



CELEBRATING

25
YEARS

2024 - 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Shared Vision, Focused Future





**We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Elders past, present and future.**

**We acknowledge the stories, traditions and cultures
of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and
recognise their continuing connection to land, waters
and community.**

Artwork by Timothy Buckley - Iris, 2022

Our Members

Gold



Bronze



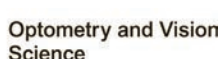
Major Supporting



Supporting



Corresponding



Associate



Contents

ABOUT US	1
2024-25 HIGHLIGHTS SNAPSHOT	2
CHAIR'S MESSAGE	3
CEO'S MESSAGE	4
OUR BOARD	6
COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS	8
Prevention and Early Intervention Committee	9
Independence and Participation Committee	11
Global Committee	13
Vision and Eye Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples	15
2024 - 2025 HIGHLIGHTS	16
2024 World Sight Day	17
Parliamentary Friends Group Function & Exhibition	18
Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan	20
2025 Election Platform	21
Parliamentary Eye Screenings & State Engagement	22
Priorities for inherited retinal disease (IRD)	23
Geographic Atrophy: We Can't Wait and See	23

About Us

Vision 2020 Australia is the national peak body for eye health and vision care.

Our mission is to prevent avoidable vision loss and improve opportunities and outcomes for people living with blindness or low vision. We do this by working to ensure that eye health and vision care remains high on the health, disability and international development agendas of Australian governments.

Vision 2020 Australia works with member organisations, governments and other relevant stakeholders to develop effective policy solutions focused on improving eye health and vision.

Our member organisations have the knowledge and expertise to identify the crucial issues that need to be addressed for improved eye health outcomes and come together through Vision 2020 Australia to speak with a united voice.

We advocate

We articulate and reflect our sector's views and, with the aim of improving equity and participation:

- We influence, through proactive policy development and problem solving
- We leverage government, and public and private sectors
- We walk with, and are led by the priorities of, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples organisations and communities
- We are guided by people with lived experience.

In our advocacy, we acknowledge Australia as an international leader in eye health, and therefore:

- We collaborate with our members and work in partnership with international aid entities to ensure vision and eye health matters are advanced in the international arena
- We leverage the Australian government's international support for vision issues
- We provide a forum for collaboration and information exchange for the benefit of our members and all Australians.

We build awareness

We communicate with the aim of increasing eye health and vision care knowledge in all related sectors, as well as the general public:

- We make issues relating to eye health visible to varied audiences
- We generate and aggregate evidence on eye health and vision care
- We highlight areas for improvement in services and participation for people who are blind or have low vision.

In our awareness building, we do so in ways that:

- Capture multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples voices and those with lived experience of blindness and low vision
- Engage with, and build on, the successful communications and activities of our members.



2024 - 2025 Snapshot

OUR YEAR OF IMPACT

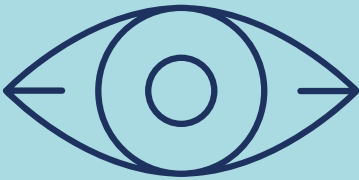
22

submissions,
reports and
policy papers
delivered.



331

eye checks for
politicians and
parliament staff in
NSW, ACT, TAS & QLD.



fifty-four

media mentions, with a
potential audience
reach of
3.2 million
people.



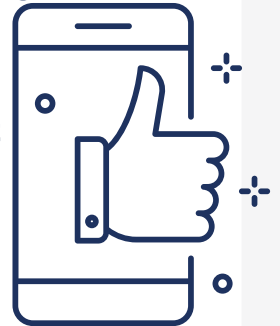
one hundred and nine

meetings with
politicians, advisors,
department
representatives
and sector leaders.



100%

increase in
audience
engagement
through
Facebook
posts.



48%+

average open rate of
our Sector News Alert,
26% higher than
the industry
average.



38%

increase in
unique
website
visitors.



Chair's Message

For Vision 2020, this year has been one of focus and momentum - consolidating our influence across government, strengthening relationships with members and setting the stage as the organisation enters its 25th anniversary year.

Over the past 12 months, Vision 2020 has reinforced its standing as the trusted national peak body for the eye health and vision care sector. Through the Parliamentary Friends Group for Eye Health and Vision Care and our expanding program of parliamentary eye screenings, we have deepened political understanding of vision loss, the importance of prevention and early intervention and the need to support independence for people who are blind or have low vision.

These initiatives continue to attract the attention of key ministers, parliamentarians and departmental advisers, strengthening our reputation as a valued partner to both state and federal governments.



Our achievements this year reflect the collective strength and commitment of our membership.

Sector-wide collaboration has informed major submissions, advocacy campaigns and the development of our 2025 Election Platform. Member engagement has been central to our success - driving outcomes such as securing \$12 million in Australian Government funding to expand access to assistive technology across the Indo-Pacific, and influencing the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing's decision to reinstate products and services for older Australians who are blind or have low vision under the Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM) scheme.

A key focus for the Board has been ensuring that Vision 2020 remains strategically aligned and future-ready. Through strategy sessions, updated governance frameworks and refreshed organisational policies, we have strengthened Vision 2020's ability to meet the evolving needs of our members and the sector. These enhancements will sustain our effectiveness and ensure continued leadership well into our 25th year and beyond.

