

# ANNUAL REPORT '23

Annual Report 2023



## Acknowledgement of Country

Buddy Up Australia acknowledges Traditional Owners of the Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and elders past and present.



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## Key Information

### Vision

Connection and purpose for military and emergency services personnel and their families.

### Mission

The company's object is to pursue the following charitable purpose(s):

to prevent PTSD in Australian service personnel by increasing their resilience through strengthening their network of support and community outside their services and by providing education, psychological and social support.

### Values

**Wellness** - We build healthy bodies and minds to contribute fully to our community

**Mateship** - We respect others despite differences and build meaningful relationships

**Service** - We commit to our purpose to help others and ourselves feel valued

**Courage** - We share our story to help others and ourselves and create solutions when faced with challenges

### Incorporation and charitable status

- Public company limited by guarantee with ASIC from 5th February 2018;
- Registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) from 5 February 2018; and
- Diverse board of directors who are mostly serving or ex-serving personnel and/or immediate family members.

### Tax concessions and fundraising endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office as:

- A Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) on 10 July 2018;
- An income tax exempt charity (holding tax concessions and exemptions relating to income, goods and services, and fringe benefits taxes);
- Fundraising licences held for each state as required.

*This Annual Report covers our activities and performance for the period covered: 01.07.2022 - 30.06.2023*

## Chair's Report

### Megan Davidson - Director / Board Chair

The last year has seen us go from strength to strength. With Eleanor at the helm and her fabulous team we have managed to offer a diverse range of activities to our members to help them connect with purpose.

The establishment of Program Coordinators and the new role of Program Manager has ensured the consistency and reliability of events to cater for the flux of volunteer power. The Member Support Officer (MSO) Roles, filled by Ross Gordon and Thomas Blair have also made a significant difference to our ability to engage members early and identify any unmet mental health needs. The MSOs also conduct staff check-ins as part of their role, which has been invaluable to keep our team mentally healthy. Despite the increase in employed positions, we are still over 85% run by volunteers.

Brigitte Cunningham and Shane Dimech coordinated our annual Chapter Leader Development program. With the backdrop of the Sunshine Coast, we brought the team together to share learnings and ideas for the future. This is an energising opportunity to refocus and connect face to face.

Internally, we have introduced the EOS Traction model, which has made our operational, strategic and board meetings more focused and people more accountable and energised. It's allowed our strategy to be more easily operationalised.

The big win is the introduction of our own Buddy Up Australia event app. The App allows members to find events both in their area and wherever they may be travelling to, so they can find an immediate 'tribe'. We hope to open it up to others who support our members to cross-promote events.

Our Veteran Support program at Acacia Prison has now been running a year and we have seen the confidence and connection grow with those involved. We have extended this program to invite others, including RSL advocates, Defence Legal, Open Arms etc.

Speaking of collaborations, we continue to work with as many organisations as possible who support our members. Event leaders have made some excellent partnerships. On a national level we are looking forward to our new collaboration with Bravery Trust.

Another unique collaboration is with Theatre180 in Perth, who are going to assist with our value of courage - the ability to share our story to help ourselves and others. This project will involve story-telling activities with our members and forms a component of a DVA grant.

There have been challenges in the year too, but when you have a fantastic team of buddies around you, they're easier to overcome and the rewards are worth it!

It can be difficult to quantify the exact impact we are having so a massive thank you to everyone who believes in what we do **to provide connection and purpose for our members.**





## Executive Director's Report

### Eleanor Chappell - Executive Director

Buddy Up Australia experienced its biggest growth during this period in a number of ways. This was heavily supported by being funded under the Department of Health's National Suicide Prevention Leadership Support Program; a program the organisation is a part of from 2022-2025. This program is also the largest funding the organisation has ever received to date.

Buddy Up Australia's focus last year was around the core areas of evaluating and growing our volunteer portfolio nationwide, growing our membership and expanding into new locations, expanding our marketing efforts and identifying new opportunities. We also developed and implemented new systems and technologies for the organisation to scale with confidence and securely. Growing our network of partners and collaborators was an important feature of last year too.

Throughout last year Buddy Up Australia changed its structure and introduced a number of new employee roles. These included my own role as Executive Director, Program Coordinators, Office Manager and our Marketing Coordinator transitioned onto a casual contract. We maintained our Finance Officer in a paid position. Previously the organisation has been over 95% volunteer run. However, during the development of the strategic plan for last year, it was evident the organisation would need to entertain the idea of restructuring to a part employee / part volunteer model to deliver and maintain consistency of its core program which is delivered nationwide.

The Program Coordinator role was first introduced in Western Australia with the responsibility of overseeing the support and growth of the volunteer team in the State. The role evolved over the 12 months to include a core focus on developing a diverse event calendar for our Chapter areas. It was evident the Program Coordinator role is critical to the growth and success of our Chapters. Therefore, we introduced these roles in QLD and TAS.

