



Court Network



celebrating 40 years

COURT NETWORK ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20

Acknowledgment to country

Court Network acknowledges the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia, their diversity, histories and knowledge and their continuing connections to land, seas and community. We pay our respects to all Australian Indigenous Peoples and their cultures, and to Elders of past, present and future generations.

Reflections 40 years on...

Reflecting back over our 40 remarkable years it is clear that Court Network has contributed to dramatic changes in the Victorian and Queensland justice landscapes. It couldn't have happened without the outstanding volunteers who are the frontline workers in providing support and information to often traumatized court users.

True to its original core values Court Network has softened and made more understandable the court experience of millions of people. It has made constructive changes in their lives possible.

Before 1980 there was absolutely no structured recognition of the needs of individuals compelled to attend court hearings - be they distressed, disturbed or disadvantaged. I warmly congratulate court networkers, the Board and staff for addressing those needs with wisdom and great compassion over many, many years. I am so very proud of you.

Carmel Benjamin AM



President & Executive Director's Report

Dear colleagues, friends and supporters,

It is our great pleasure to present Court Network's 2019/2020 Annual Report.

This year marks Court Network's 40th anniversary. The organisation has come a long way since 1980, when Carmel Benjamin, Court Network Founder, realised how disadvantaged many court users were and how little understanding they had of the court process. In response she, established Court Network at Prahran Courthouse. Today we operate at 37 courts in Victoria and Queensland, have more than 500 volunteers and help more than 200,000 court users an ordinary year. Carmel's outstanding work was recognised in December 2019 with the Premier's Volunteer of the Year, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award. We are profoundly grateful to Carmel for her vision, unwavering passion, and commitment.

Heading into our 40th anniversary we truly had no idea of what lay ahead. This time last year, we started planning for a year long celebration of our 40th anniversary. And then, 2020 arrived and what a year it turned out to be! Bushfires had a devastating effect on regional and rural communities and shortly after, the whole world was struck by the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented event that has fundamentally changed the way we live and work.

Court Network team – the Board, volunteers and staff – has risen to the COVID-19 challenge in a remarkable way. We made important decisions quickly and suspended our service in March 2020. But we never lost sight of the importance of maintaining services to those needing our support the most. Within days of identifying the need to change how we operated, our entire workforce moved successfully to working from home and embarked on the journey of making rapid innovations and changes to the way we deliver services.

Things that seemed almost impossible a year ago are now our everyday reality.

Our new Telephone Support Service was developed and implemented in less than 8 weeks. We researched, selected and customised the best

contact centre platform, developed resources, created and delivered tools and education for Program Managers and Networkers and run a stakeholder communication campaign by distributing more than 100,000 copies of business cards, postcards and posters. Through the Telephone Support Service, we have been able to establish a truly state-wide service, reaching new court users regardless of barriers due to geography and accessibility. The Telephone Support Service has proved to be highly valuable for court users seeking pre-court support (98% of callers), for those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (34%) and for court users with family violence matters (42%), mostly those without access to legal representation. We are grateful to our Networkers, for adapting rapidly to the new service model and learning new technology skills so that they could continue providing their support.

Our journey to come together as One Court Network has progressed this year with the establishment of the national structure, the Leadership Team and working groups, which ensured consistency, achieved efficiencies, and resulted in a true collaboration of Victorian and Queensland teams.

In 2019, we farewelled our long-standing State Managers Bernadette Burchell and Annette Hogan, who both had made significant contributions to Court Network. We welcomed new State Managers, Maureen Dawson-Smith in Victoria and Arlene Morley in Queensland, Vicki Kyritsis (National Communications Officer) and Julie Jones (National Quality and Operations Officers) who together with Ming Zhou (Finance Manager) and Sarah-Jane Terrill (National Learning and Development Manager), bring a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience to the Leadership Team. The steps we have taken will set Court Network up for continued success in the years to come.

