



ARZA Australia

Annual Report

July 2017 – June 2018

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President's Report

While it is true to say that the past year has been a difficult one for ARZA Australia, it has had some highlights and the organisation has continued to work on its three “core” activities as the Political Zionist arm of the Progressive movement in Australia. The first activity has been as Australia’s Progressive representatives in the World Zionist Congress (WZC); the second our representation in the Zionist Federation of Australia (ZFA); and the third to promote and inform Progressive congregations in Australia about relevant events and activities in Israel, particularly with regard to religious pluralism and equality.

Total reliance on the work of volunteers with regard to the administration and operation of the organisation created challenges and undoubtedly diminished the organisation’s output. This lack became particularly clear with regard to the use of social media and resulted in a decision to employ a young person on a part-time basis to distribute relevant information to our members and to the wider community. We were especially delighted to employ Bec Szabo in this role, as she has been able to combine it with her work as a volunteer in Netzer Australia. We are hopeful that this move will increase our output and the ability to share our important message with the community.

Whether it is a result of this diminished presence or due to other priorities in the congregations, the number of paid members has dropped significantly during the past year. While this has had a significant and negative impact on the finances of the organisation, even more importantly it threatens our ability to elect delegates to attend the World Zionist Congress as Australian delegates. It has also meant that our ability to undertake additional activities and promotions has been restricted, particularly within the UPJ-affiliated congregations.

It is hoped that the visit in May by Rabbi Lea Muhlstein, the then recently elected President of our world body, stimulated understanding and support for our work, especially among the leadership of the UPJ. Consequently it is hoped that some new recruits will join the leadership of the organisation over the coming weeks and prepare to take on key leadership roles in the near future.

Regarding the WZC, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of the role that ARZA plays as a member of ARZENU other than to say that we are part of the largest coalition in the WZO and we continue to succeed with issues such as the acceptance of a wide range of Resolutions to promote democracy and pluralism in Israel; to combat cronyism and corruption in the National organisations in Israel; and to combat discrimination and anti-democratic measures within the WZO, which is the Parliament of the Jewish People.

As previously reported, the various ‘backflips’ and other changes in the behaviour and policies of the WZO and the Israeli Government subsequent to the approval of these resolutions at Congress is a source of immense frustration. However, it is also an important reminder that we, and our colleagues in IRAC, the IMPJ, as well as ARZENU and the WUPJ, must maintain our presence and strength in this institution if we are to ever achieve religious pluralism in Israel and the full recognition of Progressive Judaism around the world.

I was reminded of this most strongly when, as a speaker and representative of ARZA Australia, I attended the biennial conference of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism on Kibbutz Shefayim at the beginning of June. I cannot overstate the amount of appreciation, respect and warmth that was expressed for the Australian movement. They recognise that the support of Australian Progressive Jews, through the work of ARZA, the UIA Progressive Trust and the Australian donors who established the Legal Action Centre for Olim, has been crucially responsible for the development and current growth of the Progressive movement in Israel today. Any person visiting Israel should take the opportunity to visit the IMPJ and to witness first hand how the movement is growing and, is working to make Israel the inclusive and democratic society that we all believe in.

Locally, for understandable and historic reasons, the ZFA supports every decision of the Government of Israel. However, when we don't agree we take the opportunity to express our concern over decisions that the Government makes that are anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian. Our initial approach is always to inform the ZFA of these issues and to seek their support, having them speak on these issues on behalf of the entire community.

In conclusion I can only repeat our previous requests to the UPJ leadership and the Moetzah:

- **Members** – we can only “keep “them” honest” – both here and in Israel - from a position of strength. We need your help to make sure that every member of your congregation over the age of 18 is a member of ARZA and that the default position of your congregation is that, unless they consciously “opt out”, they will be a paid member of ARZA.
- **ARZA Shabbat** – plan a Shabbat where one of our senior representatives can address your congregation;
- Use and acknowledge the **educational material** that we distribute from the Jewish Agency and WZO;
- Consider sharing **Scholar-in-residence** visits with us – including a potential visit by a key person during 2019;
- Appoint an ARZA liaison person to ensure that the information your members receive comes from you rather than “somebody” in Sydney or Melbourne.
- Also, please consider recruiting people for our Executive committee. We would be delighted to have a representative from each congregation.

Finally, please consider how **you** can provide “help in kind” as a volunteer to support the work of ARZA.

