103rd Annual Report
2018-2019

travellersaid.org.au

Travellers Aid

Who we are

Travellers Aid are committed to enabling individuals of all abilities to connect to people and place. We take pride in the diverse backgrounds of our team which reflect the communities in which we work. We operate ethically and are guided by a volunteer Board of Directors who ensure strong and transparent governance. Travellers Aid's workforce consists of 75% dedicated volunteers and 25% committed staff who are motivated by creating real outcomes for the people we serve.

What we stand for

Caring. We treat everyone with dignity and care. Our goal is always to respect, empower and enhance people's capacity.

Proactive. We use our expertise to help those who are finding it difficult to travel. Wherever possible, we take the initiative so that they feel they have control as soon as possible.

Uplifting. We are invested in people and that comes out in how we help them. We want our customers, donors and supporters to feel uplifted and inspired when they engage with us.

Experienced. Travellers Aid has over 100 years experience in assisting travellers. We use our intimate knowledge of the transport system to provide unique insights into the changing needs of the travelling public.

Safe. People who feel vulnerable, alone and afraid can turn to us knowing we will be there for them. Making sure people feel safe, both physically and mentally, when they are with us is our most powerful offering.

What we do

Buggy Service

Our buggy and personal guidance services assist people with mobility challenges to achieve safe passage through high sensory or crowded areas.. Providing this connecting link enables people to travel independently and participate fully in life.

Emergency Relief

By providing subsidised public transport tickets, we assist people in crisis situations to reach a place of safety and support. This service also assists people to leave dangerous and abusive situations.

Companion Service

We provide trained volunteer companions who are able to accompany service users to and from essential appointments and services, as well as social activities. Our companions are there for support and guidance, helping to build confidence when it comes to travelling independently.

Disability Service & Lounge

Our Disability Service provides a range of services for those who have a disability, enabling them to have the independence to access work, education or social activities. Our lounge areas at Southern Cross and Flinders Street stations also provide a safe, welcoming and relaxing space, as well as providing other services for people travelling through these stations.

Mobility Equipment

We hire a range of mobility equipment to enable people to engage and participate. This service particularly enhances the experience of visitors to Melbourne as bringing their own mobility equipment, can be challenging when travelling.

Community Education

Our Community Education presentations aim to educate community groups in how to assist people to stay mobile, by providing travel knowledge which can help them feel confident and safe whilst travelling. It also allows people to maintain independence and to become self-advocating users of public transport. Participants are also made aware of the further supports and services Travellers Aid provides.

Building for the Future

Our 2018-2028 Strategic Plan is now firmly embedded in our organisation and guiding the direction of everything we do. This past year has seen us sharpen our focus for the long term, growing and strengthening our existing services with a view to build for the future.

Bev Excell
Chair of Board

Elias Lebbos
Chief Executive Officer

We have developed and deepened a number of key relationships that will help us maintain financial stability, as well as expand our future capacity through the development of improved systems and processes in the coming years.

As an organisation we continue to operate in a financially responsible manner, ensuring our people are resourced appropriately to help them achieve their best. Over the last few years, we have had success making and retaining surplus funds. This year, with the future in mind, we have used some of these retained earnings to fund some of our strategic initiatives. For instance:

- We have invested significantly in the development of a strong volunteer program, enabling us to reach and assist more people.
- Work has commenced on a new workforce development strategy, which will help us grow and develop both our paid and volunteer workforce, and assist in recruiting and retaining the best people.
- The development of a data/KPI project is nearing completion. This will ensure effective data management and reporting of service information.

Despite this additional expenditure, we were pleased to end the year with a surplus. As per our strategic plan we intend to continue to invest in further capacity building activities during 2019/20.

We are delighted to report that following on from the successful pilot of the MCG buggy service during last year's AFL season, the service has now been implemented as an on-going fixture at events taking place at the MCG.