As this is my final report as Chair, I want to express my appreciation to all who have supported the organisation during my tenure. It has been a privilege to serve as Chair and to work alongside so many dedicated individuals united by a shared vision. I am immensely proud of what has been achieved over the past five years and confident that Vision 2020 will continue to drive positive change under capable leadership, a strong Board and an engaged membership.

To Carly and the Vision 2020 team, our Board, Committees and members - thank you for your dedication and collaboration. Our continued success lies in the trust we have built across the sector and our shared belief that we are strongest when we act together.

The Hon Christopher Pyne
Board Chair

CEO's Message

As CEO of Vision 2020, I am proud to reflect on a year that has strengthened our impact, influence and readiness for the opportunities ahead, as we mark 25 years of advocacy and leadership in eye health and vision care.



The 2024–25 period has been defined by clear focus and continued progress. We consolidated our advocacy platforms and deepened engagement with government at both federal and state levels. Through collaboration with members and partners, substantial policy and advocacy outcomes were achieved that continue to shape a more equitable and coordinated vision care system.

Our invitation to join the Australian Government's Communications Accessibility Consultative Committee highlights growing recognition of our leadership in accessibility reform for people who are blind or have vision loss. We successfully advocated for the inclusion of vision-related products and services in the Support at Home Assistive Technology and Home Modifications Scheme - a tangible outcome improving the lives of older Australians living with low vision.

The release of our 2025 Election Platform – Clear Vision: Key Priorities for Eye Health and Vision Care highlighted the sectors priorities for eye health and further strengthened Vision 2020's role as the unified national voice. This leadership was reinforced by the Australian Government's announcement of \$12 million in funding to expand access to assistive technology across the Indo-Pacific, following sustained advocacy from Vision 2020, members and partners. The initiative will provide affordable, high-quality assistive technology and support services, extending Australia's eye health impact across the region.

Our parliamentary eye screening events continued to grow, with events held in New South Wales, Queensland, and for the first time, Tasmania. These initiatives engage hundreds of parliamentarians and staff, raising awareness of early detection and the importance of regular eye checks. State-level advocacy was also strengthened through engagement with health and education ministers in South Australia, Queensland and Tasmania to enhance children's vision screening and expand access to eye care in areas of greatest need — reinforcing our ability to deliver advocacy that drives impact both nationally and locally.

The Parliamentary Friends Group for Eye Health and Vision Care event brought together ministers, advisors and sector leaders to highlight innovation and collaboration across eye health and vision care – fittingly held on the eve of World Sight Day.

We were proud to support the launch of 10 Research Priorities for Inherited Retinal Diseases and the Geographic Atrophy: We Can't Wait and See report. Both initiatives demonstrate the strength of partnership between Vision 2020, our members and collaborators, ensuring that policy decisions are informed by evidence and lived experience. Our committees continued to contribute expert advice through submissions on aged care, disability and health reform.

A personal highlight was championing the launch of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which sets out a practical framework for embedding reconciliation across all aspects of our work. This plan strengthens our commitment to integrating cultural awareness and respect into daily operations and to improving equity in eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As our Chair, the Hon Christopher Pyne, concludes his tenure, I thank him for his leadership, support and commitment to strengthening Vision 2020 over the past five years, his contribution has been pivotal to the organisations success. I also extend my gratitude to our Board Directors, Committees, and the entire membership for their input and expertise. Finally, I thank the dedicated Vision 2020 team for their professionalism, energy, and ongoing passion for our vision.

Looking ahead, I am confident and optimistic about the year to come. With the continued support of our members and partners, we will keep driving toward a future where every Australian has access to quality eye care, and people who are blind or have low vision can participate fully in every aspect of society.

Carly Iles
CEO

A group of people, including Carly Iles, standing together at an event. Carly Iles is in the center, wearing a bright green suit. To her left is a man in a dark suit and patterned tie. To her right is a man in a dark suit and blue tie. They are all looking towards the right. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a large room.

**Our achievements this year
reflect the collective strength and
commitment of our membership.**

Our Board (2024-2025)

THE HON CHRISTOPHER PYNE CHAIR

The Hon Christopher Pyne is Chairman of Pyne and Partners and a Professor in the UniSA Business School amongst other appointments.

Christopher served as a member of Federal Parliament from 1993-2019, leading reforms across the Ageing, Education, Industry Innovation and Science, Defence Industry and Defence portfolios.

Christopher's father, Remington, was a past President of RANZCO, contributing to the creation of the first National Trachoma and Eye Health Program. Christopher has witnessed firsthand, particularly in Indigenous communities, the work of the eye sector and is keen to ensure it receives the support it deserves.

JANE SCHULLER DEPUTY CHAIR

Jane has 25 years' experience in eye health care. She is a qualified orthoptist in both Australia and the USA and has had 10 years' experience in large teaching eye hospitals and private ophthalmology practices in Singapore, Bangkok and the USA. She is a past President of Orthoptics Australia, past Victorian Chair and has held a number of other state and federal roles. In 2019, she completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Directors Course. She continues to work at the Royal Melbourne Hospital and in several private ophthalmology practices.