With your support; plus the continued enthusiasm of the current members of the Committee, together with some increased support from the UPJ congregations, it is my belief that we can continue to grow in number and in the influence that we bring to the WZC; to the Zionist Federation of Australia; and in making Progressive Judaism stronger.

Steve Denenberg
ARZA Australia President

Treasurer's Report

This report covers the financial year July 2017 to June 2018. The financial summary is available on the ARZA website and in hard copy at this AGM. It shows a deficit for the year of \$4,856 against a budgeted deficit of \$4,435 so we were close to budget. This not necessarily a good result. Last year we had a surplus of \$15,781 although there were some unusual circumstances helping to achieve this.

The real questions are why did we budget for a deficit and what is the outlook for the next year? The overall structure of ARZA's finances is simple. Our members pay a membership fee of \$18 per year each, up from \$10 per year two years ago. There is no other appreciable source of income apart from a small grant, around \$2,400, which we usually get from ARZENU.

Our income is used mainly to fund our core activity, which is to represent the Australian Progressive view at the World Zionist Congress including the Va'ad Hapoel meetings which are held each year in Israel. Our representative(s) must attend in person. This is usually, and rightly, our major cost.

Our next most significant cost is to support our youth movement, Netzer, and to be able to give grants to young people who apply to assist their studies and their Jewish leadership development. This support is in line with ARZA's charter and we take it seriously. In 2018 it was our biggest expense item, just over \$10,000.

Our charter encourages us to build relationships with Israel by funding visits from Zionist leaders, such as that undertaken by Rabbi Lea Muhlstein this year. These visits teach and inspire and build valuable links, particularly for our young people. This visit was funded by an extraordinary allocation from the WZO but any future events of this nature will require local funding.

We do have administrative costs, the major one being designing and operating our membership data base, web site, and email system, and this is running at around \$5,000 per year. We outsource bookkeeping at the modest cost of \$550 per year.

Until 2 years ago, ARZA was administered as part of the UPJ and office running costs were absorbed by the UPJ which has a small and very efficient paid staff. Following a strategic review by the UPJ it was decided that ARZA should be made separate to run its own affairs. We have been doing that with no paid staff and only a small volunteer group. During this year we felt the necessity to use social media better and we employed Bec Szabo for one day a week to set up more effective communications with our members and the wider community.

ARZA now has to manage the collection of its own membership fees. Previously it relied on the goodwill of the UPJ member synagogues to collect ARZA fees by adding them their own membership invoices. As the synagogues all have reliable systems the addition of ARZA to their invoices does add some work but is not, for most synagogues, a significant burden. We are, of course, most appreciative of this co-operation with the 10 synagogues who support us in this way. The reality is that an organisation as small as ARZA, and without ongoing paid staff, cannot build and manage its own independent membership system.

Therefore, ARZA's fee income is entirely dependant on the enthusiasm and support of the synagogues. This has varied widely over the years. From a peak of nearly \$50,000 11 years ago, in 2007, we have reached the trough of \$17,500 in 2018. At this rate ARZA will not be able to function for many more years. We need a stable income of around \$35,000 to achieve our goals.

However, as our President has mentioned, the importance of our membership is not primarily financial. Our membership numbers directly give us our voting strength when matters are debated at the World Zionist Congress. Until recently we have had significantly more members than other organisations, and hence a strong voice backed by our numbers. If our numbers fall our influence falls accordingly. Currently our voting rights are based on a membership of around 3,000, the number when voting rights were last allocated. But at present a fee income of \$17,500 indicates around 970 financial members. Our email list of 1400 indicates perhaps 2000 people (many emails go to one address where there are probably 2 people) and we are building a Facebook following of around 200 and a smaller number on Instagram.

It should be possible to re-build the membership numbers and this must be the priority of the incoming president and committee. The active support of the synagogues, from the bimah, their newsletters, and their membership invoicing systems, is vital. If we don't achieve this our voting strength and ability to fulfil our charter is in jeopardy.

Because of the importance of the membership issue I have not remarked in any detail on the financial results. I am, of course, happy to take any questions on the figures, here at this meeting or later. Suffice it to say that we are still in a sound position with cash reserves of around \$67,000. But this will not last for many more years and should not be dissipated by a dwindling membership. We achieved a minimum loss result in 2018 by cutting back on our core activities – no representation in Israel at WZO meetings, and reducing our grants. Our only major activity was Rabbi Muhlstein's visit.

