



ANNUAL REPORT

2024 - 2025

**DRAGONS ABREAST
AUSTRALIA LTD**

PRESENTED BY :
Pearl Lee - Chair

PREPARED BY :
DAA Board of Directors





DRAGONS ABREAST
AUSTRALIA

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VISION AND MISSION

VISION

Empowering more breast cancer survivors to lead active, vibrant lives, helping them thrive through movement and community.

PURPOSE

Dragon Abreast Australia is a health promotion charity supporting Breast Cancer Survivors (BCS) through a supportive paddling community with shared experiences. To support BCS from survivorship to thrivership focusing on the whole person – physical and mental. To be a supportive community-based movement both on and off the water for all Breast Cancer Survivors.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

Pearl Lee - Board Chair

It is with great pride that I, alongside the Board, reflect on what has been an extraordinary year for Dragons Abreast Australia. The success of 2024–25 is a testament to the passion, energy, and strength of our incredible community of volunteers—our vibrant flock of dragons. You are the heart of our movement, and your dedication continues to inspire us all.

Our Members are key to driving all the activity on the ground, so it is of great pride to welcome new Member Groups into our fold, Amazons (WA), Dragons Abreast Moreton Bay Pink Snapdragons (QLD).

We endeavour as the Board, to have regional representation which is made possible with online-meetings to keep us cost-efficient. In addition to our Board quarterly's online, we conduct working groups to plan member content, membership drives and composite teams in events across the country. Hobart PPP provided a rare opportunity for the Board to meet in-person for a **Strategic Planning Day**, where we explored our priorities, challenges, and aspirations for the future.

There are also the online meeting and in-person representation at AusDBF annual meeting and our State Bodies. We are looking for more BC Regional Reps!

Internationally, we are thrilled that six boats are registered for the IBCPC 2026 Aix-les-Bains, France, with accommodation secured—a feat akin to finding dragon's gold!

Our commitment to representing our members continues through active participation with **AusDBF**, **IBCPC** and the **International Dragon Boat Federation**. We are determined to see an Australian BCP Aurora's team compete in 2027. Let's get ready!

Thank you for inspiring us every day. Together, we are stronger. Together, we move forward in our Move-ment—with purpose, pride, and paddles in hand.

With gratitude,
Pearl Lee
Chair, Dragons Abreast Australia Ltd.



Bringing hope and inspiration to newly diagnosed women



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Promoting breast cancer

MEMBERSHIP OVERVIEW

During the 2024-25 year, Dragons Abreast Australia proudly welcomed one new member group: Dragons Abreast Moreton Bay Pink Snapdragons. We also continued to celebrate having more than 1,000 members. Our organization now comprises 29 member groups, along with 80+ individual members representing an additional 15 community dragon boat clubs across the country. These new additions reflect the continued growth and strength of our community as we extend our support to breast cancer survivors nationwide. We are in discussions with other breast cancer groups who are interested in joining DAA.

Victoria		
DA Ballarat	Coordinator	Deborah McMaster
DA Bendigo	Coordinator	Jo Haythorne
DA East Gippsland	Coordinator	Leonie Taylor
DA Geelong	Coordinator	Traci Brown
DA Melbourne Pink Phoenix	President/Coordinator	Andrea Seers
DA Patterson Lakes	Coordinator	Lyndsay Takacs
DA Patterson Lakes	President	Ros Hill
NSW		
DA Central Coast	Coordinator	Janice Kennedy
DA Coffs Coast	Coordinator	Wendy Bennetts
DA Blue Mountains	Coordinator	Janette Fry
DA Illawarra	Coordinator	Yvette Murada
DA Newcastle	Coordinator	Sandra Sturgess
DA Penrith	Coordinator	Anne Gaudiosi
DA Rainbow Dragons	Coordinator	Juliette Sizer
DA Sydney	Coordinator	Carrol Ware
DA Western Region	Coordinator	Sharon Cooper
DA Wollumbin	Coordinator	Anne Bowden

