



## Annual Report 2006 - 2007

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## Introduction

Our vision is *“A world where people with disability live full, independent lives of their own choosing”*. We work to support people with disability and people with age related disability, their families, carers and other supporters to self advocate, enabling them to make informed decisions about matters of importance to them. We do this by providing a range of free information services and products. Using our specialist expertise, we source information and then filter, interpret and disseminate it on request, through a variety of methods for the benefit of our service users. We also provide "soft" information that is not specifically about a service but can assist people with disability to make informed choices about their daily living.

IDEAS is widely recognised in New South Wales as the leading Information provider in our field.

## ☐ Our Values & Principles

We believe the following are intrinsic to IDEAS Inc and everything we do:

- Social Justice
- Consultation
- Integrity
- Innovation

## ☐ Our Vision

A world where people with disability live full, independent lives of their own choosing.

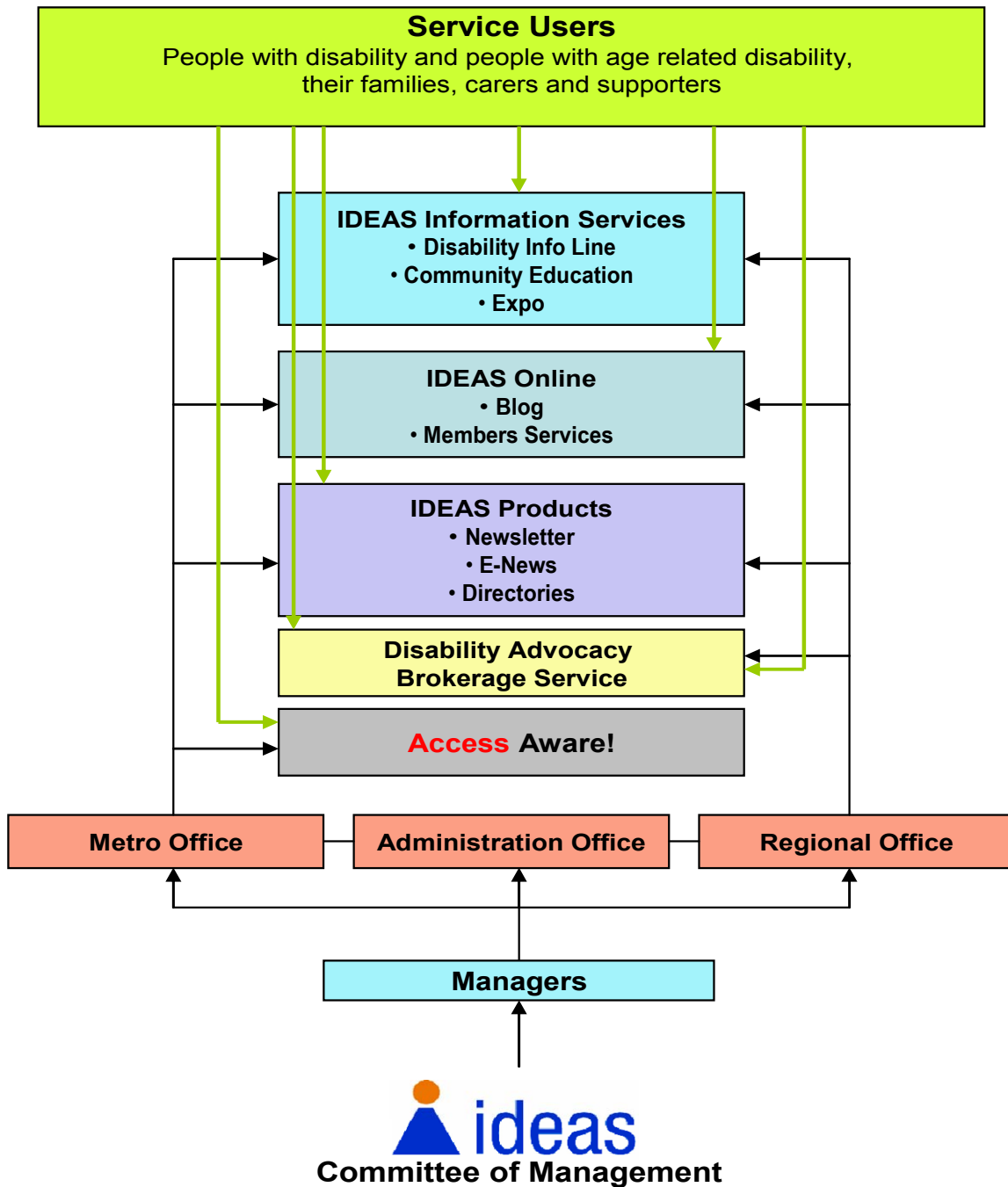
## ☐ Our Mission

To provide high quality accessible and relevant information and community awareness services about disability in partnership with people with disability and their supporters.

## ☐ Our Strategic Objects

- To be the leading disability information service provider promoting and developing self advocacy for people with disability, their families and carers.
- To provide information services to support systemic and group advocacy for people with disability, their families and carers.
- To educate the community about disability.
- To enhance the quality and relevance of our service provision to people with disability, their families and carers.

## Organisational Flow Chart



## ☐ Chairpersons' Reports

This is the first Annual Report of the new association known as Information on Disability Education Awareness Services Inc. which is the result of the merger of two former associations, DIRC (NSW) Inc and Information on Disability Equipment Access Services Inc. The merger officially took place on the 20 February 2007, therefore for the purposes of reporting on the 2006—2007 financial year, reports from the Chairpersons from the two former associations are included before the Chairperson of the “new” IDEAS.