We overhauled our Volunteer Program to focus on recruiting Event Leaders as opposed to Chapter Leaders. Our Event Leader role is extremely flexible and an attractive opportunity for people who are time poor but passionate about giving back to the community. This opportunity reflected the current trends in volunteering needs / wants. Therefore, although we have not closed our Chapter Leader opportunity, we have shifted our focus to recruit and welcome Event Leaders as the initial step into the volunteer program moving forward.

Buddy Up Australia experienced a 180% increase in membership growth during last year and we understand this has been largely attributed to our marketing efforts. We invested time and resources into upskilling in the digital marketing field to support brand awareness nationally as well as locally targeted campaigns. These efforts have also contributed to developing new and strengthening existing relationships Australia wide.

As an organisation we have always felt strongly about collaboration and partnerships within the ex-service organisation sector. This is to ensure Buddy Up Australia's program(s) enhance what is delivered in the community and is not duplicating. We maintain this passion and we 'play nice with others'; welcoming opportunities to develop new relationships and cross referral pathways to benefit our growing member base.

Behind the scenes there have been extensive development into our systems and software capabilities. We developed and rolled out a new Customer Relationship Management System and Marketing Automation Software to enhance the member experience whilst supporting the organisation to scale. This has also enabled Buddy Up to effectively hold critical reporting data to support and prove the importance and success of our program(s).

On 23rd May 2023, our new 'Buddy Up App' was launched. This was made possible by the support and kindness of Team Red, White

& Blue in the USA. We will be forever grateful for this incredible show of support. This App technology allows Buddy Up to manage events and communication on one platform for all members. We will be gradually moving away from the reliance on Facebook for event management.

Our new website was developed throughout last year with market launch due in the first quarter of the 23-24 FY.

Buddy Up have also worked hard in developing new and innovative ways to diversify program delivery, whilst remaining aligned with our values. This led to a successful Department of Veterans Affairs Wellbeing Grant being awarded. This new program will focus on 'storytelling' in three parts aligning with our value of 'Courage'.

Buddy Up Australia operates a remote working model therefore team engagement and inclusion has been a focus for us, trying to establish what works best for the team. In the second half of the financial year, we introduced an Entrepreneurial Operating System under the 'Traction' method which has been a huge success. This meeting model keeps the team laser focused on key deliverables and ensures the team feels confident to bring any issues / areas of improvements to the meeting which are addressed accordingly.

The incredible growth the organisation has experienced over the past year has not come without its challenges of course. We have had to navigate the transition into an employee structure and manage a period of significant change associated to this. Volunteerism across Australia has been a challenge, and we understand Buddy Up Australia is not alone in feeling these pressures. Employee recruitment can be time consuming in identifying the 'right people for the right role', another challenge we are not experiencing alone. Our resilience as an organisation ensures we are able to move through and weather these challenges to come out stronger and with an attitude of continuous improvement.

I would like to end on thanking our volunteers and employees for their unwavering support and dedication to the organisation following a hugely successful, yet challenging year. Also, to our members and community supporters who have contributed to the success and are our biggest cheerleaders on and offline! Because of this incredible support, Buddy Up Australia is in a position of continuing to go from strength to strength.





