



**Early Childhood  
Australia**

Tasmania Branch



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024

**Early Childhood Australia – Tasmania Branch**

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) – Tasmania Branch activities and advocacy efforts have been guided by the following principles:

- Children are central in decision making in supporting them to learn and thrive.
- Changes in policy reflect what is in the best interest for children, families and indeed educators themselves.
- Long term sustainability of the education and care sector – an economic and social imperative.
- Workforce growth and development remain a priority agenda item.
- Equity, inclusion, and child safety principles are a focus.
- Strong partnerships are essential in supporting school-age children.

In a year of submissions, reports and ongoing changes, ECA Tasmania Branch Committee have consistently advocated in the best interest of children. This report outlines an overview of the significant achievements through the commitment of members, project personnel and the ECA Tasmania Branch Committee.

## Submissions

- Lifting Literacy, Lifting Tasmania
- Tasmanian Youth Jobs Strategy Discussion Paper
- ECEC Targeted Programs Review (programs supporting the enrolment of completion of Early Childhood Education and Care qualifications by people who live in regional, rural and remote areas.)
- Early Childhood Education and Care Capacity Study Consultation Paper November 2023. A subsequent case study was developed outlining the Good Fit Tool to help inform and support the study's report. This is a testament to all involved with this being a national study and Tasmania specifically being identified as a case study.
- Supported ECA National Office through the EYSAC Project with information to inform their Jobs and Skills Australia Skills Occupation List submission.
- Australian Government Employment White Paper
- Strategic Review of the Australian Apprenticeships Incentive System
- Tasmania Government 2024-25 State Budget Submission which featured in the Liberal Government election commitments – see EYSAC Report for more detail.

## Representation

Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Organisation Framework – Sector Advisory Council  
EL3 Advisory Group

Early Years Interagency Advisory Group  
 Education and Care Unit (ECU) Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG)  
 AEDC Committee  
 Move Well Eat Well Steering Committee  
 Working Together Advisory Representative  
 DECYP 9-12 Year Project – Community Services Industry Advisory Group  
 DECYP RTO Advisory Board  
 Community Services Industry Plan - Workforce Coalition  
 ECA National Reconciliation Working Group

## Advocacy

ECEC Targeted programs review consultation - enrolment and completion of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) qualifications by people who live in regional, rural and remote areas. This review is a key action from Shaping Our Future: 10-year National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy under Focus Area 2: Attraction and Retention.

Launceston Recreation and Open Space Strategy meeting.

## Meetings

- Political Parties
- State Growth – Skills Tasmania
- Department of Education, Children and Young People
- Minister for Education, The Hon. Joanne Palmer
- State and Territory ECA chairs came together with the National President and Deputy National President in Melbourne in late June. The day included a consultation on governance reforms and a discussion on ECA's next strategic plan.

Several Talking Points published and Media Releases advocating for the sector.

Regular attendance at weekly *Thrive By Five* meetings including a face to face meeting in Tasmania.

Early Childhood Education & Care Industry Skills Compact Priority Action Plan – See EYSAC Report



The Hon Jo Palmer, Minister for Education, and ECA Tasmania Branch Chair Annette Barwick, celebrated the launch of the Respectful Relationships and Consent in the Early Years on 13 June 13. ECA Tasmania Branch played an active role in the resource's review, promoting gender equity and fostering a culture of respect and consent from birth to Year 12.

## Projects

- Early Years and School Age Care (EYSAC) Workforce Strategy
- Education and Care Good Fit Tool
- Workforce Coordination Project - Strategic Priority 2 of the Community Services Industry Plan: Workforce Development and Training – ECA Tasmania – Peak Body Partner
- Research - Working in 2024 on an ARC Linkage Grant Partner Commitment with UTAS re: *Worker Recruitment and Retention in the Care Economy – Archetypes as a Way Forward*

## ECA Tasmania Branch/B4 Forum

Another successful professional learning forum in partnership with B4 was facilitated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2023. Thank you to the Forum Working Group that consisted of ECA Tasmania Branch Committee and B4 Representatives. Their energy and commitment contributed to a highly regarded professional learning event.

In one or two words, how would you encourage others to attend next year?



