



David Gould OAM and Geoff Trappett OAM

# ATSA Newsletter

## Message from ATSA's Executive Officer, David Sinclair

Another busy quarter has flown by... Although many of us have been in lockdown for much of this time, we are hopeful that restrictions will lessen in coming weeks and we can ease ourselves into the 'new normal'.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games kept us entertained and inspired for a number of weeks. A huge congratulations to all competitors who made it to Tokyo. It was also fantastic to hear Paralympian Bryce Alman of Melrose Wheelchairs, commentating the Wheelchair Rugby.

The virtual seat fund-raiser by Paralympic Australia was a huge success and the overdue equality now available to ensure our Paralympic medallists will receive equivalent payments to our Olympic medallists is most welcomed. Bring on Paris 2024 and Brisbane 2032!

Although we were unable to attend in person, ATSA held briefings in Brisbane and Adelaide recently and we thank our guest speakers and attendees, alike, for joining us.

At both sessions there was plenty of insight on insurance from Brendon Watson, Oracle Group Insurance Brokers, as well as a detailed presentation from EmploySure. We welcomed two inspirational Paralympians as guest speakers to round out the morning sessions. In Brisbane, Geoff Trappett OAM gave the audience his thoughts on goal-setting and on allowing yourself to be disappointed when things don't go to plan – his insights apply to all and were very well received. David Gould OAM, joined us in Adelaide and gave us all a new appreciation for the challenges faced while representing your country. Bus crashes, police escorts, "food" served in tents without air conditioning and so much more. Many thanks again for all involved.

We have delayed the ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra, by four weeks. New dates – 24 – 25 November 2021. We hope with the vaccination rates continuing to improve that restrictions will ease, and we will be able to host a COVID-safe event to end the year. Our AGM will also be held on 22 November. More information to follow.

We hope many of you can join us in the ACT in November.

**David Sinclair**  
Executive Officer, ATSA

## ATSA Board Members

**Chairman:**  
Geoff Purtill (Invacare)

**Vice Chair:**  
Nikolas Witcombe  
(Blue Badge Insurance Australia)

**Financial Director:**  
Chris Jones (Country Care)

**Directors:**  
George Ajaka (GTK)  
Philippa Bell (Board appointed)  
Sally Farrow (Para Mobility)  
Chris Sparks (Board appointed)  
Jaime Thomson (Wicked Wheelchairs)

**Company Secretary:**  
David Sinclair (ATSA)

## Important dates

### ATSA AGM

22 November 2021, Canberra

---

### ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra

24 – 25 November 2021

---

### ATSA Independent Living Expo, Brisbane

11-12 May 2022

---

### ATSA Independent Living Expo, Sydney

25-26 May 2022

“  
Supporting an  
industry which  
values the  
independence  
of people living  
with disability,  
seniors, their  
families and  
carers.

Phone: (02) 9893 1883

Mail: PO Box 7245 Tathra NSW 2550

Email: [info@atsa.org.au](mailto:info@atsa.org.au)

Website: [www.atsa.org.au](http://www.atsa.org.au)

ABN: 58 628 080 517

## In this issue

- A familiar face joins the ATSA team
  - Membership packs
  - Free Member education
    - Tony Nicholls, Good Talent Media
    - Reputation Risk Management Training - 13 October 2021 12pm (AEDST)
    - Building brand awareness and setting yourself apart - 27 October 2021 12pm (AEDST)
    - Media Training - 10 November 2021 10am (AEDST)
    - SEO Content Marketing
  - What have our Members been up to?
  - Paralympics a game-changer for accessibility says former wheelchair basketballer
  - Sunrise Medical – going from strength to strength in the post-pandemic environment
  - ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra – ready for you this November
- 

## NSW Transport and MMD update

Recent changes to the NSW Road Rules, which remove outdated weight limits for power wheelchairs and motorised mobility scooters (known as Motorised Mobility Devices - MMDs) used by people with physical disability are welcomed by ATSA.

ATSA and in particular, Board Member, Chris Sparks have been advocating for the weight restriction to be lifted for several years.

