

## PART FOUR:

# Australian Hearing's management

## People and Performance

### OUR PEOPLE

At the end of 2008/09, we employed 1,115 staff, comprising 888 female and 227 male staff members, of whom 66.45 per cent were full-time, 30.23 per cent were part-time and 3.35 per cent were casual. Thirteen (1.2 per cent) of our staff identified as Indigenous, while 28 (2.5 per cent) employees identified as having a hearing impairment and 36 (3.2 per cent) as having a disability. The following table shows our staff composition as at 30 June 2009.

TABLE FOUR: FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFF AS AT 30 JUNE 2009

STATE/TERRITORY	TOTAL	MALES	FEMALES
NSW/ACT	471	136	335
VIC	263	33	230
SA	57	11	46
TAS	38	8	30
QLD	217	29	188
NT	15	2	13
WA	54	8	46
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>888</b>

This total of 1,115 employees represents 920.42 (average over the year) FTE.

*Image right: Staff enjoy the Pink Ribbon Day morning tea fundraiser at National Head Office in October 2008.*

*Image far right: Australian Hearing enters its first team in the 2008 Sun-Herald City2Surf.*

### Continuous improvement

A key achievement this year was the introduction of a self-service human resources kiosk for staff. MyHR is a virtual HR office which allows employees to perform functions traditionally administered via HR or payroll. This empowers our employees by enabling them to update their details, view their payroll records, and request leave electronically. MyHR has eliminated manual processing of leave applications and timesheets and has made considerable savings due to reduced administrative costs and less paper use, also reducing our environmental impact.

Our Performance Development System ensures that every employee has a clear understanding of performance expectations and a development plan focused on individual needs, with formal performance feedback at the end of the financial year. This year, we simplified the form and reporting process and introduced new guidelines for managers and e-learning training to improve the ease and effectiveness of the process.

Our geographically dispersed workforce presents significant challenges when providing training and development. Greater use of technology, such as e-learning and videoconferencing, has enabled us to extend the reach and accessibility of learning when and where our people need it.

A learning management system will be introduced next year, which will allow easier deployment of e-learning, monitoring completion of training, assessment of learning outcomes, and collation of training records.

### Attracting and retaining the best in the field

During 2008/09, we implemented a range of activities aimed at attracting new audiologists to Australian Hearing. These activities included:

New audiologist survey – we surveyed audiologists recruited since early 2007 about our training, reputation, recruitment process and career opportunities. Responses indicated high satisfaction in most areas. Together with feedback from focus groups held at our Keeping in Touch workshop, the information will inform and improve our human resources strategies.

Recruitment initiatives – we conducted nationally coordinated visits to Masters of Clinical Audiology students this year, with the aim of providing a comprehensive picture of the benefits of working with our organisation. Response to these sessions was positive and they will become a regular event.

Talent referral program – we introduced a talent referral bonus program in July 2008 which offers staff a financial

incentive for referring a clinician to Australian Hearing. As a result, seven audiologists commenced work with Australian Hearing.

Overseas recruitment – we filled eight clinical positions in regional hearing centres through our overseas recruitment program.

The tables on page 44 show the turnover of our clinical and non-clinical staff in 2008/09.

### Safety in our workplace

This year, we developed a new health and safety management arrangement following extensive consultation with all levels of the organisation and all staff. The new arrangement, titled 'Health and Safety Values and Initiatives', included a statement of commitment from the Managing Director, roles and responsibilities, consultation arrangements, Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) training, emergency preparedness, health and wellbeing, injury management and dispute resolution.

We also introduced an incident logging database to ensure that all incident data are captured and monitored, and corrective and preventative action implemented. Analysis of incident data provides useful trend information and input into our risk assessment profile.



## PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

### Occupational Health and Safety initiatives

This year, we undertook a review of our OH&S management systems. We developed an improved OH&S management system to ensure ongoing legislative compliance and best practice for injury management and a sound basis for future auditing. We achieved the following OH&S program initiatives in 2008/09:

INITIATIVE	OUTCOME
Safe vehicle purchase policy.	Increased driver safety due to the purchase of new fleet vehicles with crash avoidance, crash protection and safety features for drivers (in accordance with ANCAP ratings).
Ergonomic review of the Customer Support Centre.	Ergonomic training and individual ergonomic assessments and adjustments for all staff by our accredited rehabilitation provider, resulting in significant risk reduction for muscular-skeletal injuries.
Incorporation of safe design principles for new front reception counters.	Risk reduction of staff muscular-skeletal injuries from stretching and leaning over reception counters.
Introduction of incident/hazards/near misses logging database.	A new database allows for the logging and tracking of corrective actions, and analysis of incidents/hazards and near misses.
Early intervention and return-to-work planning and support by modifying staff duties, reducing hours and other at-work support.	Following an injury or illness, staff are able to return to work sooner and with better long-term results.