The Learning and Development Program continued achieving all goals identified in the 3-year Action Plan. In addition, our learning offers to trainees and volunteers have been re-imagined

and adapted, including the development of a virtual intake model and new digital learning modules (including modules on family violence) available through a mixture of online resources, live virtual practice development sessions and virtual continuing education sessions. In addition, we negotiated a cost-effective deal with SBS that enables us to roll out their Inclusion Program to all Court Network volunteers and staff.

Another success was the virtual celebration of the National Volunteer Week 2020. We run a successful social media campaign, launched six videos and produced a podcast in partnership with the Greens List Barristers.

As if COVID-19 did not present enough challenges, we continued dealing with funding issues, facing uncertainty for the continuation of two crucial programs.

In Victoria, despite running a major advocacy campaign and receiving a lot of support from stakeholders, court users and the media, we were not able to secure further government funding for the provision of services at Family Court registries in Melbourne and Dandenong. Fortunately, a philanthropic donation of \$130,000 by David Baer, whose mother Patricia played an instrumental role in establishing Court Network, has enabled us to continue these services for another 12 months. We would like to use this opportunity to thank David for his generosity and confidence in our work. We hope that other people with an interest in access to justice will consider contributing to the Court Network in the future.

In May 2019, after years of being funded for our core support program in the Supreme and District Court, QCAT and Magistrates' Courts in Brisbane, we were advised that further, five-year funding was not allocated to Court Network. Instead, Court Network received one year's funding for the 2020-21 period to enable us to seek alternative funding sources.

Courts and tribunals are actively changing the way they operate in response to the COVID-19 pandemic – from closing in-person services at Registries, to requiring people to file documents

online or via email, conducting hearings by telephone or video conferencing and postponing hearings that are considered 'non-urgent. Under the best circumstances, attending court for the first time, being unrepresented or being unfamiliar with court rules and processes has a negative impact on court users. They feel anxious, disempowered, and frustrated, and are not able to participate effectively in the court processes. Now is the time, when more than ever, vulnerable court users need someone to listen, to stand beside, to provide support, and to assist them in navigating the court system. If governments and courts are truly committed to the human-centred design approach to access to justice, and to providing court users with an in-person experience, then this is not the time to defund organisations such as Court Network. We are grateful that the Victorian Government continues to recognise our importance by providing us with the funding for our operations. Court Network will continue to approach the Federal Attorney General and the Queensland Government to secure further funding for defunded programs.

It has been a year like no other for us, but, as a team, we made a choice - to be bold, brave and resilient, to work together and to work hard, to be innovative, resourceful and responsive, to be kind and compassionate, to look out for each other. The results have been rewarding and inspiring.

We would like thank our wonderful volunteers, staff, Board members, funders, donors, partners and supporters for your great passion and commitment to Court Network and for the hard work, support, care and kindness demonstrated during difficult times of change. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

**Warm regards
Marcia & Maya**



Who we are

Court Network was established in 1980 in Victoria and over the past 40 years the service has grown significantly with Court Network volunteers (known as 'Networkers') available in 28 major metropolitan and regional courts and tribunals in Victoria and in a number of Queensland courts. Our recently established Telephone Support Service is available to all court users in Victoria and Queensland statewide.

Court Network is a frontline community organisation that enables court users to better understand and navigate the court system. The focus of our mission is to attend to the needs of people at court by providing non-legal support, information and referrals. Court Network empowers and increases the confidence of court users to manage the requirements of the courts.

Court Network operates across all jurisdictions. Our free, non-legal court support service is delivered by 500+ Networkers who are trained to provide support, information and referral services on an impartial and non-judgemental basis to all persons, including applicants, respondents, victims, witnesses, defendants, and their families and friends who attend court with them.

Court Network service provides an important contribution towards court users accessing justice, particularly for more vulnerable and disadvantaged court users.

Court users may be attending court for the first time, be unrepresented, be unfamiliar with court rules and processes, lack knowledge about what is expected of them, feel unsafe, not being able to understand and participate effectively in the court processes, and be in need of someone to listen, provide support, and to assist them in navigating the court system.

Court Network services also provide direct benefit to the administration of justice by reducing the demands on other services inside and outside the courtroom, thus bringing economies to the courts' operations.

Our role is complementary to that provided by legal and other services within the courts and tribunals.

