Image credit: 2025 Australian Deaflympic Team

Deaf Australia Sports Annual Report 2026



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Image credit: Australian Team - Opening Ceremony

Message from the President Hannah Britton



I am pleased to share the President's Report for Deaf Sports Australia for the 2025 – 2026 period.

As alerted to in our 2025 Annual Report, what a year it was! Financially, we were managing over $1.6m in both income and expenditure due to increased government and other grants; the 2025 Deaflympics participation with our largest ever overseas team attending the Tokyo Games; and, the 2026 Australian Deaf Games preparation and government / sponsorship support.

Some of the highlights for this period include:

- Welcoming our new Patron, Cindy-Lu Bailey to our organisation. Cindy-Lu became one of Australia's most remarkable swimmers representing Australia at two Commonwealth games, two Pan Pacific Games and competed at 6 Deaflympics games spanning 20 years. She is also a highly respected leader within the Australian's Deaf community. Her role as Patron includes being an advisor to the Board; a representative of the organisation at ceremonial events; and, a DSA ambassador in general. She is now a keen pickleball player and assisted establishing Deaf Pickleball Australia;
- An Australian team of 143 athletes, management team and officials representing Australia at the 2025 Tokyo Deaflympics. Led by Chef de Mission, Bryn Davies, this was a huge undertaking above our normal day to day operations, and it could not have been successfully managed without the support of our Australian Team management group, the athletes, coaches and team officials, parents and families and our DSA staff and Board. Read more about the Games details in our Annual Report;
- A 10 year recognition of Deaf Sports Australia as a National Sport Organisation for Disability (Deaf) by the Australian Sports Commission, which guarantees us support until 2036;
- Ongoing Australian Sports Commission PlayWell grant for the next 2 years;
- Ongoing development of our REVSport portal allowing our members to create a membership database, establish their own communications, website and events portals;
- Our continued expansion of our Active Deaf Kids programs with over 900 school aged deaf and hard of hearing students participating in our programs across Australia;

Message from the President (cont.)

- Preparation of our 2026 Australian Deaf Games to be held on the Sunshine Coast (July) and the appointment of 3 Games Ambassadors - Jamie Howell , Caine Batten and Tegan George. We are pleased to note a record level sponsorship support including our Principal Games Sponsor, Deaf Connect and a late entry with Uber as our Rideshare partner. More details further in the Annual Report. I would like to acknowledge Garry West-Bail who will be retiring from his role as Games Project Manager after the 2026 Games. Garry started with us in 2013 as General Manager and since 2019 has focused on facilitating wonderful Games experiences. His passion, experience and support has been nothing short of extraordinary – thanks Garry;
- Welcoming Sam Cartledge to our Board with a focus on Communications and Media direction;
- Welcoming a delegation from Wales Deaf Sport and Wales Disability Sport to meet with our DSA team for a week in September 2025 and learn how our organisation works and the connections with have in sport and community. A DSA delegation would visit Wales in October 2026 as part of the exchange program funded by a Trust program in Wales;



Image credit: Cindy-Lu Bailey - DSA Patron with Hannah Britton, DSA President

Message from the President Hannah Britton

These highlights and many other activities and efforts help ensure the long-term strength, expansion and value of our organisation supporting participation opportunities in all sports.

I also acknowledge the support from the Australian Sports Commission, our national and state government partners, sponsors and other partners for their valued contribution throughout the year. Your support enables us to provide opportunities for our members and continue improving our programs. A big thank you to our members and our volunteers, whose ongoing support is essential to everything we do.

As always, huge thanks to my colleagues on the Board, who have shown great passion and commitment to helping drive DSA towards a stronger base, consolidation and improved visibility; Bryn Davies as Chef de Mission of our 2025 Australian Deaflympics Team; Kathryn Armfield as Chair of our 2026 Australian Deaf Games Organising Committee; and, to our DSA staff team, led bv our General Manager, Phil Harper, who continues to manage and guide the organisation and ensure that our sport is safe, enjoyable and deaf-led.

2026 – 2027 will be a year of consolidation and opportunity to work more closely with our members and partners to help grow their membership and sport opportunities. We look forward to new and exciting developments and seeing you at our many community events and activities.

Hannah Britton
President



Image credit: DSA Board (Teneale Houghton, Melinda Vernon, Stuart Corstorphon, Hannah Britton, Catherine Dunn (on TV screen), Julie Davies, Sam Cartledge and Phil Harper (General Manager)

A message from the Chair of the Australian Sports Commission – Kate Jenkins AO (cont.)



The Australian Sports Commission (ASC) continues to drive Australian sport forward, helping it grow and deliver lasting benefits for communities across the nation.

From grassroots participation and community sport to high performance, we work alongside the sector to create positive environments where everyone can succeed.

We are committed to ensuring sport is safe, fair, inclusive and accessible, with every athlete supported to realise their full potential.

As we look ahead, we remain focused on ensuring Australians can access quality sporting experiences and that our sporting system empowers people to develop, achieve and perform at their best, both on and off the field.

This includes investing in athletes, coaches, officials and organisations through our grant programs, and helping young Australians experience sport for the first time through initiatives like our Sporting Schools program.

Through the Play Well and Win Well national sport strategies, we continue to build a stronger, more connected sporting system that expands opportunities for participation while supporting athletes to deliver elite performances in exceptional environments.

Our performances at the Milano Cortina Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games and Glasgow Commonwealth Games reflected the dedication of athletes, coaches, support staff and sporting organisations across the country, and demonstrated our collective commitment to win well.

Looking to the future, those same values will guide Australian sport through Los Angeles 2028, the French Alps 2030, the Amdavad Commonwealth Games and Brisbane 2032.

Supported by the Australian Government's recent $513 million investment in sport, we are helping athletes pursue success at the highest level while strengthening the systems, people and infrastructure that will support Australian sport for years to come.

This includes continued investment in the Para Uplift, creating greater opportunities and support for Para athletes across the country.

The AIS Podium Project is now underway, transforming the AIS campus through its most significant redevelopment since opening more than four decades ago. Backed by a $249.7 million Australian Government investment, the project will deliver contemporary facilities and support services that strengthen the AIS as Australia's home of high performance sport. This includes a new world-class Testing and Training Centre, a 24/7 Indoor Sports Dome and Australia's most accessible athlete accommodation.

I am confident that our collective commitment to Australian sport will continue to strengthen communities, inspire achievement and create positive outcomes for generations to come.

