OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AUSTRALIA LIMITED ACN 127 396 945 (COMPANY)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Date: Thursday, 20 November 2025

Time: Commencing at 12:00 pm AEST

Location: Zoom Conference

1 Welcome

The President welcomed attendees to the Occupational Therapy Australia Annual General Meeting (AGM) for 2025. The President declared the meeting open from 12.04pm.

1.1 Acknowledgement of Country

In keeping with OTA's commitment to reconciliation and respect, the President acknowledged the Traditional Custodians of the land the AGM took place, the Turrbal and Yuggera people. The President paid her respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people joining the meeting.

1.2 Apologies & Proxies

Quorum was achieved by 12:04 pm.

Attendees

Member Name	***Member Type***
Ailsa Leslie	Voting Member, OTA Staff member
Angel Ramadas	Non-Voting Member
Angela Berndt	Voting Member, OTA Honorary Member
Angus Buchanon	Voting Member
Carol McKinstry	Voting Member, Director
Caroline Reljich	Voting Member, OTA Staff member
Christopher Pearce	Voting Member, WA STAC Chair
Cindy Wieman	Voting Member
David Dawbin	Voting Member
David Wen	Voting Member, ACT STAC Chair
Elizabeth Knightbridge	Voting Member
Ellice Willcourt	Voting Member, SA STAC Chair

Ellie Christensen	Voting Member
Fiona O'Keffe	Voting Member
Hilarie Kohn	Voting Member
Himesha Vandebona	Non-Voting Member
Janice Mckeever	Voting Member, VIC STAC representative
Jenny Gribbon	Voting Member
Jessica Francis	Voting Member, NSW STAC Chair
Karen Brown	Voting Member, OTA Staff Member
Kerri Roberts	Voting Member, TAS STAC representative
Kim Walder	Voting Member, QLD STAC Chair
Kimberley Ackland	Voting Member
Leanne Healey	Voting Member, Director
Mandy Stanley	Voting Member
Marilyn Pattison	Voting Member, OTA Honorary Life member
Michelle Applegate	Voting Member
Michelle Bissett	Voting Member, Director
Michelle Oliver	Voting Member, OTA Staff member
Natasha Layton	Voting Member
Phil Valoppi	Voting Member
Priscilla Ennals	Voting Member, Director
Rachael Starbuck	Voting Member
Ralda Bourne	Voting Member, OTA Honorary Life Member
Sarah Hill	Voting Member
Tessa Newland	Non-Voting Member
Tracey Parnell	Voting Member
Trina Phuah	Voting Member

Staff Members (non Voting)

Samantha Hunter	Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
Lea Rawlings	Chief of Staff
Alexandra Reynolds	Chief Operating Officer
Damien Moloney	Special Projects Manager
Cynthia Noh	Finance and Risk Manager
Neelam Bhikha	Governance Coordinator, Minute-taker

Proxies

Merrolee Penman	Chairperson
Paul Marsh	Chairperson

2 Minutes

The President advised that in line with OTA's process the Minutes from this meeting will be placed on the website within three weeks and following this, will be presented to the Board for confirmation.

Apologies were received from Paul Marsh, Merrolee Penman, Karen Schokman, Nicole Walters, Lee Zeakrzewski and Vivienne Miller

3 President's Report

The President presented key highlights from the 2024-25 year for Occupational Therapy Australia. The year saw membership increase by 5.6% over the year, reflecting the confidence members place in their professional Association. Key highlights included:

- *Advocacy*
  Advocacy was once again a central focus for OTA throughout 2024–25. The Association's efforts during the 2025 Federal Election campaign gave the profession a clear and unified voice at a national level. The election toolkit also empowered members to advocate directly with candidates in their local electorates.

- *New brand Identity*
  This year saw the reveal of a new brand identity — a contemporary, confident, and bold look that reflects OTA's commitment to progress and pride in the profession. Accompanied by a redesigned website and member portal, this new brand experience has modernised the way members connect, engage, and access information.

- *Launch of six new Capability Frameworks*
  This was a major achievement for the year. These frameworks articulate the capabilities of therapists in different practice areas and how these evolve over time. Their development drew on the deep expertise of many members who contributed their knowledge to ensure the frameworks reflect the breadth and richness of occupational therapy practice in Australia. This work demonstrates OTA's role in defining, guiding, and strengthening the profession's standards for the future.

- *Governance activity*
  Behind the scenes, significant governance activity has taken place to ensure OTA continues to operate with integrity and accountability. The Board has reviewed and refreshed the Association's Constitution and bylaws, developed a new Member Code of Conduct, and revised the Code of Ethics. These updates ensure OTA remains contemporary, compliant, and aligned with the expectations of members and the community we serve.