## Funding Scholarships

**2024 ECA Reconciliation Symposium** convened in Canberra Ngunnawal Country on 3 and 4 May 2024. Tasmania Branch fully funded an ECA Tasmania Branch member (Alarna Page) to attend through the 2024 travel scholarship. (See recipients report)



**2024 ECA National Conference** – Realising the Vision, *An integrated future for the early years* being held 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> September in Brisbane. Through this funding a Tasmanian Branch member (Cate Taylor) has been fully funded to attend. We look forward to Cate’s report after the conference.

### **The Rosemary Payne Prize in Early Childhood Education**

Continued to commit to this prize that is awarded to a UTAS student who lives in Tasmania, has completed three years of the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) course and who is determined to be the overall highest achiever based on results in units undertaken in the third year of the course while studying full-time

### **Looking Ahead**

ECA Tasmania Branch will continue to leverage opportunities to support members and young children to thrive. There has been no other point in time where factors have combined to elevate children and the value of early learning as a top priority in Australia. I would actively encourage you to get involved in both the advocacy work and workforce projects as collective impact and *leaning in* is required to ensure children’s voice is central to all decision making and policy direction.

**““When enough people come together, then change will come and we can achieve almost anything. So instead of looking for hope — start creating it.”  
— *Greta Thunberg.*”**

In closing, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Tasmania Branch Committee for their continued commitment to the Branches’ work and indeed, quality outcomes for children, families and all childhood professionals.

Annette Barwick  
President  
Early Childhood Australia – Tasmania Branch

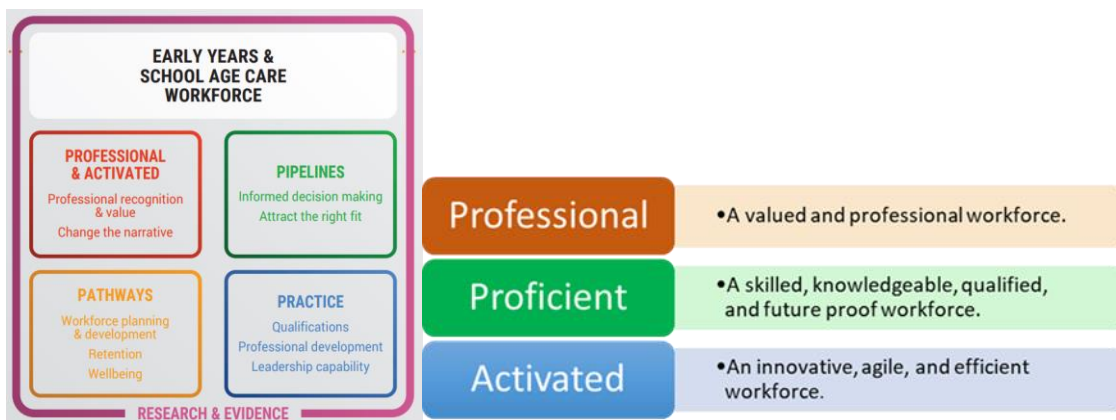
# EARLY YEARS AND SCHOOL AGE (EYSAC) WORKFORCE STRATEGY



All work undertaken this year has been in alignment with and builds on previous activities of the [Early Years and School Age Care Workforce Strategy Tasmania 2021 and Beyond](#).

The Vision: *A proficient, professional and activated Tasmanian early years and school age care workforce now and into the future.*

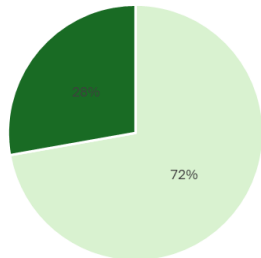
Each area of focus responds to challenges and opportunities identified through the Innovation Network and recognises the importance of all activities being underpinned by research and evidence.



Highlights have included:

### EYSAC Innovation Network Meetings and Regional Meetings

Education and Care Sector



72% of the Tasmanian Education and Care Sector have engaged in EYSAC Innovation Network meetings and Regional Meetings held across the state. These meetings serve to create champions, increase shared understanding across the broader community of the value of the Tasmanian EYSAC sector workforce to the social and economic outcomes for the state, increase understandings of workforce planning and development and provide input into future projects.

