



Annual Report

2022–2023

freed^om
solutions
australia



Our Mantra

 **Clever ideas,
changing lives** 

Our Mission

To change the lives of people living with disability by providing personalised technology, equipment, and services.

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to elders past, present, and emerging.

Contents

About Freedom Solutions	4
Chairman's Report	6
CEO's Report	7
Strategic Achievements	8
Our Values	10
Our Impact	11
How Do We Measure Our Impact?	13
Strategic Plan	14
Our Volunteers	15
Highlights	17
Our Team	19
Our Board Members	20
Our Supporters	21
Financial Report	23

About Freedom Solutions

Freedom Solutions has three services to help change the lives of people living with disability.

Since 1975 Freedom Solutions' volunteers have created over 50,000 solutions to change the lives of people living with disability.

Whether that be to use an iPad, ride a bike, or to bathe a child independently – Freedom Solutions' talented volunteers have been there, using their skills and partnering with the community to make these goals a reality.

Every project our volunteers complete is possible thanks to those who provide the funding base for our vital work to continue. To our volunteers and supporters – thank you for all you do.

Patron

The Honourable Margaret Beazley
AO QC, Governor of NSW

Founders

George Winston AM
Mark Dohrmann AM



Freedom Wheels

Custom-made and modified Freedom Wheels bikes and trikes provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to experience bike riding, sometimes for the first time in their lives. Many of our clients face challenges with walking independently, yet they can enjoy the thrill of riding with the appropriate assistance. Our health professionals prescribe Freedom Wheels bikes, and each one is meticulously crafted to accommodate the unique requirements of every individual, including their height, weight, and therapeutic needs. We believe that everyone should have the chance to enjoy the freedom of cycling.

Unique Solutions

Technical volunteers from Freedom Solutions collaborate with individuals with disabilities to create tailored assistive technology, either by crafting custom devices or adapting existing equipment, in order to enhance their overall quality of life or assist them in achieving specific objectives. Freedom Solutions is committed to providing innovative solutions that enhance the well-being, lifelong learning, daily routines, and community engagement of people with disabilities. We work with the client's community therapist to ensure a strong multidisciplinary approach.

Adaptable Solutions

These products are created to empower individuals to be more independent. The Adaptable Solutions range includes items like supportive seating, step and rails, and mobility aids. Many of our offerings are designed with children in mind, offering adjustable features that adapt as the child grows.

Products include:

- Joystick controlled ride on car
- Adjustable chair and table
- Step and rail
- Boccia Ramp
- Standing frame
- Mobility walker
- Sit to stand ladder

The past year a message from our chair

It is my pleasure to present to you the annual report of Freedom Solutions Australia for the financial year 2023. I continue to be amazed by the life changing clever ideas brought to life by our skillful volunteers and staff. Our organisation has been helping people living with a disability achieve their goals by designing and building custom assistive technology since 1975.

The NDIS continues to change the way our communities support people living with disabilities and we are transforming the organisation to match. I am confident we have the right team and the right approach to continue to change lives well into the future.

Our important work is not possible without the skill and care of our volunteers and the generosity of our corporate and individual donors and I want to thank them for their continuing support. I would also like to thank our board of directors, our CEO Scott Miller, our management team, and our dedicated staff for their hard work and contribution.

I would like to welcome our incoming chair Matthew Kayrooz who I believe will be a fantastic custodian of our remarkable organisation.

Andrew Every

Board Chair



2023 reflection with our CEO, Scott



I would like to begin this annual report by addressing the challenging operating environment that our organisation has faced over the past year. In the wake of various post-merger alignment activities, we have continued to make strategic decisions aimed at ensuring our long-term sustainability.

One of the most challenging aspects of this process was the reduction in staffing levels, which included several redundancies. These difficult decisions were made with great consideration for our team members and the organisation's overall health. We appreciate the impact these changes have had on both current and former staff and appreciate their support as we move to an increasingly agile operation.

In response to these challenges, we re-evaluated and re-affirmed our organisation's values. Our values are the cornerstone of our organisation's culture, guiding our actions and decisions. They have been instrumental in helping us navigate these difficult times while staying true to our mission.

Our rebranding from Solve-TAD to Freedom Solutions has been a strong strategic move to revitalising our organisation's image while also serving as a testament to our commitment to adapt and thrive in evolving markets.

