

# I do this work because

sometimes a little support can go a long way in the life of someone without any positive supports at all. I do this work because of the opportunity to bring to life the potential of human beings. I do this work because each and every one of the people we work with are somebody's child. If they were my children, I would take some comfort in knowing that people are out there supporting them. I do this work because I believe our clients are much more than their labels (ie. offending histories, drug using, mental health issues etc). I enjoy being part of the process that brings this back to life.



**acso**

Australian Community Support Organisation



# CONTENT

OUR ORGANISATION	1
OUR RELATIONSHIPS	2-3
PATRON-IN-CHIEF’S MESSAGE	4
COUNCIL CHAIR’S REPORT	5
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT	6 - 7
OUR HISTORY: FOUNDERS’ MEMORIES	8 - 13
HISTORICAL CROSSROADS: REUNION AND FAREWELL	14 - 15
OUR PROGRAMS TODAY	16 - 40
DISABILITY PROGRAM	16 - 21
JUSTICE SERVICES	22 - 27
SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	28 - 33
EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	34 - 39
PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE	40 - 41
ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE	42
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	43 - 47
THE COMMUNITY	43
THE VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES	44 - 46
THE ENVIRONMENT	47
ACHIEVEMENTS	48
CHALLENGES & RISKS	49
MAJOR EVENTS	50 - 51
STRATEGY REPORT	52 - 55
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT	56 - 59
HUMAN RESOURCES	60 - 65
COUNCIL MEMBERS	66 - 67
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	68 - 71
HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT AND ORGANISATIONAL INCIDENTS ACROSS ACSO	72 - 73
FINANCIALS	74 - 80
ABOUT OUR ANNUAL REPORT	81
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	82 - 83
INDEX	84

# OUR ORGANISATION

## WHO WE ARE

ACSO is one of Victoria’s leading community support organisations with a reputation for assisting some of the most disenfranchised members of our community: those not generally welcomed or able to be supported by other services due to their behaviour, presenting issues or offending history.

We offer innovative service delivery within a diverse range of programs throughout the metropolitan area and regional Victoria.

### Our programs provide:

- Case management, crisis assistance, housing placements and intensive outreach support to people involved in the criminal justice system
- Residential, outreach and therapeutic support to people with an Intellectual Disability
- Employment support and Job Placement to people experiencing significant disadvantage
- Alcohol and Other Drug assessments to people involved in the criminal justice system
- Outreach and psycho-social support to people with a mental health diagnosis
- Intensive outreach support to people with multiple and complex needs

ACSO’s service model ensures support is planned on an individual basis and in collaboration with each client, to ensure that their needs are met.

## PURPOSE

To make a difference in the lives of disenfranchised people.

## VISION

ACSO aims to contribute to individual and community wellbeing by increasing opportunities for disenfranchised people to positively engage with their communities and by reducing the impact of social disadvantage. ACSO will build on our expertise to enhance services to individuals at critical points in their contact with the justice system. Using our experience and knowledge we will inform the community about the issues facing our clients and our role in assisting individuals to lead more positive lives.



ACSO STAFF



## VALUES

### Respect

Encouraging an environment that respects the situation and needs of our clients and that is respectful of the skills and abilities each staff member contributes to the organisation.

### Integrity

In our dealings with all our community of interest and in our use of government and other funding.

### Caring

Providing a caring environment for or clients, staff and the community.

### Shared Responsibility

Recognising that to make a real difference in our clients lives both ACSO staff and clients must take responsibility for change.

### Outcomes

Acknowledging that as well as providing a respectful and caring experience for our clients we must also strive for positive change and achieve outcomes through their contact with us.

### Innovation

Striving to find new ways to more effectively meet the needs of our clients and/or to provide services to clients where no other service does.

## ACSO LOCATIONS

ACSO is a Victorian state-wide service, with our head office in North Richmond, with one other metropolitan office and six regional offices as indicated on the map provided. ACSO operates eleven community residential units within Victoria — seven of which support clients with an Intellectual Disability, and two for clients with a mental illness. Staff also provide outreach support to clients across the state and visit all Victorian prisons on a regular basis.





# OUR RELATIONSHIPS

One of ACSO’s strategic initiatives is to identify opportunities for collaboration and partnerships in order to better meet the needs of existing clients.

ACSO has developed many positive working relationships within the community, which are critical to the success of service delivery. These relationships include:



### Members of the Community:

- Clients and their families
- Members of the community who assist our clients
- Members of the community who are affected by our services

### Non-Government Organisations that ACSO works closely with:

- Yarra Community Housing
- Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO)
- Jesuit Social Services
- Salvation Army Adult Services
- Australian Vietnamese Women's Association,
- Ngwala Willumbong
- Active Housing
- Plenty Valley Community Health Centre
- Mind Australia
- WISE Employment
- Home Ground Services
- South East Centre Against Sexual Assault
- Melbourne City Mission
- Mission Australia
- DEKRO
- King Personnel
- Arts Access
- VicPsych
- VicServe
- APM
- Wombat Housing
- Formal relationships with 100 Drug and Alcohol treatment agencies.
- St Vincent de Paul Community Services

### Business Relationships:

- Hesta Superannuation
- Steger and Associates
- Ernst and Young
- Commonwealth Bank of Australia
- Bendigo Bank
- Hiscock Insurance
- Preston Motors
- Summit Holden
- Gallagher Bassett
- Landmark Software
- Victorian Managed Insurance Authority

### Government Departments & Statutory Authorities:

- Department of Justice – Corrections Victoria, Courts, Police and Prisons
- Department of Human Services – Mental Health and Drugs Division, Housing and Homelessness Assistance and Disability Services
- Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)
- Department of Human Services (DHS) (Commonwealth)
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
- Forensicare
- Centrelink

### Educational Institutions that ACSO Works closely with:

- Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT)
- University of Melbourne
- Kangan Batman TAFE
- Monash University



## PATRON-IN-CHIEF MESSAGE

## COUNCIL CHAIR'S REPORT

ACSO's work in 2009 commenced under the shadow of the devastating 'Black Saturday' bushfires on the 7th February. Many of ACSO's staff and clients were affected by the tragedy of lost lives and property. This year's Annual Report includes a special update on the responses that ACSO staff and management made to support the victims of 'Black Saturday'.

I would like to express my appreciation of the ongoing advice and support provide by members of the ACSO Council. We experienced a number of membership changes over the previous year; however oversight of the organisation's governance remains strong with all Council members actively involved in discussion regarding proposed changes to Government policy related to Justice Health services.

I note that Dr Heather Manning resigned from the ACSO Council after being a member for 9 years. I express my appreciation and thanks to her for her contribution to ACSO and in particular ACSO's strategic planning and for her clinical advice and support to our Management team. I also note the contribution of Dr Ruth Vine, who was seconded to the Council in 2008, but resigned in 2009 after being appointed the Chief Psychiatrist of Victoria. I also welcome to the Council the Honourable Justice Paul Coghlan of the Supreme Court of Victoria and His Honour Ian Gray, Chief Magistrate of Victoria. These distinguished appointments will continue the tradition of ACSO's positive relationship with Victoria's judiciary and I am sure their knowledge and experience will be invaluable to ACSO's future work.

After 25 years of service, ACSO has moved to new premises at 1 Hoddle Street, Richmond and is proud to be contributing to the diverse community services system within the City of Yarra as well as providing programs across Victoria. I would like to pay a particular tribute to our Chief Executive Officer, Tony Calabro, whose untiring dedication to ACSO over many years has been exemplary. I also thank our staff, who continue to work with optimism and professional skills to fulfil ACSO's mission in helping the most disadvantaged and disconnected people in our community. In this work staff of all levels have adapted to changes in government policy to ensure that the organisation's work remains relevant to the community that it serves.

The Honourable Alastair Nicholson, AO RFD QC



**THE HON. ALASTAIR NICHOLSON**  
PATRON-IN-CHIEF

In this, my third year as Chair I am pleased to report my continuing confidence in the role of Council in actively providing strategic direction and leadership to ACSO. This role has been particularly important as the past 12 months have been very challenging for ACSO.

I acknowledge the significant contributions made by ACSO Council Members. In doing so, I would like to make particular reference to departing members – Professor Karen Nankervis and Dr Ruth Vine. Professor Nankervis was Deputy Chair and Chair of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee, she resigned in 2009 when appointed to the University of Queensland. Dr Ruth Vine also resigned, to take up the position of Victoria's Chief Psychiatrist. As well as departures, new members of the Council were appointed in 2009. The Council benefitted from the appointment of Ms Kathleen Barker and Dr Bill Glasser to the Council.

During 2009 there were also changes to the Chair of the three Council Committees: while Ms Ersilia Barbone continued as Chair of the Governance Committee, Mr Tony Cant, Partner of Romanis Cant Chartered Accountants took over as Chair of our Risk and Audit Committee and Dr Leigh Gassner APM took over as as Chair of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee.

The past 12 months has seen the organisation transition its head office and numerous program operations to a new premises at 1 Hoddle Street, Richmond. This change has resulted in better public transport access for ACSO clients and improved office amenity for ACSO staff. I pass my appreciation on to ACSO staff and management for their patience and continued commitment to their clients during what was a time of change and transition.

ACSO was a successful applicant in the Federal Government's restructure of the Job Network, Job Services Australia which commenced on the 1st July 2009. The overall outcome was positive with ACSO receiving new business to deliver Stream Services in the City of Yarra and being selected as one of only two Specialist Homelessness providers in Victoria. This contract will be delivered in partnership with St Vincent De Paul Community Services. Unfortunately, the tender process resulted in ACSO closing down its successful Geelong and Dandenong Job Network sites. I extend my gratitude to those dedicated ACSO staff who continued to provide services right up until the end of the contract. I wish them the best in their future employment endeavours.

ACSO's 2006 – 2009 Strategic Plan was finalised and evaluated, with a number of important recommendations made including to establish a Research and Evaluation Unit. In response, ACSO Council has invested resources over the next 12 months for the Strategy and Development Project, which will analyse and develop solutions to key gaps highlighted by the Strategic Plan Evaluation. These issues are detailed within this year's Annual Report and include: development of an ACSO Research Agenda, establishing an organisation wide Evaluation Framework and commencement of seeking funds for innovative programs from philanthropic trusts and foundations.

2009 ended on a major challenge to ACSO, with the Department of Justice - on behalf of Government - selectively tendering the lead contract for the multi million dollar Justice Health Services of Victoria. A significant percentage of ACSO's contracts are included within the scope of the tender. So, in order to seek to continue to provide the support services on which ACSO had built its quality service reputation, ACSO was required to engage with the tender process. This process raised significant challenges for ACSO's Council, senior management and senior staff. I want to congratulate the whole ACSO team for the manner in which they worked their way through the complex financial, moral and service planning issues raised by the tender process.



**MICHAEL WRIGHT**  
CHAIRMAN

In conjunction with the senior team, I want to specifically thank the Risk and Audit Committee, Chaired by Mr Tony Cant and with the wonderful independent members, Mr Andrew Chadwick and Mr Stewart Leslie, for the role they played in ensuring that ACSO's financial and risk issues are properly managed during a very complex 2009. With growing accountability and scrutiny of the Not-for-Profit sector, the oversight offered by the Risk and Audit Committee is crucial for assuring funders that they can have confidence in the efficacy and effectiveness of ACSO's governance and financial oversight. (In this context it is important to note that ACSO's 2008 Annual Report received its second Silver Award, following on from last years success, from the Australasian Reporting Association and was again named in the top 10 finalists in the PriceWaterhouse Coopers Foundation and Institute of Chartered Accountants Not-for-Profit Transparency Awards.) These awards are a direct result of the work of the staff and the Committee, for which I express my appreciation.

ACSO's work is based upon a sound structure with leadership being given by program managers and senior managers. Forming as an Executive they are responsible for implementation of both Council and operational policies. I have had the opportunity through Tony Calabro, Vaughan Winther and Ed Holmes to observe their work and the confidence they have in their staff. The Council also expresses its appreciation and indebtedness for the staff and their dedication.

Mr. Michael Wright - Chairperson



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

2009 commenced with the tragic events of the 'Black Saturday' bush fires on 7th February. The realisation only hit later in the evening and over the weekend. By Monday morning all ACSO staff had been affected either directly or by the shock of what slowly unfolded. At least one staff member lost their house, others lost close friends. ACSO's regional operations in Bendigo and Wangaratta were particularly affected. It was an intensely anxious time for those ACSO staff who either live and/or work in bushfire prone areas. At the other end of the spectrum some of our staff were involved in fighting the fires as CFA volunteers and cleaning up after it. I can only express my admiration to them. Beyond that, ACSO staff rallied around to assist victims and their families where ever possible. As a measure of this we donated \$8,000.00 to the bush fire appeal. When ACSO was asked by DHS to consider offering staff for case management we volunteered four positions. That offer was accepted and will continue until 31st December 2009. Can I thank those case managers for their work and ACSO staff generally for the commitment they have shown to all those affected by the bush fires.

## SIGNIFICANT ISSUES FOR THE YEAR

### Change of premises

ACSO's change of premises has been successfully completed. The new 'head office' location at 1 Hoddle Street, Richmond provides enhanced access to public transport and re-positions many of our programs to focus on service delivery within the City of Yarra. The open plan office layout offers a more collegiate environment and additional client interview space was made available with the fit-out. With the awarding of the Federal Government Job Services Australia contract, ACSO will be expanding already with an additional site being opened on Hoddle Street to deliver employment placement services.

### The Victorian Justice Health Initiative

ACSO was informed late in 2008 of changes in State Government policy relating to health services delivered to people involved in the criminal justice system. Whilst these changes may pose significant operational and financial challenges to ACSO, we welcome the decision of the Victorian Government to reform health services to prisoners and other people being dealt with by the Courts and Victoria Police. We look forward to working in partnership with Government in developing the proposed service model.

### Federal Government Employment Contracts

ACSO was a successful applicant in the Federal Governments restructure of the Job Network, Job Services Australia which commenced on the 1st July 2009. The overall outcome was positive with ACSO receiving new business to deliver Stream Services in the City of Yarra, sites in North Melbourne and Richmond, and being selected as one of only two Specialist Homelessness providers in Victoria. In acknowledging this important link, ACSO negotiated a sub-contract with St Vincent De Paul Community Services to deliver part of the program from their site in North Melbourne. Unfortunately, the tender process resulted in ACSO closing down its Geelong and Dandenong Job Network sites. I extend my gratitude to those dedicated ACSO staff who continued to provide services right up until the end of the contract. I wish them the best in their future employment endeavours.

## POLICY ISSUES

### Mental Health.

Last year I wrote of concerns about the mental health issues experienced by people in the Victorian Prison System. The ongoing over-representation of people with serious mental health issues in the

justice system remains a focus, not only for ACSO, but also for the welfare sector in general. Despite the amount of demonstrative data and new forensic mental health focused initiatives to help address this trend, ACSO's Specialist Mental Health Services are still regularly finding mental health consumers exiting courts, prisons or police cells with no clinical follow up i.e. no medication or access to treatment. The irony is that, often, these were the same circumstances that lead to their offences and consequential incarceration in the first place. This phenomenon is further highlighted with bail applicants and remanded prisoners who are transported from a correctional facility to a court potentially anywhere in Victoria. They are subsequently released without consideration to treatment or appreciation that failure to provide access to their property and their medication has resulted in a very confused person, sometimes in prison clothes, with no resources or ability to collect their essential items such as minimal identification needed to access welfare and medication needed to keep them stable. Specialised Mental Health Court Liaison staff are only available at a small number of court locations and are not always engaged or available. Sometimes these cases are not dealt with until late in the day and, therefore, Centrelink and other necessary services are not available. It should be noted that ACSO does not hear about such cases until the crisis is unfolding, often too late. The impacts of such poor planning can result in harmful behaviour to the individual and/or community.

I believe that these problems can be resolved – via a well resourced responsive flexible short term support service that can be placed on alert to intercept such clients and provide a short term crisis response. This response could include assistance to address issues such as emergency accommodation and access to resources to address basic needs and importantly, provide an assertive referral and linking service to area mental health services or other support programs.

I welcome the Victorian Government's 'Because Mental Health Matters': the Victorian Mental Health Reform Strategy 2009-19. The strategy will focus on social inclusion as well as prevention, early intervention, recovery. It aims to increase the responsiveness of the mental health service system to people who are homeless with mental health issues through addressing the impact of multiple and compound disadvantage. The process being followed by the Victorian Government to reform the mental health system gives ACSO hope that the new system will take into account ACSO's core client group. We hope this will lead to better service provision for those within the mental health system who have traditionally not had the support they deserve.

### Accommodation and Homelessness:

I congratulate the Australian Government in providing a structure for reform in homelessness and homelessness assistance in the release of the 'White Paper on Homelessness – The Road Home'. I note that the White Paper's emphasis on long term individually tailored solutions, preventing exits into homelessness (eg. from prisons, hospitals and also from rooming houses) will provide positive outcomes for current and future ACSO clients. ACSO acknowledges that the Victorian Government will soon commence the development of a new Victorian Homelessness Strategy to direct the achievement of the White Paper goals in Victoria and looks forward in participating in the consultative process that will follow.

ACSO also acknowledges the commitment of the Department of Justice - Corrections Victoria as they have commenced working with key stakeholders including; the Office of Housing, Yarra Community Housing and HomeGround Services in developing specialised housing support models for people leaving prison.

The current policy context both at the Federal and State levels, presents an exciting opportunity to truly make a difference in the way homelessness is addressed and to effectively reduce homelessness in Australia and Victoria.

In 2009 ACSO commenced participating in the Northern Local Area Services Network and is working closely with a number of homelessness providers in the North West Metropolitan Region to better integrate housing support resources. I would like to acknowledge the work of our Specialist Mental Health Services team and the Program Manager Robb Ritchens for their ongoing commitment to this network.

As our Annual Report goes to print ACSO is working closely with the Office of Housing to try and secure an alternative site for our McCormack House program. The current site requires upgrading, however, is privately owned. This program plays a small, but critical role in the homelessness sector providing intensive residential and home based outreach support for mental health consumers with an Axis One diagnosis.

### Extended Supervision Orders

ACSO's Sex Offender Support Program and Disability Program has seen an increased number of offenders receiving Extended Supervision Orders. With new legislation coming before the Victorian Parliament which will expand the scope of these orders to include sex offenders and child sex offenders, there is a greater need for the Department of Justice to provide appropriate levels of resources in addition to monitoring and supervision. Without access to safe affordable accommodation and appropriate material aid, these clients experience high levels of stress and therefore can potentially pose a greater risk in the community.

## ACSO'S STRATEGIC PLAN

Our 2006 – 2009 Strategic Plan has been overseen by the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee. The work of this council subcommittee has been evolving to become a strategic positioning committee with its role playing a pivotal part in the ACSO council determining strategies for its future activities including overseeing strategic partnership development, the establishment of a Research and Evaluation Unit and establishing relationships with philanthropic trusts and foundations. In these times of financial difficulty, policy initiatives and government change, it is important for organisations such as ACSO to have the ability to anticipate and foresee changes so that its activates are responsive to both government policy and evolving client needs. This committee fulfils that role. Can I express my appreciation to the members Prof Karen Nankervis, Justice Sally Brown AM, Dr Leigh Gassner APM, Dr Ruth Vine and Mr Michael Wright for their work.

Our 2006 – 2009 Strategic Plan came to an end and was evaluated with feedback requested from all ACSO staff and stakeholders. I congratulate the ACSO staff and managers who maintained such a significant commitment to the organisations future, providing creative input and developing a number of important strategic projects that have had a positive impact. Some of the key outcomes included; the re-branding of ACSO with a new logo, implementing the strategy development project which will provide a new focus on research and evaluation and a draft Partnerships Framework. Further detail is provided later in the Annual Report. ACSO's next strategic plan will be developed in 2010-11 to coincide with the outcome of the Department of Justice's redevelopment of Justice Health Services.

## FORENSIC DISABILITIES CONFERENCE

The highlight for our Disability Program in 2009, was conducting the 4th Forensic Disabilities Conference in Melbourne with the theme 'Disability and Justice – Many Faces, Equal Rights?' Keynote speakers from the United Kingdom included; Professor Gill Hague from Bristol University, Professor William Lindsay from University of Aberdeen and Dr Jonathon Rogers from St Mary's Hospital in Warrington Cheshire. The conference highlighted that, as international and local government legislative and



**ANTONY CALABRÒ**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

decision-making processes are becoming increasingly influenced by issues relating to human rights, there also needs to be analysis and debate on how this construct impacts or translates to those who have special needs, have offended, and/or have been victimised.

A strong and effective working relationship between staff and Council continues to be the cornerstone of the organisation. I particularly express my personal appreciation to Chair Michael Wright and Deputy Chair Associate Professor Karen Nankervis who are available to provide input and support for myself and senior management. I also acknowledge the Council members who contribute their time and expertise in providing advice and governance accountability via the sub committees of Council.

Finally, I express my great appreciation to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan Winther, Director of Business Management, Ed Holmes and to the program managers, Robb Ritchens (Specialist Services), Jenny Johnston (Justice Services), Renae MacNamara (Employment Services), Brett Anderson (Disability), and Annie Trainor (Link Out). Their level of expertise and their commitment to our clients is reflected in the quality of service and the outcomes achieved. I also express my admiration and thanks for all the ACSO staff for their commitment to our mission and to their clients.

**Antony Calabrò** - Chief Executive Officer



# OUR HISTORY: FOUNDERS' MEMORIES

## GETTING STARTED: STAN MCCORMACK'S STORY

### A seed was planted

When I was doing time for armed robbery, there was a priest there who was the assistant prison chaplain.

In late 1982 we were sitting in my cell chatting when he said to me "Stan, I want you to think about what might be needed by men who are coming out of jail, like a half way house. I have a couple of barrister friends who have noticed that there is no support for people after they are released."

### Planning

So I set to work. I wrote out everything that someone may need, a site for the house, food, clothing and access to resources generally. I did this because I saw it as a challenge and it got me thinking.

The priest never mentioned this conversation again, and when I got out of jail I had no intentions of starting a half way house. I did get involved with Prison Fellowship who kindly accommodated me, and gave me some work. My main job there was to produce 'The Epistle', a magazine published and distributed for the prison population. However I still had the desire to help other prisoners who were in my situation.

Soon after that I moved into a little self contained flat in a Carmelite monastery where my brother was a priest.

Then someone I knew got out of prison after eight years. He had nowhere to go. Over the weekend he stayed with me and I decided that now was as good a time as any to find a rental property for situations like this, and as a home base for the magazine. At that time another ex prisoner I knew had just been kicked out of his property and needed somewhere to stay as well.



**STAN MCCORMACK**  
FOUNDER OF ACSO



STAN MCCORMACK'S ORIGINAL VISION FOR A PRISONER  
SUPPORT SERVICE, DRAWN UP IN 1983 IN PENTRIDGE PRISON

**"Look Father... if it's God's work then it will succeed, if it isn't then it will fail, so let's leave it at that." And we did.**

STAN MCCORMACK - FOUNDER OF ACSO

### The first house

So we got a private rental house in Napier St. Fitzroy, on 23rd October 1983. We all shared the rent but I paid the majority of it, as I had a part time night shift job at a bakery.

From that time people just kept coming in, as well as supporters coming on board to help. I still had a lot of contact with prisoners still inside, and through the magazine the house was advertised as somewhere these guys could go for crisis accommodation. Many men were being released at the same time and it was known that my address was a place they knew they could go to get help.

The only help I had at the time was an unpaid but qualified social worker.

### Bursting at the seams

At one point it was so crowded, I was sleeping in the cupboard.

When the house was full, we used to then accommodate guys in boarding houses across inner Melbourne. We were literally inundated with people!

I never worried about how many people were in the house at one time and it never affected me who was coming and going. There was always help on hand from the residents who would do anything for us because we were providing a roof over their heads.

### Support flows in

The more men we took in, the more support we seemed to get from different people and agencies.

Another priest who was a friend once questioned me about what I was doing.

We went to have dinner in Chinatown one Sunday night and a group of people got stuck into me. They had heard of the place and knew I'd been in jail for so many years.

I just said "Look Father... if it's God's work then it will succeed, if it isn't then it will fail, so let's leave it at that." And we did.

After a few months, someone from the Department said to me "Stan, do you know how we will judge the success of this endeavour? By the number of requests you are getting!"

So it wasn't long after that, that we secured four flats across the road, but still more requests than we could manage were pouring in from the different male prisons across Victoria.

### Sister Clare McShee

At that time, a catholic nun, Sister Clare was away at a weekend conference. A lady came up to her and asked if she would take her to the prison in Bendigo and help her deliver a present to one of the prisoners. This lady was connected to a group who used to go and visit the prisoners regularly in Bendigo. That was when Sister Clare came on board with us and was soon visiting prisons with us and did so for many years. Recently she was awarded an Order of Australia medal for her work in prisons and specifically with sex offenders.

### Generous people and many miracles

Miracles seemed to happen all the time.

One day there was a man who just got out of prison and only knew two people who both lived in Canberra. Until he could get there, he was homeless.

That very day some volunteers came in and handed me an envelope containing \$300. It was from an ex prisoner who had used the service before and who said he felt he had to give back. Well, that was a problem solved.

We never had the money when the time came to pay our rent, but we always got it somehow in the nick of time, often given as a surprise gift, and sometimes the exact amount.

People gave to us all the time.

### Getting organised, and the entrance of Alastair Nicholson

We realised we needed to get a committee of management established, so it was a case of getting hold of strategic people.

Someone suggested we get a Judge on our committee. We asked one, who suggested his colleague who happened to be head of the Parole Board and was interested in what we were doing. Judge Alastair Nicholson was his name. We invited him over to see what we were doing.

Just before he arrived I got everyone up and kicked some people out and ran around in a mad rush. Then he arrived and I showed him a plan of what I had in mind.

I was just about to show him around when one of the ex prisoners Matthew comes rolling into the office. He was about 16 stone and it was obvious he had been out and had a big night the night before. It was not really the impression I was trying to create. However we moved off quickly and I explained clearly what we did there. Alastair wrote back not long after this visit to say he was happy to put his name to this project.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

### Note:

Stan lives now in Castlemaine, but remains in touch with ACSO.

His work in the establishment and early days of ACSO is always remembered and honoured, and the residential house which cares for people with an offending history and a mental illness is named after him.



**LEN REYNOLDS**  
FOUNDATION STAFF MEMBER

## GETTING INVOLVED: LEN REYNOLDS' STORY

I was remanded in custody In Pentridge, awaiting trial for armed robbery.

I decided at that time that my best option was to escape.

I deliberately smashed my finger and was taken to hospital.

I waited until I was treated and plaster was on my hand. We were walking out when I said to the officer "Hang on; I need to go to the toilet." So off I went and walked out the bathroom's other exit. He didn't know there were 2 entrances to the public toilets, but I did!

He was still waiting outside, meanwhile I was picked up by somebody and driven away.

It was an intense time as I was on the run. The bloke I was staying with knew a sailor that worked on a steam ship, and so I went aboard. Everyone on the ship just thought I was one of the crew.

We were about a mile off the coast of New Zealand when my sailor mate came up to me and said that the authorities were on their way out to the ship to search for "stowaways" and drugs. Unless I was willing to go overboard, then I would be caught. So my mate gave me a life jacket and overboard I went.

It took me about an hour to get to the shore. When I finally touched dry land I laid there for an hour recovering.

Amazingly, at that moment a lady came along and said "Looks like you're in trouble?"

I replied "Yeah I am, I lost my wallet and things in the water and I have nowhere to go." She then said "Well I have a spare room at my place. Why don't you stay there for a couple of weeks until you get on your feet?"

So I accepted her offer.

It was a miracle! Someone up above was looking after me!!

I then started work in New Zealand as a painter and was earning a good wage. I wanted to move on from New Zealand so I contacted a mate of mine who went and rented a room for me. What I didn't know was that he had already told someone in Melbourne that he was helping me, so two months later I was arrested and extradited back to Melbourne.

My punishment for escaping was being placed in "H" division in Pentridge.

My current sentence was eleven years for armed robbery. While I was still inside I met up with a mate who was into "stick ups." He offered me "a quick job" when I got out and I agreed as I had no job or anywhere to go once I got out.

Unfortunately I was still thinking with the old crim's mentality where you imagine you are smart and invincible. So we did the job and ended up having a shootout with the cops this time. Bullets were fired everywhere and I was shot in the collarbone. It was like being in a Western, but it was Melbourne.

### Time for change

I ended up with a 14 year sentence with a minimum of 12 years to serve.

On the first day of my new prison sentence, I knew that I had to change.

During that time I started looking at myself and those around me.

I realized I had all these tough gangsters around me and they were all doing hard jail terms 18 years, 20 years, 22 years and I realised that this was my life gone.

I was only 32 when I first went to prison. All the gangsters say they don't cry but they do when the doors are shut!

I didn't want any visitors at that time, although my mother came to visit me often which I think is where I got my strong will from.

