



ANNUAL REVIEW 2009



Making the most of our abilities

Since 1962, House With No Steps has supported adults and children with intellectual, physical, sensory and/or psychiatric disabilities to live, learn, work and connect in the community.

Today we support over 2400 people across 100 sites in New South Wales and Queensland.

QUEENSLAND REGION

NORTHERN NSW REGION

WESTERN NSW REGION

HUNTER REGION

SYDNEY REGION

SOUTHERN NSW REGION

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE...

In 1962 House with No Steps (HWNS) was founded by Lionel Watts, a Sydney man for whom polio had resulted in severe quadriplegia. After experiencing first hand the appalling standard of services available for people with disabilities, Lionel Watts resolved to do something about it. Shortly after, House With No Steps was formed.

That small acorn planted by Lionel Watts is now a vigorous tree that branches across New South Wales and Queensland, and continues to grow and be nourished by its core commitment to focus on people's abilities rather than their disabilities.

Today HWNS supports adults and children with intellectual, physical, sensory and/or psychiatric disabilities to live, learn, work and connect in the communities where they live.

Through a mix of accommodation, employment, training and social connection programs, HWNS assists over 2,400 people with disabilities across 100 sites.

Many people with disabilities who join HWNS programs have faced great challenges in life and may also experience low self esteem. Over time, through a focus on ensuring that they have access to appropriate living arrangements, opportunities to learn and develop skills, and the chance to participate in employment and recreation activities, their situation and their outlook can change dramatically. Remarkable outcomes have been witnessed.

That's where House With No Steps has made a difference.

OUR STRATEGY – 3 YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS



STRENGTHEN

Strengthen HWNS to provide consistent, excellent, efficient & sustainable services to our clients and stakeholders

“EXCELLENCE & SUSTAINABILITY”

Continuously identify best practices and efficiently implement them across HWNS

Recruit, develop, inform and inspire our people effectively

Diversify and fortify our funding streams and strengthen our balance sheet

GROW

Extend and expand our services & businesses to offer greater choice and opportunity for people with a disability in NSW, QLD & the ACT

“GREATER CHOICE & OPPORTUNITY”

Extend the reach of our existing services and businesses

Develop new services that address unmet needs, with partners as required

Innovate to provide increased and improved outcomes

LEAD

Provide leadership, direction and advocacy on disability issues in Australia

“INVOLVEMENT & INFLUENCE”

Build our public profile and brand

Participate strongly in industry bodies and networks

Pursue a strategy of influence at senior government and political levels



HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2009

- More than 2,400 clients in House With No Steps programs;
- Excellent outcomes for both client and supported employee surveys;
- 29 of the 32 key strategic directions on track;
- 23% growth in community support services funding;
- New Respite Care program; and
- Disappointing financial outcomes.

VISION

- To enhance the lives of people with disabilities

MISSION

- To make the most of people's abilities through quality support services

VALUES

- We have ethical dealings with all our stakeholders
- We acknowledge and respect the contribution and value of the individual
- We continuously focus on the needs and aspirations of people with disabilities
- We accept diversity, embracing "one world – one people"
- We value professionalism, performance and teamwork

YEAR IN REVIEW

House With No Steps' 47th year was rewarding and challenging. We continued to provide quality services to our clients, supported more people with disabilities than ever before, and made excellent progress executing our **Strengthen • Grow • Lead strategic plan. However our financial performance was poor. Our profitability was impacted by the global economic downturn and a range of other factors during a year of strategic investment and growth.**

EXCELLENT CLIENT AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES

House With No Steps exists for a single purpose – to enhance the lives of people with disabilities. It is wonderful to be able to report on another successful year of new program development and excellent client service.

2008/09 saw continuing strong growth in our community services, training and employment programs. We established six new day programs and piloted emergency response accommodation programs with the Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care in New South Wales. We opened new accommodation services, including our first group home at Townsville on the Queensland north coast – and continued to develop our broad range of respite services. Our registered training organisation, *The Training House*, delivered a record number of courses and our *House Employment* service maintained its excellent track record placing and supporting people with disabilities in open employment settings.

In August 2008 we conducted our second organisation-wide supported employee engagement survey. Parallel with a family and carer survey in May 2009 we also conducted our first HWNS-wide survey of client wellbeing and satisfaction. The client survey was a major undertaking. Many of our clients have impaired communication ability and required independent support to participate in the survey process. We thank the Voice Project

team at Macquarie University for their support in developing and conducting these surveys.

The survey results reflect the quality and consistency of HWNS' services and the commitment and professionalism of our staff. Most clients are very satisfied with the services that we provide (86% positive rating) and have a strong sense of wellbeing (89% positive). Our clients' families and carers have similarly affirmative views of our performance as a service provider (89% positive). Our supported employee survey was also encouraging, with a high 85% job satisfaction rating.

Our surveys also help us to identify areas for improvement. For example, we are now working to improve our communication and engagement with families and carers – particularly in supported accommodation settings – as a direct result of survey feedback.

SOUND STRATEGIC PROGRESS

2008/09 was the second year of House With No Steps' three year **Strengthen • Grow • Lead** strategic plan. Under the plan, we are building HWNS reputation as one of Australia's leading disability service providers and positioning the organisation to adapt and thrive in a changing strategic environment. There is now a welcome shift emerging towards greater empowerment and service choice for people with disabilities. The HWNS team has made pleasing progress executing the plan and is on track in 29 of 32 result areas to achieve our strategic goals.

STRENGTHEN

House With No Steps is moving from a highly decentralised operating model towards a more integrated approach to service delivery. This is enhancing our service excellence; generating efficiencies and supporting further growth. We have retained our geographic management structure, as we believe passionately in being part of the local communities we serve. We are developing high quality shared services to support

our on-the-ground teams in the areas of quality and safety management, human resources, learning & development, clinical support, tendering, internal audit, policy development, fundraising, recruitment, finance, marketing and IT. Our plans in each of these areas are on track.

HWNS is a people organisation. Therefore we are enhancing our staff recruitment, training and career development practices; improving internal communication and cross-unit cooperation; and developing the leadership skills of our front line supervisors and managers. We have more work to do in this area, but we are already seeing substantial improvements in staff retention, engagement and better occupational health and safety performance.

Of the three focus areas in the plan, we have made comparatively less progress in our **Strengthen** area. The slower progress relates to diversifying our funding streams and further strengthening our balance sheet. This is therefore an area of ongoing focus.

GROW

Our twenty-five business enterprises which employ nearly 600 people with disabilities grew modestly in 2008/09. A promising start to the year was offset by revenue and pricing pressures in the second half as economic conditions worsened. Despite these pressures we maintained full employment levels and increased supported employee wages by an average of 9%.

We were delighted to welcome employees and staff from Autism Spectrum Australia's Sydney bush regeneration business to House With No Steps in August 2008. This unique business provides excellent employment opportunities for people with autism spectrum disorders, but has struggled in the face of heavy losses for some years. We are working hard to improve the viability of this business, which is now part of *Growing Care*. Although the business is unlikely to be profitable in the foreseeable future, we hope to reduce its

losses to manageable levels over the next twelve months and thereby secure the future of this valuable service. We thank Warringah Council for their recent support in this regard.

