



Annual Report.

20 25



**Lions
Assistance Dogs**



Changing lives through impact.

Lions Assistance Dogs aims to create a world where every individual and their Assistance Dog lives with safety, independence, and confidence, empowered by their transformational partnership.

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Providing
life-changing
Assistance Dogs,
free of charge.

Our Organisation.

Here at Lions Assistance Dogs our mission is to empower individuals by providing professionally trained Assistance Dogs, free of charge, to our recipients. We are committed to enhancing lives with compassion and innovation while advocating for greater independence and inclusion.

Compassion, integrity, resourcefulness, accountability and **collaboration** are the values Lions Assistance Dogs hold in the highest regard. We are driven by kindness and care for the individuals we support. We are committed to operating with transparency and respect to build trust across our community. Through responsible management of our resources, we remain self-sufficient and able to provide services, free of charge, to all recipients. We hold ourselves accountable for the wellbeing of our remarkable Assistance Dogs and the people we serve, and by working together as a community, we create a strong, connected network focused on achieving the ultimate outcome of security and independence for those in need.

We run three programs at our National Training Centre in Verdun, South Australia. This includes our **Hearing Assistance Dog Program** as the basis for which our organisation was formed back in 1980, our **Medical Assistance Dog Program**, currently focused on Diabetic Alert Dogs with the capacity to expand in the future, and our **Psychiatric Assistance Dog Program** for returned servicemen and women living with Post-Traumatic-Stress-Disorder. In addition to this we coordinate a Breeding Program through our Breeding Centre to adhere to ever increasing demands and needs for more Assistance Dogs and run our Puppy Program to prepare our future Assistance Dogs for full-time training. Backed by volunteers and supporters, we have built a strong community to keep these life-changing programs running.



Our Patron.

Mr Rod Bunten.

Earlier this year I was privileged to have a front row seat at the Lions Assistance Dogs training centre at Verdun and see three amazing trainee dogs in action - dogs who will provide support, safety, and independence to those who need them.

Border Terrier Bentley, a Hearing Assistance Dog, responds to sounds such as a doorbell, oven timer, or alarm clock, and will run and "touch" his handler to alert them and lead them to the sound. Amazingly if the sound is a smoke alarm, he will run to the handler and "touch" them with his paw then drop to the ground in a warning signal.

Labradoodle Zena, a Diabetic Alert Dog demonstrated how she detects low and high blood glucose levels in type 1 diabetics and performs life-saving tasks in the home.

Labradoodle Vino, a Psychiatric Dog displayed how he interrupts anxious behaviours to provide comfort and safety to a veteran with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Accompanied by my wife, Her Excellency the Hon Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, we sat enthralled at the dog's alertness and joyful attention to their tasks, and we were grateful to know of the lifelines they will become.

But they will also give so much more. They will be trusted companions who provide love and joy alongside community connection.

Her Excellency and I met many other dogs in training at Verdun and heard their stories from the staff. In the breeding centre, we cuddled Bonnie's adorable then five-week-old puppies, at a crucial stage of development and on the threshold of starting their training. They would be well on the way by now and growing up fast.

All these dogs will transform lives thanks to the dedication and professionalism of the staff and volunteers and the generosity of donors who are the lifeblood of the organisation.

That generosity of spirit extends far wider than the Lions Assistance Dog Centre. When Her Excellency and I meet Lions Clubs members throughout the State, it is

clear that they are proud to contribute to such transformational work.

In 2025 Lions Hearing Dogs rebranded to become Lions Assistance Dogs in recognition of its expanded role and providing a wider communication of the breadth of the centre's role.

As part of that expansion, in early 2026 the redevelopment of the National Training Centre at Verdun will reach a major milestone with a groundbreaking ceremony. I look forward to further progress in this important project which will assist in expanding the organisation's scope.

I thank the Lions Assistance Dog family for your generous support because of you, more than 750 Assistance Dogs are empowering lives.

Rod Buntan

Rod Buntan Patron, Lions Assistance Dogs
Government House
South Australia





PDG Norm Alcock.

Chair's Report.

The redevelopment of the training centre has received approval and we are confident that construction of phase one of the redevelopment will commence in July 2026. The Capital Campaign has been relaunched and we are confident that sufficient funds will be available to complete the second phase of the redevelopment when required. Arrangements have been made to facilitate the uninterrupted operation, training and placement of our dogs during the construction phase.