Fortunately I ended up doing 8 years after all because of my good behaviour.

The people in charge around me had noticed the change in me, and I began leading by example.

At that time, a highly esteemed judge, Prof. The Hon. Alastair Nicholson had made a commitment to ACSO as Chair of the new Council, and Patron. Fortunately for me, he was also the head of the Parole Board at that time and greatly assisted me in getting parole.

I made a determined decision to turn my life around mentally too. I no longer hung around those gangsters or became one of them. I was no longer a sheep. I decided I was going to go straight and I was never tempted after that.

### Finding my way to McCormack House

I was released from prison with 5 years parole to serve.

I knew Stan McCormack in jail. I also knew of him trying to put his criminal past behind him and was serious about setting up a place for prisoners when they are released. He used to talk about it a lot before his own release.

Stan offered me a job at ACSO and I stayed on for 20 years.

The one thing that I was able to do the whole time I was in prison is work. So I became a cook and worked 7 days a week. I had trained myself to get up and go to work. I was in a "disciplined" routine.

### Why did McCormack House succeed?

McCormack House thrived mainly due to the life experience of the staff on board. It was the way we treated people. We treated everyone with dignity. We were all equals. A lot of prisoners are aware the moment they walk in a room whether they are liked or not. You get that from jail.

That's when I would say to them "Hey, we're all equals here now. No one is the boss. I'm the same as you mate, I'm here to help."

### What did I get out of working at McCormack House?

I felt those prisoners pain as well as my own. I have all these wasted years, my youth, all my good times, all the nice women I could have been with!

The main thing I got out of my time working at McCormack House was that I saw the change in myself as I was helping other people.

I got a lot of satisfaction from working with somebody and seeing the changes in them.

I knew that some of these people were dangerous and without help they could go on to kill or rob someone.

It was a job that I wanted to do and it was the opposite of what I had done before. I was dedicated to the cause and I wanted to live a normal life... to go to work, go home, work hard, save money, buy a house.

### The process of change

Before I could change, I needed to be ashamed of what I did and be genuinely sorry. I needed to take responsibility for my actions and for hurting a lot of people.

You can blame others for your bad childhood but when reality hits, you will still be back to square one in the "merry go round" cycle of jail.

I had to be hard with all the stories I heard. Sometimes I would say things to people that they didn't like to hear at that time. But the next day they would often come back and say "Hey, you were right about that. I was an asshole.

I would always give people something to think about!

**I feel that ACSO has given me the chance to get my life back, and in turn I have helped get back many other peoples lives.**

LEN REYNOLDS A FOUNDATION STAFF MEMBER

### An example

You must have the will to change. You can't be half a crook! I had a bloke come down the stairs one night with a balaclava and gloves on. I said to him "Where the bloody hell are you going?" He said "It's a cold night!" I yelled to him: "Get that balaclava off, get the gloves off and get back to your room and I don't want to see you for the rest of the night!" The next day the guy come and apologized, and he changed his ways after that.

### Our many residents

I remember one guy who was really dangerous and mentally unstable. He used to watch tv and go out and stab people, because the tv would tell him to do it.

He came to me one night and said "Mr Lenny, The TV told me I have to stab someone!" I said to him "Did it mention my name?" With that, this guy smiled and I took him to Royal Park psychiatric hospital where they managed to put him on the right medication. He then succeeded all because he got the right help.

I feel that ACSO has given me the chance to get my life back, and in turn I have helped get back many other peoples lives.

**Thank you**



EARLY CONNECTIONS:  
ALASTAIR NICHOLSON'S STORY

Early days

From the age of seven, my early days were spent in a boarding school in Melbourne, as my parents lived in Papua New Guinea, and there were no local schools there.

In the September and Christmas holidays I would travel to Papua New Guinea to visit my parents on their coconut plantation. I loved that lifestyle and I spoke the local language.

It was a big change to go from boarding school to the free life in the tropics. Those days deeply affected me in that I became interested in the lives and culture of Papuan people, and it widened my understanding of the diversity of people's lives.

My parents had a strong influence on my life. I had no brothers and sisters but I had a close relationship with my parents. My mother encouraged me in my schoolwork. My father was a man whom I also regarded as a close friend, and I always think very fondly of them both. My parents always led by example. They were also very conscious of looking after the local people, and were very caring in the way they assisted those around them.

As a young person, I had always thought I would go into medicine but in my final year of schooling, I found that I enjoyed the humanities subjects and had an interest in politics and enrolled in Law at Melbourne University.

A career in Law

I commenced Articles in 1960 which I thoroughly enjoyed. However soon after, I developed a keen interest in going to court and arguing cases, which seemed much more interesting to me than dealing with wills and conveyancing.

From 1963, I practiced independently at the bar and became a Queen's Counsel in 1979. As counsel I appeared in the general run of criminal and civil cases and before Royal Commissions and various Boards of Inquiry. I remember particularly the Inquiry that I conducted into the Richmond City Council. The irregularities, included frauds involving tampering with electoral rolls and bribery, together with various acts of violence such as the firebombing of houses and cars and led not only to the sacking of the council, but also to various criminal charges.

In 1982 I was appointed a Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria and also became Deputy Chair, and then later Chair of the Parole Board.

As a result of my parole involvement I was asked by Sir James Gobbo, then a colleague of mine at the Court, whether I would be interested in chairing an organisation that supported ex prisoners, later to become known as ACSO, and I was and my interest has continued to date. In 1988 I left the Supreme Court and the Parole Board and accepted appointments as Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia and as a Judge of the Federal Court of Australia. Thereafter my direct involvement in the criminal law ceased but I maintained my interest through ACSO.

Early days of ACSO

Our first meetings were in the (ACSO) drop-in centre in Napier St. Fitzroy.

The driving force in the organisation was Stan McCormack, a former bank robber who had turned his life around in prison. He is such a gentle man that I always found it very hard to imagine him in a robbery. The gun he used was only a toy, nevertheless he received quite a long sentence.



ALISTAIR NICHOLSON  
FOUNDING COUNCIL CHAIR OF ACSO

Alistair Nicholson was the founding Chair of the ACSO Council, and his connection continues today as Council member and Patron-in-Chief.

Stan was a visionary who really believed in what he was doing. He believed that all that was needed for the organisation to prosper would just emerge. He had a lot of confidence, and he didn't mind asking anyone to come along and assist. I think this confidence was very much sustained by his faith.

I remember he rang me one time and said, "We can't pay the light bill, or the rent for that matter." At that time I had been introduced through one of my fellow Judges to a Priest named Vincent Kiss who was also the Manager of ANZ Trustees. I rang him and asked him if he could help out, and he responded with \$90,000.00 which enabled the Napier Street property to be purchased. Vince later proved to be an unsavoury character who went to prison himself, but he certainly did a great job for his future fellow prisoners on this occasion.

The meaning of Justice

I deliberately chose to support an organisation that wasn't well established. I was attracted by the fact that Stan McCormack had been in jail and so knew what was needed and he understood the people who would use the service. He had such an enthusiasm and dedication to it. He also had some good people working with him like Chris Cappello and later Sister Clare McShee..

I have never believed that because someone has been in jail, they can't make a contribution. That belief was my main motivation.

I'm a great believer in equality of opportunity. I think all people should have an equal opportunity to achieve what they can. It annoys me when society continues to punish ex prisoners after incarceration. I don't think it's fair. We have a guiding principal in the concept of Justice. In the law, this really means treating people fairly and equally and not favouring people because of their beliefs or rejecting them because of their flaws.

I have met many people through the courts and in prison during my parole Board period and this has made me hopeful about people.

For example, Len Reynolds was a founding staff member who had also done long prison terms for armed robbery, and for shooting at a policeman. It is hard to imagine a more difficult background than his.

His application for parole came up. His prospects didn't look too good. However he had behaved well when he was in jail and we thought he would be okay. I remember thinking 'this guy has something going for him,' and then you just keep your fingers crossed.

It is a very interesting thing that he was able to overcome so much in his own and in his family's background and become what I would describe as a decent citizen. There are plenty of others who have done that also.

It is interesting when you talk to people who have been in for murder and so on, that many after release have gone on to live quite normal pleasant lives. You can't assume that all will be villains forever.

The challenges

Many challenges awaited me also.

I remember there was a lot of bad publicity when the neighbours found out what Francis House was about. So I went on television to defend the house and it was quite an eerie experience. I can remember that the interviewer was in Sydney but I was talking to a big wall in Melbourne.

One of our first financial supports from Government I was able to achieve, because as Deputy Chair of the Parole Board I had some connections with the Office of Corrections. I remember going to see the Minister, Mrs Pauline Toner and she offered us a grant of \$3,000, which was quite a lot of money then.

I can recall another time when Sister Clare was being seriously threatened by an unbalanced and dangerous individual, and the police were being less than responsive. I made a phone call to Christine Nixon and her response was immediate.

I can recall when we were constructing the Board, I had a friend who was an accountant whom I invited along to sit in on a meeting, with a view to him assisting us. He left the meeting only to discover his car had been smashed. He didn't come back!!

One of the disappointments was that we were trying to offer the same type of support for women ex prisoners but we just couldn't seem to get that working. There was not the same level of support available that is given to men.

ACSO's development

I have watched ACSO develop over 25 years. I believe it has lasted and grown because it has always had good people on its Council. The people from the Court system, judges and so on, gave it some credibility.

We were fortunate also to have great staff. Stan McCormack was so visionary.

Tony Calabrò was and is a great asset. He has been really wonderful over the years and done a tremendous job. He is very calm and so is very good at dealing with difficult situations. He has had my great confidence, and still does. Sister Clare's work over the years has been extraordinary.

It was good to see ACSO expand its Board and also enter a time of strategic planning, in order to become more organised. I was always concerned that in operating so informally, something could go awry. In operating more professionally, it has nevertheless retained its spirit and avoided becoming just another bureaucracy.

ACSO's future

These days, ACSO continues to face challenges, however, I am sure we will get through them. There are too many people interested in it to let it go, and its reputation is very good.

I have enjoyed being involved with ACSO because it is an organisation that is achieving something.

I think the real purpose of places like ACSO is to rehabilitate people to the point that they can take their place as valued members of the community. I think that's what it's about. It's about dealing with people who are starting out from scratch, a long way back, and you have to be prepared to make allowances for that. I think by the same token the system serves a purpose and that's what it's there for.

Don't lose sight of our purpose. That is my advice.

All in all, I don't consider myself a particularly great achiever. I have just done the best I can with the knowledge I have.

May we all do likewise.



Timeline  
Establishment  
of services

1983

The Epistle Centre  
(post release drop-in)

1987

McCormack House  
(post-release accommodation)  
Prison Outreach and Support

1989

Disability Program  
(Intellectual Disabilities)

1992

Forensic Mental Health  
Later Specialist Mental  
Health Services

1997

Employment Directions,  
and Community Offender  
Advice and Treatment  
Service (AOD)

2001

Bridging the Gap  
This, and several smaller transitional  
services merged in 2007 to form Link Out.

2006

Sex Offender Support Program

2007

CASST (post release crisis  
accommodation support)  
and Link Out

2008

Konnect  
(Koori Transitional Support)

2009

Job Services Australia



# HISTORICAL CROSSROADS

## A REUNION AND A FAREWELL



### On the 31st October 2008, ACSO's history and ACSO's future met to celebrate some significant milestones.

Present were many current staff, who gathered to say farewell to a foundation staff member, Mr Len Reynolds, an armed robber who on release from prison spent the next twenty years working for ACSO and assisting men transition from prison into new ways of living. His story is profiled in this year's Annual Report.

Amongst those attending the farewell was the The Hon Alastair Nicholson, who being the Head of the Parole Board at the time, enabled Len to be released and commence his life of community service.

His speech of appreciation to Len is recorded here.

Also present were Chris Cappello and Tony Calabrò who were also foundation staff members, but also hold current positions, being the Executive Secretary and CEO respectively.

Sr Clare McShee who was the early face of ACSO in the prisons and who also pioneered the Sex Offender Outreach Program attended, also Aiden Fahey another foundation staff member of the Mental Health Outreach Program. Stan McCormack, the founder of ACSO was present and his painting undertaken in honour of The Hon Alastair Nicholson was unveiled.

This event celebrated great and long term achievements. At the same time it was a farewell, with an acknowledgement that the gathering of these particular identities who had achieved and given so much was for the last time. This then was a very significant occasion.

### The farewell speech, by The Hon Alastair Nicholson, Patron and president of ACSO

My attention was first drawn to Len some years ago when I was chairing the Parole Board. At that time Len was a bit of a problem but to his eternal credit he then turned his life around and has done a terrific job since.

He came to ACSO on the 1st October 1988, 20 years ago and he was then house manager of McCormack House, named after ACSO founder Stan McCormack.



ACSO FOUNDERS: ALASTAIR NICHOLSON, LEN REYNOLDS & STAN MCCORMACK WITH AIDEN FAHEY



STAN MCCORMACK & ALASTAIR NICHOLSON AT THE UNVEILING OF THE PAINTING

**Clients soon began to realise that you (Len) have a great gentleness about you and a supporting nature that helped so many people.**

THE HON ALASTAIR NICHOLSON, PATRON AND PRESIDENT OF ACSO

Len worked at McCormack house for 20 years and the work changed considerably over that time. It started with 10 beds, accommodating ex prisoners of various categories and then moved to Victoria Street where it specialised in housing sex offenders and clients with a mental illness. With each of these groups of people Len has been able to show amazing understanding and support on all levels.

He also apparently has a certain 'reputation' I'm told that makes people stand up and take notice! In the early days, that would have been a considerable help!

In any event clients soon began to realise that you have a great gentleness about you and a supporting nature that helped so many people. You should take great credit in your vital work, as I know this organisation is extremely proud of you. You have a great knack of providing feedback to support staff, combined with your good sense of humour that has seen you through the work you have been doing.


Len assisted over 1000 people who stayed at McCormack House while House Manager.





I do this work because  
I have been able to make a  
difference to forgotten and  
persecuted people.

## DISABILITY PROGRAM



THE DISABILITY PROGRAM OPERATES 15 DISTINCT SERVICES TO VICTORIANS WHO HAVE A DISABILITY. SERVICES ARE MANAGED ACCORDING TO THREE SERVICE STREAMS; RESIDENTIAL SERVICES, OUTREACH SERVICES AND THERAPEUTIC SERVICES.

WHILST THE MAJORITY OF OUR CLIENTS HAVE AN INTELLECTUAL OR OTHER COGNITIVE DISABILITY, MOST EXPERIENCE ADDITIONAL FORMS OF DISABILITY OR DISADVANTAGE, INCLUDING PSYCHIATRIC DISABILITY, SUBSTANCE MISUSE, SOCIAL ISOLATION, HOMELESSNESS, POVERTY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTURBANCE.





**BRETT ANDERSON**  
PROGRAM MANAGER - DISABILITY PROGRAM

I do this work because after many years of trying to bring justice to the wider community and having the feeling of bashing my head up against a brick wall, I have been able to make a difference to forgotten and persecuted people.

## MANAGEMENT REPORT DISABILITY PROGRAM

This year our program has enjoyed some significant highlights and achievements.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Forensic Disabilities Conference

We recently facilitated our 4th Forensic Disabilities Conference, titled ‘Disability and Justice: Many faces, Equal Rights?’ The event welcomed the largest number of delegates to this conference yet from all states and territories within Australia and overseas. This year’s conference included presentations from four keynote speakers, three of whom were from the United Kingdom, and a fourth presenter from Western Australia discussed issues relating to Koori sex offenders.

Overall, the feedback from those who attended was very positive and we are looking forward to continuing our involvement in hosting the event with the continued support of our sponsors.

#### Disability Services Review

This year also welcomed a major review of our services by the Australian Healthcare Association. This resulted in a favourable outcome, and indicated that the program is well regarded as responsible yet flexible which provides a valuable resource to the disability sector for people who present with forensic, psychiatric and/or complex support needs.

The key recommendations related to improving program guidelines and more clearly defining policies and processes.

Work has commenced to address the recommendations from the report.

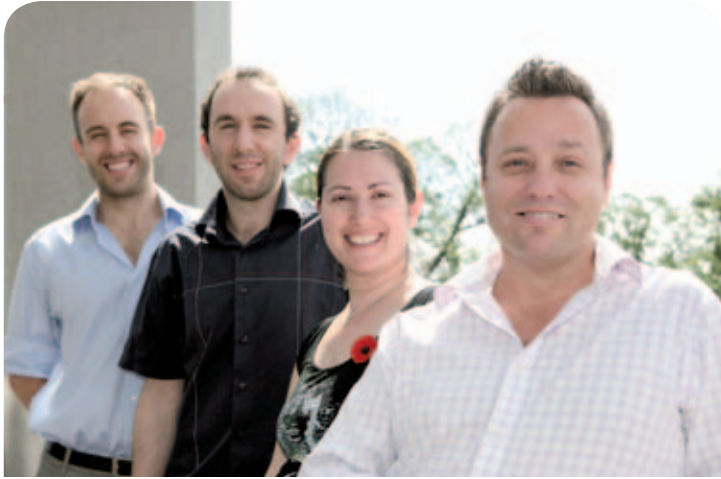
#### Meeting a challenge

During the year, DAP was approached by the Department of Human Services (DHS) to provide residential services to a client with a communicable disease who was deemed to pose a high-risk of offending and transmitting the disease.

DAP was able to respond to this request quickly, which included the setup and provision of a highly structured and monitored residential service. The program sought to maintain community safety whilst maintaining the dignity of the person to the greatest degree possible. As a result of our involvement, ACSO enhanced its reputation for the prompt development of support services for complex clients and received positive feedback for our actions throughout. The service concluded when there was no longer any supervisory or support requirements from our service.



STAFF FROM DISABILITY PROGRAM



STAFF FROM DISABILITY PROGRAM



OUR PROGRAMS TODAY: DISABILITY PROGRAM

### The Art Show

This year, ACSO hosted its 5th Art Show. Approximately 80 people attended the opening to this year’s show which included a range of over 100 pieces of client artwork.

More than 60 of the pieces on display were sold throughout the week, with all proceeds going to the artists which totalled over \$1000.

### Presentations

Paul Tomaszewski, DAP Program Co-ordinator, presented at the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disabilities (ASSID), Australasian Conference 2008. This presentation focussed on consumer understanding and experiences of processes involved in the application of Supervised Treatment Orders.

Additionally, Stan Pappos, DAP Program Co-ordinator, also presented an overview of DAP services on radio, which generated some positive publicity for the DAP program and its Art show.

Stan was also involved in providing training for all new Criminal Justice Case Managers within DHS, Disability Services.

### CHALLENGES

#### Workload

Some of the program challenges relate to the implementation of the Disability Act 2006. Our continued involvement with a number of forensic clients has resulted in a significant increase in administrative requirements. Despite these additional administrative requirements, there has been no additional funding support to assist with their implementation, and this has resulted in increased workloads.

The resignation of the Assistant Manager, Dual Disability Program Co-ordinator and the extended leave of the Program Manager have also added to pressures on the team over the year’s final quarter, who nevertheless did a great job.

#### Supervision Orders

Extended Supervision Orders and Supervised Treatment Orders have posed a challenge for staff in terms of the increased administrative component, but also in terms of the need to balance monitoring movements, and support. At times, the rights-based focus of the Disability Act 2006 has also presented significant challenges particularly in working with people on court orders through the required balance of restriction and opportunity.

#### Cultural Change

Within the last decade, there has been a shift in the concept of best practice, with an increasing focus on the development of positive social behaviours, and less on monitoring client activity.

At times, this has presented a moral dilemma for staff where a responsibility to help clients develop independent living skills in the community may seem to conflict with a concern about risk and duty of care to the community.

#### Advocacy

The advocacy role of staff continues to remain a challenge. Due to the complexity and history of some of the people that we work with, assisting people to gain access to generic services continues to be difficult. Additionally, staff are experiencing the added pressure of balancing and promoting a person’s human rights with individual court based or civil orders requiring monitoring and restriction.

A great deal of hard work has been done by the clients themselves. This has been achieved with the support of dedicated staff and these achievements make us feel that all the work we do continues to remain worthwhile.

OUR PROGRAMS TODAY: DISABILITY PROGRAM



SOME CLIENTS ARTWORK

## DISABILITY PROGRAM STAFF LIST

### PROGRAM MANAGER

Brett Anderson

### ASSISTANT MANAGER

Tracey Allen (to March 09)

### CO-ORDINATORS

Guy Cooper	Jeff Rose	Stan Pappos
Louise Mason	Paul Tomaszewski	

### STAFF

Asfaha Abraha	Vincent Allen	Robert Amato
Mary Astare	Kathy Astrinakis	Sacha Barry
Elma Becirovic	Tim Blanksby	Rodney Brady
Morris Briones	Gary Brook	Peter Cushing
Paul De Salvo	Anneka De Wilt	Mieka Donald
Jeff Douglas	Traceylee Farrell	Carmen Filip
Dip Gohil	Juan Goycoolea	John Haythorpe
Jane Hingston	Daniel Horvath	Renee Hyland
Simon Jones	Anurag Khullar	John Kildea
Michael Kofmansk	Anna Lansell-Kenny	Michelle Lesek
Taylor Linseman	Ljubica Loncarevic	Martin Markus
Daniel McCoy	Radomir Medic	Joseph Miles
John Moore	Jodi Murphy	Jasmin Ong
Josephine Pain	Ian Power	Bronwyn Price
Barbara Renou	Olivia Roberts	Noel Runnalls
Smita Sabhlok	Nadia Sartori	Daraphet Sayakhot
Leon Scadden	Shweta Sharma	Peter Simmonds
Ricky Skipper	Rinke Slotegraaf	Allison Smillie
Anthony Smith	Christopher Smith	Shane Spence
Andrew Taylor	BelindaThomas	Cara Thomson
Despina Tseros	Andrew Tyson	Philip Walsh
Darryl Warren	Philippa Williams	Nathan Wilson
Paul Wilson	Sandy Xu	



DISABILITY SERVICES

PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR SERVICE

A service that works with persons over 12 years of age who have an intellectual disability and are at risk of committing or have committed sex offences. The service offers client assessment, direct intervention, secondary consultation and staff training.

GAP

A voluntary program consisting of a lone outreach worker who provides a proactive and assertive response to the needs of clients with an Intellectual Disability.

Many of its clients do not engage with community-based services, and so a short period of ‘perseverance’ or ‘assertive outreach’ by the GAP worker is needed in order to assist the client to identify and work toward their goals.

GAP meets clients in their own environment for the purposes of assessment, case planning and mentoring/service provision and assists clients to build essential communication and life skills that will enable full community participation.

LINK

Provides outreach services to people with an Intellectual Disability who require support in a range of life areas in the North, West and Southern metropolitan regions of Melbourne.

Activities may include assistance with accessing recreation, leisure & cultural activities, travel training and support, skill development and household management, for example cooking, cleaning, budgeting.

SUPPORTED LIVING AND ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Offers assistance to people with an Intellectual Disability who have come into contact with the criminal justice system, or are at risk of doing so, and aims to assist clients to live independently and responsibly.

Clients are people accommodated in an Office of Housing flat in the inner Northern or Western suburbs of Melbourne and are provided with personalized outreach support. At the conclusion of the service, clients may retain on-going tenancy of the flat.

DUAL DISABILITY RESIDENTIAL SERVICE: ARMADALE HOUSE

A specialist short to medium term program for clients who have both an Intellectual Disability and a Mental Illness.

There are up to five people living in the house at any time, which is staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week.

FRANCIS HOUSE

A statewide service offering a residential placement for up to 12 months to persons with an Intellectual Disability who have had contact with the criminal justice system or are at risk of doing so.

The aim of the service is to assist residents to overcome the stress associated with their contact with the criminal justice system and to develop independent living skills. The service operates on a 24-hour staffing model.

Areas where residents may gain assistance include relapse prevention, development of social and independent living skills, recreation and educational and vocational training.

REGIONAL ACCOMMODATION

Five regional residential services exist for individuals who have an Intellectual Disability and exhibit challenging behaviours or behaviours of concern. They each accommodate up to 5 residents for medium to long-term periods, with the aim of promoting each resident’s community inclusion and development of skills and opportunities that reflect their needs and aspirations. Each service has staff available to provide support to residents 24 hours each day.

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Residential Services	Total No. Residents 09	Max Capacity	Occupancy Rate (%)
Francis House	7	4	100%
Western House	5	5	100%
TK House	6	5	100%
Southern House	5	5	100%
Aspin House	5	5	100%
Gully House	4	5	80%
Armadale House	2	5	40%

\*Note:

- 1. Where total number of residents exceeds maximum capacity, it denotes individuals exiting the program and being replaced by new residents. The maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- 2. Due to the Disability Review (see Management Report), a hold was placed on referrals to Armadale House, thus full occupancy rates were not achieved.

CLINICAL SERVICES

Problematic Sexual Behavior Service	Required	2009FY	Completion Rate (%)
No. of clients	12	15	125%
Training courses	6	8	133%

OUTREACH SERVICES

Program	No. of Clients	Completion Rate (%)
GAP	7	100%
Dual Disability Outreach	5	100%
Supported Living and Accommodation Program	6	100%



ASFAHA ABRAHA  
STAFF MEMBER - DISABILITY PROGRAM

My role at ACSO

Currently I work in the Disability Program as a residential worker. I work in an accommodation house which offers support to people who have had contact with the criminal justice system and who have an Intellectual Disability.

My job is to assist people in their development of social and everyday living skills.

My life in Ethiopia

My wife and I married in Ethiopia. My wife had been in Australia for 10 years before she travelled to Ethiopia so that we could get married. Then after the immigration process I joined her here in Melbourne.

In Ethiopia, I was working in a similar field.

After I completed my studies at Addis Ababa University, I worked with the Department of Health educating people in HIV/Aids prevention.

The main differences between my life in Ethiopia and my life here in Australia are the types of social life. In Ethiopia, you always have a strong relationship with the extended family. There was a very strong and close community base where I lived, and when you travel to Australia you miss that. Here it feels isolated.

However, I am becoming accustomed to the Australian lifestyle.

Another difference that I have noticed is that in Ethiopia, the Government does not have the capacity to care for disabled people and so they are left to the family to provide full care.

They are often neglected and uncared for as the families are poor and have very limited resources. They are living in very harsh conditions with no medication or medical facilities. It is very different from Australia.

A new working environment

For the first three months in my new role, I found it challenging. It was difficult to contain the residents’ behaviours, which I found often to be aggressive and abusive, but gradually I came to understand more of the behaviour of people with this disposition.

From there I managed to develop a good rapport with the clients. This came from the new and real appreciation and understanding I was learning. Now this is not hard work for me.

STAFF IN FOCUS

Also, I often see real change in people I work with. I see the results and benefits of the work I do. I have grown to like the residents, and I believe they like me.

Satisfaction

The best part of my job is the thanks the clients give. They are amazed that someone is taking the time to listen and help when most times they have felt neglected and as a result have lost their confidence. They know I’m someone who is on their side.

Challenge

The hardest part of my job is that it is a long term project, and there are no immediate results. It is often over a very long period of time that I see some progress, and this requires time and a lot of hard work.

Working for ACSO

I am very confident and happy to be working at ACSO. It’s been nearly 2 years since I started at ACSO and it is the first job I’ve had since coming out to Australia from Ethiopia, Africa.

My employment has not only provided a work environment, but also a means of learning about the lifestyle of Australian people.

I find the work I do is very rewarding and satisfying.

I have found ACSO to be very supportive of me, in terms of training and support from other staff.

I look forward to developing the skills I am learning along the way, and to complete more education to add to my qualifications in Social Services.

Thank you for this opportunity.

SMITA SABHLOK  
STAFF MEMBER - DISABILITY PROGRAM

I have previously worked in the Development and Housing sectors, however working in the Disability sector has been the most rewarding experience of my life.

The person-centred approach allows me to pay sufficient attention to the special needs of each individual client. At the same time, it gives immense satisfaction to be able to provide high quality services to clients with complex needs.

I like working for ACSO as it gives me the scope to work independently and it provides me with the opportunity to learn and grow.

Through ACSO, I am getting the opportunity to work closely with clients who can be both challenging and fun.

