

Twenty Fourteen



Aspire to Life



President and CEO Report

The 2014 financial year was another year of substantive achievement for Aspire as it moves towards becoming NDIS ready and continues to work alongside people with disabilities and their families to achieve their goals and aspirations.

The start of the year witnessed the amalgamation with the Community Options Brokerage Service (COBS). This was another significant milestone in the history of Aspire. It adds a wider range of programs and activities to allow us to deliver a more comprehensive range of services. The integration of these new programs is well underway but it will still take some time and hard work to fully consolidate these

This year Aspire achieved a major financial milestone as we head towards an income stream exceeding \$10 million and more than \$6million in assets. This provides us with the size and scale for a sound financial and operational future.

Our operational areas once again performed extremely well and in some areas we were able to over deliver and in other areas we were around the yearly target. Overall a very good year operationally.

Across the year Aspire was presented at 2 major conferences with invitations to speak at the NSW State Conference along with the National Employment Conference. Aspires reputation as a forward thinking and progressive organisation has grown as with its standing within the NGO sector across Australia.

Our governance has been strong throughout the year with a focus on risk management, quality and strengthening our financial systems. This year Aspire focussed on engaging with our key stakeholders being clients, families and funders. This will be followed up in future years with our Community Engagement subcommittee which will be crucial to understanding the needs of the community in the future and will shape the types of services we will deliver.

Another highlight for the year was the establishment of our focus on staff and client Health and Wellbeing program which was run in conjunction with Gateway Health through the Healthy Victoria program.

One of the great challenges throughout the year has been the bringing together of our workforce to understand and embrace the funding environment of the future. Moving towards a market driven economy under an Insurance model will pose many challenges and currently the education of all of our staff and the shift towards the new paradigm is a gradual process.

These achievements would not be possible without the dedication and tireless efforts of our staff. Aspire is truly a people business and the Board and Nigel would like to recognise and thank our staff for their commitment to allow us to continue to work alongside people with disabilities and their families to achieve their goals and aspirations.

Wolfgang Schwarz

President

Nigel Stone

Chief Executive Officer

Treasurer's Report

With the addition of the COBS organisation on 1 July 2013, the year has been yet another year of consolidation merging the COBS systems, staff and culture into the existing Aspire business.

While Bianca has proved a competent and capable Director of Finance & Administration, the workload has continued to be a challenge so I am pleased that an Assistant Accountant has been appointed. This will enable Bianca to better focus on the analysis of the business and provide Management and the Board with better and more timely Financial information.

We will now have a Financial Management structure appropriate for a business of our size and complexity with the capacity for further growth. With the planned move to a more size appropriate IT system in 2015, I am confident that the Financial Management of the business is in good hands.

The challenges for 2015 will be achieving some planned increases in cost to consumers of Transport and Aspiring Lifestyles services. The reduction of the continuing losses in these areas will ensure the ongoing profitability and viability of the business in coming years.

While we have a very healthy Balance Sheet with significant cash reserves, the one-off costs of the current staff restructure and the timing of the increased recoveries from Transport and Aspiring Lifestyles will have a negative effect on the cash reserves of the business.

Noel Sargent

Treasurer

Finance Report

The merging of COBS information systems, processes and accounting policies into the existing Aspire business has been a challenging and labour intensive process.

Significant analysis has been undertaken that has identified shortfalls in recovering the costs of transport to and from service users residences within the Aspiring lifestyles program. The decision that this form of transport will no longer be offered by Aspire from mid Dec 2014 will mitigate these losses going forward.

This analysis also identified a need to implement a pricing structure within Aspiring lifestyles that adequately recovers the cost of service delivery. This, along with the alignment of pricing across both Albury & Wodonga services will safeguard the future sustainability of the program.

It was noted by our independent auditors that the Finance team has been under resourced to date and they acknowledged that the appointment of an appropriately qualified and skilled Assistant Accountant, along with more focused roles of Accounts Payable and Payroll will be a significant step forward. This will allow for a better resourced Finance team who are enabled to improve systems and processes and provide Management, the Board and our service users with timelier financial reporting and analysis.

Bianca Mann

Director of Finance & Administration

Human Resources Report

The year 2013 – 2014 has continued to provide challenges in the Human Resource Team.