- *National Conference*
  The 31st National Conference and Exhibition was an outstanding highlight of the year. More than 1,400 occupational therapists and exhibitors came together on the beautiful lands of the Kaurna people in Adelaide to learn, connect, and refresh. The energy and engagement at the event reflected the vitality of our profession and the importance of coming together to share knowledge and experience.

- *WFOT Delegates transition*
  We also saw changes in OTA's representation on the international stage. Our WFOT delegates transitioned during the year, with Emma George stepping into the lead delegate role and Adam Lo moving into the position of second alternate delegate. A thanks was extended to Adam for his contribution to the Board over the past four years, and for his continuing commitment to

strengthening occupational therapy across the Asia Pacific region through WFOT.

The President acknowledged and thanked Jack Smith, who stepped down from his director role in March, for his service and contributions to the Association.

A thanks was extended to all members for contributed to the work of OTA throughout the year. She also thanked the Board Directors, Committee members, and the State and Territory Advisory Council Chairs.

The work of The Australian Occupational Therapy Journal was also acknowledged, with thanks to editor Louise Gustafsson and her editorial team for continuing to curate and publish high-quality research.

Lastly, the President extended her thanks to the OTA staff, including CEO Samantha Hunter and the OTA leadership team.

4 CEO's Report

The CEO reflected on the year, with notable highlights including:

- *Advocacy as a major focus*
  Advocacy was a major focus in an unprecedented year of reform. OTA worked collaboratively with allied health partners and peak bodies, gaining strong traction across national reform agendas in the NDIS, aged care and workforce arenas. Through targeted submissions, direct engagement with government and the leadership of OTA's Chief OT and National Reference Groups, OTA have ensured that the voice of occupational therapy continues to be heard. OTA advocacy campaigns mobilised the OT community across Australia, creating a united front that is driving change through coordinated engagement and local action.

- *Enhancing the member experience and deepening engagement*
  A key focus this year has been enhancing the member experience and deepening engagement. The launch of *OTA Connect*, the new member portal, has created a single, seamless gateway for events, learning and community participation. Combined with a redesigned website, refreshed communications and expanding social media presence, OTA has transformed how members connect with each other and with their professional body. Membership grew steadily to almost 13,000, reflecting the confidence members place in OTA's leadership, advocacy and direction.

- *Strengthening practice standards and professional growth*
  Significant progress has also been made in strengthening practice standards and professional growth. OTA expanded its suite of national Capability Frameworks, released the updated Professional Supervision Framework, and launched the *Practice Essentials* learning programs – all designed to build capability, confidence and consistency across the profession. OTA's *CPD Empower* events, the Mental Health Forum and the record-breaking 2025 National Conference showcased the profession's appetite for connection, evidence and excellence.

- *Investment in supporting our members*
  This year, OTA recorded a planned deficit following seven successive years of growth. This was a deliberate investment in the systems, tools and programs that will support members for years to come. These reinvestments have strengthened our infrastructure, enhanced member experience and ensured OTA remains fit for the future – an organisation capable of delivering sustainable value and amplifying the profession's voice.

The CEO the extended her thanks to President Priscilla Ennals and the Board of Occupational Therapy Australia, as well as staff, members and partners.

5 Financial Report

The Vice-President, Finance presented the Financial report for the 2024-2025 financial year, noting that for the past seven years, OTA recorded a surplus. This strong financial foundation allowed OTA to build healthy reserves and confidently invest in key initiates that strengthened the Association, elevated the profession, and enhanced value for members.

This year was about stabilising, investing in, and strengthening our association for the future. Deliberate and strategic investments were made in several core areas; digital transformation, refreshed branding, improved member experience, and new professional development resources. This included the launch of new Capability Frameworks and Practice essentials learning modules, all designed to directly support members practice and professional growth. These investments resulted in a planned net deficit of $503,674 for the year, reflecting OTA's intentional decision to modernise, enhance value for members, and deliver greater long-term benefit to the profession.

OTA remains in a strong and secure financial position, with total assets of $12.28M, cash and short-term reserves of $9.12M. The Operational Liquidity Ratio sits at 3.0.

This reflects sound financial stewardship and ensures we can comfortably meet short-term obligations while continuing to invest in initiatives that deliver value to members. Our disciplined approach to financial management means that, even with a planned deficit, OTA remains stable and future ready.

In the year ahead, OTA will continue to balance financial stability with thoughtful investment in areas that strengthen our profession, amplify our advocacy, and improve the support and resources available to members.