## Organisational Breakdown

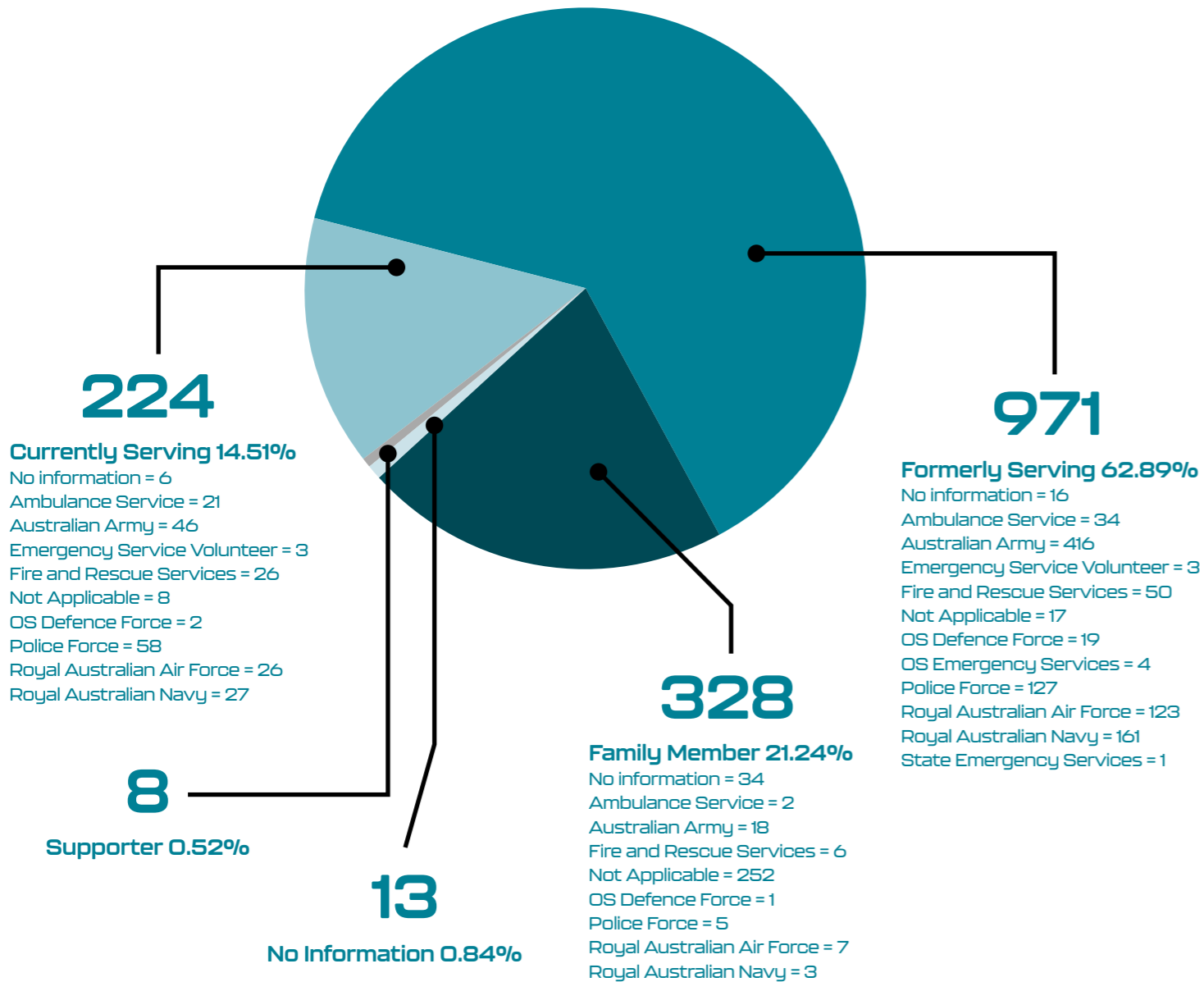
CHAPTERS  
**12**

MEMBERS\*  
**1544**

VOLUNTEERS  
**48**  
6 Board Members  
9 Chapter Leaders  
32 Event Leaders  
1 Systems Volunteer

EMPLOYEES  
**10**  
Equivalent  
FTE = 5.2

### Motivation for becoming a member

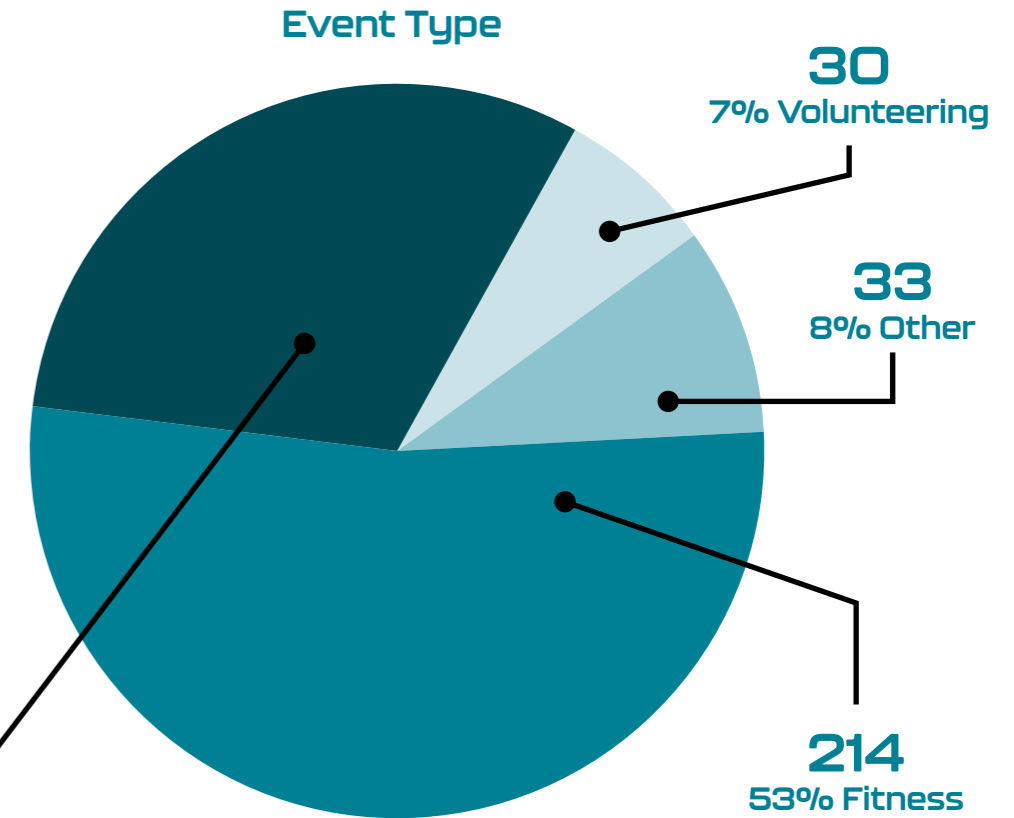


\*Buddy Up Australia has 2 membership options. Membership is free for current or former serving military or emergency service personnel and immediate family members. A Supporter membership is \$49 per year and for members of the community who are not affiliated to the services but believe in Buddy Up Australia's cause.