It's successes such as this that further cement the vital role that our strategic plan plays in our organisation's future. With the strategic plan to guide us we are able to reach more people than ever before and create a Travellers Aid that meets the needs of today's travellers—as well as tomorrow's.

> "Over the last few years, we have had success making and retaining surplus funds. This year, with the future in mind, we have used some of these retained earnings to fund some of our strategic initiatives."

94%

Overall satisfaction rate

15%

Growth in the use of services this financial year

20%

Increase in equipment hire

Customer Satisfaction

In the 2018-2019 financial year Travellers Aid undertook a broad-ranging market research study that looked at attitudes toward Travellers Aid among the following key groups:

- Service Users
- General Public
- Stakeholders

The study found that while brand awareness was low amongst the general public, there was very high engagement and satisfaction with the Travellers Aid brand amongst our donors and service users—with an overall satisfaction rate of 94%. The findings from the research have given us a strong foundation on which to build our brand, marketing and communications strategy which will be rolled out over the coming three years.

Services and Performance

As we extend our services beyond being based exclusively/primarily in train stations we have been able to reach more people than ever before. We have assisted over 20,000 at the MCG during the 2019 AFL season alone with this number only set to increase as the awareness of the service grows.

We have also experienced increases in our Seymour buggy service and companion service usage at 11% and 15% respectively. As buggy trips at Southern Cross remain close to capacity we will continue to look for ways to grow our resources to allow for an increase in capacity.

Our People

Our people play an important part in Travellers Aid's successes, and our accomplishments over the last year are largely due to the commitment and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

This year we have focussed strongly on volunteer recruitment in order to support our increased activities. A successful recruitment drive, supported by City of Melbourne, was conducted in early 2019. This resulted in our volunteer numbers growing to over 100—a first in our organisation's history. The broad diversity of our volunteers—aged 18 to 80 and from a diverse range of backgrounds and cultures—further enables us to meet the needs of multi-cultural Melbourne.

Travellers Aid would like to thank our board and sub-committee independent members. This year the board has welcomed two new members, Nicola Edwards and Jantine Eddelbuttel. Nicola and Jantine come to us with a wealth of experience in communications and human resources respectively.

Thank you to our Partners

We are very proud of everything we have achieved over the last 12 months, however none of it would be possible without the help of our partners. We would like to thank our funders, stakeholders and donors for their on-going commitment to the work that Travellers Aid does. We have been very fortunate to be able to deepen our relationships with a number of key partners over the past year, resulting in some new and exciting opportunities. These include:

- A community partnership with Yarra Trams which has provided Travellers Aid with $100,000 worth of advertising on the front and back of trams across the Melbourne tram network.
- A pilot developmental program funded by State Trustees, TAC and VicRoads that aims to help older drivers plan for their own transition to driving less. This will be trialled over the next 12 months in partnership with the City of Moonee Valley.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to our generous donors and the Friends of Travellers Aid who have joined the program since it was launched last year.

> "Wonderful unique service especially for people from the country. Thank you."

Treasurer's Report

A key strategy to strengthen our financial sustainability is the diversification of funding sources and it is pleasing to see Fee for Service Activities grow to 13% of our total income, which itself has increased by 25% over the last 4 years. For the financial year ended 30 June 2019, Travellers Aid received revenue of $2,333,387 from ongoing operations with the increase mainly due to the MCG service continuing on from the pilot phase. Costs of $2,319,244 were incurred which resulted in a surplus of $14,146. This was less than the 2018 surplus, due to implementation of the first phase of the Strategic Plan with investment in several infrastructure projects and new positions which will build capacity for future growth.

As an organisation we acknowledge and value the essential and continued support of Federal, State and Local Governments, who provided 65% of our operational funding last year.

We received fantastic support from a number of philanthropic trusts and foundations which is greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank the many other individuals and organisations for their generous support.