In recent years, our programs have undergone further development:

- The Volunteer program involves our dedicated volunteers collaborating with our staff and dogs in training. Their assistance is indispensable in providing the exceptional level of service we offer and we express our sincere gratitude for their unwavering support.
- Our Puppy program has achieved remarkable success, fostering puppies to local volunteers until they reach the appropriate age for regular training.

In 2025, the organisation experienced significant growth and transformation, culminating in the successful rebranding from Australian Lions Hearing Dogs established in 1980, to Lions Assistance Dogs. This rebranding enhanced the recognition of our current programs and strengthened our community engagement efforts nationwide.



We successfully placed 41 Assistance Dogs, comprising 25 Hearing Assistance Dogs, 6 Medical Alert Dogs, and 10 Psychiatric Assistance Dogs. This represents the highest annual placement count since the inception of our program.

Throughout the year, annual Public Access Tests (PAT) were conducted to ensure that our dogs continue to meet the stringent standards required of all Assistance Dogs. Twenty seven dogs also successfully completed their accreditation process.

Regrettably, the Puppy Program produced only 28 puppies in 2025, which is a decrease from the number of pups born in the previous year. However, the program remains highly successful and will continue to produce puppies that alleviate our reliance on acquiring additional dogs to fulfill our training requirements.

Our veterinary clinic, established in 2024, has demonstrated remarkable success in safeguarding the well-being of our canine companions. This endeavour has effectively reduced the associated costs of dog care, while simultaneously generating an additional revenue stream from client patronage.

With a strong foundation built in 2025, we are entering the next few years poised for further expansion of our programs and the facilities needed to meet growing national demand for assistance dogs. The sustained success of the program is attributed to the unwavering dedication and enthusiasm of our staff, volunteers, the Board of Directors and of course, the Lions Clubs of Australia. We extend our sincere gratitude to all of them for their steadfast commitment to enhancing the program's effectiveness.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Norm Alcock', written over a white background.

PDG Norm Alcock
Chairperson



CEO's Report.

PCC David Horne.

In terms of services provided, 2025 has been the biggest year on record for the organisation, with 41 Assistance Dogs placed across Australia. This was seven more than the previous record of 34, which we had placed for the previous two years.

Although more Assistance Dogs are being placed, the need for our services continues to grow, and we will not meet this demand until we complete the expansion of our National Training Centre. The expansion moves ever closer to breaking ground, which is scheduled for May 2026.

During the year, the organisation undertook the massive task of rebranding from Australian Lions Hearing Dogs to Lions Assistance Dogs.

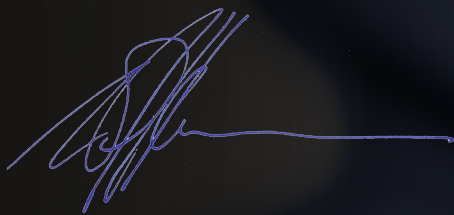
This name change highlighted the program's evolution from its humble beginnings in 1980 to today and better reflects the services provided.

Since its inception, Lions Assistance Dogs has placed over 750 Hearing Assistance Dogs free of charge, but the needs of Australians requiring Assistance Dogs have changed over the past four decades. To meet this increased need, we have developed two additional programs, for both diabetes and PTSD, which are both in high demand.

Our partnership with the Department of Veterans Affairs, which began in 2024, has seen an increase in the number of Psychiatric Assistance Dogs placed with Veterans of the Australian Defence Force. 10 of the Assistance Dogs placed in 2025 were from this program, spread across the nation.

As we come closer to the massive changes our expansion will bring, it is a great time to reflect on the many people who have made our program the success that it is. From our two founding Lions, PDG Brian Carter and PDG Bob Allen, to the many Chairpersons and Board Members, the Lions who have volunteered their time to assist with placements or at the Training Centre, our volunteers who help raise our dogs either as foster carers, guardians or by playing with our dogs whilst in training, but most of all to our dedicated team members, some of whom have been here for more than 20 years, thank you for your time and commitment.

Yours in service,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D Horne', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

PCC David Horne
Chief Executive Officer

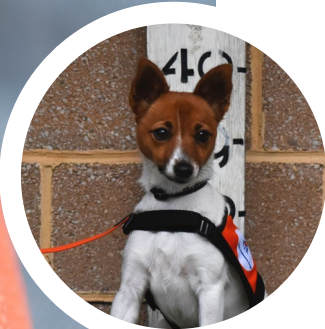


Our Rebrand.