See Appendix 1a and 1b for more on our commitment to OH&S in the workplace.

### Wellbeing program

Each year, our staff have the option of sacrificing a portion of their sick leave in return for cash payment on health-related activities and sporting equipment.

This year, 27 staff from our National Head Office and hearing centres around Sydney participated in the 2008 Sun-Herald City2Surf.

We will continue to support this and similar events as part of our wellbeing program.

Table Six on page 45 shows the amount of unplanned leave taken in 2008/09 compared to the previous four years. The rate is lower than last year and remains below the Australian Public Service (APS) average.

### Recognition and reward

We continued to celebrate the success of our staff by recognising exceptional contributions to Australian Hearing by individuals and teams. Staff were able to nominate their colleagues throughout the year, and all nominees were acknowledged by the Managing Director. These nominations are used

TABLE FIVE: TURNOVER OF ALL STAFF AND CLINICAL STAFF

All staff turnover – (Number of cessations as percentage of average staff)

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Organisation turnover ( <i>All staff cessations</i> )	19.3%	17.5%	19.5%	20.2%	21.6%
Clinical turnover ( <i>Clinical cessations</i> )	6.7%	5.2%	6.7%	6.6%	5.9%

(Percentages rounded to one decimal point)

Clinical only turnover – (Number of clinical cessations as percentage of average clinical staff).

	FY 2004/05	FY 2005/06	FY 2006/07	FY 2007/08	FY 2008/09
Clinical	14.7%	11.8%	15.4%	15.3%	14.7%

(Percentages rounded to one decimal point)

to choose the employees who receive Australia Day achievement awards. *See page 67 for the Australia Day 2009 awards.*

We also continued to recognise and reward staff with individual and team bonuses based on achievement.

### Developing our people

We are committed to developing and supporting the careers of our employees. Opportunities for support staff to progress their career within Australian Hearing have increased this year with the extension of the Clinical Assistant and audiometry training programs. *See page 46 for the Voucher Clinical Assistant case study.*

#### LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

This year, we commenced a comprehensive review of the leadership development needs of our managers. From this, we developed a framework for all levels of leadership in our network and a number of other initiatives. These included a workshop on emerging leaders for Area Managers, a workshop for Hearing Centre Supervisors on being new leaders, and executive coaching. A program on advanced

leadership is planned for later this year and will become part of our succession planning initiatives. Leadership topics were also delivered at clinical conferences, graduate workshops and regional meetings during 2008/09.

#### TRAINING AND SUPPORT

We have 18 student audiometrists completing the Diploma of Hearing Device Prescription and Evaluation and 28 provisional audiometrists under our audiometry training support program. Seven audiometrists have achieved their qualified practitioner status this year.

#### CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Our senior clinicians attended two overseas conferences this year: Wendy Pearce, Principal Audiologist, attended the second International Symposium on Bone Conduction Hearing in Gothenburg, Sweden, and Annette Smith, Clinical Leader, attended a seminar called 'Defining Hearing' at the Ida Institute in Denmark.

Alison King, Principal Audiologist, Paediatric Services, presented at the Australasian Newborn Screening Conference in Adelaide in May.

### Supporting cultural diversity

#### INAUGURAL INDIGENOUS EMPLOYEES NETWORK CONFERENCE

A highlight of this year was our first Indigenous Employees Network Conference hosted at National Head Office in November 2008. Eleven staff attended the two-day conference covering a range of topics including recruitment, career development and retention of Indigenous employees.

#### CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING

This year, we launched a training program titled 'Working with Indigenous clients' designed to assist staff in communicating effectively with Indigenous clients and communities and delivering more culturally appropriate services. Many of our staff also attended a one-day cultural awareness workshop.