The amendments to the Road Rules, introduced on 1 September 2021, remove any references to weight restrictions for people using MMDs as pedestrians, including mobility scooters and power wheelchairs.

ATSA thanks the Minister for Roads and Transport, The Hon. Andrew Constance and his department for addressing this long-term issue.



## A familiar face joins the ATSA team

A new chapter has commenced in the long-standing working relationship between Assistive Technology Suppliers Australia (ATSA) and [Interpoint Events](#), with [Allison Miller](#) taking on the new role of Sales Manager at ATSA as of 1st September.

Allison will continue to be the point of contact for all exhibitions stand sales.

Interpoint Events, who have been organising the ATSA Independent Living Expo's since 2006, will continue to focus on the operational management of the ATSA Independent Living Expo's with ATSA taking on the marketing and sales responsibilities.

Interested in exhibiting and not yet an ATSA member? Please email [allison.miller@atsa.org.au](mailto:allison.miller@atsa.org.au) to register your interest in our 2022 events.



**Allison Miller**  
Sales Manager, ATSA

## Membership packs

ATSA members were sent a Membership kit in August. Please let us know if you would like additional copies of the Code of Practice, ATSA Code of Practice poster, ATSA Membership Certificate or the ATSA door decal. You will have recently been sent the ATSA logo, if you have missed this or need it supplied again, please let us know.

Look out for the next issue of Link magazine where we start an ATSA column - and all members will receive a free copy in the mail.

Finally, please take a few moments to check your member directory listing (if you haven't recently) at: [www.atsa.org.au](http://www.atsa.org.au)





## Free Member education

We have a number of education sessions happening before the end of the year - please check out details below - if you wish to register or have any questions, please email [events@atsa.org.au](mailto:events@atsa.org.au)

### Tony Nicholls, Good Talent Media

Founder and Principal Consultant of Good Talent Media Tony Nicholls is an accomplished journalist who has held roles for more than ten years with the ABC, SBS and Network Ten.

Tony has seen first-hand how the media landscape has evolved, changing the roles of journalists, politicians and media spokespeople. Tony will be presenting the three media sessions below.



**Tony Nicholls**  
Good Talent Media

### Reputation Risk Management Training - 13 October 2021 12pm (AEDST)

Crisis is no longer an aberration; it's going to be the standard operating environment for decades. We have enormous political instability and a deepening culture of digital and social media surveillance.

What's also here to stay and is only going to deepen is media scrutiny. Alongside the traditional media formats of TV, radio and print have emerged social and digital media platforms and the 24/7, 365 day a year news cycle. Today, anyone with a screen can be a citizen journalist and anyone can post almost anything they like without sanction. And there are a lot of agents out there whose concern is not necessarily the truth but inflicting damage or campaigning against your organisation.

The team of ex-journalists at [Good Talent Media](#) can help you to formulate your crisis media audit and to prepare your team to deal with the press during a crisis.

### Building brand awareness and setting yourself apart - 27 October 2021 12pm (AEDST)

There is no shortage of problems in the world and organisations doing great work to resolve them but building your profile and showcasing your work is critical to attracting the competitive philanthropic dollar.

Good Talent Media will show you how to create a slate of stories based on singular themes targeted to specific media outlets, then the anatomy of a successful media release. Does it have a case study as the emotional core,

a partner to validate your claims and elevate your brand, and a call to action that is specific and has news hooks?

Are you using a redundant 'product/sales' approach to your media releases, or a 'problem/solution' approach? Sales repels. Learn from a PR agency staffed by ex-journalists how to package up stories that will get picked up.

### Media Training - 10 November 2021 10am (AEDST)

Does the public know about the good work you're doing? Have you articulated a vision the public can understand? Is your message connecting emotionally with the audience? Are you ready to answer tough questions under pressure in a media interview? Do your spokespeople know how to answer media questions and stay on message?

The team of ex-journalists at Good Talent Media can help you formulate key messages, an interview plan, overcome your nerves and share your narrative with confidence.

### SEO Content Marketing

Would you like Google to send more potential customers to your website? If more clicks from Google sounds like it might help your marketing, we have a suggestion...

