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Dear Members,

It has been a busy time here at Blind Citizens Australia. We have had an exciting few months, featuring many program launches, projects, and events. Since our last edition of Blind Citizens News, we have run an issue-based Federal Election campaign, completed several submissions and consultations on a wide range of issues, relaunched our Executive Leadership Program, and more!

We have also been focusing more on engaging with our members. We want to thank everyone who has shared their experiences, input, and feedback over the recent months. We value your contributions and appreciate the time and effort it takes.

Sincerely,

Sally Aurisch

Chief Executive Officer

November 2022

# Federal Election and Voting

Elections and voting have been a major focus for BCA this year. Throughout the Federal Election, we ran a large campaign promoting the issues that matter most to our members, a major one being accessible voting. Following a decision from the New South Wales Electoral Commission to discontinue the use of its only accessible voting platform, we campaigned for the development of a replacement platform that guarantees people who are blind or vision impaired access to a secret, independent, and verifiable vote. We recently filed a complaint against the NSWEC to the Australian Human Rights Commission on the grounds of discrimination. We look forward to representing our members on this issue.

# Report on Banking and Financial Services

BCA recently published its ‘Report on Banking Services and Products for People who are Blind or Vision Impaired’.

The report examines and highlights the accessibility barriers of banking and financial services for people who are blind or vision impaired. It also sets out various recommendations for the banking and finance sectors, providing best practice solutions to increase accessibility.

You can read this report on the 'Submissions' section of our website, or you can request a copy in your preferred format by calling 1800 033 660.

# Pedestrian Safety Policy

After an extensive member consultation process, we're excited to announce that our Pedestrian Safety Policy was officially launched at this year's BCA Connect.

In recent years, many people who are blind or vision impaired have experienced changes in our communities, such as increases in the number of silent vehicles and shared e-scooter and e-bike services. Many of these changes have resulted in an increased risk to pedestrians who are blind or vision impaired.

Our new Pedestrian Safety Policy outlines these safety risks and provides recommendations to address them.

# What's Coming Up at BCA

We have recently changed the names and structures of some of our regular events. Don't worry - they're still the same events you know and love.

Happy Hour has been renamed to BCA Conversations.

The Aboriginal Blind Persons Forum is now BCA Yarning Circle.

The New Member Forum is now BCA Welcome.

The details for some of our regular events are listed below. For the most up-to-date information and meeting details please give us a call on 1800 033 660.

All meetings can be joined through a computer, smart device, or landline telephone (charged at the cost of a local call).

## Peer Connect Groups

Would you like to meet other members with the same interests and passions as you? Our Peer Connect Groups provide the perfect opportunity. Each group focuses on a different topic, ranging from things like gardening and travel, to employment and assistive technology. Most groups meet regularly at least once a month. Call us to find out how you can join in.

## BCA Conversations

Our BCA Conversations occur each Thursday evening at 7:30pm AEDT. Join us as we discuss a different topic of interest each week. This is an opportunity to connect with like-minded members and engage in interesting discussions. Contact us to find out the topic of upcoming sessions.

## Trivia

Are you interested in a fun-filled night of virtual trivia? Each Saturday evening a dedicated group of members come together for a competition of the mind. We have a different host and theme each week, and new contestants are always welcome. The game begins at 8:00pm AEDT every Saturday.

## BCA Inform

Join us on the first Tuesday of each month as we discuss different topics of interest. BCA Inform is regularly attended by guest speakers and subject matter experts and provides an opportunity for in-depth discussion. We meet from 7:15pm – 9:00pm AEDT over Zoom. Please call us for details about the topic and registration.