### ☐ DIRC (NSW) Inc. 1 July 2006 to February 2007



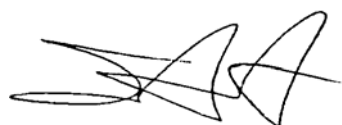
Following the passing of a special resolution at last year's AGM the membership of DIRC (NSW) Inc endorsed the proposed amalgamation of DIRC with IDEAS Inc. The DIRC Management Committee worked closely with the IDEAS Management Committee in the early months of 2007 to ensure that the amalgamation process was undertaken without any disruption to the provision of our services to people with disability and their carers. The amalgamation was finally completed in February 2007 and a new Management Committee elected with members drawn equally from DIRC and IDEAS. In addition, all statutory requirements and financial obligations arising from the merger were met through the efforts of all of those involved.

On behalf of the former DIRC (NSW) Inc Management Committee I would like to pay tribute to the commitment and drive of our Manager Ken Thomson who worked tirelessly with Diana Palmer the Manager of IDEAS to prepare for and implement all the changes required for the amalgamation to be effected. I would also like to thank Jill Otter, Information Officer for her hard work in keeping the telephone lines open

throughout the transition period and for her support for the Amalgamation.

Finally I would like to acknowledge the dedication of the DIRC Management Committee members, particularly Tess Protey who was a founder member of DIRC and who served the organisation faithfully through all its ups and downs for over 15 years. Sturt Duncan and Rachel Spencer, both Management Committee members for many years worked right up until the end to ensure that the transition to the new IDEAS was successful. I feel privileged to have worked with such capable and committed people over the past 4 years.

Jackie Campisi and Kim Meddows, former members of the DIRC Management Committee volunteered to serve on the new IDEAS Inc Management Committee, bringing a wealth of skills and experience to developing the new organisation. We are all looking forward to building a state-wide disability information service that will continue the legacy left by DIRC (NSW) Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jan Hatch', with a stylized, overlapping loop structure.

**Jan Hatch**  
Chairperson  
DIRC (NSW) Inc

Information on Disability Equipment Access Services Inc.

1 July 2006 to February 2007



2006/2007 represents a significant and very exciting era with respect to the provision of information services for people with disabilities, their loved ones, carers and service providers. The commitment of DIRC and IDEAS to enhance the scope of disability information services has been revealed as we have now joined to form the new IDEAS.

There has been considerable effort and hard work by both DIRC and IDEAS to achieve this goal and as such we can all reflect over the achievements with a sense of pride. I'd like to take this opportunity to say a very sincere well done to both Diana and Ken for their efforts, time and hard work in ensuring the success in forming the new IDEAS.

The journey hasn't been easy for staff at both organisations with general uncertainty over funding and a special note of appreciation is paid to them for their continued hard work and commitment to duties.

Thank you to Diana, staff at I.D.E.A.S and members of the committee for your support over in this last year and my best wishes to the new IDEAS.



**Colin Johnstone**  
Chairperson  
I.D.E.A.S. Inc.

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☐ IDEAS Inc. February 2007 to June 2007



It is with a great deal of pride that I present this report.

This is the first Chairman's Report for "new" IDEAS – Information on Disability & Education Awareness Services which is the result of the successful merger of "old" IDEAS – Information on Disability & Equipment Access Services and (DIRC) NSW Inc.

The notion of merging developed out of a recognition by both organizations that changing technologies offered a great opportunity to improve the provision of information services to our clients. Associated with this was also the opportunity to introduce efficiencies of scale to the operations of our organization by removing administrative and technical duplication. This realization coincided with the reform process planned by NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) to ensure the overall provision of services under their umbrella was as effective and efficient as it could be.

It is no secret that the planning involved in our merger and the development of the reform process have both, by necessity, been longwinded.

After protracted discussions "old" IDEAS and DIRC developed the proposal of a single entity to service the needs of both organizations' existing client bases being the Sydney metropolitan area and southern and south western regional New South Wales. Further, it was envisaged that utilizing technology would allow the new entity to develop into the principal information service provider to the state.

This proposition was put to and, accepted by, DADHC as being consistent with their goals.

“New” IDEAS officially came into being on 20 February 2007 and since that time our small team of dedicated staff have worked tirelessly to ensure the smoothest possible transition to a single entity.

Administratively it has been a mammoth task to wind up the operations of our predecessor organizations and prepare their books for audit whilst establishing the infrastructure of the new organization. I would like to thank both our Regional and Metro Managers and our Administration Officer for their efforts in this regard.

It is a credit to our “front line” staff that during this transitional period our service provision was able to be maintained across both offices with only a negligible impact being observed. I would like to acknowledge their essential contribution in meeting our clients’ needs and thank them for that contribution.

The success of the start up of the new entity is in no small part due to the diligence shown by the Management Committees of the parent organizations in developing the plan to merge. Very early in our discussions a working party comprising members of both Committees was formed to plan and prioritize the steps necessary to achieve our goal.

Going forward from this work it was a relatively easy task for the new Management Committee to develop Vision and Mission Statements, a short term Implementation Plan and a longer term Strategic Plan. I would like to acknowledge the effort and commitment of the members of the former Management Committees which has enabled us to seamlessly introduce the new structure.

I also wish to congratulate the Management Committee of IDEAS for the manner in which they have very quickly developed into a unified team working towards a common goal. Our members bring a diverse

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spread on skills and an impressive depth of experience both in commercial fields and within the disability sector.

The acceptance of our proposition by DADHC was essential for it to become reality and I would like to thank the Director General and the departmental staff involved for giving us the opportunity to enunciate our plan and then critically analyzing it prior to making any decision. We can only assume that analysis revealed the merit in our proposal which led to the approval we needed to proceed.

Through all this has been the unswerving leadership of Diana Palmer and Ken Thomson the professional Managers of the preceding services and now our Regional and Metro Managers respectively. Their input in the success of establishing the “new’ IDEAS cannot be overstated. In what must have been times of uncertainty for them in relation to their own careers they selflessly drove the merger concept, advising and guiding their Committees, reassuring and encouraging staff to embrace the change and negotiating the proposal through the corridors of DADHC. My appreciation of their contribution is immense.