Kate Jenkins AO
Chair of the Australian Sports Commission



Image credit: Mini Games Day on Sunshine Coast with DSRQ and Education QLD

Building & strengthening opportunities for all

Our Values

- Integrity - we act honestly, morally and ethically
- Excellence - we strive to be outstanding
- Passion - we are committed to being the best we can be
- Equality - we offer status, rightsand opportunities
- Nurturing - we strive to care for an encourage growth and development

Our Objectives

- We will foster leadership and mentoring
- We will consult, listen and be transparent
- We will develop a governance framework that will support the business
- We will have a risk analysis procedure
- We will advocate, educate and inform sports on the needs and wants of the deaf and hard of hearing communities
- We will host, conduct, manage and oversee National competitions and participate in International competitions

Our Outcomes

- We will oversee commitment, relationship building
- We will have a sustainable and effective management structure overseen by a strategic-driven Board
- We will create agreed outcomes
- We will have concise and up to date policies that will drive the business mode
- We will develop encompassing pathways

Our Priorities

1
2
3

Our Stakeholders

Our Services

Our Resources

Our Communication

General Manager's Report – Phil Harper



Strategic Highlights and Achievements

The 2025–2026 reporting period has been one of significant progress for Deaf Sports Australia (DSA), with key achievements across national recognition, athlete representation, sport development, advocacy, partnerships and organisational growth. As you will note, an extraordinary year that included two significant events; the 2025 Deaflympics participation and 2026 Australian Deaf Games preparation, with both having to be managed on top of our normal day to day operations.

A major milestone was the confirmation of DSA's ongoing National Sporting Organisation for the Deaf (NSOD) recognition for a further 10 years from 2026, following completion of the Australian Sports Commission's organisation capability assessment. DSA also completed its first full year Play Well grant, strengthening our capacity to deliver member support initiatives and inclusive sporting opportunities and programs.

Australian Deaflympics Team – Tokyo 2025

DSA supported Australia's participation at the Summer Deaflympics in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2025. The Australian delegation comprised 143 (98 athletes) members across eight sports – our biggest team sent overseas – see cover page for Team photo.

Key engagement activities included:

- Recruitment of Team Management group;
- Attendance by Bryn Davies as our Chef de Mission with team preparation and information meetings in Japan;
- Sponsorship from Deaf Connect and Word of Mouth Technology;
- Welcome ceremony at the Australian Embassy in Tokyo
- Support from National Sport Organisations to some of our sport teams – "shout out" to Tennis Australia;
- Uniform support from iAthletic and Travel / accommodation support from SportsLink Travel;
- NSW government grant to support NSW team members as well as support from the ACT government for the 3 ACT team members;
- Attendance at the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD) Congress (post-Games);

General Manager's Report (cont.)

These activities assisted supporting and strengthening our ability to organise such a large team, with our management team led by Bryn Davies all volunteering their time, with countless hours spent on communications, preparation, logistics, fundraising, team planning and management and many other tasks. We could not have carried this off without their passion, commitment and wish to ensure our Australian team enjoyed a positive experience at a peak international Deaf Sport event – the summer Deaflympics. For many of the team, it was their first international sport competition and a unique opportunity to showcase our young and talented athletes.

We were proud to continue our Australian participation in the Deaflympics which started back in 1965, enhancing our international reputation and relationships within the global Deaf sport community. The lack of federal government support for the team despite many advocacy and communication efforts, and the fact they have contributed with small grants to past Australian teams, unfortunately for our 2025 team – no funding support. We also had our challenges with financial management of athlete costs of such a large team, and we are still working through final acquittal completion which has taken longer than anticipated. See further Australian Team and Games details and photos in this Annual Report.



Image credit: 2025 ADT at the Australian Embassy welcome event

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Australian Deaf Games 2026

Preparations for the Australian Deaf Games 2026 on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland, continued throughout the reporting period with a 'One year to Go' event held in July 2025 to begin the countdown clock.



Image credit: ADG 'One Year to Go' event with Deaf Connect team - major sponsor; Kate Armfield, GOC Chair and Phil Harper (GM)



Image credit: Garry West-Bail ADG Project Manager

Key developments included:

- Appointment of three Games ambassadors: Jamie Howell, Caine Batten and Tegan Blanch.
- Trialling Pickleball, Handball and AFL 9 as new sports.
- DSA National Deaf Sport Organisation Members workshop on Games Planning
- Development of a partnership with Education Queensland creating a "Mini Games' program in May 2026 supported by Deaf Sports Recreation QLD engaging more than 60 deaf and hard of hearing students; a 'Games Mascot' drawing competition for primary school students; and, educational resources, including awareness videos and Mythbusters (deaf awareness) content now available on our website - https://deafsports.org.au/deaf-awareness-information/
- Record number of sponsors and support organisations
- Wonderful preparation and planning work by our Games Organising Committee led by Kate Armfield

Planning also commenced for the 2030 Australian Deaf Games, with the host city bidding process underway and to be announced at the 2026 Games Closing Ceremony.



Image credit: DSRQ Mini Games school event

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Oceania Deaf Games Development

DSA continued working closely with Deaf Sports New Zealand towards an ambitious 2028 Oceania Deaf Games.

The 2028 Oceania Deaf Games was to bring our Pacific Island Deaf communities together with our Australian and New Zealand sport teams to foster sport development and participation, which for many Pacific countries, is not funded or supported by their national governments. DSA took on responsibility to extend our global regional support, initially starting with inviting our Pacific neighbours to our Australian Deaf Games, for the first time back in 2012. Our aim with the partnership with Deaf Sports New Zealand was to expand this with Oceania Games location alternating between our two countries – 2028 in New Zealand and 2032 in Australia.

Participation in the Oceania National Olympic Organisation Conference in Auckland in May 2026 provided opportunities to engage with regional sporting organisations and representatives from Solomon Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Cook Islands, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, alongside International Olympic Committee representatives.

The Oceania Paralympic Committee indicated that Deaf Sports would be included among its affiliated organisations. The visit, funded through a Sport Inclusion Australia grant, supported relationship-building and regional collaboration in preparation for the planned 2028 Oceania Deaf Games.



Image credit: Oceania IOC Conference - IPC sub-committee meeting

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Membership Support and Sport Development

Our National Participation Manager, Tom Dent, has played a huge role in supporting our DSA membership with learning and adopting our REVSport portal to improve member self-management and autonomy through a centralised platform to support member organisations with:

- Website management.
- Communications.
- Event creation, registration and planning.
- Membership management.
- Database administration.

This is still ongoing work and a significant change to how our members managed their organisations. Not only is it a national and state government funding requirement to provide participation data and details, but it also allows members to working towards improving their governance and management responsibilities.

The portal remains an important tool in strengthening the administrative capacity and digital capabilities of DSA's member organisations.