A/PROF KRISTOPHER RALLAH- BAKER

Dr Rallah-Baker is Australia's first and currently only Indigenous ophthalmologist. A proud Yuggera and Biri-Gubba man, Kris is a highly respected ophthalmologist and is one of the founding members of the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association, a Director on the Board of the Nova Peris Foundation, and founding member and Director of the Board of the First Nations Eye Health Alliance.

Kris brings a broad base of experience from within clinical ophthalmology, particularly rural and remote ophthalmology, both across Australia and internationally.

DALE CLEAVER

Dale Cleaver is the CEO of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT. He was first appointed to the Vision 2020 Australia Board in 2019 and co-opted in March, 2023.

Dale's history of working in the health, not for profit and charity sectors includes positions as CEO of Campbell Page (National Provider of Employment Services), CEO of the Royal District Nursing Service South Australia (SA) and prior to this, 17 years with The Australian Red Cross including roles as Acting CEO and National Chief Operating Officer.

He has a professional passion for making a difference and empowering people with disabilities, and has experience in strategic, operational and transformational change to further increasing the quality of service-based organisations.

BRANDON AH TONG

Brandon has 20 years' experience working in the eye health sector as an advocacy expert and is currently the Director of Policy & Advocacy with The Fred Hollows Foundation. His area of work has spanned the human rights of people living with blindness or low vision. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander eye health and global eye health. He has had the privilege of being a commissioner with the 2021 Lancet Global Health Commission on Global Eye Health.

Living with blindness, Brandon brings a perspective that bridges the imperative to address avoidable blindness with the dignity of living with vision-related disability.

KYLIE HARRIS

Kylie is the Director of Operations at the Australian College of Optometry. Starting her healthcare career as an optometrist, she has held numerous Board positions within eye health. From 2016 to 2020, she served on the Optometry Australia board, during which she was appointed Deputy President in 2018. Prior to her term at Optometry Australia, Kylie served two separate terms on the Optometry Victoria board, and notably held the position of President for the state organisation from 2013 to 2016. She currently holds the position of Sight for All Vice Chair.

Kylie is passionate about establishing sustainable and inclusive care models for all Australians.

LEAH CAMERON

Leah is a Trawlwoolway (Palawa) woman from Tasmania and is the founder and principal solicitor of Marrawah Law.

Since forming the firm in 2013, her philosophy of doing law differently has been the driving force behind Marrawah Law's growth into one of the largest Indigenous owned and operated law firm in Australia. Leah was recently appointed as one of the independent experts on the esteemed Australian Heritage Council.

Leah is both highly effective in commercial legal practice and influential across government and corporate Australia in advocating for social change.

CLIN A/PROF NITIN VERMA

Nitin is Past President of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists (RANZCO) and longtime Board Director. He is also a Director of the Macular Disease Foundation of Australia. He has been active both locally and internationally through involvement in establishing the eye health program in Timor L'este.

During his tenure as RANZCO President he oversaw the implementation of the Vision 2030 and beyond plan, which aims to enhance equitable service provision across Australia and develop and maintain a sustainable ophthalmology workforce, with the goal of working towards eliminating avoidable blindness in Australia.

DR KATE REID

Dr Reid has provided 15 years of service to public Ophthalmology at Canberra Hospital, where she was instrumental in funding Eye Clinic infrastructure projects in excess of \$4 million, and initiating patient co-management with both public and private Optometry.

She is an experienced educator, inaugurating then leading the ANU Medical Student Ophthalmology Program for a decade. She is a regular presenter of her research at scientific conferences. Now in private practice, Dr Reid continues her research interests in neuro-ophthalmology, and her advocacy for utilising limited public Ophthalmology resources as efficiently as possible.

FIONA WOODS

Fiona is the President of Blind Citizens Australia and has been a Director since 2017.

Fiona has also held positions with the National Women's Branch, has chaired the National Policy Council and led the development of BCA's Expectations of Service Providers, which sets out what we believe people who are blind and vision impaired should expect when they access services designed for them. In addition, Fiona was a graduate of the first Executive Leadership Program.

Fiona is a passionate advocate for growing awareness of vision impairment, blindness and inclusion, and that access to and knowledge of eye health should not depend on socio-economic or geographical factors.

DAMIAN PAPPS

Damian is the Executive Director of See Differently and has a strong commitment to social impact and mission driven initiatives. He has three decades of global financial services experience with skills in strategy development, governance and corporate advice.

Damian is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and is an experienced Director having served on several Boards.

Since 2011 he has specialised in Healthcare, with a focus on Aged Care and Retirement Living, hospitals, pharmacy, medical specialists, general practice and disability services.



Committee Highlights

Prevention and Early Intervention Committee

The Prevention and Early Intervention Committee met three times in 2024-2025, continuing our focus on:

- **Promoting the National Framework for Vision Screening in 3.5-5-year-olds**
- **Enhancing mental wellbeing supports for people with vision loss, and**
- **Advancing collaborative care as a means of improving eye care pathways and access.**

In the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election, Committee members identified an opportunity to upskill general practices in eye care and referrals. A very positive evaluation report from a Victorian pilot was used to advocate for national uptake of the education program in V2020's Federal Budget submission and election platform.

Stories and messaging from Committee members informed meetings with MPs and with Minister Butler's office in advance of the election campaign.

At the end of this period, we hadn't yet been successful in securing Federal funding for further rollout of the program. But the new Government's focus on primary care was an encouraging sign that continued advocacy might yield results.