In July 2025, We announced an important milestone in our organisation's journey, with Australian Lions Hearing Dogs officially becoming Lions Assistance Dogs. This change reflects the significant growth and evolution of our services over recent years, following conversations with our volunteers, staff, donors, supporters and, most importantly, the recipients of our Assistance Dogs. While our roots remain firmly in the Hearing Assistance Dog program, our organisation has expanded to support more Australians through additional Assistance Dog services, including Medical Assistance Dogs, specifically focused on Diabetic Alert Dogs, and Psychiatric Assistance Dogs. While our name and brand have evolved, our mission remains unchanged.



2025 Snapshot.



Sherbet

Sherbet excelled in the Hearing Assistance Dog Program in 2025, showing exceptional sound work, focus and enthusiasm throughout the year. She finished the year settled into life with her recipient, providing support and companionship.



Zena

Zena was a staff favourite and an outstanding Diabetic Alert Dog in 2025, who began alerting her recipient quicker than any dog in the program has in the past. She formed a strong bond with her recipient and is successfully making a life-changing impact.



Archie

Archie stood out in 2025 for his work across both the Medical and Hearing Assistance Dog Programs, successfully completing his Public Access Test and task assessments, to become our first dual Hearing and Diabetic Alert Dog.



Sally

Sally reached an exciting milestone in 2025 when she was delivered to her recipient and quickly settled into her new role as a Hearing Assistance Dog. She adapted beautifully to her new home and began supporting her recipient in everyday life.



Clyde

Clyde was a standout in 2025, successfully completing his training in the Psychiatric Assistance Dog Program and becoming an accertified Assistance Dog. He was delivered early in the year and has since formed a strong connection with his recipient.

Training Centre Expansion.

The redevelopment of our National Training Centre in Verdun, South Australia has been many years in the making, with careful planning laying the foundation for this transformative project.

In 2025, we reached a significant milestone with the launch of Phase 2 of our Capital Campaign, marking the halfway point of our fundraising efforts. This progress reflects the generosity and commitment of our supporters and brings us closer to realising a facility designed to meet the growing demand for Assistance Dogs across Australia.

Looking ahead to 2026, we anticipate turning the first sod and commencing construction mid-year. Once complete, the new National Training Centre will significantly expand our capacity, enabling us to train and place up to four times as many Assistance Dogs and support more individuals to live with greater independence, safety, and confidence.

2020-Q3 2025
Strategic Planning, Design
\$8m of \$15.7m secured for project

Q2 2026
Breaking ground

Q1 - Q4 2027
Building Phase 2

1 Year Open
Scaling to 120 New Partnerships
- Up 75%



Q1 2026
Builder confirmed

Q2 - Q4 2026
Building Phase 1

Q1 2028
Centre Official Opening

5 Years Open
Scaling to **600** Dogs placed from new centre. - up to **440** additional extraordinary partnerships.







Lions Assistance Dogs
NATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE



Our Impact.

2025 was a record breaking year for Lions Assistance Dogs. We delivered 41 Assistance Dogs to those in need, more in one calendar year in our entire history.



25
Hearing Assistance
Dogs Placed



6
Medical Assistance
Dogs Placed



10
Psychiatric Assistance
Dogs Placed

With the roll out of our rebrand half way through 2025, we also saw the reach of our impact grow through;

