Respect My Uniform
Call on the community to resist patting or distracting working Guide Dogs in harness.

Freedom Guide Dogs
Celebrating 25 Years

Purposeful Fundraising
A successful fundraising campaign requires a strong plan executed within a tight time frame which creates urgency, excitement and purpose.
First and foremost, membership of the IGDF enables Guide Dog Schools around the world to join a community dedicated to serving the visually impaired. That community needs and wants to share its knowledge and the IGDF facilitates that.

The map below outlines the contributing countries for this edition of Visionary.
Message from the Chair

Paul Metcalf - National Manager
Blind Foundation Guide Dogs, New Zealand

Hello everyone and, welcome, once again to Visionary.

Being the first edition for 2017, I would also take this opportunity to wish you all a happy, healthy and successful new year!

The move, last year, to include ‘special features’ within each edition of Visionary continues to draw new interest in submitting articles from our members – all keen to share stories, experiences, successes and developments with fellow members around the world.

Already, we have focussed on Volunteering for Guide Dogs, the IGDF Seminar and, in this issue, Fundraising & Communication.

We aim to continue with this approach and would welcome your thoughts on topics that you would like to both share and, also, hear about.

The special feature for the next edition of Visionary is one that is becoming more prominent around the world, with growing interest in the work of Guide Dogs and how they are trained and monitored – Standards.

The current IGDF Standards have been created and developed over many years, and all through the hard work and dedication of many within the industry – the people who know and understand what is needed from a guide dog and the ways in which they are trained, monitored, supported and cared for.

The IGDF, through the Accreditation Committee, continues to formally review the Standards to ensure their relevance and appropriateness to our work.

There will, at the very least, be opportunities to comment and influence through formal consultation processes – please look out for, and contribute to, these opportunities.

The IGDF Board is in the process of developing formal strategies to support work that is already underway around the world to recognise the high standards to which we work and we will report more in the next edition of Visionary as part of the special feature.

Kind regards,
Paul Metcalf
IGDF Chair

Disclaimer
Whilst the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) retains editorial right to all articles presented within the Visionary, accuracy of specific detail and figures quoted are as provided by the author and their supporting organisation.

The IGDF, whilst welcoming feedback on content, will not enter into any dialogue relating to perceived inaccuracies in these areas.
Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind is proud to be a founding member of the International Guide Dog Federation. We are also proud to have played an integral part in the IGDF receiving its’ first major bequest.

A bequest is a gift in a will. Bequests are by far the most popular type of planned giving because they are remarkably simple to understand and easy to establish with professional assistance. Some gifts are large, others are small, but almost everyone can participate in this form of giving. Bequests can take several forms. A general bequest leaves a specific monetary amount or percentage of an estate, while a residuary bequest donates the remainder of an estate after all of the beneficiaries have been cared for through initial provisions in the will, and expenses and any taxes have been paid. A specific bequest can also be left, which is a special asset, such as stocks and bonds or property.

Several years ago, Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind was contacted by a lady named Margaret Neyden Smith in Canada, who wished to receive more information about donating to our organization. We sent her information, as requested, which was on Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind letterhead.

On our letterhead, Mrs. Smith noticed the logo of the International Guide Dog Federation. She was intrigued and queried again. Jane Thornton, C.O.O. & Co-Founder of Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind, is a past Chair of the IGDF and was quite pleased to educate Mrs. Smith.

Mrs. Smith was impressed about the IGDF, its’ history, the number of member organizations, how it serves people who are blind or vision impaired around the world. Most important to her was the fact that having international standards meant people around the world would have access and quality of guide dogs no matter which country they live in.

Shortly following this correspondence, Mrs. Smith passed away, in her 89th year. She left a legacy by making a very significant donation to the International Guide Dog Federation through a residual bequest.

Canadian Guide Dogs for the Blind is pleased to have played a role in this contribution. We frequently find ourselves mentioning the IGDF to the public in Canada. We hope that other member organizations feel the same pride that we do in promoting the IGDF in their countries and how valuable it is to have an international body to promote and oversee our industry and standards.
France – A national bequest campaign for 10 guide dog organisations

Christine TURC - Chief Executive Officer
Les Chiens Guides d’Aveugles de l’Ouest, France

Some of you may remember the Bequest presentation I gave with Graeme White during the 2014 IGDF seminar in Tokyo. During 2015, we have gone a step further in France with the launch of a new national campaign dedicated to bequests for guide dogs.