*“As a person coming into a senior leadership role in the ECEC sector and with no prior experience, I have found the work of the EYSAC Workforce Project immensely helpful in navigating the complexities of the industry and in particular the very real workforce issues we all face. The ability to come together through the Innovation Network Meetings and regional forums has been essential to not only grow my own understanding but more importantly to provide a platform for providers to come together in a meaningful and structured way and to collaborate on solutions for the chronic labour shortages we in the ECEC sector face every day. I sincerely hope that the favourable consideration will be given to the future of this project.”*

*Tim Short*

CEO Adventure Patch

### EYSAC Online Hub and Digital media

The [EYSAC Online Hub](#) has been refreshed to incorporate technology upgrades and enhance user appeal.

The number of followers on Facebook increased by 63% over the last 2 years, reach, views and page visits have also steadily increased. These figures have held steady in the last twelve months

Data indicates that Facebook posts that promote EYSAC and local identities have higher engagement statistics; like, view, share are more likely to translate into new followers.

Newsletter engagement has also continued to increase. [LinkedIn](#) has been added to the digital media channels to capture a broader audience and respond to changing communication trends.

The introduction of the Humanitix ticketing system has boosted RSVPs for meetings and reduced administrative load.

## Workforce Coordination Project Collaboration

The [Workforce Coordination Project](#) is part of the [Community Services Industry Plan 2021-2031](#) and EYSAC has been an integral component of this project for the education and care sector across governance and implementation.

EYSAC has continued to be representative on the Coalition Network for this project in addition to direct engagement supporting and promoting each component for the education and care sector. For further information about this project see the Annual Report from Kerrie Hansen Workforce Coordination Project Senior Officer for the Education and Care Sector.



## EYSAC developed resources

[Be the Difference Career Resources](#) and [Traineeship Handbooks](#) are promoted to a variety of workforce pipelines and within EC services to increase attraction, retention and increase understanding of career possibilities.

*"I work in marketing and communications for Lady Gowrie Tasmania. Part of my role involves attending careers expos and other events to promote our organisation and our sector in Tasmania. In discussions with prospective staff and students at these events, I have found the online and print materials about careers provided by EYSAC to be extremely useful. The materials are visually appealing and easy to follow. The careers roadmap is especially useful when having discussions with school students as it shows clearly the steps required to work in our sector. The EYSAC staff are always helpful when I have needed to find out information and are always willing to provide printed or other materials when requested.*

*Thank you EYSAC, for all that you do to support the education and care workforce in Tasmania. Keep up the great work! "*

*Katherine Harris  
Marketing and Communications Manager  
Lady Gowrie Tasmania*





## Industry Skills Compact

The [Industry Skills Compact](#) was signed on 9 November 2023 after consultation with ECA Tasmania Branch and the broader Education and Care Sector through the EYSAC Innovation Network Meetings and forums including guest speakers, group work and feedback loops. The Industry Skills Compact sets out a framework for the parties (Early Childhood Australia Tasmania Branch and the Tasmanian Government) to work collaboratively to deliver a sustainable and highly skilled current and future workforce in Tasmania. This is a State Government initiative delivering on the Premiers Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council (PESRAC). It recognises that both Government and industry have areas of strength and responsibility for the system and is a mechanism to support active delivery in those respective areas.

We received National exposure for this work in an [article by The Sector](#)



## ACECQA National Workforce Forum

EYSAC were invited to attend the [ACECQA National Workforce Forum 2023](#) where the Be the Difference campaign gained National exposure in research to support the [National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy FA1-4 Promote the Importance of a Career in Children's Education and Care](#) through a National Communications Campaign. Dr Alice Hsieh and George Daniels from the Behavioural Architects discussed key attributes of a successful campaign to attract people to work in the EC sector. The Be the Difference campaign was highlighted in their research and it ticked the box for nearly every positive component to be included in a campaign.

## AEDC Interagency Working group

The EYSAC Workforce project Manager is one of the founding members of this group that formed to explore and create the development of tools to support the early years workforce across Long Day Care and Kindergarten to better utilise the [Australian Early Development Census](#) data to inform planning and development for young children. Encouraging shared language and access to professional learning across these settings will contribute to an increased understanding for educators, families and the broader community of the early years settings as a continuum of learning and equally valuable professional settings. The group comprised of representatives across the early years currently meets fortnightly to provide feedback and input on the development of resources.