As noted above, we continued to develop and grow our community services programs in response to community needs. Revenues in this area increased by 23% over 2007/08. We commend our staff on the professional manner in which they have responded to the challenges and opportunities that this growth has presented.

Our small business development team continues to prepare quality tenders and proposals, as evidenced by a variety of tender wins and HWNS' pre-qualification by the Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care to provide a broad range of community services programs to people with disabilities across New South Wales.

LEAD

We are pleased with the progress of our brand-building and sector leadership initiatives over the past year. Our long term goal is to enhance the lives of all Australians with disabilities by influencing social policy and community attitudes. We must be widely known, highly regarded, well connected and innovative to achieve this goal.

Our new promotional DVD and advertising campaigns are increasing public awareness of House With No Steps and the work that we do. Our **Strengthen** and **Grow** initiatives are definitely enhancing our reputation. We are now much more strongly engaged in industry peak bodies including NDS and Interchange NSW, and have an active voice with senior government decision-makers and politicians directly and also via these peak bodies.

Additionally we are making good progress with our innovation agenda. This is despite the difficulty of engaging with government on innovation and the consequent requirement to self-fund programs in this area. Our research partnerships with

two universities are developing; our extended person-centred thinking and active support pilots are generating positive results; our best practice approach to the thorny issue of restrictive practice authorisation is receiving excellent feedback; and our investment in strong internal clinical skills - while not as large as we would like - is also paying dividends.

A CHALLENGING YEAR FINANCIALLY

2008/09 was a difficult year financially. We started the year with a strong commitment to build organisational capability and develop new services in accordance with our **Strengthen • Grow • Lead** strategic plan, whilst also continuing to operate our portfolio of self-funded social, training and day programs. Unfortunately we generated less income to fund these initiatives than planned. This resulted in a net deficit for the year of \$1.7 million on revenues of \$78.6 million. The major drivers of the shortfall were:

- the impact of a slowing economy on business sales and margins, disappointing fundraising results and reduced investment returns;
- delays and reductions in government funding for our fifteen new respite services following the change of federal government and the transfer of most of these programs from federal to state agencies; and
- higher-than-expected operating costs in some community service programs, largely as a result of mismatches between funding levels and evolving client needs.

We elected to continue our strategic capability building work and self-funded programs as the economic environment worsened, whilst implementing a range of cost reduction and performance improvement actions in support and administration areas. This resulted in an improved financial performance late in the financial year. We have budgeted for a better overall financial result in 2009/10. At the time of writing, the economic

outlook remains uncertain but is looking more positive. We will assess the future of some self-funded programs, such as our highly popular *Live It Up* social program in Sydney, in light of our trading and fundraising performance through to December 2009.

LOOKING FORWARD

2009/10 is another exciting year of development and progress for House With No Steps. Our operating plans have a strong “complete and consolidate” flavour, as we conclude the initiatives in our **Strengthen • Grow • Lead** strategic plan and review our direction for the future. We will continue to develop our community services programs in partnership with the state and federal governments and will work to generate a small financial surplus to offset the deficit recorded in 2008/09.

As we have noted in previous years, many House With No Steps activities depend on the ongoing support of our volunteers and supporters who share our vision for people with a disability. They provide vital expertise, on-the-ground assistance, local connections, new business opportunities and funding for our programs. From all of us at House With No Steps – on behalf of our clients and employees – thank you!

Graeme Thompson
Chairman

Andrew Richardson
Chief Executive Officer

8th September 2009







LIVING

House With No Steps seeks to encourage, enable and support its clients to reside in situations that allow them to live with dignity; with as much independence as possible; and that provide them with every opportunity to achieve their goals in life.

HWNS PROVIDES:

- support and assistance to clients who are able to live independently;
- small group homes with varying support levels for clients who need a more structured environment; and
- respite programs for families where a person with a disability continues to live with the family.



WORKING

For most adults a meaningful job or career can be the key to economic independence and healthy self esteem. For people with disabilities it can also be an important opportunity for integration into the wider community, and a means to make a valuable and visible contribution to the broader world.

HWNS PROVIDES:

- transition to work programs that assist school leavers with disabilities to progress to meaningful employment;
- links to mainstream employers, thus assisting people with disabilities to obtain work in the mainstream employment sector; and
- employment opportunities within one of HWNS' own 25 disability enterprises – businesses that have been established specifically to provide employment for people with disabilities.



CONNECTING

Doing things with other people, forming friendships, expanding life experiences and pursuing hobbies or interests, can be an important part of everyday life for all of us. House With No Steps seeks to ensure that people with disabilities are also able to participate in a wide range of social activities that cater for their particular skills and interests. As far as possible it seeks to arrange these opportunities within community settings with community partners.

HWNS PROVIDES:

- community participation programs to provide social outlets for people with disabilities of all ages who are not involved in employment programs;
- day respite programs that provide important social activities and connections for people with disabilities, in addition to providing respite to their families or carers;
- a supported social and recreation program that links people with disabilities with mainstream social opportunities; and
- a social and activity program for retired employees of HWNS' disability enterprises.



LEARNING

For people with disabilities, acquiring day to day life skills, employment skills and even social skills can be a real challenge. Mainstream training providers do not usually have the skills to adapt their training programs to the particular needs of people with intellectual or other disabilities. House With No Steps achieves this through its official training program and the training components built in to the majority of its services.

HWNS PROVIDES:

- life skills programs for toddlers, adolescents and adults through a range of training programs;
- employment skills programs through its own registered training organisation in addition to those in association with TAFE and other education providers;
- recreation and leisure skills programs; and
- training programs for people seeking to work in the disability field.



BUSINESSES AND SERVICES

	Regional Offices	Nursery	Fruit Packing	Farming	Conference Centre	Medi Redi	Horticulture	Catering Functions	Woodworking	Packaging	Aussie Biscuits	Laundry	Recycling	Engineering	The Training House	Emergency Response	Multi-Purpose Services	Day Programs	Attendant Care Program	Group Homes	Young Residential Aged Care	Mental Health Respite	Day Respite	
Queensland																								
Burleigh Heads																								
Doonan																								
Logan																								
Slacks Creek																								
Townsville																								
Northern																								
Alstonville																								
Bonville																								
Newcastle																								
Port Macquarie																								
Taree																								
Terranora																								
Hunter																								
Adamstown																								
Birmingham Gardens																								
Croudace Bay																								
Glendale																								
Hamilton																								
Kincumber																								
Lambton																								
Long Jetty																								
Maryland																								
New Lambton																								
Ourimbah																								
Salamander Bay																								
Springfield																								
Warabrook																								
Woongarah																								
Wyoming																								
Western																								
Dubbo																								
Forbes																								
Orange																								
Parkes																								
Sydney																								
Allawah																								
Baulkham Hills																								
Beaumont Hills																								
Belrose																								
Bexley																								
Burwood																								
Campsie																								
Canterbury																								
Cecil Hills																								

HUNTER REGION

Regional Advisory Board Chairman— Peter de’Lore
Regional General Manager – Trisha Downes

Like so many businesses in the broader community, Hunter Region Business Enterprises experienced the impact of the global financial crisis. Fortunately due to the efforts of staff and managers, the impact was minimised with no adverse affect for the 262 people with disabilities employed in its 8 business outlets.

