



DWA

Disabled Wintersport Australia

2020 & 2021 Annual Report



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About DWA

Disabled Wintersport Australia (DWA) is a registered charity (ABN 64 571 062 301).

DWA's mission is to "promote and foster the advancement of participation of people with disability in winter sports in Australia, with safety and dignity."

Established in 1978 as the Australian Disabled Skiers Federation, DWA has assisted thousands of individuals with disability to participate in winter sports. DWA plans to broaden operations to include green season activities such as adaptive hiking.

DWA's headquarters are in Melbourne. DWA operates at Australia's 5 major snow resorts across New South Wales and Victoria. DWA works closely, and collaboratively, with the management teams at Thredbo, Vail Resorts (Falls Creek, Mount Hotham, and Perisher Ranges) and Mount Buller. These strong relationships, combined with the support of resort staff, ensure DWA can deliver positive experiences for members, enabling them to find their freedom on snow.

DWA's members range from recreational skiers and snowboarders to Winter Paralympians, and some of the world's finest winter athletes have emerged from DWA's programs.

DWA's vision is "the equality of opportunity for people with disabilities to participate at all levels in the winter sport of their choice."

Patron's message



Richard Champion de Crespigny AM

Unprecedented political, health, weather and financial crises have beset us over the past three years, forcing us to become more efficient and resilient than we have ever been before.

To survive these crises, we have been forced to focus, avoid distractions, prioritise, and pivot to take advantage of dynamic opportunities. These adaptations have improved our resilience personally, corporately and nationally,

It's been Coral's and my delight to see this resilience displayed at DWA. During these challenging years, the DWA board and staff have taken the opportunities to extend strategies, enhance goals, seek new support and build management teams to effect these changes.

As a result, Coral and I are delighted to see DWA today in a better state with bolder visions than it has ever had before.

It's Coral's and my privilege to be the Patrons of DWA, to see the organisation grow, helping more people with disabilities to reach their full potential. We send the staff and all members our best wishes for emerging from these challenging years energised, focused and rewarded.

Richard Champion de Crespigny AM

President's message



Iain McGuire

The last couple of years have seen unprecedented challenges for all of us and our organisation. At the time of writing this we are approaching the close of our 2022 season and DWA is back in full swing fulfilling its purpose and giving our members freedom on snow.

Much has been learnt and already applied during this period of change. For the 2021 season we had to adapt. The team worked relentlessly to navigate constantly evolving health and regulatory rules, ongoing lockdowns, a changing Government funding landscape and the impacts on our membership levels.

However, with our focus and the ongoing support of our members, volunteers, staff, stakeholders, the resorts and our communities, we were successful in providing a restricted set of services and at a time where this meant so much to so many.

The Board and Management kept several guiding principles at our core. To ensure the ongoing sustainability of our organisation, striving to deliver the opportunity for members to participate in winter sports, to keep the safety and wellbeing of our members and staff as the highest imperative and to continue to focus on our future.

As we look ahead, we are better placed than we have ever been to expand our services, develop new offerings and lead on strategies and programs to deliver much needed change to access and accommodation in our snow fields. This will be outlined in more detail in our 2030 Strategy which is under development.

To name a few examples, the scale of our camps program for winter 2023 is already bigger than ever. Our membership is increasing, new offerings such as the Para-Nordic program are in trial and green season initiatives are being evaluated. Finally, our Alpine Access Network Committee is progressing some significant projects focused on enduring accessible infrastructure.

In closing, none of this is possible without the unwavering support and commitment of our members, volunteers, staff, our Board and all of the organisations we interact with every day, be it our Government and Philanthropic donors through to the resorts and their caring teams.

Thank you on behalf of the Board of DWA. We are excited about what comes next.

Iain McGuire

Chief Executive Officer's message



Jenni Cole

Since its foundations in 1978, DWA has showcased what can be achieved when a dedicated group of volunteers and staff combine technical excellence and passion for helping people with disability 'find freedom on snow'. Each year since has brought growth and innovation, while maintaining a clear focus on service to our members. The 2019 ski season saw the highest ever demand for DWA programs, and then the "COVID years" of 2020 and 2021 presented some of the greatest challenges the organisation has faced

In early 2020, the whole country grappled with what this pandemic meant, and whether or not sport and recreation programs could be delivered at all. Part way through 2020 DWA farewelled CEO Rick Coate and the DWA Board and senior staffensured there was leadership continuity. DWA was able to retain staff and use the opportunity to innovate and look to the future and sees the organisation in robust financial health as we emerge from the pandemic.

I was privileged to take on the mantle of CEO of DWA in late March 2021 and every day since then I have been humbled and inspired by the skill and dedication of the DWA staff team, who have continued to strive for excellence, persevering through two very challenging seasons.

During winter 2021 we were able to offer resort services programs to a limited extent in both states, however we had to implement rolling cancellations of camps programs in response to the evolving pandemic lockdowns and restrictions. Members who were able to get out on snow shared stories of their joy in being so well-supported by the wonderful DWA volunteers and staff.

Partnerships are a critical part of building sustainable programs. Our major donors and partners have continued to generously support the organisation, allowing us to purchase essential equipment to support core programs. As DWA heavily subsidises our on-snow member programs, this kind of financial partnership is critical and deeply appreciated. We are grateful to have such supportive partners in the alpine resorts in which we operate, along with sporting partners and government, and look forward to continuing to build on these partnerships into the coming years of growth.

During the two years covered in this Annual Report, DWA, like many other organisations faced many challenges. While ensuring we provided programs where possible, DWA took the opportunity to look to the future and to innovate and grow to best to serve our members. We were successful in securing two major grants from Sport Australia in 2021, to develop a volunteer engagement and retention strategy, and to establish the sport of ParaNordic skiing in Australia.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the DWA Board, the tireless DWA staff, and our passionate volunteers. Thank you also to the many members I have met who have shared their stories and ideas for the future, and who continue to put their trust in us to support them on snow.

We look forward to engaging with members and stakeholders as we look to return to full operations in 2022 and to develop our strategic plan through to 2030, with strong input from our members, volunteers, and partners.