Our mission

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

Our vision

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

1 July 2019 to 18 March 2020



Networkers supported

132,359

court users between the period of 1 July 2019 through to 18 March 2020 when services across courts in Victorian and Queensland were suspended due to COVID-19.



Supported by a total of
489
Networkers face to face



Volunteered a total of
150,000
hours



This time is worth over
\$7,300,000

IN QUEENSLAND
WE ASSISTED A TOTAL OF
56,026
COURT USERS

IN VICTORIA
WE ASSISTED A TOTAL OF
76,333
COURT USERS

BY
163 Networkers

BY
326 Networkers

COVID-19 Quarter: 18 March to 30 June 2020

Establishment of the new Telephone Support Service



With the suspension of face to face services across the courts in Victoria and Queensland Court Network reimagined a new service model. Within eight weeks we:

Identified the most suitable contact centre platform

Trained the networkers to use the new contact centre platform

Customised Optus Loop

Developed the documentation to support the new service model

Engaged more than **70 Networkers** to support the telephone service



We responded with an extensive communications campaign promoting the new Court Network Telephone Support Service — reaching media, stakeholders and federal and state politicians via the distribution of:

1600 posters, 26,000 postcards and 130,000 business cards

A Parliamentary newsletter to 178 MPs across Federal and State Parliaments in Victoria

A Parliamentary newsletter to 134 MPs across Federal and State Parliaments in Queensland

Resulting in the support of **72 court users** once service was launched on 27 May

Priority One Service

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

“

Court Network is the oil
that runs the machine.”

(Brisbane Magistrate)

National

Development of Court Network Telephone Support Service 1800 571 239

The COVID-19 suspension of face to face court services challenged Court Network to find an alternative way to support individuals with court matters.

The Court Network Telephone Support provides confidential support, information and referral for court users during business hours Monday to Friday. This includes both general enquires as well as requests for assistance about specific court processes. The service is provided exclusively by volunteers.

While the initial intention was for the Telephone Support Service to replace the face to face in-court model during the COVID-19 restrictions, early successes indicate that the telephone support will be an added level of service to complement in court services on an ongoing basis.

Telephone Support volunteers can assist all court users statewide, in Victoria and Queensland. They:

- Provide support and information about what happens before, during or after court

- Explain how the courts and legal systems operate
- Inform court users about how to best contact various courts and tribunals
- Assist court users to get the help you need to address your safety issues
- Help to arrange access to a secure room if required
- Provide court users with up to date information on new arrangements for court since the COVID-19
- Provide court users with referrals to legal services in their area
- Refer court users to services to assist them to fill out and submit orders and paperwork
- Talk to court users on their day of court either before or after their matter has been heard
- Help court users to understand the next steps that they might have to take
- Refer court users to an appropriate service that could assist them with issues such as housing, domestic violence and mental health.

“

I have been so impressed with the professional development that we have been able to access during these lockdowns. It helped to make me feel really engaged with other Networkers and Program Managers. It also made me feel valued as a volunteer in that the Court Network was willing to invest all this training in me. Zoom sessions led by Program Managers helped me learn more about supporting court users around family violence matters. On a really personal level, the telephone service, the training and the virtual sessions kept me feeling like I was still contributing to the wellbeing of court users during these difficult times of COVID-19.”
(Court Networker)



Case Study

The caller to the telephone support service was a woman seeking information about what would happen when she attended the Magistrates’ Court for an Intervention Order hearing.

The call lasted about 40 minutes. The caller talked about the sustained physical, emotional and psychological abuse she had received from her husband over many years, including that he had threatened to kill her and had approached her with a knife on one occasion. She described him as controlling and that she was severely restricted by him in what she was allowed to do. She had gone to the police a few days earlier and the police had taken out a Safety Notice and her husband had moved out of the house at the Police’s direction. The caller said she felt safe at home but noted that she would call the Police if she felt unsafe or threatened by her husband at any time.

The caller was concerned that her husband would challenge the Intervention Order and that he would return to the marital home. Her wish was that an order be granted for 12 months and that her husband not be allowed to return.