Despite the economic downturn Hunter Business Enterprises were **strengthened** over the course of the 12 months, contributing to the organisation’s strategic objectives through the following key achievements:

- Medi-Redi/Therapeutic division secured a 3 year supply contract for dialysis procedure kits valued at over \$1m, as well as successful tender wins for the supply of DNA testing kits for SA & TAS Police forces, adding to those already supplied to QLD, NSW & VIC forces; and

- laundry operations secured the supply of linen & laundering for newly opened outlets of Grand Mercure Apartments and Chifley on the Wharf.

Community Services also contributed to the organisational strategy with 40% **growth** during 2008/09, highlighted by the success in tendering for an additional two *Day Programs* on the Central Coast, and the expansion of respite services throughout the Hunter & Central Coast regions.





KIM

Kim has an acquired brain injury. When she first commenced with House With No Steps' *Day Program* in the Hunter Region, she would sit at a bench just inside the front gate with her handbag stuffed full of old magazines. That is where she would stay all day. Kim would sit on the bench, withdrawn from the world around her and pick at her skin until it bled.

House With No Steps staff tried everything to coax Kim out of her shell. They suggested all manner of things in order to perk up her interest. However, Kim's response was always "No!" to all suggestions. It soon became routine for staff and visitors to walk in the gate, greet Kim as she sat on the bench with her hand bag, and continue on their way.

There was however no way that House With No Steps was going to give up on Kim. Faith can move mountains. And, when nothing else seemed to be working, the time came to move that mountain. The bench Kim sat on was progressively moved closer to where the other clients sat.

Gradually the staff were permitted to enter Kim's world. After much patience and perseverance they were able to communicate with Kim, paint her nails and put lotion on her hands to help them heal. They were even able to assist Kim in disposing of the old magazines from her bag. Kim's transformation was well underway and it didn't take long before she was socialising without encouragement and showing enthusiasm for participating in group outings.

Now, Kim's dad Peter reports that she is "*Happy and bubbly and can't wait to get to Glendale. The staff approach to the clients is fantastic and they inspired Kim to do things she has never done before.*"

NORTHERN NSW REGION

Regional Advisory Board Chairman – Dr Bill Buddee
Regional General Manager – Brett Lacey

It is again pleasing to report on a very positive year for the Northern NSW region. The region continues to contribute to the organisational **Strengthen • Grow • Lead** strategy, as well as deliver on its commitment to provide quality services to people with a disability.

The region continues to establish new services as well as grow the businesses and programs, and now has more than 80 employees and 120 clients.

Highlights for the year included:

- completing the extension to the Turning Point Café & Function Centre, thereby employing 16 people with a disability;
- positive employee, client, parent and staff outcomes reflected through the VOICE surveys;
- record macadamia harvest and strong sales growth in the Packing Shed, Café, Nursery and Cawleys Gift Shop;
- more than 70,000 visitors to the Summerland House site, which now also includes the latest attraction - Watts Cottage;

- winner of the Ballina Excellence Award for Best Agribusiness;
- established and/or consolidated new Community Services programs in Taree, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Alstonville and Tweed Heads;
- commenced service delivery for the Mental Health Program;
- opened Frangipani Cottage (Respite) at Taree; and
- commenced several new day programs, including Community Participation, Life Choices and Active Ageing.

These achievements and the overall outcomes for the people who are supported by HWNS are largely dependent on the commitment and expertise of the staff. All those involved are fortunate to be part of the existing team, and they are thanked for their valued contribution. The Regional Advisory Board, support from families and carers, and relationships with customers, supporters and funding bodies are all greatly appreciated.





STUART

Stuart was born blind. Following a series of operations to remove some congenital cataracts when he was 2 years old, Stuart had some sight restored. More treatments were needed as he grew older, and fortunately he now has enough vision to find his way around.

Stuart learned to read Braille and play the piano by ear at a boarding school for blind and visually impaired children in Sydney. He decided to return to beautiful Northern NSW as soon as school finished – as this is where his heart is truly able to sing.

Stuart has a natural musical gift and loves singing. He takes every opportunity to express his talents. Stuart leads the church congregation in chorus; is often asked to perform at events and sings his much anticipated own version of the song 'Leaving on a Jet Plane' at the annual House With No Steps Christmas Party.

Stuart started working at House With No Steps in 1978. Apart from a short break, he has been a valued employee ever since. *"House With No Steps has been a great learning curve in teaching me work skills and taking on new responsibilities. Knowing that I can go to work each day and do a job gives me a great sense of being able to achieve something"*, says Stuart.

Our picturesque Summerland House project in Alstonville employs 87 people with varying disabilities across a range of agricultural and tourism businesses. Stuart has filled many valuable roles at Summerland House over the years, including working at our avocado and macadamia farm, fruit packing shed, wholesale nursery and in the main reception area.

Today though, he is most well known for his guided tours of the site. Stuart is passionate about HWNS and his knowledge of its history makes him the perfect tour guide. *"What I enjoy most is showing visitors our different business services and introducing them to the supported employees"*, says Stuart.

SOUTHERN NSW REGION

Regional Advisory Board Chairman: Rex Leighton
Regional General Manager: Jennifer Mollett

HWNS Southern NSW Region provides services across a large geographical area, stretching from Helensburgh in the north to beyond Batemans Bay in the south and through the Southern Highlands down to Goulburn and Queanbeyan.

The region supports 277 people with a disability through a range of services, including Supported Accommodation, Independent Living Services, Community Participation, Transition to Work, Respite Care, Day Programs and other services.

Highlights for the year included:

- the Person Centred Planning Team worked with thirteen services in Southern NSW Region;
- the Person Centred Planning team also worked with key HWNS personnel from other regions;
- Active Support training and mentoring provided to staff and management by the University of Sydney;
- Active Support now implemented in three services;

- several new young people have entered the Community Participation and Transition to Work programs with some great outcomes;
- new day program facility established in Wollongong;
- Southern NSW Region's Mental Health Respite Care Service officially opened by Federal Member for Throsby and now provides a service to 30 families;
- new accommodation purchased for the Nowra Leaving Care program and is being renovated. Meanwhile the program has seen many young people achieve significant milestones;
- continued provision of crisis support for people awaiting permanent accommodation placements; and
- ongoing provision of staff training through Induction, Certificates 3 & 4 in Disability Studies and Certificate 4 in Mental Health.





ELEANOR

Eleanor was born with an intellectual disability. She was also born with Spastic Tetraplegia of the forearms and hands, leaving her with very limited movement in these areas. Eleanor loved to cook and be independent in everyday tasks but found she couldn't do these things on her own.

That's where House With No Steps has made a big difference.

Eleanor now lives in a house which has a team of people who work together to help her live the best life possible and do as much for herself as she can manage. Eleanor has become more positive and social as a person; and has a wealth of creative talents she has nurtured over the years. These talents were undiscovered until Eleanor spent time at House With No Steps *Day Programs* in Wollongong where her carers encouraged her self expression through work in arts and crafts.

Eleanor has become very good at finding a way to get around her physical restrictions when it comes to expressing herself creatively. Her whole body is involved in the process of weaving her magic through her work. Eleanor has now filled an entire china cabinet full of her creations and proudly shows them off to anyone she can.