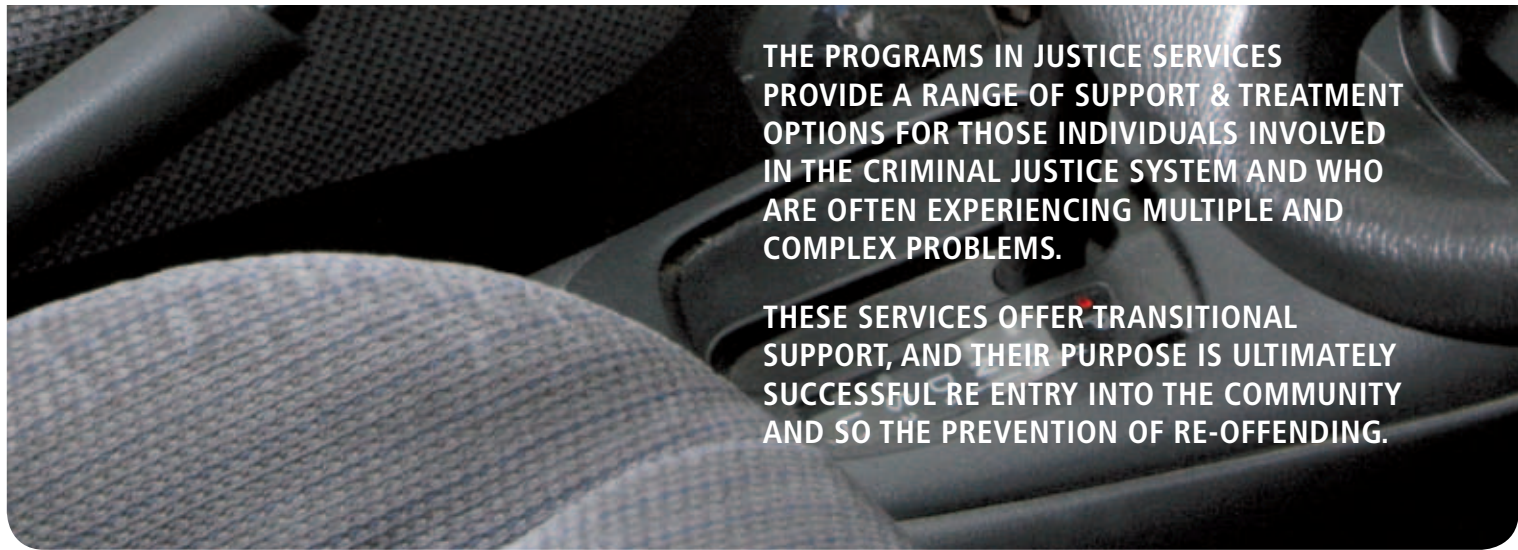
My experience has also been very exciting as I can transfer my skills and knowledge to help people with disabilities in countries like India.

The main thing I have come to realise is that with the right approach to support and care, people with disabilities do not need to have less than fulfilling lives than others in the community around them.





## JUSTICE SERVICES



## STAFF IN FOCUS

TRISH READ, STAFF MEMBER IN THE COMMUNITY OFFENDER ADVICE AND TREATMENT (COATS) SERVICE AND BASED IN THE WANGARATTA OFFICE.

### What does your role entail?

I travel a lot visiting clients, and I conduct drug and alcohol assessments with people who are going through the criminal justice system and who have substance abuse issues.

This is a fairly lengthy interview focusing on the person's psychosocial, medical, psychiatric and criminal history. Basically we are trying to find out what has led them into contact with the court system.

As regional workers, we cover the Hume region, which includes places like Wodonga, Myrtleford, Beechworth, Yarrawonga, Shepparton, Seymour, Benalla, Mansfield and Wangaratta.

There are three staff in this team, two servicing these communities, and one focusing on the two prisons within our region, being Beechworth and Dhurringile. Each of us would travel between 700 – 1000 kms each week.

### What are some of the issues that you see often recurring in assessments?

Some of the more common problems our clients have faced are dysfunctional or broken family units, substance abuse in the family, sexual abuse, violence and poor education. Often there have been no positive supports, combined with the suffering of severe physical and emotional abuse. Many of our clients are just ordinary people who have had a really bad run.

It doesn't excuse behaviour, but it gives insights as to why some people have done what they have done.

A lot of our clients are ready for treatment by the time the assessment is occurring.

Some of the stories of the clients we hear are heartbreaking. I listen to some people and I ask myself "how are you ever going to live differently given your history, and what you've been through?"

Yet it never ceases to amaze me how well the majority of our client group function, even though there can be a history which is horrific and terrible.

### Is it complicated in a small country town to keep your work and personal life separate?

I maintain very clear boundaries.

If I'm out and I see a client, then I wait for them to acknowledge me first before I say hello. A lot of the clients are embarrassed that I know them, so it's rare that they acknowledge me. However, if anyone begins a conversation, I ask them to call me in the office. I have never had a problem with my family's safety.

### What helps you cope with the emotional strain of work like this?

I have learnt to use co-workers as a sounding board. As we are in small team and often out on the road, it can tend to be lonely so phone contact is important. We also touch base with each other in the office a couple of times each week.

The regular formal supervision I receive is very important. Also if staff ever feel overwhelmed ACSO has been fantastic in providing informal or formal debriefings.



**TRISH READ**  
STAFF MEMBER - COATS

### Why do you choose to do this work?

I am really passionate about it. It's important for me to feel that I am doing something worthwhile. Often clients are really motivated and ready to do something about their life, and it gives me great satisfaction when I feel I can help them with that.

### What is the biggest personal challenge you face in the work you do?

At the moment it's the travel.

Also, working with sex offenders can be challenging. The background of a sex offender is often quite different to that of other client groups. They may be more likely to be well educated and with limited disruptions in their childhood. This group can be difficult to build a rapport with because many have learnt from their experiences in the system to be very self-protective, and so reluctant to disclose information.

### What brings you most satisfaction in your work?

Every day brings something new.

I am also conscious that we deal with people's lives, people who have names and faces, hopes and fears. It gives me great satisfaction to try to give people some option or avenue to enable them to move forward.

It amazes me some people are able to survive despite the horrific things that have happened to them, some things you couldn't imagine a child could survive. However, the human spirit is amazing. A lot of the clients don't appreciate how much resilience they have displayed in their life. I am so glad to be able to make a difference by providing clients with opportunities to make a difference in their own lives.

I have been through some rough times personally and ACSO has been very supportive to me through that time. I am thankful for all that ACSO has offered me.







**JENNY JOHNSTON**  
PROGRAM MANAGER - JUSTICE SERVICES

## MANAGEMENT REPORT JUSTICE SERVICES

This year has been a very busy one, with many changes occurring. These included ACSO's move to Richmond, program development and restructure and the short term management of extended supervision order clients.

### ACHIEVEMENTS

#### Research

This year, Justice Service also commissioned Caraniche to provide a piece of research in order to gain greater understanding of behaviour change in young people in relation to drug and alcohol use, and a review of the best practices around that behaviour.

This was important in helping the COATS program to learn more about what constitutes effective drug and alcohol treatment for young people across the field, some of the models of best practice, and ultimately, determining the most effective treatment for us to purchase.

#### Restructure and new positions

This year the COATS program was restructured as a response to the need to increase productivity.

As a result, some clinical positions were relocated to regional centres, to be supported by a regional Clinical Co-ordinator. This has created the opportunity to provide more regional assessments and increased access to regional prisons.

This move has also reduced travel time for metropolitan staff, and enabled a greater regional cover across Victoria, from Mildura to Gippsland.

Part of the restructure was a change to the leadership structure, and the development of a Deputy Manager position. This has enabled all Justice Services programs to be better supported.

This year Justice Services also employed a Koori Drug Diversion Forensic Co-Ordinator.

His role is to support and liaise with Koori Treatment Agencies particularly around the Community Offender Advice and Treatment Service (the COATS program at ACSO) processes, and the collection of statistical data.

#### Training and Access

Justice Services staff have conducted training for new Community Corrections programs, and made presentations to the Drug Court

Magistrate and staff on harm minimization for drug and alcohol clients.

New brochures and promotional material were developed to provide greater access to Justice Services, and also to publicize the change of ACSO's location from Spencer St Melbourne to Richmond.

### CHALLENGES

Recently changes have emerged in terms of the new State Justice Health Initiative, which will fundamentally impact the structure of funding, and will affect all drug and alcohol agencies, including COATS.

Other challenges include difficulties in recruiting regional and metropolitan staff, particularly those fully qualified in drug and alcohol assessment and treatment.

Staff retention can be difficult, due to disparity in salary levels and increasing referrals.

The Victorian bushfires presented the challenge particularly in regional areas, of maintaining the service, particularly in continuing the assessment of drug and alcohol of both Community Corrections clients and parole clients.

The majority of prisons are based in regional locations so in order to avoid staff travelling through fire stricken areas, telephone assessments were offered in the interim.

Another challenge has been the relocation of ACSO's head office from Melbourne to Richmond. This has presented difficulties for some clients in that this area is a major centre of drug culture and so clients who need to attend ACSO for assessment or case management can find this a very threatening experience.

### ADVOCACY

Justice Services were invited to sit on the Forensic Service System Review, which is a Department of Health review of the Drug and Alcohol system. This is a great opportunity for ACSO to be part of shaping future directions of services.

A new government initiative has seen COATS assessments include a dual diagnosis screening, covering both drug and alcohol and mental health issues, in particularly those of anxiety and depression.

It has been interesting to note that significant mental health issues are commonly present in the diagnosis of many drug and alcohol clients.

From this has emerged a new challenge, being to access appropriate mental health treatment.

The year has been full of challenges, changes, and great achievements.

However we see all those as opportunities to be more effective and more efficient in providing services to some of the most disadvantaged people in our community.

**I do this work because I love working with a group of people who demonstrate such care and respect for clients.**



**BRENDAN ARENTZ**  
MANAGER - TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

## MANAGEMENT REPORT - TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

### ACHIEVEMENTS

In the previous 12 months the Transitional Services programs have met or exceeded all the criteria listed as Key Performance Indicators.

Staff have not only done what was required for case management of clients, but the actual level of support offered has exceeded all expectations.

Regular presentations have been made by Transitional Services to prison staff about what is available for prisoners through the Link Out program.

New informative brochures have been produced this year, and these are now readily available across the prison population.

In terms of student placements, three RMIT students completed placements within our programs. One of the students has now become a staff member in our office.

### CHALLENGES

Within the last 12 months the program received a request from the Department of Justice to provide a transitional program for sex offenders who are on an Extended Supervision Orders in order to ensure the demands of their Orders are met post parole. This program ran from October last year to the end of the last financial year.

During this time, learning to belong to the LINK OUT consortium presented new challenges. These included the need for cooperation, consultation, and a balancing of policies and a diverse needs of the organisations. However the advantages gained through cooperation and knowledge sharing were very worthwhile.

A continuing challenge is the ongoing high workload, due to the high numbers of prisoners being released from prison who need support

The chaotic nature of Transitional clients can also impact on the team, particularly those who were released in a more chaotic state than when they were first incarcerated.

The pressure on staff, the potential to burnout and the need for formal external debriefing is also quite high.

There is a shortage of funding to provide more training for staff, but due to the high workload the time available for training is also minimal.

The shortage in accommodation for the population exiting prison continues to be at crisis level.

The waiting lists even for the most urgent transitional accommodation needs can be several years long.

Transition Services have also observed an ongoing shortage of funding, accommodation and support for Sex Offenders transitional programs compared to the other transitional programs across the sectors. This is of concern in that reoffending is often directly related to lack of support and oversight.

In summary, despite the difficulties and challenges that have been faced, Transitional Services have managed to exceed most expectations of the Key Performance Indicators, and will continue to support our clients as they aim to transition back into the community and into more stable lifestyles.



**STAFF FROM JUSTICE SERVICES**



JUSTICE SERVICES

The programs in Justice Services provide a range of support options for those individuals involved in the criminal justice system and who are often experiencing multiple and complex problems.

The services that are provided include assessment, planning and brokerage of drug and alcohol treatment for those experiencing problematic substance use. Also, pre and post release prison programs provide support in addressing chronic homelessness, unemployment and social isolation. The aim of transitional support is ultimately the successful re entry into the community and prevention of re-offending.

COATS (COMMUNITY OFFENDER ADVICE AND TREATMENT SERVICE)

Is a state wide service funded through the Department of Human Services (DHS). Its role is to provide a comprehensive drug and alcohol assessment, and then develop a treatment plan for forensic clients who have come before the criminal justice system and have a treatment component to their Community Order or parole. COATS then purchases appropriate treatment from DHS accredited agencies.

It is vital in some cases due to the client’s substance use, that an assessment occurs as quickly and as seamlessly as possible.

COATS also provides a diversion program offering options for individuals who are in the pre-sentence stage and presenting with problematic drug and alcohol misuse, thus diverting them away from the criminal justice system and into treatment.

This service is a key to enabling individuals to return to the mainstream community, and in addressing problematic Drug or Alcohol issues, reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

COATS Referrals and Assessments for the years 2003-2008

	2004 - 2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007 - 2008	2008 - 2009	% GROWTH 07/08 - 08/09
Referrals	6767	7160	8128	8439	9025	6.94%
Assessments	6104	6018	7012	7036	7758	10.26%

COATS clients assessed and referred on for treatment according to order

	COMMUNITY BASED ORDER	INTENSIVE CORRECTIONS ORDER	PRE AND POST PAROLE	STEPOUT	OTHER	TOTALS
Adult CCCC	2615	799	1354	150	60	4978
Youth CCCC	67	13	10			90
Residential Rehab	69	14	28			111
Withdrawal	252	48	67	2	2	371
Koori Alcohol and Drug Worker	91	16	30	1		138
Rural Outreach Diversion Worker	172	65	68		3	308
Support Accom.	10	3	6			19
Other	103	16	24			143
Totals	3379	974	1587	153	65	6158

CCCC - Counselling, Consultancy, Continuing Care.

**Note:** Previous years’ figures excluded Support Accom. & Other (Youth Outreach, ABI & Specialist Pharmacotherapy Service)

JUSTICE SERVICES STAFF LIST

PROGRAM MANAGER

Jenny Johnston

DEPUTY PROGRAM MANAGER

Bernard Hanson

CLINICAL CO-ORDINATORS

Erin Rankins (Metro)

Jane House (Regional)

ALLOCATIONS CO-ORDINATOR

Jodie Armstrong

CO-ORDINATOR ABORIGINAL DIVERSION UNIT

Matthew McCue

MANAGER - TRANSITIONAL SERVICES

Brendan Arentz

FINANCE AND ROSTER MANAGER

Petula Franz

Data and Finance

Jie He

LINK OUT CONSORTIUM MANAGER

Annie Trainor

LINK OUT

Monica Karst

Mark Flemming

Emma Bell

Kate Wyatt

Brad Roberg

Lisa Dwyer

Tim Giles

Toan Nugyen

Charles Levy

KONNECT

Jaime Binks

CASST

Bev Fox

STEP OUT

Is a service within the Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service (COATS).

Most clients are released from prison with parole involving conditions which may include drug and alcohol treatment. Some clients are released without these conditions but choose to access treatment voluntarily. These are Step Out clients, and are able to access counselling through the COATS services.

Data for this program is included in COATS figures.

CRISIS ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT FOR A SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION (CASST)

Is a short term program designed to assist those prisoners who have served a sentence of three months or less who have been released on remand who require accommodation, or who are in crisis in the community after release.

A short term intervention is sometimes needed to address the immediate problems following release from prison. The support that is offered includes finding and securing accommodation, liaising with Community Correctional Services, legal assistance, linking the client back with their families and friends and connecting them into services for long term support.

This is a vital component in the plan to prevent re-offending.

	07/08	08/09	% MOVEMENT
CASST	367	378	2.9

LINK OUT

Is an outreach support program for men in prison who need support when they are released back into the community. It is a voluntary program for those who are assessed as being at high risk of reoffending. If accepted onto the program, prisoners are seen by their case manager prior to their release to identify their needs and develop a release plan.

Needs identified may include accommodation, drug and alcohol treatment, medical and psychiatric treatment, legal issues, family and relationship difficulties and assistance with employment, training and education.

Support is offered for up to 12 months post release from prison.

The connection with prisoners prior to their release enhances the chances of the prisoner maintaining their release plan and sustaining a more positive lifestyle.

CURRENT CLIENTS	07/08	08/09
Pre existing clients	153	80
New Link Out clients	84	106
TOTAL	237	186

The 08/09 figures relate only to the ACSO component of the consortium.

SEX OFFENDER SUPPORT PROGRAM (SOSP)

Is a voluntary program which provides support for those prisoners who have received a sentence for sex offences and are either eligible for or have participated in the Corrections Services Sex Offender Program.

Outreach Support Workers will visit those in prison and develop a release plan. Support can include sourcing accommodation, employment, and maintaining Correctional commitments, thus leading clients away from reoffending and developing a more positive and stable lifestyle.

This program provides a service to offenders who are in the main on the outer fringes of mainstream community and have few or no supports.

The Sex Offender Support Program emerged from the pioneering work of Sr Clare McShee over the last two decades. Sr. Clare is quoted as saying that whilst these offences are abhorred by staff, nevertheless there must be engagement with offenders in order to reduce the potential risk to future victims and thus avoid the irreparable damage that can be done when these offences are committed. This is the aim of the program.

	07/08	08/09	% GROWTH 07/08 - 08/09
SOSP	46	62	25.9

**Note:** This includes Extended Supervision Order clients from Nov. 08 to June 09.

COMMUNITY OFFENDER ADVICE AND TREATMENT SERVICE (COATS)

Client Services Unit

Nenita Batica	Natalie Cassimatis	Stacey Chick	Jeremy Swire	Diane Evans	Chloe Redmond	Helga Hornig
Brett Richards	Kerry Scambler	Georgina Vakouftis	Evelyn Ramsay	Viv Alexander		

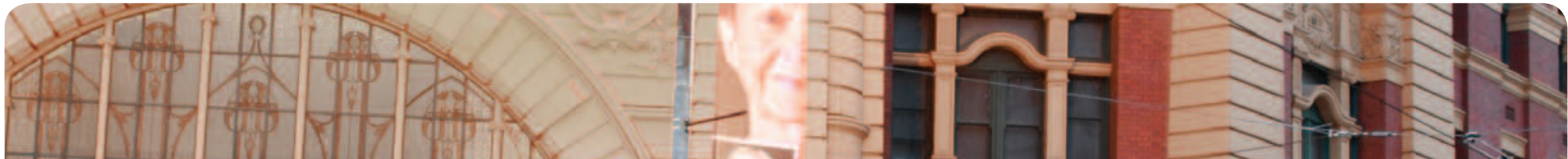
Clinical Staff

Brien Baxter	Darron Burt	Karren Chapple	Sally Fountas	Michael Inglis	Lisa Jackson	Carly Katz
Sheridan Manley	Elizabeth Meagre	Jane Moreton	Nita Quick	Brad Roberg	Jan Rowsell	Kirsten Seymour
Warren Simmons	Jacinta Smith	Prue Stevens-Jones	John Tasca	Graham Toohey	Julie Walters	Ina Woitassek
Mark Tatti	Brett Hayes	Sue Nelson	Roula Dibs	Rebecca Shields	Naomi Adams	Susan Saxe
Rachel Freeland	Rhonda Pagett	Terry Valler	Catriona Bice	Carly Doyle	Jen Walker	Robyn Bradley
Marg Ingles	Matthew Atkinson	Trish Read	Valma Collett	Raoul Foglia	Rory Ford	Mark Labrick
Vi Lotter	Jim McIntyre	Melissa McGuffy	Bronwyn Rouse	Rebecca Shields		

ESO (EXTENDED SUPERVISION ORDER) AND SEX OFFENDERS OUTREACH AND TRANSITION PROGRAM

Kate Bischof	Rob Telfer	Rob Staggs	Jac Dwyer	Shaun Dibbin	Matthew Parnett	Jonathan Worble	Jeannie Cavanagh
--------------	------------	------------	-----------	--------------	-----------------	-----------------	------------------





# SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

THE SPECIALIST SERVICES SUITE OF PROGRAMS TARGETS MEN AND WOMEN WITH SUBSTANTIAL PSYCHIATRIC OR PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUES THAT SERVE AS BARRIERS TO SOCIAL PARTICIPATION, RESULTING IN MARGINALISATION AND GENERALLY INCARCERATION.

TYPICALLY SPECIALIST SERVICES CONSUMERS OFTEN EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND UNSTABLE MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS THAT ALL NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE THEIR BEHAVIOUR AND BRING THEM TO THE ATTENTION OF THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM. THE MAJORITY OF REFERRALS ARE GENERATED FROM CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.



I do this because I believe people can turn their lives around and I believe everyone deserves the chance to do so.



MANAGEMENT REPORT  
SPECIALIST SERVICES

This year has been a busy one, with much of staff energy spent assessing an ever increasing number of men and women with mental health issues within the prison system.

Improving consumer access to services through collaborative practices within the Housing and Mental Health service system remains a key focus.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Consumer participation

Specialist Mental Health Services spearheaded a consumer participation project which occurred this year, and which was one of the initiatives emerging from ACSO’s Quality Improvement work plan.

The project continued over a six month period and worked with current and past consumers, staff and management in developing a consumer participation strategy. This will help ensure that consumer perspectives and needs remain integral in the development Initiatives of ACSO, and in turn ensure that its services are meeting the needs of its consumers.

More detail on this initiative is available in the Quality Improvement pages of this report.

Networking

There has been an increased emphasis on networking, particularly in the North West Local Area Service Network (LASN) and the Opening Doors initiative.

There has also been a focus on the development of partnerships, resulting in a stronger alliance with Flat Out, a state-wide support service for women exiting prison. Specialist Mental Health Services (SMHS) has recognised many other services that strategically will enhance the current model with complimentary expertise such as Acquired Brain Injury and Family Support Services.



ROBB RITCHENS  
MANAGER - SPECIALIST SERVICES



CHALLENGES

To increase the affordable housing options for our target group, particularly women and families, through collaborative initiatives and partnerships within the housing sector.

To address the difficulties that families face who have a member in prison with a Mental Health concern. These often include a lack of coordination between the legal system, the Office of Corrections, and treatment services. This can often result in people being released from prison without notice or clinical support, without medication or case management. SMHS aim to work with families and courts, correctional and clinical providers to ensure that transition is seamless and sensitive to the needs of consumers and their significant others.

IMPROVEMENTS

Access

The referral process into the program has been simplified and also clarified in terms of eligibility criteria.

These changes are responsive to feedback from the sector and ensure our processes are relevant and user friendly.

Consumer-friendly handbooks, brochures and information packs have been developed, containing information about client rights and responsibilities, about ACSO and other support and emergency services. These improvements take varying literacy skills into account. Again this initiative was assisted through consumer and sector feedback.

ADVOCACY

The aim of the program in the coming year will be to address the current lack of coordination that results in highly disadvantaged individuals leaving courts and prisons with no clinical or welfare follow up. This leaves consumers vulnerable to relapse and re offending, thus creating a cycle of failure.

Much of our work unfortunately is coloured by predictions of failure, not of consumers, but of the system’s lack of co-ordination which often negatively impacts on the transition process.

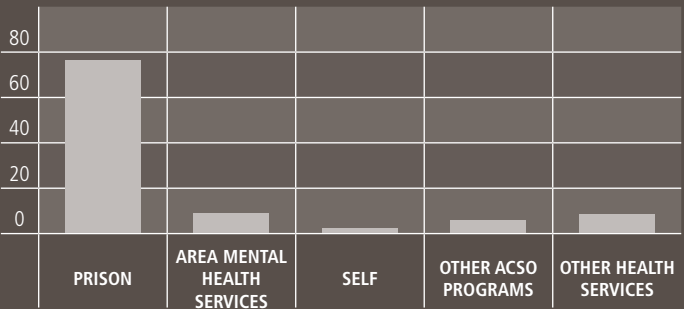
Therefore, Specialist Mental Health Services will continue to give ongoing focus to the provision of service co-ordination through stronger communication and collaboration, thus maximising our consumers’ hope of stability

SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Specialist Services suite of programs targets men and women with substantial psychiatric, psychological and neurological issues that serve as barriers to social participation, resulting in marginalisation and generally incarceration.

Specialist Services consumers often experience homelessness, substance abuse and unstable mental health conditions that all negatively influence their behaviour and bring them to the attention of the criminal justice system. The majority of referrals are generated from correctional facilities.

Referrals 1/7/2008 - 30/6/2009



MCCORMACK HOUSE

McCormack House, has operated for over 20 years and is named after the Founder of ACSO, Stan McCormack. It provides six semi-supported beds for short-term accommodation for men with Axis 1 psychosis, who have a history of homelessness, who have had criminal justice involvement and are clients of the Specialist outreach program. Residents are generally in transition from institutions and correctional facilities.

The support model consists of day and evening staff support and outreach follow-up that continues after residents leave McCormack House for as long as appropriate.

McCormack House is a much sought after program that provides a safe and supportive environment, and has strong linkages with Area Mental Health and Forensic Health Services.



STAFF FROM SPECIALIST MENTAL HEATH SERVICES

The environment is unstructured and allows residents time to reflect and plan with the aid of the staff; typical stays are three to six months. Residents are given opportunities to develop basic living skills, and to live communally with a code of mutual respect.

YEAR	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	% MOVEMENT 07/08 - 08/09
No. of clients	24	36	25	28	38	26.4

SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES  
OUTREACH PROGRAM

Specialist Services works with men aged 18 to 64 with substantial psychiatric, psychological, and neurological issues that serve as barriers to social participation, resulting in marginalisation and generally incarceration.

Typically, Specialist Services consumers experience homelessness, substance abuse, unstable mental health that all negatively influence their behaviour and brings them to the attention of the criminal justice system.

This service offers support through a home-based outreach service that extends to a radius of 20kms from Melbourne’s CBD.

The Outreach Workers’ role involves legal advocacy provided through court appearances, adult parole board hearing attendances, support letters to courts, legal aid and attendances at case conferences and discharge planning in prison or hospital settings.

Workers provide responsive and assertive outreach to maintain engagement with clients and ensure they attain access to services that match the identified needs of the consumer.

Staff attend all prisons throughout Victoria. Staff collect a person upon release to ensure that they have the best chance for a successful transition, as often unplanned and unsupported releases result in reoffending and a relapse of illness.

WOMEN’S SPECIALIST MENTAL HEALTH  
SERVICES OUTREACH

This program supports at risk women with borderline personality disorders exiting the forensic and or prison system.

Homelessness and access to services remain the major factors influencing successful outcomes for this group.

Specialist Mental Health Services provides Intensive home-based outreach to those who generally aren’t eligible for clinical case-management.

Specialist Services collaborates and advocates with correctional, clinical and housing services. Staff address breakdowns in housing, family and other services .

Family reunification is a major problem faced by our service recipients, and Family Law Court representation is often requested.

Outreach Services

YEAR	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	% MOVEMENT 07/08 - 08/09
No. of clients	68	72	67	62 (6 women)	96 (3 women)	35.5

**Note:** The increase of referrals is an indicator of greater numbers of people in prison with mental health issues, and the increasing scarcity of accommodation and pre and post release support.





## STAFF IN FOCUS

### TOM MITHEN STAFF MEMBER - MCCORMACK HOUSE

I am a residential worker at McCormack House, and I am about to start as an Outreach Worker in the Specialist Mental Health Service.

McCormack House is for people just leaving prison, and people stay about six months until they are ready for more independent living and have found somewhere else to move into.

Over the last ten years I have worked mostly in the disability sector but I had always wanted to work in the Mental Health area.

I was attracted to the work because I have had mental illness trouble myself. I have made progress throughout the last decade or so in figuring out how I can fit into the social world and the family world, and I wanted to be able to use this life experience to assist others to do this too.

I believe at times I can be a sign of hope to people, although I can represent a challenge too. It can be easy for someone to feel a failure in the face of my progress. Getting better takes a lot of courage and drive, and you have to fight a lot of self-doubt.

I have had to learn how to work with this. When I started working here, I told everyone that came through the door about myself, but Robb (Manager, Specialist Mental Health Service) helped me to work out when it was appropriate and when not.

Sometimes it encourages people act up with me. Sometimes clients don't want to know as they are dealing with their own problems, whereas other people are looking for more understanding and appreciate the added insight into what they are going through.

I have learnt that I have to take care of myself also.

One of the biggest learnings for me is to not take the client's issues home. I have had to learn to put my ACSO hat on when I am at work.

I have had to learn, and continue to learn to think on my feet and I make sure that I continually put the boundary in where it is needed.

It is also complicated in that I am a similar age to a lot of the guys at the House, and with some similar experiences.

So now in my work I just listen to what people are saying, and just try and get a bit of insight into what sort of person they are, and what they

need. Most often I find with the men coming out of prison that they just need mates, and mates that won't just lead them down the wrong track. So then I'm balancing the buddy hat with my work hat.

In the end, it's about who I've decided to be. I've decided to be a staff member, not be a friend. It helps me to focus on life outside work and what I am doing in my personal life, and I keep that as my personal space.

Music is a big part of what I have going on. I love to play music and I am a singer song writer. I play cello and I write my songs.

My greatest satisfaction is seeing people progress, although as everyone at ACSO knows, its pretty slow and it can be a fifteen year job or more, and usually is. I think worker interactions, and being part of a team is probably the next one. And also sharing moments with clients, just hanging out, having a smoke or a coffee and just a chat, passing the time. Those moments are really enjoyable.

The biggest challenge is continuing to give as much as I can when clients don't progress quickly.

