

AMIDA

Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation

Annual Report 2011



Advocacy, Self-Advocacy, Rights, Accessibility, and Community Living for People with a Disability

1st Floor, Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000

Telephone: 9650 2722 Fax 9654 8575

Email: amida@amida.org.au

Web: www.amida.org.au

AMIDA
Annual General Meeting
13th September 2011
AGENDA

- 10.00 Welcome
Present/Apologies
Minutes of the Previous AGM
Chairperson's Report
Activities Report – AMIDA advocacy, SARU, ARG
Treasurer's Report
Chair is handed over to Returning Officer (16 vacancies)
- 11.00 Colleen Pearce – Public Advocate
- 12.00 Lunch
- 1.00 Close of meeting



Norrie Blythman handed meeting to Returning Officer, Esther Harris.

Esther Harris thanked AMIDA for inviting her to again act as Returning Officer.

She declared 16 vacancies.

5 nominations had been received prior to the meeting: Luke Stone, Ray Groves, David Banfield, Cynthia Pilli, Norrie Blythman.

All elected.

Esther Harris called for nominations to fill the remaining positions.

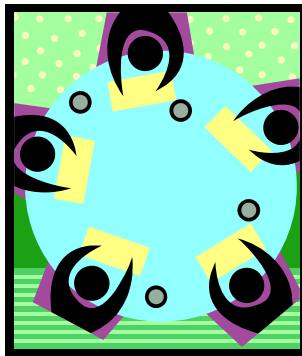
Steve Reidy-Croft was nominated by Jane Hauser, Mary Reid seconded. All in favour. Steve Reidy-Croft elected.

We now have 6 committee members.

At the next Committee meeting we can co-opt other members. Norrie will continue as Chairperson until a new Chairperson is elected.

Norrie Blythman continues with the meeting, and introduces Mary Reid who spoke about the 'Housing Know Your Rights in CRUs Training.

Lunch was followed by close of meeting at 1.00pm



Chairpersons Report
David Banfield (Chairperson) &
Norrie Blythman (Deputy Chairperson)

One more year of AMIDA success. It's getting better and better each year.

The federal government provided an increase in our core funding up to \$115,000 from the start of July 2010.

The Housing Know Your Rights in CRUs project provided copies of the DVD and Booklet to all CRUs in Victoria last year the training for the residents in CRUs was begun. This year the project received extra financial support and has been extended.

The Raising Our Voices Radio Show continues with presenters organizing shows on Living in hostels, a Reinforce Update, The Pacific Disability Forum in New Zealand, Valid & Reinforce 'Shut In – closing institutions' Campaign, Myki Ticketing and Myki Sunday Pass for free public transport, Peter Waters book 'Wobbly Old Road', Housing & Support Issues leading up to State and Federal elections, Having A Say conference and Highlights of the year.

We continue to be a part of VDAN, Victorian Disability Advocacy Network, with Norrie Blythman and Gabrielle Dickinson attending as AMIDA representatives.

This is our 3rd year as lead group in the SARB (Self Advocacy Re-Born) consortium which manages the SARU - Self Advocacy Resource Unit. The four SARB members are Start Community Art, AMIDA, Reinforce and Brain Injury Matters. For AMIDA, our role has included managing the finances, employing staff, attending meetings with the funding body and being represented on the Project Management Group. The SARU continues to be successful and busy! This year training went into full swing using the completed "Getting into the Act" DVD on the Disability Act for Self Advocacy Groups. We were successful in obtaining additional funds to train self advocacy groups using the "Getting into the Act" DVD. This part of the project has now begun.

Also SARB applied for and was successful in getting funding to create 2 or 3 new information resources on the Disability Act for people with a disability. The project is called the Act Resources Group (ARG) and we have set up a web site and made DVDs about the Disability Act. The initial project has gained additional funding so we can extend the work.

This year we were audited on our performance against the applicable Disability Service Standards by FaHCSIA, and we received a very positive outcome on our audit. We were found to meet the Disability Services Standards and were recognised on our good practice, in particular our 'ability to target information to a wide range of clients, and especially via client involvement in monthly 3CR radio show.' Particular comment was also made of our 'encouragement and involvement of clients in individual and service planning (50% of the Committee of Management is people with disabilities)'.

Furthermore I would like to thank the other Committee members for all their efforts and support throughout the year, and also the workers for the great work they have done.