Court Network was able to support and reassure the caller and provide a range of information including details of how Intervention Order matters are dealt with at court, specifically the role of the Police in her matter.

Further information was provided to her about talking to the Family Violence Registrar on arrival at court and that she could request to sit in a separate area and also be physically distanced from her husband during the hearing. Information was also provided on the processes should a matter be contested and the likely result that her interim order would be extended until a later court date would hear the matter in full.

Information was also provided to her about where she could seek legal assistance and details on InTouch, multicultural support service, was also provided as she was of Indian heritage and she talked about a number of cultural issues impacting on her situation.

The caller said she appreciated the support and information provided and felt better informed and prepared for her court attendance.

“

I miss the personal contact with Court Network staff, board, fellow court Networkers and the other stakeholders in the courts in which I worked, and the face to face contact with court users. However the phone service has made me aware that there are alternative and positive ways that Networkers can work with court users during these very different times.” (Court Network volunteer)

Victoria

Cultural Support Pilot Project at the Melbourne Children's Court

The vision for this innovative project was to empower Sudanese and South Sudanese Australian court users and their friends and families attending the Melbourne Children's Court to better participate in the court processes and reduce the likelihood of reoffending through the creation of strong social supports.

The over representation of Sudanese and South Sudanese youth in crime statistics suggested a need for culturally relevant and sensitive responses that take into consideration the challenges experienced by this community in order to address offending. In partnership with the Children's Court of Victoria and the Sudanese and South Sudanese communities, we created new Cultural Guide roles to partner with existing networkers in the Children's Court aiming to improve the Sudanese and South Sudanese court users' understanding of court processes, and their level of participation in those court processes.

So far, the project has achieved significant aims and benefits:

- Meaningful networks and connections have been developed between the Sudanese and South Sudanese Australian communities, Court Network and the Children's Court.
- We increased awareness of, and participation in, volunteering with Court Network in the Sudanese and South Sudanese Australian Communities.

- We increased the knowledge and capacity of Court Network volunteers and CCV staff to provide information, support and referral services for Sudanese and South Sudanese Australian families at Court.
- During the project, we conducted a number of capacity building and reflection sessions. Cultural Guides shared stories about behaviors and community beliefs, but they also took messages back to the community about how the law works and why it is important to engage with government agencies and departments.
- Help court users to understand the next steps that they might have to take
- Refer court users to an appropriate service that could assist them with issues such as housing, domestic violence and mental health.

“

This project has built a bridge to our community and we have built networks with other people in the court as we have observed that the outcomes are better when the children attend court with family support.”

Cultural Guide, Rose

12

community members were trained as Cultural Guides

487

Sudanese and South Sudanese court users engaged directly with the Cultural Guides over a four-month period

3

of the original 12 trained guides have gone on to employment,

Case Study

Two South Sudanese parents were sitting in the waiting area on the criminal side of the Court. They looked anxious, and at first appeared disinclined to converse. When approached by Court Network Cultural South Sudanese Guide, they opened up and said that they were waiting to see their 16-year-old daughter whose matter was listed for that day, but they did not know what was it about. When the daughter arrived with a friend, she refused to engage with her parents. The father made a bid to speak to her, but she was not interested.

During the morning, Court Network made several attempts to support the parents. The Networker and Cultural Guide checked that the matter is to be heard, and they checked that the young person would have a lawyer because the father was very anxious about this. They also provided parents with more information about court processes. The Networker and Cultural Guide also made themselves available by waiting in the same area while the young person talks to her lawyer.

The Networker and the Cultural Guide made contact with Youth Justice and with the approval of the lawyer, they asked if the parents could have some information about diversion. A Diversion Officer engaged with parents and this was of great relief to them.

Throughout this entire interaction, the Cultural Guide assisted the parents by 'walking beside' them. While the privacy of the young person was respected, the Cultural Guide was able to check on the process for the day, supported the parents, facilitated the introductions and organized for more information to be provided.

A stressful day in the court was made manageable by the quiet assurance offered by the Cultural Guide and the willingness of Youth Justice and a lawyer to view the matter holistically.

