

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



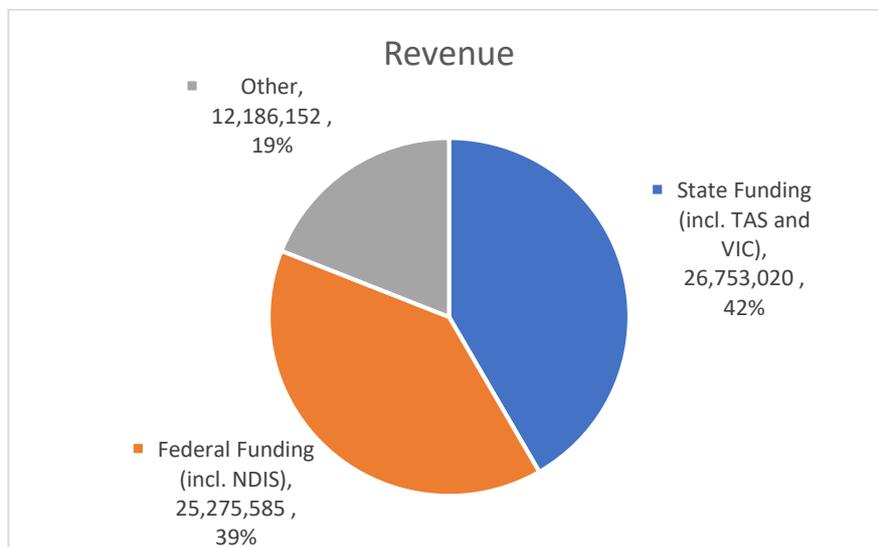
## Chair and CEO's Report

We are pleased to present a condensed Annual Report for 2019 featuring the highlights and financials over the past 12 months. It has been another busy year for the organisation in supporting people who choose our services to achieve their goals and live connected lives in the communities that we serve.

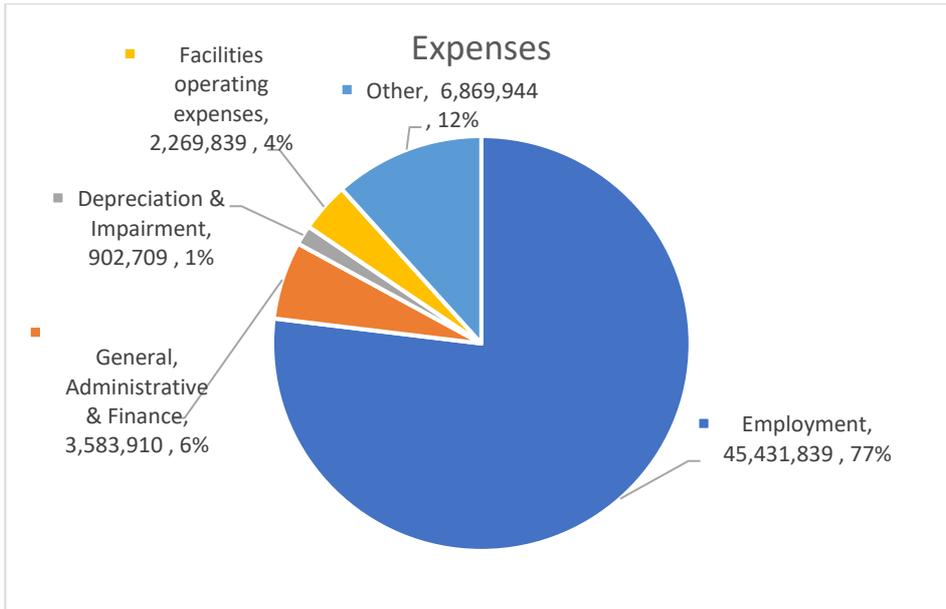
We have continued to improve the processes that support our Board being responsive to the needs of participants through regular consumer group reports to the Board. This important feedback has led to many improvements to services across the organisation. I would like to thank Peter Cox, our current consumer representative for his hard work and commitment to this role and SpeakOut Advocacy for their support in independently facilitating the consumer forums across Tasmania.

Oak Possability delivers more than 1.5 million hours of support over 2018-19 to more than 900 people with disability, as part of our mission of creating a world where everyone has the opportunity to pursue their potential.