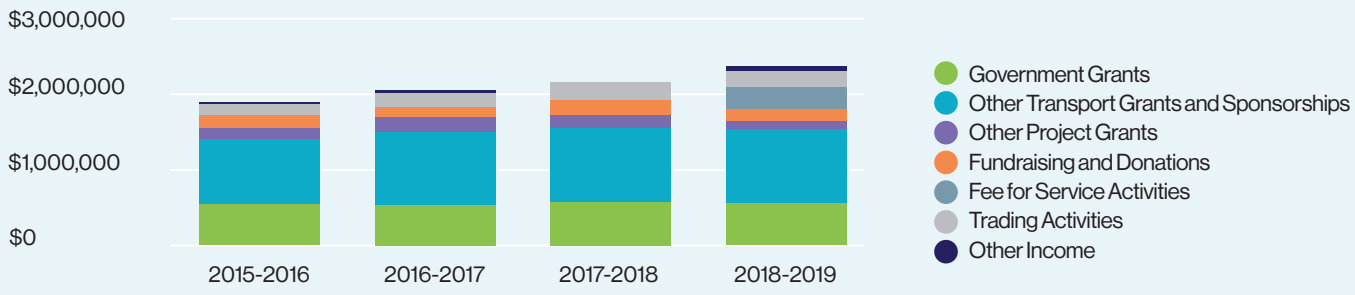
Our equity has been strengthened again to provide a solid foundation for the achievement of our Strategic Plan and has enabled us to plan further investment in the coming year.

The staff and volunteers of Travellers Aid have continued to provide an invaluable service helping people travel independently within their community, and I thank them on behalf of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee.

I would particularly like to thank our Finance & Business Development Manager Elaine Shallue and her team for their ongoing and exceptional work in supporting the work of Travellers Aid and the committee.

Finally, thank you to all the members of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee for their valuable contributions.

Revenue Growth 2015-2019



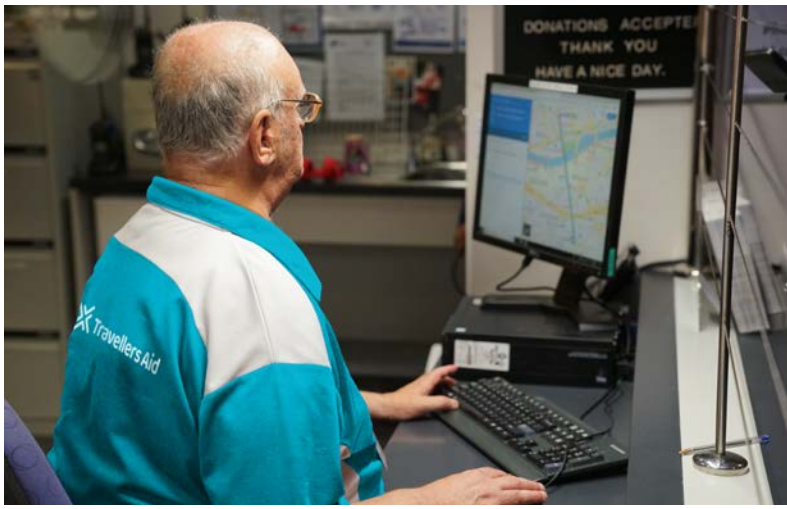
Financial Results for the Annual Report 2018/19

	2018-2019		2017-2018	
Income	**$**	**%**	**$**	**%**
Government Grants	557,550	23.9	571,278	26.1
Other Transport Grants and Sponsorships	970,797	41.7	970,501	44.2
Other Project Grants	98,804	4.2	176,228	8.0
Fundraising and Donations	151,739	6.5	203,631	9.3
Fee for Service Activities	298,894	12.8	0	0.0
Trading Activities	205,523	8.8	215,711	9.8
Other Income	50,080	2.1	56,960	2.6
Total Income	**2,333,387**	**100**	**2,194,309**	**100**

