

# Court Network Annual Report 2016-2017

Court Network



## About Us



Court Network's community service is an important component of accessing justice, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged people who may be attending court for the first time, lack knowledge about what is expected of them, feel frightened or unsafe, be representing themselves, or just need someone to listen, provide support, and assist them to navigate the court system.

### Our Vision

To provide the community with volunteers who stand beside, empower and instil confidence in all court users.

### Our Mission

To provide support, information and referral to persons attending court and to advocate for the needs of all court users.

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PEOPLE ASSISTED IN VIC & QLD

183,670



## From the President & Executive Director



As a community service co-located within the courts, Court Network's Mission and service model remains unique. We are the only court-based service offering non-legal support and information to people, regardless of their reason for being in court. This goal drives our identity as an organisation and provides the foundations for our practice. We believe in social justice principles that promote the right of every person to be offered support, to be treated with dignity and respect, to feel safe, and to be properly informed about any process in which they are required to participate.

Our frontline service of some 400 volunteers across Victoria and Queensland has reached out to more than 180,000 people over the past financial year. With great skill, compassion and knowledge of the court process, our volunteers (we call them 'Networkers') have stood beside, and helped to empower these court users to manage the complexities and anxieties of being involved in court processes on the day.

The task of supporting better access to justice for people who come into courts is challenging. The operating environment continues to change. For example, changes to the eligibility requirements for legal aid in 2012 have affected the capacity of duty lawyers to now adequately support vulnerable court users in the summary crime jurisdiction leading to more people having to represent themselves; victims of crime in Magistrates Courts in Victoria are still not able to access a dedicated service that can support their needs; and while there has been momentous reform and investment in both Victoria and Queensland to improve the systems' response to family violence, the flow-on effects will take time to have their intended effect.

Against this backdrop, Court Network has continued to improve its reach and impact on court users, particularly in the areas of family violence and victim support, with innovative models that bridge a critical service gap in court-based support. Both these programs are comprehensively featured in this Annual Report.

Court Network recognises that people who enter the court system are also amongst our most socially and economically disadvantaged. Those in contact with the criminal justice system are more likely than the general population to have mental health issues, be under-educated, unemployed, have higher levels of drug and alcohol use, lower levels of literacy, and to have experienced violence, abuse or neglect as part of their family histories. Court Network's opportunity to connect with, support and refer court users to the broader community service sector is significant.

Assuring the capability of a highly-skilled volunteer workforce to deliver on our Mission is critical. Our training program now anticipates the learning and development needs of Networkers across their volunteering time with us. The focus with intake training is on building foundational practice skills that align with key capabilities that are central to performing the Networker role. For established Networkers, the Continuous Education program, further refines and deepens the practice impact they can have on court users in being able to readily source referrals and provide more support in complex cases.

With court users at the centre of our Mission, our new Strategic Plan 2017-2021, previewed on page 8-9 will sharpen these efforts in four key priority areas:

1. **Service** - Work where we are most needed and can make a real difference for vulnerable court users
2. **Volunteer Workforce** - Provide high-quality services through a skilled volunteer workforce
3. **Partnership** - Build strong relationships to expand our reach and influence
4. **Organisational Capability** - Secure the organisational base needed to achieve our Mission

The implementation of a new Service Charter is central to our work in the coming year. The Charter captures the key universal elements of the Court Network service, and pledges our commitment to serve the court community, and to assure court users that their experience in one court will be consistent, in an operational sense, with the service that we offer in another. Our achievements in this area will be verified with our partners and stakeholders, as well as those who receive a service.

The Board is confident of our ability to deliver on this ambitious agenda with a highly-capable staff team that is focused, motivated, and well supported by the leadership. We rely on their agility and comfort with change to advance so much of this current agenda. They never fail to stand tall.

Our thanks also to our many partners and stakeholders. Our ability to support court users relies on us having meaningful and trusted relationships with you.

We are grateful to our funders for continuing to believe in the unique value of a skilled volunteer workforce to effect real change in the day-to-day experiences of people entering the court system. While we account well for ourselves in managing the modest sums we are provided to do this work, we will continue to appeal to governments, potential donors, and philanthropy to invest in our ideas and our capability to extend our efforts in meeting the needs of some of the most disadvantaged people in our communities.

**The Hon Marcia Neave AO**  
President

**Dr Melanie Heenan**  
Executive Director

## Our Thanks To

**Christine Heyting** for the benefit of her executive level experience and wisdom in guiding complex culture change initiatives within organisations. Chris has facilitated workforce development sessions with our paid staff teams in both states, provided individual and group coaching sessions, and supported the development of our learning and development program. All of it – gratis. She is the greatest 'Gift' we have known for offering this level of 'in kind' support, with the impact felt across so many dimensions of our work.

**Victorian Ambassador Barbara Rozenes** for taking every opportunity to share the value of the work performed by Networkers with the legal profession and justice sector. Along with the irrepressible **Judy Banks**, Barb has been particularly active in helping to support the continued professional development of legal professionals in presentations at the Leo Cussen Centre for Law.

Our esteemed group of patrons for their continued support, which is based on their first-hand knowledge of, and respect for the positive difference Networkers make to the functioning of courts. They include **Her Excellency the Honourable Linda Dessau AC**, Governor of Victoria and former Family Court judge; **the Honourable Diana Bryant AO**, Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia; **the Honourable Catherine Holmes**, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland; and **the Honourable Marilyn Warren AO**, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria.

**Dean Farrant**, Special Counsel at Herbert Smith Freehills for his wise counsel this past year. This is the sixth year that Herbert Smith Freehills has provided pro bono support to Court Network for which we are tremendously grateful.

## Our Workforce of Extraordinary Volunteers

They sign up to a Mission that is all about supporting other people.

Each day, they make their way into courts across Queensland and Victoria.

They suspend their other lives - of family, partners, paid work, grandchildren, furry-friends, and communities - to be there. For others.

They work with their teams each morning to organise themselves for the day. To try and cover as much ground as possible, to reach out to those most in need.

They might be occupied with one person, or several people throughout any one day.

They talk with people, reassure them, lessen their anxiety, their fears, give them information, simplify what is complicated; sit with them, in conversation and in silence, sometimes for hours.

And they empower them to take their next steps through the process.

This is the work of Court Networkers. This is how we stay true to our Mission.





Court Network's Board spent the last half of the financial year actively engaged in the development of a new four-year Strategic Plan. The new strategy sharpens Court Network's focus in key priority areas relevant to the court and justice system, and positions practice quality, workforce capability and sustainability of service as the platform from which we plan to grow as an organisation.

## Our Strategy

From its earliest days, Court Network has held a unique place in the justice system by nature of its outreach model. Through approaching people in the courthouse itself, and offering direct support, information and referrals it has:

- Worked to reduce the anxiety and distress experienced by victims, witnesses, families and accused parties involved in court proceedings
- Empowered court users to confidently navigate the justice system
- Supported the efficient carriage of justice
- Helped to build increased community confidence in the justice system

To deepen our impact for individuals and further embed our work in the broader service system over the next four years, we will strengthen the integrity of our service model, ensure the quality and consistency of our work and, where appropriate, expand our reach to better connect with those most in need.

## Priority 1 — Service

Work where we are most needed and can make a real difference for vulnerable court users.

### Objectives

We will:

**Respond** to the changing needs of court users and the dynamic court environment

**Develop** our model to improve access to justice in emerging areas such as family violence, victim support and in our work with unrepresented court users

**Integrate** with other services that operate within and beyond the courts

### Measure

Court users report a high level of satisfaction and stakeholders confirm our responsiveness to service needs.

## Priority 2 — Volunteer Workforce

Provide high-quality services through a skilled volunteer workforce.

### Objectives

We will:

**Implement** the Court Network Service Charter that defines the services delivered by skilled volunteers who share our goal of empowering court users

**Recruit** and train a diverse and adaptable workforce that reflects the communities we serve

**Ensure** best practice by linking intake training, continuing education, reflective practice and reviews to the needs of court users

### Measure

Stakeholders confirm a positive match between volunteer skills and service user needs, and volunteers report a positive volunteering experience through their reviews.

## Priority 3 — Partnerships

Build strong relationships to expand our reach and influence.

### Objectives

We will:

**Build** our reputation as an evidence-based service provider and a source of quality information

**Advocate** for court users to improve access to the justice system for all

**Create** new relationships that advance the needs of vulnerable court users

### Measure

Stakeholders value our service and include our input into policy and program development.

## Priority 4 — Organisational Capability

Secure the organisational base needed to achieve our Mission.

### Objectives

We will:

**Preserve** existing funding arrangements and expand our funding sources

**Optimise** our management and reporting systems to ensure we are efficient and effective

**Build** the capability of our workforce to deliver our strategies

### Measure

Our balance sheet shows a secure financial position and our capability strategies have been implemented.

## Our Quality Mechanisms

- Court User & Stakeholder Feedback
- Volunteer Standards & Reviews
- Quality Framework & Work Plans to meet Accreditation Standards
- Risk Register





We are profoundly grateful to our Founder, Carmel Benjamin AM, for continuing to be such an important voice for Court Network, and for reflecting the significance of the Mission in driving our practice with court users. Over the past year, we were most fortunate to have Carmel attend and address our volunteers at the Victorian Annual Recognition Awards Ceremony, as the guest of honour at the Queensland Ten Year Anniversary and at a National Volunteer Week luncheon held in May.

## Our Founder

### Address to Court Network Volunteers

“The work you do at the coal-face is more challenging than the work of most social workers.

You are ‘out there’ with the court user... not sitting in an office after it has all happened.

You are with the person at the time of acute distress and the value of your support is magnified a thousandfold.