There are two projects that are of particular interest going forward.

One is the ongoing development of a database of accessible premises which will ultimately be an income generating package available to consumers via website access. This project, titled Access Aware, is a continuation of work begun by DIRC in collaboration with Data Diction, a software company with a strong commitment to the community. The database is currently being compiled across two local government areas with those local government bodies being partners in the project.

I would like to extend thanks to Rod Sharples from Data Diction as our Community Business Partner for the extensive and generous support he has given this project and the organisation overall.

The second initiative was developed to address a need in the rural communities centred around Young and Goulburn areas of NSW. At the request of DADHC we have developed and commenced a brokerage service for the provision of advocacy to people with disability living in the target area. The contract is for one year and it is not inconceivable that, should it prove successful, it could be a model to further develop for other such initiatives.

Given our tender age it is difficult to cite specific achievements and advances in actual service delivery for the four month period ending 30 June 2007. I am confident however that the next twelve months will see significant changes in the way we offer our services and greater utilization of those services and this will be achieved as clients and potential clients become aware of IDEAS through promotion, referral and website access.

Just as we have met challenges in the past we will meet many in the future and just as surely as we have addressed those challenges in the past we will address those still to come. I believe IDEAS has the structure, management and staff to build on the foundations which have resulted from the restructure and look forward with anticipation to the next twelve months.



**Robert Gilholme**  
Chairperson  
IDEAS Inc

## ☐ Treasurer's Reports

IDEAS – Information on Disability Education and Awareness Services Incorporated became incorporated on 20 February 2007 and this report covers the period from then until the end of the financial year, being 30 June 2007.

Obviously there is no previous year data which can be used for comparative purposes so my comments shall be addressing only the material figures in the financial statements in the accompanying IDEAS Financial Report.

## ☐ Income

Total income for the little over four months the enterprise was operating was \$129K. The major components were:

|                             |        |
|-----------------------------|--------|
| DADHC Funding               | \$118K |
| Access Aware Project Income | \$ 7K  |
| Newsletter Subscriptions    | \$ 4K  |

It is worth noting the Access Aware income was from contributions from two of the projects contributors, the Council of the City of Sydney and Wagga Wagga City Council.

## ☐ Expenses

Total expenses in the period were \$173K giving a Net Loss from Operating Activities of \$(44)K. The material expenses were:

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Employee Related Expenses | \$ 88K |
| Consultants Fees          | \$ 34K |
| Repairs & Maintenance     | \$ 12K |

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Rents                     | \$ 6K  |
| Travel, Accommodation etc | \$ 6K  |
| Postage                   | \$ 5K  |
| Depreciation Charges      | \$ 4K  |
| Telephones etc            | \$ 4K  |
| Combined Other Expenses   | \$ 14K |

I believe there are only two matters which need to be expanded on from the above information.

The Consultants Fees comprise mainly the charges of developing a new website for IDEAS and this work, which is substantially completed, represents a one off charge against the organisation with future charges in this category being more in line with ongoing maintenance of the website.

In relation to the stated loss of \$(44)K it should be noted that this is entirely attributable to the timing of the receipt of a specific grant associated with the website upgrade. An amount of \$45K was received prior to 20 February 2007 for this work and is therefore accounted for in the books of IDEAS – Information on Disability Equipment Access Services and, as detailed above, the expenditure was incurred after that date and therefore recorded in the books of the new organization. On amalgamation the effects are negated and the result is reflected in the Accumulated Surplus in the Balance Sheet.

### Balance Sheet

The Balance Sheet indicates a strong financial position for the organisation as at 30 June 2007.

The net worth of assets (\$304K) in excess of liabilities (\$169K) at balance day is \$135K with the actual cash component of the assets being \$258K. The net value of Plant and Equipment is \$40K.

The total liabilities include full provision for staff entitlements, currently valued at \$59K, and an amount of \$87K which represents grant funding received in advance.

In closing I would like to thank our Administration Officer, Michelle Post and our two Managers, Diana and Ken, for their efforts in preparing both the monthly financial reports to the Committee and these annual statements. With the amalgamation this process has been magnified three-fold and yet they have managed to maintain the information flow with a minimum of disruption. I would also like to thank our Auditor, Stephen Walker, and his staff for their input into the 2007 Financial Statements.

I thank you for your attention and invite any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Fallon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher Fallon  
Treasurer  
IDEAS Inc

## ■ **Committee of Management February to June 2007**

The inaugural Committee of Management meeting of IDEAS (Information on Disability Education Awareness Services) Incorporated was held on Tuesday 13 February 2007. There are four representatives from each of the previous two organisations that amalgamated to become the new organisation.

### **Executive Committee Members**

|               |                  |
|---------------|------------------|
| Bob Gilholme  | Chairperson      |
| Col Johnstone | Vice Chairperson |
| Jan Hatch     | Secretary        |
| Chris Fallon  | Treasurer        |

### **Ordinary Committee Members**

Wendy Bowles  
Jackie Campisi  
Wendy Mason  
Kim Meddows

## ■ Staff and Volunteers

On the 20 February 2007, staff and their benefits from DIRC NSW Inc. and IDEAS - Information on Disability Equipment Access Services Inc. transferred over into the new amalgamated organisation.