Sometimes the line is blurred for me about whether I am there to help the clients improve, or whether I am there to do a job whether the clients are helped or not. For me that's challenging as I want to see people turn their lives around, because everybody can, and I know that.

It is great working at ACSO. The staff really seem to put theory into practice, and I love the attitude there.

The staff at ACSO have a passion and real desire to help the people they are working with, who have pretty extreme difficulties, to find a genuine place in the world. That's probably the thing I like best about ACSO.

**I want to see people  
turn their lives around,  
because everybody can,  
and I know that.**

TOM MITHEN



I do this because  
each and every  
one of the people  
we work with are  
somebody's child.  
If they were my  
children, I would  
take some comfort  
in knowing that  
people are out there  
supporting them.





## EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

THE EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM PROVIDES ASSISTANCE TO A BROAD RANGE OF CLIENTS, ALL OF WHOM ARE EXPERIENCING SOME FORM OF SOCIAL ISOLATION.

THE ASSISTANCE PROVIDED IS ON AN INDIVIDUAL NEEDS BASIS, AIMED AT FINDING MEANINGFUL AND SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT. THIS INCLUDES RESUME PREPARATION, PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING, TRAINING IN JOB SEARCH SKILLS SUCH AS INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES, AND LOBBYING EMPLOYERS ON BEHALF OF OUR CLIENTS.

I do this because it  
is full of diversity  
and challenges.





**RENAE LOWRY**  
MANAGER - EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

This year was both a satisfying yet challenging one.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

### The Employment Tender

During the year, a Government tender was released which incorporated all employment services, except the Job Capacity Assessment program and the Disability Employment Network.

This was a positive change in that it created a ‘one stop shop’, enabling job seekers to access all the services needed in one place, however this required a significant amount of work to be completed in a short amount of time.

Some services that needed to be provided in order to tender for this funding had not previously been offered by ACSO. This then necessitated the building of new partnerships with organisations which did provide them, in a short amount of time.

The tender had a successful outcome in terms of gaining generalist business. Success was also achieved in terms of becoming a provider of specialist homelessness services, to be delivered in partnership with St Vincent De Paul to job seekers who are at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless.

This service addresses a job seeker’s accommodation needs and offers the support required to assist with the transition to employment.

Five contracts of this kind were awarded in Australia. ACSO’s success in this tender was due to its new partnership with St Vincent De Paul and also as a result of its own experience in delivering homelessness services.

The tender also met with success in winning the right to bid on the Innovation Panel which dispenses funding for new services.

Unfortunately success did not extend to applications made to offer services in the Bayside area, necessitating the Employment programs previously offered by ACSO in Dandenong and Geelong to be closed.

This outcome resulted in loyal and dedicated ASCO staff losing positions and being offered redeployment. That the program had performed highly, in the top six percent of providers in Australia, added to the disappointment.

### ‘Scanners R Us’

A successful submission was also made to the new Jobs Fund, which was created out of the Government’s Economic Stimulus Package.

This submission was for a new project ‘Scanners R Us,’ a social enterprise which ACSO had piloted previously.

## MANAGEMENT REPORT EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The model involves building relationships with Not For Profit organisations who are likely to have large amounts of hard copy archived documents which incur significant costs in terms of storage and security.

The aim of the project would be to provide employment for approximately fifty Job Seekers over three years who would be employed to electronically scan these documents.

## CHALLENGES

### Placing Job Seekers

The global financial crisis has created changes in terms of market share volume, the number of job seekers, and the change in the job seekers’ profile.

This profile incorporates an increased number of redundant professional workers who have no vocational barriers.

This creates greater problems for those with vocational barriers, in that there is increased competition. This in turn creates greater problems for Employment Services, in terms of the number of placements the Disability Employment Network particularly will be able to make.

In order to mitigate against this, Employment Services will aim to develop a range of social enterprises, broadening its emphasis from filling to creating positions.

### Victorian Bushfires

Another challenge was the response to the need for case management for victims of the Victorian bushfires. This increased pressures on staff, in that secondments needed to be arranged.

However, this also provided an opportunity to work closely with the Department of Human Services to develop and manage this emergency response. With this came a range of new expertise in a new area of service.

### A satisfying outcome

One of the most satisfying outcomes this year was an implication of the funding changes. This broadened the focus for staff from simply getting people into jobs, to being able to broker a fuller range of services often needed for sustainable employment.

## FUTURE PLANS

A new location will be sourced to house the Scanners R Us project and other Employment Services initiatives.

In October 2009 there will be a change in management resulting in a renewed focus on delivering successful employment outcomes for clients participating in the Job Services Australia and Disability Employment Network programs.



**JERRY DINER**  
STAFF MEMBER - EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

I was born in Poland over half a century ago, and migrated to Australia in 1958 to escape the anti Semitism, rife at that time.

My family first settled in Coburg then moved to Caulfield where I grew up and completed my schooling. My teachers were very surprised that I passed my year 12 year as I was often sent home from school.

I consider myself culturally Jewish. However, many aspects of our culture stem from the Jewish faith, so even though I didn’t consider myself religious, yet every Friday night we would have a special dinner where we lit candles and said a prayer.

I grew up in the times of the Socialist Youth Movement. It was a cultural experience. It was about the eastern European Jew who grew up in ghettos, who had a hard life yet who had a humour and intelligence about them. I see myself as a product of that. My Dad was a worker in a factory pressing ladies garments but that wasn’t because that was all he was capable of. Circumstances meant that he couldn’t get an education. He certainly had the intelligence and capabilities. My parents formed a group who met at their house once a week to discuss current affairs and politics yet these people were workers. It proved to me that you don’t have to have a doctorate to be intelligent.

As a young person, I belonged to a Jewish youth group and then I moved into leadership there.

This prompted me to begin training for a career in education, majoring in drama and media.

I accepted an offer which emerged from this, to do volunteer work at the National Theatre in Israel. I also worked in a local Jewish amateur theatre company.

At this time I married in Israel and returned to Australia to teach. However this began to better resemble police work, and so I joined my father in his lingerie business.

I was the sort of person who just ‘did things’ and seemed to always land on my feet.

One thing I loved was to potter around the garden, so the idea soon emerged of starting a gardening business. Some friends bought me a

## STAFF IN FOCUS

whipper snipper and off I went. However this was isolated work and I soon discovered how important relationships were for me.

After some career counselling I realized a key strength was in one to one work, and so I went on to complete undergraduate qualifications in Psychology.

I worked as a counsellor for four years. Shortly before I became a registered Psychologist, I began working at ACSO. I observed that much of the psychologist’s work lay in writing reports, so this again prompted a change in direction.

I have finally found work satisfaction as part of the Personal Support Program, a service of ACSO’s Employment Services, because in this I am at the coalface of need. It means a lot to me to be with people who really need help.

It also helps in my job that I have had so many careers. It has given me a real empathy towards my clients.

The good thing about this program is that we can offer the support needed to resolve personal issues before we send people into employment. There’s no point in forcing someone into a job knowing that they won’t be able to keep it.

There are many rewards for me in this work. I know that in some way I can improve someone’s life just by listening. In this way I have observed that depression often decreases, and motivation and self esteem increases.

I bumped into a girl recently whom I assisted. When I first began working with her, she had a significant alcohol issue, but now she has a job in an upper class city hotel. A real transformation.

The hardest part for me is when I have to watch clients self destruct, and not be able to do anything about it. I get disappointed about not having found the key that will unlock for them the steps forward.

Nevertheless, I have now found what I am happy doing in life, and despite the challenges, my work gives me great satisfaction.

**I have finally found work satisfaction as part of the Personal Support Program, a service of ACSO’s Employment Services, because in this I am at the coalface of need.**

**It means a lot to me to be with people who really need help.**

JERRY DINER







This program provides assistance to a broad range of clients, all of whom are experiencing some form of social isolation as a result of unemployment.

The assistance provided is on an individual needs basis, aimed at finding meaningful and sustainable employment. This includes resume preparation, pre-employment training, training in job search skills such as interview techniques, and lobbying employers on behalf of our clients

THE JOB CAPACITY ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Provides a comprehensive assessment of an individual’s capacity for work.

It combines referral to employment and related support services with assessments of work capacity for income support purposes such as for the Disability Support Pension, and for exemptions from activity-testing due to medical conditions lasting more than 13 weeks.

The assessors have the opportunity to refer clients for short term interventions, which will help them overcome barriers whilst searching for employment, for example, counselling, pain management and cognitive behavioural therapy.

TOTAL ASSESSMENTS	06-07	07-08	08-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 - 08/09
Melbourne	324	528	552	4.4
Geelong	340	445	555	19.9

**Note:** The number of assessments increased due to the global financial crisis.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES STAFF LIST

MANAGER

Renae Lowry

PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Natasha Salter

JOB CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS

Linda Millard      Irene Watkins  
Soula Noutsis      Beth Prunty

PERSONAL SUPPORT PROGRAM (PSP)

Senior Case Manager

Jerry Diner

Case Managers

Alistair Castle      Melissa Duckmanton      Fiona Terrill  
Sean Sloan      Julie Anne Lonnie      Katherine Morgan  
Tristan Carter      Anna Tucceri

SPECIALIST EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

Program Co-ordinator

Terry Roberts

Paula Pecchiari      Susan Walsh      Celia Whelan  
Cassie Harris      Anne Hession

VITALITY PERSONNEL DANDENONG

Natalie Beardon      Annette Colpoys      Christopher Lucey  
Erinlee Archer      Tanya Ruisi      Julie Sutherland

BUSHFIRE CASE MANAGERS

(SECONDMENTS FROM OTHER PROGRAMS)

Bonny Grant      Brien Baxter  
Rob Telfer      Melissa Duckmanton

I do this work  
because I make a  
difference.

THE DEN PROGRAM

Is designed to work with people who have an identified reduction in their capacity to work full time.

ACTIVITY	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 - 08/09
Clients Served	107	67	74	106	30.2
Placements	15	20	18	11	-39
13 Week Employment Outcome	13	16	9	9	0
26 Week Employment Outcome	10	16	9	9	0

**Note:** Another employment program provider closed which led to an increased demand for the service and an increased capacity of two new staff.

Placements were impacted negatively again by the Global Financial Crisis, in that the increased unemployment rate in the community increases the difficulty of placing job seekers.

JOB NETWORK PROGRAM

Is designed to work with people who have vocational barriers. These barriers may include lacking skills in resume preparation, job seeking, interview preparation and interviewing. The program will then link clients into employment or training.

Employment Services offers this service in Dandenong, which also has co-located programs with ACSO’s Justice Services and Disability Program.

FINANCIAL YEAR	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 - 08/09
No. of clients maintained in employment for greater than 13 weeks	260	330	345	121	129	6.3
No. of employer vacancies filled	200	267	347	184	210	12.4

THE PSP PROGRAM

Delivers support services to job seekers who have multiple non-vocational barriers to employment, for example drug and alcohol, homelessness or domestic violence issues.

On a daily basis, case managers are meeting with job seekers to create action plans and implement strategies to overcome their barriers to employment.

Melbourne

ACTIVITY	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 - 08/09
Contract Capacity	127	196	235	317	25.9
Commencements with PSP	187	185	186	251	25.9

**Note:** Another employment program provider closed which led to an increased demand for the service and an increased capacity of two new staff.

Geelong

ACTIVITY	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 - 08/09
Contract Capacity	68	84	100	110	9.1
Commencements with PSP	46	99	79	67	-15.2



STAFF FROM EMPLOYMENT SERVICES





# PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE THIS YEAR:

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN RECEIPT OF ACISO SERVICES

**11,658**

(THIS REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF 21% ON LAST YEAR, DUE PARTICULARLY TO A 10.26% INCREASE IN DRUG AND ALCOHOL ASSESSMENTS.)

PEOPLE ASSESSED FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL TREATMENT

**7758**

TREATMENT WAS THEN SECURED FOR  
**93% OF THOSE ASSESSED.**

PEOPLE RECEIVING COUNSELLING OR ASSESSMENT  
(OTHER THAN DRUG AND ALCOHOL ASSESSMENTS)

**1122**

PEOPLE PROVIDED WITH  
PRE-EMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

**1741**

PEOPLE GAINING EMPLOYMENT

**221**

PEOPLE RECEIVING OUTREACH SUPPORT

**744**

PEOPLE ACCOMMODATED IN ACISO HOUSING

**72**

## PERFORMANCE AT A GLANCE

### FINANCIAL ANALYSIS & COMMENTARY

Our financial surplus for the year of \$ 818,700 comprised an operating surplus of \$152,477, interest income of \$562,775 and \$103,448 from funding of capital expenditure. Total funding and other income was \$17.5m, a decrease of 27% from last year. This decrease is the result of a decision by DHS to pay brokerage income directly to the treatment agencies instead of through ACISO. This decision by DHS has no impact on our financial viability. Interest income also declined during the year due to lower interest rates

Employment costs increased by 11% on last year due to a restructure of our metropolitan positions in the COATS program to gain operating efficiencies and redundancies in our employment program due to the unsuccessful tender for business in our Geelong and Dandenong offices. Wages also increased in line with CPI of 3%. A new program funded by DHS for the case management for bush fire victims contributed to the remainder of the increase in wages.

Other operating expenses were in line with last year.

This surplus further strengthens our financial viability and will enable us to embark on strategic initiatives while meeting the challenges referred to elsewhere in this report. The majority of our funding has been renewed until June 2012. We provide our funding providers with audited acquittal statements for the year's results.



*Ed Holmes*

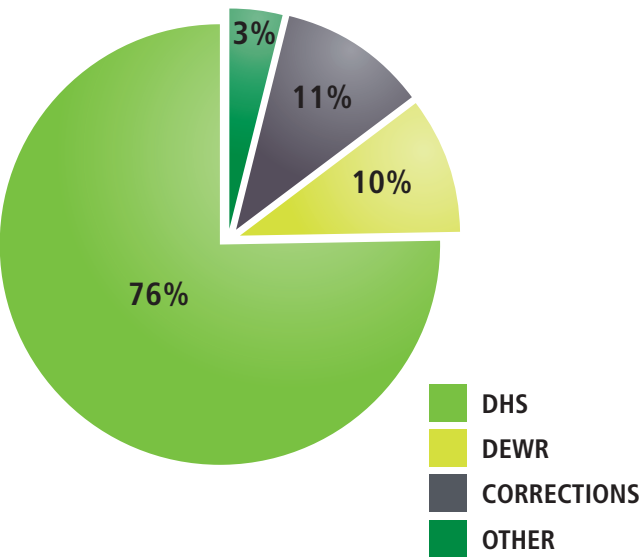
ED HOLMES  
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

### KEY FINANCIAL INDICATORS

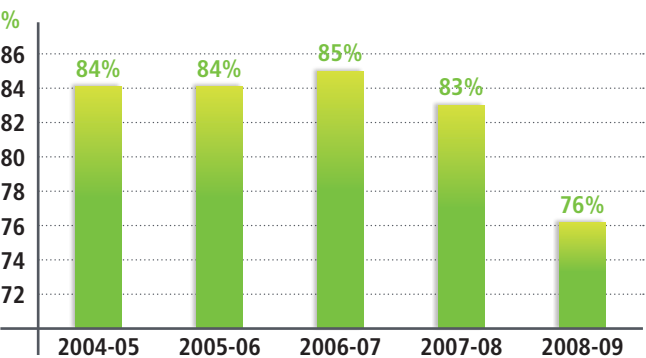
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	% MOVEMENT 08/09 07/08
Total Income	20,291,496	20,640,268	21,969,344	24,059,682	17,461,635	-27%
DHS Grants	17,119,496	17,396,770	18,587,181	20,083,383	13,223,298	-34%
Total Expenditure	19,796,480	20,409,259	21,611,686	22,693,752	16,642,935	-27%
Net Surplus /Deficit	495,016	231,009	461,429	1,365,930	818,700	-40%

### % OF FUNDING FROM MAJOR PROVIDERS

Our proportion of funding from major funding bodies changed compared with last year with the reduction in brokerage funding from DHS reducing our total DHS funding to 76 % of total funding received. Funding received from DEEWR and Corrections Victoria increased marginally.



### % OF TOTAL FUNDING RECEIVED FROM DHS



### STAFF INDICATORS

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Number of staff employed	164	168	181
permanent full-time staff	96	87	104
permanent part-time staff	49	47	40
casual staff	19	34	37



# ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

I do this work because everyone deserves a second chance.

Administration and Finance is the program of ACSO which ensures that its programs and services are managed responsibly, safely, and function smoothly.

Key responsibilities include oversight of ACSO's finances including funding contracts and compliance, Accounts, Payroll, and Information Technology.

Administration and Finance also incorporates Reception, and Organisational Development activities such as Research, Strategy and Accreditation processes.

These processes are overseen by the senior management team.

## ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE STAFF LIST

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Antony Calabrò

### DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Vaughan Winther

### DIRECTOR, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Ed Holmes

### STAFF

Rose Broadstock	Christine Cappello	Petula Frantz
Naomi Mayne	Damien O'Meara	Chloe Redmond
David Rose	Tammy Rowe	Noel Roxas
Natasha Salter	Maree Sing	Sharon Stevens
Nely Tanur	Kelly Warner	Yvonne Webster

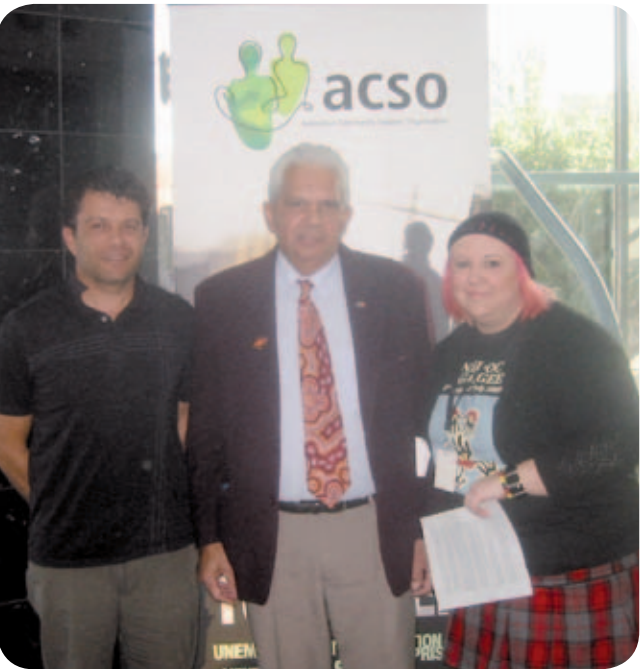


# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## THE COMMUNITY

### NAIDOC 2009 @ ACSO

NAIDOC (National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee) refers to the week in which Indigenous Australians and other Australians from all walks of life celebrate their past, their achievements, their culture and community.



L-R: Patrick Ahmat - VACRO, Mr Tony McCartney - Respected elder of the Victorian Aboriginal Community and Jaime Binks - Taungorong woman and Konnect Co-ordinator from ACSO

This year the theme for NAIDOC is 'Honouring Our Elders, Nurturing Our Youth.'

ACSO hosted its first NAIDOC event this year, a breakfast to celebrate Indigenous culture, as well as to unveil the recent addition of a plaque at ACSO, which acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand.

It was attended by many ACSO staff and agency partners.

We were very honoured to have the esteemed elder, Mr Tony McCartney, come and speak to us about NAIDOC, and working with Indigenous people and their communities.

All who attended enjoyed the breakfast, and learning about what NAIDOC means to Indigenous people.

As NAIDOC is a time for spiritual celebration for my people, I felt very supported by, and honoured to have been part of ACSO's celebrations.

Konnect is a state-wide intensive pre and post release support program, specifically developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

### THE GREAT BIKE COLLECTION

ACSO was pleased to assist the joint project of Yarra Youth and Victoria Police who were collecting unwanted bikes in order to create a sports equipment lending library for young people, to be established at each of the Richmond, Collingwood and Fitzroy housing estates.

Some bikes that had already been collected were also being used by refugees who needed transport but have no money.

With assistance from St Vincent de Paul, ACSO managed to collect 308 bikes as a result of this appeal.



Bikes were collected by Senior Constable Chris McGeachan

### THE WORLD'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

On the 28th May, ACSO not only put on a "Biggest Morning Tea" but a "Longest Morning Tea" which was still being enjoyed in the afternoon!

This great event exists in order to raise much needed funds for the Cancer Council.

In addition to a delicious repast, there were other competitions, and our CEO kindly provided the First Prize, being a day off with pay!

The morning tea raised \$405.





I do this because it never ceases to amaze me how a simple smile and hello can cross all barriers and be equally rewarding to the giver and receiver.

# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## THE VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES

### EMMA BELL, A RELIEF EFFORT.

**Emma, what action did you take in response to the Victorian bushfire disaster?**

I asked ACSO staff to provide donations of material aid, toiletries, clothing and so on, to assist bushfire survivors.

**What motivated you to do this?**

After seeing the raw devastation of Black Saturday, I understood that individuals, communities and wildlife had lost everything. The animals which survived were injured and homeless. Through media reports, we saw people sitting with nothing, holding their children and sleeping in shelters. I felt the least I could do was try and assist with collecting material aid, which I hoped would bring some support and relief.

**Did you get any response from staff?**

Yes it was an overwhelming response. I ended up collecting 55 large green bags of items, which took hours to sort through. There was a lot of clothing, but many people had gone out of their way and bought a lot of new goods to donate also. I then took it all to Yea, where it was to be distributed to the survivors, some of whom were staying at the oval.

Whilst driving there, it was surreal seeing the degree of devastation, and also the way the fire had missed some properties but taken others. It was hard to grasp what had happened.

**How did you feel after you completed this project?**

I wished I could have done more, but then I know that's only a small part of what must be done to assist people who must rebuild their lives.

ACSO staff donated \$3,037 to the Bushfire Appeal. In addition ACSO donated \$5,000, making a total of \$8,037 donated by the ACSO community.

ACSO staff wanted to assist but didn't know how to, so I think creating this opportunity was important, and I hope it made some difference to survivors of Black Saturday.

It is so true that people do have a lot of compassion and are willing to be generous but have no idea how to respond. So the way you create these opportunities assists both those in need and those who want to give. You must be proud of what you achieved.

Yes, it was satisfying to know that the donations assisted a lot of people who came to the Yea Relief Centre and in particular a family in Flowerdale who lost their property. The mother was four months pregnant and had a one-year-old child.

**Emma is a Case Manager in the Link Out Program.**



**MARK FLEMING**  
MEMBER OF THE CFA

**Mark, what was your involvement in the February Victorian bushfires?**

I have been a member of my local CFA for about 5 or 6 years now and we usually attend car accidents and local fires.

CFA crews are also called upon as strike teams when there are larger events such as the February 7 fires. I attended the Kinglake fire as part of our local strike team.

**How did you feel when you got the call to go?**

I felt as though I could contribute. CFA thoroughly trains volunteers and in the past I have attended other large fires with strike teams. There are many CFA volunteers who have been around much longer than I have and have plenty of experience.

**What were you thinking as you travelled to fire area near Kinglake?**

We already knew how bad things were. On the way down on the CFA bus we were briefed and told that we will be looking out for bodies. We were given the opportunity to be released from this duty but none did. I didn't know what to expect, it was more a feeling of being challenged by something I hadn't done before. I was interested in seeing how I would react to this new situation.

**What did you see as you were arriving in Whittlesea?**

We got to the footy ground in Whittlesea and there was a sea of yellow, green and red trucks and cars. There were vehicles from DSE, SES and CFA from all over Victoria and NSW. The logistics of organising this mass of trucks and people are huge so there are usually delays before you are sent out on the fire front. This usually gives you an opportunity to eat, and to supply the truck with water and food.

Our first job was to undertake what they call 'asset protection' which is to protect houses that hadn't already burnt down and making sure spot fires were put out. We did this all night.

The fire front had been through already and the devastation was amazing. It is hard to describe. The images on TV showed some of the things I saw, but the police tape around houses that needed to be checked for bodies and burnt out cars pushed to the side of the roads were amazing.

With the Kinglake fires affecting so many people, ACSO staff rang me to see how I was going, because people knew I had been there. I really appreciated that.

MARK FLEMING - MEMBER OF THE CFA

We went to Kinglake fire station, where local residents had gone for shelter. They were thankful to us for being there although they were in shock still and very emotional.

I could not get over that someone had bought up a cappuccino machine into Kinglake and even though it was one a clock in the morning they were making coffees for anyone who wanted one. It was amazing how many different ways people helped. In the first few days of the fire, there were things I would not have thought of such as pet food, horse blankets, stock feed, axes and chain saws. Exactly the stuff you need after a fire. The co-ordination required for this was overwhelming.

**So why do you do this extra work when you already have a lot on your plate?**

Well someone has to do it and since joining, I feel more part of my own community.

**Have you found ACSO supportive to you in this work?**

Yes, I appreciate ACSO enabling me to undertake this volunteer job. They have given me time off without question and unlike other CFA members ACSO have not penalised or threatened me with the sack. When I have attended CFA duties in the middle of the night, ACSO has been understanding and given me time off to catch up on sleep.

With the Kinglake fires affecting so many people, ACSO staff rang me to see how I was going, because people knew I had been there. I really appreciated that.

**Mark Fleming is a staff member with the Link Out Program.**





**MELISSA DUCKMANTON**  
DHS BUSHFIRE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICE

**Recently you were seconded voluntarily from your role as an Employment Services Personal Support Worker to that of Case Manager within the State/Commonwealth Government initiative offering support and assistance to victims of the Victorian bushfires.**

**What does this role involve?**

This varies from person to person, but it's about helping people who have been affected by the bushfires to rebuild their lives after this tragedy. It may involve minor tasks such as accessing grants, finding out about house rebuilding processes, clearing land. It may also be about supporting people who have sustained injuries or experienced great loss.

**So how does it work?**

We each receive a caseload from the Department of Human Services. It may be that some work is done by phone, perhaps dealing with insurance companies. It may be about meeting with people, for example if we need to look at their land for rebuilding, The area I was allocated was Strathewen, Arthur's Creek and Kinglake, but I may visit where people are living now, in temporary accommodation.

**When you go to those bushfire affected areas, what do you see?**

It's terrible driving up there, it's just black everywhere, the trees are all burnt, dead animals on the side of the road that haven't been cleared yet. Pulling into Kinglake all the signs are burnt. I think the signs used to say "Welcome to Kinglake" but you can't make the words out. It has an eerie smell about it, and an eerie feel about the whole place for me. The town is set up as an emergency centre rather than a community at the moment, with the SES in one corner, the CFA in the other and then the Resource Centre on the other.

**What are you observing in terms of how people are feeling?**

It varies from person to person, depending on how they have been affected and what stage they are at.

At the moment many people seem to be feeling guilt, regardless of what they've been through.

For example, often people say " We're OK, we lost half of our belongings but they have lost a whole house, or the rest of their life. We can still rebuild, but they have lost their children."

They feel guilty about receiving support, because they believe there are people who are worse off than they are, who have been affected more than they have been, regardless of how extreme their own circumstances are. I think it's a common stage of the grieving process.

I think the other thing about not wanting support is about not wanting to lose more control.

They have lost what was the foundation of their life, which is for a lot of people their home and their sense of belonging to a community.

So a lot of people now are starting to work, or to do what they would normally have done before the fires, to try and get back some sense of normality. It might just be visiting their grandchildren on Tuesdays as they always did, having lunch with their daughter, or something that keeps those regular things in play, so there is something left.

Some people are quite angry still, but generally things are starting to settle down. People aren't running on adrenalin any more. There has been time for reality to sink in.

However people still need a lot of intense support.

**What made you decide to volunteer for that role?**

I don't really know. I just wanted to help out, to get out there and help people who aren't thinking straight at the moment - just help someone to pull the pieces back together.

**And has the experience impacted on you?**

Not at the moment, it hasn't really. You see a lot of reports on TV, but when you actually get out there you see the media's portrayal of what is going on is very different to the reality. The context is always twisted a little bit or made more dramatic.

On the other hand the extent of what's gone on up there isn't portrayed. You hear the big picture, like how many homes were lost, but not the individual stories, which just can't be told.

**So what is it like listening to those stories?**

Obviously it's difficult, but for me it's about getting information so I can try to help them. It different to watching TV or seeing a movie, because we are acting on a professional basis. It's not about an emotional attachment. I hear people's stories and have that empathy but it's about being able to put that barrier there so I can help without my own emotions getting in the way.

So if you were to reflect on what you've experienced so far, what would you say is the main thing you've learnt?

It has highlighted for me how we unite as a community when something goes wrong, that in a crisis people pull together and put in all they can to help out.

There have been some amazing examples of that, for example of someone in Sydney hearing a report about someone losing a rare musical instrument and they then somehow tracked the person down and got one of those instruments to him. People try so hard to help people put it all back together.