EVENTS  
**403**

Nearly 75% of the events held (299) involved the public. We aim to provide a safe environment for service personnel to transition back into the community.

**126**  
31% Social



## The Year in Review

### Perth Chapter



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Jane Inglis**  
Volunteer Chapter Leader

As the first chapter established with Buddy Up Australia, the Perth Chapter has been going from strength to strength since 2018 with over 200 members.

Perth held an astounding 85 events, often with their Buddies from the Rockingham Chapter: a total of 453 people including members and supporters attended events throughout the year.

Some of Perth's favourite events include:

- Veterans' Health Week Family BBQ (Kings Park – joint event with the Rockingham Chapter)
- Family Christmas party (Coogee)
- XTTERA X-Country Triathlon (Dunsborough)
- Park runs
- Stand Up Paddle Boarding family days

'It was encouraging to see not only so many new faces, but the huge range of physical fitness levels and abilities and everybody getting involved and giving it a go. The smiles on everyone's faces on completing all these events is immeasurable.' (Jane Inglis – Perth Chapter Leader)

The Veterans Health Week Family BBQ would be the highlight from a member's perspective with just under 50 members including their families attending.

### Rockingham



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Alan Somers**  
Program Manager

The Rockingham Chapter was established in June 2022 and now supports over 200 members. The Chapter has been involved in a variety of events with the favourites being:

- Veterans' Health Week Family BBQ (Kings Park – joint event with the Perth Chapter)
- XLR8 Obstacle course (Baldivis)
- Try Sailing Experience with 'Sailing Eventide' (Port Coogee)
- Weekend Family Camp (Jarrahdale)

The member feedback from the Weekend Family Camp was incredible with the adults being able to relax and the kids exploring!

Rockingham is currently planning on expanding their event offering to include walking netball and learn to dive opportunities.



### Adelaide



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Stephanie Altus**  
Volunteer Chapter Leader

The Adelaide Chapter launched in February 2023 at the Somerton Park Sailing Club. There was between 40 and 50 people who attended throughout the day, with a number of new members welcomed at the event.

The Adelaide Chapter is now supporting over 100 members and slowly growing visibility in the veteran and emergency services communities.

Adelaide's popular and regular events include:

- Walks
- Coffee catch-ups
- Kayaking
- Dolphin Cruise
- Adelaide Gaol Tour

A member favourite was a forest walk in winter with mushroom photography and a campfire lunch.

The Adelaide Chapter is working towards running regular fortnightly events and expanding the event offering to include Ice bath, Yoga, stand up paddle boarding, bush hikes and a wellness camping weekend.

### Hobart



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Naomi Skelly**  
Program Coordinator

In July 2022 Tasmania had two Chapters, Hobart and Launceston. Hobart has been an established Chapter since 2018 with the effort of Kris Amiet, and Launceston was introduced May 2022. Over the past 12 months Tasmania has welcomed a Program Coordinator in the second half of the financial year to support the engagement and growth of the members. The introduction of this new role was followed by a soft relaunch of the Hobart Chapter due to a period of low activity to reignite the passion and engagement.

Through some challenges with maintaining Launceston as an active Chapter, the decision was made to focus on Hobart and find alternative ways to engage members Statewide and revisit introducing more Chapters at a later date. Tasmania supports over 100 members and the future event delivery includes on-water experiences, creative experiences as well as farm cooking events and coffee catch ups.

*"Buddy Up Australia has been such a great organisation to be part of. I have bush walked, paddled boarded, rode, sketched and painted for the sheer physicality and/or enjoyment of connecting with a great bunch of ex-service and emergency service people and their families, cooked for the homeless and raised money to support similar activities for other veterans. Thanks for the opportunities and comradeship."*

**Deb Gibbins – Perth Chapter Member**



## The Year in Review

### Brisbane



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Dave Every**  
Program Coordinator

The Brisbane Chapter was established in August 2018 and supports over 300 members.

The Community Holistic Wellness Weekend as well as the Art Classes have been member favourites along with the regular coffee catch ups. There has been strong Event Leader uptake across the Brisbane Chapter which has led to strong member growth and engagement across Southeast Queensland.

The focus for the Brisbane Chapter is to continue the momentum of member growth and engagement and increase the Chapters in the area, along with growing the volunteer leadership team to support the event delivery. Collaborations with other local organisations is also a focus.

### Townsville



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Dave Every**  
Program Coordinator

The Townsville Chapter was established in April 2023 and supports over 50 members

The featured event for the Chapter was the launch event itself which received incredible support from the Jubilee Bowls Club and the Sunshine Chapter Leader.

Townsville has experienced some challenges with growing the volunteer team however, the introduction of a Program Coordinator in Queensland has significantly helped draw some focused support to engaging volunteers to lead events for the Chapter.

