

2022-2026

# STRATEGIC PLAN



AUSTRALIAN SEABIRD  
& TURTLE RESCUE





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Incorporated (ASTR) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and the places in which we live.

We pay respect to Ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise the unique cultural and spiritual relationship to seabirds, sea snakes and sea turtles and celebrate the contribution of the First Nations peoples to Australia.



# INTRODUCTION FROM THE PRESIDENT

At no time in the history of Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue has it been more important to plan for the ongoing strategic importance of the organisation and its role in the rescue and rehabilitation of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes.

## **Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue's roles and responsibilities**

The Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Strategic Plan 2022-2026 builds on the organisation's expertise in the roles of rescue and rehabilitation, education and community engagement. We recognise some of the major challenges of dealing with the issues that impact on the wildlife that we interact with. Climate change has had an increasing impact on the ocean environment with rising numbers of sick and injured marine reptiles being rescued and requiring rehabilitation. We recognise our role in community education by inspiring and engaging with the public to minimise the impact the humans have on wildlife.

COVID-19 has affected all aspects of our organisation with difficulties in carrying out our activities and an increase of bird injuries coming into contact with humans, as well as impacting fundraising activities. The Strategic Plan 2022-2026 of Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue develops our continued goals to be a modern leading conservation organisation with a commitment to rescue and rehabilitate vulnerable species of marine wildlife including marine turtles, Sea Snakes, and seabirds.

Volunteers are the backbone of this organisation, and I would like to thank them for their ongoing commitment. I would also like to thank our partners and sponsors, especially the Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation, WildlifeLink, whose support we depend on. These partnerships make our organisation stronger and in a position to meet the challenge of meeting increasing need.

## **Acknowledgments**

Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue's Strategic Plan has been developed by the members of the management committee and staff and I would like to thank them for their ongoing dedication. I look forward to working with you as we strive to achieve the goals in our Strategic Plan and to secure a sound future for our organisation and the wildlife we are committed to.



**Anna Dicker**  
President  
Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue

# OUR VISION

Living together – reducing  
the human impact on  
marine wildlife.



# OUR ORGANISATION



Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue was established on the North Coast in 1992 at Ballina.

In 1995 the Constitution was formed. ASTR is licenced by the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service to operate along the coast of NSW.

The Central Coast and South Coast branches were formed to service other areas of the NSW coastline.

■ North Coast Branch: Covers the geographic area from Tweed Heads to Sandon River

■ Central Coast Branch: Covers the geographic area from Newcastle to north of Sydney

■ South Coast Branch: Covers the geographic area from Southern Sydney to the Victoria border



# BACKGROUND

Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Incorporated has existed in some form since 1992.

For the first eight years ASTR operated without a formal legal or financial structure, with most of the costs being borne by the founder, Lance Ferris, and a few supporters. Some small sponsorships and grants were received, mainly to fund training activities and capital items such as a 4WD vehicle and a boat.

The first Constitution of the then unincorporated group was adopted in 1995 and the was incorporated in New South Wales in 2001.

In 2000 ASTR was operating from premises adjacent to Emigrant Creek in West Ballina. The property was made available for ASTR's use and provided on a peppercorn rental. Around this time ASTR opened the first sea turtle rehabilitation centre. This represented a major change in operations due to the longer term care and more specialised housing requirements of sea turtles.





# WILDLIFELINK SANCTUARY

In 2004 Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Incorporated (ASTR) formed a relationship with The Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation – WildlifeLink, based in Sydney. Initially supporting ASTR's training and education work, the Foundation came to the rescue when the West Ballina property was resumed for construction of the Ballina by-pass. A former wedding reception and conference centre located on North Creek, Ballina was purchased by the Foundation and ASTR was granted a licence (renewable annually) at a peppercorn amount to occupy the property and make it their home.

As "WildlifeLink Sanctuary", the five acre property at 264 North Creek Road has been developed as ASTR's rescue and rehabilitation centre, and the coastal wetland and endangered ecological community is now protected and enhanced.

This continuing investment by the Tony & Lisette Lewis Foundation, both in the property and its facilities and in funding ASTR's administration and numerous projects, has been pivotal to the ongoing success of ASTR, the care it is able to provide wildlife and the increasing community awareness of the impact of humans on marine wildlife.

In late 2007 Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue lost its Founder, President, Manager and hero, 'The Pelican Man', Lance Ferris. At the time it was uncertain if ASTR could survive this blow. Lance's daughter, Rochelle, a qualified Marine Biologist, took up the roles of President and Manager.



In 2008 ASTR adopted its first Policy and Procedures Manual and began the process of separating the many roles previously undertaken by Lance. The Committee also adopted a Strategic Plan which identified the urgent need be able to offer Tax Deductible status for donations.

In 2009 ASTR conducted a major review of its Constitution with the specific aim of achieving 'Deductible Gift Recipient' status.