You have volunteered to do this because of your personal generosity.

You have trained to do this in the knowledge that the service you offer must, and I repeat must, be of the highest quality.

Because of your training you have increased your knowledge and honed your personal skills so that through you, Court Network continues to develop and flourish and our service provision to the fearful and bewildered people you meet in court daily, lives on forever in their memories.

Continual training is, as you know, pivotal to the excellence of the Court Network service provision.

When you approach individuals without knowing why they are in court you acknowledge their humanity with a rare openness and kindness, and when you share with them the information that they need, and support them with concern, you dignify their presence while making their experience more understandable.

By doing this you act as the link between the court and the community that Court Network was designed to be.”

### **Carmel Benjamin AM**

Founder

November 2016





Total People Assisted

129,787

Victoria



People supported in Magistrates Courts

81,899

People supported for family violence matters in Magistrates Courts

37,984

People supported for summary offences/ criminal matters in Magistrates Courts

37,404



Top three client groups assisted/supported

32,878 DEFENDANTS

29,822 FAMILY/FRIENDS

23,689 APPLICANTS

Information offered via Info Kiosks

28,222



People supported at Supreme & County Courts, Melb CBD

5,505

People assisted in Family Courts

2,703



Total People Assisted

54,197

Queensland

\*inc info line



People supported in Magistrates Courts

26,321

Top three client groups assisted/supported

21,917 DEFENDANTS

16,136 UNREPRESENTED LITIGANTS

8,653 APPLICANTS

Top three types of matter heard



25,883 CRIMINAL

8,432 CIVIL/TRIBUNALS

3,427 FAMILY VIOLENCE (FV CIVIL & FV CRIMINAL)

Information offered via Info Kiosks and info line

12,793



Family/friends supported

5,468

People supported in Arrest Court

9,188





## In Celebration



Victorian Ombudsman, Deborah Glass OBE and Emeritus Professor Arie Freiberg AM

### 2016 Court Network Conference



Emeritus Professor Arie Freiberg AM

“Putting Prevention at the Heart of Justice” was the theme of the Victorian conference for 2016. Two highly accomplished speakers explored the underlying causes and drivers of offending and reoffending behaviour, and spoke to the importance of looking beyond punishment for producing real change. We were fortunate to have Emeritus Professor Arie Freiberg AM as our facilitator for the session, with panel member Victorian Ombudsman, Deborah Glass OBE, who together spoke with more than 200 Networkers and stakeholders in attendance.

Emeritus Professor Arie Freiberg contrasted the often short-term and short-sighted policy responses from government to addressing crime through evidence-based approaches to its prevention.

**“A rational response to crime...would be one that is directed at finding and implementing effective crime prevention or crime control policies, one informed by evidence and scientific knowledge about the causes of crime and how to combat it. It would look at the nature and extent of crime, its economic and social impact, how to prevent it before it occurs, how to deal with offenders once it has occurred and the effectiveness and costs of those intervention. Crime prevention would be regarded as a technical approach to social problems...So, to reframe the title of this conference, we would put prevention in the mind of justice rather than its heart, or we could try to change the heart so that it is less full of fear and anxiety or hate.”**



From left: Inspector Anne Rudd, Carmel Benjamin AM, Helen Fatouros [far right]

### Recognising our unique volunteer workforce during National Volunteer Week (May 2017)

This was an important week for volunteer organisations around the country to acknowledge the social and economic impact of volunteer contributions across the nation, and that our Networkers have on the court user community.

In Melbourne, a lunchtime event was held at the Law Institute of Victoria to celebrate and recognise the efforts of Networkers with Helen Fatouros, Executive Director at Victoria Legal Aid, as guest speaker.

Helen spoke passionately about youth justice approaches and the urgent need for a less complex whole of system response that links family, education, health, child-protection, police and justice responses at all levels.

#### For young people in detention:

- 43% had a previous child protection order
- 62% were victims of abuse, trauma or neglect
- 53% offended while under the influence alcohol and drugs
- 33% presented with mental health issues
- Indigenous Australians are 12 times more likely to be in prison;
- 87% of female prisoners in Victoria are victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse, with the majority being victims of multiple forms of abuse

Youth Parole Board  
[Annual Report 2014-2015]

### Twitter Launched!



Executive Director, Dr Melanie Heenan

[@CourtNetworkInc](#)

We entered into the world of social media in May 2016, with the launch of our Twitter site! This will mean we can more easily engage with stakeholders, potential donors, and the public, in recognising the important role that social media can have in influencing understanding, and creating awareness about social justice issues and the challenges faced by court users in navigating the system.



Her Honour Chief Justice Catherine Holmes and Court Network Patron [centre] with Cairns Court Networkers and Program Manager, Brenda Masutti [far right]

In Brisbane, the courts hosted a combined National Volunteer Week for all volunteers, including Court Networkers. The Honourable Yvette D'Ath, Queensland Attorney General, recognised and sincerely thanked all volunteers.

In Cairns, The Honourable Chief Justice Catherine Holmes met with Networkers from the Cairns team.





Court Network Founder, Carmel Benjamin AM

### Ten Years Old in Queensland

This year marked the 10th anniversary of Court Network's operations in Brisbane. We were honoured to have Queensland Attorney General, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and our Patron, the Honourable Catherine Holmes, as our special guests of honour. Both spoke with great sincerity and passion about the impact of the work of our volunteers. Our indefatigable Founder, Carmel Benjamin AM, spoke with great pride at seeing Court Network become such an established part of the Queensland court and justice furniture.



Queensland Attorney General, the Hon Yvette D'Ath



Back row: Carmel Benjamin AM [third from left]; the Hon Chief Justice Catherine Holmes; Julie Steel, the Hon Yvette D'Ath, QLD Attorney-General; Garry Roach, Immediate Past President [far right] with Brisbane Court Network volunteers



**Thank You**

More than **400** volunteers contributed **95,040** hours of their time to support over **180,000** court users.

Thank You All.



# VIC State Manager's Report

Looking back over the past year of operations at Court Network in Victoria, I am struck by how worthwhile it has been to invest in professionalising our volunteer workforce which is so well located within our courts and tribunals to influence positive outcomes for the community.

We have invested significantly over the past year in refreshing our volunteer workforce in the foundational skills of outreach practice, community service referrals, and advocacy within a court context, and ensuring that the professional skills of our volunteers are up to the standard required for contemporary community services.

It has meant that 129,787 people have been ably assisted by Court Network on their day in court throughout the 2016/17 financial year.

Looking first at state courts and tribunals, a total of 98,862 people were assisted with 83% supported by Networkers in Magistrates Courts at eighteen different locations around Victoria. Of these, 38% concerned family violence matters and 37% predominantly concerned summary crime.

Two out of five people supported (43%) were attending courts in regional Victoria, where Networkers are providing support in courts with multiple jurisdictions. And in terms of the higher courts, where some of the most serious person-related criminal matters are heard, Networkers supported some 3,946 people at the County Court, and 1,559 at the Supreme Court.

We thank Court Services Victoria for their continued confidence in and funding support for Court Network in these state jurisdictions.

**This short note is to express the thanks of my husband and myself regarding the calm and helpful support of your people over the past months. As grandparents of a child removed from her mother's care we have experienced multiple hearings. Whilst we have been well supported in other ways we have appreciated the quiet availability of your people there and want to encourage and affirm you in your valuable work.**  
Court user, Ballarat Court

This year, we have also invested heavily in the development of the family violence service capability of our volunteers and program management workforce.

**At Sunshine Court, throughout the duration of the Project, I have seen women who have come to court confused, daunted and intimidated, being given support and information throughout the day by a skilled Networker which has kept them engaged in the justice process and ensured that they can make informed and safe decisions. Through constructive conversations, the Networker has identified needs, risks and safety concerns at court and ensured they have spoken with services on the day (legal and/or family violence services) to ensure those needs are met. I have observed Networkers advocate with court staff, police and lawyers which has improved court users access to justice and enhanced their safety. The difference this has made to the court user is remarkable and should never be underestimated.**

**Jennie Child, Court Network Family Violence Program Manager**

Through these efforts we have been able to demonstrate the significant contribution that a well-trained and supported Networker team at the Sunshine Magistrates' Court can have on the safety and wellbeing of women and children affected by family violence. One hundred and ninety-one women affected by family violence from the Brimbank/Melton community have been provided with professional support by volunteer Networkers based at the Sunshine Magistrates' Court as part of the specialist family violence integrated service system in operation there on Family Violence list days.

We thank the Department of Health and Human Services for providing us with the opportunity to pilot the contribution that Court Network can make to improving the social and justice response to this critical issue of addressing family violence, leveraging our core role at Sunshine Magistrates Court to great effect. The details of this project are captured on page 20.

We have continued to invest in the provision of comprehensive non-legal support to parties without legal representation in final hearings in matters involving children at the Melbourne registry of the Family and Federal Circuit Court. This has been another example where we have leveraged our core service role with innovation funding and further built on the expertise and capability of our core team of volunteers in the process, allowing us to set new benchmarks for the types of service we can provide.

In these commonwealth courts this financial year, we have provided support to 2,703 people at the Melbourne and Dandenong registries of the Family and Federal Circuit Court.

**Just a note to thank the volunteers who guided us as unrepresented applicants at the Family Circuit Court today. Apart from their good knowledge and understanding of the courts system, their true value was their compassion - and in just being there to reassure first time users in an unfamiliar environment.**  
Court user, Melbourne Registry Federal Circuit Court

We thank Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) for their support of services in this jurisdiction in a funding context of transferred responsibility for legal and non-legal support services from the Commonwealth Government to the Victorian Government for administration through VLA. We certainly operate in a dynamic funding context!

