

**ATSA Independent Living Expo, Canberra**

ATSA Newsletter

Message from ATSA's Executive Officer, David Sinclair

In the first newsletter of 2021 my opening was 'I could open with the common phrase; "We are coming out of a year like no other" and I would have to say no more...' we didn't anticipate 2022 starting the way it has, however 'living with COVID' will be the way forward.

Supply chain disruption, staffing challenges, testing is all looking like it will be around for longer than expected. Just remember that being kind to yourself and others will reap mental health benefits for everyone. If you need anything, please make contact with our team at ATSA who are here to assist you and your business.

As much as 2021 was unsettling, as an industry we had some great successes.

- 28 new members joined ATSA
- More than 10 Government submissions made
- Over 50 members directly assisted with numerous government consultations and COVID matters
- More than 50 hours of free education offered
- Three ATSA Independent Living Expo's held in three different states and territories
- Three new team members joined ATSA
- Two new members join the ATSA Board in late November

We are excited about 2022 and what it holds. There are some big projects in the pipeline including the first ATSA Gala Dinner, to acknowledge ATSA's history and all the industry leaders who have helped get us to where we are, it is sure to be a highlight at the end of May.

As always, we welcome suggestions on the ATSA education sessions, member benefits and any other ideas you may have.

There is plenty of news in the following pages – enjoy reading – and if you have a story you would like to share, please email melanie.robertson@atsa.org.au

Let's make 2022 count, make it enjoyable and remember that together we can get through these challenges. Stay safe.



David Sinclair
Executive Officer, ATSA

ATSA Board Members

Chairman:

Nikolas Witcombe
(Blue Badge Insurance Australia)

Vice Chair:

Sally Farrow (Para Mobility)

Financial Director:

Chris Jones (Country Care)

Directors:

George Ajaka (GTK)
Philippa Bell (Board appointed)
Stewart McDonagh
(Independent Living Specialists)
Jaime Thomson (Sunrise Medical)
Jeff Watters (Automobility)

Company Secretary:

David Sinclair (ATSA)

Important dates

ATSA Independent Living Expo, Brisbane
11 - 12 May 2022

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ATSA Gala Dinner
25 May 2022

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ATSA Independent Living Expo, Sydney
25 - 26 May 2022

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Rehacare Düsseldorf
14 - 17 September 2022

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New Zealand Disability Expo
28 - 29 September 2022

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ATSA Code of Practice

Under the ATSA Code of Practice, all ATSA members commit to ensuring they act at all times with the best interests and welfare of the consumer in mind.

Clause 4.1 states that:

'They will act at all times in such a manner as to justify public trust and confidence, to uphold the good standing and reputation of the healthcare industry, to serve the best interests of society, and above all, to safeguard the interests of individual customers. They will respect the confidentiality of information obtained and not disclose such information without the consent of the customer concerned or a person entitled to act on that customer's behalf, except where such disclosure is required by law. They will be honest and truthful in all their dealings with customers.'

A PDF copy of the Code of Practice is available to anyone by emailing info@atsa.org.au and can be downloaded at www.atsa.org.au

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Thank you Chris and Wendy Sparks

Chris and Wendy Sparks will be stepping down from their support roles with ATSA, after many years of dedication and commitment, to enjoy the next phase in their lives.

They will leave very big shoes to fill. We have all greatly benefitted from their comradery, humour, hard work and skills over the years.

Their legacy will go on, ATSA would not be where it is today without them.

All the very best Chris and Wendy, here's to many wonderful and joyful adventures ahead!



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ATSA Board for 2022

At the ATSA AGM, held in November in person and via Zoom, new Board members were elected. ATSA and the Board welcome **Jeff Watters** and **Stewart McDonagh** as new Board Members.

ATSA Board:

Nik Witcombe - Chair

Sally Farrow - Vice-Chair

Chris Jones - Financial Director

George Ajaka, Jaime Thomson, Jeff Watters

and **Stewart McDonagh** - Elected Directors

Philippa Bell - Appointed Director.