ASTR's amended Constitution was approved by all the relevant agencies and Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue. The 'Lance Ferris Memorial Fund' was subsequently added to the Register of Environmental Organisation in 2010. ASTR also adopted a 'Banking and Finance By-Law' to implement the necessary changes and ensure the highest standards of financial accountability are maintained.











## OUR MISSION

To reduce the human  
impact on seabirds,  
shorebirds, sea turtles and  
sea snakes through rescue,  
rehabilitation, education  
and research.



# OUR GOALS

Effective rescue and  
rehabilitation

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Good governance and  
operations

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Increasing awareness  
and understanding

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Integrated research  
and reporting





# OUR VALUES

Our Values are fundamental to the success of our organisation. They reflect the way our people and volunteers work together to achieve our vision and the goals identified in this Strategic Plan 2022 –2026.

- 
- Be collaborative, kind and respectful
  - Accept and take responsibility
  - Safely undertake all activities
  - Innovate and take initiative
  - Communicate clearly and constructively
  - Embrace diversity





## OUR WORK



1,349

BIRD RESCUES  
(2019 - 2021)



349

TURTLE RESCUES  
(2019 - 2021)



81

SEA SNAKE RESCUES  
(2019 - 2021)





**300+**

MEMBERS

(AS AT 30TH  
NOVEMBER 2021)



**32**

TURTLES  
SPONSORED

(FROM PROGRAM  
INCEPTION IN  
FEBRUARY 2021 TO  
30TH NOVEMBER 2021)



**87**

LICENCED  
VOLUNTEERS

(AS AT 30TH  
NOVEMBER 2021)







THE FUTURE



A woman wearing a blue short-sleeved shirt, a blue baseball cap with 'IMAS' and 'INTEGRITY MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION' logos, and sunglasses is smiling while holding a large white swan. The swan has a long, pinkish beak and dark feathers on its wings. They are on a grassy bank next to a blue lake. In the background, there are more swans in the water and rolling hills under a blue sky with some clouds.

## 6 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Effective and successful rescue
2. High quality rehabilitation
3. Valued education and information
4. Sustainable funding and support
5. Creative promotion and communication
6. Efficient and accountable operations



# 1. EFFECTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL RESCUE

## OUR GOALS

To actively patrol coastal waterways within New South Wales and do such things as may improve, or cause to be improved, the safety, health and welfare of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes, their environment and ecology

To actively rescue and rehabilitate sick, injured or maimed seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes from within New South Wales coastal waterways and associated environments



To train and educate wildlife rescue personnel in rescue and rehabilitation techniques for seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes



## 2. HIGH QUALITY REHABILITATION

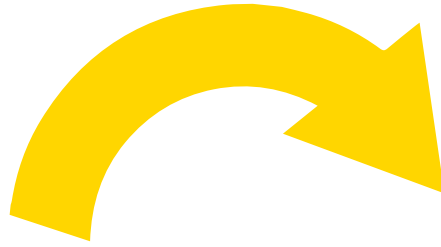
### OUR GOALS

To actively care for those seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes rescued and rehabilitate them to enable their release back to the natural environment



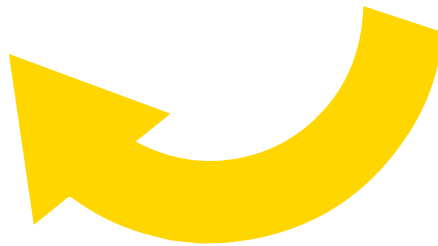
# 3. VALUED EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

## OUR GOALS



To inform and educate the public concerning the conservation, safety, health and welfare of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes, their environment and ecology

To participate in research concerning the conservation, safety, health and welfare of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes, their environment and ecology





# 4. CREATIVE PROMOTION AND COMMUNICATION

## OUR GOALS

To encourage and promote public awareness of and interest in the conservation, safety, health and welfare of all marine and aquatic wildlife with a particular focus on seabirds, shorebirds and sea turtles

To encourage and promote public awareness of and interest in the conservation and protection of the environment and habitat on which seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes depend

To work cooperatively with other agencies and organisations concerned with the conservation, safety, health and welfare of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes, their environment and ecology

To monitor, record and report any activity or thing that may adversely affect the safety, health and welfare of seabirds, shorebirds, sea turtles and sea snakes, their environment and ecology



# 5. SUSTAINABLE FUNDING AND SUPPORT

## OUR GOALS

To maintain a Public Fund to receive donations, bequests and gifts to the Public Fund in support of these aims and objectives

To receive such other donations, grants or sponsorships as may be made to the Association generally





# 6. EFFICIENT & ACCOUNTABLE OPERATIONS

## OUR GOALS

To do all such other things as are conducive or incidental to the attainment of the above goals.





# SUPPORT OUR WORK

Please support our work by visiting us, becoming a member or making a donation.

For more information about Australian Seabird & Turtle Rescue Incorporated and our work to reduce the human impact on marine wildlife, please go to:  
<https://seabirdrescue.org.au/donations>







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[seabirdrescue.org.au](http://seabirdrescue.org.au)