We are worthy of the support that we enjoy from the community and our funders and we are ready to do more. Indeed, we welcome the opportunity to do so.

The baseline court support infrastructure provided by Court Network – professionally trained volunteers who operate in positions of trust in relation to the community and the courts alike – have been springboards for some terrific and cost-effective innovations in the family courts and in complementing family violence services in the Magistrates Courts. Modest investments, that have allowed us to target volunteer training and development and increase practice supervision and management support, have resulted in highly capable teams operating on the floors of these courts.

We are off to a great start in building our capability to support people without legal representation and in the area of family violence service provision.

We look forward to building on our work in complementing the existing court based legal and non-legal services to close gaps for vulnerable court users and contribute to better quality, efficiency and effectiveness of court support services, particularly in regional Victoria.

To this end we lent our advocacy support to Victoria Legal Aid in highlighting the current stresses on the system that were evidenced in their "Better Justice Every Day Summary Crime Evaluation" report, bringing into focus the human face and cost of a highly stressed and sometimes compromised Duty Lawyer Service system.

We also see unmet need for victims and witness support in Victoria, particularly in the regions, that could be improved with some modest investment to leverage our capable teams in these areas. The urgency of this situation was highlighted by the Victorian Law Reform Commission's report into 'The Role of Victims of Crime in the Criminal Trial Process', released in August 2016, which emphasized the unique barriers to support, protection and participation that victims in regional and remote areas face throughout the criminal trial process.

Our volunteers are amazing people, giving of their time and skill to support the community. You could not ask for a more willing and dedicated workforce.

Thank you to our team of over 300 volunteers in Victoria who supported a remarkable 129,787 people on their day in court throughout 2016/17.

The community is so fortunate to have their volunteering compassion and care and we are so grateful to them for being part of Team Court Network.

Congratulations to the whole Court Network team, program management staff and volunteers, on another great year of service.

**Bernadette Burchell**  
Victorian State Manager





# A Critical Part Of The Integrated Response To Family Violence

For the past two years, Court Network has been building a dedicated program to develop its capability to respond to family violence. The program's development is guided by Court Network's family violence vision to:

**Provide effective support to people affected by family violence, strengthen our capability to identify family violence risk, complement the integrated service response available to maximise women's and children's safety, and connect victims and perpetrators with appropriate referral pathways.**

The model has been shaped by, and tested through the operation of the Sunshine Family Violence Pilot Project and an Independent Evaluation of the project that was completed in February 2017. This evaluation highlighted the value and success of a mainstream community service such as Court Network in delivering a specialised family violence service alongside its core operations in the court.

There continues to be unprecedented policy reform in the area of family violence which includes how the legal system and the courts must now respond to dramatic increases in people, the majority of them women, seeking court orders that are intended to prevent future episodes of violence. This in turn influenced the manner in which Court Network needed to redefine and adapt its service to ensure it stays relevant to the changing practice environment, and become an effective part of the integrated court-based service response to people affected by family violence.

## Opportunities & Challenges

Operating a service in thirty three courts across Victoria and Queensland presents both opportunities and challenges for Court Network in providing a service in the family violence jurisdiction. Unique to Court Network's operating model is the opportunity to reach out to vast numbers of court users every day. With a minimum of two Networkers rostered on each day at court, approaching each court user and offering them support ('outreach'), Court Network has the opportunity to complement existing court-based support services to fill a critical service gap in an otherwise overburdened family violence service system.

**We can't have eyes over all victims in the court, unfortunately. So, if we did miss someone, one of the high-risk ones, or not prioritise someone, the Project Networkers were amazing [in saying], 'we think this woman's really at risk, we think you should prioritise seeing her today.' They were excellent in identifying those that we'd missed.**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p12

But the scope and reach of the service also presents a number of challenges in developing a practice model that can potentially work across all courts in which Court Network operates, including across different jurisdictions. This has been the focus of the family violence program in Victoria over the past twelve months - to take what has been learnt through the Project and develop a family violence practice model that can be consistently replicated in other courts.

**They would have come into the court, sat down, and completely slipped through. Just because of the numbers coming through. The beauty of having the Project Networkers involved is that they're able to pick these people up before they even come into the court room. They've had a bit of a chat with them, redirected them. 'I think it would be really helpful if you could see this service or that service.' For that woman, it makes such a difference.**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p13

## Family Violence Practice Innovation

As a mainstream service providing support to court users affected by family violence, Court Network plays a unique and important role in the integrated family violence system. Court Network does not assess or manage family violence risk but has a role and responsibility to be able to identify and respond to risk. The specialised family violence practice model developed by Court Network builds on the core service (support, information and referral) so that Networkers:

- Are trained and supported to identify and respond to family violence needs and risks
- Discuss safety planning with women at court
- Develop greater knowledge of family violence referral pathways at court and in the community and
- Have a shared understanding of family violence that accords with others working in the service system.

**It's helped with the integrated service system. There's a big gap there of people we can't see. It gives everyone confidence that if we have missed high-risk people, that the Project Networkers are very capable of picking them up and letting us know. You can also feel confident that the Project Networkers are having the right conversations and the appropriate conversations with those clients to support them.**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p26

## Elements to Success

The practice model is underpinned by the following core elements to ensure the quality and consistency of the service provided:

- Networkers complete a comprehensive three and a half day family violence training course tailored to the Networker role

**'When I was first shown the training program I thought 'Wow.' I was really happy with it. I was really impressed. If you go through it, they've covered everything, every aspect. The scale of the problem, the system, how it works, the impact on women and children...I don't think there was another thing you could have taught in that timeframe. Comprehensive and considered.'**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p18

- Networkers are supported by a Program Manager trained in providing family violence practice support to ensure Networkers can reflect on their practice, are aware of the boundaries and limits of their role, and receive support for ongoing learning and development
- Court Network liaises with stakeholders at the court to facilitate information-sharing and to streamline referral processes

**'There was a training session and I spoke about my role. They [the Networkers] were really engaged and really wanted to learn. In Touch, Women's Health West and Victoria Legal Aid were there and they were all talking about their roles. And they were really engaged in wanting to get that information to facilitate the best referrals.'**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p19

- Development and use of prescribed family violence referral pathways and resources

**'Networkers need to know if women are at risk, if they are unsafe, and what they need on the day so the best referral can be made on the day...That's the point of the integrated service system, you work to the level of your responsibility and then you refer'**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p17

## Promoting Quality & Consistency of Practice

Court Network has developed several family violence practice tools, guidelines and resources to support the Networkers at court so that they can put their classroom learning into practice. These include:

- Family Violence practice support and supervision guidelines for Program Managers to ensure consistent support is provided to Networker after they attend training
- Family Violence Practice Guidelines for Networkers that comprehensively outline the scope and role of the service Court Network provides in family violence matters
- A Family Violence Curriculum which documents each learning and development module
- Practice tools for Networkers to utilise at court

## Planned & Considered Implementation

Court Network is committed to ensuring that the service provided to court users affected by family violence is high-quality and consistent across the courts in which we operate and aligns with the Court Network family violence vision. For this reason, there has been a gradual and planned roll-out of the family violence training and practice model over the past twelve months to ensure that Networkers can be supported in their practice and their ongoing learning and development.

In the past year, Networkers at Heidelberg Magistrates Court and Melbourne Magistrates Court, both in Victoria, have attended the three and a half day training course and Networkers from the Federal Circuit Court have attended Day One of the course (Introduction to Family Violence). The Intake training provided to new trainees in the Metropolitan and Hume Region incorporated two days of family violence training so that new trainees have a shared understanding of the nature, dynamics and definition of family violence and how to respond to family violence within the bounds of the Networker role. These trainees will be offered more advanced family violence training (i.e. risk identification) when they have gained more in-court experience.

The result of this planned and considered implementation is that Networkers are highly skilled and knowledgeable and can provide court users with invaluable support, information and access to ongoing support services. As noted in the Sunshine Family Violence Pilot Project evaluation:

**Service providers and court staff...are really blown away by the commitment of the Project Networkers to take on the additional training. A lot of them who were fond of Court Network thought it was a good service, but the Project has added another dimension, demonstrated how committed the volunteers and Court Network are to being skilled and professional, a complementary service...**

**Project Networkers have had the specialised training and we get the benefits of already having a good relationship. We've always had this at Sunshine. Now we're building on this with their expertise in family violence. It's a true integrated model and they're filling a really important piece of that jigsaw.**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p25

Every day at court, Networkers ensure court users don't 'fall through the gaps' by offering everyone who is at court support, information and referral options. As noted by one of the interviewees in the Sunshine evaluation:

**The value added has been there are now Project Networkers who are trained in identifying risk, have the capacity to do safety planning, and can do really good needs assessment. All volunteers are there, performing this role every day. That, in itself, adds capacity to a service system that's overstretched and overburdened**  
Interviewee, Project evaluation, p27

Through constructive conversations, the Networkers can identify needs, risks and safety concerns at court and ensure people speak to relevant services on the day (legal and/or family violence services) to ensure those needs are met. Networkers help court users navigate what is often a foreign and confusing court environment which often results in people staying engaged in the justice process.

### Conscious Actors in the Family Violence Service System

The ultimate outcome of having this specialised response and family violence practice model is that Court Network has become part of the integrated response to family violence and complements existing services:

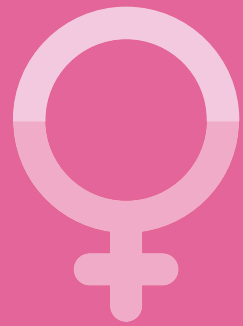
**Having the Networkers get extra knowledge was one of the final stages in increasing integration of all the services at court: from being outside to being part of the family violence services that court provided.**

Interviewee, Project evaluation, p26

The result has been that Networkers have become conscious 'actors' (workers) in the family violence service system. Through identifying and responding to risk, Networkers enhance the safety of women and children and ensure that victims and perpetrators are connected with appropriate referral pathways.