This year, we acquired multicultural customer service training materials from our sister agency, Centrelink which all staff will complete.

*Below: Indigenous Employees Network Conference participants and head office staff were treated to a smoking ceremony conducted by well known Aboriginal elder, Uncle Max Eulo.*



TABLE SIX: UNPLANNED LEAVE

UNPLANNED LEAVE		
	AUSTRALIAN HEARING	APS AVERAGE
2004/05	6.81	11.9
2005/06	6.51	11.9
2006/07	6.91	11.9
2007/08	10.32	11.9
2008/09	4.74	7.7

# The Voucher Clinical Assistant program

## Case Study

Following a successful trial, the Voucher Clinical Assistant program was implemented across the organisation this year to give support staff a greater role in assisting and advising our Voucher clients. To achieve this outcome for support staff, we implemented a training program aimed at helping our administrative staff to deliver improved customer service. All support staff undertook a series of six extensive training modules which covered areas such as strategies for coping with hearing loss, managing hearing aids and listening devices, maintaining hearing aids and minor aid repairs. This allowed our staff the opportunity, as a team, to provide the best hearing service possible.

Some of the staff from this program went on to provide support during designated client appointments, formally assisting the practising clinician. While the clinician undertook technical tasks and provided appropriate counselling, the assistant addressed other areas of need, demonstrating how to wear the aids, cleaning aids and changing batteries. From these beginnings, a designated Voucher Clinical Assistant position was created. These positions now support client appointments, as well as providing more immediate support over the counter in the majority of our centres.

Our support staff have enjoyed the opportunity to extend the scope of their assistance to our clients and all staff



*Bernie Forster, Voucher Clinical Assistant, shows off the Siemens Pure at Australian Hearing Bundaberg.*

have benefited from the team approach. Clinicians find their time can be used more effectively and, as they have personally trained their assistant, they are confident in their skills. Some Voucher Clinical Assistants have enjoyed this work so much, they have gone on to study audiology.

### IN THE WORDS OF SOME OF OUR NEW VOUCHER CLINICAL ASSISTANTS:

'After starting in customer service, I have completed my Clinical Assistant training and I am finally completing my portfolio by studying to become an audiometrist. I am enjoying working with clients one-on-one and seeing first hand how all my years of varied experience in the hearing industry are helping improve the quality of their life.' *Bernie Forster, Australian Hearing Bundaberg*

'Since becoming a Clinical Assistant, my confidence, not only with my knowledge of the products, but the way in which I explain the devices and techniques to the clients, has increased immensely. Becoming a Clinical Assistant has given me a better understanding of what the audiologists experience in their appointments.' *Maree Gauci, Australian Hearing Croydon.*

'As a Clinical Assistant, I was given the chance to move into a closer interactive role with clinicians and clients. With each, I gained insight into audiology and the benefit of successfully aiding a hearing impaired client, not only for the client, but also for their family and friends. I now work as an audiometrist. For me, studying audiology was a natural transition from the Clinical Assistant role.' *Deanne McDonnell, Australian Hearing Maitland.*

# Information Technology

## CONNECTING OUR PEOPLE

This year, we continued to enhance our IT infrastructure, building on last year's achievements.

We continued to improve our internal services, including expanded methods for staff to access the Australian Hearing data network, such as wireless and internet connectivity, increased response times to service desk enquiries and ongoing IT support to enable seamless service delivery to our clients.

This year, our IT strategy focused on:

- significant changes and enhancements to existing IT systems;
- adding and modifying the features available in our IT systems to enable our centres to better generate revenue and deliver services; and
- changing and improving the underlying IT infrastructure to allow us to deliver more reliable access to central IT systems from field locations.

### Major IT projects to improve our service delivery

We introduced a new system for booking client appointments, a tool kit that provides efficient scheduling of staff resources at a hearing centre and an online reporting management tool to track progress against business targets at our hearing centres. These tools will enable better management of client appointments. Improvements were made to other IT systems, including:

- Talinga, a PC system that provides an offline processing capability for managing appointments, primarily targeted for use at remote Indigenous communities; and

- Noah, the clinical software used by our audiologists to electronically tune hearing aids to suit the specific needs of individual clients.