DSA welcomed two new national Deaf Sport Organisation members.
Exciting to see how sport interest and participation grows and changes over time:

- Deaf Australia Football (AFL).
- Deaf Pickleball Australia.



Image credit: RevSport Training - Tom Dent, National Participation Manager

General Manager's Report (cont.)

DSA also continued collaboration with our National Sport Organisation colleagues. Some developments include:

- Cricket Australia (CA) – ongoing discussions regarding deaf cricket programs and alignment with Cricket Australia. It has been a challenging period with the International Cricket Council deciding on setting up a multi-disability cricket program which CA supported. This development is not supported by DSA or the International and Australian Deaf cricket communities.
- CA National Cricket Inclusion Championships (NCIC). DSA continued dialogue and CA survey support to ascertain the future of the NCIC program and planning for the 2027 competition.
- AFL – through our close partnership in developing AFL participation among deaf and hard of hearing Australians, they offered to stage AFL Deaf 9s exhibition games in Melbourne in October 2026, creating further opportunities to promote participation and visibility. Our new national member, Deaf Australia Football are helping lead the way and we are hoping this would lead to an annual AFL Deaf carnival in the near future.
- Athletics Australia (AA) – liaison with AA's Disability Advisory Group and project work on provision of start light systems at major venues across Australia which should start emerging in late 2026.

As part of DSA's governance responsibilities to remind our members of their commitment and role in ensuring that sport is a safe and fun experience for all, we produced an updated version of our 'Code of Conduct' policy and also created an Auslan translated version - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZajPp-MP_oU

Video production, Auslan translation work and related content development has grown, with consideration given to better accessibility, privacy requirements and alignment with DSA's values.

Our 2025 AGM and member workshops held over a weekend in February 2026, provided opportunities for member engagement, governance development and information-sharing. REVSport and governance training were key workshops facilitated by our DSA team.

General Manager's Report (cont.)



Image credit: 2025 Deaf Sports Australia Annual General Meeting - February 2026

Advocacy, Inclusion and Communication

DSA continued advocating for improved access to high-performance sport funding and support for Deaf athletes, particularly through the WinWell program and funding for international competition participation.

The 'Beyond the Game' video project was launched during National Week of Deaf People in September 2025, supported by a significant Deaf Connect grant. The project features nine videos showcasing the sporting experiences of young Deaf and hard of hearing people. Raquel Fasano was appointed as Project Worker, and the videos are now on our website. The project is already being used in Deaf Studies programs in schools.

Website link - https://deafsports.org.au/beyond-the-game/

Our Deaf Sports Awareness Training program (DSAT) has grown exponentially with increasing interest from the sport industry to be more inclusive and accessible. The 'Runway to 2032 Olympics' movement has also sparked greater interest in sport and sport facilities being more accessible for all and has prompted our participation in an advisory role in their planning and considerations.

DSA also continued its community engagement through attendance at Deaf Festivals in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and other relevant sport community events.

DSA continues to develop a presence in social media as well as our website, in particular enhancing access by producing more Auslan-translated videos. Both our DSA and 2026 Australian Deaf Games websites continue to improve on user experience to navigate the information more easily.

Here's a comparison of the number of visitors, both unique and total, on both our websites and Facebook. Note the huge increase with 2026 Australian Deaf Games Facebook visitors, thanks to a wonderful effort by the Communications team boosting attention and interest in the Games.

General Manager's Report (cont.)



Image credit: DSAT Training - National Deaf Bowls Championships - Lake Macquarie NSW



Image credit: DSAT Training, Melbourne Oct 25



Image credit: WADRA DSAT - WA



Image credit: DSRQ DSAT - QLD

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Here's a comparison of the number of visitors, both unique and total, on both our websites and Facebook. Note the huge increase with 2026 Australian Deaf Games Facebook visitors, thanks to a wonderful effort by the Communications team boosting attention and interest in the Games.

Deaf Sports Australia website	Unique visits	Total visits
2024 - 2025	47,743	98,586
2025 - 2026	66,428	85,942
Australian Deaf Games website		
2024 - 2025	14,773	21,316
2025 - 2026	16,013	31,181
Deaf Sports Australia Facebook visits		
2024 - 2025	579,870	N/A
2025 - 2026	762,301	N/A
2026 Australian Deaf Games Facebook visits		
2024 - 2025	105,444	N/A
2025 - 2026	867,510	N/A



Image credit: NSW Deaf Sports Club meeting

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Partnerships, Governance and Integrity

DSA continued strengthening partnerships with the Australian Sport Commission (ASC) and Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) and other stakeholders to promote safe, fair and inclusive sport.

Regular meetings continued with the ASC team manage the PlayWell grant, Participation Leaders Network (where Tom Dent represented DSA), disability sport future planning and also access to their Coaching Essentials program (planned for Sydney and Brisbane in second half of 2026).

Key activities in collaboration with SIA have included:

- Production of two new accessible Integrity in Sport videos in partnership with Sport Integrity Australia to show sport integrity means and the importance of supporting each other to make sport participation safe
- Delivery of an ongoing sport governance workshop for members in Melbourne in February 2026.
- Promotion of integrity policies, case studies and educational resources in accessible formats.
- Progress in making educational materials available in Auslan through the Play by the Rules website.

These initiatives support member organisations to build their understanding of sport integrity responsibilities and foster safer, fairer and more inclusive sporting environments.

Relevant resources include:

- Sport Integrity Australia: Integrity in Sport – Auslan presentation
- Play by the Rules: Video resource



Image credit: SIA Integrity in Sport Education series - Auslan translated

General Manager's Report (cont.)

DSA hosted a Welsh delegation from Deaf Sport Wales and Disability Sport Wales from 13–17 October 2025. Through a grant from Taith Wales, they were keen to find a deaf sport organisation model to borrow to improve deaf sports in Wales.

They chose us as being the best fit. We provided them with an opportunity to meet with our Board, staff, membership and partner organisations to demonstrate the relationship, evolution and operation of our organisation. The program includes a visit from a DSA team to Wales scheduled for September 2026.



Image credit: Wales Delegation visit to DSA



Image credit: WADRA Committee with Susan Bates

Member organisation developments

Western Australia Deaf Recreation Association (WADRA) secured a new three-year funding grant from Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport (CITS) and became a full member of DSA in January 2026. WADRA is now a full member of DSA and we welcome them aboard with their new committee led by Jen Moloney-Hyde.

In October 2025, DSA relocated its Melbourne office to East Melbourne, co-locating with Deaf Connect to strengthen collaboration and organisational connections.

The DSA AGM and member workshops in February 2026, providing opportunities for member engagement, governance development and information-sharing.

General Manager's Report (cont.)