We would also like to thank those stepping down this year.

Tom Hogan - thank you for your effort and energy during your time on the Board.

Thank you to **Geoffrey Purtill** for his strong leadership and dedication over the past five years.

Chris Sparks OAM has also decided it's time to step down - without the guidance and support of both Geoff and Chris ATSA wouldn't have grown into the association it is today. Thank you.

TGA's SME Assist 'Meeting Your Obligations' workshop - 3 March 2022

Do you have new staff or are you considering supplying a therapeutic good in Australia? Then don't miss TGA's [SME Assist](#) hybrid workshop (online and in-person) on 'Meeting Your Obligations'.

It's a free workshop for those new to, or unfamiliar with, therapeutic goods regulation, including small to medium enterprises (SMEs), start-ups, and researchers. The workshop will help you navigate the regulatory maze so you understand your obligations at different stages of the regulatory process.

When: Thursday 3 March 2022

Online attendance: 9.00am - 11.30am (AEST)

In person attendance: 8.45am - 12.30pm (AEST)

Where: [Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Glenelg St, South Brisbane, Queensland](#)

For those wishing to attend in-person, please be reassured that all relevant COVID safety requirements are being put in place. If you have any questions about COVID safety please don't hesitate to contact sme.assist@tga.gov.au.

To register and get more information please visit [registration page](#).

ATSA Independent Living Expo back in Brisbane and Sydney in 2022 after a 3-year break

"At the beginning of 2021 we didn't know if we would be able to hold one ATSA independent Living Expo event, let alone three," ATSA executive officer, David Sinclair said at the close of the Canberra event in November. This followed ATSA Independent Living Expo's in Melbourne and Perth held in May. These events had been delayed from 2020 due to the pandemic.

The Canberra event was delayed four weeks as a result of ACT lockdowns, but the change affected few of the more than 60 exhibitors on the show floor for the two days.

"It was the held at Exhibition Park, (EPIC), which allowed for wide aisles that were important for safe social distancing, with plenty of easy parking and purpose-built seminar rooms," David continued.

"We were delighted to welcome a number of new exhibitors including Bedshed, COTA ACT, Eyes for Canberra, Lifestyle Solutions, Meridian ACT, Momentum Sports & Rehabilitation Service, Nurse Next Door, PolySpine, RoboFit, Scope Home Access and Vera Living," said Allison Miller, ATSA sales Manager, *"A number of new products were also released at the show. It is great to see such innovation happening."*

[Check out the highlights video from Canberra.](#)

Planning is now well underway for the 2022 events with Brisbane all but sold out and Sydney more than 85% sold at the time of writing.

There are many new exhibitors involved with both events and a number of presentations submitted from speakers who have not previously been involved with the event. The program will have a few surprises when it is released early in 2022 and bookings for the sessions will be in demand. The presentations are always well-attended and are a drawcard for the event.



Amy and Robert from Sunrise Medical still smiling despite the rain at bump out in Canberra

ATSA Gala Dinner 25th May 2022 A first for ATSA

To celebrate ATSA's 20th anniversary, our founders, members and industry leaders, ATSA will hold a Gala Dinner in Sydney – 25 May 2022. Join colleagues and peers for a night to remember at Accor Stadium in Olympic Park. Tickets are selling fast (table and single ticket options are available).

Interested in exhibiting at our expo's or booking to attend the Gala Dinner?

Please email allison.miller@atsa.org.au
or call **02 4646 1453**

Interested in volunteering?
Email events@atsa.org.au

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) – ATSAexpo to stay up to date with all that is happening at the shows.

Ottobock extends Paralympic partnership with the IPC until 2032

In November 2021, it was announced that the global partnership between med-tech company Ottobock and the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) has been extended until 2032. Thanks to the extension, Ottobock will be able to provide its' technical repair and maintenance services to athletes at the next six Paralympic Games – from Beijing in 2022 to Brisbane in 2032.

