# **Blind Citizens Australia**

# **Annual State Division Plan**

# Preamble

Blind citizens Australia, (BCA), has developed a set of guidelines for the governance of its state divisions. The guidelines require that the state division must develop an annual state division plan and budget, as well as a calendar of state division events for the board’s approval.

This, the NSW/ACT state division plan is the first ever annual plan to have been developed by BCA, following the consolidation of Blind Citizens NSW, (BCNSW) into BCA in late 2017. The plan will cover a fifteen month period from April 2018 to June 2019. It was developed through a facilitated workshop held in Sydney in February 2018 involving NSW board members, all members of the NSW/ACT state division committee, (referred to in the plan simply as “the committee” and key staff. The plan reflects discussions on the day, as well as feedback gathered from members of BCA and BCNSW through three facilitated teleconferences held in late January.

The plan seeks to act as an ambitious but sustainable road map for the new state division in its first eighteen months. Specifically, it aims to:

* Achieve a balance between the traditional values and activities of both organisations, and current and future ambitions
* Reflect the significant body of work which still needs to be done by the BCA board, BCNSW management committee and staff to complete the process of integrating the two organisations
* Ensure that planned activities meet the needs and aspirations of members and of our organisation, whilst being sustainable and realistic
* Reflects BCA’s role as the representative voice of people who are blind or vision-impaired and its commitment to continuing to develop strong relationships across the blindness and broader disability sectors.

Thank you to all members who have contributed to the development of this document. As this is the first state division plan BCA has created, we welcome your feedback and suggestions on it at any time. We also look forward to hearing more of your ideas, there is no need to wait for the next consultation. As with all planning processes, there were more ideas generated than we could ever hope to achieve in fifteen months, but we have saved them up for the next plan. It is also our intention that the plan be a living document which is flexible enough to respond to emerging issues, so keep your ideas coming. We look forward to working with you to bring the planned activities to fruition.

## **Management and Governance**

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| Key Activities | Possible Strategies | Responsibility | Time-frame | Priority |
| 1. Build the capacity of BCA leaders and representatives to enable them to effectively speak on behalf of the organisation. | Ensure adequate representation from NSW/ACT in national capacity-building teleconferences and other opportunities. | Committee and staff | Ongoing | 1 |
|  | Seek funding to pilot a capacity-building program for BCA leaders and representatives in NSW and the ACT. | Staff | By Dec. 2018 | 1 |
| 2. Identify young and emerging leaders and support their development over the life of this plan. | Create specific opportunities for young people and others with an interest, to become involved in NSW advocacy campaigns with the view to encouraging leadership aspirations.  | Committee and branches | Ongoing | 2 |
|  | Work with branches to identify pathways for the development of young and emerging leaders. | Committee, NSW/ACT coordinating committee and branches | Ongoing | 2 |
| 3. Provide training and development opportunities for the state division committee | Tailor the BCA Board induction program to ensure it meets the needs of state division committee members and can be delivered at a face-to-face meeting. | President, Committee Chair and CEO | September 2018 | 1 |
|  | Include regular training and development activities as part of state division committee meetings. | Committee  | Ongoing | 2 |
| 4. Facilitate communication and information exchange to support capacity-building and skill development across NSW and the ACT | Identify resources to facilitate accessible video conferencing. | Staff | Ongoing | 3 |
|  | Offer regular teleconferences, face-to-face opportunities and other communications for general member capacity-building and skill development. | Staff | Ongoing | 3 |
| 5. Finalise the winding up of the Association of Blind Citizens of NSW  | Transfer lease from BCNSW to BCA. | BCNSW Management Committee and BCA Board | 30 June 2018 | 1 |
|  | Finalise transfer of NSW Government funding contract to BCA. | BCNSW Management Committee and BCA CEO | April 2018 | 1 |
|  | Complete legal work required to wind up the BCNSW entity. | BCNSW Management Committee | July 2018 | 1 |

## **Member Engagement and Development**

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| Key Activities | Possible Strategies | Responsibility | Time-frame | Priority |
| 1. Ensure the culture of BCNSW is retained and its history documented
 | Legacy Project to create an audio history of advocacy by BCNSW and BCA In NSW  | Legacy project committee and staff | Dec. 2018 | 1 |
|  | Sydney branch revitalised to create peer support opportunities for former members of the “Thursday group”. | Branch and staff | May 2018 | 1 |
| 2. Engage existing members and build the membership across NSW and the ACT | "Spring to Action Month" (includes State convention): This will be a series of regional events culminating in State convention in Canberra.  | Committee | October 2018 | 1 |
|  | Deliver camps for youth/young adults | committee and staff | Summer / Autumn 2019 | 2 |
|  | Develop a communication Strategy to ensure that members across NSW/ACT are provided with timely and relevant state specific information.  | Staff and committee | Ongoing | 2 |
| 3. Empower and up-skill branches to deliver social and educational activities. | Establish a network of peers to act as mentors for branch presidents/coordinators. | Staff, branch Presidents/ coordinators | Dec. 2019 | 3 |
|  | Create an event planning kit for use by branch presidents/coordinators | NSW/ACT coordinating committee and staff. | Dec. 2019 | 3 |
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## **Policy, Representation and Advocacy**

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| Key Activities | Possible strategies | Responsibility | Time-frame | Priority |
| 1.Enhance the mechanism for consultation on NPC issues | Maintain a Calendar of branch meetings to facilitate Branch/NPC interaction.  | Staff and branch presidents | April 2018 | 2 |
|  | Targeted teleconferences to be offered with NPC reps to facilitate member consultation | NSW/ACT NPC reps, branch presidents and staff | Ongoing | 1 |
| 1. Ensure that BCA’s policy and representation activities take

Into account the experiences and views of people in regional and isolated communities in NSW/ACT.  | Conduct teleconferences for people in the regions | Staff and Committee | Ongoing | 1 |
|  | Hold state division events and local forums outside Sydney to promote regional engagement. | Staff and Committee | Ongoing | 1 |
| 1. Build relationships with state and local government in NSW and the ACT to support advocacy activities.
 | Support advocacy campaign re State Government funding of NSW advocacy organisations. | Staff and members | July 2018 | 2 |
|  | Work with state government to pilot NDIS transition activities similar to those BCA is already undertaking in Victoria. | Staff | September 2018 | 1 |
|  | Develop relationships with local Government to support regional advocacy, lobby for access officers in local governments and for the continuation of access committees. | Staff and branches | Ongoing | 3 |
|  | Improve access to state and local government elections including accessible pre-election information and accessible voting processes | Staff and members | Ongoing | 3 |
| 4. Improve access to public transport:  | Monitor and react to proposed changes and other developments in relation to public transport standards and policy in NSW and the ACT.   | Staff and branches | Ongoing  | 2 |
|  | Respond to relevant state and local Government inquiries.  | Staff and branches | Ongoing | 2 |
|  | Support individuals and branches to pursue public transport access issues. | Staff and branches | Ongoing | 2 |
| 5. Disseminate information about NDIS and My Aged Care: | Continue delivering NDIS/MAC workshops | Staff | Ongoing | 1 |
|  | Distribute information resources, provide advice to individuals.  | Staff and branches | Ongoing | 1 |
|  | Offer direct support to individuals when there is capacity to do so. | Staff | Ongoing | 1 |