



# Araluen Annual Report 2021

Chair Report from Dr Larissa Roeske

In 2021, the extended lockdowns and public health restrictions created immense disruption for Araluen. For a second year COVID impacted on our operations. We continued to face unprecedented challenges to important services for our community. Many organisations in our sector have struggled, unable to operate anywhere near normal capacity. Supporting our participants' face-to-face interaction, and building connections with participants, families and carers is at the core of Araluen's work. The constraints on these services have been severe. The lockdowns have taken a heavy toll on everyone. In acknowledging all our staff, particularly those balancing home-duties, care-duties or living alone, we extend our deepest gratitude for their extraordinary commitment, care and resilience throughout the pandemic.

Araluen's leadership team have helped the organisation to navigate this wave of the pandemic. The safety, health and well-being of our participants, staff and wider community have been our primary focus. The Leadership Team under Tamara Cattach's guidance have led with courage and integrity, rising to meet many challenges including adapting the way we deliver participant services, workforce planning, remote working, and the mandatory vaccination of all Araluen staff. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is also changing the way Araluen operates and the supports we're offering. Our service plan is designed to maximise the opportunities and reduce the complexities presented under the Scheme, whilst maintaining Araluen's high standards of quality assurance and safety. In a year of great change and disruption some achievements stand out. We used the past year to create new online opportunities for support and meaningful connection, introduced new services, expanded our supported accommodation services, and

were quick to recognise and respond when we faced the real threat of COVID-19 in our midst. We thank our Executive Leaders for their tireless efforts, outstanding commitment and innovative leadership.

This year the Board bid farewell to Trevor Norman and to Linda Peterson, both served as Directors and as Treasurer, Company Secretary and Deputy Chair of the Board respectively. We acknowledge their dedication over many years of invaluable service to Araluen.

We were delighted to welcome Ray Hair to the Board. Ray brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role of Treasurer and Chair of the Finance Committee. Also, we thank Dan Gleeson for taking on the role of Company Secretary.

On behalf of Araluen, we are deeply grateful for the continued support of our members, volunteers and all those who support Araluen.

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The Board played an integral role governing through this difficult time and I thank them for their dedication and service.

Araluen's financial position is stable however the impact of the pandemic means it is necessary to continue to optimise our business operations with responsive and prudent management.

We remain forward looking as we are closer to the end than the beginning, having reached the vaccination milestones required for the careful easing of restrictions. We will focus on the path ahead, taking the lessons from the past year to spur recovery and the next phase of Araluen's future. One lesson we will take forward with us is to find time for re-connection and celebration of our achievements big and small. There is much to do and this promises to be a busy time. I am confident Araluen's Chief Executive, the Executive Leadership Team and staff are equipped for the Araluen of tomorrow, as together we take the next steps to repair, and recover for a stronger Araluen. We look with great hope for a better year, and one in which we will strive to continue to inspire, support and empower people to have great lives.



**Larissa Roeske**