I am proud to report that our commitment to volunteer engagement has grown stronger. Our volunteers' dedication to giving back to their wider community has only intensified during the last year. Philanthropic partnerships have remained

a central pillar of our organisation's identity, and despite the challenges, we have continued to leverage their investments in us to ensure our positive impact continues making a difference in the communities we serve.

Lastly, we implemented several major IT systems changes that have not only enhanced our operational efficiency but have also positioned us for a more robust and secure future.

In conclusion, while the past year presented significant challenges, it has also showcased the resilience and adaptability of our organisation. We are confident that the steps we've taken to manage our sales, expenses, values, brand, volunteers, and philanthropy will ensure our success for a sustainable future.

Thank you for your continued trust and confidence in our organisation.

Scott Miller
Chief Executive Officer

Strategic Achievements

Rebrand and New Website

Embarking on an exciting chapter after 48 years of legacy, our organisation proudly unveiled a refreshed brand identity crafted through extensive stakeholder engagement. This transformative journey reflects our commitment to evolution, capturing the essence of our rich history while aligning with contemporary values. A vibrant logo redesign symbolises our renewed spirit, harmonising tradition with a forward-looking vision. Simultaneously, the launch of our sleek new website, offers stakeholders an immersive experience that mirrors our brand ethos. This milestone celebrates our enduring legacy while heralding a dynamic era of innovation and engagement, uniting stakeholders in our shared commitment to a brighter future.

Values & Strategic Pillars

Freedom Solutions proudly unveiled a strategic framework anchored in five core values and pillars. Innovation drives our quest for excellence, propelling us to explore cutting-edge solutions and stay ahead in a dynamic landscape. Financial sustainability underscores our commitment to responsible stewardship, ensuring longevity and impact. A customer-centered approach shapes every decision, prioritising the needs and experiences of those we serve. Collaboration is the heartbeat of our success, fostering partnerships that amplify our collective impact. Integrity, the bedrock of our ethos, ensures transparency and ethical conduct in all endeavours. Together, these pillars fortify our mission, guiding us towards a future of purposeful growth and positive change.

My Active Life

We're thrilled to share the success story of My Active Life, a program that has significantly impacted the lives of regional Australians living with disabilities. Having secured the My Active Life grant in 2020, we've witnessed remarkable progress over the past year. Expanding our Freedom Wheels clinics in New South Wales and Victoria, we've empowered over 200 individuals to experience the joy of riding a bike for the first time.

In Victoria and New South Wales, we proudly introduced the Inclusive Community Sport Days, exciting afternoons held every school holiday, providing a safe and inclusive environment for families and friends to explore different sports. This initiative has connected over 500 Australians with disabilities in regional Victoria to accessible sports, fostering a sense of community and promoting active, fulfilling lives.

Service Delivery – Consolidation of FW Service

In a strategic move, we consolidated our Freedom Wheels service, prioritising quality and ensuring financial sustainability. This initiative streamlines operations, allowing us to maintain the highest standards in delivering adaptive bikes to those with unique mobility needs. By centralising our efforts, we enhance product excellence while optimising resources for long-term financial health. This consolidation not only fortifies our commitment to providing top-tier services but also positions us to navigate challenges with resilience. We believe this focused approach will not only sustain the financial viability of the Freedom Wheels program but also amplify its impact, empowering more individuals to experience the joy of mobility and independence.

US Pricing Model & Business Systems

Strengthening the sustainability of our Unique Solution Service, we introduced a forward-thinking approach by updating our pricing model. This innovation ensures cost-effectiveness for clients while maintaining the exceptional quality they expect. Simultaneously, we streamlined the process to access our service, prioritising efficiency and client convenience. Leveraging our robust business systems, we integrated cutting-edge technology to enhance the overall user experience. This strategic evolution not only responds to the dynamic needs of our clients but also reinforces our commitment to delivering unparalleled solutions. It marks a transformative era where accessibility, efficiency, and technological integration converge to redefine excellence in our Unique Solutions Service.

Partnerships & Philanthropy

Partnerships and philanthropy are the lifeblood of Freedom Solutions. In an everchanging landscape, forging alliances becomes paramount. Collaborative partnerships amplify our reach and resources, enabling us to surpass the limitations of our non-profit status. Philanthropic support, whether from individuals or businesses, sustains our mission-driven initiatives. It's a powerful testament to the shared commitment toward social good. These relationships not only level the playing field but also elevate our capacity to innovate, thrive, and effect meaningful change in the lives we touch.