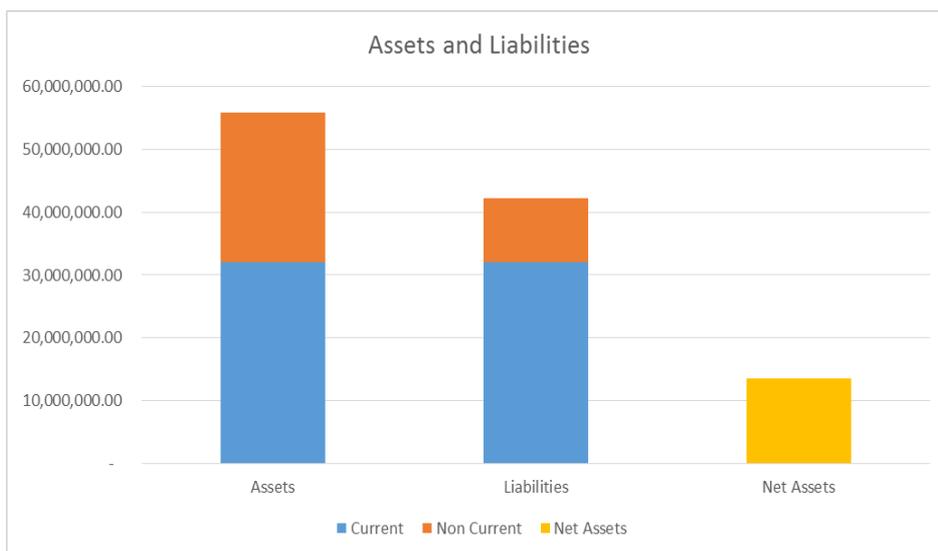
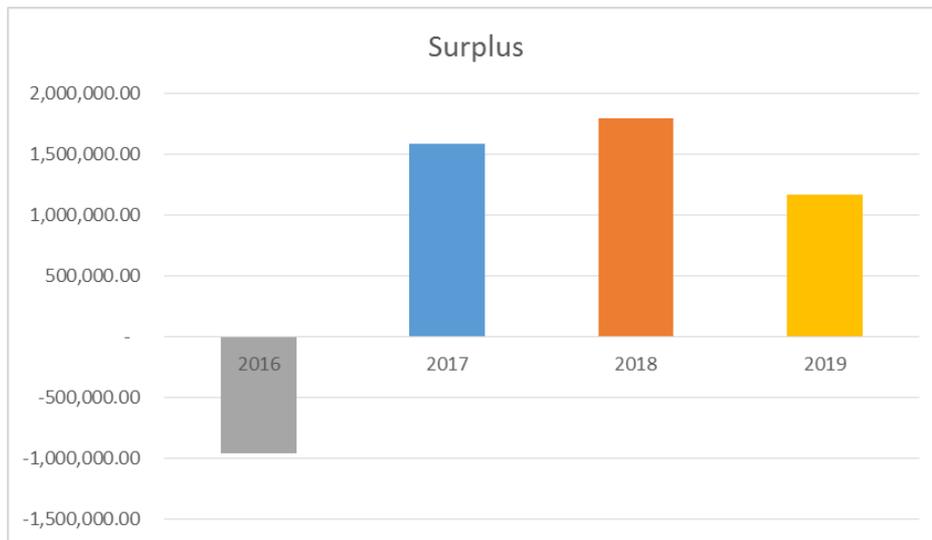
From this support and our other business activities, the Oak Possability (OP) Group (Oak Tasmania and Optia Limited) returned a surplus of \$1.2 million for the 2019 financial year, down slightly from \$1.7 million in 2018. This result included a number of one off events including the finalisation of the sale of Tahune Fields Nursery and a transfer of mobile assets to Oak Possability from the Victorian Government as part of the Victorian services transfer. Further information in relation to the financial statements will be available on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Association website.



Combined Revenue 2018/2019 Financial Year for Oak Possability



**Combined Expenses 2018/2019 Financial Year for Oak Possability**



**Combined Assets and Liabilities 2018/2019 for Oak Possability**

## **Consumer Advocacy**

We seek to promote self-advocacy by participants through bi-monthly house meetings and Regional Consumer Forums, independently facilitated by an advocacy organisation. In Tasmania, we partner with SpeakOut Advocacy and with VALID in Victoria. Both these forums provide opportunities for participants to raise issues and discuss matters that are important to them. Feedback from the Consumer Forums is collated and presented by a participant representative to each Board meeting.

We have also introduced a new system to survey participants and families to gain their feedback on their experiences with our services and to help us to learn where we can improve. Focus groups were held with both participants and families to gain their input into the survey design and methodologies.

## **Sector Advocacy**

In line with our strategic objective of being a catalyst for change, Oak Possability has continued to advocate on issues of importance to the people we serve. As a larger participant in the community sector, we contribute proactively to policy development and importantly to ensure the final stages of the roll out of the NDIS scheme enables choice, ensures value, minimises complexity and delivers better outcomes for participants and their families.

To this end Oak Possability has become a member of the Alliance20 a group of national providers which collectively support around 75,000 people with a disability in every State and Territory, and has more than 30,000 staff working directly in disability services.

We have also continued our membership of National Disability Services and have supported their Buyability program to promote businesses to buy products and services from social enterprises that employ people with disability.

We have also participated actively in supporting the work of the employment taskforce that was established in late 2018 to support NDIS participants to seek and gain employment. To prepare ourselves and improve how we provide employment and employment pathways for people living with disability, we have engaged with Dr Peter Smith from the Centre for Disability and Employment Research and Practice. He undertook a scoping study across our social enterprise to trial customised employment in our social enterprises and our other services. We were thrilled to have received a \$350,000 grant to continue the roll out and pilot of our customised employment program in partnership with Dr Smith and the Centre based in Melbourne.