We look forward to continuing to expand this model across all Magistrates Courts in which we operate in both Victoria and Queensland, and to adapting our knowledge and practice to better respond to family violence where it forms part of the context of matters dealt with in other jurisdictions.

**We would like to thank DHHS for their contribution to the Family Violence Project.**



**191**  
women supported

of these women:

**147** were identified by Networkers during 'Outreach'

**132** were not already linked into a family violence service and had not been identified as being at risk

**114** were 'warmly referred' to specialist family violence services at court

for **91** WOMEN this was the first time they had taken action against the offender and for many, the first time they had disclosed the extent of the violence

### Case Study



I provided support to a young woman (Susie\*) at Sunshine Magistrates' Court who I met through outreach. She was not seeking help but was sitting on the floor waiting for a police interview regarding her application for a Family Violence Intervention Order against her ex-partner, to protect her and her young daughter. I supported her periodically throughout the day and she sat in the Court Network office while she was at court. Late in the afternoon she was granted a full "no contact" order, to remain in place indefinitely.

Susie was terrified and often tearful during the day but determined to go through with obtaining the order even though she doubted he would abide by it. She had no money and was sure that if she took the bus home he would follow her. She had no money for lunch. Despite this complex history she was not linked in to any specialist family violence service.

I referred her immediately to the family violence Applicant Practitioner as I was concerned for her safety and she spent a considerable period of time with her. We obtained vouchers from the Salvation Army for lunch and for a taxi home at the end of the day. I supported her in court, in her dealings with the police (who were very supportive also), provided information on counselling for her child and herself and on all aspects of safety planning, including paperwork to be given to her child's school. I observed that the Magistrate was very concerned about her story and was very compassionate.

Without Court Network approaching and supporting her I believe the day could have ended very differently. She was overwhelmed by the support she received from me, from the Applicant Practitioner and from the police. She told me she felt 'heard' and not judged 'by the system' for the first time in her life.

\* All names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals



# QLD State Manager's Report

We were delighted in 2016 to mark ten years of operations for Court Network in delivering services to court users in Queensland. Throughout this time, we have assisted more than 270,000 people to better navigate the court system. We progressed from relatively modest but very important beginnings in the Brisbane Commonwealth Law Courts in 2006, to our subsequent growth into the Supreme and District Court, Brisbane Magistrates' Court and Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT), followed by our expansion into Cairns and Townsville in 2010 and then the establishment of the Victim Support Unit (VSU) in Brisbane and Ipswich in 2013. We celebrated this important milestone by holding an anniversary event in December 2016 which brought together our key stakeholders and partners, Networkers, and staff to recognise and share in our achievements, and reflect on our impact. We were also delighted to host the Queensland Attorney-General, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath, and the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland, the Honourable Catherine Holmes, at this event, both of whom described the role of volunteers as invaluable in the context of increasing access to justice for court users featured at page 16.

While the first half of the financial year ended in celebration of our past, the second half resembled a rollercoaster ride in terms of securing our future. Along with all other services funded through the Legal Services Assistance Program, Court Network was required to tender for funds that would support our core operations from July 2016. Regrettably, as a result of the Commonwealth Government's decision to reduce its allocation of resources to the States by thirty per cent, Court Network was offered funding at a significantly reduced level. Subsequently, Court Network's Board was forced to make the agonising decision of withdrawing services in the Brisbane Supreme and District Courts and at QCAT. Sadly, this included having to also reduce program management costs to meet the shortfall.

News of our planned withdrawal of service was met with profound concern and disappointment. None were more deeply affected than our Networkers who were primarily distressed for court users who would no longer have access to support. In the Supreme and District Courts, these were likely to be people involved in some of the most serious matters ever dealt with by our justice system.

To our great relief, and after a concerted and effective advocacy campaign led by the community legal sector, the Commonwealth Government reversed its decision. Fortunately, this extended to Court Network's funding offer being increased. Happily, and with sincere thanks to the efforts of supporters from behind the scenes, Court Network has been able to continue operating the service in its current locations. In addition, we were delighted to receive funding from the Public Trustee of Queensland for the next three years to strengthen our service model for vulnerable clients going to QCAT. I want to acknowledge the CEO of QCAT, Mary Shortland, and the Immediate Past President, the Hon Justice Thomas, for providing valuable support at this critical time. We now have a fantastic opportunity to work in close collaboration with QCAT and other key stakeholders to strengthen our capability and deepen our support efforts with vulnerable Tribunal users. We anticipate that we will be redeveloping our services with a particular focus on those who attend guardianship and tenancy hearings.

**"It's hard to imagine how confused and overwhelmed some of our clients must be when they arrive at QCAT for a proceeding. This is when the knowledge and compassion of Court Network volunteers can make all the difference in easing clients' fears and helping them navigate QCAT facilities and processes."**

**Mary Shortland, Executive Director  
Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal**

The good news continued in January with Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) advising that we had successfully tendered to continue operating our Victim Support Unit (VSU). This is a significant achievement for us having established the VSU as a pilot project in 2013, the additional three years funding allows us to treat the VSU as a core part of Court Network's service offer to the court community. Victims of crime who are attending courts in both Brisbane and Ipswich will continue to be supported throughout their court experience, providing support while they give their evidence, regardless of the jurisdiction in which they may be required to give evidence. VAQ has also supported our ideas to innovate the service through creating an outreach model to support victims going to court on the Sunshine Coast and at Gympie (featured later in this report), and to scope the extension of our VSU service into the Cairns Courts in 2019-20.

While the end result of these respective funding negotiations was ultimately satisfactory, and we are sincerely grateful to those who were instrumental in supporting a successful outcome, the uncertainty made a significant mark on Court Network in Queensland this year. Like most community organisations, Court Network operates on a lean budget with highly committed, and often very part-time staff, who shape up to whatever might be the challenges of the day. With the advent of the proposed funding reduction, Court Network was forced to plan for the withdrawal of service, and to communicate with a volunteer workforce that they would no longer be able to provide a service to people in jurisdictions that had ten years earlier been identified as critical sites for a non-legal court support service to operate.

There was also significant cost to our state office team, including the departure of Brisbane Program Manager, Teresa Snow, who left our service after nine years as a result of the uncertainty. Networkers have been deeply affected by the experience. It will take time to fully re-establish our operating arrangements and to restore trust with our volunteer Networkers that the service they provide to some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our communities, is secure.

**Despite these challenges, Networkers delivered an extraordinary level of service activity throughout the year with more than 54,000 people informed, more empowered, and better connected with court and community-based services, as they stepped through their day in court.**

Some significant aspects of our service delivery this year included: a focus on referrals practice which subsequently resulted in a substantial increase of referrals being made in to Court Network (1,606 this year compared with 259 in 2015-16), we redeveloped our referrals form and process, and strengthened relationships with some referring agencies; planning with the courts to improve processes for Adult Special Witnesses, as there has been rapid growth in the number of Adult Special Witnesses; and a continuing focus on our support strategies for court users attending hearings for family and domestic violence related cases.

Our Victim Support Unit supported 392 new clients (263 in Brisbane and 129 in Ipswich) and provided ongoing support to another 550 clients. Earlier in the financial year, and in line with recommendations from an independent evaluation, the operations for the VSU were centralised such that referrals into the service were triaged, co-ordinated and case-managed through the Brisbane office. The Program Manager, along with the newly created position of Services Co-ordinator, now both operate out of the Brisbane office resulting in efficiencies and quality improvements to the systems and processes that sit behind the VSU's operations. Given the large numbers of victims and vulnerable witnesses supported in the higher jurisdictions, we also relocated the VSU office from the Brisbane Magistrates Court to the Supreme and District Court.

Supporting the continued renewal and development of our volunteer workforce remains an ongoing priority. This year we held intakes for new Networkers in both Cairns and Townsville. A comprehensive intake training program was delivered at each site, followed by a period of mentoring and supervised practice. Ten graduates joined the Cairns team, doubling its ranks. Townsville also completed its intake training during this reporting period and is looking forward to welcoming twenty new graduates to the team.

In terms of assuring the quality of our service, like most government funded community organisations, Court Network is required to meet the Human Services Quality Framework Standards through a process of self-assessment. Over the past year, we directed significant effort to ensuring that we meet these standards and stay committed to a pathway of continual improvement.

This year we were also involved in a number of special events to recognise our Networkers' contributions. Some were hosted by Court Network while others took place as a result of the leadership and generosity of our stakeholders. Highlights included graduations in Townsville, Brisbane and Cairns, with special thanks to Townsville City Council for hosting the Townsville graduation. In Brisbane, the courts hosted an event during National Volunteer Week in May to recognise the efforts made by all volunteers who work in the courts. Queensland Attorney General, the Honourable Yvette D'Ath, spoke at this event and warmly acknowledged the impact of all volunteers on the workings of the justice system. His Honour Kerry O'Brien, Chief Judge of the District Court, and His Honour, Justice Thomas, QCAT President, also attended to show their appreciation. In Cairns, Chief Justice Catherine Holmes, who is also a Court Network patron, met with the team during National Volunteer Week to thank them for their efforts. In late June, QCAT hosted a very special event, attended by all QCAT staff and senior Members of the Tribunal, to thank the QCAT Networkers and their Program Manager for their contributions.

Every year, there are so many people to acknowledge. It is my honour to thank all the Networkers, stakeholders and staff for their good will and generosity and express my deep appreciation for their continuing support.