Our greatest priority is to support our members to enjoy finding freedom to adaptive alpine and snowsport programs.

Jenni Cole

Sport Australia Chair's message

The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), comprising Sport Australia and the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS), is proud to lead, support and grow Australian sport at all levels.

On behalf of the Australian Government, we nurture and develop community sport through areas such as volunteering, community coaching and governance. Our vision in high performance sport is to create sustainable success that inspires all Australians.

We are living through tumultuous times and a global pandemic, but we are supporting Australian sport to thrive.

Across 2021-22 we oversaw an unprecedented four Olympic and Paralympic campaigns in the space of eight months. An equal-record 17 gold medals at the Tokyo Olympics, followed by a record four medals at the Beijing Winter Olympics, is testament to how our athletes and sports are excelling.

More so, it has been inspiring to see how our Olympics, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games athletes continue to represent Australia so proudly with humility and respect, reinforcing their status as important role models.

The upcoming Birmingham Commonwealth Games in 2022 provides another opportunity to inspire Australians to get involved in sport.

The unprecedented challenge of the global COVID-19 pandemic has required incredible resilience as a society and within our sport sector. We know sport is playing a crucial role in the nation's rebuilding efforts.

In March 2022, we welcomed our new CEO, Kieren Perkins OAM, who will oversee Sport Australia and the AIS. His role will be connecting Australian sport from our grassroots sporting fields to our international representatives.

This connection is crucial, and we are immensely proud of our many programs and initiatives that support this involvement with sport.

Through our Participation Grants, Sporting Schools program, Regional Sport Events Fund, Local Sporting Champions and Local Para Champions program we're helping Australians of all ages and abilities get active and lead happier, healthier lives.

The ASC is a strong advocate for greater diversity in sport. As one example, our Women Leaders in Sport (WLIS) programs, with support of the Office for Women, provides women with valuable leadership development opportunities on and off the field.

Our focus is on building sustainable success. Every action we take today must have positive and lasting impact well into the future as we lead a new era towards Brisbane 2032 and beyond.

Funding is critical to high performance sport and we thank the Australian Government for their ongoing commitment. The AIS has already committed funding to sports for the entire 2024 Paris Olympic and Paralympic cycle. This \$257m announcement is historic and meets the needs of sports to plan ahead with greater certainty. By the end of this year, we'll give the same certainty to our Winter Games team for 2026.

We care about people in sport. We're putting athletes first because we want them to be successful in sport and life.

We are providing \$14.6m a year in direct funding to athletes via our dAIS grants, but this is complemented by world-class athlete support in mental health and wellbeing services. As one example, the AIS Mental Health Referral Network received 444 referrals in 2021, a rise of 68 per cent.

Additionally, the AIS is supporting our athletes and sport through innovation and technology, medicine and sport science, wellbeing and community engagement, coaching and leadership, as well as high performance facilities.

The announcement of a home Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brisbane in 2032 provides an incredible opportunity to unite Australia through sport. It can be a catalyst to drive participation and strengthen our volunteer workforce, as well as identify, develop, support and progress talented athletes.

Brisbane 2032 has become a beacon to aim towards, aligning our sports, our infrastructure and our communities to leave a positive legacy for Australia.

This is a pivotal time for our sector and the green and gold runway provides an opportunity to consider the role that each of us can play in making Australia stronger through sport.

On behalf of the ASC, thank you to everyone who contributes to Australian sport with the aim of making it better for all.

Josephine Sukkar AM
Chair of the Australian Sports Commission

Performance against our Strategic Priorities

DWA's Strategic Plan comprises 4 pillars, leading DWA's operations and programs:

- Resort Services Program – adaptive snowsport programs delivered to individual members in alpine resorts
- Managed Camps Program – residential adaptive snowsport camps for groups based at Finsko's Lodge, DWA's accessible accommodation in Jindabyne, NSW, and the Access All Abilities Building at Howman's Gap, Victoria.
- Training and Education Program – providing excellence in training and certification of alpine adaptive snowsport guides
- Alpine Access Network – focussed on improving access for people with disability in the alpine regions.

During 2020 and 2021, DWA continued to deliver against its strategic priorities within the limitations of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pillar 1 - Resort Services Program

DWA provides members with adaptive snowsport programs at five alpine resorts - Falls Creek, Mount Buller, Mount Hotham, Perisher Ranges, and Thredbo. All programs are tailored specifically for member requirements and include adaptive snowsport guides and/or adaptive equipment. DWA's resort services staff provide members and their families with advice and support to plan a successful trip to the snow.