“

We would have never been able to reach this family and have such a positive outcome, if it weren't for having the Cultural Guides at the Court.”

Networker



Victoria

Enhanced Family Violence Support Model

Court Network is committed to the vision of a society free from family violence. Since the inception of Court Network, Networkers have supported both applicants and respondents with family violence court matters, most of whom had not engaged in any previous discussions with other agencies.

In January 2016 Department of Health and Human Services funded Court Network's Enhanced Family Violence Support Model as a pilot in the Sunshine Magistrate's court. Based on the successful evaluation of the Sunshine Magistrate's Court pilot, the Specialist Family Violence Branch of the Magistrate's Court Victoria (MCV) funded Court Network to implement this model across their newly announced five Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVCs).

In 2019/2020 Court Networkers supported 32,470 court users addressing family violence matters in the Courts. This year's highlights also include Court Network's participation in cross sectoral service development initiatives, and the creation and alignment of Networker practice to support broader court stakeholder collaborative frameworks.

In 2019/2020 Court Network supported the Magistrates Court Victoria, Family Violence Branch as a member of various working groups including MCV The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) project control group and project working group, SFVC Stakeholder Group, SFVC Advisory Panel, SFVC court user digital information working group and four working groups responsible for the development of a collaborative practice model in each of the Ballarat, Shepparton, Moorabbin and Frankston SFVCs.

2019/2020 was a key milestone for the rollout of the specialist Family Violence Courts, with three courts becoming fully operational (Shepparton, Ballarat and Moorabbin and with Frankston and Heidelberg courts being delayed due to the COVID-19 period). To support the opening of these courts, Court Network provided specialist Family Violence training of four modules to 70 Networkers. A further 60 trainees also received this enhanced training as part of their intake process.

Court Network has also responded to the challenge of meeting different requirements identified in each court's inter-agency collaborative model. This includes providing information desks, court information and navigation services, accompanying court users to safe areas, providing a welcoming space in safe areas, supporting court users in remote witness settings, supporting individuals fill out IVO applications, staying with vulnerable individuals who are alone and unrepresented, helping court users to access the duty lawyer before their matter is heard, introductions to workers, attending daily planning meetings, undertaking MARAM screening

conversations and assertive outreach to identify any risk or safety issues.

As a MARAM prescribed entity, Court Network also undertook an audit of the MARAM capability checklist to ensure these capabilities were included in Court Network's learning design and reviewed central intake and duty procedures to ensure MARAM compliance.

In 2019 our Learning and Development Manager also became a member of the project working group responsible for the design and the roll out of MARAM training for all court officers. This improved collaboration has resulted with greater sharing of training resources and improved training alignment.

Case Study

A Registrar staff member asked a Court Networker to provide support to an anxious woman from Thailand in court responding to Police initiated FV proceedings.

The Networker took her to a quiet room and after a time she identified her immediate concerns. The Networker ensured that the woman spoke to a lawyer without seeing her husband, advocated for access to an interpreter in Court which was made possible by the end of the day and undertook a warm referral to a specialist family violence service resulting in her immediately being relocated to a refuge.

Throughout the Court day another Court Networker supported the perpetrator through the court process with a view to supporting the safety of all.



Queensland

Domestic and Family Violence Information Desk

This year Court Network Queensland was successful in the expression of interest to further develop our domestic and family violence volunteering in the Brisbane and regions courts. This included establishing and further developing Domestic and Family Violence Court Reception Desks at Beenleigh, Ipswich, Southport and Brisbane.

These desks are staffed by teams of volunteers on each day and coordinated by paid staff. Recruitment, training and working guides were developed with volunteering commencing in the Beenleigh, Ipswich and Southport courts in November 2019.

The Brisbane DFV Court Reception Desk has been operating since 2009 and now has become part of a larger team. We currently have 30 volunteers working across the four courts.

Our key work includes administrative tasks, checking courts users in for their attendance; and discussing services available to ensure both aggrieved and respondents are aware of the duty lawyer service and domestic and family violence prevention and support workers.

The volunteers also play a role in communicating court readiness and advocating for court users. In addition, we work with court staff, support workers and protective services staff to identify safety and health related concerns during our shifts.