**Annette Hogan**  
Queensland State Manager

## Case Study



I noticed an elderly woman looking a little lost and I asked if I could help her. She began to cry and I led her away to a quiet area and she proceeded to tell me her story. The woman was in her late seventies and this was her first time in court and her first offence – a shoplifting charge. She told me she survives on the age pension and continually worries about paying her rent and having enough money left to buy food. She was so ashamed and hadn't told any of her family or friends of the charge, and as a result was in court on her own with no support. In the end, she received a small fine and no conviction. She was so relieved and couldn't thank me enough, repeating that she could not have got through it without me. Once again it brought home to me the vital role Court Network provides in the court system.

Court Networker, Brisbane

people assisted in Brisbane courts  
**39,629**

people assisted in Northern QLD  
centres of Cairns & Townsville  
**14,254**

new clients assisted in the  
Victim Support Unit, QLD  
**392**

trainees	graduates	set to graduate in Oct 2017
<b>69</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>21</b>



## Innovation in Practice: Outreach For Victims On The Sunshine Coast And Gympie

Adult victims of violent crime often experience a range of issues that serve as barriers to them accessing support. They can be reluctant to seek assistance or be unaware of the services that exist to help address the impact and trauma often associated with experiencing a violent crime. Issues of access are often heightened for people from marginalised groups, or for people located outside major population centres where there are significantly fewer services available. Where services might be operating, there may be concerns about protecting privacy and confidentiality in the community.

In the context of accessing justice, attendance at court hearings, and going through the experience of giving evidence, is a very significant event for most victims of crime. Historically, the criminal justice process has operated with little regard for how distressing and alienating the process might be for victims, such that people have often reported feeling re-victimised rather than supported through their ordeal.

Fortunately, today, it is well accepted that there is significant value in having support available to victims throughout the proceedings. However, the various forms this support might take are also important. It is critical, for example, that family and friends of the victim are supportive and willing to help. But their level of emotional involvement may mean that they are unsure of how to manage their own reactions which makes it difficult for them to focus or prioritise the victim's own needs. On other occasions, victims may not want their family or friends to be present. Sadly, it is also not uncommon for families to be hostile or less than supportive to the victim. Indeed, they may be alleged to be involved or to have perpetrated the crime itself.

### Outreach Link Service Model - Pilot Project

The extent to which service providers can reach out to victims and provide appropriate levels of support can be challenging, particularly outside major population areas. As Queensland is a large and decentralised state, it makes it difficult to provide the full range of court support services in regional and rural areas.

In October 2016, Court Network's Victim Support Unit (VSU) was fortunate to receive a twelve-month capacity building grant from Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ). The grant is for a pilot project to trial a court support service for adult victims of crime on the Sunshine Coast and at Gympie. These locations were identified as having particularly limited court support services available for adult victims of violent crime.

The new "Outreach Link Service Model" was launched in March 2016 and operates on an outreach basis from our Brisbane location, in close cooperation with local service providers. The service aims to empower victims of crime to have a better understanding of the court process and to effectively manage and respond to the requirements of the process.

Specifically, the objectives are to develop a regional outreach court support service that can:

- Provide timely and accessible support to adult victims of crime who do not have access to pre, during and post-court support services, due to geographic disadvantage, using internet technologies, telecommunication and local support
- Support local community services to assist victims of crime to access court support
- Establish a flexible and cost-effective outreach model that can form the basis for future regional outreach support in Queensland

Key elements of the project include:

1. Outreach services - the Program Manager and Networkers, based in Brisbane, connect with service users via Skype, phone, email and SMS
2. A key regional partnership - Relationships Australia Queensland offers a safe and confidential location where service users can communicate with the VSU staff and volunteers in privacy by Skype or phone
3. Referral pathways - working closely with local services to promote referrals to and from the VSU to relevant services and resources
4. In-court support in regional support services - the Brisbane-based VSU team continues to provide a range of services but is not able to provide 'in person' support during the proceedings themselves. Therefore, a key innovation for this project is the development of a 'tool-kit' that can assist others to provide in-court support on the day(s) of the proceedings

**42** victims have connected with the Outreach Link Project since March 2016

With relevance to this final point, the VSU is exploring the viability of other locally-based community agencies being able to provide in-court support, or equipping people known to the victim to feel more informed about the process, and confident to provide support on the day, assuming they have no direct connection with the case. An Advisory Group of local stakeholders meets regularly to offer feedback and advice on the implementation of the project, and the effectiveness of the service being provided.

There will be a review of the project's impact and outcomes. We are particularly interested in the effectiveness of the tool kit; in how successful the range of outreach communication strategies (including video link through Skype) have proven; reviewing feedback from other services that may have been involved in providing in-court support for VSU clients; and importantly, establishing whether standards of practice in providing victim support can be appropriately maintained when using an outreach service model. We look forward to reporting on our progress next year.

## Victim Support Unit, QLD

The Outreach Link Service Model is an extension on Court Network's Victim Support Unit (VSU). The VSU is available to assist and support adult victims throughout their entire court experience. This includes assisting their family members and other vulnerable witnesses. The VSU provides a range of support services including:

- Familiarising the victim/witness with the courtroom, the court's operations and legal processes
- Talking through concerns about court appearances and providing support during and after the proceedings have concluded each day
- Providing access to a safe place in court
- Linking victims to other support services including housing, family and domestic violence, victim counselling and other community support agencies
- Providing emotional support for victims dealing with sentencing outcomes

- Helping victims deal with rescheduling of court days and adjournments
- Providing support at plea hearings
- Providing referral information for ongoing support
- Helping someone to complete a Victim Impact Statement or Financial Assistance Statement

The service is led by a professional Program Manager, with services provided by a team of professionally trained and supported volunteers. The Program Manager is located in Brisbane and volunteer Networkers are located in Brisbane and Ipswich. A key factor in the success of this service model is the close supervision and proximity of the Program Manager to the VSU Networker team. This enables the Program Manager to plan and monitor the services that are provided to victims, and to closely support and resource the practice of the Networkers. It is an effective service model, that is now exploring how to extend its reach to victims in regional and remote locations using technology.



## Case Study



Jane was initially referred to the VSU Outreach Link Project via Victim Assist Queensland. Jane was preparing to attend the Caloundra Magistrate's Court in relation to an assault. Her husband was to attend as her support person. We were able to link with Jane by telephone and provide information about what to expect at court, the process of giving evidence, and the possibility of providing a Victim Impact Statement, depending on the outcome. We also talked with her about eligibility for financial assistance, and referrals for longer term counselling support.

Importantly, the VSU was also able to contact the courthouse and organise a saferoom for Jane to use while she was waiting to give her evidence. This resulted in Jane having a specific person to contact when she first arrived at court, who could escort her and her husband to a saferoom, and who could inform the prosecution team that Jane had arrived. Having access to the saferoom – a separate and secure space – also helped Jane to feel less anxious about the fact she was still breast-feeding a very young baby, who would need to be with her throughout the day.

We followed up with Jane after the case had been completed, and things had gone well; the perpetrator, who was her next-door neighbour, had been found guilty. Nonetheless, Jane was still dealing with the impact of the assault and was continuing to feel anxious about her safety. We provided short-term emotional support to Jane but returned to the subject of a referral to a victim's counselling service offered by Relationships Australia, which she took up. We were so pleased to have the opportunity to connect with Jane so early in the process and to offer a service that twelve months ago would have left her turning up to court with a young baby feeling unsafe, uninformed, and not knowing what to expect. It's a critical service for victims on the Sunshine Coast.

\* All names and identifying details have been changed to protect the privacy of individuals



## Information

Our volunteers assisted **43,278** court users with information and general enquiries at Court Info Desks in VIC & QLD. We are the first point of contact for people going to court, giving information about court facilities and processes, and assessing their needs.

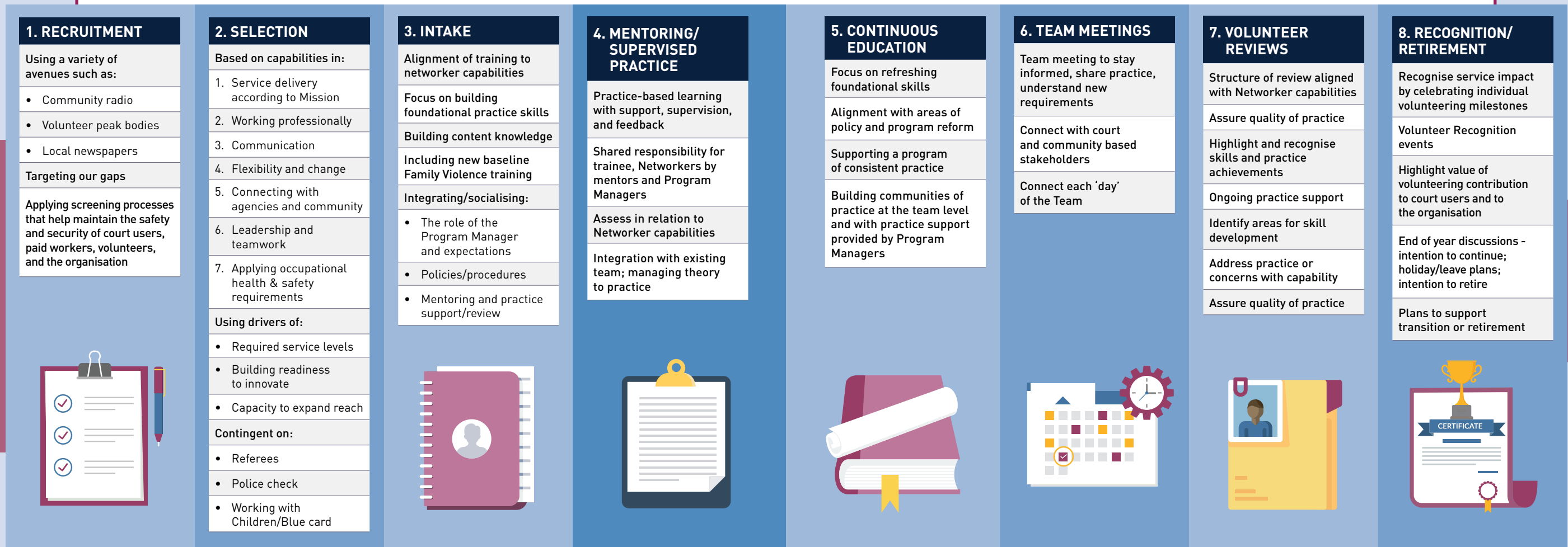


# Learning and Development Program

Court Network has been building a Learning and Development Program that spans the duration of the Networker role – from recruitment through to continued learning and practice reflection, to reviewing individual practice and development needs, to a program of recognition and retirement.