National and International Championships

Deaf Bowls Australia held their National Championships in Lake Macquarie, NSW in September 2025 at Club Charleston. Over 50 competitors including bowlers from New Zealand attended. Soon after, some participated in the Australian Open championships which featured a 'Deaf competition' category for the first time. Lake Macquarie Council kindly provided a grant to assist this event.



Image credit: National Deaf Bowls Championships. 2025 NSW

Deaf Golf Australia held their National Championships in Perth, WA in November 2025 at Joondalup resort with a good number of deaf golfers attending and also supporting a golf clinic for young deaf / hard of hearing children. The Department of Creative Industries, Tourism and Sport provided a grant as part of their 'Events funding program,' which helped keep the player costs to a minimum.

DSA, through Phil Harper as Australian Delegate attended the International Committee for Sports of the Deaf (ICSD) Congress, held in Tokyo after the Deaflympics. This was an opportunity to network, review and discuss new policies and rules, discuss how Deaf sport events can be improved and planning for future Deaflympics, regional championships and World championships.

The 2027 World Deaf Bowls Championships will be held in Lake Macquarie, New South Wales, providing important opportunities to showcase deaf sport in Australia. There are many world championships events happening in 2027 and likely that we will see Australian teams participating in Basketball (Italy), Swimming (Poland), Tennis (Germany) and Athletics (Brazil).

Down the track we have the 2028 Asia Pacific Deaf Games in Malaysia and 2029 Deaflympics in Greece.

General Manager's Report (cont.)



Image credit: ICSD Congress - Asia Pacific repressntatives

DSA Staff and State Development

Our staff as always commit to doing the best they can with the limited time and resources they have available to them. Thanks to State government funding from Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales and Western Australia, we are able to provide a range of services and programs including our growing 'Active Deaf Kids' program in schools supported by partnerships with schools, Deaf Sport Club leaders, State Sport Organisations and volunteers.



Image credit: DSA Staff Training Day

In Victoria, Deaf Sports Recreation Victoria's Deaf Hub project continues to evolve and develop local community engagement. Staff changes have had an effect but we are committed to completing our targets by the time funding is completed in June 30 2027.

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Multi-Sport Days and Sport Competition Days continue to be popular and growing for both primary and secondary aged deaf and hard of hearing students in Victoria, Queensland and in Western Australia. NSW will initiate their first multi-sport day in 2027. Hearing Loop continues to sponsor our national Active Deaf Kids allowing us to provide these programs for free across Australia.

Attendance numbers for deaf and hard of hearing students attending the school based programs continue to rise:

Victoria	Queensland	Western Australia
478	196	75



Image credit: DSRV Sports Day - Aug 25



Image credit: DSRQ Athletics Day 2025



Image credit: DSRQ Regional community meeting - Toowoomba



Image credit: DSRQ Athletics Day with Start Lights- August 2025

Deaf Sport Awareness Training workshops continue to be popular across Australia as an effective tool for mainstream sport organisations, clubs and staff to become more aware and understanding of how to be more inclusive and accessible.

Supporting our national and state Deaf Sport clubs is a critical part of our work, not only assisting them with their sport programs but also with REVSport portal and governance training. A key development was assisting Western Australia Deaf Recreation Association (WADRA) with dissolving their incorporation to become a full member of DSA in January 2026.

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Thanks for a Queensland Government Active Queensland Super Fund grant, DSRQ gained funding to support a part time high performance based program to both assist deaf and hard of hearing Queensland athletes with pathway development but also work more effectively with State Sport Organisations to better liaise and support our athletes in their participation and development. This included supporting the Queensland team with preparation for the 2026 Australian Deaf Games and holding a weekend development camp.

The preparation for the 2026 Australian Deaf Games State and Territory teams has given our staff more work than they would normally manage. Supporting the Deaf Sport clubs and individuals with Games participation, team uniform (gratefully sponsored by Deaf Connect) and other tasks. Well done team on managing this and supporting the teams development in preparation for an exciting Games experience.

Staff changes over the last year included:

- Lei Minici appointed as State Development Officer for NSWDS in September 2025.
- Raquel Fasano appointed as State Development Officer for DSRV in October 2025 (resigned May 2026).
- Lucy Christodoulou appointed as DSRV Sport Development Officer, commencing 24 June 2026.



Image credit: DSRQ club governance and RevSport training



Image credit: Susan Bates at WADRA AGM - Jan 26

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Priorities Moving Forward

DSA, for the next period, will continue focusing on:

- Delivering the Australian Deaf Games 2026 and progressing planning for 2030 Games (Western Australia).
- Continue our strong interface with oiur funding partners at Australian Sports Commission and State Governments
- Expanding to South Australia, ACT, Tasmania and Northern Territory and seeking grant funding
- Growing national Deaf Sport Organisation membership through our REVSport portal and strengthening state-based development.
- Expanding accessible education, integrity and awareness resources.
- Supporting Deaf athletes and advocating for equitable access to high-performance funding.
- Building partnerships with government, sporting organisations and community stakeholders.
- Advancing preparations for the 2028 Oceania Deaf Games.
- Improving communications and social media and website capabilities
- Strengthening organisational capacity, governance and member services.

The 2025-26 period, despite the unique challenges of managing an international team attending the Deaflympics and preparation for the 2026 Australian Deaf Games, continued to provide positive progress in DSA's national and international recognition, sport development and advocacy. DSA remains committed to creating, advocating for and supporting more accessible, inclusive and long term sporting opportunities for our Deaf and hard of hearing Australians.

General Manager's Report (cont.)

Acknowledgements

As always, thank you to our wonderful DSA team including:

- SDO staff - Sam Greatorex, Raquel Fasano and more recently, Lucy Christopoulou in Victoria; Nikolas Schlie in Queensland, Susan Bates in WA; and Lei Minici in NSW;
- Finance Administrator, Rosalie Kassulke who had an extraordinarily busy and challenging year that included the 2025 Australian Deaflympic Team and forthcoming 2026 Australian Deaf Games finances to manage on top of her normal workload;
- Garry West-Bail for his impeccable and passionate work with the 2026 Australian Deaf Games project management and time with DSA over the last 13 years (he will retired from his role in August); and;
- Lisette Davies for her excellence with our media and communication tasks;

Funding support from our Federal and State Government supporters is what keeps DSA alive and thriving and we are thrilled that they see great merit in our work to continue funding us. The role played by the Australian Sport Commission, Sport Integrity Australia, our friends at the Australian Sporting Alliance for People with Disabilities, and National and State Sport Organisation colleagues and other networks in the Australian sport industry is critical and greatly assists us to work towards achieving our goals and strategic targets.