Freedom Solutions' Values

Innovation

We inherently push the boundaries of assistive technology, developing life-changing solutions through our commitment to innovation.



Financial Sustainability

We are committed to financial sustainability through responsible financial management and revenue growth.



Customer Centred

We are committed to a positive client experience at every stage. We achieve this through quality products and services and through continuous improvement.



Collaboration

We recognise our success is built on cross-functional teamwork. We believe results only come through effective collaboration.



Integrity

We act honestly and ethically. Through integrity we build strong relationships with clients and volunteers, ensure quality, and promote a positive workplace culture.


freedom
solutions
australia



Our Impact

Freedom Wheels Leo's story

Leo, an 11-year-old boy with the spirit of a calm whale navigating the ocean, a story unfolds—a tale of resilience, discovery, and the transformative power of Freedom Wheels.



Leo, born with Down Syndrome, likes to be in a quiet environment and loves to dance like no one is watching him. Before the advent of Freedom Wheels, Leo, an indoor enthusiast, found joy in the quiet corners of his home. However, a pivotal moment came when Leo, now equipped with his own Freedom Wheels bicycle, experienced a newfound motivation to explore the world outside. Riding became not just a physical activity but a catalyst for confidence and community interaction.

The journey began when Leo's family discovered Freedom Wheels during a free bicycle day at the traffic school in Kew when he was five. Since then, Leo's life has seen positive transformations. While still in the training stages, Leo's confidence in riding has grown, and his school reports echo his newfound enthusiasm for cycling.

Freedom Wheels, with its personalised approach, has played a pivotal role in Leo's journey. Our commitment to meeting individual needs has not only empowered Leo but also positively impacted his family. The ripple effect of this support extends beyond personal growth—it contributes to the beauty of interdependence, where supporting others becomes a source of happiness for all.



Thai



Photography is more than just capturing moments; it's about expressing oneself, preserving memories, and connecting with the world.

For Thai, photography is more than just a hobby; it's a passion. However, Thai had to recently stop taking photos due to his disability.. Thai lives with muscular dystrophy. He spends most of his day in his wheelchair, and experiences muscular weakness and fragility. His camera was starting to be too heavy for him to hold:

“The camera I used was too heavy, weighing a total of 2,090 grams with the lens attached, making it challenging for me to hold the camera and thus I wasn't able to take photos.”

Working in co-design with Thai, our occupational therapy team and a team of volunteers, a custom mount was designed and prototyped. The result was a meticulously crafted mount that allowed the camera to sit comfortably, enabling Thai to take photos while being seated in his wheelchair without the burden of its weight.

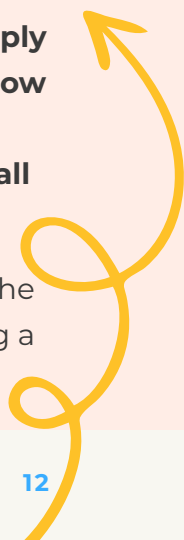
The mount was created with various materials, attaching to the side of his wheelchair. The mount can be adjusted and moved, to best position the camera.



Since receiving his custom mount, Thai's quality of life has significantly increased. Despite the design being a simple solution, the final result has provided to be invaluable, as explained by Thai himself:

“In the last 2 months, this mount has given me the opportunity to explore photography, enabling me to engage with photographer communities, capturing photos, and create work that fills me with pride. This camera setup has been truly transformative. I find myself going out more, engaging in social activities, and becoming an active member of communities I deeply appreciate. Words cannot describe how much this has changed my life. I had no idea this was an option for me at all before I met Freedom Solutions.”

We have loved working with Thai, and he is extremely eager to continue building a life of independence.



How do we measure our impact?

In 2022/2023 we assisted 714 people with disability to achieve their goals.