At the foundations of this program, are seven core capabilities that are at the heart of the Networker role and that are critical to delivering on the Court Network Mission. They feature below under 'Selection' and guide our approach to supporting the learning and development needs for all Networkers.

## Networker Development Pathway



Guided Practice Conversations

Continuous Learning Cycle

National Volunteering Standards; Quality; EAP



## Strengthening and supporting our volunteer network



Over

# 50

continuing education sessions were held and attended by our volunteers, covering aspects such as:

Outreach Practice; Mental Health; Access, Equity and Diversity; Victims and Witness Assistance; Advocacy; Supporting Unrepresented Litigants; Referral Processes; Working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities, Family Violence, Overviews of Legal Services and Courts, and Compassion Fatigue.



Renewal

More than

# 150

new volunteers attended our Intake Training Program in VIC & QLD



# 2016-17 Board of Directors

## THE HONOURABLE MARCIA NEAVE AO | PRESIDENT

### APPOINTED AGM 2016

Marcia Neave was a Judge of the Court of Appeal Division of the Supreme Court of Victoria from 2006 to 2015, until her appointment as Chair of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Prior to those roles, she was a legal academic for many years, holding chairs at several Australian universities and was the Foundation Chair of the Victorian Law Reform Commission.

## JULIE STEEL | VICE PRESIDENT

### APPOINTED AGM 2011, RE-ELECTED AGM 2014

Julie is the Executive Director of the Supreme, District & Land Courts' and Industrial Relations Commission's Service in Queensland. Julie brings significant experience with a diverse perspective from being a solicitor in private practice, to a parole officer with probation and parole, to a variety of positions within the courts. She was the Director of Operations in the implementation of the Access Courts Program which introduced Court Network in Queensland.

## DON TIDBURY | TREASURER

### APPOINTED AGM 2015

Don Tidbury is an experienced health care executive who has worked across the public health and not-for-profit sectors. As a qualified CPA and GAICD with extensive experience across hospitals, community health and residential aged care, Don has a strong record in leading major improvements in culture, clinical governance, financial performance and stakeholder engagement. Don is currently the Chief Executive Officer for Macedon Ranges Health, an award winning provider of primary care, disability services, welfare, home care and residential aged care to the Macedon Ranges. Don enjoys contributing to the health, aged and community sectors via other voluntary board appointments including the Healthcare Financial Management Association (HFMA) and the Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership.

## RUDY MONTELEONE | SECRETARY

### APPOINTED AGM 2012, RE-ELECTED AGM 2015

Rudy is currently Project Director, Whole of Government Infrastructure Policy, in the Department of Health and Human Services. Rudy has held various management roles in the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Supreme, County and Magistrates' Courts; the Victorian Multicultural Commission, and was appointed as Victoria's inaugural Juries Commissioner for Victoria in 2002.

## DEPUTY CHIEF MAGISTRATE FELICITY BROUGHTON

### MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2013, RE-ELECTED AGM 2016

Felicity was appointed as a Victorian Magistrate in January 2000 and has been a Deputy Chief Magistrate since 2007. Felicity is currently a Supervising Magistrate for the Family Violence and Family Law Portfolio having been appointed in August 2011. She was Supervising Magistrate for the court's sexual assault portfolio from 2006 to 2012 and for the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal from 2001 to 2004. Felicity is a member of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine's Council and Ethics Committee. She was a board member of CASA House from 1989 to 2000 and of the Children's Protection Society (CPS) from 1993 to 2000 serving as their President from 1996 to 1999.

## INSPECTOR ANNE RUDD

### MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2013, RE-ELECTED AGM 2016

Anne is a serving member of Victoria Police and over the past sixteen years she has performed duties within the bayside area, Prosecutions Division, Family Violence Command and more recently, the North West Metro Region. Anne is a lawyer and an experienced prosecutor within the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court where she specialised in prosecuting sexual offences and family violence matters. Anne was a board member of the Therapeutic Treatment Board from 2010-2015.

## GARY GIBSON

### MEMBER & NETWORKER | APPOINTED AGM 2014

Gary has spent most of his career in the design, development, marketing and delivery of professional development training courses applicable to a wide range of industry sectors. He has held senior training management and marketing roles for various IT&C services companies. Gary has delivered numerous sales management courses to sales teams in the US, Canada, Chile and South Africa as well as in Australia. Gary is a published author on time management skills and have been a coach/mentor to many senior executives. Gary has driven dialysis patients for Kidney Support Network, is a Court Networker in Brisbane alternating between QCAT and the Supreme and District Court, and has been a member of the QCAT JP Trial in Queensland since its inception.

## ENID RICHARDS

### MEMBER & NETWORKER | APPOINTED AGM 2014

Enid has been a Networker at the Shepparton Magistrates' Court for five years. Her background is in welfare, working in areas of disability, the homeless and mental illness. Enid was a member of the Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission Disability Reference Group for two years, representing rural Victoria. She also volunteers as an Independent Person with the Youth Referral and Independent Persons Program (YRIPP) in the Shepparton region. Enid has a strong social justice ethic that comes from life and work experiences. She is enthusiastic and passionate about assisting people while supporting them.

## THE HONOURABLE DAVID HARPER AM

### MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2015

David Harper was a Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria from 1992 - 2013, becoming a member of the Appeal Division of that Court in 2009. He was President of the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) between 1995 and 2012, and is now its patron. David became a Member of the Order of Australia in 2008 for service to law reform, the judiciary, international humanitarian law and the community.

## NICKY BROMBERG

### MEMBER & NETWORKER | APPOINTED AGM 2016

Nicky is a current Court Networker, working in the Sunshine Magistrate's Court and the Family Court. Nicky is a trained Social Worker with a degree in Social Work and Criminology and has volunteered as a telephone counsellor at the Post Natal and Ante Natal Depression Association (PANDA) for a period of eighteen months. Prior to social work, Nicky had a twenty five year career in the publishing and communications industry, including working for ten years at Text Media as Publishing Director and Hardie Grant Magazines as Director of the business as well as serving on the Board. Nicky has extensive experience in the areas of staff and stakeholder management and in all facets of the publishing of printed and online content.

## JOANNA WRIEDT

### MEMBER & NETWORKER | APPOINTED AGM 2016

Joanna is a current Court Networker, based at Ringwood Magistrates' Court. She has previously worked as a lawyer and as adviser to a Federal Health Minister with responsibility for policy development and strategic negotiation with stakeholders in both public and private sectors. Joanna holds a PhD in Medical Research and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She is a Director on the National Asthma Council, a Member of the Radiation Advisory Committee, and has recently been appointed Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee for "Fitted For Work", a community organisation that aims to increase workforce participation rates for women experiencing disadvantage. Joanna has just completed a five-year term as Director and Deputy Chair of UnitingCare ReGen, an alcohol and other drug treatment and education agency that provides outpatient, residential and prison services.

## BRIGITA CUNNINGTON

### MEMBER | CO-OPTED MAY 2017

Brigita is currently the Acting Executive Director of the Magistrates Courts Service in Queensland. She has extensive experience in the justice portfolio working in various legal, policy and management roles. Brigita was admitted as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2000 and practiced in native title law including at Crown Law. She has been employed in various roles in Queensland Courts since 2006 including as Director of the Office of the State Coroner and Director of Courts Innovation Program.

### MEMBERS WHO RESIGNED OR RETIRED FROM COURT NETWORK BOARD DURING THE 2016-17 FINANCIAL YEAR:

#### GARRY ROACH (IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT)

Appointed AGM 2010, re-elected AGM 2013, term ended Nov 2016

#### JENNIFER EVANS (IMMEDIATE PAST SECRETARY)

Appointed AGM 2011, re-elected AGM 2013, term ended Nov 2016

#### PATRICIA BYRNE

Appointed AGM 2012, re-elected AGM 2015, resigned Sept 2016

#### CECILIA EDWARDS

Appointed AGM 2015, resigned April 2017

### 1 JULY 2016 - 30 JUNE 2017

NAME	YEAR JOINED	MEETINGS ELIBLE IN 2016-17	MEETINGS ATTENDED IN 2016-17
MARCIA NEAVE	2016	6	6
JULIE STEEL	2011	7	4
DON TIDBURY	2015	7	6
RUDY MONTELEONE	2012	7	6
FELICITY BROUGHTON	2013	7	4
ANNE RUDD	2013	7	6
GARY GIBSON	2014	7	4
ENID RICHARDS	2014	7	6
DAVID HARPER	2015	7	5
NICKY BROMBERG	2016	5	2
JOANNA WRIEDT	2016	5	4
BRIGITA CUNNINGTON	2017	1	1
GARRY ROACH	2010	3	3
JENNIFER EVANS	2011	3	3
PATRICIA BYRNE	2012	1	0
CECILIA EDWARDS	2015	7	2

\*Eligible meetings include 2016 AGM



## Our Current Staff Team

### Support

“

Court Network is a crucial and necessary service that supports women who have experienced Family Violence. All staff were exceptional in their support, knowledge and empathy. Thank you!