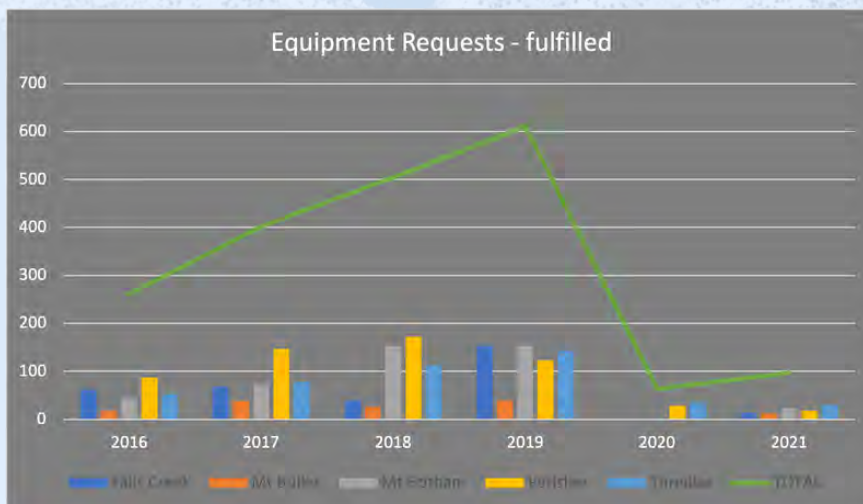
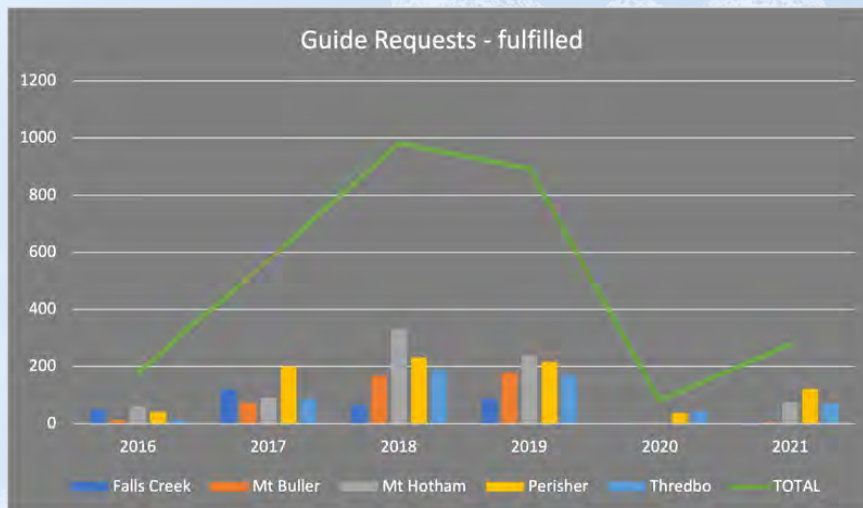
During 2020 and 2021, the tourism and alpine resort sector was seriously impacted by COVID-19. All organisations were required to comply with Public Health Orders and experienced significant disruption to business operations.

As a result, in 2020 Resort Services Programs were not offered in Victoria, with the exception of the first two weeks of the season at Mount Buller. In NSW, programs were limited, with staff, rather than volunteers, delivering the services.



Pillar 1 - Resort Services Program (continued)

In 2021, programs in Victoria and New South Wales resumed, but experienced significant interruptions because of Public Health Orders.



Pillar 2 - Managed Camps Program

Managed camps provide the opportunity for people with disability to experience adaptive snowsport programs in group settings, utilising DWA's accessible accommodation at Howman's Gap (VIC) and Jindabyne (NSW).

Camps are delivered for members, partner organisations (such as Special Olympics), and for training of adaptive snowsport guides.

In 2020 and 2021, given the added limitations of density restrictions in accommodation and physical distancing requirements, the Managed Camps Program was significantly impacted. In 2020 there were no member or organisation camps offered. Rolling lockdowns resulted in almost all camps in 2021 being cancelled.

DWA prioritised the reintroduction of its camps program in winter 2022.



Pillar 3 - Training and Education

The provision of excellence in adaptive snowsport guide services is one of the most important programs for DWA, ensuring high quality and safety focused programs for all participants. Guides are trained in all aspects of guiding; the pathway begins with Level 1, then progresses to Level 2 and Trainer certification.

Delivery of adaptive snowsport guide training was impacted during 2020, with no training occurring in either NSW or Victoria during this period because of COVID-19.

Training returned in 2021 in both states, with the following training delivered:

Location	Level 1	Level 2	Trainer Training
Falls Creek	1 course	Nil	Nil
Mt Buller	Nil	Nil	Nil
Mt Hotham	3 courses	Nil	1 course
Perisher	1 course	Nil	Nil
Thredbo	1 course	Nil	Nil

DWA is particularly focused on adaptive snowsport guide training. Over the next 2-3 years DWA will focus on refresher training at all resorts, new guide training, and on Level 2 and Trainer training.



4. Alpine Access Network

DWA provides adaptive snowsport programs in alpine resorts, where the mountain environment presents significant challenges to accessibility.

DWA aims to advocate for and partner in development of accessible infrastructure in alpine resorts, to reduce barriers to people with disability accessing the resorts for sport, recreation, and leisure.

In 2021, DWA continued to offer members accessible accommodation at Finsko's Lodge, Jindabyne.



At Mount Hotham, DWA worked closely with the Alpine Resort Management Board to secure funding for access enhancements at the new Alpine Gateway development. The project will provide storage for member and DWA adaptive snowsport equipment, accessible bathrooms, and an accessible staging point for independent guests to access the trails at Mount Hotham.

In addition, DWA supported the resort in the development of a fully accessible Biathlon facility at Mount Hotham, due to open in 2022.

In 2022, DWA will be completing a review of its Alpine Network Strategy, with a focus on fostering the development of:

- an Alpine Access Hub at each alpine resort at which DWA operates
- increased accessible accommodation on snow, and
- information about accessible facilities and services at alpine resorts.



Program Improvement and Development

While 2020 and 2021 have seen significant interruptions to all DWA programs, DWA has taken this opportunity to undertake several special projects, including:

- a Review of the Resorts Services Program
- a Review of Training and Education Materials
- development of the Supported Guide Program
- development of a Volunteer Engagement and Retention Strategy
- development of the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, and
- planning for a ParaNordic Skiing Project

Review of Resort Services Program



DWA's Resort Services Program has grown substantially over the past 5 years across all resorts.

DWA expects this growth to continue (notwithstanding the temporary interruption caused by COVID-19), to meet community expectation, a growing awareness of DWA's services and increased demand driven by the NDIS.



Review of Resort Services Program (continued)

DWA's resort-based teams have consistently identified several significant barriers that impact the current level/quality of service, drive unsustainable/unpaid staff workloads, and impact the ability to absorb further growth. These include:

- Suboptimal retention and limited of availability at times of experienced volunteer adaptive snowsports guides. Over the 2020 and 2021 seasons, the majority of the guiding was provided by Resort Services staff and the new guides trained in 2019. There needs to be a focus on developing, training, and retaining volunteer adaptive snowsport guides, and ensuring that there is sufficient staff resource to support safe and effective program delivery
- Accessibility in Alpine Resorts – while the alpine region naturally provides challenges for access for people with mobility limitations, there are additional challenges caused by ageing infrastructure that was built prior to current accessibility standards, as well as the competition for available space close to lifts and other services. Lack of accessibility is a significant barrier for DWA members, and DWA staff and volunteers often need to work around these challenges in support of members
- Lack of storage and program operational space in resorts. For DWA to be able to sustainably provide a service to DWA members, the program requires space to store and readily access adaptive snowsport equipment and Personal Protective Clothing (PPC), space to meet and greet members, and proximity to accessible bathrooms.