## Education and Care Good Fit Tool



The EYSAC Workforce Project was a critical friend throughout the project ensuring integrity to the core concepts and genuine consultation with the EYSAC sector to influence the tool. To achieve this, EYSAC collaborated with DEWR the funding body, Lady Gowrie Tasmania as the Project Manager, Workforce Australia and WorkSkills as partnering providers and Early Childhood Australia who undertook the research and development and the EYSAC Innovation Network.

Gowrie Tasmania as the Project Manager, Workforce Australia and WorkSkills as partnering providers and Early Childhood Australia who undertook the research and development and the EYSAC Innovation Network.

On the cessation of this activity and funding EYSAC took carriage of hosting and promotion of the resource. The resource is hosted on the EYSAC Online Hub along with the

- [Education and Care Good Fit Tool Information Session](#) - a video explanation of how to use the tool for an outline of the participants strengths aligned to factors important in

the profession along with information about common roles and settings to consider when planning a career in the education and care sector.


- [Education and Care Good Fit Tool Guide Document](#) - A guide to using the Education and Care Good Fit Tool for an outline of the participant's strengths aligned to factors important in the profession along with information about common roles and settings to consider when planning a career in the education and care sector.

We are only beginning to see the impact and future application of the Education and Care Good Fit Tool with examples being:

A 'Speed Dating Event' inviting employers and candidates who had undertaken the Good Fit Tool to participate in conversation for the purpose of employment. Attendance was low reportedly due to workforce issues on the day; however, feedback was positive with 5 of the candidates that attended securing employment and 1 exploring study options for a future career.

*"In great news.... A few weeks ago, Rohan secured a position in our OSHC program and will be commencing his cert III in the New Year. ... I'm looking forward to seeing what 2024 has in store for Early Learning. You and the team have put in a tremendous amount of work to support the sector. Thank You!"*

*Jess Young, FDC Team Leader Early Learning  
Uniting Victoria Tasmania Limited*

 Workskills Tasmania  
April 18 at 9:06 AM

We're so proud of Teagan and all that she's accomplished over the last 18 months. 🥳

Teagan joined our #TransitiontoWork program to receive additional support to achieve her goal of becoming a qualified Childcare Educator while pursuing her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care from [Foresite Training Pty Ltd](#). Teagan has always aimed for the bigger picture of building a successful career path and has channelled her energies well, with little guidance.

Leah, Teagan's Youth coach, has supported her by holding weekly study sessions in the office. Teagan's commitment to attending every session without fail demonstrates the value she places on the support she receives from the program.

Teagan's progress took a significant step forward when Leah and our Program Support team facilitated her participation in the Good Fit Tool session for Childcare, a local jobs initiative run by [Early Years and School Age Care - EYSAC Workforce Project](#). This session proved to be a turning point for Teagan, leading to a job offer as a Childcare Educator. Her Certificate III also came just in time, and she is happily working towards building her dream career.

Congratulations, Teagan! We will always be cheering you on. 🥳👏

#TtW #Youngpeople #workforce #workskillstasmania Early Childhood Australia



## Submissions, Funding and Advocacy

In the previous 12 months EYSAC has contributed to consultations and submissions and represented the EC sector at various levels of government including but not limited to responses to [ANZSCO](#), traineeship enquiries, productivity commission and attendance at Jobs and Skills Council; HumanAbility, Skills Tasmania Collaborate and Elevate, [We Are More](#). Responsiveness to current affairs and advocacy has included [radio interviews](#) and meetings

with ministers. The ECA Tasmania Branch and the EYSAC Workforce Project actively sought funding through the Tasmanian Government 2024/2025 budget submission to continue the EYSAC workforce project. Notable success includes the Liberal party's commitment to provide \$890,000 over three years for project officers and the establishment of a \$5 million Early Years Workforce Development Fund. ECA Tasmania Branch eagerly await the Tasmanian Governments September Budget release in relation to this commitment.

### Conclusion

As an economic driver with one of the highest economic multipliers of any sector or industry, a thriving EYSAC Sector is an essential component for an effective Tasmanian economy now and into the future. Continuity and long-term funding is required to maintain momentum and achieve sustainable outcomes for such a complex and essential workforce. The success of the EYSAC workforce project into the future relies on not only sector engagement, but action. Working together in new ways to advocate and achieve outcomes to build a professional, proficient, and activated workforce.