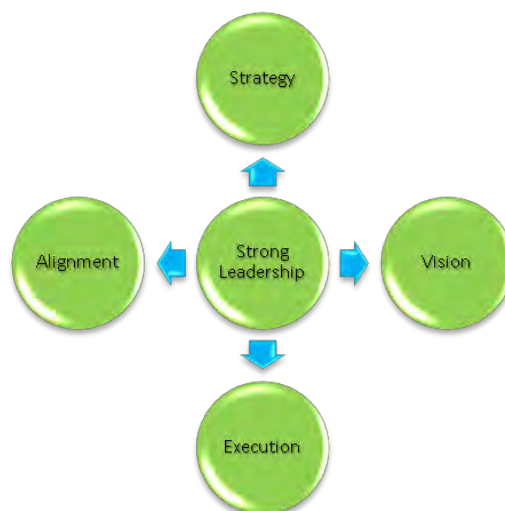
One of the positive opportunities the mergers have provided for the HR team is seeing the team grow from a team of two to four. The four roles within the team have the focus areas of:

- Workforce Strategy, Planning and Management
- Workforce Compliance
- Training and Development
- Safety and Wellbeing

Since the mergers the HR team has been working hard on developing initiatives to ensure the organisation gains a cohesive workforce.

Some of our strategies to gain a cohesive workforce (as highlighted in the diagram below) include:

- Establishing clear strategic visions and systems and aligning the workforce to that vision and executing accordingly to develop and lead a high performing workforce
- Carefully selecting staff with “good fit” and “like minded” as the objective so as to create a workforce that understands and applies the values and philosophies of the organisation
- Ensuring leaders, have the skills required to lead their teams and ensure that staff are clear about what is expected of them. Developing leaders into mentor and coaching roles with the ability to lead change effectively
- Gaining strategic cohesiveness to ensure that workforce is aligned and that plans are executed in a focused manor to achieve a common goal



Aspire remains committed to creating a mutually beneficial working environment in which staff are skilled, motivated, valued and supported. It is only through our well trained, passionate and dedicated staff that we are able to provide professional, quality support to our communities.

Aspire has developed a strategic human resources management method which delivers a coherent approach to managing staff in order to achieve the organisation’s objectives.

Human Resources Report

As part of this approach, the following factors are critical:

- **Mission, Visions Values - the business objectives** of the organisation
- **Employment Law** – implementing and adhering to those duties and obligations defined under relevant industrial law and other legislation with the assistance of our peak employer body
- **Human Resources Planning** – reviewing the organisation’s needs to ensure the recruitment of employees with the right knowledge and skills
- **Recruitment and Selection** – seeking and attracting a pool of qualified applicants from which the best person for the vacancy can be selected
- **Staff Management and Leadership** – ensuring a consistent, fair and ethical management process for employees and volunteers. Includes grievance and dispute processes
- **Workforce Strategy and Development of Workforce Capability** – providing support and guidance to ensure employees and volunteers can do their job
- **Workplace Environment** – providing a productive, safe, healthy, equitable and diverse work environment.
- **Following Benchmarking and Best Practice Principles** in all of the above to build a robust and responsive workforce

The HR team are also working on strategies to address the challenges that we face in the future landscape of our industry. These strategies are around attraction and retention. To attract and retain the required workforce, we will have to:

- Offer first class skills development that will reinforce & promote our professionalism and quality
- Offer a variety of clear career pathways
- Offer well packaged positions to attract quality staff
- Inspire and motivate our staff and make them feel that they are part of a professional organisation that is playing a huge part in sustaining and developing a community
- Recognise and reward the contribution each and every staff member makes toward achieving the mission and goals of the organisation.
- Ensure our staff are flexible enough to adapt when and where we need to change and improve

We have a lot of work to achieve over the next few years. We are excited and ready to accept the challenges that the future brings.

We are confident as a team that our workforce plans sets out the strategies we need to implement to ensure we have a cohesive workforce and that is capable of responding to both our industries and communities needs for now and the future and with a harmonious culture that is well regarded by all of our stakeholders.

I would personally like to thank the HR team and all staff of Aspire who work so hard to achieve the Mission of our organisation within our ever changing environment.

Mardi Weber

Director of Human Resources

Operational Report

The Operational areas of Aspire includes the following service delivery areas:

- Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)
- Respite Options
- Centre Based Respite – both Adults and Children’s houses
- Supported Accommodation and Drop in Support
- Flexible Service Response and Volunteer Coordination
- Aspiring Lifestyles
- Aspire Opportunity Shop

Each area of service has operated within the scope of the funding agreements, and outputs across all areas were within the acceptable range or better, as seen in the following table:

	% attendance or occupation	Actual Service Hours Delivered
Early Intervention	86 % attendance	4704
Flexible Respite (RO)	105% of target	19238
CB Respite - Adult House	93% occupation	28693
CB Respite - Children’s House	86% occupation	27706
Day Programs	96% attendance	137312
Supported Accommodation & Drop In Support	100% occupation	36332

Supported Accommodation / Independent Living Facility

Aspire has been successful in a recent tender for a new independent living facility. The facility is being custom built and will be a 6 unit cluster model which will house 5 independently living clients; with 1-2 support staff overseeing the units daily. The units will provide long term placement for independent clients and it is expected that the first client will relocate to the premises in early December, 2014.