Review of Resort Services Program (continued)

Recommendations from the review included:

- Introduce a new 'Supported Guide' program to increase volunteer guide retention, increase overall skill level of volunteer guide pool, ease resort-based staff capacity, improve the overall quality of service delivered to members, and increase member confidence in DWA services
- Expand the role of the lead resort services staff member at each resort, allowing for the Resort Services Manager role to become more strategic, to improve DWA's relationship with the resorts, and to deliver incremental resort operational improvements.



Review of Resort Services Program (continued)

The changes implemented in 2021 in response to this review were:

- Introduction of the role of Resort Services Manager, with an increased focus on management of resort stakeholder relationships, fundraising, promotion of DWA, guide recruitment, and overall program management
- Increase in program staff remuneration in line with award
- Earlier commencement of seasonal staff to allow for season preparation, and extension of contract term to cover post season evaluation and planning and preparation for the following season
- Increase in resort-based staff to manage the expected reduction in volunteer adaptive snowsport guides as identified above, and in the event of further COVID-related lockdowns.



Review of Training and Education Materials

The Training and Education Committee, and key staff undertook a review of DWA's Guide Training and identified several areas of improvement.

These included:

- Introduction of advanced level snowboard-based sit-ski primary guiding certification
- Introduction of regular weekly training opportunities at each resort where appropriate
- Review of prerequisite skills for new guides
- Further categorisation of guides beyond Level 1 – modular based to allow specialisation
- Scope of new guide training – what should be included and how best to deliver this training
- How to increase and improve training of trainers
- The need for recertification after a specific period to ensure that all guides maintain a minimum safe standard
- The importance of harmonising training practices across locations – with the proposal to deliver an on-snow workshop for trainers in 2021.

In addition to this, there was a review of the new guide training manual, and several student projects, including one that revised the theory assessment new guides undertake prior to practical training. The manual continued to be reviewed in 2021, with the aim of finalising the updated manual after the 2022 ski season.



Guide Pathway and Supported Guide Program

DWA aims to develop a professional pathway for DWA Guides, to build on the Level 1, 2 and Trainer certification. The pathway creates progression and recognition for guides who wish to be more involved, rewards effort and excellence and increases DWA's capacity to deliver increased and high-quality guide services to members.

The 'Supported Guide' program, detailed in the previous section, will reward and support highly experienced DWA Volunteer guides who provide more than 15 days of volunteer guiding each year. This program will be launched in 2022.

Volunteer Engagement and Retention Strategy

Having identified that volunteer retention, engagement and development was a challenge that needed focused attention, DWA was successful in securing a Sport Australia Capability Grant in 2021 to develop a whole-of-sport volunteer engagement and retention strategy, to increase awareness of the range of roles that volunteers can fill, as well as improve engagement and retention through a volunteer management framework.

For many years DWA delivered its services almost entirely through volunteers, as did many sporting and recreational organisations. With increasing demand over time, there has been the need to increase the staffing of DWA both on-snow to support program delivery, and off-snow to support fundraising, governance, administration and operational capability. DWA continues to rely heavily on its excellent volunteers to be able to provide an ever-increasing volume of adaptive snowsport programs, and to expand our off-snow offering in the 'green season'.

An extensive review of the volunteer program was conducted. This audit included a volunteer survey, staff and volunteer interviews, and a review of current volunteer operation and processes.



Volunteer Engagement and Retention Strategy (continued)

Key findings about our volunteers and their views included the need for:

- a platform to manage the volunteer database and coordinate scheduling
- increased and targeted communication, rather than *ad hoc*
- improvements to the online guide training, and
- consistency across resorts in terms of incentives and benefits of being a guide.

The overarching recommendations that inform all of these recommendations were:

- Create a consistent and easy to follow volunteer journey along all touchpoints, from recruitment, to application, onboarding, training, support and recognition. This will allow volunteers to understand their role from the outset
- Create a communication plan that supports all parts of the journey and engages effectively with volunteers. This plan should include multiple channels for people to engage with, e.g., email, newsletter, social media, LMS, training sessions
- Create a social engagement plan –this is important to keep a growing number of people engaged over time, without the chance to talk one on one with every volunteer. Formal get-togethers allow for recognition, but more importantly informal get togethers allows for building connection and trust, exchanging information and knowledge.



Volunteer Engagement and Retention Strategy (continued)

While the project was still ongoing, DWA was able to implement some of the key early recommendations from this project ahead of the winter season of 2022, including:

- Introduction of “Deputy” rostering system
- New guide jackets
- Preparation for introduction of the Supported Guide Program
- Increased communication with volunteers via social media and newsletters
- Planned engagement of a dedicated staff member to manage the volunteer program



ParaNordic Skiing Project

In late 2021, DWA secured a Sport Australia Participation Grant to develop and establish the sport of ParaNordic Skiing in Australia. ParaNordic Skiing is a winter Paralympic sport incorporating the disciplines of Para Cross-Country (ParaXC) and Para Biathlon. Prior to this project, there was no formal ParaNordic Skiing program in Australia.

DWA's long-term goal is to establish the sport of ParaNordic Skiing in Australia, both on and off snow, bringing this sport to people with disability across multiple locations.

DWA's partners in this important initiative are Snow Australia, Paralympics Australia, and Biathlon Australia, who will work closely with DWA to develop and deliver coach and guide training, and pilot programs across locations in Brisbane, Sydney, Canberra, Wodonga, Jindabyne, Adelaide, Falls Creek, Mt Hotham, and Perisher Ranges.

Once established, DWA will offer the program on snow in several locations through both camps and resort services programs, continuing to work in close cooperation with its partners to support the emerging talent and performance parts of the pathway.