Now at 71 years young Eleanor has finally found a place she can really call home. *"It's good here because I'm happy now"*, exclaims Eleanor.

SYDNEY REGION

*Regional Advisory Board Chairman – Peter Terry
Regional General Manager – Amanda Ellison*

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Significant unification of the Sydney Region services management was undertaken to enhance client outcomes and increase service quality and effectiveness. Community Services revenue grew 27% over the previous year.

Highlights for the year included:

- the Emergency Response Transition Project (ERTP) North pilot contract was extended to 2009/10;
- a new ERTP South contract was also gained with provision for six residents and over \$1million revenue per annum;
- a new group home with DADHC Metropolitan North, which will accommodate 5 people in the Nepean area; and
- during March-April 2009 the region collaborated with The University of Sydney and Professor Roger Stancliffe from the Faculty of Health Sciences. The region supported 20 Occupational Therapy students undergoing field placements. Also, an Active Support pilot program is being trialled this year in a group home.

AUSTRALIAN DISABILITY ENTERPRISES

In the context of a difficult year in overall business the highlights included:

- the appointment of a Business Enterprise Manager and a Sales Manager for the Region;
- new customers & contracts with TACCA Plastics Australia, Downer EDI and Barros Laboratories; and
- the re-auspice of ASPECTS Bush Regeneration work crew & staff, including the transition of 14 employees into Growing Care, which now has 36 supported employees.

OTHER

- The Sydney Gala night was held on the 28th November, 2008 at Rosehill Racecourse. It was a very enjoyable evening, well attended and an important opportunity to recognise and celebrate staff, employee and client achievements with family, friends and supporters.
- The 2008 House Idol in September was a fantastic event with 22 entrants from across the region. It was attended by friends, family, staff, employees & clients all of whom enthusiastically supported all the contestants.





PETER

The first thing you notice about Peter is that he is always smiling. But if anyone had a reason not to smile it might well be Peter. When he was 18 months old he was diagnosed with Hydrocephalus, a serious brain swelling condition. He has been in and out of hospital ever since. *“I have a shunt that runs from my brain into my stomach. It has been in my heart before too. When the pressure goes up in my brain, I have severe headaches, vomiting, blurry vision and epileptic seizures.”*

Twenty operations later Peter still has this incurable, lifelong, disabling condition - but that doesn't faze him. He doesn't see having a disability as an uphill battle.

One of the consequences of his disability is that Peter can also become very forgetful, which is a big obstacle to getting and keeping a job. *“I've got to think positive and look to the future and not look backwards.”*

Thanks to House With No Steps, that is exactly what Peter can do – look forward to a bright future. Peter now has a job with the HWNS Sydney site services team where he works very hard. *“HWNS is a great place to work. All the new things I'm learning are unbelievable. I've really improved and gone to the next level. I feel more settled and stable. I feel like I am getting somewhere.”*

Peter's dad Eric agrees *“That Peter can go and do something and feel wanted is marvellous”.*

WESTERN NSW REGION

Regional Advisory Board Chairman – Bill Stibbard
Regional General Manager – Kevin McGuire

The year in Western NSW has been another tough one with the drought gripping most of the region.

Highlights for the year included:

- 27% increase in sales for Aussie Biscuits on top of a 9% sales increase in the previous financial year;
- improvements in quality consistency and packaging design for Aussie Biscuits;
- great support from the state's bowling clubs for Aussie Biscuits;
- despite the continued drought, the Lawn Maintenance team achieved a sales increase of 27% on the previous year;
- the high standard of work by the Lawn Maintenance team ensured the continuity of some large contracts, including North Parkes Mine;
- Linen Hire Service, a partnership with Glenray Industries (an Australian Disability Enterprise in Bathurst) continued to develop and provide more opportunities to employ people with disabilities in Forbes, Parkes and Bathurst;
- Community Service client numbers continued to grow;
- uptake of the Mental Health Respite program gained momentum;
- Western NSW Region now provides services - including Respite, Post School Program, and Early Childhood Intervention - to 250 clients and families covering the Central West and Orana Far West areas of New South Wales; and
- all Community Service staff have successfully completed their Certificate III in Disability, with most also currently undertaking Certificate IV.





NATHAN

Nathan is an 18 year old country boy living on a wheat and sheep farm in western NSW with his mother, stepfather and 2 younger brothers. Like all boys his age, he loves PlayStation, catching up with his friends and partying.

Nathan is an exceptional young man. When he was 5, he was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy - the worst form you can get. His mum Michelle recalls *“Nathan had plasters on his feet from 2 weeks old. When he went to pre-school we noticed that his development was very delayed and he wasn’t participating in activities like other children.”*

Two years ago, Nathan was also diagnosed with a severe respiratory condition which nearly proved fatal. Nathan now depends on a machine every night to ensure he continues to breathe. Michelle needs to check on him about ten times during the evening. Nathan also suffers from severe arthritis, osteoporosis and scoliosis which can be very painful. All of these conditions are consequences of his illness for which there is no cure.

But Nathan never complains. He is a shining example of the House With No Steps philosophy, focusing on his abilities rather than his disability.

Nathan is a very chatty person and blossoms in social situations. Because of the daily challenges he faces, it is especially vital that Nathan has the opportunity to have fun and socialise with others his own age. Nathan regularly attends House With No Steps’ Respite Service and loves going there. *“I look forward to getting back to see my friends. I have fun with my friends. We do all sorts of things. We go to the movies and shopping, go out for dinner and go for a drive in the new bus.”*

Thanks to House With No Steps, Nathan gets to experience things that other young people just take for granted. The Respite Service also means that Nathan’s parents get a much-needed break, to spend some quality time with each other and with Nathan’s brothers.

Nathan has a selfless nature and when asked what his favourite thing about respite is he says, *“Giving mum a rest.”*

QUEENSLAND REGION

*Regional Advisory Board Chairman – Leanne Dreves
State Manager Queensland – John Jensen*

2008/2009 reflected a period of change, expansion and innovation in QLD. Significant geographical expansions also occurred as new services at Slacks Creek (Brisbane), Deception Bay (Sunshine Coast) and Townsville (North Qld) were developed. The subsequent diversification of services and programs has resulted in greater opportunities and enhanced outcomes for clients, employees and staff. Client numbers grew by 38% to total 227 whilst Supported Employee numbers remained stable at 34.

With the focus remaining on the four key areas, a number of new services and programs were established.

Highlights for the year included:

- Transition To Work program located at Burleigh Heads and funded under the DSQ Day Service Initiatives;
- Older Parent / Carer Respite Services at Doonan and at Slacks Creek;
- flexible Respite Services in Townsville;
- School Holiday programs at Slacks Creek;
- Community Living Unit in Townsville;
- Emergency Response Services in Townsville and on the Sunshine Coast;
- Group Home at Deception Bay; and
- Community Access Services in the Sunshine Coast.

Service expansion or reconfiguration included;

- expansion of Post School Services at Doonan and at Burleigh Heads;
- Drug & Alcohol Counselling services commenced at Slacks Creek complementing the Burleigh Heads services; and
- reconfiguration of group home at Morayfield and the business enterprise at Doonan.