205

Unique solutions



394

Freedom Wheels



115

Adaptable solutions



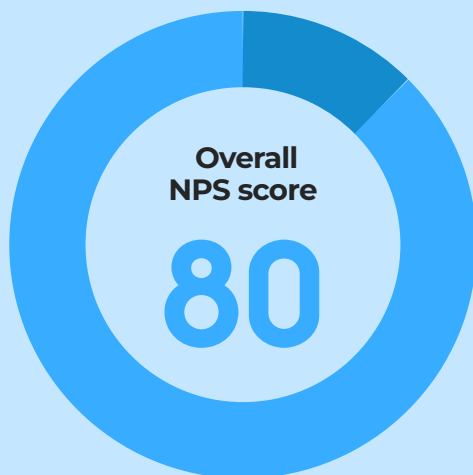
495

Therapy consultations

The NPS is a way to determine how likely someone is to recommend a product or service to another person thereby indicating their level of loyalty and likelihood of 'telling a friend' about Freedom Solutions. The survey

participant is asked to rate the likelihood of recommending Freedom Solutions from 1-10, 10 being the highest likelihood, these results are then used to calculate NPS. The maximum score achievable is 100 and the lowest score -100.

NPS Score Clients



NPS Score for Referrers



Strategic Plan 2023–2026

Strategic Pillars

Customer Focussed



Enabled People



Financial Sustainability

Strategic Objectives

- Brand recognition
- Customer satisfaction
- Referrer satisfaction
- Market growth
- Specialised volunteers
- Engaged employees
- Values-led culture
- Quality production
- Health and safety culture
- Stronger partnerships with our referral community
- Philanthropic and fundraising value for money
- Improved financial management of our COGS and overheads.

2022–23 Strategic Initiatives (highlights)

- Develop and roll-out a single market-facing brand in NSW and Victoria
- Understand and improve our customers' experience
- Understand and leverage our referrers' experience
- Provide solutions that maximise the number of customers
- Develop and implement a volunteer recruitment and engagement plan
- Attractive value proposition that increases the diversity of skillsets
- Establish an organisational environment and culture of continuous improvement
- Maintain an organisational environment culture of workplace health and safety
- New products, partnerships, additional revenue driven resource & sales initiatives
- Provide our OT Assistive Technology and Equipment Therapy service to new and existing clients
- Improve our value proposition to funders and philanthropists
- Grow our partnerships with TADs, regional OTs and other disability charities

Marco's 30-year journey

At Freedom Solutions, we are committed to providing unique and customised assistive technology solutions that empower individuals living with disabilities. Our mission is to create disability equipment that enhances mobility and independence.

One of our dedicated volunteers, Marco, has been a vital part of this mission for over 30 years. His story is a testament to the power of innovative solutions and the impact of volunteering.

Marco's journey with Freedom Solutions began when he discovered an opportunity to combine his professional skills in engineering with his passion for woodworking. With a background in mechanical engineering, computer science, and an MBA, Marco was drawn to our mission of creating customised assistive technology.

Marco's work at Freedom Solutions is diverse, encompassing woodwork, electronics, and other materials. He specialises in creating disability equipment that meets the unique needs of our clients. Whether it's rearranging a room to enhance mobility or building customised beds, Marco's projects are tailored to provide the best mobility solutions.



Marco's contribution to Freedom Solutions goes beyond crafting customised assistive technology. His work is about making a real difference, allowing clients to feel more freedom in their daily lives.

“The ones that I like to do are the ones that exercise my skills, allow me to make a difference, and allow the client to really feel like they're getting more freedom in what they're doing,” he explains.



Bob, making a difference every day

Bob Armstrong is a retired engineer who has devoted his time and skills to help those in need. After retiring in early 2020, Bob sought a way to give back to his community and found his calling with Freedom Solutions as a technical volunteer in the Geelong region.

Before volunteering, Bob had an extensive career as an electrical engineer, working on major projects related to hydrocarbon facilities, oil, and gas facilities. He also transitioned into project management, travelling both interstate and internationally. Despite his busy career, Bob and his wife raised six children, making their lives even busier.

Bob's passion for volunteering with Freedom Solutions was ignited by the desire to use his technical background to make a difference in the lives of those with disabilities. He believes that providing individuals with custom equipment suited to their needs can offer a sense of freedom and independence. This is especially true for people who have been struggling with their disabilities for years, relying heavily on caregivers and ill-fitting equipment.

One of Bob's favourite projects was designing a custom walker for a woman with only one functional arm. With the help of Joanne, another Freedom Solutions volunteer, they created a walker that provided elbow support and a single handle. The woman could manoeuvre the walker easily and even walk through tight spaces, giving her newfound independence.