As a search engine, Google does only one thing: Google answers questions. A searcher asks something like "assistive technology" then Google ranks the pages it thinks have the best answers.

That means you need to convince Google that you're the best answer to your potential customers' questions. To make your website content a good answer for Google and the human readers it sends you, you need to apply a combination of easily-learned skills. These skills include understanding:

1. What Google cares about (which is all "search engine optimisation" or "SEO" means)
2. How to find the exact questions your clients are asking Google. (Only when you know the exact questions, can you shape your content as the best answers.)
3. How to turn this information into content that Google and your customers will thank you for

These are all skills you can get through the SEO content marketing course run by our training partner [Taleist](#). The course is taught by [Steven Lewis](#), who has been writing websites since 1994. Steven will show you what you need to know to get your website climbing Google.

Future dates for the course are now available, you can read more about the course and claim your spot [here](#).

Use coupon code **ATSA2021** at check out for a \$250 saving.

## What have our Members been up to?



Leading the way in Innovative Healthcare Solutions and accessibility, the Country Care Group Mildura showroom is built on the foundations of the company's mission and vision. Spacious, considered, and accessible, the showroom displays an extensive range products and assistive technology for customers to choose from. With private consulting rooms available, customers can meet with their allied health professional in store and work in consultation with our specialist NDIS Ambassadors and customer service team.

Visit them at 836A Fifteenth Street, Mildura, 3500, Victoria or [www.countrycaregroup.com.au](http://www.countrycaregroup.com.au)



## recovawear™

Recovawear launched new [website](http://www.recovawear.com.au) - experience their newly launched website now, a new destination for all your favourite adaptive clothing pieces.



Leading provider of mobility equipment Motobility has a new showroom boasting more space, more support and a more comprehensive range of products.

The exciting leap to a larger space, means a bigger business for Motobility, and store Manager Glenn Harris said the interactive space was one of the many features customers had grown to love.

*"As well as carrying Perth's largest range of mobility scooters, we have increased our display of adjustable beds, power chairs, lift and recline chairs, stairlifts and platform lifts, he said. We have also introduced a brand-new selection of mobility aids which we didn't carry before."*

These include manual wheelchairs, bathroom and toilet aids, walking sticks, cushions, walkers and daily living aids, to name but a few. Another feature is the addition of a dedicated workstation for our visiting occupational therapists and healthcare professionals.

*"It has been great to have visits from our new and existing customers Mr Harris said, "Everyone is loving the increased range and the brighter and more spacious showroom area."*

*Every customer is unique with their specific needs, comfort requirements and what personally works for them, and having larger premises with an increased offering enables this."*

Visit them at Head Office 311 Selby Street Osborne Park, 6017, Western Australia or [www.motobility.com.au](http://www.motobility.com.au)





# Paralympics a game-changer for accessibility says former wheelchair basketballer

**Article reproduced with permission.**

**Written by Amandine Ahrens.**

**First printed in Bega District News - 31 August 2021.**

Chris Sparks OAM feels for the 2021 Paralympians competing in unprecedented times, having compete in the 1988 Paralympics himself.

While watching the Tokyo Games recently with his wife Wendy, from home on NSW's South Coast, Mr Sparks said he felt sad for the Olympians, seeing the stands empty of fans.

*"The atmosphere in major games is something else, you know, when you're in a stadium with 20 or 30,000 screaming fans cheering you on,"* said Mr Sparks, a former Paralympic wheelchair basketballer.

Mr Sparks also shared with ACM some insight into what life inside the prestigious world class competition is like.

*"When you're competing, it's a very different world to being a spectator and it's often a build up that takes years and years of hard work,"* Mr Sparks said.

Mr Sparks said what people often don't realise is that the build up towards the event involved tremendous discipline and that for some athletes, who spend months if not years preparing for a competition, it is over within minutes.

*"So it's a tremendous build up, it's great elation if you succeed, but equally, it can be pretty heartbreaking if you don't do as well as you set out to,"* he said.

In Mr Sparks' case, being part of a team helped a lot with the pressure and lead up to competitions.