Court User  
Melbourne CBD Court

### Victoria

<b>DR. MELANIE HEENAN</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR</b>
BERNADETTE BURCHELL	VICTORIAN STATE MANAGER
NARELLE ANSON	TRAINING MANAGER
LOUISE MORPHETT	TRAINER
JENNIE CHILD, PAUL DROST, SARAH HARRIS, FRAN LOMBARDI, JULIE TOOHEY	METROPOLITAN PROGRAM MANAGERS
CLAIRE CONNELL, DEB BROWN, VERNON KNIGHT, PATRICIA MULLENS, LYN WILSON	REGIONAL PROGRAM MANAGERS
MING ZHOU	FINANCE MANAGER
AMBER ROSE	NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICER
JOAO GONCALVES	STATE ADMINISTRATION OFFICER
SASH SAMARASINGHE	RECEPTIONIST/ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT OFFICER
ANN BARRETT	ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT OFFICER

### Queensland

ANNETTE HOGAN	QUEENSLAND STATE MANAGER
TERESA SNOW (TIL JULY 2017)	BRISBANE PROGRAM MANAGER
BRENDA MASUTTI	CAIRNS PROGRAM MANAGER
MADELEINE RUDGE	TOWNSVILLE PROGRAM MANAGER
SANDRA SCOBIE	VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT SERVICE MANAGER
RENEE DILLON	STATE ADMINISTRATION OFFICER

We also acknowledge the following staff for their contribution to Court Network during the 2016-17 Financial Year:

Anna Taylor, Benjamin Golby, Barbel Reisinger, Katie Talty, Eunice Tang, Donna McDonald, Kathryn Rendell.



## Treasurer's Report



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The 2016-17 financial result could not have been possible without the generous support provided to Court Network by its many stakeholders including Queensland and Victorian Governments, Court Services Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, Legal Aid Queensland, Victim Assist Queensland, our passionate volunteers, our industrious employees and the highly competent executive team.

I am delighted to present the Treasurer's Report for Court Network for the year ended 30 June 2017. It has been an honour to work with the Board, Executive and Volunteers over the last twelve months to deliver Court Network's mission: To provide support, information and referral to persons attending court and to advocate for the needs of all court users.

For the 2016-17 year, Court Network achieved an operating surplus of \$25,712 following the previous year's operating surplus of \$51,215. Given the challenging financial environment in which Court Network operates, this a strong result which reflects well on the many stakeholders who contributed to it.

Court Network generated \$2,203,844 in revenue which represented an increase of \$173,909 on the previous year. The growth in revenue was mainly due to successfully securing increased funding from Court Services Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid and an innovation grant from Victim Assist Queensland for a "Outreach Link Pilot Project". It is a credit to Management that they have secured additional government funding in what is becoming an increasingly competitive environment. I should note that all grants, in accordance with their funding agreements, are subject to acquittal and have to be fully expended.

Operating costs continue to rise which saw Court Network's annual expenditure increase to \$2,178,132, nearly \$200,000 up on the previous financial year. The result was influenced by increased wages and on-costs as a result of mandated award pay equity increases, additional staffing required for new projects, and costs related to the upgrade of the organisation's website.

Court Network continues to carefully manage its cash position to ensure the organisation remains solvent, can fulfil all of its financial obligations and retains sufficient reserves to accommodate any unplanned emergencies.

Management has made good progress in negotiating with funding providers for the year ahead and I am pleased to say Court Network's Board has endorsed a modest surplus budget for the 2017-18 year. Where possible the budget includes allowances to develop our most important resource being our highly valued volunteers.

The 2016-17 financial result could not have been possible without the generous support provided to Court Network by its many stakeholders including Queensland and Victorian Governments, Court Services Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, Legal Aid Queensland, Victim Assist Queensland, our passionate volunteers, our industrious employees and the highly competent executive team. In closing I would like to acknowledge the tireless efforts of my fellow colleagues on the Court Network Board who always ensure the highest standards of governance are maintained.

The 2017-18 year will be another good year for Court Network and I look forward to sharing it with you.

Don Tidbury  
Treasurer

## Income Statement

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

INCOME	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
GRANTS FROM GOVERNMENT AND STATUTORY BODIES	9	2,183,273	2,010,971
DONATIONS		2,376	1,302
INTEREST		12,690	12,570
MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS		1,282	559
OTHER		4,223	4,533
		<b>2,203,844</b>	<b>2,029,935</b>

EXPENDITURE	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
AUDIT FEES		5,410	5,110
BANK CHARGES AND FEES		855	1,210
BOARD AND GOVERNANCE		16,369	20,427
CONSULTANTS	10	34,356	84,688
COURT SUPPLIES		5,649	5,578
DEPRECIATION		4,888	6,238
INSURANCE		4,666	4,690
IT AND EQUIPMENT UPGRADE		30,791	41,970
LEASE EXPENSES		2,752	3,229
OFFICE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS, MINOR ASSETS		4,649	4,775
PAYROLL EXPENSE		4,368	3,591
POSTAGE, PRINTING AND STATIONERY		22,375	26,497
PROJECT - DATABASE		3,725	5,037
PROJECT - WEBSITE		17,000	-
PROVISIONS FOR EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS		17,400	20,942
PROVISION FOR TECH & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY		25,880	-
PUBLICATION & INFORMATION RESOURCES		21,449	37,760
RENT		230,935	120,350
SALARIES & WAGES (INCLUDING CONTRACTORS)		1,395,320	1,242,837
STAFF RECRUITMENT, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AMENITIES		20,840	7,255
SUNDRIES AND MEMBERSHIP		4,158	3,818
SUPERANNUATION		124,987	110,816
TELEPHONE		22,555	18,939
TRAVEL		70,138	65,348
VOLUNTEER EXPENSES		66,011	120,538
WORKCOVER		20,606	17,077
		<b>2,178,132</b>	<b>1,978,720</b>

<b>OPERATING RESULT FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>25,712</b>	<b>51,215</b>
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The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



## Balance Sheet

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

CURRENT ASSETS	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	3	1,163,941	1,212,273
RECEIVABLES AND PREPAYMENTS	4	4,336	4,978
		<b>1,168,277</b>	<b>1,217,251</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
FIXED ASSETS	5	5,506	2,834
		<b>5,506</b>	<b>2,834</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,173,783</b>	<b>1,220,085</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS		162,208	189,546
INCOME IN ADVANCE	6	209,899	276,089
PROVISIONS	7	232,230	210,716
		<b>604,337</b>	<b>676,351</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>569,446</b>	<b>543,734</b>
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>			
MEMBERS' FUNDS	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS		<b>569,446</b>	<b>543,734</b>
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		<b>569,446</b>	<b>543,734</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## Statement of Changes in Equity

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

	RETAINED EARNINGS \$	RESERVES \$	TOTAL \$
BALANCE 1/7/2015	490,973	-	490,973
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	51,215	1,546	52,761
TRANSFER TO/ (FROM) RESERVES	(4,533)	4,533	-
<b>BALANCE 30/06/2016</b>	<b>537,655</b>	<b>6,079</b>	<b>543,734</b>
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	25,712	-	25,712
TRANSFER TO/ (FROM) RESERVES	-	-	-
<b>BALANCE 30/06/2017</b>	<b>563,367</b>	<b>6,079</b>	<b>569,446</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

## Statement of Cash Flows

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
GRANTS FROM GOVERNMENT AND STATUTORY BODIES		1,886,149	1,900,650
INTEREST		12,690	12,570
OTHER		8,564	5,711
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
EMPLOYMENT EXPENSES		(1,585,772)	(1,349,788)
SUPPLIES		(362,403)	(480,471)
<b>NET CASH (USED IN)/ PROVIDED FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>(40,772)</b>	<b>88,672</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
PAYMENTS FOR PURCHASE OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		(7,560)	(1,093)
<b>NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>(7,560)</b>	<b>(1,093)</b>
<b>NET (DECREASE)/INCREASE IN CASH HELD</b>		<b>(48,332)</b>	<b>87,579</b>
<b>CASH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>		<b>1,212,273</b>	<b>1,124,694</b>
<b>CASH AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1,163,941</b>	<b>1,212,273</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

The financial statements cover Court Network Inc as an individual entity. Court Network is a not-for-profit Association incorporated in Victoria under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic) ('the Act').

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2017 was providing personal support, non-legal information and referral to those in contact with the justice system. The Association provides support, information and referral to persons attending court and advocates for the needs of all court users.

The functional and presentation currency of Court Network Inc is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

The financial statements and Committee's Report have been rounded to the nearest one dollar.

### 1. Basis of Preparation

In the opinion of the Committee of Management, the Association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial statements who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Act.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements, AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows, AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors and AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

### 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

#### (A) INCOME TAX

Court Network Inc. is not liable for tax as it is recognised as a public benevolent institution by both Federal and State legislation. Donations to Court Network Inc. in excess of \$2 are eligible for a tax deduction.

#### (B) FIXED ASSETS

Fixed assets are carried at cost or fair value as indicated, less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation or impairment losses.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight line basis over the useful lives of the assets commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for fixed assets are 10% - 40%. The assets' residual value and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

#### (C) CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of twelve months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in values.