Court Network staff attend the Operational Working Groups to ensure effective and save operations at the courts and assist with stakeholder collaboration.

- Our teams have been working with the Coordinators Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Courts in Ipswich and Southport to streamline the court check-in and court user readiness by using a live list on tablets. Beenleigh and Brisbane will be next.
- Collection of DFV Court Reception Desk statistics has also commenced on tablets.



Victim Support Unit

The Victim Support Unit (VSU) started the year as per usual and provided our clients with court support, assistance to complete victim impact statements, financial assistance applications and made many referrals to external services such as counselling and domestic violence.

The VSU welcomed eight new graduates into their Ipswich team throughout July and August 2019 and we expanded our service to Townsville in October 2019. The Networkers in Townsville completed a one-day training session that focused primarily on witness and victim support.

The Townsville team will now assist VSU clients with court support and pre court tours while the Brisbane

and Ipswich teams complete their financial assistance applications and victim impacts statements. Due to COVID-19, the VSU offices in Brisbane and Ipswich closed and we commenced working at home from March 2020. We were fortunate during this time to have five VSU Networkers available and able to continue their client support from home by using a VSU laptop and mobile phone.

Even during COVID-19, our five Networkers supported close to 200 clients from March to June via telephone and email to complete their victim impact statements and financial assistance applications, making referrals, and providing emotional support during a very difficult time.

An amazing effort by the team as it certainly has been an unusual and challenging year.



Priority Two Volunteer Workforce

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Often the only glimmer of compassion, kindness and hope for those traumatised comes from volunteers. Total strangers who care enough to share kind words, give support and reassurance that there is light at the end of the tunnel. Otherwise the court process can continue trauma in a different way as victim survivors navigate a system that is fragmented, transaction driven and often devoid of humanity.”

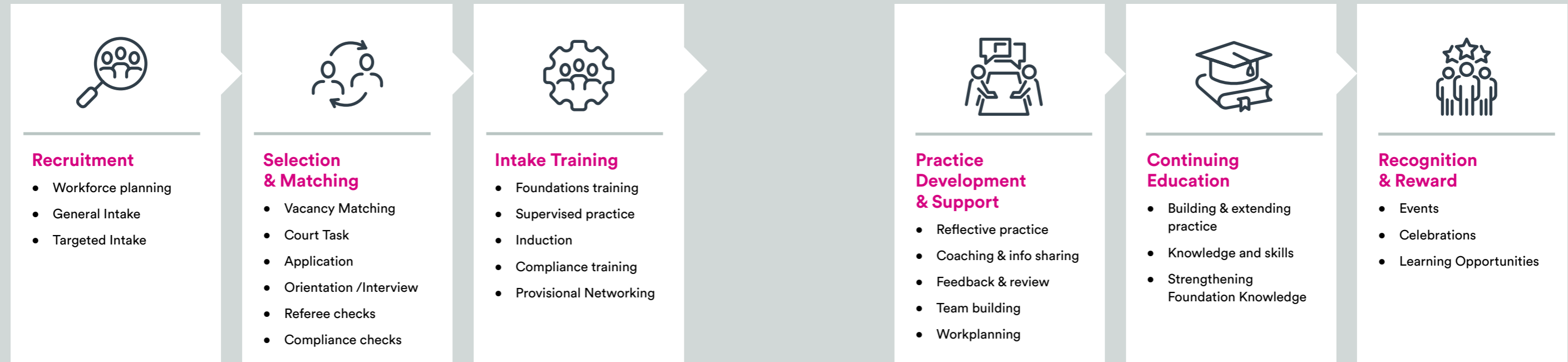
(Family Court Stakeholder)

Networker Learning and Development Lifecycle

Court Network’s learning and development journey spans the duration of the networker role.

At the heart of this learning and development process is practice guidance and support. This key element of Networker development facilitates the interpretation of contemporary practice knowledge into enhanced practice.

This learning and development lifecycle equip Networkers with knowledge and skills over time to provide effective proactive outreach to court user, as well as strengthen relationships and ways of working with courts, legal and community services.