6 Questions on Presented Reports

The CEO responded to the following questions raised by members prior to the AGM.

1. *The Annual Report shows our paid membership has increased by 5.6%, equivalent to 32% of the registered occupational therapists in Australia. What campaigns and offerings are in place or are planned to improve this market share?*

Member acquisition and retention are an essential component of a thriving association. OTA continues to invest and offer new member benefits like the Employee Assistance Program and Notification Navigator service. This year a new member portal, updated functionality, new website and suite of capability frameworks and programs were launched.

The benchmark across the association sector is approx. 30% and OTA will always strive to improve on this benchmark. The OT workforce is the fastest growing allied health profession in the country. An increase of over 42% of OT's has occurred over the past five years. Over this period the membership cost for a full time member of the association has only increased by 2%.

2. *The summary of the professional practice advice - a valued member service is a highlight of the annual report. How often is this practice support being utilised and are these paid employees?*

OTA practice advisors are paid employees of OTA. There is a team of five Practice Advisors as well as a Head of Professional Practice and a Chief OT representing the association. Our Practice advisors respond to members practice enquiries via phone and mail. They provide a range of advice including practice queries, regulatory guidance and support for OTs through the Notification Navigator service. This team also lead the development of the capability frameworks, develop resources and provide representation and expertise to shape Australia's health, disability and aged care systems.

3. *The OT Exchange is a fantastic event to celebrate and showcase what it is we do best, providing occupational therapy services to people and demonstrating innovation. What can be done to enable more therapists to connect with this event and consider presenting or attending to highlight what it is that OTs do?*

The next OT Exchange is being held in 2026 in June in Brisbane, and is the third time the OT Exchange will be held. OTA are continually looking to improve and increase the knowledge around the opportunities with this event. OTA are including messaging around Ideas to Impact, largest clinical conference and designing the program with presentations and workshop styles to give insights into what is current and what works in clinical practice. OTA's marketing team have a robust plan in place to help this event stand alone as the clinical conference for all OTs and as a true exchange of ideas and knowledge.

4. *It is noted that in the last couple of years, OTA has been more visible in the media and been a louder voice in the issues concerning the profession. Are we likely to see this continue?*

During the 24/25 period, OTA have continued to invest in developing our public profile and a trusted source for the media to seek credible content. During this time OTA have further elevated our positioning with proactive media engagement securing more than 330 media mentions across almost 200 outlets reaching an estimated 6.4 million people.

Open Question Time

There were no further questions.

7 Ratification of Appointment of Auditor

The President informed members that, as is customary each year, OTA seeks members' support to ratify the appointment of our Auditors.

Resolution: That iaudit suite pty ltd are ratified as the Auditor of Occupational Therapy Australia Limited.

The resolution passed unanimously.

The President thanked the members for passing the resolution.

9 Announcement of Board

The Board appointments were overseen by the Nominations Committee and the CEO thanked Nominations Committee members for their work.

Members were informed that the following Directors have been reappointed to the Board:

- Carol McKinstry
- Joanna Murray

And announced a newly appointed Director

- Christopher Pearce

The following Directors remain on the Board**:**

- Priscilla Ennals
- Leanne Healey
- Emma George
- Caleb Rixon
- Alex Splitt

WFOT Delegate announcement

The President announced the election of Kim Walder as first alternate WFOT delegate, and congratulated her. Kim joins Emma George as Delegate, and Adam Lo as second alternate delegate.

8.2 Thank you to outgoing directors

The President extended her thanks and gratitude to outgoing directors:

- Michelle Bissett
- Alice Fung
- Jack Smith

Michelle Bissett has been a longstanding Board Director since 2017 and has completed four terms over 8 years. Michelle was the VP Finance for many of those years overseeing the growth and financial stability of the association. Michelle has provided exceptional stewardship, leadership and rigour to guide the association through rapid periods of change and growth. OTA are very grateful for her tenure and commitment to the association and profession.

The President thanked Alice Fung and Jack Smith for their terms as Directors and participation in Finance Risk and Audit committee and Nominations respectively.

Announcements

The appointment of Professor Angus Buchanan as the new Editor in Chief of the Australian Occupational Therapy Australia Journal, was announced.

Professor Buchanan brings more than 40 years of experience in practice, research and leadership, with a lifelong commitment to promoting inclusion and advancing the rights of people with disabilities.

A thanks was also extended to Professor Louise Gustafsson, who will step down shortly after five years of exceptional leadership and contribution to the journal.

10 Final Statements

The President expressed her gratitude to members, the CEO and team at OTA.

11 Close of Meeting

The President declared the meeting closed at 12:33 pm.