

## Building an effective Australian non-profit sector led by high-performing board members

### > THE CONTEXT

There are over 100,000 incorporated non-profit organisations in Australia. The great majority (over 90%) are small organisations delivering valuable services in health, education, welfare, cultural, sporting, religious and other fields of community endeavour. They all have boards or management committees and often are less experienced than for-profit boards and lack support for their role.

In UK, US and elsewhere have specialist support services for the boards of non-profit organisations. Australia did not have these services until now.

### > THE BRIEF

BoardConnect was established by the Directors of Positive Solutions to address the need to provide support and advice for board members of non-profit organisations. The aim was to strengthen the sector, and build alignment between executive officers and board members.

### > OUR APPROACH

Originating as a pilot program with support from Positive Solutions and the Queensland Government in 2008, BoardConnect grew out of founding Director David Fishel's 20 years of governance work with non-profit organisations. David is recognised as one of the leading authorities on non-profit governance in Australia. He authored the *Book of the Board* (2003) which is now in its third edition. BoardConnect became an independent charitable and tax exempt non-profit organisation in December 2010.

Our products and services are designed to equip, connect and inform NFP board members, CEOs and Executive Teams to effectively lead and govern their organisations. BoardConnect programs are tailored to suit an organisation's specific needs. It works with individual boards to support their annual and triennial self-assessment processes by facilitating board self-reflection discussions, board reviews and audits at various levels of detail. BoardConnect offers interactive full-day workshops designed to help board members and senior executive staff to understand their roles and to maximise the board's contribution to the organisation. It also has a resource-rich website, and access to a wide range of specialists (law, marketing, fundraising) who can provide detailed guidance.

### > THE RESULTS

BoardConnect reviews have assisted board members to clarify their role, understand legal and financial responsibilities, discover better ways to collaborate with executive staff, and make board meetings as effective as possible. Its structured approach has provided organisational leaders with greater confidence to identify opportunities for change and to implement new initiatives in governance and leadership.

#### SEE ALSO:

- > [The Book of the Board](#)
- > [Arts Queensland Governance Reviews](#)
- > [Alzheimer's Australia Governance Review and Training](#)
- > [Oxfam Australia Governance Review and Training](#)