### **Administration Office (Tumut)**

Michelle Post                      Administration Officer

### **Regional Office (Tumut)**

Diana Palmer                      Regional Manager

Mia Toppin                        Communications Officer

Helen Bullough                Information Officer

Sue Gorman                      Community Education Officer

### **Metro Office (Surry Hills)**

Ken Thomson                    Metro Manager

Jill Otter                         Information Officer

Roger Gazard                    Casual Information Officer (From 28 May 2007)

### **Volunteers**

Amanda Brown                Regional Office

Helen Brooks (dec.)        Regional Office

## IDEAS Integration Plan

With the assistance of a pro-bono change management specialist, Sebastian Chung from Xmergent Solutions, the two Managers worked co-operatively to develop and implement an Integration Plan for the merger of DIRC (NSW) Inc and Information on Disability Equipment Access Services Inc into the new association with the following objectives and results:

| Objective   | Outcome         |
|---|-----------------|
| Meet all the NSW Office of Fair Trading requirements for amalgamation of associations   | Achieved        |
| Smooth transition with minimum disruption of the current service provisions during the merger process   | Achieved        |
| Create consolidated services for the new organisation   | Achieved        |
| Improved governance for the new association   | Achieved        |
| Provide a single point of contact (1800 number) to access experienced staff who can interpret service users needs and then disseminate appropriate disability information and resources | Achieved        |
| Provide a single accessible on-line disability information web portal that combines databases and other electronic resources that is available to service users                         | Partly Achieved |
| Provide disability information independent from direct service provision that allows for anonymity and confidentiality and offers an alternative choice                                 | Achieved        |
| Provide both a metropolitan and rural understanding of the issues for people with disability and chronic illnesses.   | Achieved        |
| Improve marketing and leverage for sponsorship and grant applications   | Achieved        |
| Improve unit cost and quality assurance of services provided  | Partly Achieved |

## ☐ IDEAS Service Outlets

A major component of the integration plan for the new amalgamated association IDEAS – Information on Disability Education Awareness Services Inc. was to streamline operations. This involved maintaining the physical locations of the old DIRC NSW Inc. office in Surry Hills and the old IDEAS Inc. office in Tumut as the new organisation's service outlets and co-locating administration at the Tumut premises for economy of scale. The change also involved the subsequent Managers of the two amalgamated association taking on shared roles and responsibilities.

## ☐ Metro Office Report

The main focus for the IDEAS Metro Office (formerly DIRC NSW) this year was on maintaining a level of quality service delivery while developing and implementing an integration plan. The implementation of the plan involved many changes occurring at the metro location, which were not without their challenges. Thankfully I can say taking a co-operative approach to change management lessens the burden and increases positive outcomes.

Some of our key achievements this year were:

- The successful consultation with DIRC membership to obtain their approval for the merger ;
- the successful windup of DIRC as an incorporated association, meeting all legislative requirements;
- the transfer of all DIRC's assets to the new association;
- informing all of the DIRC stakeholders of the changes that have taken place; and
- maintaining a quality service throughout the merger process.

**Ken Thomson**  
Metro Manager

## Regional Office Report

The main focus for the IDEAS Regional Office (formerly IDEAS- Information on Disability Equipment Access Services Inc) was maintaining our reputation of high quality service provision while developing and implementing the integration plan for the amalgamation.

The team worked very well during the year managing to convene an Expo (albeit smaller than our usual expo) as well as maintaining a consistent level of enquiry responses in amongst the constant organisational changes.

The staff at the regional office accepted the organisational changes with a positive attitude and greeted them with enthusiasm for the future direction of the amalgamated entity.

Achievements for the year included:

- Successful negotiations with DIRC (NSW) Inc for agreement to amalgamate;
- Approval gained from DADHC (NSW Dept of Ageing Disability & Homecare) for amalgamation into the new entity;
- Communication with all IDEAS newsletter subscribers about the amalgamation and a positive uptake of membership to the new organisation;
- Moderate success in educating State Government politicians on the role and importance of disability information provision for people with disability in NSW, and
- Successful transfer of all of 'old' IDEAS assets to the new association and integration to a new accounting system.

**Diana Palmer**  
Regional Manager

## ☐ IDEAS Services and Products

### ☐ IDEAS Disability Info Line

A toll-free telephone information service that supports informed decision making and promotes independence.

### ☐ IDEAS Online

An on-line information clearinghouse that supports informed decision making.

### ☐ IDEAS Expo

A community event showcasing services and products that support independence.

### ☐ IDEAS Community Education

An education program raising community awareness and promoting services that support informed decision making and promote independence.

### ☐ IDEAS Newsletter

A newsletter providing information that supports informed decision making and promotes independence.

### ☐ IDEAS e-News

An electronic newsletter providing information.

### ☐ IDEAS Directories

High quality directories of services and products.

### ☐ IDEAS Blog

An internet diary that promotes independence.

### ☐ Access Aware

An online directory of accessible businesses and services.

## ☐ The Access Aware Project



A lack of information about accessible businesses, public facilities and services inhibits the ability of people with age related disability and people with disability to participate in their local community and economy. This fact is regularly noted by council access committees, older persons reference groups, disability inter-agencies and community care forum. Evidence from our information service supported that there was a community demand for this information and a project to address this need across NSW was highly desirable.

The Access Aware Project commenced in early 2003 to focus on this need and was initially a joint initiative of DIRC (NSW) Inc. and their community business partner Data Diction Pty Ltd. Over the years since then small community grants from several Councils has kept this innovative project ticking away slowly. The project has now been transferred to our new amalgamated organisation and given a high priority to develop to fruition. Lack of funds however remains an issue and several submissions have been made to government and non-government organisations seeking financial support to take it to the point where it will become self-sufficient through membership fees.

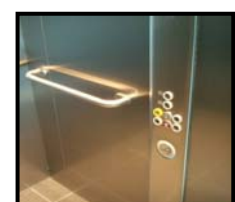
A sound business plan has been developed and we are seeking some help with market research. Rod Sharples from Data Diction has done a huge amount of in-kind work developing the software for the project and Sandra Vassallo from e-bitity Pty Ltd was hired as a consultant to help us develop the question sets on accessibility. Consumer focus group testing of the question sets has taken place and a business focus group tested the logon procedure. Blake & Dawson Lawyers are supporting us on a pro bono basis to develop a set of terms and conditions for membership. We are now ready to pilot the project in a metro and regional local government area to give it thorough testing before growing it into other local government areas across NSW and ultimately nationally.