Bob enjoys working with the volunteer group, as they collaborate on projects, offer technical support, and share resources. This collaborative environment fosters success and enables volunteers to continuously learn from one another.

When asked what the word 'freedom' means to him, Bob says it's about providing individuals with self-satisfaction and self-importance by giving them the ability to achieve something on their own. The custom equipment designed by volunteers like Bob can grant a level of freedom to those in need, making a profound difference in their lives.



Highlights

In this year's annual report, we present a curated compilation of highlights that encapsulate the essence of our organisation's achievements and milestones. From significant milestones in growth to accomplishments, this collection serves as a testament to our dedication and success. Delve into the pages of our report to discover the noteworthy moments that have shaped our year, reflecting resilience and innovation. These highlights not only showcase our achievements but also underscore the unwavering commitment of our team and the impact we've made in the broader landscape.







Our Team

Freedom Solutions Australia employs 29 staff members across NSW and Victoria who work to deliver our strategic objectives.

At Freedom Solutions Australia, just under 250 volunteers dedicate their time, skills and energy to produce life-changing solutions. Our volunteers are our core workforce, and many have spent decades changing the lives of people living with disability.

Together the staff and volunteers have achieved our strategic milestones and gained positive results for our customers. We will continue to build upon these with our collective efforts focused on creating a sustainable future for Freedom Solutions Australia to continue our important work.



2023 Milestone Awards

5 Years

Terence Vickers
Dale Clingeffer
Michael Muir
Rod Savage
Gilbert Wignall
Ian Wilkinson
Ian Winch
David Mitchell
Mary Apps
Andrew Pettit

10 Years

Davy Lee
John Clayton
Dick Adams
Leonard Williams
Brian Middleton
Laurence King
Alan Grimes
Paul Lucas

15 Years

Rolf Edler
William Burns
Douglas Faram
Richard O'Keefe

20 Years

Geoff Winsley

25 Years

Dorothy Duncan
Andrew Marminc
Janet Richards

30 years

Marco Colli
Elizabeth Irwin

Our Freedom Solutions Board Members



Andrew Every
Chair
B Commerce, CA



Matthew Kayrooz
Bachelor of Science
(Mathematics)



Laura Mazin
Deputy Chair
GAICD



Sarah Olsen
B Information and
Communication
Technology (Hons)



Marianne Hammerton
BA (Hons), MA



Stan Proctor
Diploma, Electronics



Sarah Hilt
B Economics and Social
Sciences (Hons)



Ionela Manescu
MHSM, BSc Nursing, GAICD



Our Supporters



Platinum Sponsor



Club Grants

Bankstown District Sports Club

Batemans Bay Soldiers Club

Bathurst RSL

Birrong Sports Club

Burwood RSL Club

Cabra Vale Diggers Club

Castle Hill RSL Club

Chatswood RSL

Club Catalina

Dee Why RSL

Dooleys Lidcombe Catholic Club

Doyalson Wyee RSL

Earlwood-Bardwell Park RSL

East Cessnock Bowling Club

Greenacre Bowling Club

Hornsby RSL

Lithgow District Workers Club

Magpies Waitara

Miranda RSL

Orange Ex-Services Club

Panthers Bathurst

Parramatta Leagues Club

Rules Club Wagga Wagga

Ryde-Eastwood Leagues Club

South Sydney Junior Rugby League Club

Toronto Workers Club

Wenty Leagues Club

Wests Ashfield Leagues Club

Corporate Sponsors

Herbert Smith Freehills

Councils/Government

City of Casey

City of Parramatta

Community Building Partnership

Department of Social Services -

Parramatta Electorate

Information Linkages and Capacity Building

Victorian Department of Health and Human Services

Yarra City Council

Trusts & Foundations

Aged Persons Welfare Foundation
Australian Communities Foundation
Australian Lions Children's Mobility Foundation
Baxter Charitable Foundation
Cassandra Gantner Foundation
Cecilia Kilkeary Foundation
Chain Reaction Challenge Foundation
Dalwood-Wylie Foundation
Geelong Community Foundation
Gregory Patrick & Marie Dolores Farrell Foundation
Horizon Bank - Community Grants Program