27
Accreditations

57
Applications Received





178
Active
Assistance
Dogs across
Australia.

43
Dogs entered
full time
training in
2025

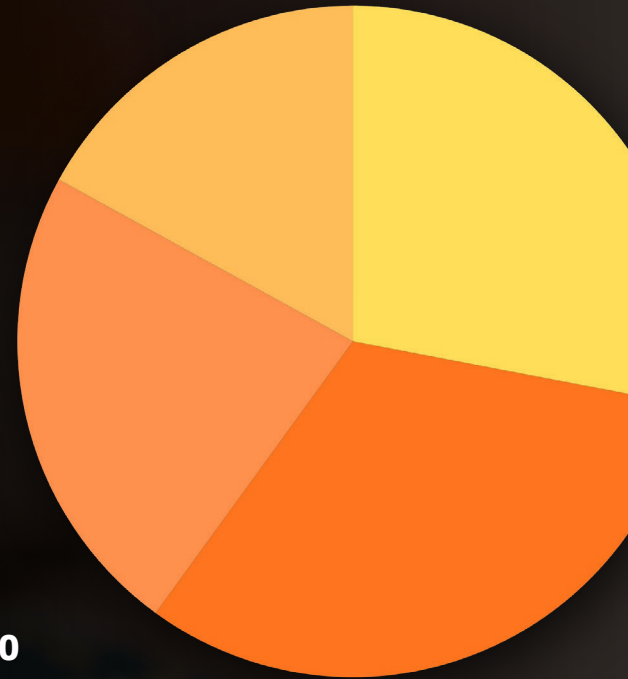
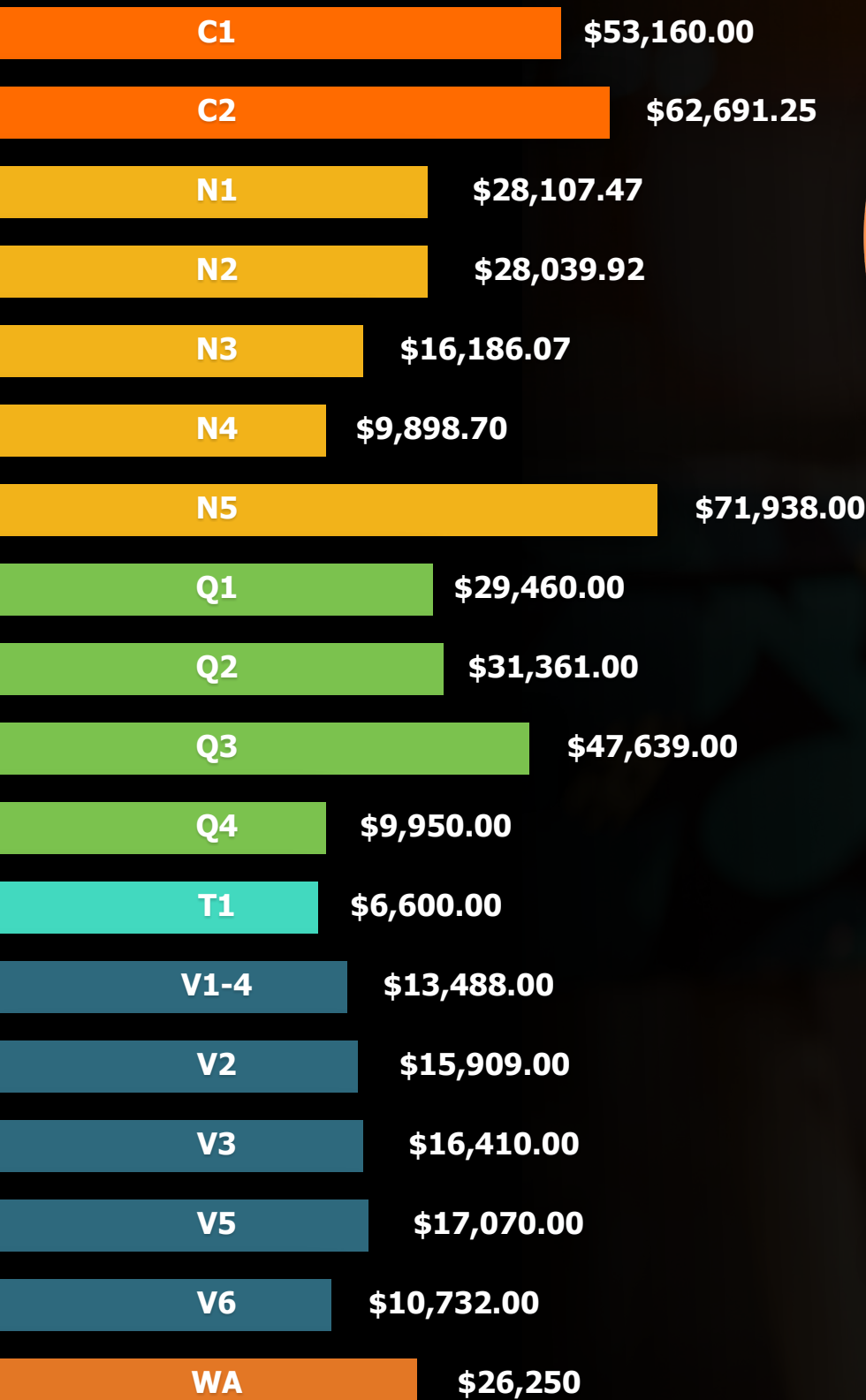
27
Puppies
born in
2025

33
Staff
Members

142
Active
Volunteers

397,883
Volunteer
Hours

Donations & Lions Support.