## **Royal Commission**

Importantly this year, the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability was announced and is now well underway. Oak Possability welcomes the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

As I am sure you are aware, we take violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with disability incredibly seriously. Safeguarding the rights of our clients is a fundamental part of our culture, systems and processes. We will be continuing to communicate to our community on the work of the Commission and how Oak Possability is supporting its work to ensure that the Royal Commission leads to meaningful change in the Australian community.

## Annual Highlights

### Oakdale Enterprises

Oakdale Enterprises is part of the Oak Possability group and comprises a number of social enterprises in Southern Tasmania, with commercial activities including:

- Timber processing;
- Paper recycling and security shredding;
- Production of potting mix;
- Production of firewood, kindling packs and wood fire pellet;
- Sewing services; and
- Pack and Mail services.

More than 200 people are employed across four sites in Hobart and the Huon Valley, with 107 supported employees. Oakdale Enterprises comprising Timber, Shredding, Pack & Mail and Sewing experienced a challenging year financially returning a combined loss just over \$1 million.

### Neville Smith Forest Products partnership

Oakdale Enterprises' timber division has forged a long term strategic partnership with Tasmania's largest timber manufacturer, Neville Smith Forest Products (NSFP).

Under the agreement, NSFP will provide any timber shortfalls if they arise from our current timber suppliers, securing our long term timber supply needs. In addition, NSFP will purchase all Tasmanian Oak wholesale timber and wood pellets produced at the Warrane site.

We continue to grow relationships with Industry Partners, Hydrowood, SmartOAK and Neville Smith Forest Products



*Image: The Oakdale Timber and Neville Smith Forest Products teams at the Oakdale production centre.*

## Enterprise Agreement

A new enterprise agreement was finalised in 2019 with our Tasmanian workforce and their unions which now bring together the two enterprise agreements that pre-dated the merger between Optia Limited and Oak Tasmania in 2016.

The agreement provides the flexibility needed to respond to participants' choices and best practice working conditions, such as paid days for training and development, and special leave for domestic violence and emergencies.

The agreement seeks to increase permanent jobs in the organisation by enabling casual employees who work regular shifts for three months to be converted to a permanent position. An innovative system of flexible banding of permanent working hours provides important flexibility in rostering, while also ensuring regular wages for employees. The enterprise agreement ballot was a resounding success with 30 per cent of employees voting, and 96 per cent voting 'yes'. The agreement was certified by Fair Work Australia in September 2019 and implementation occurred soon after.

## Institute - Sharing knowledge

The Institute has continued to gain pace following the inaugural *Building Opportunities and Building Communities* conference held late last December with strong local, national and international presenters. This was the official launch of the Institute which showcased examples of contemporary best practice and research from around the world. More than 100 professionals from a wide range of organisations attended the event, held at the University of Tasmania in December 2018.

Speakers included leading national and international leaders in the sector, including Keynote speaker Professor Christine Bigby from La Trobe University and Dr Elizabeth Hughes, Clinical Director for the Institute for Applied Behaviour in Los Angeles, California. Subsequently, there were several approaches from third parties to collaborate and engage in research and training.

Thank you to our sponsors – University of Tasmania, HESTA, Accesspay and Nexus Inc. disability services.



Image: Conference speakers included Mainstream and Me community educators (from right), Ian Barry, Genevieve Hooker and Sonia Hume, pictured with Julie Butler from SpeakOut Advocacy.

## **Child and Youth Services**

Some children in Out of Home Care have complex support needs which means they cannot be cared for by foster families. Possability provides a nurturing and secure environment, with specialist support to meet their individual needs.

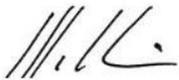
Possability works with some of Australia's most vulnerable and high risk children in therapeutic, one to one rostered care under a trauma informed and attachment informed model. For staff their first step is to build safe and healthy relationships and attachments to the young people and create safety for the children by putting in place consistent and predicable routines. Over the past year we have supported 35 children and young people, several children successfully transitioning to family or foster care.

We would like to thank the support of the Board directors, all of whom serve in a voluntary capacity, and we thank them for their continuing dedication. All directors bring a wealth of experience and commitment to the organisation and drive the strategic direction of the business. We welcomed Pam White from Victoria to our Board directors.

A special thanks to David Mazengarb for his considerable efforts as the Chair of the Finance Risk and Audit Committee, Kat Brient for Chairing the Governance Committee and Dr Julie Rimes who has taken up the Chair role of the Institute and to all members of these Committees who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to monitor the organisation in line with our strategic direction.

We would like to extend our appreciation to the staff who work every day to support clients to achieve their goals and aspirations. Not only do the staff of our organisation bring their professionalism and skill to their work, they also bring their compassion and motivation to achieve our purpose.

Finally, we would also like to thank the Executive Team and all employees for their ongoing support and hard work.



Brian Scullin  
Chairman



Drew Beswick  
Chief Executive Officer