V2020, along with various Committee members, also attended workshops hosted by RANZCO, on how collaborative care models could improve access and experience for:

- People with Age-related Macular Degeneration
- People with Glaucoma
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, and
- Children and families.

Feedback from these workshops informs our Committee's ongoing work and priorities.

Our Mental Wellbeing and Vision Loss working group, which met three times during the period, guided the creation of a short film played at the 2024 RANZCO congress in Adelaide, where ophthalmologists, an optometrist and an orientation and mobility specialist discussed the mental health impact of vision loss. V2020 also presented at the concurrent annual Orthoptics Australia conference, on our Adult Referral Pathway for Blindness and Low vision Services and Mental Wellbeing Resources Guide.

A short course on mental wellbeing and vision loss, to be hosted by the Mental Health Professional Online Development Platform (MHPOD) was nearing completion at the end of the period, with draft videos presented to the working group in their May meeting.

Our Children's Vision Working group, which met fortnightly throughout the period, undertook a mapping project to measure the adherence of state and territory programs to our National Framework for vision Screening for 3.5-5-year-olds. This led to state-based roundtables in the Northern Territory, hosted by Optometry Australia, and Western Australia, hosted by the University of Western Australia, including V2020, member organisations, clinicians, researchers and other stakeholders from the sector. At the end of the period, work was also underway toward proposing systemic improvements to both the Victorian and South Australian Governments.

Looking ahead, this Committee's future work will likely be informed by data from the new Australian Eye and Ear Health Survey about the prevalence of vision conditions amongst people over 50. Meanwhile, excellent presentations to the Committee highlighted growing dangers like the rising rates of Diabetes and Myopia.

Improving access to timely, preventative eye care amid ongoing resource constraints and pressures on health systems will require constant advocacy and innovation. This Committee remains a valuable mechanism for coordinating that work, informing members with the latest information, and encouraging a collective approach to addressing these tough challenges.

As always, thank you to all Committee members for your time, assistance, and contributions over the past year.

Dr Nellie Deen

Committee Chair for the 2024-25 period

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Amanda French	Orthoptics Australia
Carol Wynne	Indigenous Eye Health Unit, University of Melbourne
Colina Waddell	Brien Holden Foundation
Elisse Higginbotham	University of Western Australia
Greg Harper	Keratoconus Australia
Jennifer Doggett	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
Jeremy Hill	Guide Dogs Queensland
Kerryn Hart	Deakin University
Leanne Turner	The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital
Leighton Boyd AM	Retina Australia
Lisa Nivison-Smith	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
Meera Chandra	Macular Disease Foundation Australia
Mei Ying Boon	University of Canberra, School of Vision Science and Optometry
Michael Yapp	Optometry Australia
Nellie Deen	Australia College of Optometry
Pranadewi (Orien)	Australian Ophthalmic Nurses Association
Amarindra	Guide Dogs NSW/ACT
Sarah Holland	Guide Dogs Victoria
Shelley Pannier	NextSense
Sue Silveira	
Tanya Morris	The Fred Hollows Foundation

COMMITTEE PROXIES

Amy Lim	University of Western Australia
Cesar Carrillo	Sight for All
Dr Janet Cheong	Guide Dogs Queensland
Emma Stanford	Indigenous Eye Health Unit, University of Melbourne
Faran Sabeti	University of Canberra, School of Vision Science and Optometry
Georgia Bennett	Brien Holden Foundation
Jane Cowan	Orthoptics Australia
Larry Kornhauser	Keratoconus Australia
Linda Robinson	Deakin University
Margaret Lum	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
Mark Choo	Macular Disease Foundation Australia
Matt Trinh	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
May Ho	The Fred Hollows Foundation
Michael Yapp	Centre for Eye Health
Pete Haydon	Australia College of Optometry
Renee Chmielewski	The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital
Rosemary Boyd OAM	Retina Australia
Skye Cappuccio	Optometry Australia

Independence and Participation Committee

This year, the Committee held three full meetings and four additional discussions, during which important topics were considered and key achievements were acknowledged. We responded to consultation papers on general foundational and targeted childhood supports, music and art therapy supports for NDIS participants, and the Draft National Principles for the Regulation of Assistance Animals.

This year also marked Vision 2020's 25th anniversary as the peak body for the blindness, low vision and eye health sector. Some of the most important developments in accessibility, independence and participation for people who are blind or have low vision were highlighted in a special keynote presentation at the 2025 Roundtable on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities.

Recognising our past achievements gives us confidence as we tackle emerging policy challenges. With the majority of people with vision loss aged 65 and over, the ongoing reforms to Aged Care are having a particularly significant impact on our sector. Rising to the challenge, our Aged Care advocacy was highly effective this year.

We secured a special sector-specific briefing from leaders at the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. These senior bureaucrats helpfully informed our members of how the new Support at Home program would affect participants and service providers in the low vision sector.

Our 2025 Federal Election Platform called for the provision of early intervention services for older adults with vision impairment, to significantly reduce long-term healthcare costs and the need for support workers. We also called for the provision of specialised training via block funded low vision service providers, to enhance the quality of life of older Australians and reduce the overall cost to the healthcare system.