**At times like that we remember we're all connected.**

# SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## THE ENVIRONMENT

**This year, ACSO continued to focus on our contribution towards environmental sustainability by increasing our efficiency in the use of resources.**

### VEHICLES

In Victoria, vehicles contribute to ten percent of green house gas emissions. ACSO maintains a fleet of approximately seventy vehicles, and in order to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the decision was made and actioned, to convert to a diesel fuel- based fleet.

### ENERGY

On August 1st, 2008 ACSO moved to a new location which was equipped with energy efficient lighting throughout the building. A cost benefit analysis indicated a reduction of 41.97 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions in this first year. This will continue to be evaluated over five years. ACSO continues to be committed to the purchase of green energy.

### PAPER AND RECYCLING

ACSO continue to be diligent in its practice of recycling, and purchases only recycled paper. Two recycling bays exist on each floor, each consisting of an 80L bin which is emptied weekly. At present a proposition exists to receive bank statements online, thus saving approximately 1000 pages of paper per year.

### RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

ACSO manages a number of residential houses within its programs and this has also provided an opportunity for activity with an environmental focus. Residents of the Disability Program have enjoyed becoming involved in simple yet important initiatives. Whilst it is sometimes difficult to stimulate interest in some other activities, environmental projects have received much positive response in that these offer both the opportunity to make a difference, and an involvement with the community. These projects include recycling and water management projects. A worm farm was also established. All houses operate on green energy. In terms of water management, all tap washers were replaced with a new water-saving model, which has saved approximately 40% of water used previously. A funding application was made for a new water system, where a vegetable patch was to be developed, sustained with grey water, however this was unsuccessful.

### ENVIRONMENTAL GROUP

A new initiative has been established, being the ACSO Environmental Group which exists to ensure that ACSO's environmental policy is actioned, to look for ways to become more efficient, and to raise consciousness amongst staff generally regarding environmental issues.

### FUTURE DIRECTIONS

ACSO will continue to improve its efforts to contribute to global sustainability by seeking further ways to develop environmentally sustainable practices, under the leadership of its Environmental Group, and our Disability Program residents.





# ACHIEVEMENTS

## HASS ACCREDITATION

The Homelessness Assistance Service Standards are the industry standards which services funded through The Department of Human Services, Office of Housing must meet in order to deliver homelessness support services.

These standards consist of five sections covering consumer rights, access, service delivery, case management, service delivery to specific groups and working with the community.

The HASS review was confined to McCormack House, which is a key component of the Specialist Mental Health Service. This provides six semi-supported beds for short-term accommodation for men with Axis 1 psychosis, who have a history of homelessness, who have had criminal justice involvement and are clients of the Specialist outreach program. Residents are generally in transition from institutions and correctional facilities.

This service was accredited in July 2008.



## REPORTING AWARDS

We were pleased to receive a silver award by the Australasian Reporting Awards for our 2008 Annual Report.

This is a great achievement in that the awards are open to all organisations that produce an Annual Report for their stakeholders including listed companies, government bodies (Federal, State and Local), and not-for-profit organisations like ours.

ARA is a not-for-profit organisation established to encourage effective communication of financial and business information.

We were also ranked in the Top 10 of Price Waterhouse Coopers Awards for transparency in reporting.

These awards are part of PWC's initiative to encourage transparent and quality reporting in the not-for-profit sector.



## NEW EMPLOYMENT SERVICES FUNDING:

In November 2008, ACSO made a number of tender submissions to the Federal Government for funding under the new Job Services Australia (JSA) program. The JSA will replace and combine the Job Network, Personal Support Program (PSP) and a range of other Federal Government funded job support programs.

The tender had a successful outcome in terms of gaining generalist employment business. Success was also achieved in terms of becoming a provider of specialist homelessness employment services, to be delivered in partnership with St Vincent De Paul to job. These are services to job seekers who are at risk of becoming homeless or who are homeless.

This service addresses a job seeker's accommodation needs and offers the support required to assist with the transition to employment.

Five contracts of this kind were awarded in Australia. ACSO's success in this tender was due to its new partnership with St Vincent De Paul and also as a result of its own experience in delivering homelessness services.

The tender also met with success in winning the right to bid on the Innovation Panel which dispenses funding for new services.

This funding equates to funding for 14 full time staff.

Whilst it was successful in Yarra, ACSO was not successful in its Geelong and Dandenong submissions, and so the previous ACSO Employment Services programs which were operating in Dandenong and Geelong will cease.



## THE ACSO WEBSITE

This year ACSO launched its new website which has been designed to keep the community informed about ACSO's programs and services.

It is hoped that it will provide a resource for professional workers in the sector, and will increase access to services for those who need them.

The website was designed and improved through much stakeholder consultation. Our clients contributed some vital feedback in this process, ensuring that the website is user-friendly.

Our website can be found at [www.acso.com.au](http://www.acso.com.au)



# CHALLENGES & RISKS

**Whilst ACSO's operations and programs continue to progress and we have reported on numerous successes, it is also important to transparently report the areas of our work that pose significant risks or poor performance. This is the first time that we have included this section in our Annual Report, however, ACSO will continue providing the community and our stakeholders with a revised account of our challenges and risks in forthcoming Annual Reports.**

## EXTENDED SUPERVISION ORDERS

In 2009 the Victorian Government Department of Justice introduced a new program to provide community and housing support to offenders subject to Extended Supervision Orders. The program has been established in anticipation to the potential increases in Extended Supervision Orders (and the new Detention Orders) with the planned legislative changes that will widen the scope of these orders to include all sex offences, not just child sex offences.

In late 2008, the Department of Justice requested ACSO to establish the program in an interim capacity (as an extension of ACSO's Sex Offender Support Program) in preparation for a public tender process to deliver the program over a three year period from July 2009. Unfortunately, ACSO was not the successful tender applicant, however, will continue to play a role in the development and delivery of services to sex offenders. The feedback from Department of Justice and results from an internal review of ACSO's tender submission confirmed a number of deficits in our tender preparation and writing processes. These issues have been analysed and the management team have commenced responding to ensure that ACSO's level of professionalism in submitting tenders and grants is of a high standard.

## RESTRUCTURE OF THE COMMUNITY OFFENDER ADVICE TREATMENT SERVICE (COATS) – METROPOLITAN ASSESSMENTS

In 2008 ACSO completed a restructure of COATS metropolitan based assessment services. This issue related to the need to change a number of long term work practices that had started to impact on the capacity of ACSO to meet its key performance indicators for the COATS program and as such were at risk of being in breach of our Funding and Service Agreement. Unfortunately, ACSO was unable to successfully negotiate changes to these work practices with the staff involved and the restructure resulted in 9 staff being made compulsorily redundant. The required changes have now been implemented and the program is performing above expectation in meeting its KPI's, and importantly staff delivering the services are enjoying flexible working conditions and above award remuneration.

## NEXT STRATEGIC PLAN POSTPONED

ACSO's 2006 – 2009 Strategic Plan was concluded in early 2009 with an evaluation and recommendations completed. During this time ACSO was informed that critical components of its programs will be affected by the pending redevelopment by the Department of Justice of justice related health services. Given the potential impacts on service delivery, funding and staff, ACSO Council made a decision to postpone the next strategic plan until 2010. To ensure ACSO maintains a 'strategic edge', during this time we plan to establish a new Research and Evaluation Unit to complement our experience in delivering programs with rigorous evaluation and forming an 'organisational research agenda'. ACSO will also commence focusing on developing research partnerships with other community agencies and universities and will take a more consistent approach in responding to both Federal and State policy consultation processes.

## EXTENSION REQUESTED FOR QUALITY ACCREDITATION REVIEW

ACSO was due to commence its 4th quality certification review in mid 2010. Due to the level of Council, management and staff resources that will be required to respond to the pending Justice Health initiative, ACSO has requested, and been granted, a 12 month extension from QICSA. Making this decision at the half way point of our current accreditation cycle has allowed ACSO to review its current Quality Work Plan (which is detailed elsewhere in the Annual Report) and will also allow for any changes to be made in 2010, subject to the Justice Health initiative.

## JUSTICE HEALTH INITIATIVE

As mentioned earlier this change in policy by the State Government will have a significant impact on ACSO's operations. This change in policy will result in health services being integrated for prisoners and those people engaging with the Courts, Police and Community Correctional Services. The ACSO Council and management team has spent 2009 (and will continue to 2010) in developing our strategic position in relation to these changes. A tender for Justice Health services has been released late in 2009, in which ACSO has decided to take an active role.



# MAJOR EVENTS

## 20TH ANNIVERSARY, THE DISABILITIES PROGRAM (DAP)

In 1989 the new ACSO Disability Program commenced and the doors of its first residential house, Francis House opened.

This service was established for people who have an Intellectual Disability, who have had contact with the Criminal Justice system. It began with 5 residential staff including its first manager, Sister Clare McShee, but had no outreach component.

In these early days, administrative demands of funding bodies were much lower, formal records were not kept nor did databases exist.

Nevertheless calculations indicate that over its 20 years of existence, the service has supported over 1000 individuals with complex needs, and many of those were assisted to move into independent living and to fulfil life goals and aspirations.

20 years later, DAP has seen much growth and now has 7 houses and 78 staff.

## KONNECT LAUNCH

In 2008, the Link Out consortium was approached by Corrections Victoria to develop and implement a state-wide Indigenous specific ex-offender support program, called 'Konnect'.

This is a voluntary program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sentenced individuals who want help in transitioning from prison. Participants are provided with an Indigenous Case Manager pre and post release in an attempt to address the issues that may have contributed to their incarceration. Four Indigenous Case Workers have been employed by Jesuit Social Services and VACRO and the Program Co-ordinator and Research Evaluation Officer are based at ACSO.

The program was officially launched on April the 30th at the Aboriginal Advancement League in Thornbury.

Since then the number of referrals are increasing each month.

Jaime Binks, Program Co-ordinator, and Neil Hassall of Corrections Victoria will be touring the countryside visiting prisons, talking to Aboriginal Liaison and Wellbeing Officers and also Koori prisoners about the program. Along the way they will also visit Aboriginal Co-ops and meet with local community members and elders.



### Launch of Konnect

**L-R:** Annie Trainor (Program Manager - Link Out), Tony Calabrò (CEO - ACSO), Johnathon King (Brosnan Centre) and Lisha Constantino (Link Out and Konnect Program Assistant - ACSO).



### The Opening of Francis House 1989

**L-R:** Sister Clare McShee (first Manager of Francis House), Chris Cappello (ACSO staff member and Council Secretary), Justice Alastair Nicholson (Chair of ACSO's first Council) and The Hon. Kay Setches (Minister for Community Services).

## ACSO'S NEW HOME

In 2008, ACSO moved from its home of 12 years at Spencer St Melbourne to its new premises at 1 Hoddle St., Richmond.

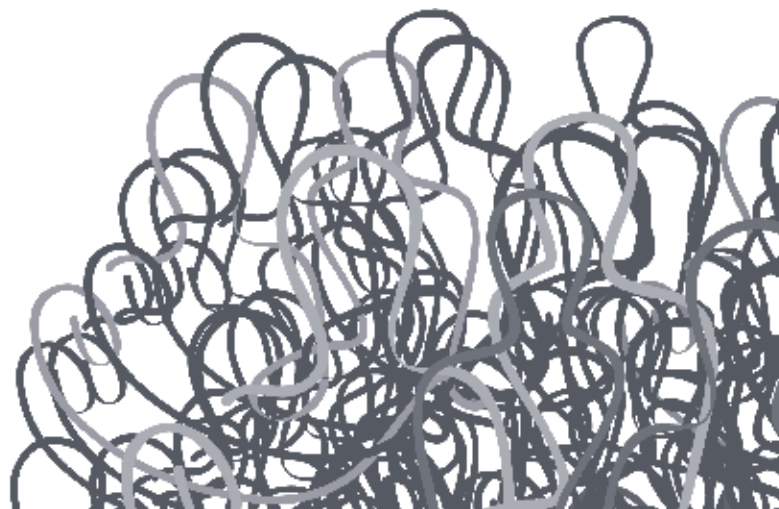
Much work was involved in this transition, including the electronic scanning of over one million files. A great deal of work was also required to modify the new building to suit ACSO's purposes, including the installation of a new lift.

It wasn't long before the premises across the road, being 1 Hoddle St Collingwood noticed a large influx of a new clientele, and so it was quickly apparent that new signs were urgently required.

Whilst there continue to be teething problems, many positives of the new premises including environmentally friendly fittings and its close proximity to public transport are being appreciated.

### On completion of the lift, Senior Management celebrated

**L-R:** Ed Holmes, Tony Calabrò and Vaughan Winther.



## DISABILITIES PROGRAM ANNUAL ART SHOW

This year, ACSO held its 5th Art Show and displayed client art from a range of services including ACSO, Department of Justice, and Department of Human Services.

More than 50 of the pieces on display were sold throughout the week, with all proceeds going to the artists.

This picture was painted by Mr John Kelly, for whom art was the part of his life that made him happiest. John was what some describe as "a character" and his great sense of humour was enjoyed by the people who worked with him. This painting demonstrates his great sense of optimism and hopeful nature. Sadly John died on November 14th. May he know the transformation that his butterflies represented

## LAUNCH OF RESEARCH REPORT

A research project was initiated by ACSO's Justice Services program, which commissioned Caraniche, a specialist psychological service in Melbourne for this task, and this was launched at ACSO's Head Office in Richmond.

The report was titled "Review of best practice around behaviour change in young offenders with alcohol and other drug issues."

It was considered that research needed to be conducted in order to contribute to an international and independent framework designed to inform the sector of global best practice in youth drug and alcohol treatment. Whilst adult clinical assessments have provided information on effective therapeutic models, there is less information regarding what is effective in drug and alcohol youth specific therapy.

The research needed to draw on international sources due to a lack of Australian studies in this area.

It will provide a foundation for further research and discussions about best practise in the Australian context.



### Launch of Justice Services research report

**L-R:** Bernard Hanson (Deputy Program Manager, Justice Services - ACSO) Simone Schuetz (Research Officer) and Dr Matthew Berry (Manager, Research, Training and Projects - Caraniche Psychological Services) and Jenny Johnston (Manager, Justice Services - ACSO).

## MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

In October 08, the Specialist Mental Health Program participated in the Mental Health Week Providers Expo in Williamstown Town Hall.

The team attended and manned a stall, and distributed ACSO showbags containing information about the services offered. This generated many conversations, some referrals and two new partnerships. (see photo of SMH team)

## DISABILITIES CONFERENCE

This year, ACSO convened the 4th Forensic Disabilities Conference - "Disability and Justice: Many Faces, Equal Rights" in Melbourne.

The event aimed to provide a forum for researchers, advocates and practitioners in the field of Forensic Disabilities to share information in order to promote the rights and challenge issues relating to the social inclusion of people with disabilities who have offended or been victimised.

A total of 257 registrations from all Australian states and territories was received, which was the largest number of participants since ACSO began convening the Forensic Disabilities Conferences.

The presentations focussed on a wide variety of subjects all of which are noted on the ACSO website.

### Some of the papers presented were:

Cocks, Sarah. "I've smoked my memory away' Young People with Acquired Brain Injury in the Youth Justice Sector."

Elliot, Allan, and Kim Eldridge. "Understanding Prison Disciplinary Hearings - A Pilot Project Supporting Prisoners with an Intellectual Disability."

Hague, Gill. "Making the Links: Domestic Violence and Disabled Women."

McKenna, John. "Lockdown No Longer the Best Part of the Day."

Rogers, Jonathan. "Confinement versus Rehabilitation in Secure Care: Harnessing Hope for Those who have Least."

Webber, Lynne S, Mandy Donley, Moira Buchholtz, Jeffrey Chan, and Gunvant Patel. "Implications of Human Rights on the Practice of Chemical Restraint in People Subjected to Supervised Treatment Orders."

Whale, Andrew, and Sue Waton. "Intensive Treatment and Support (ITAS) Service Managing Forensic Risk in the Community"



### Specialist Mental Health Services

**L-R:** Robb Ritchens, Denice Schoenpflug and Jo Leddin.



# STRATEGY REPORT



**VAUGHAN WINTHER**  
DEPUTY CEO

## STRATEGIC PLAN




ACSO’s current strategic plan was developed and implemented for the 2006 – 2009 period, in consultation with ACSO Council, staff and stakeholders. Many outcomes have been achieved over this time and future directions have been identified which are vital for the growth and development of the organisation.

### OUTCOMES

The following table is a summary of ACSO’s strategic objectives and outcomes:

#### ENHANCED SERVICE DELIVERY: ACCOMMODATION AND MATERIAL NEEDS






ACSO will improve response to referred clients experiencing, or at risk of experiencing homelessness. By reducing the impact of homelessness on our client group we aim to increase their quality of life and reduce recidivism.

STRATEGY	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS	FUTURE DIRECTIONS
Identify opportunities for ACSO to provide increased access to services and options to its clients.	An online service directory was purchased to assist staff with clients requiring crisis accommodation or material needs. Training and implementation complete.		
Develop and trial new accommodation initiatives to address homelessness amongst client groups, after surveying client needs.	STEPUP accommodation model piloted and proposal for funding documented.		Awaiting response to funding application.
To engage in homelessness policy, network and sector reform.	Events state and local have been attended and memberships of networks attained.		

Complete  Ongoing  Not Commenced or Out of Scope 




## RESEARCH AND EVALUATION/KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

ACSO will evaluate current programs to improve service delivery to clients and increase our reputation in our areas of service delivery. Opportunities to work with new client groups will be researched. Research and evaluation will then be leveraged to establish greater credibility in the sector, improved partnerships, and increased influence on public policy.

STRATEGY	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS	FUTURE DIRECTIONS
Conduct research in an identified priority area.			Out of scope. To be included in the Research and Development Project.
Develop and implement basic knowledge management processes.	New intranet and internet site developed and resourced, to house KM system.		
Create a visual (ppt/film) to both orient new staff, and inform the community via the website using client capabilities.	Film complete and on website.		
Utilise and expand on knowledge management framework to enhance staff development and training, including the development of a training calendar.			To be completed 2010 within Quality Work Plan framework.
Investigate mechanisms of consolidating knowledge to generate funds for ACSO.			Out of scope. To be included in the Research and Development Project.



## COMMUNICATION AND INFLUENCE

We will increase our capabilities in the areas of communication with and influence amongst all stakeholders in order to bring issues facing our client groups to the attention of policy makers, raise our profile with key stakeholders and increase our credibility as a high quality service provider. We will use our organisational knowledge and experience to increase our influence with opinion leaders and decision makers.

STRATEGY	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS	FUTURE DIRECTIONS
Identify current perceptions of ACSO amongst stakeholders and evaluate current influence strategies.	Stakeholder interviews complete.		Stakeholder survey to be conducted annually.
Modify perceptions of ACSO where necessary and raise ACSO’s profile.	New branding, signage and brochures complete. Development of new website.		
Utilise increased awareness of ACSO to derive benefit for clients.			Out of scope. To be included in the Research and Development Project.

## INCREASE PARTNERING CAPABILITIES

ACSO will identify opportunities for collaboration and partnerships in order to better meet the needs of existing clients and to diversify into service areas where we would be able to add value.




STRATEGY	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS	FUTURE DIRECTIONS
Develop a partnership planning and development framework.	A partnership planning tool has been developed collaboratively between this team and a consultant, and piloted within the Employment Services tendering process.		
Identify and develop partnerships and collaborations to enhance strategic initiatives.			Out of scope. To be included in the Research and Development Project.

Complete  Ongoing  Not Commenced or Out of Scope 



INCREASE DISCRETIONARY FUNDING

ACSO will develop diverse funding streams and aim to increase our discretionary funding on an on-going basis. This will improve our ability to respond to the emerging needs of current and future clients groups, fund projects and make us less reliant on government funding.

STRATEGY	OUTCOMES	PROGRESS	FUTURE DIRECTIONS
Identify organisational policy positions to better utilise existing financial resources.	An initiative was developed whereby each program was instructed to make the changes required to achieve a 3% surplus.		
Seek funding for projects arising out of strategic initiatives.	A proposal was written for a social enterprise (Scanners R Us). Funding was applied for and received from the Federal Government Jobs Fund Initiative in July 2009.		
Develop and implement strategy to generate additional discretionary funds.	Make submission to Perpetual and also the Law Society and invite speakers.		Out of scope. To be included in the Research and Development Project.

Complete  Ongoing  Not Commenced or Out of Scope 

EVALUATION

As this strategic planning period drew to an end, ACSO proceeded to an evaluation of the 06-09 Strategic Plan, its planning, process and implementation.

A consultant was engaged to carry out this process, who surveyed all stakeholder groups.

A key group of both stakeholders and participants were staff and a summary of their responses are as follows:

Positives:

- Participation in the strategic plan initiative groups found to be a rewarding process.
- It provided opportunity to meet other staff working within different programs of ACSO and a chance to step away from their everyday work and focus on the future direction of ACSO.
- Support of a dedicated project officer helped achieve tasks and outcomes.

Difficulties:

- Frustration in regards to the changing nature of the team membership
- Lack of clarification of direction at times in regard to objectives and budget.
- The process was time consuming and staff did not always see it as part of their core role within the organisation.
- Plan was not always supported by management.
- Only relevant to staff working at the head office of ACSO.
- Good initial consultation process to develop the strategic plan, adequate opportunity to provide input.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure all new staff are aware of the plan by inclusion in orientation
- Positions of key responsibility should require staff to nominate themselves rather than be nominated.
- Plan should be reviewed and updated on a 12 monthly basis.
- That clients be involved in the formation of the next plan where possible.
- That the roles of Sponsors and Steering Committee be clearly defined and communicated.
- That a Project Management tool be identified and implemented which will assist teams to achieve their strategic objectives, and provide a more user friendly method of reporting.
- That the aspects experienced by staff as positives and also their difficulties be considered in the formulation of the next Strategic Plan.
- That staff commitment to strategic planning is fully understood and encouraged at every level of ACSO, by representation within position descriptions, and as a component of supervision.
- That plans to facilitate the participation of off-site staff, clients and sessional staff are devised.
- That a communication plan is devised that ensures all staff are informed by Management of progress, using both email and intranet.
- That plans be formed to ensure that Council maintains control of and key responsibility for Strategic Plan progress and outcomes.

These recommendations will guide the development and implementation of the next Strategic Planning phase.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Following the completion of this Strategic Planning phase, consultations were held regarding the commencement of the next.

It was decided in this time of particular uncertainty in regard to government policy directions and consequent funding, that some strategic directions to action would be established, but the next formal planning phase would be postponed until future directions became more certain.

Some of these directions will include objectives deemed out of scope in the previous Plan.

Recommendation regarding strategic initiatives:

To develop a three pronged approach which will ensure that planning and development of ACSO is continuous:

1. Strategy and Development Project

In 2008, ACSO Council provided direction to the organisation’s role in advocacy, resulting in a conclusion that at this stage, ACSO would be best equipped to play the role of “scientist-practitioner.” The purpose here would be to create a research capacity which will gather and analyse the outcomes of research, and also the data emerging from the evaluation of practice, and apply these to assist in meeting ACSO’s strategic objectives.

In February 2009, ACSO Council approved seed funding for 12 months to establish a Strategy and Development Project, comprising a Project Manager (0.4 EFT) and Research Officer (1.0 EFT), which commenced in May 2009.

The scope of the Strategy and Development Project incorporates planning and developing the framework for the management of the following activities:

Evaluation:

- Building capacity to thoroughly evaluate ACSO’s programs and be able to clearly demonstrate performance outcomes.

Research:

- Mapping external sources for gaps and priorities in research, and build capacity for ACSO to engage in research and influence public policy.
- Undertaking research projects focussed on key research/practice gaps of relevance to ACSO operations.
- Developing partnerships with universities and other specialist research bodies.
- Providing a research function to support ACSO’s contribution to policy and government reviews.
- Managing the process for requests to undertake research.

Partnerships:

- Developing partnerships in the context of a relationship continuum varying from complex contractual arrangements to sustaining local networks.
- Monitoring and reviewing ACSO’s current partnerships and networks, and identifying partnerships of future strategic importance to ACSO.

Creating New Business and Diversify Funding Sources:

- Researching potential sources of funding outside core government funding.
- Developing funding proposals to alternative funding sources.
- Developing of an evidence base for use in tenders and funding proposals based on ACSO’s evaluation/research activities and from a broader research base relevant to ACSO’s operations.

- Provision and development of a number of key staff with strong writing skills for work on ACSO tenders when required.

2. Quality Working Group

- To map QICSA (Quality Improvement Community Service Accreditation) standards and review ACSO’s progress against these.
- To co-ordinate the gathering of evidence and development of Quality Journals in preparation for accreditation.
- To support and guide quality improvement projects.

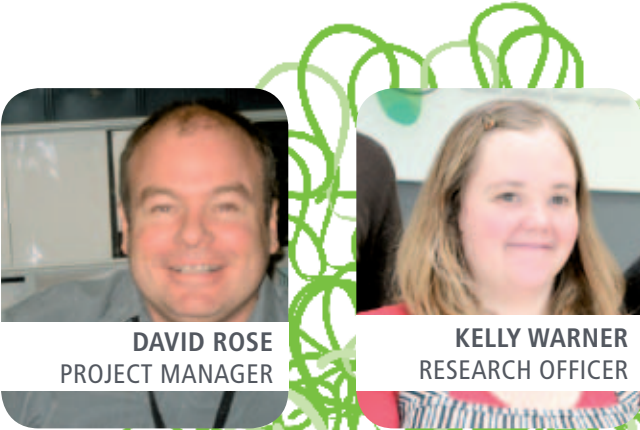
3. Staff Forums

- To develop opportunities for staff to feedback innovations, ideas, and concerns to the organisation in order to assist with the quality improvement process.
- To gather intelligence from staff concerning changes in the Sector and amongst client groups.
- To present input with a focus specific to ACSO’s strategic objectives.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It is proposed that a new Research and Evaluation unit at ACSO be established as a fifth program of ACSO, and that funding for the program structure and roles be requested from ACSO reserves from 2010 – 2013.

This Unit will provide an ongoing focus on the areas outlined above of interest in the Strategy and Development Project.





# QUALITY IMPROVEMENT




QICSA (Quality Improvement & Community Services Accreditation), offers review and accreditation to the health and community services sector in Victoria.

The accreditation process requires organisations to continually meet industry based standards. As a consequence this then assists organisations to commit themselves to continuous quality improvement.

Accreditation occurs through a process of internal and external reviews. Recommendations resulting from these form the basis of a Quality Work Plan. This lays out a timetable of work, and is the basis of ongoing reviews.

## QUALITY WORK PLAN: 2008/2009 TARGETS AND PROGRESS.

The following table, our Quality Work Plan summary, lists ACSO's Quality Improvement projects and our progress against goals. These goals are based on the recommendations coming out of the 2007 review.

PROJECT	TASKS	PROGRESS
Council	Community/client participation on Council	Participation model agreed. To be actioned. 
Knowledge Management	Development of new website and intranet.	Website and Intranet contain all relevant documentation and are fully maintained. 
	Records Management project. (Focus: uniformity, storage and security of records.) ➤ Auditing of all ACSO processes and templates ➤ Preparation of report with recommendations ➤ Action on recommendations	Processes audited, report complete. Awaiting action. 
HR Project	Major review of all HR processes, including performance reviews by a consultancy. HR system in place that addresses gaps identified.	Report complete, awaiting action on recommendations. 
	Staff Feedback system (to ensure a variety of channels exist for communication between staff and management.)	In action. 
Training	To include: ➤ Integrated calendar on the intranet ➤ Record of staff training completed ➤ Advertising and recording of secondments on Intranet	
Risk Management	➤ New Risk Management system (Riskman software) to be installed ➤ Training of managers and all staff to be conducted	Software piloted. New system ready for roll out. 
Client Participation Project	Client Participation project to develop: ➤ Central register for client feedback ➤ Uniform and integrated system for collection of data across ACSO including system for responsive action ➤ A consumer reference group ➤ Refreshed client participation policy	Client participation officer employed. Recommendations developed, to be actioned. 
CALD Project	➤ Audit needs of CALD groups likely to access ACSO ➤ Audit referral patterns within programs ➤ Document current response of programs to these groups ➤ Create strategies to respond to gaps in service and mechanisms to ensure response to need is regularly evaluated. ➤ Regular CALD training to be planned.	
Partnerships	➤ Develop central register for all agreements, relationships and key contacts with co coordinating communication plan ➤ Develop system to ensure that register is regularly updated ➤ Implement partnerships framework through process of piloting, and develop a plan for ongoing use	
HASS Specific Tasks	➤ Develop and document referral process for clients exiting McCormack House ➤ Incorporate an exit strategy into the IPP that covers accommodation as well as outreach support	Exit strategy developed and documented that incorporates outreach and accommodation support. 

Complete  Ongoing  Not Commenced or Out of Scope 

## ACHIEVEMENTS

This year has been a very busy one, with many other demands on the organisation's time. Nevertheless some significant progress has been made in regard to improvements to the quality of our service.