Our accounts are not audited as it is not mandatory at our size, but we do ask former UPJ President and Treasurer David Robinson to conduct an independent review. It is a great help to us. His letter of review is attached to these documents on our website. I would like to thank David most sincerely for his great support over many years, for his technical support and wise counsel and his many hours of pro-bono work. He has indicated, however, that he will not be able to continue in this role.

My own role as Treasurer must also be filled. Our constitution limits the term of treasurer to 4 years, which I reached a year ago. I have continued for another year at the request of the Board but this is not desirable for the organisation and I must step down at this meeting. I will, of course, be pleased to assist the new incumbent in any way I can with a comprehensive hand-over.

Philip Levy
ARZA Australia Treasurer

Statement of Financial Performance

ARZA AUSTRALIA INC		
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE		
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018		
	2018	2017
	\$	\$
INCOME	19,996	37,852
Affiliation fees received	17,347	35,259
ARZENU reimbursements	2,325	2,445
Donations received	250	100
Interest received	73	47
Less EXPENDITURE	24,851	22,071
Accounting Fees	550	550
Bank Fees	195	366
Consumer Affairs Fee	57	0
Wages	3,400	
Superannuation	323	
Affiliation Fees	3,169	1,575
Grants	10,050	6,000
Website	5,084	4,065
Office costs	1,012	1,342
Administration	0	857
Advertising & Marketing	664	751
Travel & Conferences	347	6,500
Other expenses		65
NET (LOSS)/ INCOME for the year	(4,856)	15,781
Accumulated Income at beginning of year	72,672	56,892
ACCUMULATED INCOME at end of year	<u>67,816</u>	<u>72,673</u>

ARZA AUSTRALIA INC		
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION		
AS AT 30 JUNE 2018		
	2018	2017
	\$	\$
CAPITAL EMPLOYED		
Accumulated Funds	67,816	72,672
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cheque accounts	68,044	72,672
Debtors	0	0
	<u>68,044</u>	<u>72,672</u>
Less CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Superannuation	228	0
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u>67,816</u>	<u>72,672</u>

Audit Report to the members of ARZA AUSTRALIA INC

I have reviewed the financial report on pages 4-5. The financial report provides information about the past financial performances of ARZA AUSTRALIA INC and its financial position as at 30 June 2018.

Committees' Responsibility

The Committee is responsible for the preparation of a financial report that fairly reflects the financial position of ARZA AUSTRALIA INC at 30 June 2018 and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date.

Reviewer's Responsibility

It is my responsibility to express an independent opinion on the financial report presented by the Committee and report on my opinion to you.

Basis of opinion

A review includes examining, on a test basis, evidence relevant to the amount and disclosures in the financial report. I conducted my review in accordance with the relevant Standards except that my work was limited as explained below. I planned and performed my review so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to obtain reasonable assurance that the financial report is free from material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial report. Other than in my capacity as Reviewer, I have no relationship with, or interest in, ARZA AUSTRALIA INC.

Qualified opinion

As is common with many "not for profit" entities, control over revenues from fundraising, donations and other revenue sources prior to recording, is limited. Accordingly, there are no practical procedures to determine the effect of this limited control. In this respect alone I have not obtained all the information and explanations that I have required. In my opinion, except for adjustments that might have found to be necessary had I been able to obtain sufficient evidence concerning fundraising, donations and other revenue sources, the financial report on pages 4-5 fairly reflects the results of operations for the year ended on that date. My audit report was completed on 14 October 2018 and my qualified opinion is expressed at that date.



David Robinson ACA

Auckland

Communications Officer's Report

This year, ARZA Australia employed me as their Communications Officer. This position largely involves database management and community engagement.

The majority of the first half of this year was spent learning the ropes of ARZA Australia and the various systems that ARZA Australia uses to maintain its database and communicate to its members. Various different challenges arose throughout this year that caused some setbacks, namely the lack of information about each of our members on the membership database. For instance, the congregation that approximately 65% of our members belong to is unknown. This is incredibly important information as it allows us to know which synagogues have a lot of ARZA Australia members and which do not. With this information, we would be able to target ARZA Australia advertising and focus our community engagement at specific congregations. A survey was sent out to the entire database with the intention of finding out this information. Unfortunately, we only received around 65 responses.