With the steadfast support of our members, we also made formal responses to consultations on the draft Aged Care Bill 2024, the draft Aged Care Rules 2024, and the Assistive Technology and Home Modifications (AT-HM) List for the Support at Home program. Consequently, the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing published an updated AT-HM List. The previous list had largely excluded products

and services for older people who are blind or have low vision. To our great delight, the new AT-HM List included vision mobility aids (canes); equipment for reading, writing and accessing information; and improved clarity on the process and supports for assistance dogs.

The year ended with a Vision 2020-led consortium invited to present two sessions at the upcoming RANZCO Annual Scientific Congress. Demonstrating Vision 2020's capacity to bring the sector together for the betterment of people who are blind or have low vision, these sessions will inform rural- and regional-based ophthalmologists of the supports, services and referral pathways available for their patients.

Finally, this year marks my tenth and final one as Committee Chair. Together, we have achieved many great policy and advocacy outcomes. This spirit of collaboration was most evident when we undertook work to develop the Low Vision Referrals Pathway protocol from 2017.

Another major outcome was when we secured federal government funding of Audio Description (AD) on the ABC and SBS, commencing in 2020. We continue to push for an expansion of AD services, having raised the issue with the Communications Minister's office this year.

I also fondly remember the call I made to merge the Australian Blindness Forum into Vision 2020. Prior to this merger in 2019, both the ABF and Vision 2020 were making representations to Government on behalf of the sector. As priorities and perspectives varied between the two peak bodies, the message was often confused and the impact of our advocacy was greatly diminished. While Dale Cleaver and others led the negotiations to achieve what is now a robust peak representative body, I am extremely proud of my intervention to initiate the process.

Thank you to all Committee members for your enthusiasm and engagement during my time as Chair. I wish you the very best as you continue your advocacy efforts.

John Simpson AM

Committee Chair for the 2024-25 period

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Abe Ropitini	Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
Alice Maffei	Guide Dogs Victoria
Anthea Cochrane	Optometry Australia
Brandon Ah Tong	The Fred Hollows Foundation
Chris Edwards	Vision Australia
Dr Janet Cheong	Guide Dogs Queensland
Dr Luke Chong	Deakin University
Jody Martin-Rankin	See Differently
John Simpson AM	Chair
Karen Knight	Guide Dogs NSW/ACT
Karen Titheridge	EverAbility
Khalid Saifullah	Brien Holden Foundation
Leighton Boyd AM	Retina Australia
Mae Chong	Australian College of Optometry
Margaret Lum	The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
Mark Choo	Macular Disease Foundation Australia
Melanie Chatfield	Blind Citizens Australia
Nabill Jacob	Orthoptics Australia
Remy Di Ponio	Foresight Australia
Sheela Kumaran	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
Sue Silveira	NextSense
Tina Jong	University of Canberra
Tony Starkey	Beyond Blindness
Vickie Anderson	Orientation and Mobility Association of Australasia

COMMITTEE PROXIES

Caitlin McMorrow	Vision Australia
Darlene McIntosh	Guide Dogs Victoria
Dr Chris Law	Deakin University
Felicity Beaulieu	EverAbility
Geoffrey Painter	Foresight Australia
Jane Cowan	Orthoptics Australia
Jennifer Doggett	The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
May Ho	The Fred Hollows Foundation
Meera Chandra	Macular Disease Foundation Australia
Pete Haydon	Australian College of Optometry
Prakash Paudel	Brien Holden Foundation
Rosemary Boyd OAM	Retina Australia
Sharon Oberstein	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
Skye Cappuccio	Optometry Australia
Terry Ho	Guide Dogs Queensland

Global Committee

The Global Committee convened three times during 2024–2025, advancing its mission to strengthen Australia’s contribution to regional and global eye health through partnership, evidence, and advocacy. This year, the Committee consolidated its strategic priorities around disability equity, assistive technology, and inclusion, reflecting a continued commitment to equitable access to eye care across the Indo-Pacific region.

Assistive Technology in the Indo-Pacific

A major advocacy milestone for the Committee was achieved in late 2024, with the Federal Government’s announcement of a \$12 million investment in assistive technology (AT) for the Indo-Pacific region, an initiative championed by Vision 2020 and the Global Committee.

This commitment was announced on November 28, 2024, as part of the new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy, launched at Parliament House by the Hon Pat Conroy MP, Minister for International Development and the Pacific. The investment will expand access to affordable, high-quality AT and wrap-around services across the Pacific, delivered in partnership with Pacific-led organisations.

Vision 2020 extends its gratitude to Minister Conroy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and partners including The Fred Hollows Foundation, the Brien Holden Vision Institute, CBM Australia, Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), and Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC), for their shared commitment to advancing disability equity across the region.

Global SPECS Network Membership

In January 2025, Vision 2020 was accepted as a member of the World Health Organization’s Global SPECS Network, joining an international coalition of organisations working to implement the WHO SPECS 2030 initiative. This membership enhances Vision 2020’s ability to contribute to coordinated global advocacy efforts and strengthen regional collaboration in support of equitable access to eye care and vision services.

Vision 2020 Australia at 2030 In Sight Live

Vision 2020’s Policy and Advocacy Manager, Jonathan Craig, represented the organisation at the 2030 In Sight Live conference in Kathmandu. Opened by Nepal’s Prime Minister, the Rt Hon KP

Sharma Oli, the event brought together regional and global leaders to discuss strategies for achieving universal access to eye care by 2030.