The idea was to inform the general public about the possibility for our organisations to receive their bequest free of government taxes and the advantages to putting a guide dog organisation on their testimony.

It was agreed communication for the general public must not only be with our reviews, local articles or even announcements in national newspapers - we had to be more ambitious! So let’s go on television and radio and not only in the west of France but nationally!

My colleagues from the other French organisations and the French Federation were enthusiastic on the idea so we managed a committee of 4 directors from 4 organisations to organise the campaign that will be shared by the 10 organisations.

The aim of the campaign was to attract interest and once the people interested asked for more information we would send them a specific brochure explaining how a bequest could provide more guide dogs for blind and partially sighted people in France. These potential bequesters also receive regular and specific information from us, a bequest newsletter twice a year and are invited to specific events.

Thanks to Tom and his guide dog Frenchy, our ambassadors in the television spot and the website dedicated to the campaign, in 2 years we doubled the number of potential bequesters for all French guide dog organisations and we will continue in 2017.

To see the advertisement, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yAAZ09cajsQ or visit the campaign website www.legs.chiensguide.fr
2016 was a productive year for the IGDF Development Committee. The DC is a Board Committee established to primarily support new and emerging organizations to progress through to become IGDF Members. The DC also assists current IGDF Members. The DC provides this supportive mentoring using email and Skype facilitating networking, promoting collaboration and guidance on-site on a case by case basis through the precious work completed with the organizations by IGDF volunteer Development Project Workers.

Central and Eastern Europe is one of the regions where the DC directs its efforts to support new Guide Dog organizations and further develop the existing ones. 2016 saw significant IGDF activity in this area starting with its biannual Seminar in Hvar, which in itself was a successful example of Organizations sharing knowledge and supporting collaboration.

After the seminar, a group of enthusiastic, volunteer field experts set off on a 1200km ‘road trip’ across Central Europe. Jane Russenberger, Dr. Eldin Leighton, Anthony Morin, Paul Keymer and Drs. Bob and Mieke Proesmans drove through Croatia, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic. A visit to the Mendel Museum in Brno (Czech Republic) was a boost to everyone’s commitment for genetic improvement of Guide Dogs. The group also admired the scenery and was eager to use their holidays to meet Guide Dog people and give a start to more intense collaboration and development in the region. They visited Croatian Centar Silver in Zagreb and the Slovak Guide and Assistance Dog Training School in Bratislava. The trip ended in Prague with a half day meeting hosted by Czech Guide Dogs where Czech and Slovak schools enjoyed a lecture on genetics from Dr. Eldin Leighton and provided input on their needs.

The first ever IGDF DC Workshop was hosted by Czech Guide Dog School in Prague, on 14th and 15th November 2016 thanks to Marie Hájková and her staff. The Workshop entitled “Developing Your Dog Source – Improving Behaviour” was led by Jane Russenberger who addressed issues of breeding, dog assessment and selection for Guide Dog purposes, which were areas of great interest and with potential for major development in Central and Eastern European schools. The workshop was attended by a remarkable number of 37 participants from 11 IGDF organizations (7 Member Organizations and 4 Applicant Organizations) from Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania. The topics covered were greatly appreciated by the attendees and the Workshop leaders were pleased to see their eagerness to learn and to collaborate among the organizations. Thanks go to Jane Russenberger for sharing her knowledge and other DC members Ivana Merryman Boncori and Bob Proesmans for their support. Thanks also go to Marie Hájková and her team from the Czech Guide Dog School for accommodating us and to Paul Keymer from Minnesota Breeding Centre for his participation and generous support. The DC is appreciative of IGDF Board for financial support from the ‘targeted development budget, which made participation possible for so many small organizations.

The work started in Prague continues as Jane Russenberger generously offered her time to provide ongoing training in dog assessment over Skype. We have had the first follow up training sessions, which were received with great interest.

The DC is keen to plan further regional educational workshops to help Applicant and Member Schools in Eastern and Central Europe and explore other global regions to facilitate collaboration in guide dog breeding and sharing of dogs to continue progression towards having more high quality guide dogs available to the considerable benefit of people who are blind and visually impaired around the world.
Nestled on four quiet acres in Cassville, New York, Freedom Guide Dogs for the Blind appears like an oasis in the midst of rural farmland. Co-founders Sharon and Eric Loori began their journey with guide dog training and breeding experience, a love of Labradors, and interest assisting the visually impaired. They saw the calm, unexcitable Labrador and the concept of at-home training, known at Freedom as Hometown Training™, as alternatives not generally offered elsewhere when Freedom became incorporated in 1992.