IPC President Andrew Parsons said: "Ottobock are a powerhouse in the Paralympic Village – at the Games they quite literally keep the athletes moving. The presence of Ottobock's dedicated and knowledgeable staff in the Village is so reassuring for athletes, as they know there is someone trusted to solve their technical issues should they arise. I am thrilled that Ottobock are partnering with the IPC at the Paralympic Games until at least 2032, and are going to continue to be a valued member of the Paralympic Movement."

"Passion for Paralympics"

Ottobock has been actively supporting international disability sport ever since the 1988 Paralympic Games in Seoul. They began by sending four orthotics and prosthetics professionals to support the athletes and repair their equipment for competitions, using a tent as their base. In 2021 in Tokyo more than 100 experts were deployed in Ottobock's Technical Repair Service Center. During its three weeks of operations, the Ottobock team completed over 2000 repairs on wheelchairs, prostheses, orthoses and other assistive devices.



"Our initial enthusiasm has grown into a veritable passion. We've now been supporting Paralympic athletes for more than 30 years with our unique technical services," said Professor Hans Georg Näder, owner and Chairman of the Board of Ottobock SE & Co. KGaA. "Ottobock's commitment to Paralympic sports has long since become part of our DNA. So I'm delighted that we can continue this partnership and officially support the Paralympic Games for the next eleven years."

A mutual vision

Ottobock Australia supported athletes in 2018 at both the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast and the Invictus Games in Sydney. Philipp Schulte-Noelle, CEO of Ottobock, said: "The Paralympic Games show society how powerful sports can be. They prove just how much people can achieve if they train with focus on a goal and believe in themselves. But they do more than that – they help to overcome barriers, and they epitomise courage, diversity and openness. I'm proud that our company is a part of this and can continue to play its part in the future."

New International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF) website

The modernised IMDRF website site highlights the collaborative efforts of medical device regulator members of IMDRF. Check out the new features including Google translate and improved navigation and search functions at www.imdrf.org.

Outcomes from NDIA Consultation on Early Childhood Assistive Technology

In June 2021, the NDIA released a *Request for Information* (RFI) to the AT sector seeking market input and advice on existing and future AT market solutions with regard to an early childhood AT approach. As a result of this Consultation, the next stage of the project was announced prior to Christmas. The presentation by the NDIS on this announcement is available on the [ATSA website](#).

The project has two phases:

The **first phase** is to trial an AT Loan Pool model for early childhood AT. This is expected to commence in March/April 2022. The key elements of this trial are

- Testing is likely to be conducted in defined metro, rural and remote regions with a staged roll out.
- The trial will initially be for a period of six months with an option to extend for a further six months.
- The NDIA will ask suppliers who responded to the RFI to submit an Expression of Interest to work with the Agency to complete a trial. Only NDIS Registered Providers will be eligible to participate. There is an outstanding issue where those participating in the trial are required to have a credit license. ATSA has asked the NDIA to approach ASIC and seek an exemption for all AT suppliers.
- A consultation was held with these providers in December 2021 and an Expression of Interest was released to this group in January 2022. Interested suppliers will have four weeks to respond to the EOI.
- Selected providers will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deliver the ECATA trial(s).
- Testing of new elements including the AT decision matrix and more streamlined processes to increase flexibility in funding of AT supports.
- The number of touch points with the agency will be reduced. Work is still required by the NDIA to clarify how a new AT matrix will be implemented for approvals and assessments. The matrix will focus on AT aligned with gross motor function with the opportunity to adapt and build in other categories in future iterations. We have sought clarification in regard to what triggers will be in place for a child to be reassessed for their AT as this is still unclear.
- The NDIS advised an online marketplace was viewed as a positive model to simplify the process of recycling and sourcing suitable AT. One similar to Gumtree or eBay with appropriate safeguards in place. Further work will be undertaken by the NDIS to determine the potential to trial an online marketplace in 2022. In regard to the issue

of safeguards for second hand AT, ATSA has been in contact with the TGA to advise them of this proposed trial as there are currently no standards or safeguards in place to ensure existing online platforms can guarantee reissued AT meets the TGA requirements. This issue was also raised by ATSA with the ACCC in their review of online platforms.