Some of the key achievements are as follows and indicate which Quality Work Plan (QWP) project they relate to:

### CLIENT PARTICIPATION PROJECT

#### Aim:

The client participation project was an important priority within ACSO's Quality Improvement Work Plan. Its aim was to develop a strategy for involving clients in decision making about service planning and development, and for collecting feedback on their experience of ACSO services.

The key purpose of this initiative is to ensure that client participation occurs, and that feedback may be contributed through a variety of channels in a way that takes account of a wide range of literacy and language skills and is reported transparently at all levels of the organisation.



MIRELLA RAO  
CLIENT PARTICIPATION  
PROJECT OFFICER

#### Process:

A project officer was employed who audited the variety of ACSO Program feedback systems, consulted with other organisations as to their consumer participation strategies and communicated with stakeholders throughout. A client reference group was established which advised on the project and other areas of interest to service development.

#### Outcome of audit:

- Feedback is collected inconsistently within programs, systems varying in terms of methods and templates used
- Methods and templates vary in their user-friendliness for clients
- Outcomes are not communicated beyond programs, minimising opportunities for evaluation, improvement or coordinated action
- There is also no strategy for dealing with issues that arose in feedback
- In some areas, consumer participation was confused with consumer feedback, and with complaints

#### Proposed Implementations resulting from audit:

1. Feedback forms to be translated into other languages.
2. Introduction of feedback forms with common elements
3. Trial of peer interviewer method where a former client collects information and ideas from current clients face to face.
4. Centralized and accessible register of feedback, and reports on outcomes.
5. Development of a Client Bank, being a list of clients willing to be available for occasional feedback or focus groups
6. Introduction of the touch screen (Digivay) kiosk as a feedback collection method.

#### Advantages:

- This relies less on writing and reading and more on visual prompts
  - It can offer a broad choice of languages and anonymity
  - Available in kiosk form but can be used off-site with a lap top
  - Info can be collated and charted. Reports can be instantly available and data can be cut according to need
7. Further methods for collecting information will also be implemented, for example the ACSO website feedback tool.
  8. Feedback will be presented at Council meetings, co-presented by staff and consumers.

#### The process for responding to feedback:

This initiative is a response to Health and Community Services Standards:

- 2.2. Planning and provision of services and programs focus on positive outcomes for agreed consumer and community needs.
- 2.3 Services and programs are provided in a culturally safe and appropriate manner
- 2.4 Services and program confirm consumer rights
- 2.5 Services and programs develop implement and evaluate strategies that empower consumers.

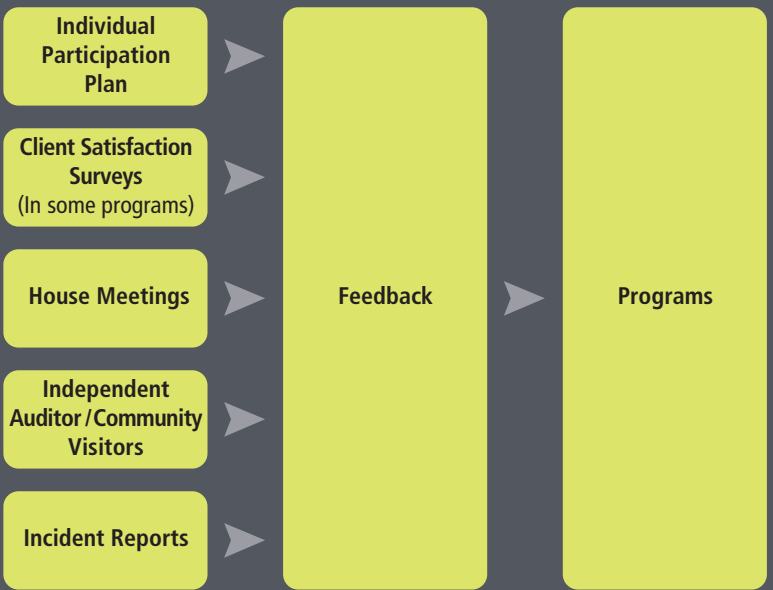
ACSO is in a unique position to offer this particularly disenfranchised group, this opportunity to participate in the community in a meaningful and innovative way. Ultimately this will enable ACSO staff and consumers together to fulfil ACSO's mission, being to make a difference in the lives of disenfranchised people.

The diagram on the following page describes the proposed client participation model.

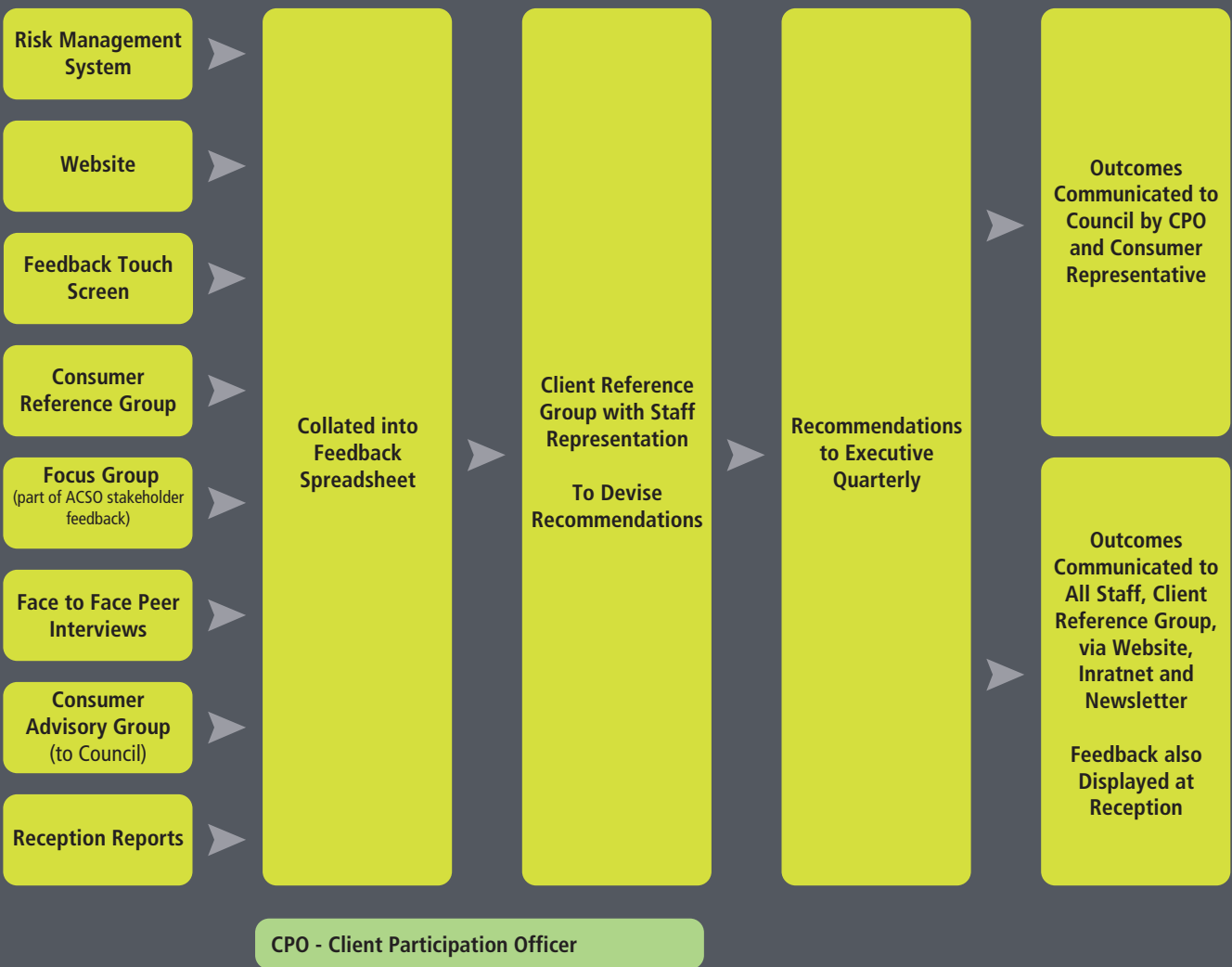


# PROPOSED CLIENT PARTICIPATION MODEL

## CURRENT METHODS



## ADDITIONAL PROPOSED METHODS



## RISK MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A new Risk Management software system was purchased, and has been piloted within one of the programs.

The RiskMan software was selected as it is a highly configurable, ready-to-use system which incorporates not only Incident Reporting, but maintains a risk register, is able to produce purpose-built reports, and also offers a channel for staff feedback.

It has the capacity to be modified and developed to include other organisation-specific features

This new system will greatly simplify many risk and Occupational Health and Safety processes and these create greater efficiencies throughout the organisation.

This initiative is a response to Health and Community Services Standards

1.3 The organisation's physical resources are managed to ensure an effective, safe and efficient service.

1.6 The organisation identifies, assesses and manages risks to ensure continuous, safe, responsive and efficient services.



## HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW

In order to evaluate our HR system and identify areas needing improvement, a review was undertaken and a consultancy firm was engaged to assist in this task.

A survey was conducted in which 115 staff participated, rating 72 items against 2 scales being that of agreement and importance.

Areas of interest were related to culture, vision, strategy, relationships, leadership, recruitment, performance management and retention, training, communication, IR and OHS.

### Outcome summary:

#### Highest rated items (ACSO's strengths in HR)

- Payroll functions well, people are paid in an accurate and timely manner
- Assistance is offered to employees experiencing personal problems
- All people are treated equally regardless of race, religion, gender, background
- The management of injured workers and return to work programs are done well
- Health and Safety is treated as an important matter.
- 

#### Items ranked as most important to staff:

- That the leader of my team is effective
- That no one at ACSO is discriminated against, and all are treated as equals
- That no one is harassed or bullied
- That staff can trust each other and work well together

#### Lowest rated items or greatest disagreement

(ACSO areas for improvement)

- I understand how positions are graded and what is required for promotion or advancement
- People who perform consistently poorly are managed out of the organisation.

- People who perform consistently well are recognised and rewarded
- Those who demonstrate great effort consistent with our core values and strategy are rewarded
- Our organisational culture has improved in the last 12 months

#### Items ranked as least important to staff:

- All understand how they contribute to ACSO's strategic plan
- That objectives and aligned with ACSO's strategic plan
- I understand ACSO's strategy and key goals for the next 12 months
- Those who demonstrate great effort consistent with core values and strategy are rewarded
- There is a focus and sense of urgency about the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness
- The key results of this survey have been made available to staff on the intranet.

This initiative is a response to Health and Community Services Standard

1.6 Human Resources are managed to create an effective and competent service.

As yet, no recommendations have been implemented, however consideration of these will occur in 2010, as a priority of our Quality Work Plan.

## NEW WEBSITE

Last year saw an emphasis on new branding which carried over into the redevelopment of our communication tools, for example, signage, brochures, banners and other communication materials.

In recognition of the fact that much information-gathering occurs in the community through the internet, it was decided to redesign ACSO's internet in order that it become more user-friendly, attractive, and informative as a resource for the Sector, for the general community and for those who may require our services.

The new website was planned and reviewed in consultation with ACSO clients.

It contains information on ACSO and its programs, professional links and resources, news and updates, and a section requested by clients that offers contact details for support and emergency services and also stories that may provide inspiration and hope.

This initiative is a response to Health and Community Services Standard

3.4 The Organisation works to build the capacity of the community it serves and the professional community to which it belongs.

The new website may be viewed at [www.ACSO.com.au](http://www.ACSO.com.au)

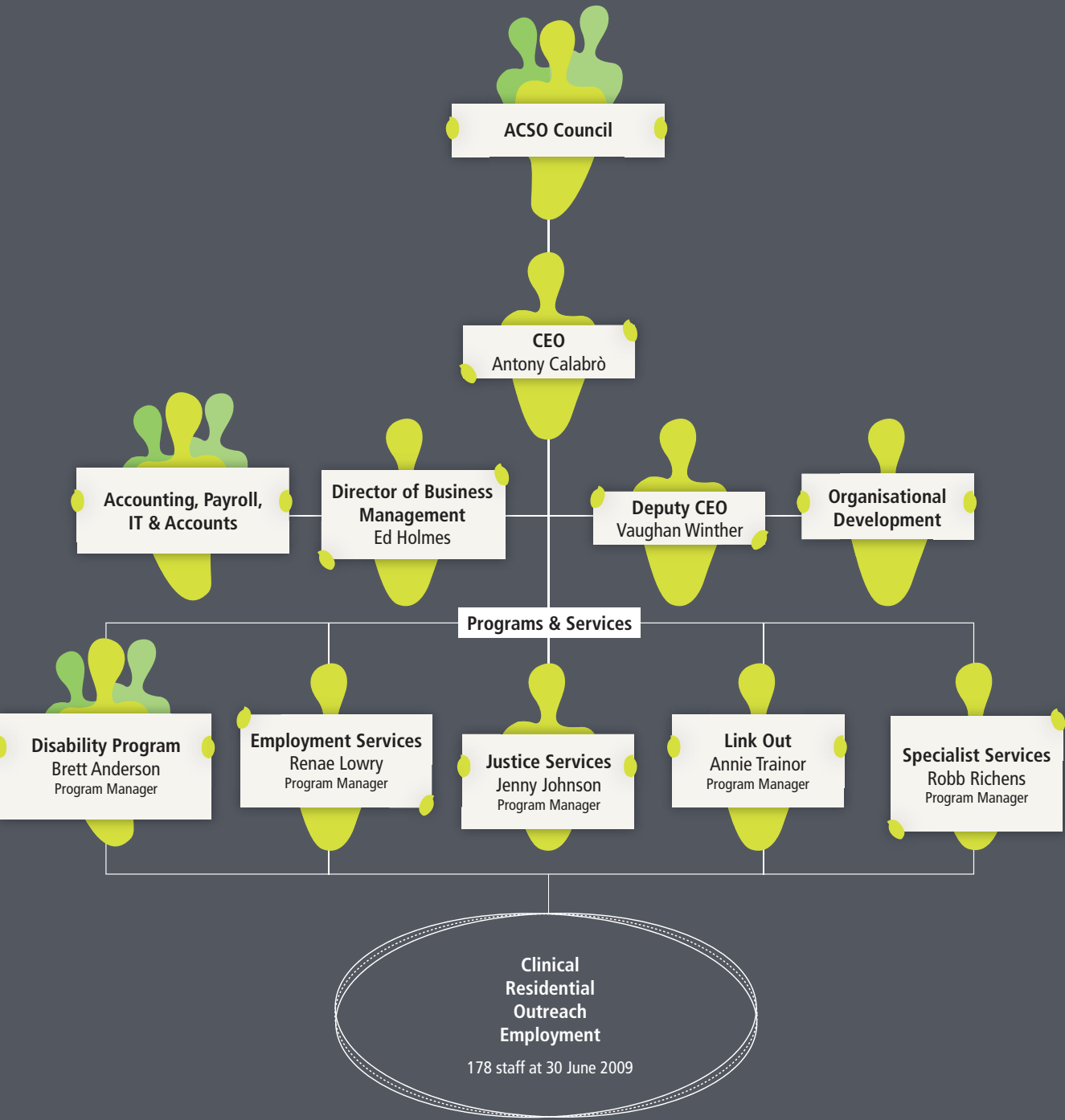
## IN CONCLUSION,

Despite many competing demands, much has been achieved in Quality Improvement and we look forward to another year of opportunity.



# HUMAN RESOURCES

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Our employees are the key mechanism by which ACSO provides quality services and as such ACSO employs staff from a variety of professional backgrounds. The table below summarises the main qualifications of staff by program area.

QUALIFICATION	ADMIN	DISABILITY SERVICES	EMPLOYMENT SERVICES	JUSTICE SERVICES	SPECIALIST SERVICES
Bachelor Applied Science (Psych)		2	4		
Bachelor of Accounting	2		1		
Bachelor Arts		1	11	5	
Bachelor Community Development				2	
Bachelor Criminal Justice / Criminology / Police Studies		2		2	
Bachelor of Education / Law / Science	1		1		
Bachelor Marketing			1		
Bachelor Nursing		1			1
Bachelor Science / Applied Science				3	
Bachelor Social Work	1		6	7	2
Bachelor Social Health					
Bachelor Commerce / Business Management				3	
Bachelor Disability Studies					
Bachelor Youth Affairs				1	
Certificate IV Alcohol and Other Drugs		1	1	12	
Certificate IV Assessment / Workplace Training / Employment Services			2	3	
Certificate IV Counselling			1		
Certificate IV Disabilities / Residential Care		14	1	1	
Certificate V1 Mental Health / Personality Development Theory				2	2
Certificate IV Workplace Assessment and Training			4		
Certificate IV Youth / Child Protection				2	
Doctorate in Social Work					
Diploma Community Development					
Diploma Management / Business	1			1	
Diploma Social Science / Welfare / Health		6	1	4	1
Grad. Dip. Addiction Studies / AOD		1		2	
Grad. Dip. Child and Adolescent / Youth		1		1	
Grad. Dip. Counselling / Psychology			2	2	
Master of Arts / Criminology				1	
Masters Business Administration / CPA	2			3	
Masters IT				1	
Masters Psychology / Forensic Psychology / Counselling(Soc.Sci)				4	
Masters Law		1			
Masters Social Work		2	1		
Masters Theology				1	
Registered Nurse / Psychiatric Nursing			1		2
Doctorate Development Studies					
Psychologist / Arts-Psychology				9	

Other qualifications exist in drink driver education, mediation, men’s behaviour change, management, mental retardation and community services.



STAFFING COMPONENTS AND MOVEMENT

SERVICES	TOTAL AT 30/6/08	FULL TIME	PART TIME	CASUAL	TOTAL AT 30/6/09	LEFT	STARTED	MAT LEAVE	INTERNAL SECONDMENT	EXTERNAL SECONDMENT
Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service (COATS)	42	22	18	8	48	29	31			1
Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (CALO)	1								1	
NGWALA		1			1					
ESO		3			3					
KONNECT		1			1					
Sex Offender Support (SOSP)	3	3			3	1	1			
LINKOUT	9	9			9	1	3	1		
Disability Program	66	32	12	16	60	16	9			
Specialist Services (Mental Health)	2.5	2	1		3	4	3			
Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative	1.5		1		1		1			
McCormack House	2		2	1	3	1	2			
Vitality Personnel Dandenong	5	4	1		5	6	2			
Personal Support Program (PSP)	8	3	2	1	6	4	3			
Disability Employment Network (DEN)	3	4	1		5	1	3			
Job Capacity Assessment	2	2	1		3	1	1			
Vitality Management	1	1			1					
Administration	11	11	1		13	2	6			
Bushfire		3			3		1		2	
Scanning Team	10			10	10	11	8			
TOTALS	168	101	40	36	178	77	74	1	3	1

Note:  
Funding for CALO was reduced.  
The scanning team began as a short term initiative but was recommenced when the Vitality Dandenong contract was lost and files had to be stored.  
Vitality Dandenong ceased operation due to loss of contract.  
New position for KONNECT.  
CALO employee was transferred to NGWALA.

● Justice ● Disabilities ● Specialist Services ● Employment

Extended Supervision Order Program commenced.  
  
The Vic. Bushfire Case management commenced after the Black Saturday bushfires with staff seconded from other programs.  
  
Movement of staff within the COATS program resulted from a restructure that occurred in order to create greater efficiencies within the program.

PROGRAM TRAINING RECORD

- JUSTICE
  - Home Detention – Sex Offender Support Program
  - Pharmacotherapies
  - Methamphetamine - Ice
  - Blood borne viruses
  - Working with Indigenous clients and Mental Health
  - Mental Health Screening
  - Fire warden training
  - Health Privacy Legislation
  - Work Organisation and Stress
  - CPA training
  - Working with Challenging Clients
  - Drug and Alcohol Competencies
- Withdrawal Guidelines
  - What Works in Counselling
  - Working with Personality Disorder offenders
  - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
  - Dual Diagnosis competencies
  - Clinical Supervision
  - Communicating with Diplomacy and Professionalism
  - Housing Submission Writing
  - OHS Training including First Aid Facilitator Cognitive Skills
  - Train the Trainer
  - Supervision Training
  - Landmark Payment Summaries
  - Suicide Intervention

Other conferences and regional networks meetings were attended

DISABILITY PROGRAM

- Engaging in working with challenging clients
- Problematic Sexual Behaviour Service Training
- Disability Leasing Model Information Sessions
- Behaviour Support Plan Training
- First Aid Training
- Justice Disability Action Plan
- Disability Forensic Assessment and Treatment Service Training
- Riskman - risk management software training
- Office of the Senior Practitioner Training
- Forensic Disability Conference
- Residential Guidelines Training
- Quarterly Data Collection Tool Training
- Supervision Training
- Safe House Training
- Safe Food Training
- Sex Offender Trainings
- How you can assist your client with self medication
- Introduction to the Information Privacy Act
- Mindfulness Training
- Aust. Society for the study of Intellectual Disability
- Mental Illness Awareness Training
- Outreach Forum
- Outreach Guidelines Training

- Cross Cultural Awareness & Communications
  - Managing Occupational Violence
  - Refresher Fire Safety Training
  - What is Chemical Restraint
  - Role of the Authorised Program Officer
  - The Ins and Outs of Risk Assessment
- Other conferences, regional networks meetings and forums were attended

SPECIALIST SERVICES

- Dealing with difficult clients
  - Occupational health and safety update
  - First Aid Level 2.
  - Fire Warden training
  - Working with interpreters
  - Dealing with aggression
  - African communities and Mental Health
- Other conferences and regional networks meetings were attended

EMPLOYMENT

- SEG1 Training
  - ASSIST Suicide Prevention Training
  - Cognitive Behavioural Therapy Training
- Other conferences and regional networks meetings were attended

ACSO EXECUTIVE TEAM

The ACSO Executive Team is an important feature of ACSO's overall governance framework. . The purpose of the Executive Team is to provide direction to ACSO for the good of the broader agency rather than any particular area or program.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The Terms of Reference of the Executive were reviewed July 2007.
- The terms of reference identify the key functions of the Executive Team as:
- i. Implementation of ACSO's strategic plan.
  - ii. Identification of issues likely to affect the strategic direction of the agency, or present a risk to the agency, for reporting to the ACSO Council.
  - iii. Dealing with broad operational issues including:
    - Management reports from each program following Council meetings.
    - Policies/procedures that have an organisation-wide impact.
    - Policy or operational issues concerning a particular area where the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and applicable manager require input from the wider Executive Team.
  - iv. Act as a conduit for feedback and information from and to staff.
  - v. Review the Terms of Reference for the Executive Team annually (at the first meeting after the end of each financial year.)

- MEMBERS:
- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Antony Calabrò     | Chief Executive Officer and Chair               |
| Vaughan Winther    | Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Deputy Chair |
| Ed Holmes          | Director of Business Management                 |
| Brett Anderson     | Manager, Disability Program                     |
| Christine Cappello | Office Manager and Executive Support            |
| Jenny Johnston     | Manager, Justice Services                       |
| Annie Trainor      | Manager, Link Out Program                       |
| Renae Lowry        | Manager, Employment Services                    |
| Robb Ritchens      | Manager, Specialist Services                    |

- In addition up to two of the following senior staff from each program attend to contribute but cannot vote:
- |                |                                       |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| Guy Cooper     | Co-ordinator - Disability Program     |
| Petula Frantz  | COATS Finance Manager                 |
| Bernard Hanson | Assistant Manager- Justice Services   |
| Brendan Arentz | Manager, Transitional Services        |
| Jerry Diner    | Team Leader, Personal Support program |



# ACSO MANAGEMENT TEAM



## ANTONY CALABRÒ - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (LL.B. MELB)

Joined ACSO in 1987 as Administrator. In 1992 Antony was appointed Executive Director and in 2006 CEO.



## JENNY JOHNSTON - MANAGER JUSTICE SERVICES

Jenny commenced with ACSO in September 2004 after working in the drug and alcohol field for sixteen years. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Philosophy, a Post Graduate Diploma in Child and Adolescent Psychology, and a Diploma in Gestalt Studies. She has experience in youth, drug withdrawal, long term residential treatment and community integration programs. Jenny has worked from both a clinical and management perspective.



## ED HOLMES - DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Ed commenced with ACSO in May 2002 after 23 years experience in the manufacturing and mining industries in senior financial roles. Ed has a Bachelor of Commerce from Newcastle University and is a CPA.



## RENAE LOWRY - MANAGER EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Renae commenced working with ACSO in 2003 after 5 years experience in the employment services filed in rural Victoria. In 2003 she was appointed to the role of site manager for the Dandenong office of Vitality Personnel. In 2006 Renae accepted the position of manager of the newly created Employment Services area within ACSO. Renae has a Bachelor of Arts in Literature and a Diploma in Education.



## VAUGHAN WINTHER - DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Vaughan took up the position of Deputy Chief Executive Officer in February 2008. Vaughan has a Bachelor of Social Work, and has worked in the social welfare sector since 1995. Vaughan's chief area of expertise is within the area of youth, policy development, and people with offending histories. As Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Vaughan is responsible for policy, strategic planning, occupational health and safety, and risk management.



## ANNIE TRAINOR - MANAGER LINK OUT PROGRAM.

Annie has a Graduate Diploma in Addiction Studies and 21 years experience working in the drug and alcohol field. She has worked in a variety of treatment agencies including Drug Services Victoria, Westadd, St Vincent's, Direct Line, Moreland Hall and ACSO. Annie commenced work at ACSO in 1997 as a Senior Clinician, and prior to her current role as Link Out Program Manager, Annie was Assistant Manager of Justice Services (Transitional Programs).



## BRETT ANDERSON - MANAGER DISABILITY PROGRAM (DAP)

Brett commenced in the role of manager of the Disability Program in early 2008 after working in various ACSO services for the past 15 years. Prior to this Brett held various roles in the correctional and disability sectors. As well as holding a Master of Management, Brett has qualifications in social work, psychology and addiction studies.



## ROBB RITCHENS - MANAGER SPECIALIST SERVICES

Robb has been a qualified General Nurse and Psychiatric Nurse since 1987. In 1996, he began with ACSO as outreach worker with Forensic Mental Health Team. He then joined the Disability Employment Program in 2000. In 2002 he accepted position of Manager of Transitional Services. In 2004 he assumed a management role in Specialist Services and became program manager in August 2005.



## CHRISTINE CAPPELLO - EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Christine joined the Epistle Centre in 1983 as a volunteer, after working in administration, secretarial and personal assistant positions within the public services and travel industry. She commenced with ACSO as a volunteer, assisting with administration tasks and taking the role of secretary to the Council. In 1990, she accepted the position of manager of McCormack House. In April 2004 she took on a new role of Executive Assistant, incorporating the role of secretary to the Executive Team.