All of our sponsors and project grant supporters are an important key to how we are able to achieve our objectives and expand our services – thank you. Special thanks to Deaf Connect for their support in multiple programs including the 2026 Australian Deaf Games (both as Principle Games sponsor but also sponsoring our State Deaf teams), Hearing Loop, Change our Game (Victoria) and Hearing Loop.

Lastly, this being the final Annual Report I will co-ordinate as I make way to move on later this year while the Board organises to recruit a new Chief Executive Officer, I would like to sincerely thank all the DSA Directors led by our current President, Hannah Britton and those Board Directors and staff have worked with since 2019 for putting trust in me to carry out the General Manager duties. I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience and hope my input has added consolidation and growth to the organisation and membership and opening doors allowing expanded ideas and creative directions to flourish as well as grow sport enjoyment, participation and pathways among our community.

It will be exciting to watch from the 'other side of the fence' where I can return to playing more active sports and see the continued development under a new CEO management team.

Phil Harper
General Manager
October 2026



Image credit: DSA staff members - 2026: Lei Minici, Lisette Davies, Rosalie Kassulke, Nikolas Schlie, Tom Dent, Susan Bates, Raquel Fasano, Phil Harper, Garry West-Bail



Achieving Sunshine Moments Together

Australian Deaf Games 2026

Sunshine Coast Queensland

WWW.AUSTDEAFGAMES.ORG.AU

JULY 4 - JULY 11, 2026



Sunshine Coast Council

Tourism & Events Queensland

Deaf Sports Australia

deaf connect

Caloundra RSL

104.9 Sunshine FM

Sunshine Coast Airport

convo

CID Foundation

National Relay Service

AI MEDIA

BioRevive CLEAN EARS DRY EARS ITCHY EARS

SPORTSLINK TRAVEL

30 years word of mouth

Print Ezy

Board, Staff and Members

State Members

Deaf Sports Recreation Queensland

Deaf Sports Recreation South Australia

Deaf Sports Recreation Victoria

Western Australian Deaf Recreation Association

Deaf Advocacy, Sport and Recreation ACT

NSW Deaf Sport Committee

National Members

Deaf Athletics Australia

Deaf Australia Football (AFL)

Deaf Basketball Australia

Deaf Bowls Australia

Deaf Cricket Australia

Deaf Darts Australia

Deaf Eight Ball Australia

Deaf Golf Australia

Deaf Netball Australia

Deaf Aquatics Australia

Deaf Tennis Australia

Deaf Volleyball Australia

Deaf Rugby Australia

Deaf Futsal Australia

Deaf Touch Football Australia

Deaf Pickleball Australia

National Associate Members

Deaf Football Australia

Deaf Sports Australia Board members

Hannah Britton - President
Catherine Dunn - Vice President & Stakeholder Engagement
Teneale Houghton - Director, Legal and Governance
Julie Davies - Director, Sport Communications & Relations
Stuart Corstorphan - Director, Finance
Melinda Vernon - Director, Stakeholder Engagement
Sam Cartledge – Director, Communications and Marketing

Staff Members:

Phil Harper – General Manager

Garry West-Bail
Australian Deaf Games Projects Manager

Lisette Davies
Communications Liaison and Multimedia Officer

Rosalie Kassulke
Finance Administrator

Nikolas Schlie
Sport Development & Pathways Co-ordinator,
Deaf Sport & Recreation Queensland

Shari Heffernan
Sport Development Officer, NSW Deaf Sport
(resigned June 2025)

Lei Minici
Sport Development Officer, NSW Deaf Sport
(from September 2025)

Susan Bates
Sport and Community Officer, WADRA
(started April 2025)

Tom Dent
Sport & Community Development Officer,
Deaf Sport & Recreation Victoria (resigned March 2025)

Sam Greatorex
Sport & Community Development Officer,
Deaf Sport & Recreation Victoria (resigned July 2025)

Raquel Fasano
Sport & Community Development Officer, Deaf Sport &
Recreation Victoria (started August 2025 – resigned April
2026)

Tom Dent
National Participation Manager (started March 2025)

Project staff:

Raquel Fasano
Video Project Officer (resigned September 2025)

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025

The 25th Summer Deaflympics was held mostly in Tokyo, Japan during the period 15th to 26th November 2025. Fukushima was a satellite location for one sport, football for the Deaflympics.

Bryn Davies was appointed Chef de Mission and had a huge task of co-ordinating the preparation and facilitation of the Australian Team for the Japan Deaflympics. This was a voluntary role and a significant amount of time was committed to working with the DSA team and developing his management team and communicating and supporting our National Deaf sport Organisations to help formalise and lock in our team for the Games.

Fundraising events were organised and communications and requests were made to both Federal and State governments as well as the Australian Sports Commission (ASC). Unfortunately, the Federal government due to their high performance support policy declined to assist, despite having helped us with small grants at past Deaflympics. Both the NSW, WA and ACT governments assisted with grants for team representatives from their State / Territory. Others were able to use the ASC grant programs for 12 – 18 years olds.

The Australian Embassy in Tokyo kindly offered to host the Australian Deaflympic Team on Friday 14th November providing bus transport for the team to and from the event. Ambassador Hayhurst in attendance and welcomed us to Japan. Our Chef de Mission, Bryn Davies had the pleasure of announcing the Team's Opening ceremony flag-bearers and team captains.

- Glen Flindell – Tennis
- Jamie Howell – Athletics
- Joshua Chapman – Football (Fukushima)

The Embassy staff were brilliant with their support to our Management team prior to and during the games with Ambassador Hayhurst attending the Men's football game in Fukushima.



Image credit: Bryn Davies (Chef de Mission), Glen Flindell, Jamie Howell and Ambassador Hayhurst.



Image credit: Flag Bearer – Fukushima: Joshua Chapman with Bryn Davies (Chef de Mission)

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)

A total of 9 sports (2 team sports), our athletes participated in:

Athletics, Basketball, Beach Volleyball, Football, Golf, Swimming, Tennis, Table Tennis, Ten Pin and Bowling

Management Team included:

Chef de Mission - Bryn Davies								
Assistant Chef de Mission Kath Regan		**Team Interpreters** Maree Madden & Mark Quinn		**Team Medico** Julie Pham		**Team Support** Phil Harper		
Athletics Joanne Lambert	**Basketball** Shirley Liu Wesley Brockett	**Beach Volleyball** Monique Beckwith	**Football** Brian Seymour	**Golf** Therese Pierce	**Swimming** CindyLu Bailey	**Table Tennis** Nikolas Schile	**Tennis** Jay Schuback	**Tenpin Bowling** NA
9 Athletes **1 Official**	**23 Athletes** **14 Officials**	**4 Athletes** **1 Official**	**37 Athletes** **9 Officials**	**6 Athletes** **3 Officials**	**12 Athletes** **3 Officials**	**1 Athlete** **1 Official**	**5 Athletes** **4 Official**	**1 Athlete**



Image credit: 2025 ADT Bryn Davies, Chef de Mission and Team Manager's Group

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)



Image credit: ADT Michael Louey - Table tennis

Highlights

82% of the team were experiencing their first Deaflympics. One team member, Michael Louey represented Australia at his 5th Deaflympics in Table Tennis. 37% of team members were female. Our oldest member was 60 and youngest was 14 years old. Victoria and NSW had the most number of team representatives.