*"You get this great sense of camaraderie and companionship, which is something that when the Games are over, I think a lot of people miss,"* he said.

Mr Sparks competed in the 1988 Paralympics at Seoul, as well as in two World Gold Cups. He was even a torch bearer at the Sydney Olympics in 2000.

Among his many achievements, Mr Sparks represented NSW on 10 occasions and Australia on seven, while playing wheelchair basketball from 1981 to 1993.

He was also awarded Australia's most valuable player at the 1986 Gold Cup in the World Wheelchair Basketball Championships, and won gold with the 1986 Australian team at the Stoke-Mandeville Games in England.

Mr Sparks said one of the great aspects about Paralympic events was that they can *"often be a great catalyst for social change"*.

*"Back when I used to compete, no-one would have ever thought they'd see a country like Iran with a disability sporting program for men and women, yet now Iran's there and they're good,"* he said.

Mr Sparks also listed the Barcelona Games as an example for social change.

He said that after hosting the Paralympics, Barcelona adapted and made changes to make everything more accessible within the city.

*"They went to the nth degree and Barcelona is pretty much regarded as the most accessible place on the planet now,"* Mr Sparks said.

With the current Olympic and Paralympic Games hosted by Tokyo, Mr Sparks hoped the Paralympian team have had more accessibility than when he worked in Japan.

Having lived in Hong Kong for a couple years with his wife Wendy, he discovered there was room for improvement for accessibility.

*"I did a lot of work in Tokyo, and Tokyo is not accessible, it's getting better slowly, very slowly, but the basics of getting around and finding a place to stay was hard,"* Mr Sparks said.

*"I'm really looking forward to hearing reports back from the athletes,"* he added.



**Chris Sparks OAM**  
1988 Paralympics

## Sunrise Medical – going from strength to strength in the post-pandemic environment

With a new showroom and warehouse dove-tailing their innovative Clinical Hub which opened late last year, Sunrise Medical forged ahead during a difficult year.

As assistive technology suppliers and users adapt to “the new normal” following Covid-19, the need for best practice consultation and careful matching of assistive technology to client needs is more important than ever.

Meet Mitchell Stone, RGK wheelchair product specialist, who has worked in the assistive technology arena for many years and joined Sunrise Medical in January – adding his unique skills and knowledge during a time of major expansion.



**Mitchell Stone**  
RGK Wheelchair  
Product Specialist

Mitch has been a manual wheelchair user since 2010 following a boating accident which resulted in a dislocated vertebra and crushed the vertebra below it, together with several broken bones. Undiscovered for more than nine hours, Mitch was rescued from his ordeal by passing kayakers who propelled his tinny to land and called an ambulance.

During an extensive eight-month stay in hospital, Mitch learned of the developing Wheelchair Rugby League Association (WRLA) which began a seasonal competition in 2010. Wheelchair rugby League is a variation of the running game allowing athletes with disability to compete with and against able-bodied people. Recognising a great opportunity to continue playing his cherished game, Mitch actively engaged in the sport, managing a junior team at his old club and gaining selection for the WRLA World Cup team in 2013. Most recently, Mitch was chosen for the NSW Blues squad preparing for the 2021 WRLA State of Origin and was an avid player for the Sydney Uni Wheelkings basketball team in the national competition.

Mitch's experience and passion for wheelchair sports gives him an undeniable edge in understanding the unique requirements of wheelchair athletes, allowing precise pairing of Sunrise Medical products to wheelchair athletes.

Having expert knowledge of the RGK wheelchair range, Mitch recently upgraded his own basketball chair to the RGK Elite.

***“The RGK Elite X is a quantum leap in design – it is the perfect combination of new technology and materials. At its’ core, this transcendent chair has a unique, pioneering carbon fibre axle, making it significantly stiffer and lighter.*”**

***The TRI-FRAME chassis design makes a world of difference to the distribution of energy during play.”***

Sunrise Medical offers a broad range of assistive technology from 14 of their family brands, including 27 wheelchairs (both manual and power) at their new showroom. Their latest release is the Quickie Nitrum manual wheelchair.