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MEMBERSHIP OVERVIEW

QLD		
DA Brisbane	President	Corina Bradley
DA Brisbane	Coordinator	Katrina Whitting
DA Mackay	Coordinator	Janelle Moran
DA Moreton Bay Pink Snapdragons	Coordinator	Kim Weller
DA Pumicestone	President/Coordinator	Vivienne Williams
DA Sunshine Coast	Coordinator	Olwyn Jacobsen
DA Sunshine Coast	President	Tara Knobel
DA Townsville	Coordinator	Josephine Burke
ACT		
DA Canberra	Coordinator	Jeannie Cotterell
TAS		
DA Devonport	Coordinator	Robyn Glen
DA Hobart	Coordinator	Cheryl Robinson
WA		
Amazons Perth	President	Margaret Little
Amazons Perth	Coordinator	Susan Troncone
DA Bunbury	Coordinator	Roslyn Webb
SA		
DA Adelaide	Coordinator	Debra Elfenbein



OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

This year was marked by several standout achievements. In partnership with Dragons Abreast Hobart, who hosted the second Pink Paddle Power (PPP) national event—a spectacular three-day celebration of paddling, connection, and resilience. With 29 composite crews, 207 regatta participants, and 285 attendees, the event was a powerful reminder of our shared strength. We were especially honoured to have ABC Radio Hobart share our stories, amplifying the voices of those who embody both vulnerability and courage.

Thanks to the Queensland Investing in Women Grant, we hosted BCS **Dragon Boat Clinics** in Hobart and Sunshine Coast with world-class coach Kamini Jain. These clinics were a valuable opportunity for skill development and community building for 100 attendees.

We also proudly composited 24 participants at the **Vogalonga**, a 38km paddle through the city's iconic Venice waterways, and the 2025 **Concord Pacific Dragon Boat Festival** in Vancouver, celebrating the 30th anniversary of Abreast in a Boat, with 22 DAA members attending.

Domestically, our presence was strong at events such as the Darling Harbour **Lunar New Year** Regatta Sydney, with 57 attendees and teams competing in both Breast Cancer and Senior B categories. At the 2025 **AusChamps** in Penrith, 38 paddlers represented DAA across three teams—Spirit, Hope, and Connect. We were proud to see Kerrie Dowding from DAA Penrith honoured as the AusChamps 2025 DAA flagbearer.

Underpinning this work, the Board invested in IT such as laptops and digital tools (RevSport) to improve on our reporting, data security and membership management. RevSport helps us all regarding event registration, and also the delivery of the In the Loop Bulletins and event communications. We strive to provide education to our Member Groups to enhance usage to provide membership statistics.

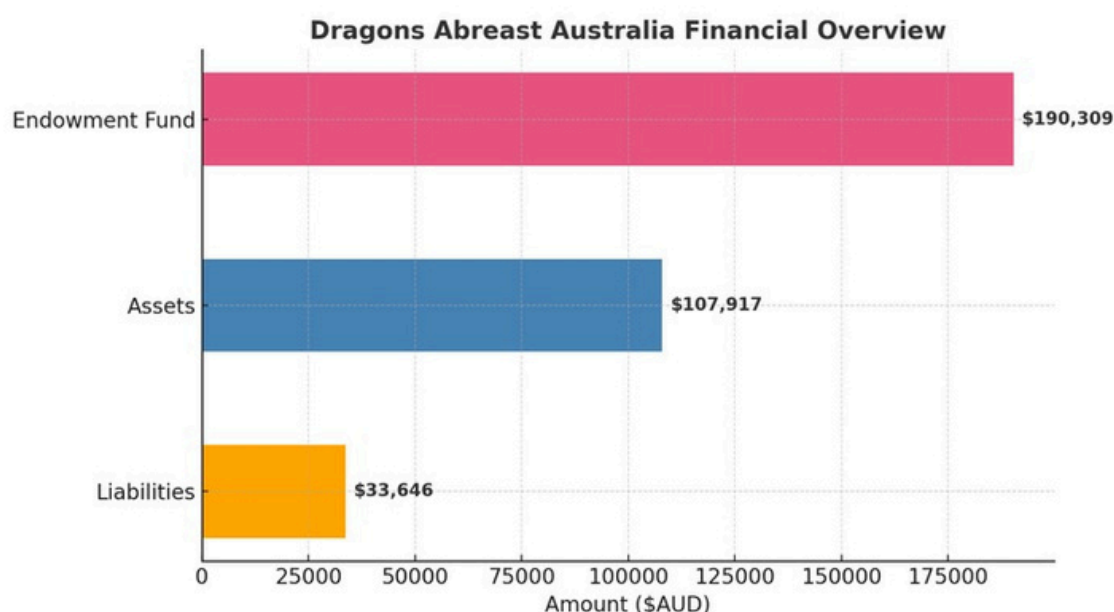
Additionally, our social media channels have continually grown, content provided by our members, allow us to generate a number of reels and stories, which is shared by community. A small investment in paid advertising Facebook followers increased by 145% year-on-year, with an average monthly reach of 27,000+. In the Loop bulletin is gaining 89% open rates which shows communications are getting through. Through creating consistent branding and messaging, we are gaining more attention... that we are thriving and surviving to encourage more BC lived experience to join us!