# COUNCIL MEMBERS



## PROF THE HON ALASTAIR NICHOLSON AO RFD QC - PATRON-IN-CHIEF

- Honorary Professorial Fellow
- Criminology Department, University of Melbourne
- Formerly Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia and Chairman of the Adult Parole Board
- Member of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee
- Joined the Council in 1983



## MR TONY CANT

- Chartered Accountant
- Member of the Risk and Audit Committee
- Joined the Council in 1997



## MS CHRISTINE CAPPELLO - SECRETARY

- A foundation staff member of ACSO
- Joined the Council in 1983



## MR MICHAEL WRIGHT- CHAIR

- Managing Director Miller Consulting Group
- Chairman Advisory Committee – McCaughey Centre, University of Melbourne
- Independent Chairman of the Risk and Audit Committee of Forensicare
- Member of Board of HomeGround
- Joined the Council in 2004



## THE HON MR JUSTICE PAUL COGHLAN

- Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria
- Formerly Director of Public Prosecutions
- Joined the Council in 2008



## DR CHARLES LEIGH GASSNER

- Business Consultant
- Member of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee
- Joined the Council in 2007



## ASSOC PROF KAREN NANKERVIS - DEPUTY CHAIR AND CHAIR OF STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND SERVICE PLANNING COMMITTEE

- Head, Division of Disability Studies, RMIT University.
- Former Past National President – Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability
- Joined the Council in 2005

## DR RUTH VINE

- Consultant Psychiatrist
- Former Director, Mental Health Department of Human Services
- Joined the Council in 2008
- Resigned June 2009



## DR HEATHER MANNING

- Formerly Psychiatrist Superintendent with Childrens Court Clinic and Consultant Psychiatrist with MH Sky
- Member of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee
- Joined the Council in 2000



## ANTONY CALABRÒ - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



## SR CLARE MCSHEE AM FMDM - PATRON

- Joined the Council in 1986.
- Retired June 08.
- Made patron of ACSO and Council June 08



## MS ERSILIA BARBONE - CHAIR OF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- Partner: White Cleland Solicitors
- Joined the Council in 1996



## HIS HONOUR JUDGE DAVID PARSONS

- Judge of the County Court of Victoria
- Director of the Koorie Heritage Trust
- Director of the Melbourne Community Foundation
- Member of the Sir Doug Nicholls Fellowship for emerging Aboriginal leaders
- Member of the Governance Committee
- Joined the Council in 2007

## KATHLEEN BARKER

- Consultant
- Formerly Executive Manager, TAC
- Joined the Council in Aug 2009



## HIS HON. IAN GRAY

- Chief Magistrate, Magistrate's Court Melbourne
- Joined the Council in 2008



## MALCOLM SIMISTER

- Chartered Accountant
- Parsons Consulting
- Joined the Council in 2006
- Resigned November 2008



## THE HON JUSTICE SALLY BROWN AM

- Justice of the Family Court of Australia
- Formerly Chief Magistrate, Magistrates Court of Victoria
- Member of the Strategic Positioning and Service Planning Committee
- Joined the Council in 2004



## BILL GLASER

- Forensic Psychiatrist,
- Member, Forensic Leave Panel (Vic)
- Visiting Fellow, Dept. Criminology, Melbourne University
- Joined the Council in August 2009



# CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

## ACSO CONSTITUTION

- A. **Australian Community Support Organisation Inc** (Inc. Reg. No. AOOO1674X , ABN 43 037 816 628) is an association incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 (Vic).
- B. The Rules of the association provide for the election of a Council by the members and that the affairs of the association are managed by the Council. Council members have been elected or appointed in accordance with the Rules.
- C. Being a not for profit association with public benevolent purposes the members of the Council do not receive remuneration.
- D. The Council meets in the months of February, April, June, August, October and November. The Annual General Meeting of the Association is held in November.
- E. The Council and its committees may seek advice from independent experts whenever it is considered appropriate.
- F. The Council has adopted the following Council policies which relate to the ethical responsibility practice and delegations of functions of the association:
- 1 Appointment to Senior Exec. Positions
  - 2 Appointment of Program Managers
  - 3 The Governing Process
  - 4 Meeting Processes
  - 5 Code of Ethics and Proper Practice
  - 6 Conflict of Interests
  - 7 Council Member Induction
  - 8 Council Committees
  - 9 CEO Monitoring
  - 10 CEO Financial Management
  - 11 CEO Financial Reporting
  - 12 Fundraising
  - 13 Public Affairs / Media
  - 14 Delegation of Authority
- G. The following are standing committees of the Council:  
Risk and Audit Committee  
Governance Committee  
Strategic Positioning Committee
- H. The day-to-day responsibilities for the operation of the association are delegated to the Chief Executive Officer. The Council Policies set out the terms of the delegation and processes for appointment to Senior Executive positions and for Program Managers.
- I. Determination of remuneration levels of Senior Executive Positions is delegated to an ad hoc committee of Council.
- J. Program activities and functions are supervised by program managers who are responsible to the Chief Executive Officer.

## COUNCIL CODE OF ETHICS AND PROPER PRACTICE

The Council is committed to the adoption of ethical conduct in all areas of its responsibilities and authority. In so doing it binds its members to the same principles and practices.

### Accordingly Council Members:

1. Shall act honestly and in good faith at all times in the interest of the organisation ensuring that all stakeholders, particularly those who are recipients of its services, are treated fairly according to their rights;

2. Shall carry out their duties in a lawful manner and ensure that the organisation carries out its business in accordance with the law;
3. Shall avoid conflicts of interests in as far as this is possible. Where such a conflict arises the member/s concerned must act within the terms of the Council's Conflicts of Interests Policy;
4. Shall be diligent, attend Council meetings and devote sufficient time to preparation for Council meetings to allow for full and appropriate participation in the Council's decision making;
5. Shall observe the confidentiality of non-public information acquired by them in their role as Council members and not disclose to any other person such information that might be harmful to the organisation;
6. Shall act in accordance with their fiduciary duties, complying with the spirit as well as the letter of the law, recognising both the legal and moral duties of the role.
7. Shall be loyal to the Council, abiding by Council decisions once reached;
8. Individual Council members are encouraged to review their own performance with a view to ensuring a suitable contribution to Council deliberations and decision making and, if considered inadequate, should either pursue training to improve their performance or resign;

### Furthermore, the Council:

9. Shall meet regularly to monitor the performance of management and the organisation as a whole. To do this the Council will ensure that appropriate monitoring and reporting systems are in place and that these are maintained and utilised to provide accurate and timely information to the Council;
10. Shall ensure that an appropriate separation of duties and responsibilities between itself and the CEO and that no one has unfettered powers of decision making;
11. Shall ensure that the organisation's assets are protected via a suitable risk management strategy;
12. Shall ensure that the views of all Council members are given due consideration and weight;
13. Carry out its meetings in such a manner as to ensure fair and full participation of all Council members;
14. Shall regularly review its own performance as the basis for its own development and quality assurance.

## STANDING COUNCIL COMMITTEES

### Risk and Audit Committee

#### Members:

- Tony Cant (Chair)
- Stewart Leslie (Independent Member)
- Andrew Chadwick (Independent Member)
- Michael Wright (ex-officio)

#### Staff:

- Ed Holmes - Director of Business Management
- Antony Calabrò - Chief Executive Officer
- Vaughan Winther - Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Petula Frantz - Justice Services Finance Manager
- Nely Tanur - Management Accountant

### The functions of the Risk and Audit Committee are:

- a) Overseeing and appraising the coverage and quality of external audits and maintaining open lines of communication between the Council and the auditors;
- b) Reviewing the financial information to be presented by management to the regulators and the general public;
- c) Make recommendations to Council regarding internal audit;
- d) Reviewing and recommending the risk management practices adopted across all material aspects of the organisation's operations.
- e) Oversee the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's administrative operating and accounting policies and the adequacy of the organisation's management information and accounting control system.
- f) Overseeing the adequacy of systems put in place by Management to limit the organisation's exposure to fraud;
- g) Monitoring management's attention to ethical considerations and the standard of corporate conduct.

The Committee meets before each Council meeting and provides reports and recommendations to the Council.

### Key Activities of the Risk and Audit Committee

The Risk & Audit Committee oversaw a range of activities undertaken by ACSO management during the year, including:

- Ongoing review of items identified under ACSO Risk Register and actions taken to mitigate risk.
- Review of insurance coverage for the organisation
- Reviewed a number of tender applications submitted by ACSO
- The scope and outcomes of the external audit
- Ongoing review of financial performance, forecasts and budgets
- The configuration of our motor vehicle fleet
- Review of policies

## GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

#### Members:

- Ersilia Barbone (Chair)
- Judge David Parsons
- Michael Wright (ex officio)
- His Hon. Ian Gray

#### Staff:

- Antony Calabrò - Chief Executive Officer
- Vaughan Winther - Deputy Chief Executive Officer

### Role of the Governance Committee

The purpose of the Governance Committee is to review developments and latest corporate governance practices in Australia and advise the Council in methods of sustaining organisational principles of Integrity, Accountability and Transparency.

### Functions of the Governance Committee

- a) To review the focus of Council meetings for the previous 12 months to confirm that Council's focus has been on strategic ends.
- b) To review the annual schedule of Council and Committee meetings to ensure that Governance tasks are met, including management strategies.
- c) To monitor that regular reports have been submitted to Council in accordance with Council policies.

- d) Review the corporate governance framework to ensure continuous quality improvement through sound processes and systems.
- e) Develop and review governance policies and procedures and make recommendations for improvement.
- f) Develop and implement a process of performance review for Council members.
- g) Exercise due care and diligence in the performance of the Council's powers and functions.
- h) To conduct the affairs of the Committee in an open and transparent manner.
- i) Reviews ACSO's constitution and recommends amendments as required.
- j) Reviews senior management and Council Membership succession planning.

### Authority

The Committee makes recommendations to the Board through the Chair of the Committee.

The Committee is authorised by the Council to investigate any activity within its charter.

### External Advice

The Chair, or the Committee through the Chair, shall have the right to seek external information/advice from other persons as necessary.

### Composition and Meeting Process

#### Membership

The Governance Committee will consist of at least two members of Council with the Chair of Council acting as an ex-officio member. The CEO and Deputy CEO will attend meetings.

#### Quorum

The quorum will consist of at least two members of the committee.

#### Meeting Schedule

Four meetings will be held each year to coincide with the key Council decision timeframes such as budget approval.

#### Secretarial Support

The Deputy CEO will circulate the agenda, minutes and any associated papers no less than three working days prior to each meeting.

#### Reporting

The Governance Committee will keep minutes of all its meetings. The Deputy CEO shall circulate the minutes to the Council with the Council papers for the next Council meeting. The minutes are to be tabled at the Council meeting along with any recommendations for Council to consider.

### Key Activities of the Governance Committee

The key activities of the Governance Committee during the year included:

- Reviewed and updated Governance Committee policies and Terms of Reference
- Prepared Council position descriptions and improved induction process for new Council members as required by QICSA, the Community Service accreditation body. Created new policy regarding recruitment of new Councillors, and also regarding Council attendance.



ACSO COUNCIL MEMBERS

STRATEGIC POSITIONING COMMITTEE

Members:

- Assoc. Professor Karen Nankervis (Chair)
- Dr Heather Manning
- Dr Leigh Gassner
- Michael Wright (Council Chair)
- Justice Sally Brown
- Associate Professor Alastair Nicholson
- Dr Ruth Vine

Staff:

- Antony Calabrò - Chief Executive Officer
- Vaughan Winther - Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Rose Broadstock - Organisational Development Project Officer

Terms of Reference

Review of the committee’s Terms of Reference:

The committee was restructured to include not only strategic positioning but service planning in 2007. However the need for oversight of clinical risk, and also the increasing prominence of strategic issues have impacted on the committee’s focus and thus its terms of reference.

New terms of reference as follows were approved by Council (3rd August 09) and received by this committee

Role of the Strategic Positioning Committee

The primary purpose of the committee is to assist the Council to assess the strategic implications (risks and opportunities) arising out of ACSO’s current and future areas of service delivery and to assist the organisation identify and implement strategies and processes that improve ACSO’s future strategic positioning.

The Committee will;

- monitor the overall implementation of ACSO’s Strategic Objectives.
- monitor and guide the implementation of ACSO’s Strategy and Development Project (incorporating the proposed Research and Evaluation Framework)
- provide analysis and advice on strategic positioning and direction in relation to current and future organisational growth
- monitor and analyse non-financial and/or clinical risks

Functions of the Strategic Positioning Committee

The Strategic Positioning Committee has the duties and responsibilities relevant to its role including:

- Overseeing, monitoring and appraising the development and implementation of organisational planning processes, specifically, ACSO’s Strategic Objectives.
- Formulating recommendations and resolutions for Council discussion and decisions based on emerging client need, future growth areas, strategic partnerships, changes in environments, risks and opportunities as relevant to emerging strategy and organisational evolution.

COUNCIL MEMBER ATTENDANCE

COUNCIL MEETINGS	AUG 08	OCT 08	NOV 08 (AGM)	FEB 09	APR 09	JUNE 09	FY AVERAGE
ATTENDANCE	50%	57%	85%	46%	69%	54%	60.1%

- Overseeing, in collaboration with the Risk and Audit Committee, the ACSO Risk Management Framework – with specific focus on non-financial and/or clinical risks. The Committee will support management to analyse risks and review mitigation strategies according to the ACSO Risk Management Framework.
- Overseeing, monitoring and appraising budget allocations, expenditure against budget for the implementation of ACSO’s Strategic Objectives.
- Oversee and guide the 2009/10 Strategy and Development Project including; research and evaluation framework, developing strategic relationships and new business and funding opportunities
- Annual review and recommendations to Council regarding ACSO’s current and future Strategic Objectives.

Composition and Meeting Process

Membership

The Strategic Positioning Committee will consist of at least three members of Council with the Chair of Council acting as an ex-officio member. Other members of Council are welcome to join the committee at any time. The CEO, Deputy CEO and Organisational Development Project Officer will attend meetings.

Quorum

The quorum will consist of at least two members of the Committee.

Meeting Schedule

Six meetings will be held each year.

Reporting

The Committee will report to Council (and subcommittees as appropriate) on the following items:

- Progress and implementation (including expenditure) of ACSO’s Strategic Objectives.
- Strategic positioning and implications of Government policy decisions as it relates to the development of ACSO programs and organisational reputation.
- Significant non-financial and/or clinical risks as per the ACSO Risk Report and Register.

Key Activities:

This committee was established to assist the organisation to improve its strategic position.

The Committee:

- Reviewed its terms of reference as above
- Oversight of particular Strategic Plan initiatives (stakeholder feedback, branding, the partnership framework development,
- Advised on the Justice Health tender issues and implications
- Provided oversight of the Strategy and Development project (see Strategy Report)
- Oversight of 2007 – 2009 Strategic Plan’s budget, completion and evaluation.
- Consideration of the planning and development of the next Strategic Plan

POLICIES, PROCEDURES & LEGISLATION

OUR POLICIES

- Organisational Policy
- Development Policy
- Planning and Monitoring Policy
- Planning and Monitoring Policy
- Information and Health Records Privacy Policy
- Document Control Policy
- Workplace Pregnancy Policy
- Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct
- Network Access Policy
- Dealing with Police Policy
- Student Placement Policy
- Motor Vehicle Policy Casual and Permanent
- Emergency Management Policy
- Consumer Participation Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Manual
- Human Resources Manual
- Incident Management Policy
- Leadership Development Policy
- Leadership Feedback and Communication Policy
- Environment Policy
- Service Delivery Philosophy
- Email and Internet Policy
- Meal Entertainment Policy
- Salary Packaging Policy
- Fixed Assets Policy
- Overnight Stay Policy
- Purchasing Policy
- Delegation of Authority Policy
- Motor Vehicle Private Use Policy
- Rostered Day Off Policy
- Portable Electrical Appliance Safety Policy

OUR PROCEDURES

- Complaints Settling Procedure
- Client Request for Personal Information Procedure
- ACSO Service User Informed Consent and Participation Procedure
- Accounting for Brokerage Income Procedure
- Lift Security Procedure
- Parking Allocation Procedure
- Payroll and Public Holiday Procedure
- Petty Cash Reimbursement Procedure
- Head Office Sign In Procedures

New Policies:

- Records Management Policy (draft)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Reception Policy

\*All policies are reviewed according to the Quality Improvement Work Plan Schedule

OUR LEGISLATION

ACSO operations are guided by a number of legislative frameworks. These include:

State Legislation

- Sentencing Act 1991
- Sentencing and Other Acts (Amendment) Act 1997
- Corrections Act 1986
- Alcohol and Drug Dependent Persons Act 2002
- Health Services Act 1988
- Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981
- Disability Act 2006
- Mental Health Act 1986
- Guardianship and Administrative Board Act 1986
- Information Privacy Act 2000
- Health Records Act 2001
- Human Services (Complex Needs) Act 2003
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Serious Sex Offenders Monitoring Act 2005
- Equal Opportunity Act 1995
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

Federal Legislation

- The Disability Services Act 1986
- Social Security Act 1991
- Workplace Relations Act 1986
- Fringe Benefits Tax Act 1986
- Privacy Act 1988



# HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

1 JULY 2008 TO 30 JUNE 2009

**VAUGHAN WINTHER**  
DEPUTY CEO

**CHRISTINE CAPPELLO**  
SECRETARY, HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE



## OVERVIEW

ACSO's Health and Safety system is composed of a Health and Safety Committee which meets bi-monthly, comprehensive Health and Safety Policies, quarterly hazard inspections, training and professional development on health and safety related issues and a Risk Register and Incident Reporting System.

Staff are consulted regarding occupational health and safety issues through regular staff meetings and bulletins. ACSO is divided into Designated Work Groups with a Health and Safety Representative elected by staff for each group and ACSO has trained First Aiders and Fire Wardens at all its work sites.

### Goal:

The goal of ACSO's health and safety system is to provide, as far as practicable, a working environment that is safe and minimises risks to the health and safety of all staff, clients, contractors and visitors.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

During the year the major event was moving our Head Office from 357A Spencer Street, West Melbourne, to 1 Hoddle Street, Richmond. The Committee was involved in ensuring that the appropriate safety systems were put in place by working with consultants and developing safety systems and a fire safety/evacuation plan.

The recommendations resulting from consultations have been implemented. These included installing an early warning detection system with smoke/thermal detectors, duress alarms throughout the building, additional security at the front door, and ensuring the front entrance and stairs are non-slip and safe. Fire Wardens have undergone evacuation training for the new building, our equipment and evacuation packs have been updated and there is ongoing training. This was a huge task and a lot of hard work and it is a credit to all those who have been involved in the process.

The Committee was involved in promoting Occupational Health and Safety ACSO wide through the following activities:

- Organising the OHS Forum in October 2008, which focused on a safe driving course, compulsory for all ACSO workers who transport clients in their vehicles.

- Selected staff have been trained as Return to Work Co-ordinators for staff who have suffered injury/stress and are on Workcover, enabling returning staff to do so with support.
- ACSO conducted a series of activities as part of Victoria's Worksafe Week to highlight the importance of Occupational Health and Safety in the workplace, for example, meditation, healthy breakfasts, a walking group and an OH&S quiz with appropriately stress-relieving prizes such as vouchers for various activities. These provided participants with opportunities to experience a variety of ways of managing stress.
- ACSO's Occupational Health and Safety Policies were reviewed by the Executive, the Committee and Staff to ensure that they meet all legislative requirements and provide clear guidance to staff in relation to carrying out their work safely, especially for staff who carry out outreach work in prisons, boarding houses and client's homes, which are high-risk environments.

## CHALLENGES

During the year the Health and Safety Committee saw a degree of movement in its membership. This was mainly due to the resignation of some committee members due to staff leaving ACSO to pursue new opportunities. Our particular thanks go to Hung Ngyuen, Robert Telfer and Annette Colpoys.

We experienced some difficulties in filling vacancies on the Committee during the year.

We would like to welcome all new members and thank all members, past and current for their ongoing support of health and safety at ACSO.

### Health and Safety Committee Members:

- Antony Calabrò - Chief Executive Officer (ex-officio)
- Vaughan Winther - Deputy Chief Executive Officer
- Christine Cappello - Secretary
- Brett Hayes
- Denice Schoenpflug
- Monica Kast
- John Moore
- Bonny Grant
- Noel Runnals
- Tammy Rowe

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

ACSO seeks opportunities to improve and review its Health and Safety systems on an ongoing basis. Next year's future directions will aim to:

- Undertake a more detailed review of Risk Management and Incident Reporting by Health and Safety Committee.
- Hold the Annual OHS Forum on an issue which affects ACSO staff.
- Provide staff with opportunities to participate in healthy activities for Worksafe Week.
- Investigate and install software to update and streamline our Incident Reporting Process.
- Investigate the Department of Health Proposed Work Health Initiative.
- Develop a Virtual Health and Safety Notice Board on the ACSO Intranet for easier access for all staff.

## INCIDENTS REPORTED ACROSS ALL ACSO PROGRAMS FOR PAST FIVE YEARS

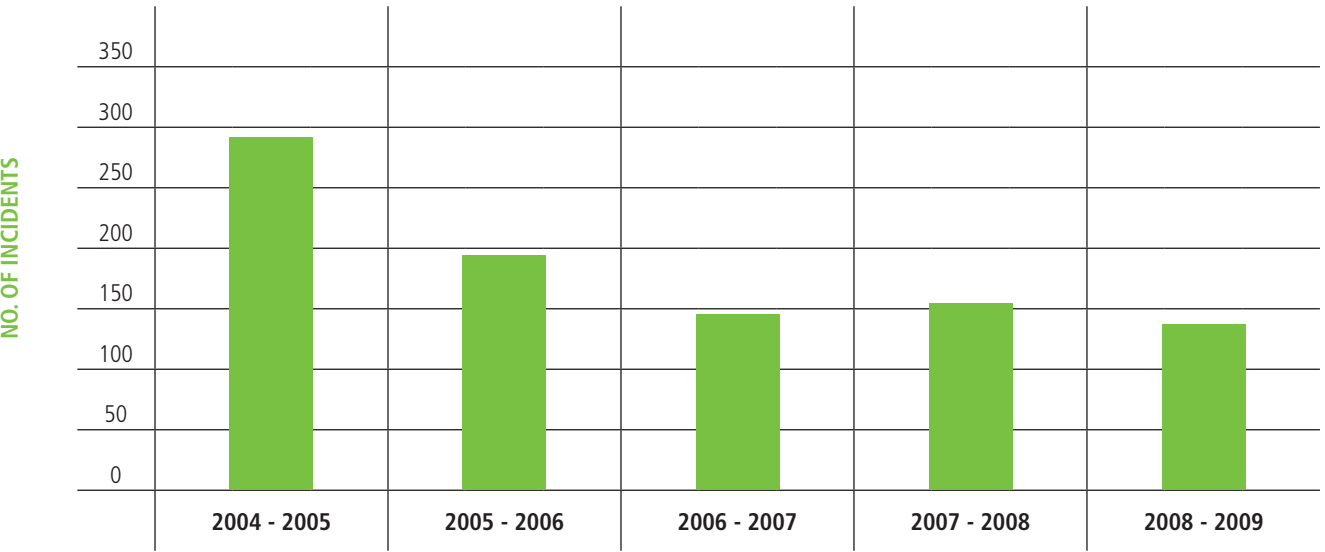
The following table summarises the major clusters of incidents recorded in ACSO over the past 5 years, as can be seen by year on year comparisons.

The OHS Committee, Program Managers, Executive Team and Senior Management review Incident Reports regularly to identify emerging issues and current practices to reduce risks and promote best practice in accordance with ACSO OHS Policies.

	ADMIN					DISABILITY PROGRAM					JUSTICE SERVICES					SPECIALIST SERVICES					EMPLOYMENT SERVICES					TOTAL				
FINANCIAL YEAR	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08
AGGRESSION	0	1	1	0	1	48	36	50	43	12	2	1	0	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	0	2	1	51	40	52	48	18
ASSAULT - CLIENT TO CLIENT, STAFF OR OTHER	0	0	0	0	0	90	52	18	57	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	90	52	18	57	36
INJURY / ILLNESS - CLIENT OR STAFF	1	0	2	1	1	23	14	17	13	41	1	0	2	5	1	1	0	3	1	1	0	1	2	2	0	26	15	26	22	44
MINOR MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT (WITHOUT INJURY)	1	3	3	1	0	9	9	2	3	9	4	5	1	2	2	4	1	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	1	20	18	7	9	12
PROPERTY DAMAGE	0	1	0	0	0	22	18	19	5	22	5	1	1	4		1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	20	20	10	22
THREATS	0	0	1	0	0	69	35	21	15	5	4	2	1	1		1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	74	38	23	17	5
TOTALS	2	5	5	2	2	261	164	127	130	125	16	9	5	15	5	8	3	7	6	3	2	3	2	5	2	289	184	146	158	137

### Notes:

1. Incidents recorded under administration include any incidents that occur in Reception.
2. The most significant variations in incidents reported between 07-08 and 08-09 occurred in the Disabilities Program. Significant decreases occurred as a result of improved intake processes and staff training. Some incidents seem to have increased but this is a reflection of more comprehensive reporting of all incidents.





# FINANCIALS

## CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2009

Your council members submit the financial report of the Australian Community Support Organisation Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2009.

### COUNCIL MEMBERS

The names of council members during the year are:

<b>Ersilia Barbone</b>	<b>Malcolm Simister</b> (resigned November 2008)
<b>The Hon Justice Sally Brown</b>	<b>Michael Wright</b>
<b>Anthony Cant</b>	<b>The Hon. Justice Paul Coghlan</b>
<b>Dr Charles Leigh Gassner APM</b>	<b>Christine Cappello</b>
<b>Dr Heather Manning</b> (resigned November 2008)	<b>Dr Ruth Vine</b> (appointed August 2008, resigned 24 June 2009)
<b>Assoc Prof Karen Nankervis</b> (resigned August 2009)	<b>His Hon. Judge David Parsons</b>
<b>His Hon. Ian Gray</b> (appointed October 2008)	<b>Kathleen Barker</b> (appointed August 2009)
	<b>Dr Bill Glaser</b> (appointed August 2009)

### PATRONS

**The Hon. Justice Alastair Nicholson AO RFD**  
**Sr Claire McShee AM F.M.D.M**

### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year were:

To provide a wide range of services to clients in relation to drug and alcohol, intellectual disability, mental health issues and employment services in Victoria.

### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

On 1 July, 2009 the Commonwealth Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, through Job Services Australia, established new arrangements for the provision of employment services. We were unsuccessful in our tender to continue providing employment services business in the Dandenong and Geelong regions and closed the offices providing those services in June 2009. However, we were successful in tendering for the provision of employment services in Richmond. The full impact of these changes to our employment service activities will be felt in the 2009-10 year.

### OPERATING RESULT

The profit from ordinary activities amounted to \$818,700  
Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Council.



Acting Chair **The Hon Justice Sally Brown**



Chief Executive Officer **Antony Calabro**

Dated this 23rd day of November 2009

### INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

	Consolidated Entity	
	2009 (\$)	2008 (\$)
Revenue	16,873,276	23,337,711
Other revenue	562,775	725,711
Other income	25,584	(3,740)
Employee benefit expenses	(9,228,732)	(8,321,519)
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	(712,978)	(639,169)
Rental expenses	(645,433)	(626,877)
Other expenses	(1,693,166)	(1,638,647)
Community Offender Advice and Treatment Service (COATS) Treatment Expenditure	(4,362,626)	(11,467,540)
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>818,700</b>	<b>1,365,930</b>

The above Income Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

### BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2009

	Consolidated Entity	
	2009 (\$)	2008 (\$)
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	17,146,281	16,475,515
Trade and Other Receivables	230,917	214,158
Prepayments	165,182	23,118
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>17,542,380</b>	<b>16,712,791</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Intangible Assets	138,012	84,783
Plant and Equipment	2,384,231	1,828,981
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>2,522,243</b>	<b>1,913,764</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>20,064,623</b>	<b>18,626,555</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and Other Payables	13,093,215	12,771,764
Provisions	900,542	955,194
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>13,993,757</b>	<b>13,726,958</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	578,629	226,060
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>578,629</b>	<b>226,060</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>14,572,386</b>	<b>13,953,018</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5,492,237</b>	<b>4,673,537</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained profits	5,492,237	4,673,537
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>5,492,237</b>	<b>4,673,537</b>

The above Balance Sheet should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2009

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

EQUITY	Consolidated Entity	
	Retained Profits (\$)	Total Equity (\$)
Balance as at 1 July 2007	3,307,607	3,307,607
Profit for the Year	1,365,930	1,365,930
Balance as at 30 June 2008	4,673,537	4,673,537
Profit for the Year	818,700	818,700
Balance as at 30 June 2009	5,492,237	5,492,237

The above Statement of Changes in Equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	Consolidated Entity	
	2009 (\$)	2008 (\$)
Funding – DHS	14,545,628	21,806,635
Funding – Other	2,697,168	2,701,067
Employment Program Fees	1,991,344	1,879,046
Interest received	700,317	672,292
Other receipts	319,073	318,693
Payments to suppliers and employees	(18,286,708)	(23,348,335)
Net cash flows from operating activities	1,966,822	4,029,398
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Purchases of plant and equipment	(1,429,405)	(926,075)
Proceeds on sale of plant and equipment	260,289	371,003
Purchases of intangible assets	(126,940)	(100,237)
Net cash flows from (used in) investing activities	(1,296,056)	(655,309)
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	670,766	3,374,089
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	16,475,515	13,101,426
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year	17,146,281	16,475,515

The above Cash Flow Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

NOTES TO THE CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

NOTE 1: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a concise financial report that has been prepared in accordance with AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports. The concise financial report does not include all notes of the type normally included within the annual financial report and therefore cannot be expected to provide as full an understanding of the financial performance, financial position and operating and investing activities of the Association as the full financial report.

It is recommended that the concise financial report be read in conjunction with the annual financial report for the year ended 30 June 2009, which

was authorised for issue in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Council on 23 November, 2009.

The financial report covers Australian Community Support Organisation Inc. and its controlled entities (the Association).

Australian Community Support Organisation Inc. is an association incorporated and domiciled in Australia under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981.

The following is a summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the Association in the preparation of the financial report.

a. Basis of Preparation

The financial report has been prepared on an historical cost basis. The financial report is presented in Australian dollars and all values are rounded to the nearest dollar.

b. Basis of Consolidation

The parent entity conducts all operations and as a result the financial statements represent those of the parent entity and the consolidated entity except where stated. ACSO has two controlled entities, Vitality Personnel and Vitality Personnel Labour Hire. The investment held in each of the controlled entities is one share of \$100.

c. Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents in the balance sheet comprise cash on hand and in banks and short-term deposits and are stated at

nominal value with an original maturity of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. For the purposes of the Cash Flow Statement, cash includes cash on hand, at banks and on deposit which is readily convertible into cash.

d. Statement of Compliance

The financial report complies with AASB 1039 Concise Financial Reports.

e. New accounting standards and interpretations

The following Australian Accounting Standards have been issued but are not yet effective. They have not been adopted in the preparation of the financial statements for the year ended 30 June, 2009.