### IT infrastructure upgrades increase our operational capacity

This year, we introduced an interactive 'dashboard' reporting system to enable management to receive daily updates on business results such as staff utilisation and fitting rates. This is a useful tool for senior management to analyse business data in real time and make quick and informed decisions.

We also upgraded four systems related to our core infrastructure.

First, we upgraded our data backup system to a single integrated system across the full suite of IT platforms used in the business. This allows more efficient backup of critical business data, with less support cost involved. The new system also enables more effective file recovery.

Second, we upgraded our telephone systems, rolling out IP telephony, which means our calls are now made over the internal data network. This will save the business money in the long term and also provides improved features, such as a single integrated corporate telephone directory and the ability to manage telephony support from a central location.

Third, we upgraded the central network devices (called core switches) through which all electronic data flows on the distributed data network. This upgrade laid the groundwork

for further modifications which will improve IT response times across the organisation.

Fourth, we implemented a personal videoconferencing capability for senior managers' PCs to improve time management and productivity for staff in diverse geographical locations. It also enabled decreased travel time and reduced travel costs where face-to-face communication was needed.

### New intranet to allow better internal communication

This year, we met our Corporate Plan goal of delivering a new look intranet. The result is a more contemporary 'look and feel', improved navigation and updated content to support the changing requirements of the business.

The benefits of the intranet refresh are:

- an improved platform for communication;
- improved search functionality and ability to set up personal quick links; and
- improved presentation of information for ease of access.

### New system for streamlining local area marketing planning

A new system was introduced to streamline local area marketing planning. This central database replaced the previous ad-hoc and unstructured process of recording data in a spreadsheet. As a result, hearing centres are better able to manage their marketing activities and report on their progress.

# From the city to the outback

## Remote audiology trials in the Northern Territory

We currently deliver services to 83 remote Indigenous communities from our Darwin or Alice Springs centres. In 2008/09, more than 20 audiologists spent approximately 5,500 hours 'out bush'.

Comprising one sixth of Australia, the Northern Territory has a population of 225,000. Approximately 25 per cent are Indigenous and live in remote, isolated communities scattered across the entire area. Long distances, rough roads (if any) and wet season floods make visiting these areas challenging at best and at worst, impossible.

The Northern Territory presented the challenges required to test whether audiological services could be provided at a remote site without an audiologist being physically present.

In August 2008, the first remote clinic trial was conducted from Miwatj Aboriginal Health Service (AHS) at Nhulunbuy on the Gove Peninsula in Arnhem Land. Emma Scanlan was the 'home base' audiologist, linking in from Sydney using videoconferencing to communicate with the client and 'PC Anywhere' technology to take over control of the laptop at Miwatj AHS. Emma was able to successfully conduct the hearing assessments from our head office while non-clinical staff conducted the remote clinic at Miwatj AHS. Our Indigenous clients were happy with both the process and outcome.

The initial trial demonstrated the potential of this process and generated enthusiasm both in Australian Hearing and Miwatj AHS. Emma continued to develop support materials and conduct further trials in Far North Queensland and the north west of Western Australia.

The final trials of the 12-month project were conducted from April to May 2009. Eight weekly clinics were scheduled, and Miwatj AHS was again involved, offering one of its administrative staff as the 'Indigenous community hearing assistant' while the local Division of General Practice provided its well-equipped boardroom one day per week for the two-month trial. To ensure a realistic trial, Claire Battersby, an audiologist from Warrnambool, Victoria, alternated with Emma as the 'home base' audiologist. Claire had considerable experience as an audiologist in the east Arnhem region, and was located as far as possible from Arnhem Land (without going to Tasmania).

With the support of IT at our head office, the clinic days were conducted successfully from Warrnambool, with an average of three Indigenous clients per clinic. Services provided to adults and older children



*Emma Scanlan, Indigenous Change Leader, conducts hearing assessments in the Northern Territory from her PC at National Head Office in Sydney.*

included hearing assessments (audiometry, tympanometry and video otoscopy), hearing aid fittings, follow-ups and maintenance. Impressions were taken by one of our audiologists on their quarterly visit to the area, or open fit and bone conduction devices were fitted where appropriate.

Miwatj AHS was enthusiastic about the service that was provided to the local people using this technology. The staff at Miwatj AHS enjoyed working as part of the clinic and were positive about the approach, which has enabled clients to be seen in familiar and comfortable surroundings while improving the services provided.