The steering committee for this project is chaired by Paralympian James Millar, Australia's only Paralympic-level Biathlete, ensuring that it remains athlete- and participant-focussed.

- Mapping the sector in Australia to identify key partners and enablers for the sport
- Benchmarking against existing successful international programs
- Development and delivery of training programs for ParaXC and Para Biathlon instructors/coaches for all locations, and ParaNordic adaptive snowsport guides for the on-snow programs
- Capacity building and support for local delivery 'clubs' (mainly biathlon clubs and associations)
- Delivery of programs in 9 participation program hubs (on and off snow, 5 of which as rural or remote) in 5 states (NSW, ACT, VIC, SA, and QLD)
- Evaluation of these pilot programs and establishment of recommendations and plans for continued development of the sport
- Drafting of a whole-of-sport plan to develop the sport at all levels through to 2030



Green Season

A NSW Government Grant of \$42,000 in 2021 allowed DWA to purchase a four-wheel drive all-terrain electric powered wheelchair. Known as the TerrainHopper, DWA conducted a successful pilot test of this vehicle, taking some of our members to Cascades Hut and Mount Kosciuszko. This equipment will allow DWA to start to offer this service during the 'green season' in NSW.

In July 2021, then Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional NSW, John Barilaro announced the grant, telling media that: "the rugged 4WD wheelchair will boost the number of people with limited mobility and disability visiting the Kosciuszko National Park."

"The TerrainHopper will allow for people with disability or those with limited mobility to journey to the summit of Mt Kosciuszko in a dignified and inclusive way and we know this will open the doors to broader trekking trips within the park."

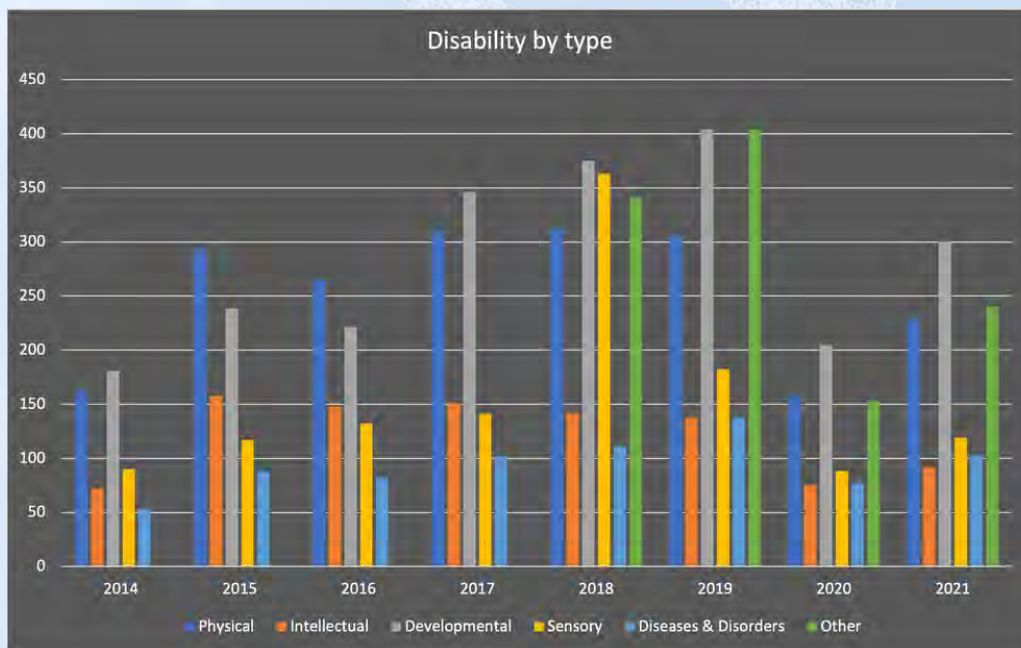


Membership

After years of steadily increasing membership, DWA's membership has been significantly impacted by the pandemic during 2020 and 2021. Closure of the Victorian resorts at various parts of winters 2020 and 2021, and multiple lockdowns affecting both New South Wales and Victorian resorts, has reduced member participation and, directly, membership.



Membership (continued)



Engagement

Stakeholders

Throughout winter 2021, and the ensuing green season, significant effort has been expended in maintaining relationships across the snow resorts, with DWA's partners, and accommodation providers.

DWA has engaged with employees through staff workshops, with guides through targeted newsletters and the volunteer engagement project, and with members through newsletters and surveys.

DWA has worked closely with Paralympics Australia, Snow Australia and Sport Australia in the implementation of the ParaNordic project, as well as Biathlon Australia to develop Para-biathlon.

Key outcomes so far include:

- refining DWA's accommodation agreement with Jindabyne Sport and Recreation
- finalising DWA's agreement with YMCA Howman's Gap at Falls Creek
- working with Vail Resorts to deliver and promote the Epic Australia Adaptive Pass to DWA members

In addition, DWA is one of the nine founding members of the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with a Disability (ASAPD), a key peak agency for sport and physical activity for people with a disability. Its vision is for all Australians to have an opportunity to engage in sport and physical activity in a welcoming and inclusive environment, which is something DWA has been advocating and delivering since 1978.



Stakeholder Surveys

Members

DWA's member survey in 2021 received 43 responses, with 63% indicating that they lived in New South Wales and 28% living in Victoria. The following responses to the survey questions have been organised into membership, disability and resort clusters.

Membership-related responses

- 49% had been a DWA member for between 3 and 10 years, with 23% indicating that they had been a member for more than 10 years
- When asked about the key reasons (multiple choice question) for being a DWA member, 60% did so to get access to half-price lift passes and 44% wanted to participate in adaptive snowsport activities
- 86% of survey respondents believed DWA was doing a good job helping people with disability find freedom on snow, although only 67% felt that membership was value for money
- And only one respondent said that they would not recommend DWA to a friend
- 86% believed that it was extremely important for DWA to advocate for disability access in the alpine region

Disability-related responses

- 56% indicated that their disability was congenital and 81% were NDIS recipients
- Less than 1% had been classified for Para-snowsports

Resort-related responses

- 60% of respondents accessed resort services programs and 33% utilised DWA adaptive equipment
- When asked 'Who usually comes to the snow with you' respondents indicated that it was mainly with family (70%) and friends (26%)
- 56% said that they would be interested in participating in alpine activities outside winter
- Main barriers to accessing snowsports were cost (42%) and health/disability (33%)



Stakeholder Surveys

Volunteers

In 2021 DWA surveyed our volunteers, with over 150 completing the survey.