Access Aware will provide information about accessible businesses and facilities such as: financial and legal services; restaurants and cafes; accommodation; a variety of retail shops; public parking and toilets; shopping centres; health and community services; sporting and recreational and social facilities.

We are encouraging people with access difficulties to become involved in the project by becoming Access Aware Ambassadors, a voluntary role that notifies us of local businesses in their community that have some degree of accessibility. Once the pilot project is completed we will commence to introduce it to other councils and it will be publicly available via the internet and on request as printed directories.

**Ken Thomson**  
Metro Manager

*Photos courtesy of Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission.*



## IDEAS Community Business Partner



Data Diction Pty Ltd Director Rod Sharples has previously generously supported DIRC (NSW) Inc since 1999 with both in-kind services and donations. Considering the history of working together the decision was made to formalise the partnership. In 2004 a Community Business Partnership Award was presented to Rod Sharples to officially recognise the partnership. Now that the merger with the former IDEAS has been completed, the partnership has been transferred to the new organisation.

Without Rod's expertise and in-kind donations the Access Aware Project would not exist, nor would many of the improvements to the software we use in provision of our disability information and resources, such as, the Equipment Supplier's database and the Library Management System.

Rod is a very community-minded person and has a caring nature. This is evident in his generosity and ongoing support for our organisations for which we are sincerely grateful.

We intend nominating Data Diction for the next Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership Award in 2008".

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Note: The definition of a community business partnership, as defined by the Prime Minister's Community Business Partnership (CBP), is: "Partnerships are collaborative, long-term relationships between businesses and community service organisations. Partnerships can comprise large, medium or small business, teamed with large, medium or small community organisations. They are innovative and flexible ways to bring mutual benefits to both partners."

## ☐ IDEAS Supporters

During the amalgamation process IDEAS actively engaged pro bono support from a variety of professionals. We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank them for their assistance. They are as follows: -

### **Xmergent Solutions**

Change management specialist, Sebastian Chung helped guide the two Managers through the development of the DIRC-IDEAS Integration Plan.

### **Langes Lawyer**

Mark Swivel's legal advice helped develop the IDEAS/Data Diction "Deed of License - Access Aware Software".

The logo for blue dot creative, consisting of the words "blue dot creative" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with a small white dot above the letter "o" in "dot". The text is white and set against a solid blue rectangular background.

Rhonda Mason worked tirelessly to develop a complete suite of printed stationary and promotional items using our new corporate brand.



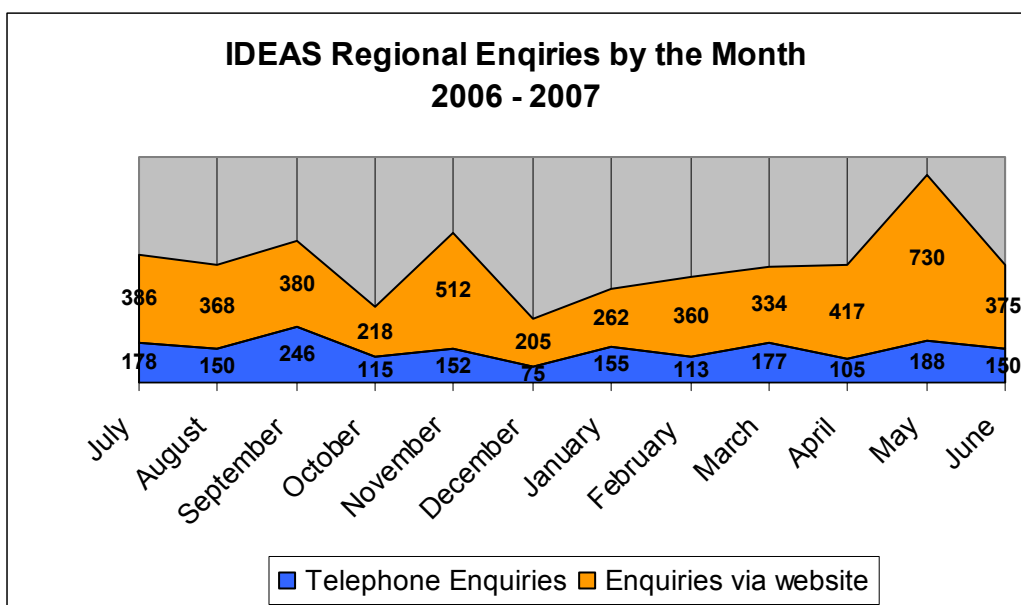
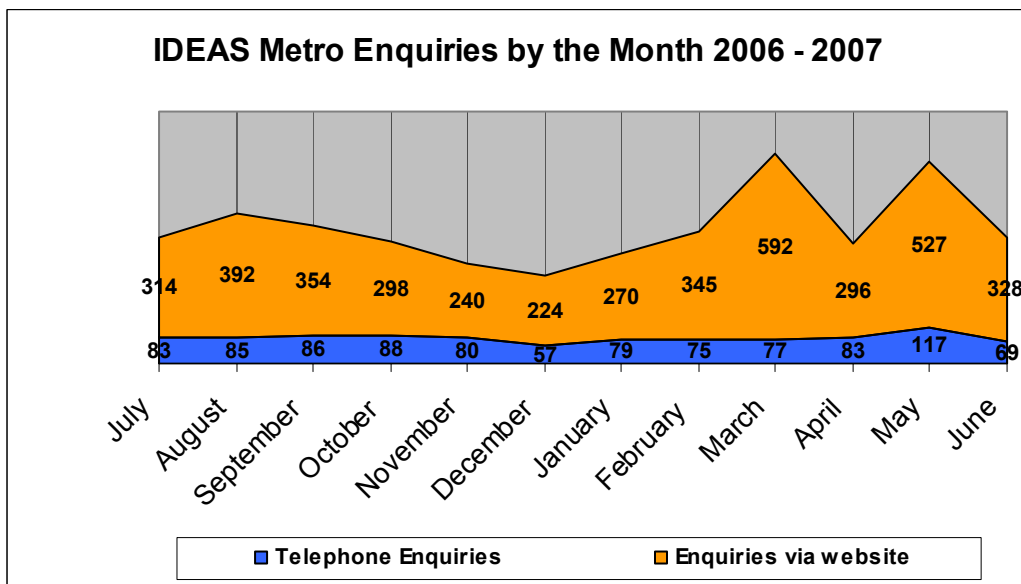
Sandra Vassallo has gone beyond her paid brief to provide additional support to our organization.