The future focus for Townsville is to welcome new volunteer leaders to run some regular events, engage existing members, grow the Chapter membership and collaborate with local organisations.

### Sunshine Coast



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Shane Dimech**  
Volunteer Chapter Leader

The Sunshine Coast Chapter was established in May 2022, but fully up and running effectively from January 2023. The Chapter supports over 100 members. The most popular events have been:

- Equine Therapy
- Sailing
- Weekly Yoga
- Beach volleyball

A highlight from the year has been witnessing the members connect with the horses during the Equine days; feeling a connection they weren't expecting. Seeing members attend yoga for the first time in their lives and making it a part of their weekly self-care ritual has also been a highlight.

Future plans include welcoming new volunteer Event Leaders who will bring fresh event ideas, with a very popular "Learn to Kitesurf" event already planned.

### Canberra



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Alan Somers**  
Program Manager

Canberra was established in February 2019 and currently supports over 70 members. It consistently carries out its Parkrun and coffee catch ups but has also held a Photography event and a Mt Ainslee walk.

The Canberra Chapter's future focus will be to welcome new Event Leaders to diversify the event program.

### Geelong



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Reece Ordner**  
Volunteer Event Leader

This Geelong Chapter was established in May 2022 and supports over 50 members. Event highlights over the year include:

- Regular Tennis
- Battle PT Sessions (group fitness)
- Stand Up Paddle Boarding
- Park Walks
- Ten pin bowling
- Golf

Future plans for the Chapter include new events such as woodwork classes, metalwork classes, nutrition classes, self-defence and cycling.

### Forster



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Rebecca Gallagher**  
Volunteer Chapter Leader

The Forster Chapter was established in November 2020 and supports over 50 members. Event highlights include:

- Veteran Health Week Nutritionist chat and lunch
- Sustainable fishing and cooking our catch
- Breath & Ice Experience
- Paddleboard Adventure
- Beginners' yoga & meditation
- Working Bee at Sunny's Place

Forster has a variety of future events planned including: Golf Lessons, Ayurveda and Daily Routines for Wellbeing Workshop, ten pin bowling and BBQ lunch, Macrame workshop, Scuba diving intro class and Whale-watching and educational marine life excursion.

### Melbourne



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Alan Somers**  
Program Manager

The Melbourne Chapter was established in April 2023 following requests for Buddy Up Australia representation in this location. The Melbourne Chapter currently supports over 50 members and has enjoyed a number of events including coffee catch ups, Pilates at the Lume and volunteering to help a local Church pack gift boxes.

The future plan is to introduce a Victoria Program Coordinator to grow the two Chapters and establish collaborations to enhance the delivery of future events. Future events for Melbourne include an Intro to Parkour, Turkish Lamp Mosaic and Nocturnal Museum Tour.

### National



CONTRIBUTOR  
**Eleanor Chappell**  
Executive Director

A National Chapter was established during the pandemic to help members remain connected. As the country began to recover from the pandemic and resume in-person engagement, the organisation focused on re-establishing an in-person event schedule. This resulted in the National Chapter losing momentum and consistency in event offerings. Reviving the National Chapter was part of the strategy of the year however this was not achieved due to major projects and workforce development taking priority. This Chapter currently supports over 200 members who are located in areas where there isn't on-ground Chapter representation. The organisation will be delivering a number of programs and events over the next financial year that are open to online participation which will support the engagement of the National Chapter membership.

## Workforce Growth

### Employees

Throughout the year the organisation grew the workforce to 10 employees (casual and fixed term), including introducing a number of new positions. We maintained our Finance Officer position from the previous financial year and our Marketing Coordinator position transitioned from volunteer to casual. The Managing Director role was transitioned to a fixed term contract under the Executive Director title. We introduced the role of Program Coordinator in Western Australia and Queensland before welcoming a third Program Coordinator in Tasmania. The purpose of the Program Coordinators is to recruit, support and mentor the volunteer leadership team and support the consistent delivery of a diverse calendar of events nationally. We also welcomed 2 Member Support Officers (WA and QLD) to engage with new and existing members and be an internal and external referral pathway to support members who may be experiencing unmet mental health needs.

Towards the end of the financial year, we welcomed a Project Officer whose focus is to specifically coordinate the delivery of a new Department of Veterans Affairs Health and Wellbeing Grant Program.

### Volunteers

Buddy Up Australia conducted a review of the volunteer program following challenges in recruiting volunteers for a 2-tiered program of Chapter Leaders and Event Leaders. The review highlighted the volunteer Chapter Leader position to be the most challenging to recruit for with the expectations of this role to identify and recruit volunteer Event Leaders. Recommendations were proposed to cease actively recruiting Chapter Leaders and focus on Event Leader recruitment. The role of Event Leader was simplified to meet the demands of modern lifestyles and attract more volunteers. The intention is to welcome volunteers into the organisation as Event Leaders with an internal volunteer development journey to becoming a Chapter Leader, if the position aligns with a volunteer's ability to commit to the role.