Networker Intake Training Overview

Court Network's Intake Training Program comprises of a range of learning and development experiences and opportunities. The Virtual program commenced in May 2020. Participants must successfully complete all elements of this mixed-mode program.

Facilitated Online Training Sessions (8 hours)

- Introductions and Foundations
- Myths and Stereotypes (x 2 sessions)
- Legal and ethical practice

Introduction to Domestic and Family Violence

- Reflective Practice Tasks (6 hours)
- Forces and Factors
- Black Side Story
- Behaviours that include and exclude

Self-paced eLearning Modules (12 hours)

- Introduction to Court Network
- Self Care
- Unconscious Bias
- Compliance
- Family Violence - a Shared Understanding
- Court Induction

Supervised Practice - on the job experiential learning (5 days)

- Court Observations
- Court Induction

Facilitated Micro-Skill Practice Development (8 hours)

- Building Rapport
- Outreach - In court services, supports, processes and procedures
- Outreach: Support, Information, Referral
- Outreach: Hard to Reach Court Users
- Stories from the Field: Family Violence Support

Reflective Practice (10 hour)

- Weekly development reflections and insights

Networker Continuous Education

The learning journey of the volunteer extends well beyond initial the Intake Training Program. All volunteers participate in prescribed and elective continued education.

Family Violence Curriculum Training eLearning Modules

- Family Violence a shared understanding
- Victorian Family Violence Reform
- Family Violence and the Legal System
- Family Violence Stories from the Field
- Family Violence Risk Identification and Response
- Family Violence- Supporting Court users who use family violence

Family Violence Curriculum Practice Sessions

- Stories from the Field Practice Insights
- Family Violence Support Practice Insights
- Legal and ethical practice
- Introduction to Domestic and Family Violence

Guided Practice Development

- Facilitated Monthly Sessions (90 mins)
- Bi-Annual Team Meetings
- 1:1 Coaching

Practice Enhancement Training

- Annual Calendar of community organisation, stakeholder and specialist service provider presentations (2-3 hour sessions x 10 per year)

Lunch and Learn Training

- Support, Information & Referral Practice awareness raising (1 hour x 10 per year)

SBS Inclusion Modules (Session relevant digital forms-3 hours)

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Course
- Age Course
- Core Inclusion Course
- Culture Course
- Disability Course
- Gender Course
- LGBTIQ+ Course



My journey with Court Network

Q&A with our former Court Networker now trainee lawyer, Hayden Walker

Tell us about yourself

My name is Hayden Walker. I have been a Court Networker for almost two years. In October 2020, I graduated from Deakin University with a Bachelor of Laws (Honours).

What motivated you to volunteer with Court Network?

I wanted to experience first hand how the justice system operates and how all court users and administration within it interact.

Can you describe your Court Networking journey?

My journey began with a group interview which gave me a very good indication as to how professional Court Networking operates. Upon being successful at the interview stage I undertook further training (practical and theory both of which were brilliant) eventually I was presented with my certificate of completion which I framed and hangs with pride next to my Law Degree.

What did you learn during your time at Court Network? From court users?

I learnt so much. I learnt that personal interaction and cooperation is so important within the court environment.

I learnt that no two court users are the same and as such you have to adapt your approach, and information, to each court user accordingly.

Some of the biggest lessons I learnt were some of the basic rules including bowing before entering a court, to never entering while a witness was being sworn in.

Even the energy within the courtroom itself after a ruling was telling and taught me that human emotion

was so prevalent within the courts. Such energy could range from happiness to pure stone silence, again this could only be fully appreciated first hand which Court Networking enabled me to experience.

Approaching court users while they were waiting for their case to be called was also a learning experience. Cold canvassing people, especially within a stressful court environment was both demanding and rewarding. Demanding because not every court user welcomed even the approach of explaining who I was, what my role involved and if they need any assistance. However it could be also be very rewarding as helping other users from initial contact, sitting with them while their matter was being heard and then being told outside the courtroom after it was over "thank you so much for helping me" was a great feeling.