	2018-2019		2017-2018	
Expenses	**$**	**%**	**$**	**%**
Employee benefits	1,757,538	75.8	1,593,235	77.6
Depreciation and amortisation	44,754	1.9	25,750	1.3
Emergency relief	11,709	0.5	17,078	0.8
Occupancy	30,620	1.3	32,415	1.6
Administration	177,846	7.7	159,738	7.8
Consultancy	109,055	4.7	59,841	2.9
Information Technology	95,741	4.1	50,360	2.4
Marketing	32,002	1.4	40,499	2.0
Repairs and Maintenance	30,461	1.3	47,409	2.3
Other Expenses	29,518	1.3	26,870	1.3
Total Expenses	**2,319,244**	**100**	**2,053,195**	**100**
Surplus for the financial year	**$14,143**		**$141,114**	

Travellers Aid
STAFF
Luke
Volunteer

Travellers Aid


DONATIONS ACCEPTE
THANK YOU
HAVE A NICE DAY.
Travellers Aid

Our services

This year Travellers Aid provided over 205,000 instances of assistance to people through our services at stations and in the community.

Companion Service

We have seen over 15% increase in the number of bookings for 2018-2019 financial year, compared to last year.

As with last year, we have seen a further increase in the number of deafblind users due to service awareness increase within the deafblind community.

"I can't tell you how fantastic they are: if I need to get medication or have another test, they're always there, never complaining—always so patient and kind. I broke my ankle about a year and a half ago, and I find it very difficult getting on and off trains and trams. Sometimes, when it's bad, I have to use my walking frame. But they're always there to help me. I always recommend them to others because they're such nice people. I was just telling the senior sister at Kilmore Hospital that they also run a service out of Seymour and will pick you up from your station on that line—which is my line! So, I'm hoping that I can finish with the ambulance now and get back onto the train as soon as possible!"

Buggy Transfer Services

MCG

Due to the success of the pilot of the program during the 2018 AFL season, the MCG Buggy service was implemented on an on-going basis in late 2018. During this time the service has assisted over 20,000 people to get to footy games, cricket matches and concerts at the MCG.

Stations

The Buggy transfer service at Southern Cross continues to go from strength to strength, while the Seymour Buggy Transfer service has seen an 11% increase—or an additional 72 jobs per month—over the past year. This is largely due to increasing awareness and is indicative of the key role Travellers Aid plays in helping people at Seymour station.

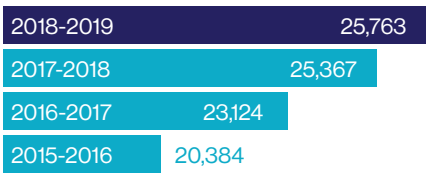
744

Companion Service Bookings

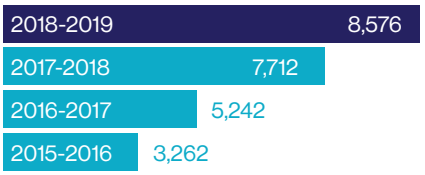
20,000

buggy trips at the MCG

Southern Cross Station
Total buggy jobs



Seymour Station
Total buggy jobs



4,376
instances of emergency relief in 2018-2019

1,109
instances of metropolitan travel assistance in 2018-2019

1,276
instances of regional travel assistance in 2018-2019

892
Total Mobility Equipment hires

Emergency Relief and Pathways to Education

In 2018-19, there were over 4,376 instances of emergency relief, including 1,109 instances of metropolitan travel, and 1,276 instances of regional travel.

Providing a safe place during a time of need continues to be a core focus of the Travellers Aid sites. Emergency relief services includes assistance with local and intrastate travel, access to internet, phone cards, crisis travel information and referrals to other service providers.

The Pathways to Education program assisted 32 students with subsidised yearly, half-yearly and short-term public transport tickets. The testimonial below is indicative of the impact this program can have.

"I am so grateful that Travellers Aid and V/Line have been able to cover the costs for my daughter to get to school. Otherwise I would have had to drive her on a round 90km trip twice a day. Being on new start allowance, this would be unachievable.