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FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Dragons Abreast Australia Ltd. remains committed to managing its finances with transparency and care, ensuring that every resource directly supports our mission of empowering breast cancer survivors. The organisation's continued financial stability, alongside the growth of our programs, reflects the dedication of our members, donors, and sponsors who make this work possible. Looking ahead, we are confident in our ability to navigate future challenges and to further strengthen our reach and impact across Australia.



Investing in Qld Women Grant

Dragons Abreast Australia proudly hosted two successful Clinical Breast Cancer Paddling Coaches Training Camps on the Sunshine Coast with international dragon boat coach and breast cancer survivor, Kamini Jain. Supported by a \$23,040 grant, these camps provided specialised training to equip coaches with the knowledge and skills needed to better support breast cancer survivor paddlers, addressing both their physical and mental wellbeing. By strengthening the expertise of coaches, the camps have enhanced the capacity of survivor teams across the country.

Funded by





PINK PADDLE POWER HOBART 2024







AUSCHAMPS APRIL 2025





VOGALONGA JUNE 2025





VANCOUVER JUNE 2025



Celebrating 30 Years of Breast Cancer Paddling

Visit us at abreastinaboat.com or follow us on [f](#) or [i](#)





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BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2024-25

The Directors of Dragons Abreast Australia oversee the organization's financial health, operations, and long-term sustainability with a focus on integrity, accountability, and transparency. Their leadership nurtures the growth of member groups and supports the well-being of breast cancer survivors. Committed to promoting both physical and mental health, the Board has guided key milestones, including the 25th Anniversary and ongoing expansion, while fostering a compassionate and inclusive environment for all survivors and their valued supporters.



Pearl Lee (Board Chair)

"I love being part of Dragons Abreast Australia for its strong network of women, leadership opportunities, and the joy it brings. I want to share dragon boating with those hearing 'you have breast cancer' and show them that life remains full—join us on the water.."

With years of experience in marketing for global media companies and charities in trauma and community development, Pearl holds a BA in Film, Media, and Marketing, and has completed the AICD Not-for-Profit Governance and AIM Women Leaders courses. A breast cancer and leukemia survivor, she's been paddling since 2016 and coaches Dragons Abreast Sydney



Rosemary Kerrison (Company Secretary)

"After many years of sailing up and down the East Coast of Australia I cherish my time on the water. Dragon boating brings joy, friendship and unforgettable experiences. The rhythmic paddling and unity of the team provides emotional resilience."

I am an inaugural member of Dragons Abreast Tasmania Hobart formed in 2003. Over the ensuing years I have had the pleasure and thrill of taking part in many International, Interstate and State Regattas as a Level 4 Sweep and paddler sharing DAA vision and mission.