The trial was completed in June 2009 and has demonstrated the potential to greatly improve service delivery to Indigenous people living in the most remote areas of Australia. We will review the outcomes of the project to determine the potential for implementation into our core business in 2009/10.

# Corporate Services

## WHAT WE'RE DOING FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

This year, we continued towards our goal of ecological sustainable development. During 2008/09, we:

- maintained a working partnership with the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts to improve energy efficiencies and actively reduce carbon emissions. This was conducted under our Greenhouse Challenge Plus agreement. We were also guided by the Energy Efficiency in Government Operations Policy (EEGO);
- participated in the Australian Government's Energy Efficiencies Opportunities (EEO) program, measuring carbon emissions by using the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System (see *Graph Eight below*);
- continued our association with Greenfleet; a further 1,990 native trees will be planted on our behalf to establish a biodiverse forest. This will offset 533.2 tonnes of greenhouse gas in addition to helping improve water quality, reduce soil degradation and provide essential habitats for native species; and

- used events such as Earth Hour to encourage staff to adopt energy saving practices at both home and office, for example by switching off computers and other electronic devices when not in use.

### Recycling, resources used and carbon emissions

During 2008/09, we continued our initiative to reduce the amount of paper used for printing. We achieved a reduction of 0.8 per cent even while we experienced a growth in both permanent hearing centres and employee numbers.

During the year, we also collected 4.7 tonnes of waste paper for recycling and continued to recycle other office product waste. We recovered 210 kilograms of printer consumables from our head office and hearing centres for recycling.

We continue to comply with all legislative and reporting requirements, including general office waste management. In the coming year, we will implement environmental initiatives across the entire organisation.

The graphs below represent our carbon dioxide emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>-e) and electricity usage over the

six-year period from 2003 to 2009, in comparison to the growth in permanent hearing centres.

In 2008/09, we measured a slight increase in electricity usage of 1.8 per cent across the organisation as a result of increasing our permanent hearing centres by 10.4 per cent and increasing overall employee numbers by 7.6 per cent.

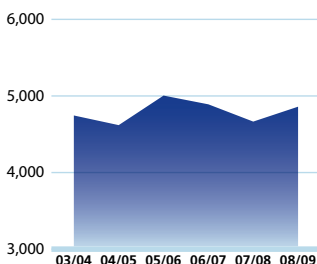
We also doubled our fleet of company vehicles. However, 78 per cent of our fleet are four-cylinder models with a low CO<sub>2</sub>-e level (as calculated by the Australian Government Green Vehicle Guide).

As a result, we increased our CO<sub>2</sub>-e by 4.2 per cent. This was a minor increase compared to the significant increase in hearing centres, employees and vehicles, and is due to the efforts made by all staff to better manage electricity usage in the workplace across the organisation.

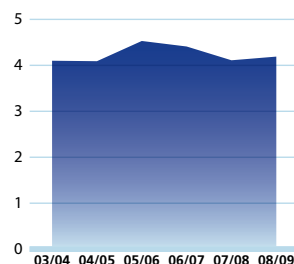
### Property growth and expansion

This year, we increased our property portfolio by improving our locations and growing the number of our hearing centres. We significantly improved our systems and procedures for renewing leases and coordinating the refurbishment, relocation and fit-out of new hearing centres. During 2008/09, we renewed contracts for the supply of furniture, acoustic booths, storage units and signage, and

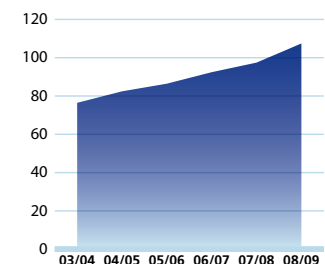
GRAPH EIGHT: EMISSIONS (TONNES CO<sub>2</sub>-E) 2003–2009



GRAPH NINE: ELECTRICITY (KWH) PURCHASED 2003–2009



GRAPH 10: GROWTH OF PERMANENT SITES 2003–2009



## CORPORATE SERVICES (CONTINUED)

we continued to challenge the building industry for new and innovative sound proofing products. Our charter to establish more ground floor, shop front hearing centres is progressing as planned and continues to deliver easier access for our clients.