Disability Employment Services including the Job Capacity Assessment programs continued to perform strongly, thus achieving many sustainable outcomes for local job seekers. Additional contracts were also obtained to enable further diversification and strengthening of the Disability Enterprises.





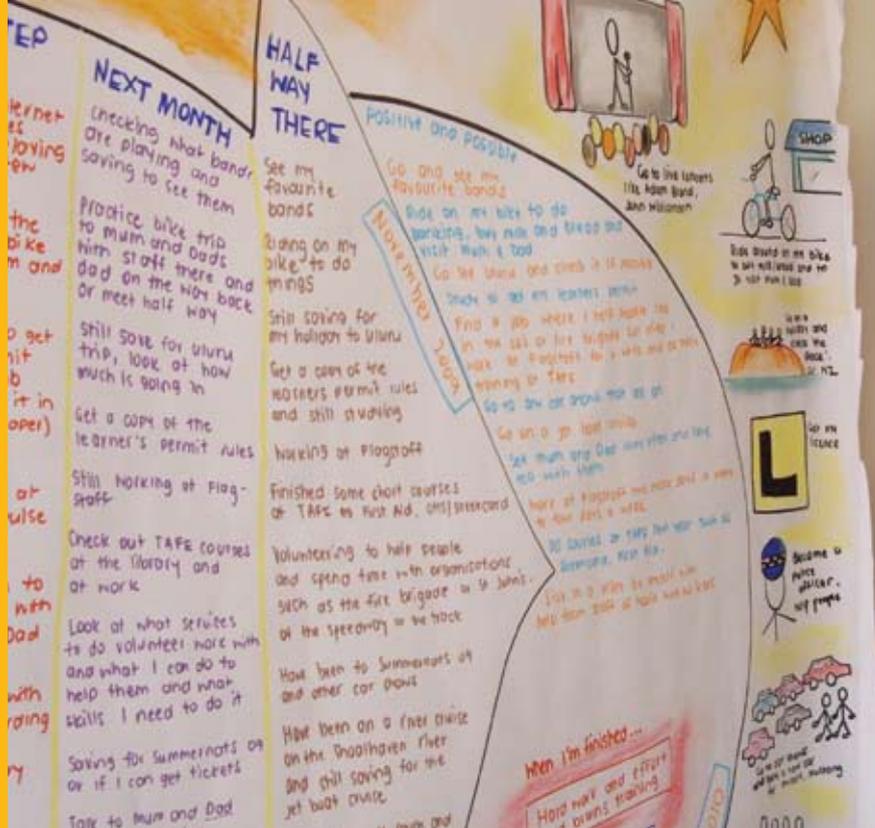
IAN

Ian had a serious motorbike accident when he was 26 which left him with severe nerve damage in his arms and slurred speech. He thought he may never walk again – but his fighting spirit came through.

Subsequently, Ian has had a brain tumour removed, and has survived abdominal cancer – twice! He receives ongoing laser therapy on both eyes to stop the internal bleeding caused by diabetes. And he is on a waiting list for a heart operation due to a blockage in one of his valves. *“Cancer was on my Dad’s side and diabetes on my Mum’s side,”* he says.

Despite these setbacks Ian remains extremely optimistic that he will be able to beat anything that life has to throw at him. *“It was really scary when I was in a wheelchair because of the accident. The nurse told me ‘If you want to walk again you must think positive and if you put your mind there, you will do it.’ It worked and I am now a strong believer in that.”*

Ian is an inspiration and a role model to everyone who knows him. Ian started working with House With No Steps, Queensland Region, 13 years ago in Boomerang Garden Care, maintaining the lawn equipment and mowers used by the work crew. He now works with Gold Coast Business Enterprise in the Coupler Tec Project section. His main activity is soldering wires on to circuit boards. Ian’s aim is to complete about 700 circuit boards per week – which is a lot! *“I set up targets for myself and focus on that,”* he says. But the most important thing to Ian is to be a team player. *“As long as there is a happy crew at work, I am happy.”*



CLINICAL SERVICES

House With No Steps has responded to the need to provide specialised support for individuals by establishing the Services Support Team. The clinical team support service staff and individuals who present challenges. This is achieved through assessment and the development of behaviour support plans and the subsequent training of staff to implement these plans.

Although the positions within the team are generally unfunded, the expertise provided is essential to providing enhanced service.

The Manager Service Enhancement has been working closely with the HWNS regions towards the implementation of a Restrictive Practices Authorisation Panel. House With No Steps is a leader in reviewing its practices to ensure that the support it provides comes with the least restrictions possible.

The Respite Services Project Manager has been providing support to regions to establish the numerous respite services that have been launched over the past 12 months. To date regions have provided more than 14,000 hours of respite through these new services to more than 160 carers.

Positive outcomes achieved throughout the year included:

- development of an individual planning process that more closely integrated behaviour support practices;
- the completion of a client and family/carer survey that will direct the priorities of all future planning;
- the design of an updated behaviour support program and training; to be rolled out to all community service staff across HWNS;
- the Integrated Clinical Support Model that is now fully functional in the Northern NSW region;
- research projects with Sydney University in Active Support models; and
- support provided across the Sydney region, particularly with the new Emergency Response Program supporting individuals in crisis for time limited periods.



FUNDRAISING – COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Dennis O'Reilly

General Manager – Fundraising and Community Relations

The work at House With No Steps once again directly benefited from extensive community support throughout the year. Valuable assistance was received in many large and small ways. Some people volunteered, others purchased art union tickets or made donations. Several people also made a significant contribution by leaving a bequest to House With No Steps in their will. Many business organisations assisted in a variety of ways for which HWNS is grateful.

ART UNIONS

House With No Steps conducted two art unions during 2008/2009. Both recorded good sales returns, but were down on returns generated in previous years. Total art union sales revenue for the year was just over \$4 million.

Following the retirement of the previous Art Union Manager, a number of personnel changes occurred in the senior management of the program. In May 2009 HWNS appointed Asiri Senaratne to the position of Call Centre Fundraising Manager. Active work has now been undertaken to return the program to a growth mode.

DONATIONS

Donation income for the year was \$485,000.

This was an improvement of 17% on 2007/08, and slightly more than the best ever year, 2006/07. The donation program included direct mail appeals, distribution of the House Herald newsletter, and promotion of the House With No Steps regular giving program. Towards the end of the year, a staff payroll giving program was also established.

GENERAL FUNDRAISING

Throughout the year there were also a variety of other fundraising activities conducted. The collection box program - where money boxes are located in retail outlets around New South Wales - continued to provide good revenue, as did the pen sales program at Westfield Penrith. In addition, several external organisations staged fundraising activities to further benefit House With No Steps.

BEQUESTS

Bequests were received from 17 different estates providing total revenue of \$386,000. The contribution made by these generous benefactors was highly appreciated. In some circumstances where there were no close family beneficiaries House With No Steps received a major proportion of the estate. However in most cases the bequest left the bulk of the estate to close family and friends whilst also arranging for a modest contribution to HWNS.

PEOPLE, LEARNING AND CULTURE

Lyn Ainsworth

General Manager - People Learning and Culture

PEOPLE

With over 1000 staff and 600 supported employees, House With No Steps is one of Australia's largest disability organisations.