Six guides were placed in New York state in Freedom’s first year, doubled in 1993 as their own Labrador breeding program began. Breeding was done carefully, in tandem with training, so pups born and raised matched training and placement needs. A smooth Collie was also donated, trained and placed and proved to be an excellent guide dog: smart, polite and easy to train. One or two smooth Collies continue to be placed each year.

As need, breeding and training grew, Freedom’s state-of-the-art kennel was built in 2003. The kennel houses 20 to 30 training dogs and has a full kitchen, multiple storage areas, indoor training space, and an enclosed outdoor play yard with steps, ramps and other learning tools for daily exercise and socializing.

In 2007 the Looris added a puppy enrichment center housing four litters, each with whelping boxes, heat lamps, and educational toys. Music fills the air. Growing pups have innovative learning devices.

Eric realized early on that visually impaired individuals with secondary disabilities had a special need. This created a niche for Freedom. Client James Fair was returning from military duty in 2003 when a bomb exploded, leaving him with no sight and no hands. Adaptive training and equipment allowed James to receive his first Freedom guide in 2008.

Special methods and techniques have allowed Freedom to place guide dogs with visually impaired clients who also have multiple sclerosis, posttraumatic stress disorder, cerebral palsy, prosthetic legs, learning disabilities, support canes, and require the use of a guide dog on the untraditional right side.

Increased applications, client diversification, and Freedom’s reputation demanded training department growth. Requests for guides expanded to surrounding states, many from people who required home training and couldn’t handle a German shepherd. Freedom began introducing additional breeds, placing a very small percentage each year: Standard Poodles for clients with allergies; white American shepherds for clients who insisted on more presence than a Labrador; Barbets for clients with allergies (breeding is just beginning); and the Freedom Lollie, a successful Labrador/smooth Collie cross, first placed in 2016 as working guide dogs. But the Freedom Labrador remains the core.


This year Freedom Guide Dogs is celebrating 25 years. There are 244 clients in 15 states and 70 puppy raisers in 5 states celebrating with them.
2016 IGDF Seminar

Paul Metcalf
IGDF, UK

There are times when it feels like a long time ago since many of us were together in Hvar for the most recent IGDF Seminar, and others when it seems like only a few weeks have passed.

Already, the plans for the next Seminar in Sydney are well under way and, thanks to the feedback that many of you provided, we can look closely at how we can continue to improve the event for all.

We had almost 20% response rate to the request for feedback through Survey Monkey which is, for those who are not familiar with such response rates, quite impressive.

Overall, the Seminar was reported to have been a huge success, with 94.55% reporting that the Seminar met their expectations (3.64% reporting that it hadn’t).

Other key responses were:

The keynote presentations were a welcomed inclusion to the Seminar programme (70% of respondents would like to see more), although shorter presentations would be preferred.

Similarly, Plenary sessions are also seen as a positive item, with 77% wanting more.

73% indicated a wish to see more workshops, and 75% enjoyed the Panel Discussions.

The broader range of topics, for workshops and other presentations, was also seen as a positive move – incorporating all elements of work involved in providing guide dogs around the world.

There were a number of ‘weaknesses’ identified with the Seminar – many around the travel to and from the venue. It is always going to be difficult for some to attend the Seminar, depending upon where they are in the world and the length of travel required. It is noted, however, that venues would be better placed close to a relatively central point in the host country. To counter this, however, there was also much comment on the beautiful surroundings in which we spent our time!

Comments were noted on timings, subjects and skills of those involved in the various presentations – all useful information from which we can develop appropriate support for those who are, perhaps, presenting for the first time, etc.

Noted strengths were the variety and quality of the presentations and, particularly, the introduction of new ways of presenting the information (i.e. the Panel Discussions and Keynote Presentations). Being the first time these have been included, the feedback will help us to improve further for future Seminars.

In short, the IGDF Seminars are most certainly a highlight of the bi-annual Calendar for everyone – many would like to see them longer and more frequent.

The IGDF Board and various Planning Committees will continue to develop and promote the Seminars and the feedback provided by who responded to the survey (which ran into many pages!) will help form what we anticipate to be a fantastic Seminar in Sydney during 2018.