In terms of the survey questions and responses, DWA discovered that:

- 87% of guides want to volunteer more, with the main barriers being cost and availability of accommodation, and needing more notice of shifts
- Social aspect/interaction is important to 67% of respondents
- 93% said that they were likely to return in future seasons

Suggestions for improvement included:

- Make membership fee tax-deductible
- Accommodation options/ access to any or cheaper accommodation
- Earlier notice of dates needed
- Better website to sign up for shifts/ accommodation
- Knowing about other resorts
- Do training when no clients booked
- More detail about client
- Regular training sessions/ refreshers
- Discounted season passes
- Discounts for gear/ meals/ coffee
- Updated DWA uniform – perhaps vests/shells, brighter
- Coordinate guides traveling together



Governance

DWA deeply values excellence in governance and is led by an experienced and passionate volunteer board, and several board committees.

DWA Board of Directors

DWA has 6 elected directors and up to 5 appointed directors. All directors are required to be independent and to declare and manage any potential conflicts. Directors are elected at each AGM (where vacancies exist) and the directors then select office bearers from the 6 elected directors after each AGM.

From 2020 AGM

Elected Directors:

Iain McGuire (President)
Melinda Brown (Vice President)
Chris Scott (Treasurer)
Ross Passalacqua (Secretary)
Paul Lamb
Cain Beckett

Appointed Directors:

Libby Adam
Joanna Decco
Kath Elliott (Public Officer)
Lucinda Fairrie
Richard Rodd

From 2021 AGM

Elected Directors:

Iain McGuire (President)
Melinda Brown (Vice President)
Ross Passalacqua (Treasurer)
Paul Lamb (Secretary)
Cain Beckett
Jim Blackburn

Appointed Directors:

Libby Adam
Joanna Decco
Kath Elliott (Public Officer)
Lucinda Fairrie

In 2021, after several years of valuable contribution, the DWA Board farewelled board member Richard Rodd and thanked him for his many contributions to DWA . In addition, the DWA Board farewelled Treasurer Chris Scott, who steered the organisation through improvements in financial practices, increased financial stability and the financial aspects of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Both directors will be greatly missed and remain part of the extended DWA family.



DWA Board Committees

The work of DWA is supported by several board committees, which each report to the DWA Board regularly.

From 2020 AGM

Finance & Risk Committee

Chris Scott (Chair, Treasurer)
Joanna Decco
Ross Passalaqua

From 2021 AGM

Finance & Risk Committee

Joanna Decco (Chair)
Ross Passalaqua
Jenni Cole (CEO)

Grants & Fundraising Committee

Jim Blackburn (Chair)
Ross Passalaqua
Libby Adam
Lucinda Fairrie
Jenni Cole (CEO)
Tony Murray

Alpine Access Network Committee

Jim Blackburn (Chair)
Phil Knight
Nick Ames
Cathy Harvey
Ian White
James Millar
Jenni Cole (CEO)

Training & Education Committee

Melinda Brown (Chair)



Governance Improvement

A key priority of Sport Australia is to support national sporting organisations to continuously improve their governance arrangements, thereby improving overall industry capability. As part of this support, Sport Australia has developed the evolved Sport Governance Principles as the framework for improving awareness, acceptance and performance of sporting governance.

The principles are supported by the Sports Governance Standards (SGS), used by the NSOs as a self-assessment tool, with guidance provided by Sport Australia to develop and strengthen governance capability.



DWA Board



Iain McGuire, President

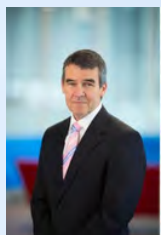
Iain is a Senior Technology and Innovation Partner at PWC Canberra, focused on assisting executives and Boards in delivering business outcomes through driving transformation agendas. He has advised many large scale Government Departments and ASX 100 organisations with driving transformation, complex projects, sourcing and commercial management. Iain practices in the areas of digital transformation, program delivery, assurance, and risk and governance. He has successfully led global programs and technology implementations with high performing teams through agenda and client driven strategies. As a local in Jindabyne, Iain is close to the mountains and is a DWA guide and an avid snowboarder during winter.



Melinda Brown, Vice President

Based in Sydney, and a regular skier and DWA Guide in the NSW Resorts, Melinda is a Senior executive with over twenty years of experience across a variety of industry sectors, including education, tourism, travel and retail. With significant not-for-profit experience, specialising in marketing in communications to generate and drive income. Melinda is an experienced leader and mentor, with the ability to inspire teams to achieve successful individual and group outcomes.

An accomplished communicator and negotiator, able to effectively engage diverse groups of people. Melinda has extensive experience in strategy and policy at an organisational level, as well as working with government. With experience in design and implementation of IT platforms and interfaces developed from a user perspective.



Ross Passalaqua, Treasurer

Ross is a company director and business consultant with broad leadership, commercial, operational, and technical experience ranging across multiple sectors including the tourism, safety, services, transport and logistics, oil, gas, and chemical industries in both Australia and internationally. Following an early career in consulting engineering and project management, Ross worked in corporate roles in Australia and expatriate postings in PNG, the UK and in the USA primarily with the Shell Group of Companies.

Post Shell Ross added tourism management and development in a role as CEO at the Falls Creek Alpine Resort.

Ross has been a member of the DWA Board since 2011. He also serves as Chair of the Tourism North East Board, as Chair of the People and Parks Foundation Board, and provides independent safety management consulting and coaching services.



Board Members



Paul Lamb, Secretary

Paul has served on the board as an elected director and vice chairman for the past 2.5 years. Paul is an avid recreational skier and has served as a volunteer guide at DWA camps and as a volunteer carer with DWA member organisations over the past 5 years.

