

**RECEPTION TO MARK THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE BRAIN INJURY ASSOCIATION OF TASMANIA  
REMARKS BY  
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC  
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA  
GOVERNMENT HOUSE, THURSDAY 24 AUGUST 2023**

Good evening everyone. It is a pleasure to warmly welcome you all to Government House to mark this significant milestone, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Brain Injury Association of Tasmania.

I pay my respects to the traditional and original owners of this land: the palawa people. I acknowledge the contemporary Tasmanian Aboriginal community and recognise their enduring culture and continued connection to land, sea, and waters.

The Brain Injury Association of Tasmania was formed in 1998 after the amalgamation of Headway Tasmania and the Tasmanian Brain Injury Program. Since then, BIAT has been an advocate and support for Tasmanians living with, or impacted by, brain injury.

BIAT's mission is to provide assistance and education to those experiencing the challenges of brain injury, and to advocate for their rights and needs within our Tasmanian community.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare estimates that 700,000 Australians live with a disability resulting from a brain injury.<sup>1</sup> Tasmania has a prevalence rate of 2.2%, which is higher than our national average. It is estimated that over 12,000 Tasmanians are living with brain injuries.

The effects of brain injury do not only extend to physical challenges, but also to cognitive, emotional, and social difficulties that may be hidden or invisible to others.

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<sup>1</sup> Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2007). "Disability in Australia: acquired brain injury." Retrieved from: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/83f0adfc-8729-4ee1-b07a-7726b117e70d/3045.pdf.aspx?inline=true>

Further, the impact of brain injuries is not solely confined to the individual; the effects extend across families and communities. The economic burden is also substantial. Addressing the effects of brain injury requires an approach that involves not only medical intervention, but also social support, policy advocacy, and education.

For 25 years, BIAT has worked tirelessly to explain brain injury and the issues that surround it to the public and to provide support and hope for those living with it.

Your BIAT's work has seen the introduction of the National Assistance Card service, which offers personalised identification for those with brain injuries, and the JustACE program, which supports and educates individuals in the criminal justice system.

Importantly, your initiatives also extend to education for young people aimed at preventing brain injury, community awareness campaigns, employment support, and peer support.

However, we should acknowledge that there have been challenges. The continued operation and success of BIAT relies on funding and support from the community and government. Without this, BIAT would cease to exist.

May I conclude and thank our Brain Injury Association of Tasmania for providing support, education and advocacy. May I congratulate and commend you all on your important work and this significant milestone of your 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Thank you.

David...