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Sue Von Richter (Treasurer and Public Officer)

"Breast cancer has reshaped my life in many unexpected ways. Discovering dragon boating after my diagnosis has only deepened my lifelong love for the water. As a passionate sailor in my younger years and someone who cherishes a week on K'Gari for holidays, dragon boating has become my true happy place."

Sue serves as DAA's Finance Director and Public Officer, bringing a wealth of accounting and auditing expertise. A breast cancer survivor, she embodies resilience and passion, which she extends into her role as a dedicated coach, inspiring those around her both personally and professionally



Sharon Cooper (Operations)

"Being diagnosed with breast cancer at 39 was a complete shock. But when I look back at all I've accomplished since then, and the joy I've found in dragon boating, I feel inspired to share this sport with others. I want to help those navigating their post-cancer journey discover a fun, active, and exciting life after their diagnosis."

Sharon is a business owner, coach, sweep, and official. Based in Orange, she loves traveling, exploring new places, and recently completed the Ord River Marathon.



Ann Boulton (Membership)

Annie began her dragon boating journey in October 2013 with Dragons Abreast Illawarra and the Illawarra Dragon Boat Club. She serves as a Committee Member for IDBC, is a Level 3 Sweep, Level 1 Coach, and Team Hope Manager for the IBCPC NZ 2023 and France 2026 festivals. Between 2017 and 2023, she was the YWCA Encore Facilitator for the South Coast.

With extensive senior management experience across marketing, sales, commercial operations, and data management, Annie is excited to collaborate with the Board to expand the sport within the breast cancer community, helping others experience the fitness, fun, and camaraderie of Dragons Abreast.



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Desley Ralph (Finance)

Since joining Dragons Abreast Townsville in 2008, after being inspired by an Encore program speaker, Desley has become an integral part of the community. As a founding committee member of the sports club, a Level 4 sweep mentor, and regional Sweep Coordinator, she has led teams through both local and international events, including IBCPC Florence 2018 and IBCPC NZ 2023.

Passionate about breast cancer awareness and living actively post-diagnosis, Desley brings valuable experience in finance, business ownership, and community service, which she looks forward to contributing in a director's role.



Robyn Ridnell (Retired 14 April 2025)

Robyn was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2011 at the age of 47, and soon after, she found a new passion in dragon boating. In 2012, she joined Dragons Abreast Bendigo, where her enthusiasm for community involvement and her skill with numbers led her to serve as treasurer beginning in 2015.

Following her retirement in 2023 after 20 years in the mapping industry, Robyn sought to give back to the community that had supported her. Joining the Dragons Abreast Australia Board has allowed her to contribute to an organization that is deeply personal to her, and she is eager to both share her expertise and grow through this role.

Robyn will be focusing her tech and analytical skills on our Sub Committee driving Web Content on our website and Revsport.



Vivienne Williams (Events and Governance)

Vivienne joined Pendragons Abreast in 2017 after her breast cancer diagnosis and has since embraced the sport, participating in IBCPC events in Florence (2018) and New Zealand (2023). As President of Sunshine Coast Dragons Abreast in 2021, she gained experience in building a successful member group and now serves as a coach focused on techniques for breast cancer survivors and older paddlers.

Vivienne is passionate about Dragons Abreast Australia's mission to support survivors through competition, communication, and camaraderie. She is eager to contribute her skills and ideas as a Board member to further strengthen the organization's impact.



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THANK YOU

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Dragons Abreast Australia Ltd, we offer our sincere thanks to our social media, grants, project volunteers, and each of you for the passion and dedication you bring to our community. Your courage, compassion, and energy continue to drive our mission of supporting breast cancer survivors as they move beyond diagnosis into strength and thriving. Through your efforts—whether paddling together on the water or supporting one another off it—you create a powerful environment of connection, healing, and encouragement that inspires all who are part of it. Dragons Abreast Australia remains a source of hope and empowerment because of you, and we are honoured to share this journey alongside you.

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