Paul's business credentials come from over 30 years' experience in the IT industry, working in senior leadership roles in Australia and internationally in marketing, sales and technical design and architecture functions. He has significant operational experience along with a strong background in the development of new business and in partnership and channels.



Lucinda Fairrie, Director

Lucinda is a researcher/communications consultant with over two decades experience in the not-for-profit sector. Previous roles include a former Board member of Barnardos Australia, founding member of Peter Pan Canberra and a former Committee member of Thredbo Ski Patrol Association (TSPA). She is currently Secretary of the Ski Club of Australia. Lucinda has raised funds for Barnardos, a secondary school scholarship and TSPA. She has been a volunteer Thredbo Ski Patroller since 2009. In addition to fundraising, she is focused on good governance.

Lucinda joined DWA in 2019.



Kath Elliott, Public Officer

Kath joined the board in early 2016. She is a senior executive and non-executive director with wide and deep experience in consulting, private sector, membership and non-government organisations. Kath is a former volunteer guide with DWA and is committed to increasing the membership and participation of all people in winter sports.

Kath is a non-executive director of: Australian Womensport, the peak national body promoting and supporting active participation of women and girls in sport and physical activity; and Huntlee Academy, a not for profit company designed to coordinate the training and employment of local people, specifically indigenous, disadvantaged, and people with disabilities, to be job-ready for employment opportunities.



Board Members

Joanna Decco, Board Member

Joanna's professional background encompasses the areas of finance and corporate sponsorship. She has over 15 years of experience in financial management across a number of industry sectors. Her experience in corporate sponsorship comes from her ski racing background as well as from involvement in some major events in Australia such as Financial Education Summits with Sir Richard Branson, Randi Zuckerberg and Arnold Schwarzenegger over the last few years.

Joanna is a retired FIS (International) alpine skier who competed under Alpine Canada and specialised in all four disciplines with Slalom and Giant Slalom having been her favourites. She competed at the local and international levels with many podium finishes. Joanna grew up in Europe and Canada and trained with Whistler Mountain Ski Club and Ski-Club Garmisch. After retiring from ski racing Joanna made the switch to snowboarding. For a number of years snowboarding became her passion where she also competed in a number of local and international events.

To this day Joanna skis and snowboards recreationally every year in Australia and overseas. She is very passionate about both sports and snow in general. Over the years Joanna has volunteered with a number of organisations involved in winter sports, including Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics, Whistler Mountain Host Program, Whistler Adaptive Ski Program, Atomic Dave Murray Ski Camps, and Sports School Zakopane.



Cain Beckett, Board Member

Mr Beckett is the Assistant Secretary - Strategy, for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Prior to joining the Commission, Mr Beckett led the Social Services, Human Services and Veterans Affairs portfolio within the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. He joined the public service to launch the supply-side functions of the National Disability Insurance Scheme as first head of Markets and Pricing.

Cain is a former Chair of the NSW Disability Council and former member of the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council. Prior to joining the public service Mr Beckett held a range of consulting and executive roles with Accenture, PwC and Perpetual including management of more than \$250 billion in financial assets during the Global Financial Crisis.

Cain is a fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a former national champion and Australian representative in Archery. He is managed by his amazing wife Dr Sara Beckett and two daughters Eleanor and Alexis.



Board Members



Elizabeth Adam, Board Member

Elizabeth (Libby) Adam is a senior human resources professional specialising in Organisational Change, Development and Talent Management. She has a vast experience with multi-national corporations across the manufacturing and retail sectors in both specialist and generalist HR roles.

Through the application of her specialty, Libby has helped focus strategic directions for both GM Holden and Target – improving their agility and training programs. Before working in HR, Libby acquired a BSc in Sport Science, an area of passion for her, and has a strong interest in golf, wakeboarding, AFL, and skiing.



Jim Blackburn, Board Member

Jim is an experienced senior executive and corporate practitioner with broad leadership, operational and technical skills and experience across the investment, finance, corporate services and not-for-profit sectors.

He has represented SME entities across a wide range of international, national, public and internal forums, and is a recognised business leader in these forums. Jim has held key Board positions in the corporate and not-for-profit community sector.

Jim has been a member of DWA since 2001, starting as a volunteer guide. He has participated in the development and funding of the organisation over the past 20 years.

Joining the board in 2007, he was DWA Chairman until 2017. In this time, he remained actively involved in guiding and was one of the first accredited DWA Level 1 Trainers in 2009. Jim became a Life Member of DWA in 2018.



DWA

DWA's headquarters are in Melbourne. DWA has operations at the 5 major snow resorts across New South Wales and Victoria.

DWA works closely, and collaboratively, with the management teams at Thredbo, Vail Resorts (Falls Creek, Mount Hotham, and Perisher) and Mount Buller.

These strong relationships, and the support of resort staff ensures DWA can deliver positive experiences for members, enabling them to find their freedom on snow.

As stated earlier in this report, DWA's vision is "the equality of opportunity for people with disabilities to participate at all levels in the winter sport of their choice."

DWA realises this vision with a small group of paid staff and large number of dedicated and passionate volunteers.

Except for a few head office staff, most of DWA's resort-based employees are engaged throughout Australia's winter season.

This successful model relies on the dedication of DWA's staff, the ongoing commitment of DWA's guides, and the importance of recruiting and training more volunteers each year.



The Team

Led by the CEO, the DWA team comprises year-round administrative, communications, member services and operational support staff. This cohort works with a team of highly experienced seasonal staff who deliver DWA's on-snow programs across 5 resorts and 2 camps locations.