David Banfield
Chairperson
Chairperson
AMIDA

Norrie Blythman
Deputy
AMIDA



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

David Banfield
Norrie Blythman
Stephen Reidy-Crofts
Luke Stone
Kay Forstner
Ray Groves
Cynthia Pilli
Brenda Lacey

Chairperson
Deputy Chairperson
Treasurer
Deputy Treasurer
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member
Committee Member

AMIDA WORKERS

Gabrielle Dickinson	Housing Rights/Coordinator
Pauline Williams	Housing Rights/Coordinator
Pam Geoghegan	Housing Rights
Koula Sarimichaelidis	Administration/Finance
Gab Reade	Radio Technical Producer
Mary Reid	Project Worker CRU Rights
Jane Hauser	Peer Educator/Advisor
Amanda Hiscoe	Peer Educator/Actor
Paul Drew	Peer Educator/Advisor
Sue McCauley	Project Coordination
Nadia Shaw	CRU Rights support worker

Self Advocacy Resource Unit

Sue Smith	SARU Project Worker
Jacqui Ward	SARU Project Worker
Jan Coles	SARU Project Worker
Sharon Jones	Conference Support Worker
Michael Buckley	Film maker and Project Worker ARG
Peters Waters	Project worker
Lisa Brumtis	Actor/Peer advisor
Neil Cameron	Peer Advisor
Sheridan Campbell	Peer Advisor
Larissa MacFarlane	Peer Advisor
Anita Solenaars	Peer Advisor
Andrew Maurice	Peer Advisor
Mario Filintatzis	Peer Advisor



Activities Report – 20010/11

Systemic Advocacy

Human Rights Charter and Human Rights Convention



We provided support to other advocacy groups writing a response to the review of the Human Rights Charter, resulting in a strongly supported submission. As well we wrote a submission into the subsequent Review of the Charter to defend and protect rights framework in the face of a new government promising to abolish it.

Raising Our Voices radio program produced a show on the convention and how people can use it. We also applied successfully through SARU, for funding to create a kit in plain English on the convention.

We contributed to a written submission on the Law Reform Commission review of Guardianship and the rights of people with a disability.

Affordable Housing for people with a disability

We had membership on an advisory committee which built a comprehensive list of housing models. We also wrote to the Office of Housing citing the Human Rights Charter of Rights and Responsibilities in relation to the lack of single occupancy housing.

Shut In Campaign

This campaign is lobbying to shut all institutions. AMIDA has a representative, Jane Houser, on this campaign group. The campaign has now produced a website with information, and we have produced a radio show and podcast on the campaign.

Access to housing

AMIDA and SARU promoted a community arts project that involved people with disability in creating an interactive art piece exploring issues people with a disability and others face in accessing housing. The new 'Access to

Premises Standards' information and information on access in hostels was included in the AMIDA NEWS.

Supported Accommodation

We continue to provide feedback on the impact of announced new places in supported accommodation in relation to the overall unmet demand. We also contributed in the survey by advocacy group re National Disability Insurance Scheme development. We produced two radio shows on this topic and wrote a submission on the initial report of the Productivity Commission.

Information gathered in our community education activities is used when lobbying government. We continued to participate in the "Creative Think Tank" about ways to promote best practice in supported accommodation, and we continue to attend meetings of this group to support a model of best practice for promotion and report to the wider community.

We participated in new research on the gap in quality between policy and practice in supported accommodation, and produced a radio program with people who have a disability and are residents of Aged Care Hostels.

We also made a contribution to Auditor Generals Review of the Department of Human Services.



Self Advocacy

Tenancy Rights

We were successful in obtaining an extension of funding for our campaign to inform and empower people living in Community Residential Units. Presentations this year continued in group houses, following on from the mail out of around 1000 booklet/DVDs to all the Community Residential Units in Victoria. The DVD explains residential rights, how to ask for your rights and how to get advocacy support. Training has now been provided to 150 residents at 36 Community Residential units and the majority of these sessions have taken place in the country Victoria.

Raising Our Voices radio show

Throughout 2010/11 we have continued to support people with a disability having the opportunity to Raise Our Voices on the radio show on 3CR. This is a self advocacy project which also tackles systemic issues. The show goes to air on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 6pm and is supported by a dedicated team of broadcasters from Reinforce and AMIDA. Topics this year have included:

- Living in hostels
- Reinforce Update
- The Pacific Disability Forum in New Zealand
- Valid & Reinforce 'Shut In – closing institutions' Campaign
- Revisiting people with a disability in the Solomon Islands
- Myki Ticketing and Myki Sunday Pass for free public transport
- Peter Waters book 'Wobbly Old Road'
- Housing & Support Issues leading up to State and Federal elections
- Having A Say conference
- Highlights of the year
- Radiothon show



Thanks to everyone who participated and aired issues important to people with a disability. There are always many people with a disability directly involved in the planning, presentation and interviewing for the show. Thanks also to Gab Reade, our wonderful technical producer over the year. Thanks also to wonderful 3CR. Copies of the shows are available on CD. Shows can be listened to live on your computer if your

radio doesn't pick up 3CR. Just go to www.3cr.org.au . We also have podcasts of the show on our new website www.amida.org.au

Information, Advice, Referral and Individual Advocacy

During 2010/11 we continued to provide information, advice, referral and individual advocacy to people with a disability. We were able to provide information, advice and referral to 27 people with a disability and community organisations. We provided secondary consultation to 8 services. 258 people were provided with information as part of education sessions

including 150 residents of CRU's. 26 people were provided with direct individual advocacy.