#### (D) IMPAIRMENT OF ASSETS

At each reporting date, the Association reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value.

Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the profit and loss.

#### (E) TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES

Trade payables and other payables are carried at amortised cost and represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Association prior to the end of the financial year that are unpaid and arise when the Association becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of the purchase of these goods and services.

# Notes to the Financial Statements

## FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

### 2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (cont.)

#### (F) EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

##### Wages, Salaries and Annual Leave

Liabilities for wages, salaries and annual leave that are expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date represent present obligations resulting from employees' services provided to reporting date. They are calculated at undiscounted amounts based on remuneration wage and salary rates that the Association expects to pay as at reporting date including related on-costs, such as workers compensation insurance.

##### Long-term service benefits

The Association's net obligation in respect of long-term services benefits, other than pension plans, is the amount of future benefit that employees have earned in return for their service in current and prior periods. The obligation is calculated using current rates including related on-costs.

##### Superannuation

The amount charged to the Income Statement in respect of superannuation represents the contributions made by the Association to superannuation funds.

#### (G) PROVISIONS

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

#### (H) REVENUE

Revenue is recognised to the extent that it is probable that the economic benefits will flow to the Association and the revenue can be reliably measured. The following specific recognition criteria must also be met before revenue is recognised.

##### Interest Income

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

##### Membership Income

Membership income is recognised in the year it is received.

##### Grant Income

Grants from the Government are recognised at their fair value where there is a reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and the Association will comply with all the attached conditions.

Government grants relating to specific projects are deferred and recognised in the income statement over the period necessary to match them with the costs they are intended to compensate.

#### (I) CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS

The preparation of a financial report in conformity with Australian Accounting Standards requires management to make estimates, judgements and assumptions based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the Association. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The accounting policies detailed in note 2 provide details of these estimates, judgements and assumptions.

#### (J) 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.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

#### (K) 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.

Finance leases, which transfer to the Association substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of the leased item, are capitalised at the inception of the lease at the fair value of the leased property or, if lower, at the present value of the minimum lease payments. Lease payments are apportioned between the finance charges and reduction of the lease liability so as to achieve a constant rate of interest on the remaining balance of the liability. Finance charges are recognised as an expense in the profit or loss.

Capitalised lease assets are depreciated over the shorter of the estimated useful life of the asset and the lease term if there is no reasonable certainty that the Association will obtain ownership by the end of the lease term.

Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense in the Income statement on a straight-line basis over the lease term.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2017

Note 3. Cash and Cash Equivalents	2017 \$	2016 \$
CASH ON HAND	1,142	726
CASH AT BANK	679,923	739,146
CASH ON DEPOSIT	482,876	472,401
	<b>1,163,941</b>	<b>1,212,273</b>

## Note 4. Receivables and Prepayments

SUNDRY DEBTORS	4,336	4,978
	<b>4,336</b>	<b>4,978</b>

## Note 5. Fixed Assets

OFFICE EQUIPMENT	65,818	58,258
LESS: ACCUMULATED DEPRECIATION	(60,312)	(55,424)
	<b>5,506</b>	<b>2,834</b>

## Note 6. Income in Advance

COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT	4,028	21,028
COURT SERVICES VICTORIA (DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE)	37,610	14,825
QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	39,236	21,140
VICTORIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	113,423	87,339
VICTORIA LEGAL AID	15,602	131,757
	<b>209,899</b>	<b>276,089</b>

## Note 7. Provisions

### (A) EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS

ANNUAL LEAVE AND OTHER ENTITLEMENTS	106,582	108,553
LONG SERVICE LEAVE	58,142	38,771
	<b>164,724</b>	<b>147,324</b>

### (B) OTHER

CHILDREN'S COURT PROJECT	11,805	11,805
OFFICE MAINTENANCE	801	5,165
STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	8,751	16,377
TECH & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY	25,880	-
VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT BRISBANE SET-UP	-	197
VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT BRISBANE VOLUNTEER SUPPORT	1,000	1,000
VOLUNTEER POLICY HANDBOOK PRODUCTION	6,469	8,848
VOLUNTEER TRAINING	12,800	20,000
	<b>67,506</b>	<b>63,392</b>
	<b>232,230</b>	<b>210,716</b>

## Note 8. Cash Flow Reconciliation

2017 \$	2016 \$
Reconciliation of net cash used in operating activities to operating results	
OPERATING RESULT	25,712
DEPRECIATION	4,888
DECREASE IN RECEIVABLES AND PREPAYMENTS	642
INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN CREDITORS AND ACCRUALS	(27,338)
INCREASE IN PROVISION FOR ENTITLEMENTS	17,400
INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN PROVISION FOR PROJECTS	4,114
INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN UNEARNED INCOME	(66,190)
<b>CASHFLOWS (USED IN)/FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>(40,772)</b>

## Note 9. Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies

COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY GENERAL	17,000	-
COURT SERVICES VICTORIA	1,065,402	850,475
VICTORIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	300,983	312,397
VICTORIA LEGAL AID	116,155	83,720
VICTORIA LEGAL AID SERVICE BOARD	-	87,527
QUEENSLAND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE	683,733	676,852
	<b>2,183,273</b>	<b>2,010,971</b>

## Note 10. Consultants

STRATEGIC REVIEW	5,000	1,500
DHS ACCREDITATION	6,306	4,333
VIC DHHS SUNSHINE PROJECT	11,050	-
OTHER	12,000	-
IT AUDIT	-	10,793
VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT PROGRAMS	-	11,937
UNREPRESENTED LITIGANT PROJECT	-	56,125
	<b>34,356</b>	<b>84,688</b>

## Note 11. Lease Commitments

Operating Lease commitments in relation to the rental of photocopying equipment.

PAYABLE - MINIMUM LEASE PAYMENTS (INCLUSIVE OF GST)		
NOT LATER THAN 12 MONTHS	3,039	3,552
BETWEEN 12 MONTHS AND 5 YEARS	4,559	1,507
	<b>7,598</b>	<b>5,059</b>

# Statement by the Management Committee

COURT NETWORK INC.

## STATEMENT BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Court Network Inc. as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Court Network Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:

  
Don Tibbary (Treasurer)

  
Rudy Monteleone (Secretary)

Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017

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## Court Network Incorporated

### Independent Audit Report to the members of Court Network Inc.

#### Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

#### Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Court Network Inc. (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2017, the income statement, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and certificate by members of the management committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2017 is prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)*.

#### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report is prepared to assist the Association in meeting the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the Association and should not be distributed to or used by parties other than the Association. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

#### Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic)*, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

#### Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

*LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd*

LDB Audit Services Pty Ltd  
 1-3 Albert St  
 BLACKBURN VIC 3130

*Hilton Miller*

Hilton Miller  
 DIRECTOR

Dated this 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 2017

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation



# Statistics

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE ASSISTED AT COURT\*

VICTORIA	2015-16	2016-17
<b>METROPOLITAN</b>		
MAGISTRATES' COURTS (INCLUDES COLLINGWOOD NEIGHBOURHOOD JUSTICE CENTRE)	29,229	39,837
COUNTY COURT	3,186	3,946
SUPREME COURT	1,497	1,559
CORONERS COURT	604	586
CHILDREN'S COURT	3,408	3,316
VCAT	5,556	7,556
<b>REGIONAL</b>		
MAGISTRATES' COURTS (INCLUDING VCAT AND CHILDREN'S COURTS) & HIGHER COURTS (INCLUDING COUNTY, SUPREME AND CORONERS COURTS)	33,651	42,062
<b>OTHER</b>		
FAMILY AND FEDERAL MAGISTRATES' COURTS	1,618	2,703
SUPREME COURT INFORMATION DESK	9,412	13,265
MELBOURNE MAGISTRATES' COURT INFORMATION DESK	28,069	14,957
<b>VICTORIAN TOTAL</b>	<b>116,230</b>	<b>129,787</b>
<b>QUEENSLAND</b>		
<b>METROPOLITAN</b>		
SUPREME & DISTRICT COURT	4,158	3,528
SUPREME & DISTRICT COURT INFORMATION KIOSK	8,952	9,061
BRISBANE MAGISTRATES' COURT	15,669	19,131
BRISBANE QCAT	9,922	7,909
<b>REGIONAL</b>		
TOWNSVILLE SUPREME & DISTRICT COURTS	503	813
TOWNSVILLE MAGISTRATES' COURT	2,586	2,173
CAIRNS SUPREME & DISTRICT COURTS	169	256
CAIRNS MAGISTRATES' COURT	2,974	5,017
CAIRNS INFORMATION KIOSK	-	5,995
VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT	543	392
<b>QUEENSLAND TOTAL</b>	<b>45,476</b>	<b>53,883</b>
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>161,706</b>	<b>183,670</b>

\*Does not include duty calls VIC or info line QLD



## Referral

Our volunteers referred **21,203** court users to other community service organisations including family violence, community legal services, mental health, housing services, and victim and witness support.



# Glossary



## AGM

Annual General Meeting

## ATSI

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

## CALD

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

## COURT NETWORKER

A volunteer of Court Network

## COURT USER

Any person attending court

## CPI

Consumer Price Index

## CSV

Court Services Victoria

## DHHS

Department of Health and Human Services

## DoJ

Department of Justice

## LEGAL AID

A free, state government funded legal service

## LAQ

Legal Aid Queensland

## NETWORKER

A Court Network volunteer

## ODPP

The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

## OPP

Office of Public Prosecutions

## QCAT

Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

## VAQ

Victim Assist Queensland

## VCAT

Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

## VLA

Victoria Legal Aid

## VSU

Victim Support Unit





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 @CourtNetworkInc

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