60% of the staff work in the community services programs, providing direct support for clients with diverse needs. 30% of other staff and most of the supported employees work in the 25 business enterprises, reflecting a broad cross-section of skills, knowledge and experience. The remaining staff and supported employees are in the shared services teams, supporting human resources, finance, fundraising, information technology and business development. Staff numbers continued to grow in 2008-9 in response to increased demand for disability services.

Major elements of the HWNS' *people* strategy came to fruition during the year with:

- development of a comprehensive competency framework to guide recruitment, learning and career development;
- effective management of workers' compensation and workplace injury management resulting in a positive premium adjustment of more than \$800,000, and a further 30% premium reduction forecast for the forthcoming year; and
- expansion of the salary packaging program to provide staff with more than \$500,000 of additional benefits and enhance the resources available to House With No Steps for service provision.

LEARNING

House With No Steps has an outstanding record of providing quality learning and development opportunities for all its people.

Accredited training is provided primarily through the HWNS' registered training organisation *The Training House*, and is augmented with specialised external providers. In 2008-2009, 278 staff

and employees commenced accredited training programs. Certificate III and Certificate IV in Disability were the most requested programs. *The Training House* expanded its operations during the year and also delivered more than 40,000 hours of training to external participants.

CULTURE

HWNS aims to be responsive to the needs and expectations of clients, families and staff.

During 2008-9 a comprehensive staff satisfaction survey called the VOICE survey was conducted for the second time. The survey showed improvements over the previous year across a number of areas. However, it was also recognised that across all levels of the organisation there needed to be a continued focus on effective communication and engagement.

HWNS was commended by the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency for its annual report. The Safety Aware Program was introduced to raise the profile of workplace safety, with Western NSW Region awarded the "Safety Region of the Year" for a substantial project benefiting clients and establishing linkages with the local community.

LOOKING FORWARD

With the restructuring of the People Learning and Culture portfolio to include the "Quality, Risk and Safety" team, a major focus will be on enhancing the quality management system to ensure that all staff have access to the tools they need to provide outstanding service. Extensive training will be required to maintain the required status as an industry leader. In addition, the complex federal industrial landscape may present some future challenges.



FOUNDER'S AWARDS 2009

Personal achievement is a keystone of the culture at House With No Steps.

The varied nature of individual achievements - both in personal development and amazing contributions made – are celebrated through a range of annual awards named in honour of HWNS' founder, Lionel Watts.

RHIANNON COCHRANE

Staff, Person Centred Facilitator

For her dedication to assisting people with disabilities; particularly her commitment to developing her personal work skills and the provision of training for others in Southern NSW Region.

LEANNE GEMMELL

Employee, Leading Hand, Linen Hire Service

For her outstanding achievement in Western NSW Region; most recently in the Linen Hire service.

LES MILES

Employee, Supervisory Role (Posthumously)

For his significant contribution to Hunter Region; in particular his leadership in the contracting division. (Les passed away in April 2009.)

IAN MILLER

Employee, Burleigh Business Enterprise

For his commitment, enthusiasm and achievements in the Queensland Region's Gold Coast Business Enterprises.

TERESE NICOLA

Staff, Senior Project Coordinator – Community Services

For her compassion, commitment and dedication to her chosen profession of Disability Support Worker; and her outstanding contribution to the Sydney Region.

ANDREW (Garth) PERRY

Employee, Process Worker – Bantry Bay

For long term dedicated service and assistance to colleagues in the Sydney Region at Belrose and Bantry Bay.

DAPHE PRIOR

Staff, Supervisor, Aussie Biscuits

For her long term commitment, outstanding dedication and extra curricular contributions to the work of the Western NSW Region.

PAMELA STEDMAN

Resident, Mary Callaghan Group Home

For her commitment to the challenge of living as full a life as possible at Southern NSW Region's Mary Callaghan Group Home.

SCOTT WATSON

Employee, Dehusking Team

For demonstrating initiative and maturity in his coordination role with the Northern NSW Region dehusking team at Alstonville.

SHIRLEE WHALLEY

Staff, Senior Regional HR Advisor

For her considerable contribution to building an outstanding team and organisational culture in the Northern NSW Region.

CHERIE WOOD

Staff, Manager, House Employment Services

For her great achievements in supporting people with disabilities in the Queensland Region to obtain quality employment options in their community.

GOVERNANCE

HWNS recognises its privileged position as a not for profit organisation that benefits from government and donated funds, special taxation concessions and a high level of community trust. In return, HWNS acknowledges that it has an ongoing obligation to act as a responsible trustee, doing its best to faithfully fulfil its mission, achieve real outcomes for the people it serves, and properly steward the resources at its disposal.

To achieve these goals HWNS has established structures and developed cultures to:

- enhance outcomes for people with disabilities;
- develop and maintain the confidence of clients, supported employees, families, staff, other stakeholders, government and the broader community;
- improve organisational performance through a commitment to quality, sound planning, performance benchmarking and risk management; and
- pay particular attention to financial probity through the wise stewardship of resources and a zero tolerance attitude to fraud, dishonesty or unethical behaviour.

ACCOUNTABILITY

House With No Steps' Board of Directors has the overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation remains focused on achieving its mission, that its values are reflected in its activities, and that it is accountable to its stakeholders.

The Board of Directors is supported in this role by Regional Advisory Boards and senior management.

HWNS has a particular responsibility to be accountable to:

- its clients and supported employees, their families and all people with disability;
- volunteers, donors, art union buyers and bequestors;
- partners, suppliers, customers; and

- the broader community generally and government specifically, with particular responsibility to the following government funding and regulatory bodies:

- Federal Department of Families Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
- Federal Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations
- Federal Department of Education, Employment and Training
- NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care
- NSW Department of the Arts Sport and Recreation
- Qld Department of Communities - Disability Services

CODE OF CONDUCT

- The Board of Directors has a formal code of conduct and each director is required assent to its content. This code reflects a commitment to uphold the values of HWNS, to act with integrity and honesty, and to put the interests of HWNS before their own.
- HWNS services all meet or exceed relevant federal and state Disability Service Standards.
- HWNS fundraising programs comply with the relevant Fundraising Institute Australia Principles and Standards of Fundraising Practice.

QUALITY SYSTEMS

House With No Steps service programs are endorsed as ISO 9001 Quality Assurance System compliant. This endorsement was audited during the 2008/09 year and recertification was granted for a further three year period.

HWNS has an in-house Corporate Quality Committee which provides support to all areas on quality management. There is in place a documented quality management system which focuses on continuous improvement, and all senior managers have a responsibility to implement quality management programs in their areas of responsibility.

PATRON:

***Her Excellency, Professor Marie Bashir AC
Governor of New South Wales***

BOARD MEMBERS 2008-2009

CHAIRMAN:

G J THOMPSON. BEC (HONS), FAICD

Graeme Thompson was appointed to the Board in February 2004 and elected Chairman in October 2007. He brings over 30 years experience in the financial services sector, where he held various senior positions with the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) and the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). Mr Thompson is a member of the Audit, Remuneration and Nomination Committees and the chairman and a director of various organisations.

DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:

P R LEIGHTON. B FIN ADMIN, MBA, MAICD, FCIS, AFACHSE, AIMM, JP

Rex Leighton was appointed to the Board in February 2004. He brings more than 20 years experience as a senior executive in the health and aged care industries. Mr Leighton is also a board member of Aged and Community Services NSW and ACT and is a member of the Remuneration and Nomination Committees.

MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CEO:

A D RICHARDSON. BSC, LLB, MBA, FAIM, GAICD

Andrew Richardson was appointed to the Board in June 2006. He brings 20 years senior executive experience to HWNS. Mr Richardson has been involved for many years with organisations that provide services to people with a disability, both as a volunteer and parent. He is a director of National Disability Services and Down Syndrome NSW and is a member of the Balance Sheet & Funds Management Committee.

M M ROBINS. BCOM, FCA

Michael Robins joined the Board in November 1994 and served as Chairman from 2000 to 2007. He has extensive commercial experience gained as a partner in a medium-sized accounting firm. Mr Robins is chairman of the Audit Committee and a member of the Balance Sheet & Funds Management Committee.

M J F FOX. AM

Michael Fox was appointed to the Board in November 2001. He holds a number of qualifications relevant to his extensive architectural and planning experience, gained both locally and overseas. Since 1972 he has participated in and directed a number of government and community programs and projects involving both the aged and disabled. His consultancy services are concerned with achieving more accessible environments and opportunities for all community members. Mr Fox is a member of the Executive of Rehabilitation International having served as President from June 2004 to August 2008.

P J FRIEDRICH. JP, BBUS (UTS)

Phillipa Friedrich was appointed to the Board in October 2004. Her professional activities have been in tax and accounting for small business with special interest in the private medical sector. Mrs Friedrich has community interests which include Coast Care and volunteer bush care in her local area. Her association with HWNS spans over 30 years. She is a member of the Audit Committee.

J C KAHLER. BA

Janet Kahler was appointed to the Board in February 2001. She has deep experience and knowledge of the welfare and disability sectors, having worked for National Disability Services (formerly ACROD) for 20 years, including 12 years as Executive Director of this peak body. Mrs Kahler currently manages her own bookshop in Canberra and is involved in many local community organisations.



C D LEVY. FAICD, FAIM

Chris Levy was appointed to the Board in September 1999. He has over 45 years experience in enterprises associated with running businesses including marketing, executive coaching and franchising. For eight years he was Chairman of the charity organisation Quest for Life. Mr Levy is Chairman of the Balance Sheet & Funds Management Committee and a member of the Remuneration and Nomination Committees.

R C MADDEN. BSC, PHD, FIAA

Richard Madden joined the Board in March 2006. He has an extensive record in public administration, including a period in charge of the Federal Government's disability services programs. Dr Madden is a Fellow of the Institute of Actuaries of Australia. His awards include the ACROD President's Service Award. He is a member of the Balance Sheet & Funds Management Committee.

T C SAUNDERS. MAICD

Trevor Saunders was appointed to the Board in June 2006. He brings over 30 years senior executive experience. Mr Saunders has built a career on brand management and operational excellence, from McDonalds in operations and franchising to restructuring and business start up roles with Blockbuster, Faulding Pharmaceuticals and Virgin. Trevor has owned several successful businesses including a Burger King Franchise. He was the inaugural President of the Burger King Franchisee Association.

D M TUCKERMAN. OAM, LLB

David Tuckerman joined the Board in July 1991 and served as Vice President from 1997 to 2005. He retired as a practising solicitor in June 2009 and has provided pro bono legal work for House With House Steps from 1964 to 2009. Mr Tuckerman is also a member of the service clubs organisation Lions Clubs International, of which he is a Past District Governor.

FINANCIALS

Financially 2009 was a difficult year despite ongoing revenue growth. Like many others in the sector HWNS could not avoid the fallout from the economic downturn during the year. As a result it was unable to achieve an operating surplus and finished the year well below expectations. Apart from the depressed trading conditions, the overall result was adversely impacted by significantly lower investment returns and protracted delays in securing funded properties for several new services. In contrast to this, the income from the supporter base in the form of donations and bequests was again better than the previous year.

Business enterprises revenue grew a modest 5%, restrained by the lack of growth in the Hunter Region. However ongoing pressure on margins eliminated these revenue gains. Both the Northern NSW (horticultural) and Western NSW (biscuit manufacturing) regions defied the trend to deliver positive contributions. Despite the difficult trading conditions a steady level of employment opportunities was maintained for people with a disability.

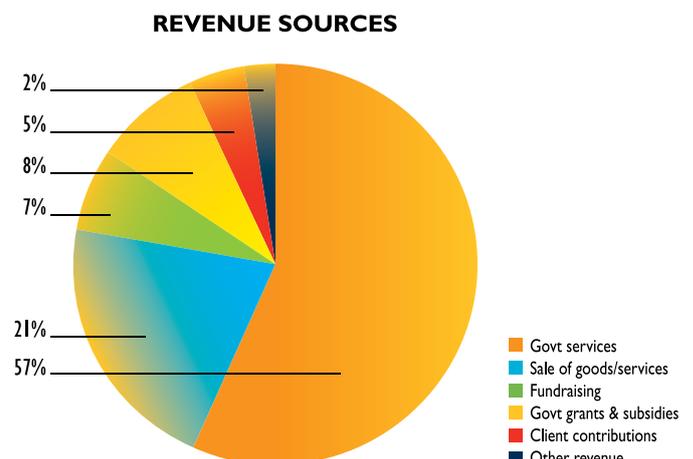
Community support services continued to grow across all regions with a 31% increase in the number of clients receiving HWNS services throughout NSW and Queensland. Revenue grew 23% over the previous year and the organisation was successful in securing funding to establish new services in its six regions throughout NSW and Queensland.

The revenue from fundraising activities decreased by 15% in comparison to 2008. However the overall impact was contained by holding costs at a similar level to the previous year. Corporate overheads increased during the year due to the continued implementation of various aspects of the strategic plan to **strengthen** and **grow**. These overheads represent less than 6% of revenue.

The organisation's future remains sound with improving financial trends, a strong balance sheet containing minimal debt, positive cash flows from operating activities and solid growth in revenue streams. The dedication of the staff and employees of House With No Steps also continues to build capacity and mutually beneficial relationships with the relevant funding bodies and business sector.

The new financial year will present further challenges as HWNS continues to restructure and invest in support services to achieve its strategic objectives. A significant increase in revenue for the coming year has again been targeted. If achieved, this should result in a modest full year operating surplus. This target is not without risk in the current climate as HWNS continues to expand its service delivery in support of people with a disability. A reduction in the funds position is again anticipated as HWNS utilises current funding in the delivery of its services. Despite this the overall liquidity position is expected to strengthen in line with an improvement in market conditions during the year.