Networking

AMIDA continues with its involvement with Victoria Disability Advocacy Network (VDAN) and this year was represented on the co-ordinating committee of VDAN. We are also met with the Victorian advocacy groups at their network VICRAN to encourage them to build relationships with the self-advocacy sector.

Disseminating information about AMIDA and improving access to AMIDA

We again produced 4 newsletters and have tried to include important information that we receive from government and the community as well as our own activities. Thanks to all the members who made contributions as these are most welcome. The newsletters are on our web site www.amida.org.au

AMIDA has developed a new website, which will provide more up to date information on our work and useful information from the community – www.amida.org.au

The Self Advocacy Resource Unit



As lead agency in the consortium which manages the SARU, our annual report includes a report from the SARU. Much has been done to continue to establish the service and to work on

the job of developing and strengthening self advocacy groups for people with intellectual disability, people with acquired brain injury and people with complex communication support needs. AMIDA would like to take this opportunity to thank our Self Advocacy Re Born partners BIM (Brain Injury Matters), Reinforce, and Start Community Art.



SARU produced DVD and paper newsletters and e memos. We also produced DVDs about the SARU and the Project Management Group. The SARU website is up and contains accessible information. There is a SARU facebook page. www.saru.net.au



We also produced a DVD and Booklet called 'Getting into the Act' which contains information on the Disability Act for self advocacy groups. Training on this kit was developed this year and is now being delivered to self-advocacy groups. Information will also soon be provided via our new touchscreen kiosk.

We have now identified 23 self-advocacy groups and this year provided active support to 13 groups. Another 6 groups are provided with information, and support to attend SARU forums, training and events. We are in the process of making contact with the newer groups.

Networking events continued this year to get self-advocacy groups across Victoria together to meet and map out the self-advocacy groups.



On 26th November 2010 one hundred self-advocates from all over Victoria met at the Melbourne Town Hall. The groups talked about the issues and problems that they are facing. On May 30th representatives from self-advocacy groups across Victoria met with Arthur Rogers, Director of Disability Services and he has agreed

to continue these meetings regularly.

We also held the first SARU Road show in Gippsland where self-advocates got the chance to network with the Mayor, CEO and members of the La Trobe City Council. Self-advocates gave presentations about their groups and discusses proposals for supporting self-advocacy in the La Trobe Valley.





SARU has been encouraging self-advocacy groups to develop their networks and contacts with other self-advocacy groups. In April Jane Hauser from Reinforce, Paul Drew from “New Wave” and Sue Smith the worker at SARU travelled to New Zealand. We went there to learn about how self-advocacy in NZ works. There are some exciting things happening in

NZ and we learnt a lot.

We ran three information sessions at the Having A Say conference, "What Cheeses Me Off" "Have a Go At Facebook" and Human Rights Who Wants to be a Millionaire". Lots of people attended the sessions which went really well. If you would like to have a copy of some of our training sessions like “Have a go at Public speaking”, you can go to the SARU website and download them for free.



Many Videos have been converted to DVD and the resources we have bought from overseas are growing. We have provided groups with access to badge makers, audio recorders, TV/DVD player, laminator and printer, interpreters, meeting spaces, speakers, support workers, accessible information, and sponsorship to conferences, travel costs and accommodation. We also assisted with the script development for the creation of the resource on good meetings practice for self-advocacy groups. We are continuing to provide information to advisors/facilitators of self-advocacy and are developing a discussion paper on best practise.

Act Resources Group (ARG)

Another of the projects AMIDA auspices for the Self Advocacy Re Born Consortium is the Act Resources Group. This group has, with its project worker, Michael Buckley, created information on the Victorian Disability Act 2006 and the rights contained in it, for distribution to the Victorian community. The resource development includes – many DVD's, and a new website. www.actresources.com.au

Treasurers Report Stephen Reidy-Crofts

AMIDA finished the financial year 2010/11 in a healthy position. Our reports here are broken up into three sections. The AMIDA-Federal report is basically our Federal funding for advocacy. We finished the year with a small profit of \$626 and retained profits of \$32,975. This includes provisions for two of our workers who are both eligible to take long service leave now.

The AMIDA-State report contains all our funding from the State government. This includes the SARU, Act Resources project and the CRU rights project. It also includes a grant the SARU received from State Trustees. For the year we show a loss of \$45,756 but this reflects the fact that we spent almost all of the remaining establishment funds this year, although we received the funding three years ago. We had one off funding to last two years for the Act Resources project some of which remains in retained profits of \$277,163 including an additional grant for both Act Resources and the CRU rights project.

The AMIDA-Local report consists primarily of income and expenditure of a City of Melbourne community information support grant and income and wages expenditure for financial administration paid to AMIDA from the State grants. Donations are also held in this account. The retained profits for this account are \$57,332.

Overall the financial position of AMIDA, and the projects it supports, is a healthy one and we are in a position to meet all our obligations.