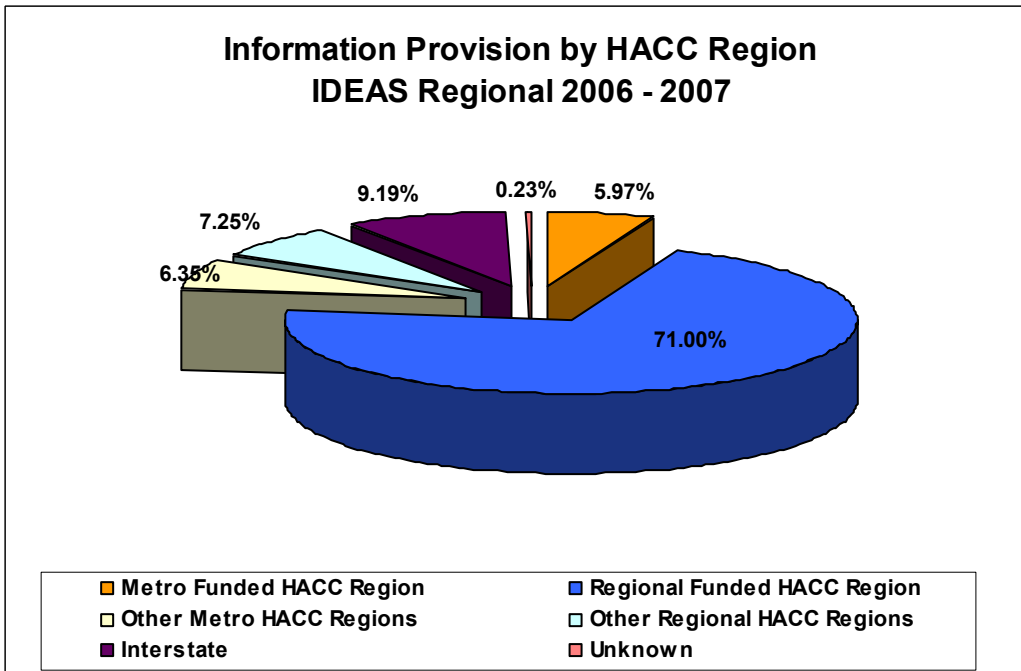
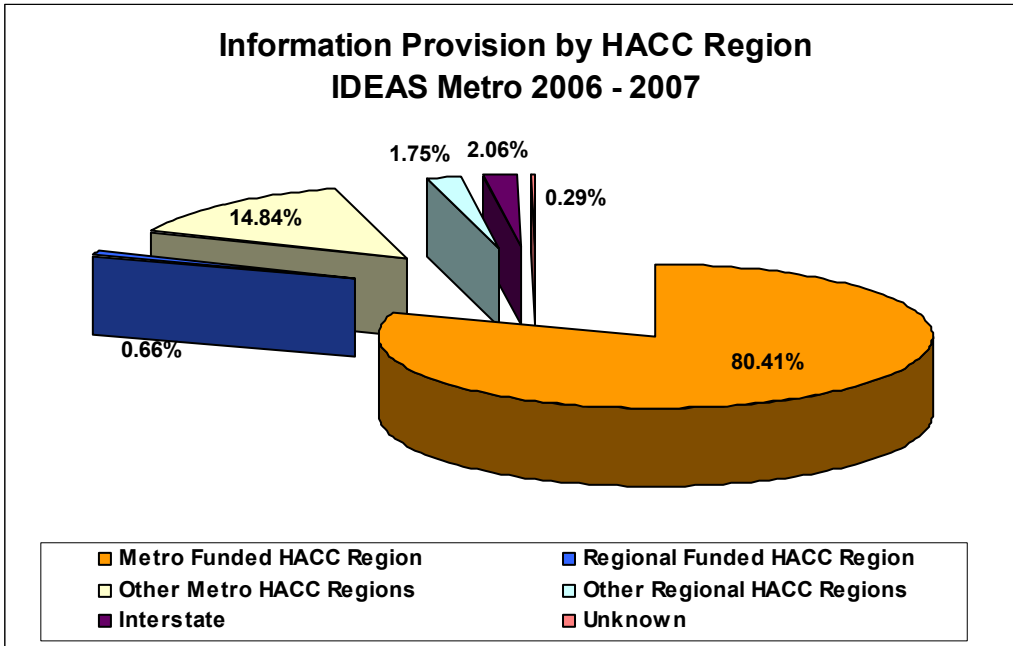
### **Consultant**

Ingrid Van Der Lee provided valuable assistance with market analysis research.