She loves getting on the bus every day to go to school. Since travelling into Wangaratta her grades have improved immensely. I am so proud of her extra achievements. Without the help of both parties my daughter would be miserable and skipping a lot of school days and still be bullied.

I thank you both for helping in this way. And as you have read above, for helping a young girl blossom. She has not only made a lot of friends at her school, she has also made friends on the bus that she looks forward to catching up with every morning."

Mobility Equipment

With a range of new equipment items thanks to an RACV Community Education grant, mobility equipment hire increased by 20% in 2018-19. We regularly receive feedback about the positive impact this equipment has, enabling people to access places and events around Melbourne that they wouldn't otherwise have been able to. Peak hire periods were during Seniors Week in October and the 2019 Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show in March.

We are grateful to Metro for the donation of an Innovcare mobility scooter. This scooter has been a welcome addition to the mobility equipment fleet and has received excellent feedback from users.

> "I am so grateful that Travellers Aid and V/Line have been able to cover the costs for my daughter to get to school."

"Hiring the wheelchair for my 80-year-old mother made our dream trip to Melbourne for the Australian Open so pleasurable. Thank you for providing assistance to interstate travellers. Fantastic service that is greatly appreciated." – iPad Survey respondent January 2019

Personal Care Service and Flinders Street Lounge

Changes in the provision of disability services—particularly through the progressive rollout of the NDIS in 2018-19—has changed the nature and frequency of visits from our regular clients and service users. We are adapting to these changes, always keeping in mind that our underlying purpose remains to assist people of all abilities to get to where they need to go.

In 2019-20 we will continue to look at how we can improve the personal care service to better meet the needs of our existing and future clients.

"Every time I use Travellers Aid I feel welcome and not discriminated against". – iPad survey respondent January 2019

Community Education

In the last financial year, 77 community education sessions were conducted. This included two Orientation Week expos at Melbourne universities, aimed at encouraging overseas students to volunteer, giving them a sense of connection to Melbourne city whilst they study here.

Community education sessions were also conducted with a number of Metro customer service groups, including authorised officers and station assistants.

3,744

Hours of Travellers Aid Personal Care Service

8,489

Visits to the Flinders Street Lounge by clients

77

Community education sessions conducted in 2018-2019

Our Volunteers

In the 2018/2019 financial year, a total of 184 volunteers played a vital role in helping Travellers Aid deliver our services. We currently have 130 active volunteers. Thank you to all our volunteers who contribute their time not just to one, but to multiple service programs.

We would like to extend special thanks to the following volunteers who have been with us for over five years:

Volunteer	Years of Service
Helen Gourlay	8
Karlene Young	8
Poppy Carvouni	8
Luke Stone	8
Uyenvy Le	8
Denis Campbell	8
Emily Sansom	7
Robyn McHugh	7
Joanna Tapper	5

We would also like to give special thanks to Brian Porter who has been volunteering at Travellers Aid for over 35 years.

Brian first became aware of Travellers Aid in 1976 when he travelled from Traralgon to Melbourne for work and would use the Travellers Aid lounge to rest and recharge. Since then he has worn a number of hats at Travellers Aid, volunteering at the Southern Cross and the Swanston Street café, before more recently becoming an ambassador for the organisation.

> “I love meeting the people that I get to meet and volunteer with; it has made my time with Travellers Aid such an enjoyable experience. Being able to interact with and assist those wanting to make their way around Melbourne has been really rewarding for me, and it’s wonderful to know that I have played just a small part in making the day of those people just that little bit easier.”