At each Deaflympic Games, our Australian Deaflympics Team creates a motto to live by. Our 2026 Team motto was announced at Australian Embassy function – GOLD VIBES. GOLD VIBES was about holding each other to a GOLD standard in terms of respect, fair play and representing Australia at the Deaflympics – not necessarily about getting a gold medal.

The Tokyo Games experience, was very successful overall with the Games Organisers despite some hiccups, doing a great job with many events spread across Tokyo metropolitan. Transport was always going to be a challenge. Unfortunately, Football competition was held in Fukushima, 3-4 hours north of Tokyo, isolating the football teams from being immersed in the Games in Tokyo. It was also a logistics challenge for our ADT management team with communications and visiting to support and participate in watching our teams competing.

Our 2025 team of 98 athletes (total 140) was the largest ever going to an overseas Deaflympics, surpassing the previous record of 79 that went to the World Games for the Deaf in 1989 in Christchurch, New Zealand.



Image credit: Australian Athletics Team



Image credit: Australian Tennis Team

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)



Image credit: Australian Women's Football Team



Image credit: Australian Women's Basketball Team



Image credit: Australian Beach Volleyball Team



Image credit: Australian Men's Basketball Team



Image credit: Australian Swim Team

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)

The team was able to achieve 3 medals – all from one athlete, Imogen Nolan – in swimming. Imogen is now a Deaflympic champion in the women's 50m breastroke, as well as a silver medallist in the 100m and 200m breaststroke events.





Image credit: Imogen Nolan - Gold & Solver medallist

This medal haul broke the drought of medals the Australian Deaflympic Team experienced, with the last medal being won in 2013 at the Sofia Deaflympics. Dylan Logan finished 4th in 100m freestyle, while Nicholas Layton was outstanding finishing 4th place in 5 swimming races – so close but a wonderful all-round swimming achievement. Our women's Football team came 4th and many achieved their personal best times at the Tokyo Games competitions.

With other countries having government or sport support programs for their deaf athletes who were able to achieve an increasing high level of performance and medal outcomes, it became more obvious that we need similar high performance support measures here in Australia that already exist for Australia Paralympic and Olympic athletes. A task that DSA Board is keen to escalate in our advocacy efforts.

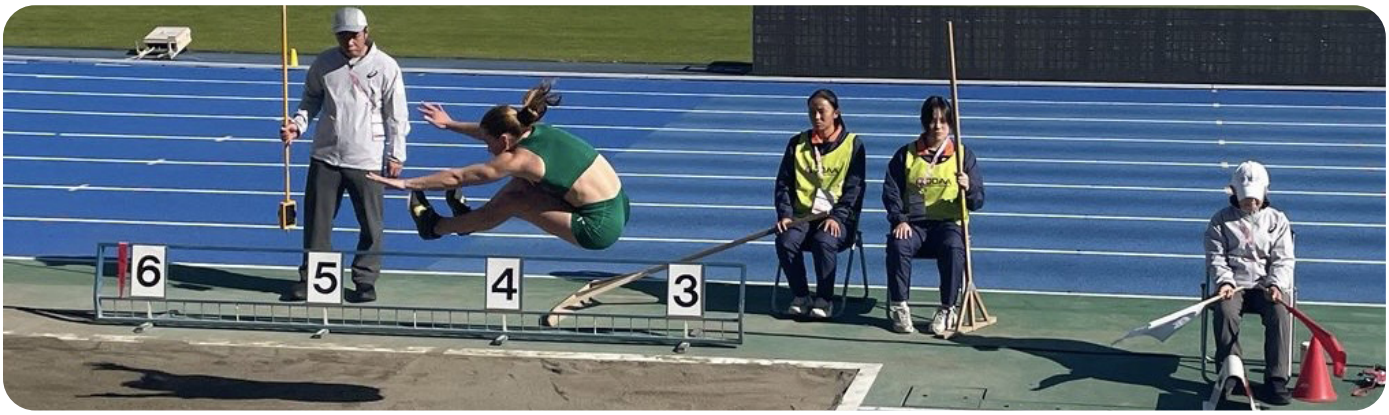


Image credit: Jamie Howell – Long Jump 5th place

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)

Athletics

Jamie Howell – Long Jump 5th place

Basketball

Men's – 8th place

Women's – 8th place

Football

Women – 4th place

Golf

Women's Individual – Christine Shin – 9th place

Mixed Team – 9th place

Tennis

Glen Flindell – Singles Quarter finals

Glen Flindell / John Lui – Doubles Quarter finals

Swimming

Imogen Nolan

Gold – 50 breastroke; Silver – 100 & 200 breastroke

Dylan Logan

Men's 100 freestyle – 4th place

Nicholas Layton

50 Fly - 4th place

Men's 4x100 Free- 4th place

100 Free - 4th place

50 Free - 4th place

100 Fly - 4th place

Men's 4x100 Medley - 6th place

We could not had sent an Australian Team to Japan without assistance from our wonderful sponsors:

Sponsorship and support

Gold Sponsor and Media partner

Bronze sponsor

Travel and Accommodation partner

Team apparel partner



Image credit: Brent Phillips (Deaf Connect) receiving Certificate of Appreciation from Hannah Britton, Imogen Nolan and Bryn Davies

25th Summer Deaflympics - Tokyo Japan. November 2025 (cont.)

In summary, with many Deaf and hard of hearing Australians and team members families attending the 2025 Deaflympics to watch the Games and our team competing, it was a very satisfying experience, especially those competing for the first time. Japan was a great host and eager to please and Tokyo as a sporting and holiday destination, excelled.

We had our challenges with financial management of athlete costs of such a large team and how the Japanese Organising committee required payments up front much earlier than anticipated with some of our teams not yet completing selection. DSA agreed to commit to significant payments up front while still collecting funds from the team members and sourcing funds through grants and fundraising, etc. We are still working through final acquittal completion which has taken longer than anticipated.