IMB Bank Community Foundation
James N. Kirby Foundation
Kidz Fix Foundation
Mostyn Family Foundation
Nelson Alexander Foundation
Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group
Newcastle Permanent Charitable Foundation
The Anthony Costa Foundation
The Coca-Cola Australian Foundation
The Honda Foundation
The Pierce Armstrong Foundation
The Sentinel Foundation

University Partners

University of Sydney
University of NSW
Australian Catholic University (ACU)
RMIT University

Swinburne University
Melbourne University
Deakin University

Individual Donors

Abe Strbik	David Milston	Jose Rodriguez	Peter Lemon
Alison Shillington	David Pritchett	Justin Farley	Richard W Seton SC
Andrew Every	Dennis Eagar	Katrina Tull	Robin Yabsley
Barbara Beynon	Dennis Eagar	Kaye Nixon	Roger McArthur
Bill Koultis	Elwyn Shade	Lelani Pressley	Sahn Zanotti
Brian Beasley	Graham & Jan Tillott	Leo & Ann Browne	Sandra Corby
Brian Gill	Harry Carlin-Smith	Marianne Hammerton	Terry Newman
Chris Miller	Henri Walter Aram OAM, JP	Mark Howlett	Tony Ingold
Claire McCartney	John Fernon SC	Mr. Schiavello	Valerie Chick
David Barnes		Peter Barker	Wendy Beresford
David Kessler			

Financial Report

Consolidated Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income For the Year Ended 30 June 2023

		2023	2022
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue	3	3,790,516	4,184,728
Other income	3	809,504	(484,100)
Cost of goods sold		(841,277)	(860,771)
Employee costs		(2,221,811)	(2,491,014)
Grant expenses		(610,894)	(678,860)
IT expenses		(6,741)	(19,657)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(130,119)	(142,387)
Amortisation expense - Leases	12	(150,348)	(148,121)
Volunteer expenses		(1,057)	(334)
Travel expenses		(86,507)	(66,947)
Bad debt expense		(5,484)	(27,432)
Property expenses		(144,344)	(87,206)
Audit fees		(63,391)	(24,809)
Bank and Insurance expenses		(48,516)	(30,447)
Interest expense	4	(20,404)	(25,073)
Legal and professional fees		(205,247)	(165,715)
Office and administration expenses		(292,841)	(273,143)
Marketing and advertising expenses		(41,627)	(29,252)
Other staff expenses		(42,874)	(35,887)
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year		(313,462)	(1,406,427)
Other comprehensive income for the year			
Revaluation of land and buildings	10	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		(313,462)	(1,406,427)

The audited consolidated financial report for the year ended 30 June 2023 forms a separate report. The following is intended to provide an overview of the financial report and not intended to replace or modify the content of the separate audited consolidated financial report.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	1,408,805	1,581,489
Trade and other receivables	6	113,296	169,607
Inventories	7	386,740	429,916
Financial assets	11	10,770	58,340
Other assets	8	28,359	80,647
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,947,970	2,319,999
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Right-of-use assets	12	451,045	592,481
Property, plant and equipment	10	2,441,419	2,499,420
Intangibles	9	188,180	186,412
Financial assets	11	5,988,706	6,791,550
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		9,069,350	10,069,863
TOTAL ASSETS		11,017,320	12,389,862
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	12	160,426	146,780
Trade and other payables	13	152,849	227,037
Provisions	14	127,923	244,605
Other liabilities	15	806,715	1,538,606
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,247,913	2,157,028
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	12	338,173	492,412
Employee benefits	14	9,083	4,809
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		347,256	497,221
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,595,169	2,654,249
NET ASSETS		9,422,151	9,735,613
EQUITY			
Asset Revaluation Reserve		421,558	421,558
Committed Funds Reserve		336,463	-
Retained earnings		8,664,130	9,314,055
TOTAL EQUITY		9,422,151	9,735,613



FREEDOM SOLUTIONS | www.freedomsolutions.org.au

1300 663 243 | info@freedomsolutions.org.au

Postal address: Locked Bag 2008, Wentworthville, NSW 2145

Head Office: Unit 10, 185 Briens Road, Northmead, NSW 2152

VIC Office: 16 Harper Street, Abbotsford, VIC 3067

NDIS Provider #: 405 0000 978 | A.B.N. 98 645 874 479