# Ron Hooton CEO, AGM 2014 speech

## Introduction

* + Great to be here and to see some familiar and new faces
	+ We introduced video conferencing at Vision Australia to increase communication and collaboration between sites
	+ It’s great to see the VCU’s being used to support our members
	+ We also have 10 people viewing the meeting through our webcast

It’s been another great year for the organisation

* + 32,477 clients in 27 locations across Australia
	+ Opening of the new Seeing Eye Dog training facility in Kensington, Melbourne
	+ The new facility will enable us to partner 3 times as many people with dogs in the coming years.
	+ The library continues to grow with more than 33,000 audio & 16,000 Braille titles
	+ This year we distributed more than 750,000 titles to library members across the country
	+ Employment is integral to maximising opportunities for participation
		- * This year 89 job seekers were supported to secure paid employment
			* 61 clients were supported to maintain their employment through our Jobs in Jeopardy program
	+ Education plays a key role in our younger clients, empowering them with opportunity and choice, this year
		- * We supported 559 children aged four and under to develop learning, playing and daily living skills
			* 90 children to transition to primary education
			* Provided further education bursaries to 21 students
	+ We resolved 312,142 enquiries through our national contact centre

We continue to innovate and two examples in the organisation this year:

* + - The NSW Spectacles program
			* + Commenced in July 2014
				+ Is expected to provide more than 58,500 spectacles and optical appliances to vulnerable NSW residents in FY2015
				+ Supported by an online application and assessment process that streamlines administration
				+ Currently there 302 optometrists registered for the program, and we have funded 17,831 optical appliances so far
		- Daisy Players
			* + Last year we announced a project to modify 3,000 daisy players to deliver faster access to audio books and newspapers
				+ and reduce CD production by 350,000 disks each year
				+ The 3G Online DAISY player streams library materials direct to the player for instantaneous access.
				+ The first 3g daisy player was delivered in March 2014
				+ Currently 1932 members are using the 3G Online player
				+ One of our most popular displays at our recent Texpo events
				+ By the time the 3g DAISY player is fully rolled out 45% of our library members will be receiving their content over the internet.

Last year we spoke of hard decisions to ensure Vision Australia’s sustainability, in particular the closing of Vision Australia Enterprises

* + As a result of that closure some staff chose redundancy or were integrated into community activities
	+ 13 moved into roles with other Australia disability enterprises
	+ 23 staff members were successful in transferring to open employment roles or redeployment with Vision Australia
	+ I am pleased to report the our first VAE staff member who took up traineeship within Vision Australia has just completed a certificate II in customer contact

We launched the 2014-2018 strategic plan last November

* + It was a collaborative process
	+ We engaged clients, staff and volunteers
	+ This year we have commenced implementation
	+ Applying a regional service model that enables us to respond to opportunities for growth and using flexible channels for service delivery
	+ We are using a phased approach to implementation
	+ Drawing on the learnings from our NDIS trial sites in Newcastle, Geelong and Canberra
	+ We continue to trial activities to prove concepts
	+ Our marketing activities is an example of this and will be rolled out in 3 locations early in the new year
	+ We are making a significant investment in back office services to support a flexible approach to service delivery
	+ With a focus on effective technology that supports our specialist clinicians to deliver front line services effectively and efficiently

Our values define us as an organisation, guide our interactions with each other and govern how we work with clients

* + We worked with the organisation to develop the new Vision Australia Values
	+ Person-centred, collaborative, accountable, agile, commercially focussed
	+ Benchmarked our performance in the recent staff survey
	+ Embedding these values daily activity and through our performance planning process

Acknowledgements

* + The success of Vision Australia is attributable to the Volunteers and Staff across Australia
	+ Our frontline staff deliver a comprehensive range of services that really make a difference to the education, employment prospects and independence of our clients.
	+ Our support staff do everything they can to support our frontline staff in delivering for our clients.
	+ This year volunteers contributed 724,995 hours to the organisation. (equivalent to 367 FTE)
	+ Volunteers assist in radio, our shops, our offices, in delivering services, supporting fundraising, helping clients with their shopping, gardening and transport and a myriad of other activities.
	+ Finally I would like to acknowledge and thank the Vision Australia Directors, who voluntarily serve on the Board. Each contributes hundreds of hours of voluntary time each year and support myself and the executive team to achieve great outcomes for Vision Australia.