We fitted out and opened 11 new hearing centres at Clayfield, Robina, Caboolture and Beenleigh in Queensland; Bankstown, Woy Woy, Campbelltown and Springwood in New South Wales; Woodville in South Australia; Sunshine and Caulfield in Victoria. We also relocated Dubbo, Noosaville and Cairns hearing centres during 2008/09. We opened a total of 34 new visiting sites during the year.

We plan to expand our network of centres in 2009/10, and many projects have already commenced. These projects include the relocation of a number of major centres and the fit-out of several new centres. A program of rationalising, upgrading and refurbishing existing hearing centres is planned in addition to the opening of further visiting sites.

### Quality Management

#### AUSTRALIAN HEARING RECEIVED QUALITY ACCREDITATION

On 3 March 2009, Australian Hearing attained formal certification to the Quality standard AS/NZS ISO 9001:2008.

We received certification due to our successful implementation of a quality management system which focused efforts towards a program of continual improvement and management review of all products and services provided to our clients.

#### WE LISTENED TO OUR CLIENTS

Throughout 2008/09, we continued to enhance our methods of recording, monitoring and acting on product failure analysis and on client and stakeholder feedback. This included undertaking mystery shopper research, analysing client complaints data, sending a monthly Hearing Aid User Questionnaire (HAUQ) to clients and conducting surveys and OHS audits. *See page 32 for the 2008/09 results of these surveys.* In addition, we introduced a pro-active internal auditing program which measured

the performance of our internal processes in providing clinical, administrative and repair services to our clients. *See Graph 11 below.*

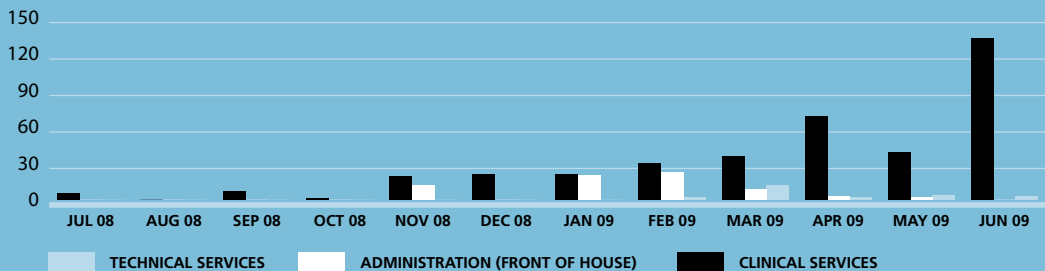
Results from these audits allowed management and staff to review and apply both corrective and preventive measures to improve on or maintain a high standard of services for our clients.

#### WE SET HIGH STANDARDS IN DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

During 2008/09, we implemented standards in records management, document control and in managing non-conforming product, assisting all employees to adhere to best business practices.

We also undertook a project to archive records located at National Head Office and secure off-site locations. A dedicated archives location has been implemented at our head office, supported by an online master register and processes to control the movement of archive records. This project will continue in the forthcoming year and will include implementing control processes for records and archived records held at all hearing centres.

GRAPH 11: NUMBER OF INTERNAL AUDITS CONDUCTED FROM JULY 2008 TO JUNE 2009



**MEAGHAN'S FAVOURITE SOUND:**  
**Waves crashing. It makes me feel relaxed and reminds me of being on holiday.**  
*Meaghan Ryan, Quality Systems Officer.*

# Marketing and Communication

## COMMUNICATING AND CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Australian Hearing's marketing and communication activities are focused on growing awareness of hearing loss and the solutions and services available to address this.

We also work closely with staff and stakeholders, to ensure that we communicate and grow understanding of our mission and vision.

### Building brand awareness

Our media strategy focused on promoting hearing health by encouraging people aged over 65 to get their hearing checked, highlighting the benefits of managing and preventing a hearing loss by wearing protection and avoiding loud noise. Highlights of the year included a:

- media conference at Parliament House as part of Hearing Awareness Week which generated positive news coverage;
- media launch of the telephone hearing service, Telscreen™ for Cantonese and Mandarin speakers that attracted widespread coverage in Chinese media. *See page six for more information on Telscreen™; and*

- launch of new research, the Listening in Spatialized Noise – Sentences (LiSN-S) Test, to medical professionals at the Libby Harricks Memorial Oration with keynote speaker, Professor Graeme Clark AC.