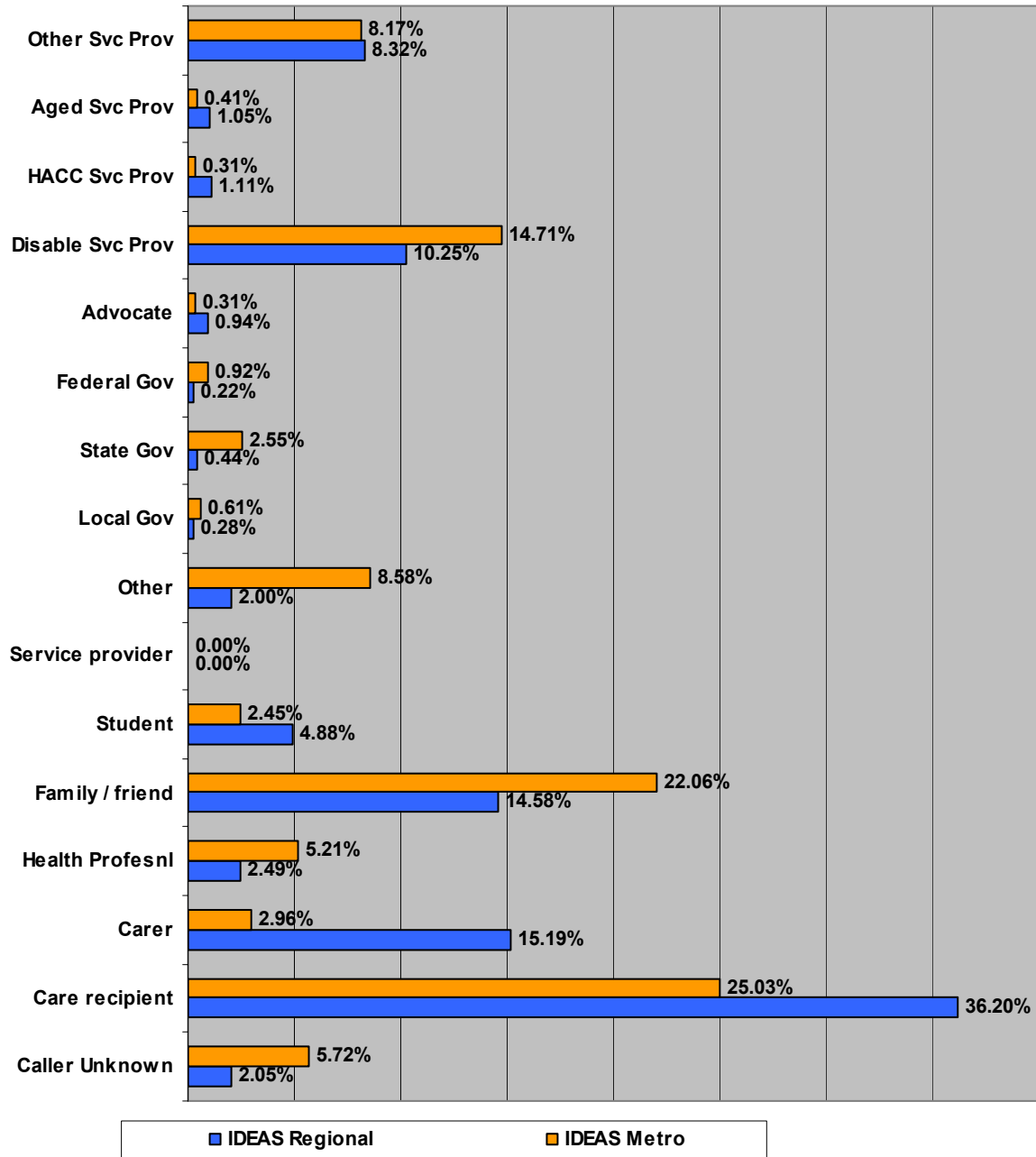
## Statistical Report

For the purpose of this report the statistics for DIRC (NSW) and the “old” IDEAS prior to the merger have been combined with those of the “new” IDEAS and have been reported as IDEAS Metro and IDEAS Regional respectively.