A more detailed report of the project over the last two years is available on request to [kellie.workforce@ecatas.org.au](mailto:kellie.workforce@ecatas.org.au)

### Thank you!

ECA Tasmania Branch on behalf of the sector would like to thank the Department of Education, Children and Young People, **Education and Care Unit** for their commitment and foresight in continuing to fund the EYSAC Project up until end of December 2024.

Thank you to all of the people who engage with and provide support for the EYSAC Project. It is only together that we can make a difference, and my heartfelt thanks extends to each and every one of you.

Early Childhood Australia, Tasmania Branch  
Annette Barwick  
EYSAC Workforce ECA Tasmania Branch Chair

Kellie Watson  
EYSAC Workforce Project Manager







# WORKFORCE COORDINATION PROJECT

The Workforce Coordination project is funded by the Department of State Growth and is administered by Skills Tasmania. The project is delivered in partnership, with TasCOSS on behalf of the social services sector peak bodies and the Tasmanian peak bodies of ACCPA, NDS, ECA Tasmania Branch (contracted to Lady Gowrie Tasmania).

The Workforce Coordination Project, a priority strategy in the Tasmanian Community Services Industry Plan (2021 – 2031), has key objectives to:

1. Improved co-ordination and capacity to address workforce issues at an industry level.
2. Improved relationships, collaborations, and partnerships to address workforce issues.
3. Increased co-ordination and capacity to implement the priorities of the Industry Plan.
4. Improved capacity for delivering training and assessment in the industry to ensure that the industry has the skilled workforce it needs to achieve positive outcomes for clients.
5. Improved coordination of research activity and data collection.
6. Enhanced awareness and recruitment initiatives to attract new talent and reduced barriers to employment in the sector.

The projects Work Ready Team comprises five Senior Officers, each representing sectors across the Community Services Industry.

The Education and Care Senior Officer (Kerrie Hansen) through a strategic and collaborative approach, champions and advocates the work of the early years and school age care workforce.

In the past year opportunities to share and work closely with the EYSAC Workforce project have included presenting at two EYSAC Innovation Network Meetings and engaging in workforce conversations with the sector at regional and local meetings across the state. These sector voices ensure that the Education and Care sector needs, and unique contexts are considered in all planning and development of products, resources, and programs through the project.

## Work with Purpose

Three sector representatives have been engaged in developing a new [Work with Purpose](#) recruitment website, sharing their stories and images in the education and care sector. The core aim of this campaign is a postcard concept for sharing personalised stories from the Community Services Industry to entice people towards clearly articulated pathways to work in the industry. Attraction will be directed not only to those seeking work themselves, but also to the general community as a way of encouraging recognition of the sector, and as a reference for those who may also identify potential workers. It is a means of creating a social movement, to encourage acknowledgement that recruitment is as much the role and responsibility of citizen to citizen as it is from sectors and organisations themselves. This campaign will be launched later in September.

## Certificate IV TAE

16 sector participants commenced a fully funded Certificate IV in Training and Assessment – a qualification that provides a career pathway, helps build training capacity in the sector, and ensure future experienced and skilled sector Trainer and Assessor.

## Workforce Planning

A [Workforce Planning and Development Review Tool](#) has been co-developed with industry/sector input, including input from several education and care organisations and stakeholders, reviewing and trialing the tool prior to its official launch later in September. This tool will support services in auditing their systems and practices to guide their workforce retention strategies.

## Coalition Network Meetings



Two Coalition Network Meetings have seen over 100 participants in attendance, including strong representation from the education and care sector. With the next meeting to be held later in September in Launceston, having a key focus on retention strategies and cross-collaboration opportunities, nearly a quarter of registrations so far are coming from the education and care sector. This is a strong indication that our workforce is activated and motivated to engage and share in workforce conversations.

## Kerrie Hansen

Senior Officer, Workforce Coordination Project

TASMANIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES INDUSTRY PLAN 2021 - 2031

Workforce Coordination Project



Early Childhood  
Australia  
Tasmania Branch



# ECA RECONCILIATION SYMPOSIUM REPORT

By: Alarna Page



Reflecting on my participation at the Early Childhood Australia (ECA) 2024 Reconciliation Symposium in Canberra, Ngunnawal Country, on 3 and 4 2024, I am deeply honoured and grateful for the invaluable opportunity it provided for professional growth and collaboration.