17%
Bequests

23%
Capital

28%
Lions Clubs

32%
Public Donations

Donation Sources 2025.

Financial Report.

2024	Operating Income	2025
\$ 493,518	Donations - Lions Clubs	\$414,428
\$ 335,670	Donations - General Public	\$463,145
\$406,444	Donations - Capital Campaign	\$344,300
\$1,085,535	Donations - Bequests	\$244,596
\$58,221	Professional Services	\$431,700
\$56,859	Merchandise Sales	\$52,763
\$17,175	Other	\$8,281
\$2,453,423	Total Income	\$1,959,213
	Operating Expenses	
\$1,355,784	Staff Expenses	\$1,754,016
\$776,885	Other Operating Expenses	\$1,019,029
\$2,132,669	Total Expenses	\$2,773,045
\$320,754	Surplus/Deficit	- \$813,832

Our Board & Governance.

Our Patron, Board, and District Chairpersons provide continuous oversight and guidance of the strategic and operational development of Lions Assistance Dogs.

Management Board

PDG Norm Alcock
Chairperson

Lion Dr. Scott Pedler
Deputy Chairperson

PDG Megan Butler
Treasurer

PDG Maxine Helmling (Start 2025)
C Districts Coordinator

1 VDG Margie Thomas (Retire June 2025)
C Districts Coordinator

Lion Sari-Elle Kraemer
N Districts Coordinator

Lion John Holliday
Q Districts Coordinator

Lion Geoff Clow
T Districts Coordinator

VDG Maria Baade
V Districts Coordinator

PDG Alan Hawkins
W Districts Coordinator

Patron

Mr Rod Bunten

District Chairpersons

C1 Lion Vanessa Malycha

C2 Lion Debra Gabel

N1 PDG Kevin Thornton

N2 Lion Rochelle Borton

N3 Lion Renae Terrell

N4 PDG Bob Smith

N5 Lion Sari-Elle Kraemer

Q1 Lion Jenny Rainbird

Q2 Lion John Holliday

Q3 Lion Cheryl Orton

Q4 Lion Juanita Goodland

T1 Lion Geoff Clow

V1-4 Lion Gita Khatri

V2 VDG Maria Baade

V3 Lion Flynn Collier

V5 Lion Glenys Needham

V6 Lion Robyn Harrison

WA PDG Alan Hawkins

Recognition of Service.

Thank you to our team of volunteers and staff that dedicate their time to the day-to-day operations of our Assistance Dog service delivery. A special mention to the following people on their significant milestones:

Puppy Carers

3 Puppies

Helen & Mark Minchin
Jenn Hodgson
Mary Jane Quinn
& James Darrie
David & Melissa Horne
Nicholas Brown
Rebecca Colla
Trilby Aldridge
Chelsea Lucas
Lynda Kingsley
Marcia Denning

4 Puppies

Amy Watson
Lenara Scandrett
Nicole Goethals

5 Puppies

Lynn & Simon Sickerdick
Gordon & Jacqui Mclean

6 Puppies

Amanda Kearton
Veronica Seedhouse

7 Puppies

Meg & Denis Haseldine
Leonie & Paul Bok

10 Puppies

Bronte Cameron

Staff

5 years or more

Melissa Carr
Alix Katala
Nick Liemandt
Shannon McCune (Casual)

10 years or more

Jodie Snudden
Luiza Ziembicki
Dayna Hill (Casual)

20 years or more

Belinda Henschke
Darren Coldwell
Mary Knight
David Horne

Lions Volunteers

In 2025, Lions volunteers contributed **1,476** hours supporting each Lions Assistance Dog placement Australia-wide. Our program is only made possible with the financial and hands-on support from each Lions Club and their members.

Partners & Supporters.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our generous supporters and partners for their commitment to helping us provide Assistance Dogs to the many people we exist to serve.

Whether their support provides services to Lions Assistance Dogs, Gift-in-kind, or financial, it is with their kindness and contribution that our Assistance Dogs can continue to be provided, free of charge.

Thank you for your ongoing support.



**MT. BARKER
PET CARE CENTRE**



**EMPLOYEE
FOUNDATION**

SA Power Networks
Enerven





**Lions
Assistance Dogs**



Lions Assistance Dogs

2025 Annual Report

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