Key concerns in regard to this trial are the lack of clarity around the decision criteria for the selection of new or second hand AT for children, the pricing for the second hand AT and safety frameworks of the resold/reissued equipment. The question of approvals for access to AT under this model of supply is also yet to be made clear.

The second phase of the project relates to how tele-health practice can be used to improve the reach to people in rural and remote areas as well as other locations. The NDIS has advised that the purpose is not to replace essential face to face assessments, however, the definition of what is "essential" has not been clarified at this time. There are still unanswered questions in regard to this trial. This may set a precedent for the provision of AT in Australia.

Renting AT? Do you need to have a credit licence with ASIC?

If your business hires AT directly to consumers, then you may need to apply for a credit licence with ASIC. According to ASIC, you will need a credit licence if you are a lessor under a consumer lease where:

- the AT hired is wholly or substantially for personal, domestic or household purposes;
- a charge is made for hiring the goods; and
- the charge, together with any other amount payable under the consumer lease, exceeds the cash price of the goods.

The licensing requirement will continue as long as you are the legal owner of the rights to payment and return of the goods under the lease. The licensing requirement also applies to any other person who performs obligations or exercises rights on your behalf in relation to the consumer lease.

It is important for you check if this applies to your business by going to the following link from ASIC www.asic.gov.au. The cost of applying for a credit licence ranges from \$1,798-\$4,624.

How a life-threatening injury led to a new life, new skills and a dream job in assistive technology

Overcoming employment barriers with help from Uccello Designs.

Trent Caldwell describes himself as “just an average guy” but anyone who knows his story understands that he is an exceptional young man in so many ways.

In 2012, Trent was leading an ordinary life in country Western Australia until the Easter long weekend when he and a few mates headed to the park for a game of soccer. As Trent describes the events that day: “Wise old me decided it would be a great idea to do a few chin-ups on the metal soccer goals that had been left out overnight from a training the night before...

The goals hadn't been bolted into the ground and they fell forward and squashed my skull.

I was in a coma for two weeks that I wasn't supposed to wake from.”

Trent's family was told that, if Trent regained consciousness, to expect serious brain injury. Trent defied expectations and emerged from his coma two weeks later. He says: “When I came out of the coma, it wasn't like waking up from a sleep. I woke dozens of times for what only felt like seconds, each time full of a confusing mess of thoughts and visions.”

Trent's eye socket had been crushed and the optic nerve to his right eye severed. His right eye was now blind.

“Fractures all over my head... had to learn to walk again, talk again, feed myself... re-learning to live at the age of twenty!” he laughs.

Trent had previously studied art at TAFE and it was an extra blow to accept that the injury had affected his depth perception and ability to draw.

“It's all a massive blur to me now. I got hit hard with PTSD and it led to depression and anxiety. Eventually, I went to take my own life and was told I was going to be admitted to Graylands psychiatric hospital.”

I said: “I'd rather die than go to Graylands!” I jumped up and legged it out of the hospital.”

They caught Trent with police helicopters buzzing overhead.

“So, I'm wanting to die, but I'm in Graylands fighting to live.

There were some very threatening and eye-opening things happening there, but if it wasn't for that experience, I wouldn't be where I am today.”

While in Graylands, Trent decided that he was never going to let another young person go through what he experienced there.

“All of a sudden, I had this reason for living.”



Trent Caldwell with a self-portrait and enjoying time with his Grandmother, Ronnie Clohessy

Trent's family moved to the Kimberley region of WA where he landed a marketing job with “The Broome Advertiser” and felt at home supporting local businesses. Trent embarked on a new trajectory and became a youth worker in Broome. Helping young people to work and to “get off the streets” led him to find something that he loved – teaching young people to make art.