Wayne Sankey
Chief Financial Officer



\$000's

2005 2006 2007 2008 2009

INCOME STATEMENT

Total revenue	52,750	55,557	57,166	68,852	78,428
Operating surplus/(deficit)*	(1,353)	(642)	(996)	489	(4,237)
Net surplus/(deficit)	867	2,066	362	2,914	(1,705)

BALANCE SHEET

Current assets	4,690	6,502	10,987	20,112	17,137
Non-current assets	23,922	24,795	26,122	26,359	28,591
Total assets	28,611	31,296	37,109	46,470	45,728
Current liabilities	6,731	7,294	12,425	19,601	20,485
Non-current liabilities	712	753	886	1,030	1,011
Total liabilities	7,443	8,047	13,311	20,631	21,495
Net assets	21,168	23,249	23,798	25,839	24,232
Funds and reserves	21,168	23,249	23,798	25,839	24,232

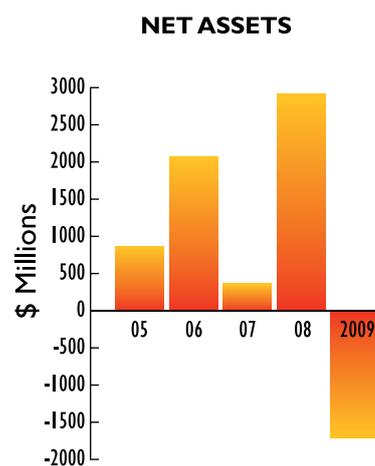
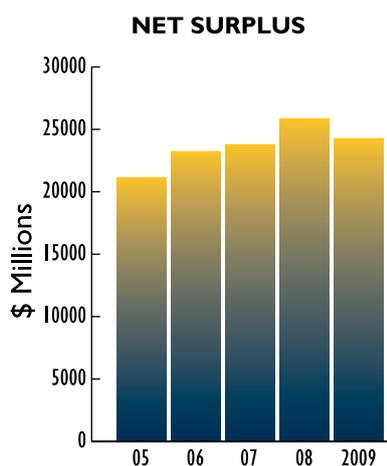
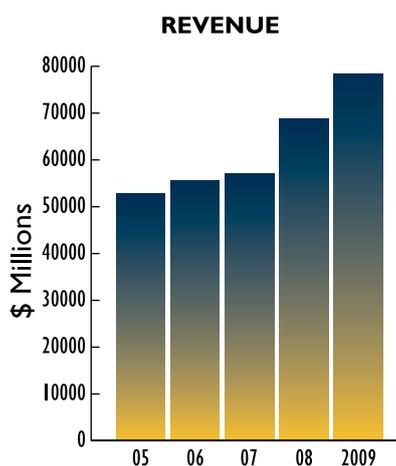
CASH FLOW

Operating activities	1,317	3,472	6,697	10,335	1,695
Investing activities	(1,328)	(2,357)	(1,776)	(2,529)	(4,130)
Financing activities	(56)	(24)	(30)	(530)	(2)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	(67)	1,092	4,890	7,276	(2,437)
Cash at the end of the financial year	362	1,453	6,344	13,619	11,182
Investments	2,324	3,217	3,518	2,201	2,235

REVENUE SOURCES

Govt services	23,168	25,961	28,209	35,775	44,510
Sale of goods/services	13,946	13,973	14,311	16,072	16,630
Fundraising	8,100	7,185	7,846	5,904	5,209
Govt grants & subsidies	4,134	4,618	5,541	6,243	6,707
Client contributions	2,542	2,597	3,423	2,896	3,605
Other revenue	861	1,224	830	1,962	1,766
	52,750	55,557	60,160	68,852	78,428

*note: operating surplus excludes investment income, bequests, capital grants and other items considered abnormal to our operating activities.





Making the most of our abilities

www.hwns.com.au

REGIONAL CENTRES

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NORTHERN NSW REGION

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SOUTHERN NSW REGION

Regional General Manager: Jennifer Mollett
100–102 Auburn Street, WOLLONGONG NSW 2500
Phone: 02 4221 0300 Fax: 02 4227 1042
Email: southernsw@hwns.com.au

SYDNEY REGION

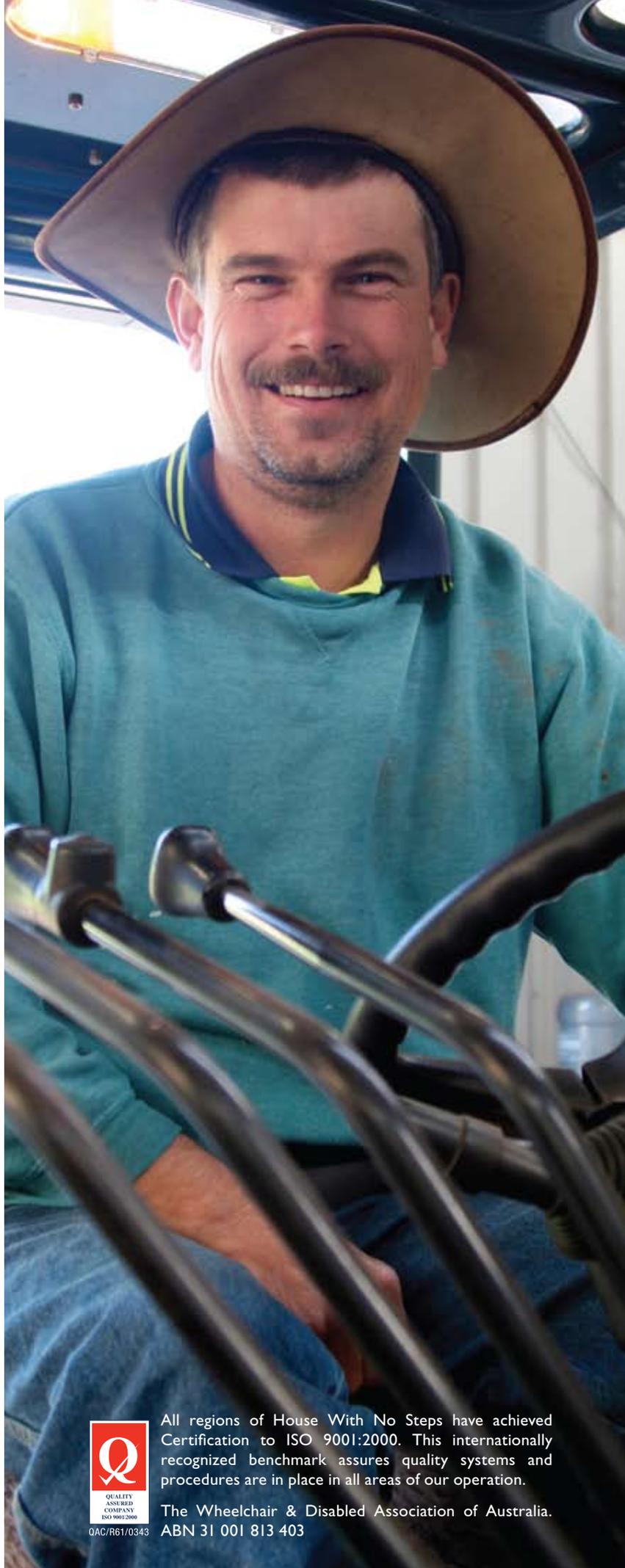
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Email: queensland@hwns.com.au



QAC/R61/0343

All regions of House With No Steps have achieved Certification to ISO 9001:2000. This internationally recognized benchmark assures quality systems and procedures are in place in all areas of our operation.

The Wheelchair & Disabled Association of Australia.
ABN 31 001 813 403