Australian Hearing and its research division, the National Acoustics Laboratories, continued to demonstrate market leadership in the generation and coverage of media stories related to hearing loss and associated research. Our 'share of voice', which measures items of media coverage compared with competitors, continued to lead the industry. Prominent coverage continues to be achieved in national mainstream, targeted seniors' and health and local media.

Dr John D'Arcy maintained his role as our ambassador this year. In addition to his image appearing on marketing collateral, he participated regularly in a range of events including media launches, the General Practitioners' Conference and Exhibition in Sydney, the

Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser at National Head Office and training sessions with Area Managers.

We also continued to expand our range of information and collateral for clients and members of the public. Information continued to be expanded into a range of different languages to meet the needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. *See page 34 for more information on our CALD program.* We have also expanded our profile on social networking sites, with a presence on both YouTube and Facebook.

### Strategic marketing campaigns

This year, we implemented two advertising campaigns using an integrated mix of above and below the line communication which were tailored to the needs of local hearing centres. A discount campaign offering 50 per cent off our high-end devices was promoted from October to January, and in February, we launched a brand awareness campaign based on the tagline 'Your world is worth hearing'.



## MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION (CONTINUED)

### Stakeholder relationships maintained

We worked closely with key stakeholders responsible for bringing eligible Australians into our centres. We developed a new program which focused on building relationships with GPs and practice managers. This included participation in the General Practitioners' Conference and Exhibition in Sydney and Melbourne, and other local events.

We continued to support our major industry association, the Deafness Forum of Australia, and were a platinum sponsor of Hearing Awareness Week and the Libby Harricks Oration.

### Centres engage with the local community

Our network of 106 centres continued to build relationships with local stakeholders. This year, each of our six regions was allocated a dedicated marketing Business Assistant who forged the link between national marketing programs and localised activities.

Centres were supported with nationally-produced marketing materials and resources to support their ongoing participation in a range of local events and theme weeks. Outcomes of all local activities will be tracked by a newly-developed local area marketing reporting and tracking system in the coming year.

Marketing training workshops were also conducted for many of our Area Managers, which focused on the development of local area marketing plans.

### Making hearing services more accessible

This year, we continued to grow our network of centres, conducting official openings at nine new centres. We also continued to engage the local community, government (including other Department of Human Services agencies) and other stakeholders in launches and ongoing activities at our new centres.

Senator the Hon Joe Ludwig, former Minister for Human Services, officially opened our centres at Canberra, Clayfield (with the Hon Wayne Swan MP, Treasurer and Federal Member for Lilley), Toronto and Townsville. The Minister's nominated representatives opened other centres, including Alice Springs by the Hon Warren Snowdon MP, Member for Lingjari; Bankstown by Mr Jason Clare MP, Member for Blaxland; Bunbury by Senator Louise Pratt, Senator for Western Australia; and Woodville by Mark Butler MP, Member for Port Adelaide. *See page 36 for more about our network of hearing centres.*

### Sharing information internally

Our new Managing Director's internal communications strategy focused on providing timely and accessible information to all staff. This was achieved via face-to-face and video-conferencing meetings between staff and senior management, and the introduction of a fortnightly staff e-newsletter. Results from a survey on the effectiveness of the communication showed that staff were satisfied with their access to information and the level of communication being disseminated. We also undertook an intranet refresh, based on the recommendations of a work group that was represented by all parts of the business. *See page 47 for more information on our intranet.*

### Award-winning annual report

This year, we were awarded Silver at the Australasian Reporting Awards (ARA) held in Melbourne for our 2007/08 annual report. The award was accepted by our Chairman, Mrs Kathryn Greiner AO, and was the second consecutive Silver Award received by the organisation.

*L-R Gillian Crowhurst, Corporate Communication Specialist, Arthur Delbridge AM, ARA Deputy Chairman, Kathryn Greiner AO, Chairman, Jenny Donnithorne, Executive Manager, Strategic Marketing and Communication and Kate Dorrell, Public Relations Specialist at the 2009 Australasian Reporting Awards.*

### KATE'S FAVOURITE SOUND:

**I love the sound of the Australian rain. It's serious, cathartic rain. Listening to heavy rain, I feel cleansed, free and alive.**

*Kate Dorrell, Public Relations Specialist.*