Jonathan contributed to two panel discussions, one focused on how patient experience can shape policy and advocacy, and another exploring strategic planning in the lead-up to the Global Summit for Eye Health. An all-day pre-conference workshop also explored how countries can involve stakeholders in summit planning, with insights from this session informing a similar workshop hosted in Sydney in mid-2025. Alongside Eye Health Aotearoa, Vision 2020 co-facilitated an informal gathering for Australian and New Zealand delegates, fostering new conversations and cross-Tasman collaboration.

The conference also marked an exciting moment for the region, as Vision 2020 Board Member Brandon Ah Tong was sworn in as the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness (IAPB) Regional Chair for the Western Pacific. Professor Nitin Verma from Global Committee member RANZCO was also appointed to the IAPB Board.

Looking ahead, the Committee remains dedicated to collaborative advocacy for equitable access to eye health and vision care across the Indo-Pacific and beyond. With this in mind, the Committee – together with IAPB – held a workshop at RANZCO in July focussed on the Global Summit on Eye Health in 2026. Twenty members attended in person to discuss planning and engagement opportunities which will ensure the Pacific sub-region remains well-represented at the Summit.

Building on the momentum of this year’s achievements, including the success of the assistive technology campaign, participation in the Global SPECS Network, and continued work to advance inclusion and disability equity, the year ahead will focus on preparing for the Global Summit, strengthening partnerships, and advancing evidence-informed advocacy.

I extend my sincere thanks to all Global Committee Members and their proxies for their dedication and leadership throughout the year. Together, we continue to shape a future where no one is left behind in accessing the eye care they need.

Drew Keys

Committee Chair for the 2024-25 period

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A/Prof Andrew Chang	Sydney Eye Hospital Foundation
Brandon Ah Tong	The Fred Hollows Foundation
Cesar Carrillo	Sight for All
Drew Keys	International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
Fabrizio D'Esposito	International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness
Felicia Adinato	Orthoptics Australia
Gerhard Schlenther	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
Helen Freris	Blind Citizens Australia
Lily Ho	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
Lisa Zhu	Centre for Eye Research Australia
Neilsen De Souza	University of Western Australia
Remy Di Ponio	Foresight
Selina Madeleine	Brien Holden Foundation
Simon Backhouse	Deakin University
Sue Silveira	NextSense
Tim Fricke	Australian College of Optometry
Vicki Evans	University of Canberra
Will Menzer	CBM Australia

COMMITTEE PROXIES

A/Prof Heather Connor	Deakin University
Daisy Shu	UNSW School of Optometry and Vision Science
Deb Deshaynes	Blind Citizens Australia
Dr Gillian Cochrane	Brien Holden Foundation
Garry Fitzpatrick	University of Western Australia
Geoffrey Painter	Foresight Australia
Jane Cowan	Orthoptics Australia
Jennifer Doggett	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists
Jo Croft	Sight for All
Marc Purcell	The Fred Hollows Foundation
Myra Leung	University of Canberra
Pete Haydon	Australian College of Optometry

Vision and Eye Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

Vision 2020 continued its commitment to improving eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through strategic initiatives, partnerships, and sector engagement during 2024–25. This year, our work focused on advancing reconciliation, supporting sector leadership, and fostering innovative approaches to achieve equitable access to vision care.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference 2025

Vision 2020 was proud to sponsor and participate in the 2025 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Eye Health Conference (NATSIEHC25) in Perth. Myself and Policy Advisor Angela Hall had the privilege of attending, presenting, and engaging with First Nations leaders and sector stakeholders.

The conference showcased powerful community-led programs, inspiring stories, and innovative approaches to eye health, highlighting the importance of strong leadership and collaboration in driving sustainable improvements.

National Reconciliation Week 2025

To mark National Reconciliation Week 2025, Vision 2020 partnered with Guide Dogs Victoria to host a special event focused on truth-telling and lived experience. The event featured a panel of proud First Nations people, Madison Cassady, James Griffiths, Thomas Mylne, Natalie Tieri, and Sorren Thomas, who shared insights from their work in the eye health sector.

In line with this year's theme, Bridging Now to Next, the event encouraged reflection on the lessons of the past while fostering action and collaboration for a more inclusive and equitable future.

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan Endorsement

Vision 2020's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was officially endorsed by Reconciliation Australia in March 2025 and formally launched during our National Reconciliation Week event. The Innovate RAP outlines practical actions over the next two years to strengthen relationships, deepen respect, and create meaningful opportunities with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Through the RAP, Vision 2020 continues to embed

reconciliation into our strategic initiatives and day-to-day operations, fostering mutually beneficial partnerships and embedding First Nations leadership across the organisation.

Strong Eyes, Strong Communities Evaluation

The Strong Eyes, Strong Communities plan concluded in 2024. To inform the development of a new, First Nations-led sector plan, Vision 2020 commissioned an independent evaluation of the plan's development and implementation. Yamagigu Consulting conducted the evaluation, which was finalised in May 2025.

