The HEARing CRC is dedicated to reducing the impact of hearing loss and hearing impaired on the health, education, and research outcomes of Australians. The HEARing CRC has been established and supported under the Australian Government’s Cooperative Research Centres Program to increase our research effort and to enhance the translation of research outcomes into positive health and economic outcomes for Australians. The HEARing CRC is focused on the twin challenges of more effective prevention and improved remediation of hearing loss.

Audiology, Hearing and Speech Sciences
The University of Melbourne
(03) 9035 5347
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The HEARing CRC is a multidisciplinary collaboration of five core and 21 supporting Members, each of which contributes specific expertise and infrastructure to our Research, Commercialisation and Education Programs.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Richard Searby
Robert Cowan

The HEARing CRC has grown and consolidated over its second year of operations, leading to a number of significant developments in the organization. We thank our Board members for their diligent work during this time, as well as our core and support Members for their ongoing interest and support. We also reexpress gratitude for the hard work of the Executive Management team, researchers, staff and students for what has been a stimulating and productive year.

During 2008/09, the HEARing CRC was officially launched by the Hon. Kim Carr, Senator for Victoria, Minister for Innovation, Industry, Science and Research. This occasion marked the official opening of our new headquarters, situated in The University of Melbourne’s Audiology, Hearing and Speech Sciences building. This excellent facility, shared with the University’s Department of Otolaryngology, will support our research, professional education and management activities.

In May 2009, Project Leaders gathered for an inaugural Research Review, presenting recent research and future plans for the future. The Review provided an ideal forum for researchers working across the HEARing CRC portfolio to develop and strengthen communications. It was an ideal forum for our Board to view the scope of research activity and to discuss progress and challenges.

Considerable progress has been made in research projects during the year, resulting in both successful clinical applications of new technologies and identification of new directions for research. Biomedical studies have contributed to the development of a new continuous skin electrode suitable for use by elderly patients with significant cognitive impairment; new clinical trials in the CRC have produced data for regulatory approval in Australia and Europe. Speech reading studies around enhancing literacy learning in hearing loss and other cochlear implant recipients have resulted in high scores across all experimental participants. By identifying a disease causing gene, we have validated a number of new models of presbycusis and aged-related macular degeneration as a result. Studies using yeast models as well as existing models have recently revealed novel genes, creating improved hearing.

Over the past year, we have received a number of PhDs into our research projects. In order to continue our work to help add the most relevant and significant research into the pool which we want fully implemented later this year, we plan to recruit an additional four new postdoctoral researchers. From a corporate perspective, we have created HEARing CRC Ltd, a new company for the HEARing CRC. In addition we have been able to bring forward payment of commercial earnings from the IP generated through the HEARing CRC.

In particular, we are delighted with the efforts of our Board members. Executive Management teams, which in turn help shape the activities of our various projects.

We would like to thank all of those who have offered their support through this year and look forward to a future in which we can maximise the progress we have made in the past and continue developing projects which are aimed toward empowering people with hearing loss.

The HEARing Cooperative Research Centre is focused on the twin challenges of more effective prevention and improved remediation of hearing loss.
During this period, commercialisation and education highlights have included:

- A high-level national and international conference promoting the importance of cochlear implant surgery was successfully conducted with cochlear implant surgeons and professionals from various countries.
- Photonics and the HEARing CRC were invited to participate in a series of national and international conferences, presenting research findings and focusing on the latest developments in the field.
- A series of focus groups with professionals and patients were conducted, focusing on the challenges and opportunities in the cochlear implant industry.
- A comprehensive review of the current state of the art in cochlear implant surgery was published, providing insights into the latest research and clinical practices.
- A new international network of cochlear implant surgeons and professionals was established, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- A series of workshops on cochlear implant surgery were conducted, focusing on the latest techniques and best practices.

Research highlights:

- The HEARing CRC's research activity is expanded during this period, including new partnerships with international institutions.
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Commercial highlights:

- The HEARing CRC's commercial activity is expanded during this period, including the launch of new products and technologies.
- A new partnership with a leading medical device company was established, leading to the development of a new technology.
- A new product was launched, targeting the needs of a specific patient population.
- A new technology was registered with the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration, bringing it closer to market.
- A new partnership with a leading research institute was established, leading to the development of a new technology.

Education and Training Highlights:

- The HEARing CRC's Postgraduate and Professional Education Programs are designed to deliver industry-ready graduates with advanced and specialised skills.
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