Reference	Title	Summary	Application date of standard	Application date for ACSO
AASB 1039 (revised)	Concise Reporting	AASB 1039 was revised in August 2008 to achieve consistency with AASB 8 Operating Segments. The revisions include changes to terminology and descriptions to ensure consistency with the revised AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements. ACSO has not yet determined the extent of the impact of the amendments, if any.	1 January 2009	1 July 2009
AASB 101 (Revised), AASB 2007-8 and AASB 2007-10	Presentation of Financial Statements and consequential amendments to other Australian Accounting Standards	Introduces a statement of comprehensive income. Other revisions include impacts on the presentation of items in the statement of changes in equity, new presentation requirements for restatements or reclassifications of items in the financial statements, changes in the presentation requirements for dividends and changes to the titles of the financial statements. These amendments are only expected to affect the presentation of the financial report and will not have a direct impact on the measurement and recognition of amounts disclosed in the financial report. ACSO has not determined at this stage whether to present a single statement of comprehensive income or two separate statements.	1 January 2009	1 July 2009
AASB 2008-5	Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project	The improvements project is an annual project that provides a mechanism for making non-urgent, but necessary, amendments to IFRS. The IASB has separated the amendments into two parts: Part 1 deals with changes the IASB identified resulting in accounting changes; Part 2 deals with either terminology or editorial amendments that the IASB believes will have minimal impact. This was the first omnibus of amendments issued by the IASB arising from the Annual Improvements Project and it is expected that going forward, such improvements will be issued annually to remove inconsistencies and clarify wording in the standards. The AASB issued these amendments in two separate amending standards; one dealing with the accounting changes effective from 1 January 2009 and the other dealing with amendments to AASB 5, which will be applicable from 1 July. ACSO has not yet determined the extent of the impact of the amendments, if any.	1 January 2009	1 July 2009
AASB 2009-2	Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards - Improving Disclosures about Financial Instruments [AASB 4, AASB 7, AASB 1023 and AASB 1038]	The main amendment to AASB 7 requires fair value measurements to be disclosed by the source of inputs, using the following three-level hierarchy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities (Level 1);</li><li>➤ inputs other than quoted prices included in Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly (as prices) or indirectly (derived from prices) (Level 2); and</li><li>➤ inputs for the asset or liability that are not based on observable market data (unobservable inputs) (Level 3).</li></ul> These amendments arise from the issuance of Improving Disclosures about Financial Instruments (Amendments to IFRS 7) by the IASB in March 2009. The amendments to AASB 4, AASB 1023 and AASB 1038 comprise editorial changes resulting from the amendments to AASB 7. ACSO has not yet determined the extent of the impact of the amendments, if any.	Annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2009 that end on or after 30 April 2009.	1 July 2009



NOTES TO THE CONCISE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2009

Reference	Title	Summary	Application date of standard	Application date for ACSO
AASB 2009-5	Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Annual Improvements Project [AASB 5, 8, 101, 107, 117, 118, 136 and 139]	<p>The amendments to some Standards result in accounting changes for presentation, recognition or measurement purposes, while some amendments that relate to terminology and editorial changes are expected to have no or minimal effect on accounting.</p> <p>The main amendment of relevance to Australian entities is that made to AASB 117 by removing the specific guidance on classifying land as a lease so that only the general guidance remains. Assessing land leases based on the general criteria may result in more land leases being classified as finance leases and if so, the type of asset which is to be recorded (intangible versus property, plant and equipment) needs to be determined.</p> <p>These amendments arise from the issuance of the IASB's improvements to IFRS. The AASB has issued the amendments to IFRS 2, IAS 38, IFRIC 9 as AASB 2009-4.</p> <p>ACSO has not yet determined the extent of the impact of the amendments, if any.</p>	1 January 2010	1 July 2010

f. Trade and Other Receivables

Trade receivables, which generally have 7-30 day terms, are recognised and carried at original invoice amount less a provision for any uncollectible debts. An estimate for doubtful debts is made when there is objective evidence that the Association will not be able to collect the receivable. Bad debts are written off when identified.

g. Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

- Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis over the estimated useful life of the assets as follows:

Class of Fixed Asset	Depreciation Rate
Motor Vehicles	25%
Leasehold Improvements	20%
Leasehold improvements - Hoddle St	10%
Furniture and Fittings	20%
Office Equipment	20%
Computer Equipment	33.3%

Fixed assets with a cost of less than \$1,000 are expensed in the year of purchase.

- Impairment

The carrying values of plant and equipment are reviewed for impairment at each reporting date, with recoverable amount being estimated when events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying value may be impaired.

The recoverable amount of plant and equipment is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value in use. In assessing value in use, the estimated future cash flows are discounted to their present value using a pre-tax discount rate that reflects current market assessments of the time value of money and the risks specific to the asset.

An impairment exists when the carrying value of an asset exceeds its estimated recoverable amount. The asset is then written down to its recoverable amount.

For plant and equipment, impairment losses are recognised in the income statement as an expense.

h. Leases

The determination of whether an arrangement is or contains a lease is based on the substance of the arrangement and requires an assessment of whether the fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of a specific asset or assets and the arrangement conveys a right to use the asset.

Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense in the income statement on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Lease incentives are recognised as a liability when received and subsequently reduced by allocating lease payments between rental expense and reduction of the liability.

i. Revenue Recognition

- Grant Income

Government grants are recognised in the balance sheet as a liability when the grant is received. When the grant relates to an expense item, it is recognised as income over the periods necessary to match the grant on a systematic basis to the costs that it is intended to compensate. They are not credited directly to equity.

A maintenance fund for the seven Disability residential houses has been set up with part of the fund established from receipts of client rental income. The maintenance fund balance will be recognised as income over the periods necessary to match the cash receipts on a systematic basis to the costs that it is intended to compensate.

- Interest

Revenue is recognised as interest accrues using the effective rate method. This is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and allocating the interest income over the relevant period using the effective interest rate, which is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset to the net carrying amount of the financial asset.

j. Trade and Other Payables

Liabilities for trade creditors are carried at amortised cost which is the fair value of the consideration to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the consolidated entity.

The Association also recognises creditors in relation to the COATS Brokerage Program. Under this Program, Brokerage income received in advance is accounted for as unearned revenue (Income received in advance COATS). When the income is assigned to a specific service for a client, the relevant Brokerage expense is transferred to an accrual account (Accrued for COATS service).

Income received in advance Other has been received from funding bodies by the Association prior to the dispensation of contract services.

k. Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a present (legal or constructive) obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that an outflow of resources embodying economic benefits will be required to settle the obligation and a reliable estimate can be made

of the amount of the obligation.

When the Association expects some or all of a provision to be reimbursed, for example under an insurance contract, the reimbursement is recognised as a separate asset but only when the reimbursement is virtually certain. The expense relating to any provision is presented in the income statement net of any reimbursement.

Provisions are measured at the present value of management's best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the balance sheet date using the discounted cash flow methodology. The risks specific to the provision are factored into the cash flows and as such a risk-free government bond rate relative to the expected life of the provision is used as a discount rate. If the effect of the time value of money is material, provisions are discounted using a current pre-tax rate that reflects the time value of money and the risks specific to the liability. The increase in the provision resulting from the passage of time is recognised in the finance costs.

l. Taxes

- Income Tax

The Association is endorsed as an income tax exempt charitable entity under Subdivision 50-B of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*. ACSO is also classified as a public benevolent institution and endorsed as a deductible gift recipient under Subdivision 30-BA of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

- Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is included as part of receivables or payables in the Balance Sheet.

Cash flows are included in the Cash Flow Statement on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing activities, which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority are classified as operating cash flows.

Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority.

m. Employee Leave Benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits including on costs arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits expected to be settled within one year comprising wages and salaries, annual leave and long service

leave, have been measured at their nominal amount based on remuneration rates which are expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Other employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those entitlements.

ACSO staff are entitled to take 3 months long service leave after 15 years completed service. In the event of staff leaving, employees are entitled to pro-rata payment of long service leave, if they have completed 7 years of service.

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured as the present value of expected future cash payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wages and salary levels, experience of employee departures, and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currencies that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Expenses for non-accumulating sick leave are recognised when the leave is taken and are measured at the rates paid or payable.

n. Intangibles

Intangible assets comprising computer software acquired are initially recognised at cost. Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at cost less any accumulated amortisation and any accumulated impairment losses. There are no internally generated intangible assets. The useful lives of intangible assets are assessed to be finite. Amortisation of finite assets is over the estimated useful life of 3 years, and the useful life and a test for impairment is reconsidered whenever there is an indication that the intangible asset may be impaired.

o. Significant event

ACSO are presently funded by DHS to operate the Community Offender Advice and Treatment Service (COATS) program. In 2008 the Victorian Government established a new business unit, Justice Health with the responsibility for the development of an integrated health project that encompasses the total continuum of health related services to people involved in the criminal justice system. The transfer of management of the COATS Program to Justice Health will impact on ACSO operations. Justice Health has advised that it intends to seek tenders for the delivery of the COATS Program from late 2010. The COATS program represents a significant portion of our operating Budget. At this stage no further information is available.

p. Reclassifications

Certain reclassifications have been made in the financial statements to ensure that the prior year comparatives conform to current year presentations.

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL

In the opinion of the Council the concise financial report.

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Australian Community Support Organisation Inc. and the consolidated entity as at 30 June 2009 and their performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Australian Community Support Organisation Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

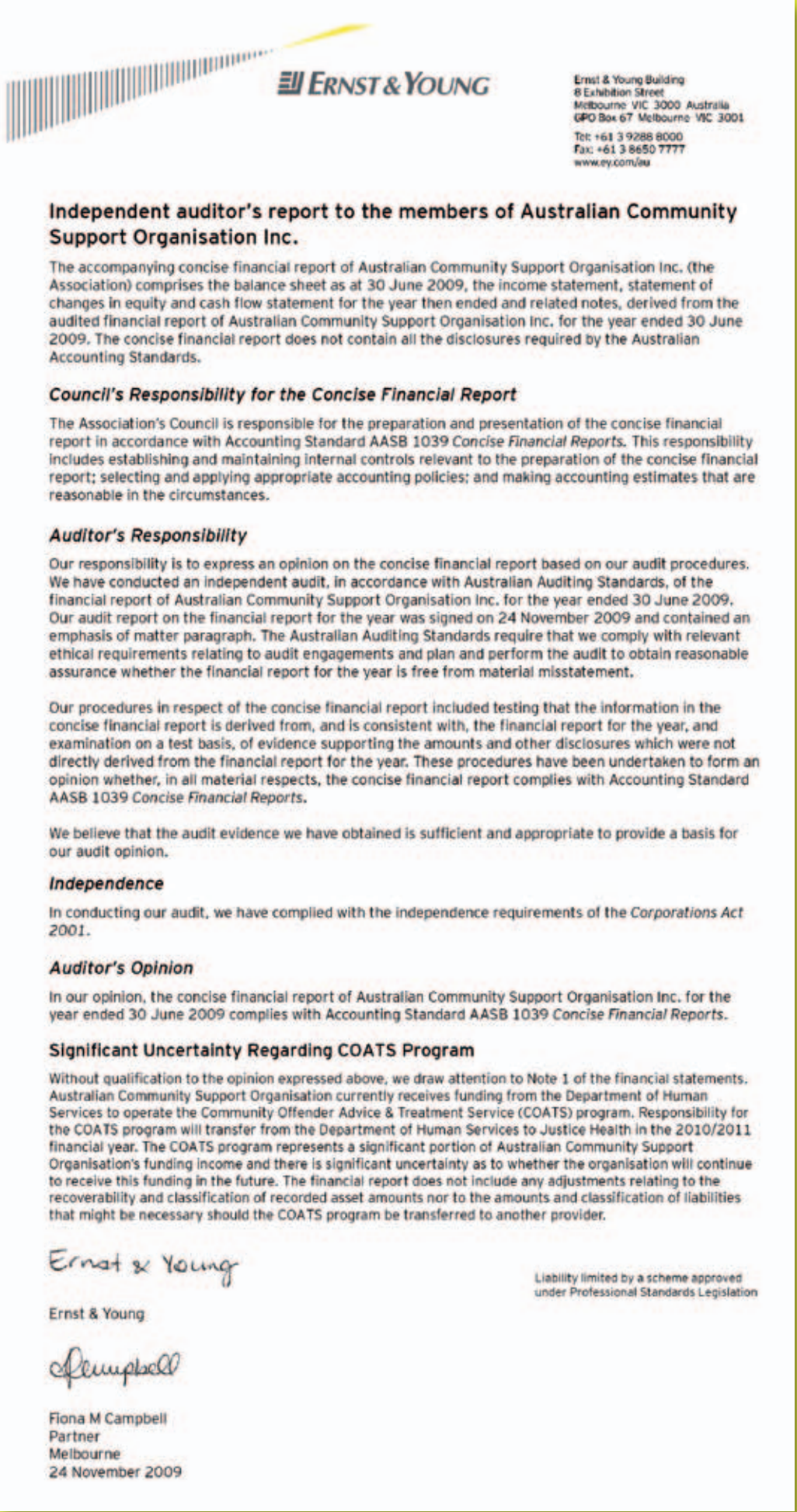
This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Council and is signed for and on behalf of the Council by:

  
Acting Chair **The Hon Justice Sally Brown**

  
Association Secretary **Christine Cappello**

Dated this 23rd day of November 2009





PURPOSE

This report reviews ACSO's operation and activity over the 2007/2008 year. It is designed to inform stakeholders about our performance as an organisation, and provide a summary of achievements and future directions. The Annual Report also gives ACSO the opportunity to acknowledge the great value of its staff, partners, colleagues and all our other stakeholders, and to thank them for their essential contribution.

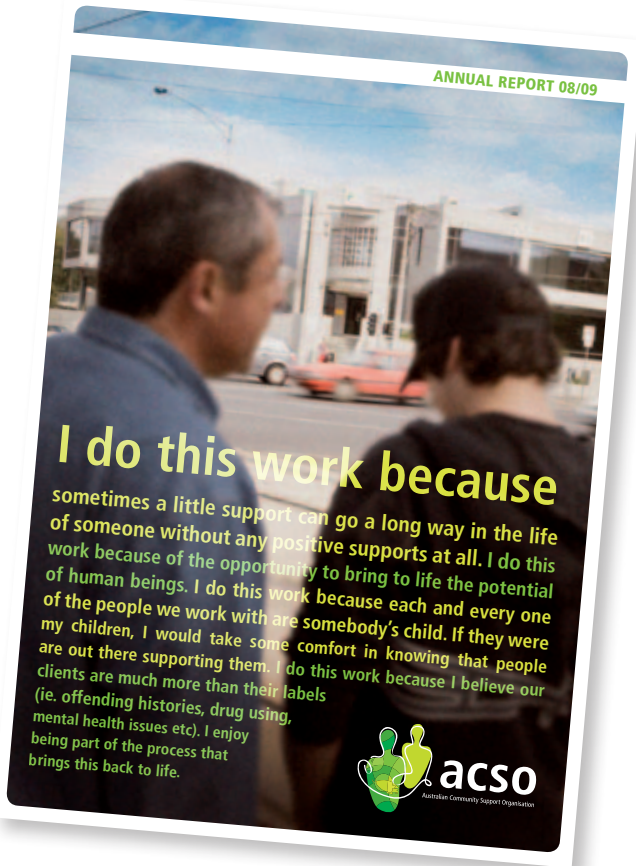
ANNUAL REPORT 07/08

A further purpose of the Annual Report is to enhance understanding within the wider community of the realities faced by our client group. Last year's Annual Report was designed particularly to highlight the lives, histories and struggles of our clients through recording some of their personal stories. More detail was also given to descriptions of programs and services, and the way they respond to the needs expressed. This issue was well received, and many comments were received that communicated readers' appreciation of these insights. Others commented that this report assisted them to truly understand what ACSO did. That the issue was read by staff, their families, and by clients and that the number printed proved to be inadequate were all indicators of its helpfulness.



ANNUAL REPORT 08/09

As a celebration of 25 years of service, this year's Annual Report celebrates the staff of ACSO, new and old. We have presented the stories of some of ACSO's founders. These stories continue to inspire ACSO staff and clients in that they are a constant testament to hope, and the possibility that life can be transformed. We also profile the stories of the wonderful and influential people like the Hon. Alastair Nicholson who were prepared to put their trust in these founding staff and to some extent stake their reputation on them. Profiles of a staff member from each program have been included, which give insights into why some people choose to spend their days in this difficult work. They are also an indicator of the diversity of ACSO staff, and the many journeys from different places and experiences that have preceded their arrival. Beyond this, staff from all programs have contributed to this edition and have written many comments about the meaning their work holds for them. Their contributions to this edition and those that they make every working day is greatly appreciated. Photographs also give insight to the many ingredients that make up an ACSO worker's day. Additional copies can be obtained from our website [www.acso.com.au](http://www.acso.com.au) or by contacting us using the details recorded on the back cover.





# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>AVWWA</b>	<b>Australian Vietnamese Womens' Welfare Association</b> Partner with ACSO for delivery of services to Indo-Chinese clients released from Fulham Prison.
<b>Axis 1</b>	A psychosis or clinical disorder including major mental disorders as well as developmental and learning disorders.
<b>Brokerage</b>	Commonwealth and State funding for provision of drug and alcohol treatment or client support.
<b>CASST</b>	Crisis Accommodation Support for a Successful Transition.
<b>COATS</b>	Community Offenders' Advice and Treatment Service.
<b>CBO</b>	<b>Community Based Order.</b> A non-custodial sentence administered by Community Correctional Services.
<b>CCCC</b>	<b>Counselling Consulting and Continuing Care.</b> A form of alcohol and drug treatment delivered by agencies in Victoria.
<b>CCS</b>	<b>Community Correctional Services</b> the section of <b>Corrections Victoria</b> which administers community correctional orders and parole orders.
<b>CMS</b>	<b>Client Management System,</b> in-house database system to monitor clients, COATS Program..
<b>CRDW</b>	<b>Community Residential Drug Withdrawal</b> a type of drug and alcohol treatment, purchased by COATS, which provides residential and supervised withdrawal from drugs and alcohol in a community setting.
<b>CSU</b>	<b>Client Services Unit. COATS</b> administrative staff, responsible for the booking of clinical assessments and initial treatment appointments for COATS clients.
<b>CV</b>	<b>Corrections Victoria.</b> The Division of the Victorian Department of Justice which administers prisons and Community Correctional Services. The division is administered by the <b>Commissioner for Correctional Services</b> and is responsible to the Minister for Corrections.
<b>CREDIT</b>	<b>Department of Justice CREDIT Bail Support Program.</b> A program in the Magistrates' Courts where persons are released on bail on condition that they attend for alcohol and drug treatment brokered by <b>COATS</b> .
<b>CTO</b>	<b>Community Treatment Order.</b> Under the Victorian Mental Health Act a patient formerly detained for treatment can be released on the signature of a psychiatrist to live in the community so long as the patient continues treatment in the community. A Restricted CTO can be placed on a patient who is undergoing treatment as the result of a court order resulting from criminal proceedings.
<b>DEEWR</b>	Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations.
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Human Services.
<b>Drug Court</b>	A division of the Magistrates Court which sentences defendants and oversees drug treatment.
<b>Drug Treatment Order</b>	An order of a <b>Drug Court</b> to deliver drug treatment which is brokered by <b>COATS</b> .
<b>Dual Diagnosis</b>	Term referring to the co-occurrence of disorders suffered by an individual.
<b>Dual Disability</b>	Where an individual is diagnosed with both an Intellectual Disability and a Mental Illness.
<b>ESO</b>	<b>Extended Supervision Order.</b> An order made under the <b>Serious Sex Offenders Monitoring Act 2005</b> placing conditions upon serious sex offenders who live in the community.
<b>FASA</b>	<b>Funding and Service Agreement.</b> The funding agreement entered into with <b>DHS</b> for the delivery of services funded by its various divisions.
<b>Forensicare</b>	Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health. Delivers Forensic Psychiatric Services in Victoria.
<b>Forensic Disability</b>	A tem referring to people with a disability who have come into contact with the criminal justice system.
<b>Guardianship Order</b>	An order made under the Victorian Guardianship and Administration Act relating to the physical and health needs of a disabled person and granting powers to make decisions in the hands of a guardian. The order is made by the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Guardianship and Administration List)
<b>HASS</b>	Homelessness Assistance Services Standards administered by QICSA.
<b>Heads of Agreement</b>	Agreement between ACSO and drug and alcohol treatment agencies that governs the purchasing and provision of drug and alcohol treatment to COATS referred clients.

<b>ICO</b>	<b>Intensive Corrections Order.</b> A non-custodial sentence given as an alternative to imprisonment. It has more rigorous conditions breach of which have an automatic consequence of imprisonment
<b>Individualised Funding</b>	Funds allocated to a client who nominates which service type and provider they wish to use. These funds are not recurrent and may be increased or decreased at short notice by <b>DHS</b> through client choice. The Disability State Plan states that a vast majority of all funding by Disability Services will move to individualised funding by 2010.
<b>IDRP</b>	<b>Intellectual Disability Review Panel.</b> Established under legislation to review impact of actions on intellectually disabled persons such as eligibility, administration of restraint and appropriateness of service plans.
<b>IR</b>	Industrial Relations.
<b>JCA</b>	<b>Job Capacity Assessments.</b> Part of ACSO's <b>Employment Services Program</b> funded by the Commonwealth Department of Human Services. It conducts employment capacity assessments of persons referred by Centrelink who have barriers to employment.
<b>Justice</b>	Victorian Department of Justice.
<b>KADW</b>	<b>Koori Alcohol and Diversion Worker</b> – a type of alcohol and drug treatment purchased by COATS and aimed at supporting indigenous clients referred by the Justice System.
<b>Landmark</b>	The financial and payroll package used by ACSO.
<b>MACNI</b>	<b>Multiple and Complex Needs Initiative.</b> The DHS funded initiative for clients with complex needs.
<b>OHS</b>	Occupational Health and Safety, which is based on a set of Australian standards designed to protect those able to be impacted.
<b>NAIDOC</b>	National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee.
<b>NGWALA</b>	Ngwala Willumbong provides an outreach service to help Aboriginal people deal with their substance misuse whilst staying in their community. Residential recovery centres are also offered as well as training for professionals in the delivery of culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal people.
<b>Office of Housing</b>	A branch of <b>DHS</b> to provide housing in various categories for disadvantaged people.
<b>Specialist Womens' Outreach Service</b>	Position funded by <b>DHS</b> providing support for female prisoners transitioning out of Dame Phyllis Frost Centre with a severe or borderline personality disorder.
<b>QICSA</b>	<b>Quality Improvement and Community Services Accreditation,</b> which offers quality accreditation for the community services sector.
<b>QWP</b>	The Quality Work Plan emerges from QICSA reviews and form the basis of ongoing work designed to address gaps in standard compliance.
<b>Resi. Rehab</b>	<b>Residential Rehabilitation</b> – a type of alcohol and drug treatment purchased by COATS, which provides intensive and holistic treatment for problematic drug and alcohol use in a residential therapeutic environment.
<b>SAAP</b>	<b>Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.</b> A joint Commonwealth/State homelessness program, administered in Victoria by <b>DHS. McCormack House</b> is funded by SAAP.
<b>THM</b>	<b>Transitional Housing Manager.</b> An agency contracted by <b>DHS (Office of Housing)</b> to manage transitional housing stock. Various THMs manage housing stock.



INDEX

<b>A</b>		<b>I</b>	
Achievements	48	Legislation	71
Audit Report	80	Link (Disability Program)	20
Armadale House (Disability Program)	20	Link Out (Justice Services)	27
<b>B</b>		Locations Map	1
Bushfire Case Management	44	<b>M</b>	
<b>C</b>		Management Team Membership	64
CASST (Crisis Accommodation for a Successful Transition, Justice Services)	27	McCormack House (Specialist Mental Health Services)	31
Challenges	49	<b>N</b>	
Contents	Inside front cover	NAIDOC Celebration Report	43
Chief Executive Officer's Report	6	<b>O</b>	
COATS service (Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service COATS, Justice Services)	26	Occupational Health and Safety	72
Code of Ethics	68	Organisational Chart	60
Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service COATS (Justice Services)	26	<b>P</b>	
Constitution	68	Patron's Report	4
Contact Details	Back Cover	Personal Support Program (Employment Services)	39
Council attendance	70	Policies and Procedures	71
Council Chair's Report	5	Problematic Sexual Behaviour Service (Disability Program)	20
Council Membership	66	Program performance summary	40
Crisis Accommodation Support for a Successful Transition (CASST, Justice Services)	27	PSP Program (Personal Support Program, Employment Services)	39
<b>D</b>		Purpose of ACSO	1
Disability Employment Network (Employment Services)	39	<b>Q</b>	
Disability Program	16	Qualifications	61
Dual Disability Residential Service (Disability Program)	20	Quality Improvement Report	56
<b>E</b>		<b>R</b>	
Employment Services Report	34	Regional Accommodation (Disability Program)	20
Environmental Responsibility report	47	Relationships	3
Events	50	Risk and Audit Committee	68
<b>F</b>		<b>S</b>	
Financial Performance Summary	41	Sex Offender Support Program (Justice Services)	27
Financial Statement	74	SOSP service (Justice Services)	27
Francis House (Disability Program)	20	Specialist Mental Health Outreach Service	31
<b>G</b>		Specialist Mental Health Services Report	28
GAP Program (Disability Program)	20	Strategic Positioning Committee	70
Glossary	82	Staffing components and Movement	62
Governance Committee	69	Staff membership	See program reports
<b>H</b>		Step Out service (Justice Services)	27
Health and Safety Report	72	Strategy Report	52
History	8	Supported Living and Accommodation Program (Disability Program)	20
Incident Reports summary	73	<b>T</b>	
<b>J</b>		Training, staff.	62
Job Capacity Assessment (Employment Services)	38	<b>V</b>	
Job Network (Employment Services)	39	Values and Vision	1
Justice Services Report	22	<b>W</b>	
		Women's Specialist Mental Health Services Outreach Program (Specialist Services)	31

A TRIBUTE

ACSO would like to conclude this report by acknowledging those clients who died this year.

It is also a reminder of the fragility of the lives of many of our service users, and the great need for support services.

This acknowledgement is also a recognition of the impact of these deaths on staff, family and friends.

Such deaths may not always be acknowledged publicly, but ACSO would like to take this opportunity to affirm the value of all these people's lives, and to salute the courage and hopefulness of some of these most disenfranchised people.



This picture was painted by Mr John Kelly, for whom art was the part of his life that made him happiest.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to:

Laurent Filippini of Studio Bastille who with his artistic photography has helped us present a glimpse into the world of ACSO staff.

Adstract for their design of this report; to Paul for his supportive coordination and to Martin for his patience and creative design which has assisted us to describe another year at ACSO.



This report is printed on Impact

ISO 14001  
Environmental  
Management System  
in use.

Manufactured from  
100% post consumer  
waste.

Manufactured using  
process chlorine free  
(PCF) pulps.

Acid free ensuring  
archival life.

Paper is guaranteed to  
last up to 100 years.

Supporting responsible  
use of forest resources.  
www.fsc.org  
Cert no. SGS-COC-00000  
© 1996 Forest Stewardship Council

The Job Services Australia initiative is an 'Australian Government initiative' which is being funded and otherwise supported by the Australian Government.



# I do this work because

all deserve the opportunity to make changes. I do this work because I have been able to make a difference to forgotten and persecuted people. I do this work because it never ceases to amaze me how a simple smile and hello can cross all barriers and be equally rewarding to the giver and receiver. I do this work because I get the opportunity to improve the lives of my people, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and to support and encourage them to achieve their goals. I do this work because I love being in an organisation that has the potential to help the disadvantaged. I do this work because of the camaraderie and fun we have, which makes the work we do a little lighter. I do this work because the marginalisation of some in the community grows and resources shrink, but I can still contribute to being a support to the clients. I do this work because it gives me an opportunity to make a contribution to the work of creating a just society. I do this work because it gives me an opportunity to make a contribution to the work of creating a just society. I do this work because to err is human, and to understand that, is to show a belief in humankind. I do this work because I love helping people. I do this work because I believe people can turn their lives around and I believe everyone deserves the chance to do so. I do this work because it is full of diversity and challenges. I do this work because I enjoy my work and believe in what I do. I do this work because doing this type of work forces me to look at myself, at the community, at the world around me, and I believe that has made me a better person. I do this work because I love working with a group of people who demonstrate such care and respect for people.

# I do this work because I love it

1 Hoddle Street Richmond VIC 3121 (PO Box 14278 Melbourne 8001)

T (03) 9413 7000 F (03) 9413 7188 E [acso@acso.org.au](mailto:acso@acso.org.au)

[www.acso.org.au](http://www.acso.org.au)