Findings were presented to members and shared publicly at NATSIEHC25. The evaluation highlights lessons learned, and provides recommendations for future initiatives aimed at improving eye health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Looking Ahead

Building on the momentum of 2024–25, Vision 2020 Australia will continue to strengthen reconciliation initiatives and support First Nations leadership across the eye health sector. We remain committed to fostering partnerships and driving sustainable improvements in eye care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We extend our sincere thanks to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders, community members, and sector partners who have contributed to these efforts. Together, we continue to work towards a future where all Australians have equitable access to the eye care they need.

Carly Iles

CEO, Vision 2020 Australia



2024 - 25 Highlights

2024 World Sight Day

World Sight Day continues to grow each year and 2024 was no different, particularly with the year-round activities to spread the Love Your Eyes campaign.

The efforts of the membership and broader sectors shows that collective impact is a powerful tool to raise awareness and create positive change for eye health and vision care.

We kicked celebrations off on September 24 with our members, UNSW Optometry and Vision Science, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Optometry Australia, Optometry NSW/ACT and Retina Australia, with a return to NSW Parliament to host eye screenings.

On October 8, we then partnered with member OneSight for a screening at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) in Dandenong to highlight the important efforts of the centre and OneSight to ensure asylum seekers have access to eye health and vision care services.

And to mark World Sight Day on October 10, in partnership with the University of Canberra and Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, we celebrated with a full day of eye screening in Parliament House Canberra.

This was the biggest eye screening day ever conducted by Vision 20/20 Australia, screening 131 parliamentarians and staff.



Parliamentary Friends Group Function & Exhibition

It was a hugely successful day at Parliament House on October 9 with Vision 2020 Australia convening three special events on the eve of World Sight Day.

Over 100 attendees that gathered on the eve of World Sight Day to ensure the sector receives the political, health, and developmental focus it needs and deserves. In addition to hosting ministers, parliamentarians, department advisors and sector executives we also welcomed our new co-Chair of the Parliamentary Friends Group for Eye Health and Vision Care, Member for Corangamite, Libby Coker.

Libby is a passionate advocate for the sector and will continue the role with the same enthusiasm of outgoing co-Chair, Meryl Swanson.

We appreciate the support of our member sponsor, The Fred Hollows Foundation, corporate sponsors, Apellis, iCare and Specsavers, as well as all exhibitors and our members for ensuring the eye health and vision care sector continues to make its presence felt in Federal Parliament and enact positive change.

Earlier in the day we also met with our members to provide a briefing of the Vision 2020 Australia 2025 Federal Election platform by our policy and advocacy team. This included an overview of key election campaign asks and an opportunity for members to provide feedback, as well as discussion around upcoming member events and activities and opportunities for collective advocacy.





Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

In March 2025, Vision 2020 Australia received formal endorsement of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). We are committed to advancing reconciliation through the development of this Innovate RAP, as a continuation of our Reflect RAP.

We envisage a future where the principles of reconciliation are embedded in every aspect of our work, driving meaningful outcomes both within our organisation and across the eye health and vision care sector. Our commitment is grounded in addressing the challenges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face in accessing eye health and vision rehabilitation services - challenges rooted in historical injustices and systemic inequities.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly those experiencing blindness or vision loss, encounter compounded barriers to care. These include limited access to culturally safe and appropriate services and a lack of programs designed to meet the unique needs of First Nations communities.

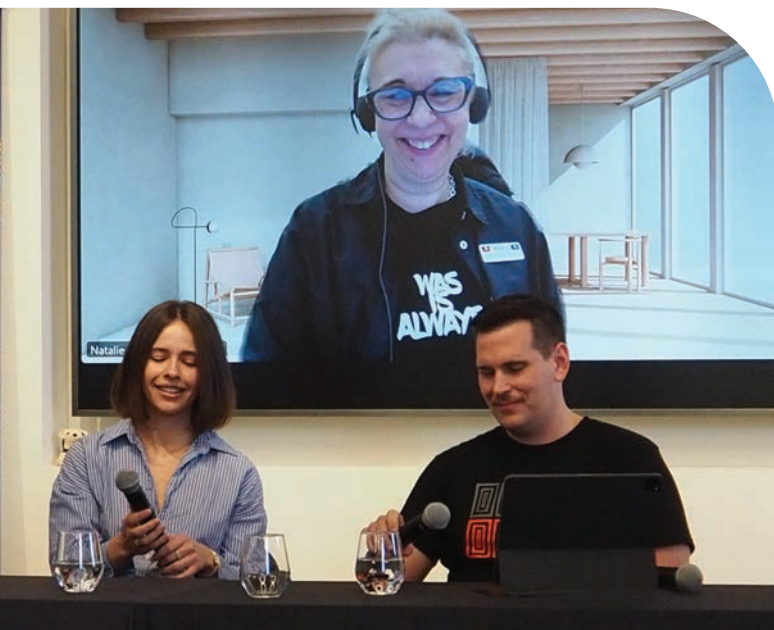
Vision 2020 Australia is dedicated to driving systemic change - dismantling these barriers and advancing solutions that promote equity and improve outcomes in eye health and vision care for all Australians. To achieve this, we strongly affirm the essential role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, community control, and self-determination at every level of decision-making.

Central to our approach is the respect and value we place on First Nations knowledges and experiences. We are committed to embedding cultural respect and pride in our everyday practices, ensuring these principles guide our decision-making. Through genuine, collaborative partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and peak bodies, we honour their leadership and expertise, as we work together to ensure self-determination and equitable access to eye health and vision rehabilitation services.