***“The Quickie Nitrum Rigid Ultra Lightweight Wheelchair is a direct result of Sunrise Medical's extensive experience in developing high-end manual wheelchairs. The Nitrum is engineered to efficiently convert your energy into motion, allowing you to propel with the least amount of effort.”***



As well as offering state-of-the-art wheelchairs, the Sunrise Clinical Hub is available for assessment services and is available free of charge to health professionals and their clients and also provides comprehensive facilities for people with disability.

Mitch Stone and the Clinical Hub are backed up by an expert team, including Clinical Director, Amy Bjornson, who took out the award for *Most Registered and Attended Session Presenter* at the [ATSA Independent Living Expo](#) in Melbourne last May.



**Amy Bjornson**  
Clinical Director

Sunrise Medical staff can assist with complex client needs, guide you through your prescription and even arrange a bespoke solution to your mobility needs from their Wetherill Park showroom, or come to you if you need an extra pair of hands for a clinical assessment at your health care location.



## ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra – ready for you this November

Do you need a compact power wheelchair? Looking for daily living aids or mobility devices? Searching for the latest in Assistive Technology for a client? Know someone who needs to update their lift chair, bed or commode? Don't know where to start with a vehicle modification?

Visit ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra, 24-25 November where you will find solutions to all those challenges and more! Better yet, it's free to attend. There are anticipated to be more than 70 exhibitors displaying products and offering services to cover many needs. [Click here](#) for the exhibitor list.

The new venue for 2021 is the Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC) which provides easy access and plenty of parking.

In addition to the exciting innovation and new products on display this year, ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra has a very strong seminar program. All sessions are free to attend. You just need to pre-register.

The diversity in the seminar program is set to be very engaging, from the practical to the informative there is something for everyone. Due to COVID safe practices seating is more limited than usual – remember to book early!

When you pre-register you not only receive free access, you will also receive a free coffee. You can also rest assured knowing all COVID safe plans are in place.

And for those in the industry, remember you can gain CPD points from attending.

Presenting for the first time at ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra are Emma Clarkson and Helen Lindner from Mobility and Accessibility for Children in Australia (MACA). They will be covering *“High Standards: An overview of the standards, products and practices that promote safe restraint options for Australian children with disability and medical conditions travelling in motor vehicles”*.

Rebecca Bateson from the Therapeutic Goods Administration will also be presenting for the first time, on *“Changes to the regulation of assistive technology – An update from the TGA on the latest regulatory changes impacting the assistive technology sector”*.

Other speakers include: NDIS, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Tracee-lee Maginnity and Rachel Fabiniak, Permobil Australia; Craig Slattery, Para Mobility; Amin Akbarian, Mobility Engineering; Amy Bjornson, Rob Norman and Tilly Brook, Sunrise Medical; Joana Sanitago and Jamie Cockle, Medifab and Lauren Hunter, Linds Rehabilitation Equipment. These are just some of the fantastic presenters you can learn from at ATSA this November.

Visit [www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au](http://www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au) for all the details – and remember to Like us on Facebook.

[REGISTER FOR FREE TODAY](#)

Spread the word to your friends, family, colleagues and broader network! We'll see you there.

Any questions please email [events@atsa.org.au](mailto:events@atsa.org.au) or call **1300 789 845**





# REGISTER NOW

**Wed 24 - Thu 25  
NOV 2021**  
Exhibition Park  
In Canberra (EPIC)





Australia's foremost  
assistive technology event

**MORE THAN  
120 EXHIBITORS**

# BRISBANE

**11-12 MAY 2022**

**ROYAL INTERNATIONAL  
CONVENTION CENTRE**  
RNA Showgrounds, Brisbane

# SYDNEY

**25-26 MAY 2022**

**SYDNEY SHOWGROUND**  
Sydney Olympic Park  
Halls 5 & 6

**SAVE  
THE DATE**

**FREE Entry,  
Seminar Program &  
Coffee Voucher**

**atsa**  
independent living  
**expo**

 **1300 789 845**

 **[www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au](http://www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au)**

Organised by

Media Partners