In addition to managing the database, ARZA Australia's social media platforms have been a focus this year. On our Facebook page, we have built a following of around 200 people. On average, on each Facebook post made this year, we have a reach of approximately 50 people. An ARZA Australia Instagram page was also created and currently has a following of 65. ARZA Australia's social media presence has definitely been showing steady growth this year. Social media is a quick and effective way to reach our community and I hope to make even more use out of this platform in the future.

This year has definitely laid out much of the ground work for the future improvement of ARZA Australia's communications and community engagement. Looking ahead to next year, I think that things like utilising the various different synagogue newsletters and working more closely with Netzer Australia to put on community-based events will really broaden ARZA Australia's reach. Furthermore, I think that some more planned PR aims and goals would assist ARZA Australia's community engagement to have a more structured direction.

Bec Szabo

ARZA Australia Communications Officer

ARZENU Message

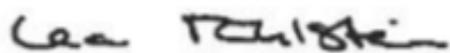
To the members of ARZA Australia,

It was my privilege earlier this year to be able to visit Sydney and Melbourne to get to know the progressive Jewish community in Australia a little better. I received an incredibly warm welcome from all the communities that I had a chance to visit and it was wonderful to see the high level of Zionist commitment amongst all the members of congregations. I hope that in the next year this Zionist commitment will translate in more individuals signing up for ARZA membership as this is crucial to ensuring that our voice in Israel is heard.

I was also deeply impressed by my encounter with the Netzer groups in Sydney and Melbourne, which gave me a sense of great hope for the future of ARZA Australia. This feeling was further strengthened last week during the meetings of the Va'ad Hapo'el in Israel, which were attended by four outstanding young adults from Netzer. I hope that as you look toward the new year, you will find ways of harnessing the enthusiasm that this next generation brings to the work of Zionism.

Finally, I would like to thank the leadership of ARZA Australia, in particular Steve Denenberg, for the tireless work of maintaining the organization throughout the year. Arzenu Olami is only ever as strong as its constituent organisations and so we pray: may you grow from strength to strength!

B'shalom,



Rabbi Lea Mühlstein



Zionist Federation of Australia Message

Dr Danny Lamm AM – ZFA President

It is with great pleasure that I extend warm greetings on behalf of the Zionist Federation of Australia to the Australian Reform Zionist Association. ARZA plays an important role in the Australian Jewish community, advocating for and voicing the opinions of Reform movement in Australia. The relationship between the ZFA and its affiliates is an important one and we applaud ARZA for always joining the conversation and advocating its perspective.

I commend ARZA President Steve Denenberg and the ARZA team on their efforts in the last year. I look forward to continued cooperation between the ZFA and ARZA. We wish the ARZA much success for the coming year and let us hope that the coming year brings peace and continued prosperity in the State of Israel and strengthening of the Jewish community in Australia.

Dr Danny Lamm AM

PRESIDENT



THE
NETZER
APPEAL

NETZER **40**
SINCE 1979

Netzer Report

In 2019, Netzer Australia will be turning 40 years old. We're excited to be a part of welcoming in this milestone as well as working together to support *another* 40 years of Progressive Jewish youth leadership in our community. Netzer Australia is a growing movement. This year, we have had the largest Winter and Summer camps in four years with 513 chanichim (*participants*) coming on camps in 2018.

The largest representation of synagogue affiliation on camps are Temple Beth Israel in Melbourne and North Shore Temple Emanuel in Sydney, each making up around 20% of attendance on Summer and Winter camps. 11% of our total chanichim this Summer camp season were from smaller communities, an increase from 9% in 2017. 46 chanichim out of 513 chanichim in 2018 live in these communities. Netzer is thankful for the ongoing support from the Progressive community around Australia who have helped us go from strength to strength. We're grateful for the meaningful partnership we have with ARZA and look forward to many more years of working together.

Following the WUPJ Youth Committee decision to 'pause' Shnat Netzer in 2019, we have been working with the WUPJ Youth Committee, Netzer Olami staff and closely with our communities in Australia to build an alternative Shnat program (with Maslul Ishi as our program provider) for 2019.

The need for subsidies is only growing as Netzer grows. In 2017, Netzer required more than \$38 000 in camp and Shnat subsidies for our chanichim. As a part of the Netzer Appeal (our main fundraising campaign), we aim to raise \$40 000 by the end of this year. This will mark 40 thousand dollars raised for 40 years of Netzer Australia.

Jess Harrison
Netzer Federal Mazkira (Chairperson)

Get in contact with ARZA Australia:



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www.arza.org.au



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