



**Early Childhood
Australia**

A voice for young children

Early Childhood Australia – Tasmania Branch Inc

President's Report 2011

I proudly present my third (and final) Annual Presidents report to members of the Early Childhood Australia - Tasmania Branch.

We have endured another year of change, albeit good change with the Early Years Framework being introduced and helped along with some excellent training provided by ECA at national level gaining funds to roll out training across Australia. We all now wait for the final draft of the National Quality Framework and look forward to participating in the successful implementation across our sector.

Our representative on the National ECA Board, Kathryn Laing has provided timely reports to National Board on our States progress and she has also disseminated board reports to us. The National CEO and President are now providing a report to all members following Board meetings.

A major part of our advocacy role this year has seen the formation of an Industry Skills Plan, working in conjunction with Skills Tasmania to develop key strategies to support the intent of the National Reform Agenda which gives us the opportunity for improvement in the sector with a more highly qualified workforce. We have also participated in tendering for Productivity Plus Places for our members to access training that is affordable and tailored to their needs.

With the Child Care Unit (CCU) we continue to offer scholarships to members to upgrade their qualifications. Over the years there has been an accumulation of unclaimed monies so to use this effectively we negotiated with the CCU to organise a training package for educators involved in outside school hours programmes (OSHC). I am pleased to announce that we are now ready to roll out this programme which should be of great value to all OSHC professionals.

We now have a subcommittee producing regular newsletters to update our state members on what is going on-these newsletters are always posted on our Website.

ECA- Tas Branch continues to recognise students who will become vital members of our profession. We once again presented awards to students at the University of Tasmania, the Skills Institute and the Polytechnic.

A subcommittee from our Executive is currently working on arrangements for a state-wide forum to be held in Launceston on November 12th. This forum is being developed around a theme of leadership and change-Stephanie Rubock is busy co-ordinating this project to ensure its success. Our National CEO and President will be attending this forum. One of the aims of our forum is to attract non members in the hope that they would realise the benefit of being an ECA Member.

As part of our advocacy role we have a subcommittee developing a Branch Reconciliation Action Plan. At our last state-wide meeting in Devonport members were given the opportunity to help input this important work.

We recently introduced a standing agenda for our regional meetings-this appears to be working well with suggestions coming in on improvements that will make it extremely worthwhile for our regular regional meetings.

Our Branch now has a Branch Handbook packed full of information for committee members to help them understand the governance model that we operate under and it has an A-Z of the issues that we need to be aware of in regard to Branch matters.

During the year our elected treasurer resigned (to take up a position in Sydney). Ros Cornish took on this position and has worked closely with our secretariat, Mary to develop a reporting summary that makes it clear to members what our financial position is at any time.

Last year we had our full complement of five members at the National Board Meeting in Adelaide, this is always a very informative meeting and an excellent opportunity to network with all other Australian Branches. The meeting was followed by a brilliant conference with over 1200 early childhood academics and educators. This year the National Board Meeting will be held in Tasmania. Our committee will nominate five members to participate but other state members are invited to attend to listen and learn. There will also be a reception held enabling us to network with our mainland counterparts.

In February our Committee met for two days in Hobart for some Governance Training, Strategic planning and discussion about how to move forward with the topics now on the table. All members attended this extremely busy but very useful gathering where we re-visited the values of ECA to ensure that our work includes these values and remains within the ethical standards of ECA.

I recently had the honour of participating in a meeting with State and Territory Presidents and the National Board. This was an extremely busy day in which we had time to focus together on the national partnership inherent in our federated organisation, with the overall aim of strengthening the partnerships and improving performance. We participated in an exercise to help identify opportunities and challenges so that we could make concrete plans to act on them. We discussed succession planning for national Board Directors and were given an understanding of their responsibilities. We also looked at sharing information; a review of current strategies regarding Board reports to branches, leadership teleconferences – post and pre-board; efficient strategies for getting information about Branch achievements and events to National Office and the national organisation. The only down side to this experience was lack of time. We had a very busy, informative day, a day that made me realise how powerful it is to belong to such a wonderful organisation.

As I resign from the Chair I thank those who have supported me over the years and wish the incoming President and Committee Members the best for a successful and productive year knowing that we can move forward as a team working cohesively as advocates for young children.

Lyn Woolley
President