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<th>Agree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<td>I felt that the location was appropriate</td>
<td>87.27%</td>
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<td>78.18%</td>
<td>10.91%</td>
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<td>The hotel accommodation was comfortable</td>
<td>94.55%</td>
<td>3.64%</td>
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<td>I can put what I have learned into immediate use</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>14.55%</td>
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<td>The poster session was relevant &amp; useful</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Panel Discussions were relevant &amp; useful</td>
<td>85.45%</td>
<td>10.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The formal (scheduled) networking time was useful</td>
<td>80.00%</td>
<td>16.36%</td>
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Purposeful Fundraising: The Campaign for the Leader Dogs for the Blind Canine Development Center

Melissa Weisse, CFRE, - Chief Philanthropy Officer
Leader Dogs for the Blind, USA

If you visited the Leader Dogs for the Blind kennel five years ago—you would have seen that it looked just like that...a kennel. Functional, but dated for an evolving and innovative organization that serves active clients throughout the United States and internationally. Our vision for creating a state-of-the-art facility was at the forefront of how we planned a fundraising campaign to elevate and enrich the way that we breed, raise, train and help our dogs to be the very best partners and guides for our clients. To achieve our objective we met with fellow IGDF colleagues and consultants in the animal welfare, veterinary and animal architecture fields to advise us in creating an optimal environment conducive to housing future Leader Dogs in training. After three years of rigorous planning for construction and fundraising, we broke ground in August of 2014. This $14.5 million project was completed in the fall of 2016.

Raising $14.5 million dollars was a formidable task for an organization whose entire annual operating budget is generated entirely by philanthropy and private donation. To put this in context, the amount that we raised for the new facility exceeded that of our annual operating budget for which the team continued to fundraise while simultaneously fundraising for the capital campaign. We met and exceeded goal in eighteen months and did not experience a decline in our annual fundraising.

So how did we make this happen?

Our fundraising feasibility study was conducted by a third party with objective philanthropy expertise. This assessment was invaluable. The study grounded us in reality which enabled us to set the proper expectations for our Board, our team, and other stakeholders who championed the campaign and helped us throughout the process. The assessment and subsequent plan provided us with a roadmap to navigate the overall fundraising campaign—turning our vision into reality. At the outset we created a strong campaign case for support which informed all other campaign materials. Our roadmap focused on key donor phases which were chronologically arranged from larger leadership gifts in the early campaign phases to smaller gifts from the general public in the final phases which included puppy raisers, breeding host families, volunteers.

Successful fundraising requires both a plan and discipline in achieving the plan. We engaged our Board—they were outstanding! Securing their emotional and financial support was truly the first step that provided the credibility needed to convince our most passionate donors and prospect for new commitments. Additionally, the campaign enabled us to “sight raise” and elevate our Board and all donor groups to greater levels of giving than we had previously experienced.

Throughout, we focused on relationships—both with individuals and organizations. Our relationships with service organizations like Lions Clubs International, in particular, were extremely beneficial to achieving our objectives. The Lions collectively rallied for Leader Dogs, as they have historically done, since founding the organization in 1939. In total, the Lions raised over $2.4 million of the $14.5 million goal for the campaign. Over 1700 clubs, 174 districts and countless individual Lions donated. Without this groundswell of passion coupled with the myriad of other donor contributions, this project would not have been possible.

The campaign not only allowed Leader Dogs to achieve its objective of creating a new Canine Development Center to ultimately better serve our clients, but also created energy, enthusiasm and renewed community passion for the mission.

Please visit us at www.leaderdog.org for more details on our organization and pictures of our new facility.
You’ll be as ‘mad as a cut snake’ if you miss the 2018 IGDF Seminar Down Under in 2018!

As well as the gorgeous beaches, endless native bush and mesmerising central red desert, coupled with famous Aussie animals such as kangaroos and koalas, Australia is also well known for its unique colloquial slang.

**Arvo** – afternoon

**Mozzie** – Mosquito

**Mad as a cut snake** – angry

**Flat out like a lizard drinking** – really busy

**Barbie** – BBQ

**Choccas** – full

**Tucker** – food

**Fair dinkum** – true

**Hard yakka** – hard work

Decoding the Australian language is just one of the incredible adventures you’ll have when you attend the 2018 IGDF Seminar hosted by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT in one of the world’s most beautiful cities – Sydney.

For many, visiting Australia is a once in a lifetime opportunity and Sydney is sure to please. Attractions such as the famous Sydney Harbour and Harbour Bridge, the Sydney Opera House, Taronga Zoo, Bondi Beach, and cuddling a Koala are just a few of the activities delegates can experience and enjoy in Sydney. Our city is renowned also for its cosmopolitan vibe, multicultural makeup and its friendly people, all factors that ensure that wherever delegates come from, they will certainly feel welcome.