Cam Sutherland, MCG Volunteer

Travellers Aid

Travellers Aid

TRAVELLERSaid
Buggy
Transfer
Service
EZGO

Travellers Aid

11
12

Our Board

Bev Excell
Appointed October 2014
B.Sc, FAICD, Chair, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee and Business Development Committee

Paddy Oliver
Appointed October 2014
LL.B, M.Litt, MBA, GAICD, Deputy Chair, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee

Sandra Bell
Appointed May 2017
B Sc, Grad Dip Ed, B Bus, M Mgt, CPA, GAICD, Honorary Treasurer; Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee

James Carroll
Appointed October 2016
BCL, GAICD, Member of the People and Services Committee, Member of the Business Development Committee

Peter Gluskie
Appointed October 2014
BEng, MBA, CPPD, GAICD, FAIPM, Chair of the Business Development Committee, Member of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee

David Hanrahan
Appointed October 2017
B Bus, MBA, Member of the Business Development Committee

Philip Cornish
Appointed October 2014
FCHSM, GAICD, Chair of the People and Services Committee

Nicola Edwards
Appointed February 2018
BA, Grad Dip PR, Grad Cert Public Administration Member of the Business Development Committee

Jantine Eddelbuttel
Appointed August 2018
FAICD, B.AS, Grad Dip Human Resource Management & Industrial Relations, Member of People and Services Committee

Thank you

Travellers Aid would like to give special thanks to our supporters without whom we could not make a positive impact on the lives of so many. To all the individuals and organisations who kindly provide their time, energy, expertise and financial support, we thank you.

Patron in Chief

- Mr Anthony Howard QC

Supporters

- Dr Hannah McDougall
- CDC Victoria
- BusVic
- Melbourne Cricket Club
- Melbourne Cricket Ground
- People's Choice Community Lottery
- Rotary Clubs of Victoria
- Yarra Trams
- V/Line
- Metro Trains Melbourne
- Country Women's Association of Victoria
- Uniting Church Fellowships
- Probus Clubs
- Lions Clubs
- MS Peer Support Group
- Combined Pensioners Association of Victoria
- Walmsley Village
- Infranexus
- William Angliss Institute
- Magistrate Courts

Government Supporters

- Department of Transport
- City of Melbourne
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Justice – Magistrates Court

Trusts and Foundations

- Rod & Pamela Wells Endowment Reserve
- Transurban Community Grants
- Melbourne Community Grants
- State Trustees
- StreetSmart

Bequests

- The Mackie Bequest
- The Estate of Rob Williams
- JB Were – The Simpson Hope Endowment

Friends of Travellers Aid:

The Friends of Travellers Aid program was launched in October 2018 for people who wish to support Travellers Aid on a regular and ongoing basis. A huge thank you to everyone below who has supported the program (as at 30th June 2019):

Shirley Baggs
Susan Beard
Tommy Brittain
Jan Britton
Don Britton
Enid Bryant
Margaret Carter
Annette Coutts
Geoffery Coutts
John Dalla
Lois Elliott
Laurie Elliott
Rory Elliott
Bev Excell
Leslie Friend
Bruce Gould
Hannah Green
Prudence Griffiths
Julie Hall
Jarred Harvey
Glenis Hawthorne
Kathleen Jeppesen
Gail Jones
David Jones
Edna Kilgour
Norah Killip
Mary McGivern-Shaw
Barbara Mitchell
Brian Moore
Judy Moore
Bill Morison
Kathlyn O'Brien
Lisa Paterson
Barbara Porter
Harry Russell
Jennifer Simpson
Penny Skinder
Elsie Smith
Margaret Spinks
Shane Spowart
Fiona Sweetman
Robyn Thomas
Bonnie Walker
Norma Wells
Maureen Williams
Lorraine Wilson

To support Travellers Aid by becoming a Friend of Travellers Aid visit **www.travellersaid.org.au/donate** or call us on **9654 2600**

Travellers Aid

Our new branding is inspired by the idea of a dynamic intersection which creates a positive symbol linking back to our brand promise of enabling everyday journeys.

Contact us

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Level 3, 225 Bourke Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
Phone (03) 9654 2600
Email: info@travellersaid.org.au

Accessibility

If you would like to request an accessible version of this Annual Report, call (03) 9654 2600 or email info@travellersaid.org.au

Support us

Donate now at travellersaid.org.au/donate
Donations over $2 are tax deductible
ABN 79 004 080 862

View this report online at:
www.travellersaid.org.au

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