Existing Chapter Leaders have not been affected by this decision and remain in their positions providing a valuable contribution to their respective Chapters, and working closely with their Program Coordinators who oversee the volunteer program and member event delivery.

## Systems & Technology

### Buddy Up Australia App

On 23rd May 2023 Buddy Up Australia released our custom App! We owe a tremendous amount of thanks and gratitude to our friends in the USA – Team Red White and Blue Team RWB). The release of this technology would have not been possible without their incredible support. Originally Buddy Up Australia were able to reap the benefits of Team RWBs own App by being granted a 'Group' feature capability to open up to Buddy Up Australia Members. After a period of time utilising this feature and having a number of conversations with Team RWB, we were able to launch a project to customise a version of the App specifically to Buddy Up Australia. This project commenced in late 2022 and launched in May 2023. We are still in the early stages of transitioning to using the Buddy Up App as the primary platform. This is due to established Chapter communities on Facebook along with the integration of our systems ongoing into the first quarter of the new financial year. However, with an uptake of 500+ members by the end of June 2023, we are extremely pleased with this volume of early engagement.

The Buddy Up Australia App is a central repository for all events happening within the organisation. The platform will allow members to locate and register for events as well engage with other members nationwide.

### Buddy Up Australia Website:

In the latter part of 2022 Buddy Up Australia engaged Kristen Bertolini Designs for the redesign and development of a new website. We invited employees and volunteers to contribute on the design and content. The website will deliver a fresh look with a strong focus on visuals to communicate where the organisation is represented along with the types of events on offer. The website will also incorporate the new release of the Buddy Up Australia App.

### Customer Relationship Management

To enable the organisation to scale with confidence and manage all stakeholder data safely and in one central location, we decided to invest in Salesforce Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software. Furthermore, we engaged Two21 consultants in WA as our implementation partners. We also enhanced our CRM investment with Salesforce's Cloud Engagement platform (formerly known as Pardot), to enable us to communicate effectively and efficiently with all stakeholders. At the close of the financial year, we continue to work hard to learn the capabilities of our customised system and manage this independently moving forward. We are also concentrating on preparing the system to be fully integrated with the new Buddy Up Australia App.

### QIN Codesafe

QIN Codesafe is software the organisation has been utilising in kind for approximately 2 years. The original purpose of the software was to enable the electronic management of event risk assessments nationally. Over the year, we have focused on expanding the capabilities of this platform to include mandatory induction modules for employees and volunteers in one central location. This process has assisted in the organisation streamlining our employee and volunteer onboarding process and ensuring all personnel have conducted the required inductions before commencing their role.





## Annual Conference & Awards

In June 2023 Buddy Up Australia held their annual Volunteer Leadership Training Event. This took place on the Sunshine Coast with 16 attendees in total. Chapter Leaders and employees from all over the country came together, some meeting for the very first time to reflect on the past year, conduct critical training, find out about the organisation's future focus and celebrate achievements. This weekend was a mixture of 'classroom' reflection and learning, motivational speakers and team building exercises, as well as physical fitness and social engagement.

During the weekend event we awarded and celebrated the Chapter Leader of the Year and well as introducing a new award category, New and Emerging Chapter of the Year.

These internal awards are to recognise and celebrate the incredible commitment and achievements made by our outstanding volunteers and the work they have undertaken which is in alignment with the organisation's values.

### The 2022-2023 internal Volunteer Awards were presented to:

#### Chapter Leader of the Year

**Jane Inglis**  
Perth Chapter Leader

#### New and Emerging Chapter of the Year

**Adelaide Chapter**  
(Lead by Stephanie Altus - Chapter Leader).

*A special thanks to the following people / organisations whose contributions made the event an incredible success:*

**Shane Dimech**  
Sunshine Coast Chapter Leader  
for organising keynote speakers, presentations and team activities.

**Brigitte Cunningham**  
Program Coordinator Tasmania  
for leading the planning and coordination of the weekend.

**Josh Soloman**  
Life Unscripted  
for the presentation on Day one

**Fourth Quadrant Foundation**  
for the presentation and team activities on Day two

**Vitality Village**  
for the venue donation over the course of the weekend

## Social Media & Marketing

Total Followers by June 30 2023:



@buddyupaustalia  
**2808**



@buddyupaustalia  
**927**



@buddyupaustalia  
**608**



## Acknowledgments

### Grants received in reporting period:

Funding Provider	Total Value
Department of Veterans Affairs - VHW 2022	12,940.00
Department of Health - NSPLSP	\$996,812.64
Microsoft 365 Business Basic Grant	Up to 300 Licences + Apps & Services
Lotterywest (Mental Health Week 2022)	\$1000 (TBC)

### Head Office In-Kind Support

Support Provided	Total In Kind Value
Consultancy (inc. Board of Directors)	\$26,000
Systems & Technology	\$41,500
Training, Development & Leadership	\$31,140
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$98,640</b>