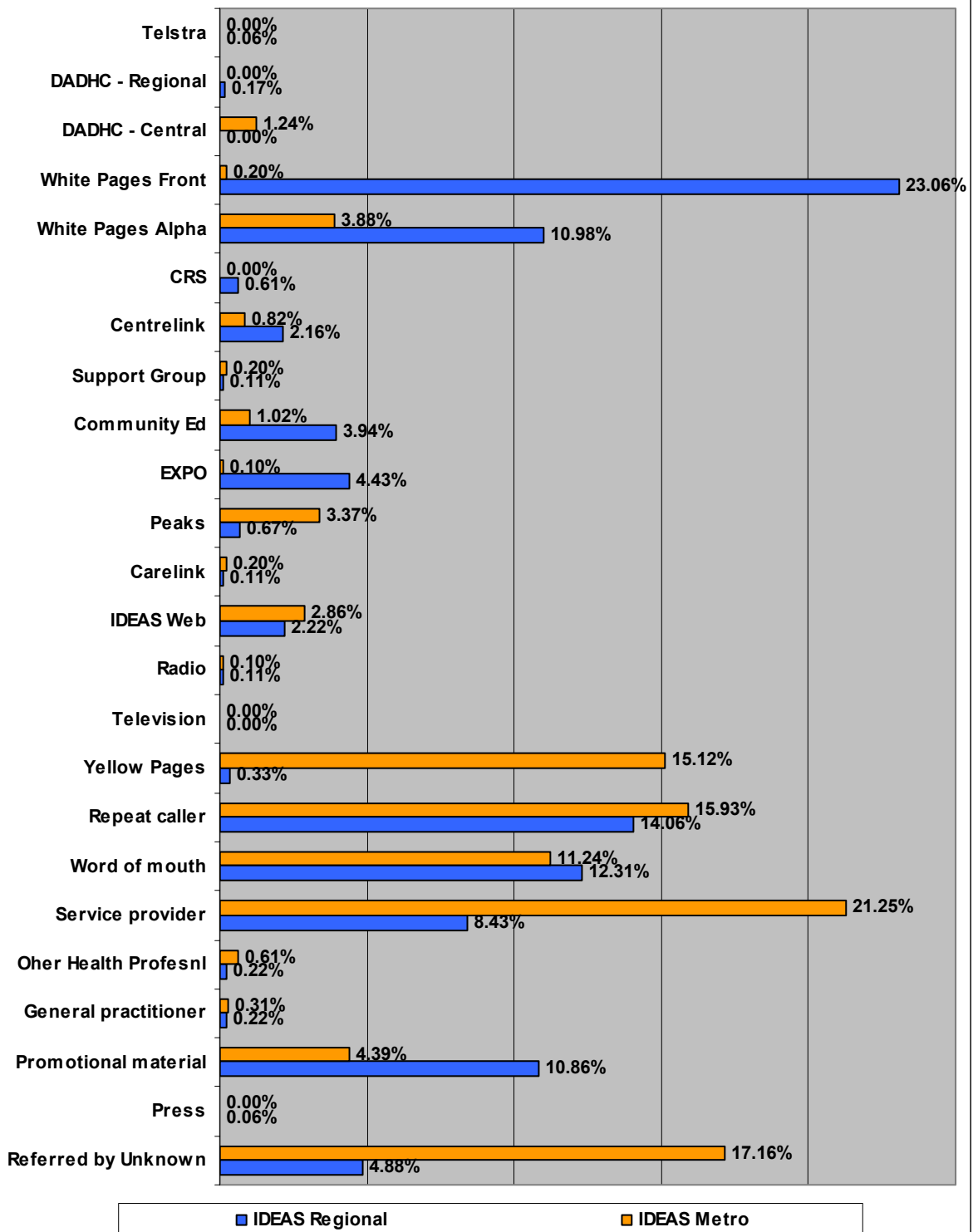




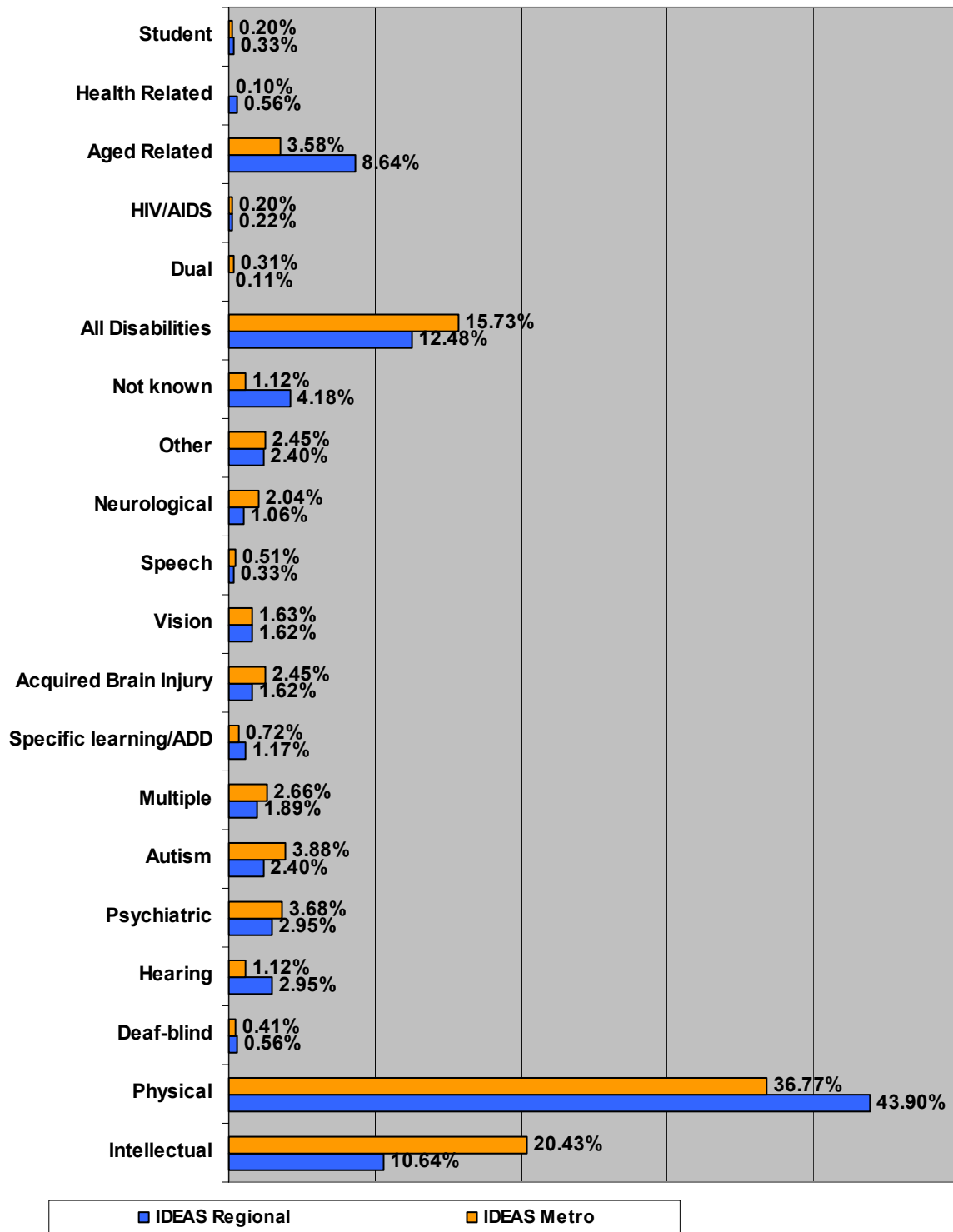
### IDEAS Metro & Regional Enquiries by Caller 2006 - 2007



## IDEAS Metro & Regional Clients by How Referred 2006 - 2007



## IDEAS Metro & Regional Clients by Disability Type 2006 - 2007



### IDEAS Metro & Regional Type of Assistance Requested by Clients 2006 - 2007