We extend our gratitude to Madison Cassady and James Griffiths who, as our First Nations Advisors, were generous with their expertise and experience to ensure our RAP was fully informed by First Nations perspectives.

As part of this process, we recognised 2025 National Reconciliation Week with reflection, inspiration, and ongoing commitment to Bridge Now to Next. We were honoured to host a panel of proud First Nations people who shared their journeys and experiences in the eye health and vision care sector. Our gratitude to Madison Cassady, James Griffiths, Thomas Mylne, Natalie Tieri and Sorren Thomas for sharing your powerful and personal stories.

Together, we look towards a future where eye health and vision care services are inclusive and accessible for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



2025 Election Platform

In February, 2025, Vision 2020 Australia launched its 2025 election platform - Clear Vision: Key priorities for eye health and vision care.

In developing this platform, we worked with members throughout 2024 to identify groups most in need. In addition to these sector-endorsed priorities, we also recognised that many members also championed their own organisation-specific goals and we supported our members in advocating for a broad range of improvements in eye health, vision care, and support services.

Through our committees, members were briefed on the Vision 2020 Australia campaign strategy, which was built on a foundation of direct advocacy with political leaders, coupled with active engagement from members and the public. A key element of our campaign was two days of action in February to meet with Ministers, Shadow Ministers, advisors, and bureaucrats to advocate for vision health policies.

We also engaged with members to play an active role in this collective advocacy activity, which included a member toolkit with fact sheets, party policy analysis, briefs on political targets, candidate communication and social media templates to strengthen and support advocacy efforts.

A major ask by Vision 2020 Australia to the Federal Government was realised with the announcement

of investment for assistive technology (AT) in the Indo-Pacific.

The commitment is part of the new International Disability Equity and Rights Strategy and includes \$12 million to expand access to essential assistive technology across the Indo-Pacific.

This successful campaign and call for action was led by Vision 2020 Australia, members and like-minded organisations including the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) and Australian Disability and Development Consortium (ADDC).



Parliamentary Eye Screenings & State Engagement

Our parliamentary eye screenings have proven to be highly successful in progressing political engagement, deepening relationships at the state level and building relationships with health ministries.

During this period, Vision 2020 Australia, in partnership with our members, undertook free parliamentary eye checks in New South Wales, Queensland, and for the first time, Tasmania.

We also celebrated World Sight Day 2024 with eye screenings at Parliament House Canberra.

We have enjoyed strong support from the relevant ministers and advisors in each state, including:

- Tasmanian Minister for Health, Jacque Petrusma
- Tasmanian Premier Jeremy Rockliff
- Tasmanian Deputy Premier, Guy Barnett
- New South Wales Minister for Health, Ryan Park
- New South Wales Minister for Disability Inclusion Kate Washington
- Queensland Minister for Health, Tim Nicholls
- Queensland Opposition Leader, Stephen Miles
- Queensland Minister for Education, John-Paul Langbroek.

We would like to especially thank our members for being part of our screenings this year, including Guide Dogs Tasmania, VisAbility Tasmania, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Guide Dogs Queensland, Braille House, Diabetes Australia, Retina Australia and UNSW, as well our other partners Zeiss, QUT, Andrew Koch from Total Eyecare Optometrists and Luke Burns from Bupa Optical Hobart.



Priorities for inherited retinal disease (IRD)

Vision 2020 Australia was proud to be involved in the launch of the 10 key research priorities for inherited retinal disease (IRD) at NSW Parliament on September 24, 2024.

The launch was hosted by our NSW Parliamentary Friends Group for Eye Health and Vision Care, including co-chairs Tim James and Dr Michael Holland.

One in every 1000 Australians are estimated to be affected by an IRD, the leading cause of blindness for working-age adults and the second most common cause of blindness in children. The newly launched priorities are the result of the IRD Priority Setting Partnership, an 18-month project led by UNSW and the Children's Medical Research Institute, with involvement from Retina Australia.



Geographic Atrophy: We Can't Wait and See

In October, 2024, Vision 2020 Australia helped launch a new report, 'Geographic Atrophy, We Can't Wait and See: The Case for Action' at Parliament House in Canberra alongside Meryl Swanson MP and Dr David Gillespie MP, Co-chairs of Parliamentary Friends of Eye Health and Vision Care.

Apellis Australia commissioned HTANALYSTS to evaluate the broader social value of preserving vision in people with geographic atrophy (GA), and the report and recommendations were informed by an Advisory Committee that included Vision 2020 Australia, Vision Australia, Retina Australia, Macular Disease Foundation Australia (MDFA), Optometry Australia and Sight For All, as well as assistance from Centre for Eye Research Australia (CERA)'s Professor Robyn Guymer AM.

More than 75,000 Australians have GA, an irreversible and devastating form of age-related macular degeneration (AMD).

The report highlights that every dollar invested into preserving the vision of people with GA will generate more than double the value in benefits to society. GA costs the economy \$1.8 billion annually and slowing GA-related vision loss will deliver significant savings for people with GA, their carers and government.





CELEBRATING

25
YEARS

Vision 2020 Australia

2-6 Chandler Highway, Kew VIC 3101
Australia

Phone +61 3 9656 2020
Email: info@vision2020australia.org.au
vision2020australia.org.au