The conference will be held at the stunning Grace Hotel in the heart of Sydney within easy walking distance to all of Sydney’s most talked-about experiences. September has been chosen as the month to host the conference due to Sydney’s phenomenal Spring weather with average maximum temperatures of 19ºC–25ºC (66ºF–77ºF). A major draw card for international visitors, Sydney’s subtropical climate is temperate all year round. Spring is historically the driest season of the year.

Just some of the amazing side-trips you could take before or after the conference include:

- **The dramatic Red Centre** – an arid, dramatic, vast, a land of extremes and home to Uluru (Ayers Rock), Australia’s spectacular monolith. This dramatic land is an exciting destination boasting spectacular wilderness, rare wildlife, rich Indigenous heritage and hospitable local people.

- **Reef and rainforest** – north of Cairns you’ll find one of the most beautiful regions of Australia, the meeting point of an ancient rainforest and the Earth’s largest living coral structure. Enjoy swimming and snorkelling on the Great Barrier Reef and discovering the beauty of the World Heritage-listed Daintree Rainforest. Witness a spectacular Whitsunday sunset on a cruise through the islands, walk to remote scenic lookouts or take a sea-kayaking tour in search of turtles, dolphins and maybe even whales.

- **The Great Ocean Road** – stretching along the coast of Victoria is the Great Ocean Road, an ideal way to experience the beauty of Australia’s rugged coastline, spectacular beaches and relaxed coastal townships. Take the opportunity to watch the sun set over the Twelve Apostles from one of the many viewing points. These aptly named giant limestone monoliths follow the cliff face boundary of Victoria, towering 45 meters from the Southern Ocean.

With Sydney being just a 11 hour flight from 50% of the world’s population, you’ll be ‘devo’ (devastated) if you miss out on this absolutely ‘bonza’ (great) IGDF conference.

Further information will be circulated very soon, but make sure you mark the date in your calendar now, and start dreaming of all the amazing adventures that await you in Sydney, Australia in September 2018.

We are so excited to host you!
Guide Dogs NSW/ACT urges community to not distract working dogs in harness

Samantha McGill - Communications Officer
Guide Dogs NSW/ACT, Australia

You wouldn’t place your hands over the eyes of a taxi driver concentrating on the road ahead, or pat a surgeon on the back mid-way through an operation, as the consequences could be disastrous. It would be just as irresponsible to distract a working Guide Dog.

To address this issue, on International Guide Dog Day in 2016, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT launched a public education campaign, Respect My Uniform, calling on the community to resist patting or distracting working Guide Dogs.

Like other professionals, once a Guide Dog has its uniform on – its easily recognisable harness – it has a very important job to fulfil.

The Respect My Uniform campaign followed the findings of a 2015 survey, in which 89 per cent of Guide Dog Australia handlers reported that their Guide Dog had been distracted by members of the public in the past 12 months.

For Australia’s Got Talent finalist and Guide Dog NSW/ACT campaign ambassador, Matt McLaren, the incidence of members of the public attempting to distract his Guide Dog, Stamford, is a daily occurrence.

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Matt, who has been blind since birth, received Stamford about eight years ago.

“Stamford enables me to do so much more than I could with a cane, such as carry music gear and travel confidently to new places,” he said.

“People will try to talk to Stamford while I am walking, make clicking noises, pat him while I move past them and try to make eye contact with him,” Matt said.

“I want the public to understand that distracting a working Guide Dog reduces its capacity to do what it has been trained to do, potentially putting my safety at risk. It can also be time consuming as I often need to refocus Stamford after he has been distracted before moving on.”

As the campaign ambassador, Matt was a great asset to the public relations activity and his involvement significantly contributed to the success of the campaign. Of particular note was an exclusive story he featured in on Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News. This story, which ran on the eve of International Guide Dog Day, was broadcast on the Sydney news service and around Australia on ABC News 24. The outlet also produced an online story and a Facebook video, which was viewed more than 9 million times, the most watched Facebook video ever produced by the ABC social media team.

The campaign also drew support from Guide Dog handlers across NSW and the ACT who shared their personal stories of the impact of having their Guide Dog distracted by members of the public. These new cases studies were of great interest to regional and suburban print, broadcast and online media outlets.