As the Principal Aboriginal Consultant at CatholicCare Tasmania and a qualified teacher, I promote inclusivity and cultural responsiveness. The symposium provided a platform for meaningful discussions and learning, allowing me to contribute to the broader goals of reconciliation within my role.

Participation in this symposium enriched my professional development and bolstered my commitment to advancing reconciliation efforts within the community. With CatholicCare impacting over 11,500 Tasmanians annually, our influence is significant. The Symposium provided a fantastic experience that allowed me to interact with esteemed keynote speakers and representatives from various organisations.

During the opening keynote, Karen Mundine, CEO of Reconciliation Australia, challenged us to stay engaged and pay attention, stand up and call it out, show up and stay hopeful - be proud, particularly as we approach National Reconciliation Week.

Discussions emphasised critical reconciliation elements, such as embracing discomfort, truth-telling, and cultural humility. The importance of creating safe spaces for dialogue and confronting biases was highlighted, alongside a call for ongoing action to address historical injustices and systemic biases in education.

The Symposium underscored the significance of respecting cultures, understanding history, and challenging colonial narratives and whiteness in educational settings. In addition to these sessions, I had the privilege of taking a two-hour walk in Ngunnawal Country with Ngunnawal man Tyronne Bell.

Overall, the Symposium left me profoundly inspired and empowered to continue the vital work of reconciliation in my professional practice. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Early Childhood Australia, Tasmania Branch for granting me the scholarship opportunity to participate in this transformative event

# FINANCIAL REPORT

It is with pleasure that the 2023/2024 Annual Audited Report is presented to members. The Branch operates two sets of accounts. These are:

1. **General Account**
2. **Debit Card Account**

It is noted that the Auditor's Report now reflects the total combined details of these accounts into one report.

Accounts are held with:

- Commonwealth Bank
- My State
- LaTrobe Mortgage and Investment

Operating income for the 2023/2024 period was raised from the B4 Forum, Guild Insurance commissions, several grants, interest on investments, transfers between the Branch's accounts and membership fees.

Guild Insurance income for the reporting period with receipt of \$26,316 which is higher than the previous year of \$22,663. On behalf of the Branch, I acknowledge and express sincere appreciation to Guild Insurance for its ongoing support and commitment to the Tasmanian Education and Care Sector. This assistance continues to enable the ECA Tasmania Branch Executive and Committee to undertake key advocacy work on behalf of children and to continue supporting Tasmanian ECA Branch members.

Membership fees for the period of \$8,440 which is less than \$8,921 in the previous period.

The B4 Forum had a higher income this year of \$9,424 which is an increase compared to the previous period of \$7,173.

It is noted that interest and dividends were significantly higher this year, \$8,300 when compared to the previous period of \$4,104, which is pleasing.

Income was also received through several Grants which are listed. Details of the Grants are to be dealt with in other reports to be presented today. In relation to the Grants, we thank the Providers for their support of these programs which are crucial to deliver services to the Sector.

The main expenses in the Accounts relate to administration, B4 Forum expenses, Committee expenses, insurance, ECA National (ECAN) Council expenses, auditing, transfers between Branch accounts, prizes (UTAS, Reconciliation Symposium & ECAN Conference Scholarships), media advice, AGM and hiring of storage facilities.

In terms of income and expenses for this period, there was an overall gross profit of \$3,133 compared to \$4,522 in the previous period.

The Branch now has net assets of \$265,630 compared to \$262,497 in the previous period.

## Summary

The Branch is financially sound and well positioned to undertake functions to support ECA Tasmania Branch's purpose and objectives. The Branch Executive is provided with detailed reports to support its due diligence in respect of fiduciary responsibilities.

On behalf of the Branch Executive and Committee, I would like to acknowledge the Branch Secretariat, Mary Rudge. Mary works closely with the Branch President, me (as Branch Treasurer), and the Auditor to ensure financial management systems are always in place and adhered to.

Also, I extend appreciation to our Audit firm, Max Peck & Associates, particularly Rendell Ridge - Principal Partner, for the annual audit process and for the advice and support provided throughout the year which has enhanced the Branch's ability to meet its financial responsibilities.

Finally, thank you to the Branch Executive and Committee members for their support and confidence in me to undertake the role of Treasurer of the Branch.

Sebastian Tuttle  
**Treasurer**  
**Early Childhood Australia, Tasmania Branch**

Please note: Auditor Report to be tabled at the AGM Meeting.