The DSA Board wish to express sincere thanks to Bryn Davies, Chef de Mission for his enormous efforts and voluntary time committing to successfully managing our second largest team ever. Many thanks also Kate as Assistant Chef de Mission, Mark and Maree as the team interpreters and Julie as our medical staff. Special thanks to Rosalie Kassulke, our Finance Administrator who worked with Bryn and Phil Harper (General Manager) on navigating the challenging financial tasks required. Well done to all our Team athletes, team managers and officials on being part of this special journey and experience.



Image credit: Aussie team members and Supporters at Swim meet



Image credit: Toby Pattullo and Caine Batten
Australian Marathon team

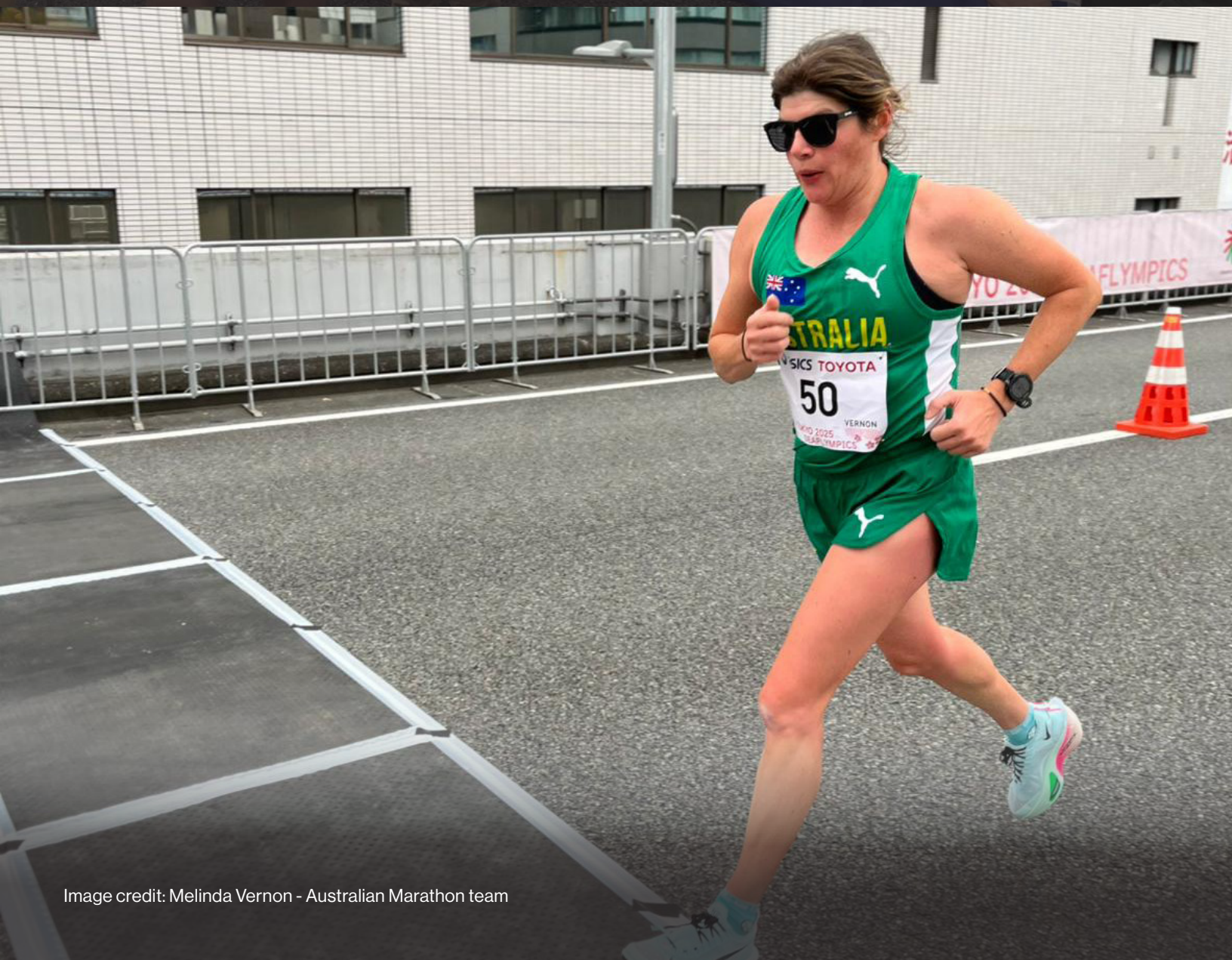
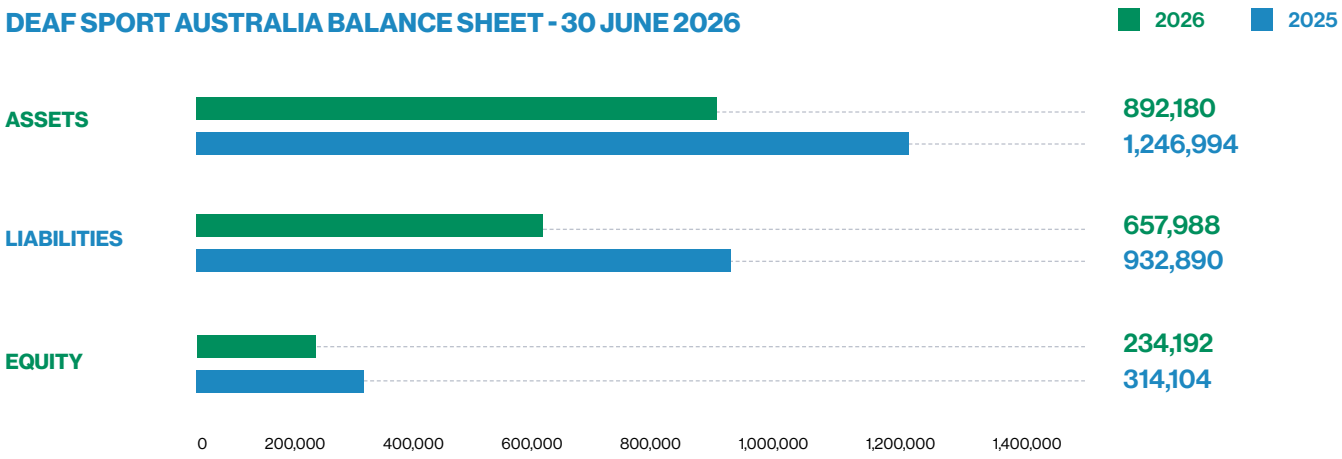