Trent knew he had found a purpose in life, but much as he loved youth work, he realised that it wasn't paying the bills. Wanting to combine his love of community service with making art, Trent had an epiphany “meld them all together and you've got marketing!”

Trent dedicated himself to completing a Certificate IV and a Diploma of Marketing and Communications and not only took out the TAFE Vocational Student of the Year for Western Australia but was also runner up in the national Australian Training Awards the same year. Never one to rest on his laurels, Trent continued to flourish: managing social media for a real estate company, designing artwork, looking after website and advertising campaigns and managing the Facebook page for one of Perth's largest event publishers.

This combination of passion and spark, Trent's skills in art and design, his sales and communications experience and his drive to help others led him to find the employment equivalent of “A Perfect Match” as Marketing Co-ordinator with Uccello Designs in February 2021.

Trent has found his ideal work environment: “If there was an award for Employer of the Year, it would be Uccello!”

“The way Uccello Designs has made me feel... I don't feel like I have a disability – they've been so supportive of me, even when I have my bad days, that it's hard to imagine ever working anywhere else. It's a great place to work – with my ADHD and visual impairment, Uccello has made whatever adjustments I require. I'm given the freedom of a very flexible work environment in my own hours, to really own the work to get the job done in a way that works for me. Uccello has provided me with everything I need to work from home, invested in additional editing programme courses and mentored me as part of a very caring and personal business – we're working as a team but also as friends who support each other.

Uccello took such a gamble with me as a TAFE graduate. They believed in me, took my skill set, flipped it around to make it work and that's what the best employers do – bring out your best!”

“Uccello really is a business with a metric to literally make people's lives easier – the focus is on people, which is something that I absolutely value.”

Trent feels totally at home in such a supportive workplace and relishes working in the assistive technology sector with so many like-minded people. The team doesn't just understand the work but also the audience behind the product – people who live with and interact with AT users every day.

“The ATSA Independent Living Expo in Perth last May was my first Expo experience and seeing all the AT products there was fascinating! To appreciate how everyone's needs are different but that innovators have a product to suit so many different variations of those needs. It's phenomenal to see the passion of the people at the Expo – it's not just a trade show – they really care about finding the best solution to assist people.”

The artwork that sustained Trent while finding his path to recovery has taken a back seat to his commitment with Uccello, although he is still drawing amazing portraits and has been featured in a number of exhibitions where he enjoys validation as an artist when his work is appreciated by a buyer.

Trent's message for those learning to cope with disability is that things do get better, that barriers can be overcome and that you can have success in life where there are opportunities to thrive.

“The years since my injury were the roughest I've ever been through but I'm just an average guy and, if I can get through it, anyone can.

I'm living my ultimate life – blessed with a beautiful partner, with fantastic friends and family, working in a job that I absolutely love.

You can't say that life gets any better than that!”

2022 New Zealand Disability Expo

Assistive Technologies Suppliers New Zealand (ATSNZ) are proud to bring to you the 2022 New Zealand Disability Expo, 28-29 September at the Vodafone Events Centre in Auckland, New Zealand. Our 3rd world class exhibition of assistive technology aims to continue to enhance and expand the choices for people with disability and seniors across New Zealand.

Alongside the Expo, there will be a first-class seminar programme that will attract a quality Allied Health audience, the who's who of the Disability sector and key influencers within government and private organisations.

We look forward to having you join us and be a part of the New Zealand Disability event for 2022.

For information, please visit our website: www.atsnzexpo.nz or email events@iconevents.co.nz for the exhibition prospectus.

ATSNZ Disability Expo

Working in Home Modifications?



Home Modification
Information
Clearinghouse

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse (HMinfo) is a Commonwealth Government funded information service that helps people make informed choices about modifications to their home aimed at improving safety, ease of access and comfort for older people and people with disability. HMinfo provides free research and technical publications to support older people and people with disability, home modification service providers, practitioners, the building industry and researchers. In addition to providing home modification information to the community, HMinfo hosts discussion forums, Apps, a service directory and other free services. www.homemods.info

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

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