### Chapter Member Event In-Kind Support:

Chapter	Total In Kind Value
Perth	\$2,505
Rockingham	\$3,305
Adelaide	\$125
Brisbane	\$1,317
Sunshine Coast	\$5,250
Townsville	\$500
Forster	\$4,300
Melbourne	\$30
Geelong	\$220
Hobart	\$281.25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$17,833.25</b>

<b>TOTAL DONATIONS</b>	<b>\$14,770</b>
<b>TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS</b>	<b>662.50</b>
<b>TOTAL VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS*</b>	<b>\$31,806.63</b>

\* Based on the Volunteer benefits calculator - Volunteering WA (all ages calculation)

## Professional Memberships

Volunteering WA

Fundraising Institute of Australia

## Thanks to our Partners/Supporters

- CEO Institute
- Integral
- Act Belong Commit
- Poppy Wood Art
- HTR Engineering Solutions
- Codesafe
- Team RWB
- DVA - Grants
- Geographik
- Theatre180
- Acacia Prison
- Frontline Yoga
- Bravery Trust
- Rapid Ascent
- Veteran Transition Centre
- City of Joondalup
- Vitality Village
- The Fourth Quadrant Foundation

*"I was extremely fortunate to have a career that spanned over two decades with a multinational corporation that had Volunteerism as one of its core values. This provided me with a vast array of varying opportunities to participate in volunteer activities across dozens of countries globally. As my career advanced, I was appointed to leadership positions where my behaviour set the benchmark for both employees and their families. Understanding that performing meaningful volunteerism built teamwork, fostered employee engagement and provided employees with a sense of self-worth, I was driven to do more and more and more.*

*When I stepped back from corporate life and returned to live in Australia, I knew there would be a piece of me missing. Something that was part of my persona and something that had to be fulfilled.*

*Giving back to others.*

*This is where Buddy Up Australia caught my attention. Feeling personally aligned with the BUA values, a daughter who is a paramedic and being third generation military, enriching the lives of veterans and first responders gives me a sense of purpose, achievement and pride."*

**Jeff Mclean - Brisbane Event Leader**



## What's next?

The 2023-2024 financial year is set to be another exciting year of growth for the organisation. Our strategy includes:

### Engagement:

- Providing a diverse range of activities to appeal to different interests and capabilities
- Focusing on quality of events rather than quantity
- Looking at more ways to connect our members with purpose

### Program Delivery:

- Delivery of over 600 Chapter member events nationwide
- Continuance of a program with Acacia Prison
- Delivery of a new program under the Department of Veterans Affairs Wellbeing Grant – focusing on the organisation's value of 'Courage'.

### Growth:

- Growing the national membership base by 2000 new registered members
- Launching 4 new Chapters
- Welcoming 50 new volunteer leaders
- Growing the Program Coordinator and Marketing teams

### System Development:

- Market launch of our new website
- Integrating of our Customer Relationship Management System and the Buddy Up App.

### Finance:

- Diversification of the organisation's revenue streams
- launch inaugural national community fundraising event (November 2023)

*"Buddy Up Adelaide has had a huge impact on myself as the Chapter Leader, in providing a supportive and regular social connection after 3 years of agoraphobia and isolation due to PTSD. While I still have to balance doing events with time alone for myself, Buddy Up has given me the confidence to start going back out into my community and rebuild a string social network. It has taken me out of the dark mind space I was in and given me a sense of purpose again. I am so appreciative of our members who attend the events and have found a like-minded community to be part of once more."*

**Stephanie Altus - Adelaide Chapter Leader**





## Financials

### Income Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Income	2023	2022
Grants (Commonwealth) Operating Recurrent	1,096,813	-
Grants (Commonwealth) Operating Non-recurrent	24,184	-
Other Grants	28,561	153,175
DVA Support	-	25,040
Donations	15,057	8,784
Membership Fees	-	6,650
Other Income*	9,320	5,746
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,173,935</b>	<b>199,395</b>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>907</b>

Payments	2023	2022
S&W Salaries & Wages	270,509	-
Computer Expenses	100,039	-
Member Event Expenses	88,555	33,244
Training, Competencies and Development	46,493	2,842
Consulting Fees	36,987	52,917
Advertising/Marketing	33,693	4,148
Travel - National	30,294	17,898
S&W Superannuation	29,529	5,663
Buddy Up Merchandise	26,506	2,629
Rent	13,853	-
Chapter Set-up Costs	10,653	1,127
Member Event Food & Beverage	10,135	5,539
Insurance	6,647	2,073
Assets Purchased <\$5,000	5,332	-
Legal Expenses	4,267	1,580
Health & Safety	2,461	-

Payments	2023	2022
Printing, Postage & Stationery	2,071	4,228
Accounting	1,979	2,597
Subscriptions	1,885	3,730
Management Fees	1,825	-
Fundraising Expenses	1,521	-
Office Expenses	1,463	17,276
Membership Fees Paid	1,199	-
Audit Fees	1,100	-
Motor Vehicle, Parking, Fuel	1,072	351
Other Expenses	3,657	4,624
Grant Expense	-	22,361
Website	-	1,632
Raffle Expenses	-	1,500
Deposits & Reimbursements	-	1,321
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>733,725</b>	<b>189,280</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>440,210</b>	<b>9,208</b>

### Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2023

Current Assets	2023	2022
Cash and Cash equivalents	694,593	193,286
Trade Debtors	792	-
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>695,385</b>	<b>193,286</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>695,385</b>	<b>193,286</b>

Liabilities	2023	2022
Unexpended Grants	149,984	127,362
PAYG Withholding Payable	22,010	-
GST	18,536	(5,060)
Accounts Payable	3,792	3,432
Superannuation (SGC) Payable	1,733	-
Accrued Expenses	-	8,432
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>196,055</b>	<b>134,166</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>499,330</b>	<b>59,120</b>

Equity	2023	2022
Retained Earnings	59,120	49,912
Current Year Surplus	440,210	9,208
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>499,330</b>	<b>59,120</b>

*"Our chapter leader Shane Dimech, is so fully dedicated to achieving the principles of make us all inclusive as members of buddy up, I feel so comfortable and able to converse a lot better with new buddys[sic]"*

**Anonymous, New South Wales**

*(Fishing trip off shore with reef species identification and cooking tips for nutritional value)*



## Our Directors

### Megan Davidson

**CHAIR**  
APPOINTED 05 FEBRUARY 2018

Megan served 11 years in the Australian Regular Army, Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME). She is a senior consultant and coach with Integral and a trek leader for Back Track Adventures. Experienced in both the Not for Profit and corporate sector, Megan also holds qualifications in business, training, leadership and project management. Founding Director with Tina-Marie Innes and Debbie Gibbins.

### Eleanor Chappell

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
APPOINTED 20 FEBRUARY 2022

Eleanor served in the British Army Reserves before embarking on a career as a Police Officer in Nottingham, England. Over the course of a decade, Eleanor served in both the UK and WA Police Forces, before leaving in 2017 to start her own company.

Eleanor founded 'The Entrepreneur Experience' (TEX), a creative events company focusing on lifestyle events and activities for time-poor professionals; the focus being on self-care and positive experiences to support mental health and wellness.

### Mike Schuman

**SECRETARY**  
APPOINTED 14 JULY 2021

Mike served 8 years in the US Army Signal Corps with a brief stint attached to 1/1st Special Forces Group, Okinawa, Japan. It was during this time he discovered Australia during a training exercise and fell in love with the place. He originally enlisted as a Satellite Communications Systems Repairer and quickly went on to design and engineer end-to-end global networks for global Joint Services deployments. Mike also served as the Chief Information Officer of WA Police from 2014-2016.

### Garth Civil

**DIRECTOR**  
APPOINTED 31 OCTOBER 2019

One of the lucky few to have a job that is a passion, Garth has nearly 20 years of service as a career firefighter. During that time, he has seen how the job can create mental health stresses and understands the importance of assisting each other to stay healthy.

When he's not a firefighter, you'll find Garth in a kayak or on the water participating with others in an event. The sense of belonging to a like-minded group gives him the impetus to continue on, even when the challenges seem insurmountable.

### Dr Samara McPhedran

**DIRECTOR**  
APPOINTED 08 FEBRUARY 2023

Samara has two decades of experience across a range of leadership and management roles, including in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors. She holds qualifications in law and psychology, and her research has been published widely in both academic and mainstream media outlets. She specialises in the study of mental health, suicide, homicide, and domestic and family violence. She has worked extensively in legislative and policy evaluation and is currently an Honorary Associate Professor with the TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland.

## Our Directors

### Michael Kitzelmann

**DIRECTOR**  
APPOINTED 28 SEPTEMBER 2023

Michael served in the Royal Australian Air Force for 17 years. After being medically discharged, Michael commenced his civilian career as Principal Consultant with Internal Audit, Risk and Evaluation at the Department of Premier and Cabinet QLD. As a member of the Redbank Plains RSL Sub-Branch, Michael lead a team of volunteers providing emergency relief to impacted residents of the devastating floods of 2011. He was recognised with a Disaster Flood Heroes Award and an Australia Day Award for his support to the community. Michael went on to become the CEO of three Councils and brings a wealth of knowledge to Buddy Up where he is proud to continue to support his fellow Veterans and First Responders and their families.

Recognition of prior board service:

- Tina-Marie Innes
- Jon Cuypers
- Reuben Omaji
- Julie Hackett
- Debbie Gibbins
- Clint McDonald
- Joe Cuthbertson



*"Thanks team again for a great weekend for both kids and parents. Feedback for VTC - What a wonderful place. Well done to the VTC team on tackling a project the size of an elephant and making it happen. 14- 16 Apr"*

**Anonymous, Western Australia**  
Family Event Weekend at the Jarrahdale VTC, Western Australia



**Contact Details**

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**1300 030 354**



[www.buddyupaustralia.org](http://www.buddyupaustralia.org)