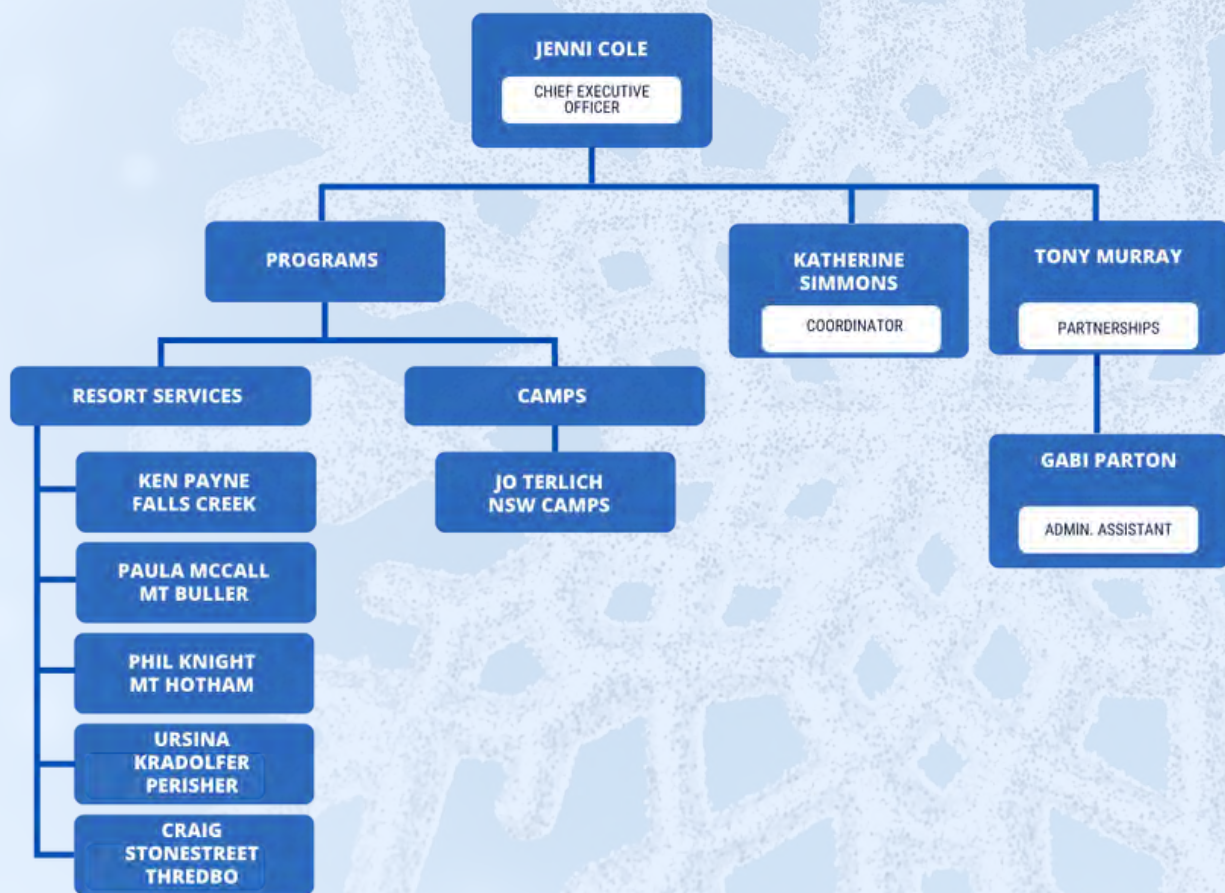
COVID 19 has seen some impact on staffing, particularly during periods of 'lockdown'. Over this time, where possible, DWA retained staff and utilised this time to work on specific projects.

Organisational Chart

DWA's structure reflects a year-round commitment to members and an increased focus on service delivery during the winter months. The following organisational chart illustrates the staff structure of DWA and the key personnel during the reporting period.



DWA - Organisational Chart



Financial Summary

DWA's activities, and hence its financial performance, were significantly impacted during both the 2020/2021 and the 2021/2022 financial years by the effects of the COVID pandemic. Notwithstanding these significant operational and financial impacts, DWA continued to closely manage its financial performance and was able to access a suite of mostly COVID based grants and support payments from both State and Federal governments. These grants and payments enabled DWA to continue limited operations as possible, to maintain necessary staff levels, and to sustainably manage costs. They also provided a financial buffer that will enable DWA to recover and rebuild post-pandemic.

The DWA Finance and Risk Committee, and DWA Board provide oversight of financial matters, and approves the DWA Budget annually.

Audited Financial Statements are presented in full to the DWA Membership prior to the AGM each year, and are submitted to the Australian Charities and Not-For Profits Commission (ACNC), Sport Australia and relevant state government entities.

Summary of Financial Performance - Profit and Loss

	2021-2022 FY	2020-2021 FY
Income - Government Grants	\$ 660,783	\$ 356,174
Income - non-Government Grants	\$ 70,155	\$ 0
Income - Programs	\$ 17,696	\$ 914
Income - Operating Activities	\$ 181,466	\$ 75,405
Income - Charitable	\$ 82,268	\$ 97,818
Income - Other, inc. Jobkeeper/ATO Boost	\$ 27,063	\$ 164,992
Total Income	\$ 1,039,431	\$ 693,475
Program Expenses	\$ 101,981	\$ 5,123
Employee Costs, inc, program staff	\$ 450,234	\$ 305,824
Other Expenses	\$ 183,168	\$ 155,824
Total Expenses	\$ 735,383	\$ 466,079
Profit/(Loss)	\$ 304,048	\$ 227,396



Summary of Financial Performance - Balance Sheet

	2021-2022 FY	2020-2021 FY
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and Equivalent	\$ 1,009,980	\$ 510,510
Trade and Other	\$ 79,219	\$ 25,290
Total Current Assets	\$ 1,089,200	\$ 535,800
Non-Current Assets		
Fixed Assets	\$ 400,100	\$ 334,945
Total Non-Current Assets	\$ 400,100	\$ 334,945
Total Assets	\$ 1,489,300	\$ 870,945
Liabilities		
Total Current Liabilities*	\$ 514,945	\$ 195,439
Total Non-Current Liabilities	\$ 19,121	\$ 24,121
Total Liabilities	\$ 534,066	\$ 219,560
Net Assets/Total Equity	\$ 955,234	\$ 651,186

*Including grants in advance



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