To support the campaign, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT created newspaper advertisements which featured a Guide Dog in harness with the caption ‘I’m working, respect my uniform.’ A new television commercial was also created, which ran across both Yahoo Catch up TV and YouTube. The advertisement can be viewed on the Guide Dogs NSW/ACT YouTube Channel:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8tz84hD7V38
Escuela de perros guía Argentinos (EPGA) and Royal Canin Argentina delivered three new guide dogs. They are going to be in charge of changing three lives.

Bruma, Ciro and Nala conform the last litter of Argentine guide dogs which are going to drastically change the lives of three people: Alexis, Francisca and Felipe.

These dogs belong to the program Escuela de Perros Guías Argentinos (EPGA), founded in 2010, supported by Royal Canin.

Alexis, 29 years old; Francisca, 19 years old; and Felipe, who is 12 years old, are already sharing their lives and adventures with their guide dogs.

There is something really special about this fourth delivery of EPGA, this is the first time the school trains a double purpose dog, Nala, who is a guide dog and an assistance dog. This is because her user, a 12 year old boy called Felipe, was diagnosed with social and communicational developmental disorder. Therefore Nala has become the first dog in Latin America who was raised and trained to carry out this double function, and worldwide Nala is the second double function dog that has been delivered to a child.

“I am going to be a mechanic and I am going to open my own business. I am going to wake up at dawn, when everybody is sleeping, and ask Nala to take me to work” Felipe says, already planning his future next to his new friend.

In Argentina, there is huge demand of guide dogs.

Official statistics estimate that there are 1.2 million blind people in Argentina, and only 35 guide dogs, including imported dogs and the dogs raised and trained by the school in the last few years.

Carlos Botindari, EPGA’s Institutional Relationships Director, caused significant impact on the audience while telling them how the school started as a dream and came true to change 10 users’ lives forever, so far.

Carlos assures he receives four guide dog requests per day, and that he wishes to deliver one hundred dogs a year, in ten years time. “We develop a very intimate relationship during training, what’s most gratifying is to see them working together and witness their happiness. That’s when we say mission accomplished”.

“We support this initiative of such a great contribution to society because of the nobility of the project and for its consistency with our commitment to work for a better world for animals and their owners. Besides this is an excellent example of the benefits of man-dog relationship. Our brand is backing the program, not just providing the food for the dogs, but also supporting the organization in order to keep on growing and accomplishing goals”, said Romina Matorras, Director of Corporate Affairs of Royal Canin Argentina.
Guide Dogs around the world

As you know, the IGDF seeks Annual Returns from all member organisations each year and, over the past couple of years, we have been developing the process to better enable us to analyse the use of guide dogs around the world.

The most recent figures collected covered January – December 2015 and show that Guide Dogs are certainly helping a great number of people to achieve and maintain independent mobility.

For the first time, there was 100% response to the request for Annual Returns which, even though some organisations were not able to complete every question, provides an exciting picture of resources and Handlers around the world.

We will continue to break down the detail and look to provide it to Member organisations in a similar way to last year – that is providing an overview to you which includes the detail on three levels:

- **Worldwide**
- **Continental (where there are 3 or more member organisations so as to maintain confidentiality for individual organisations)**
- **Country (as above)**

Thank you for the information you provided – we hope you will find the below to be of interest.

Thank you also for the feedback on the Annual Report form – we will look to make amendments in line with the suggestions made before sending out the request for your 2016 information in the next few weeks.

In the meantime, we felt it would be of interest to share some of the ‘headline’ statistics:

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<tr>
<td>Total working GD teams</td>
<td>22,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(as at 31 December 2015)</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member organisations with a breeding programme</td>
<td>60 (69.77%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Member organisations producing other service / assistance dogs</td>
<td>40 (47.06%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New GD teams trained in 2015</td>
<td>3,326</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note: Of these new teams, 1,423 (42.78%) were ‘first-time’ GD Handlers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aftercare visits</td>
<td>21,876</td>
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<tr>
<td>Note: some organisations recorded visit numbers as ‘approximate’</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawals – from puppy programme, through training and up to 1-year post-graduation as a working guide dog</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Of these withdrawals, 1,118 (30.88%) were recorded as being health-related</td>
<td>3,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing - within a Guide Dog Mobility Instructor, Guide Dog Trainer or Cadet role (recorded as full-time equivalent)</td>
<td>1,036.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The next deadline for Visionary submissions is **15th April**

Please supply your articles as a word file with original images sent separately as jpeg images.

Remember to include the completed submission form, along with your article and any pictures you would like to include.

For the index, please include a one-sentence description of your article.