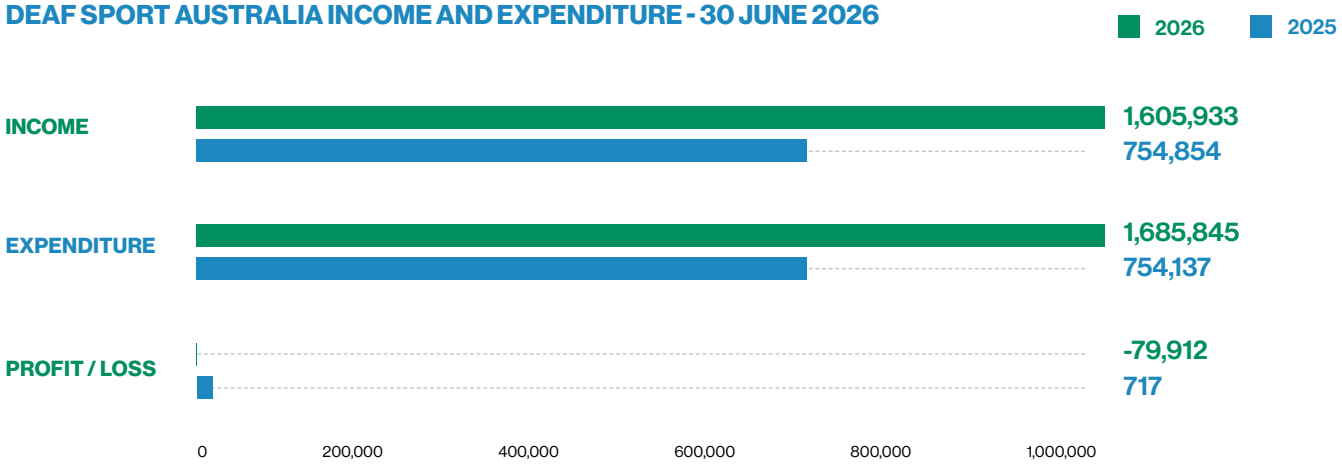
Image credit: Melinda Vernon - Australian Marathon team

Deaf Sports Australia Finance position

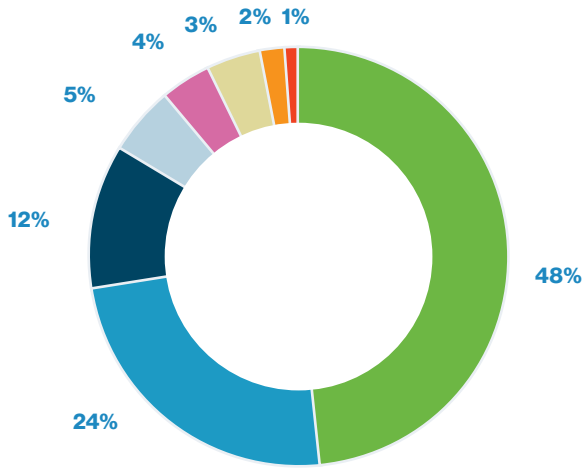
DEAF SPORT AUSTRALIA BALANCE SHEET - 30 JUNE 2026



DEAF SPORT AUSTRALIA INCOME AND EXPENDITURE - 30 JUNE 2026



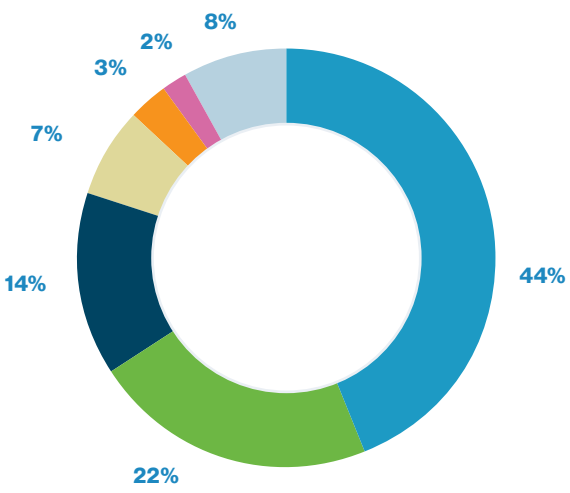
EXPENDITURE PIE CHART 2026



KEY FEATURES

- Staff / Consultancy Costs
- Travel Expenses
- Event Expenses
- Insurance
- Interpreting
- Doubtful Debts
- Other
- Contractors Expenses

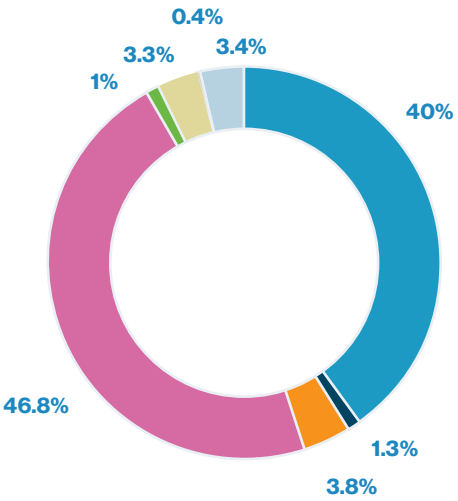
EXPENDITURE PIE CHART 2025



KEY FEATURES

- Staff / Consultancy Costs
- Travel Expenses
- Event Expenses
- Insurance
- Interpreting
- Contractors Expenses
- Other

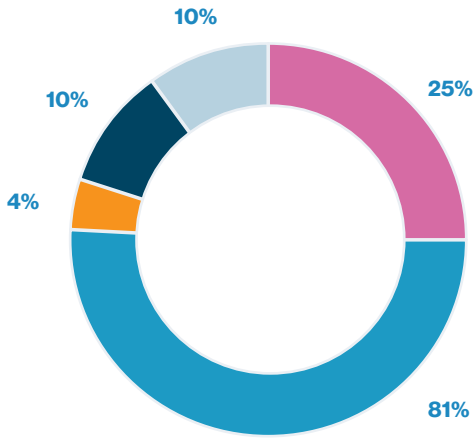
INCOME PIE CHART 2026



KEY FEATURES

- Government / Programs grants
- Partnership grants (non-govt)
- Other operating income
- ADG registrations & income
- Deaflympics registration fees
- Sponsorship - Deaflympics and ADG2026
- Employment Assistance Fund
- Donations & fundraising

INCOME PIE CHART 2025



KEY FEATURES

- Government / Programs grants
- Partnership grants (non-govt)
- Other - donations, Interest, etc
- ADG 2026 Sponsorship
- Employment Assistance Fund

Principal Partner & Supporting Partners

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

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Australian Sports Commission

STATE SUPPORTING PARTNERS

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VICTORIA State Government

Queensland Government

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APPAREL PARTNER:

iA

National Sport Organisations Partners

PROJECT PARTNERS

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