Being able to not get personally involved with a court users case was also an important part of being a Court Networker. Although we are there to help court users, there also was a line to which we had to adhere to so as to not compromise our professionalism. Encouragement to talk about experiences that were unpleasant to internal and external support networks was another fantastic initiative of Court Networking.

I learnt so much from other Court Networkers, especially those that have been in the role for years. Their knowledge was invaluable and passing on to me what they themselves have experienced was priceless for my own development which I will always carry with me moving forward.

Has volunteering helped you achieve some of your personal and or professional goals?

Court Networking has helped immensely in helping me achieve my personal and professional goals.

Court networking taught me invaluable skills about how to interact with court users, how to tailor

specific referrals to each individual client, how to interact with lawyers, magistrates, police, court security and court staff.

Professional it was absolutely invaluable for my own personal development. It also has made the transition from being a law student to successfully applying for a position within the graduate law program at Victoria Legal Aid much easier going forward from a court perspective. I definitely am not going into this new role completely unaware as to how a court operates, which is something I will always be grateful that Court Networking has taught me.

Other insights?

Court Networking is a wonderful organisation and I feel very privileged to have been a part of it. The ongoing training was outstanding and gave me insight to the current issues facing the court system within Victoria.

Court Networkers are very respected by judges, magistrates, lawyers and barristers. Court Networkers are important and help ensure that the court system runs to the best of its ability.

Moving forward I definitely will use the expertise and help that Court Networkers provide. I cannot thank Court Networking enough for the opportunity that was given to me as it was absolutely brilliant and is such a great organization to be a part of.

I urge anyone interested in helping those that may be experiencing the worst day of their lives to become a Court Networker. To help someone overcome their fear of the court system itself, for those people to genuinely thank you for everything you did to help them after it is over is such an amazing feeling.

I sincerely thank all those at Court Networking for such an amazing opportunity you are all decent human beings that are part of an invaluable and worthy organisation that I will never ever forget.



“Court networking taught me invaluable skills about how to interact with court users...”

Hayden Walker

Barbara Rozenes OAM

Volunteer and Ambassador



A big part of being a networker is being compassionate and having the ability to assist anyone during their time in Court, particularly, when they are reliving their trauma. It is a privilege to be trusted.

Over the last decade Queensland Courts have also embraced our service. We believe all Australians should have the right to support, information and referral in a non-judgmental way by well trained volunteers, during their time in Court. Launching this service in Queensland was a personal highlight during my time on the Board.

I want to acknowledge all at Court Network whether volunteers or staff who have played a role in the organisation over the past 40 years.

It is an honour to be the organisation's Ambassador.

Court Network has earned a unique place in the Victorian justice system.

The organisation was founded to provide the community with volunteers who stand beside, empower and instil confidence in all court users, particularly the most vulnerable.

Over the past 40 years, thousands of volunteers have made a significant difference to the Court experience of all user groups (including defendants, victims, witnesses and their families as well as barristers, professionals and the media) at a time when they are at their most anxious and stressed.

As I reflect on the past 28 years as a Networker, I remember finishing my training having just scraped through as 'suitable'. Little did I realise, that I would become a competent and confident networker who would learn to navigate the many challenges as a board member, organisation president, public speaker and fundraiser.

I feel privileged to have grown with the organisation and realise the best part of my role at this organisation has been at the coal face, assisting the court user.

“

A big part of being a networker is being compassionate and having the ability to assist anyone during their time in Court, particularly, when they are reliving their trauma.”

Barbara Rozenes

An extraordinary donation

provides a 12 month lifeline

Court Network is enormously grateful to David Baer and his family for their extraordinarily generous donation of \$130,000. Their gift has given us a 12 month lifeline to continue services at Family Law Courts in Melbourne and Dandenong and the time to secure ongoing funding.

The decision to step in with the donation, was to honour the memory and work of the late Pat Baer, David's mother and Court Network's first President. Pat Baer was very concerned about the issues of domestic violence and sexual abuse.

She was committed to supporting people who were distressed, anxious and often in very desperate situations. She worked alongside Carmel Benjamin 40 years ago to establish the service that has evolved and exists today.

This wonderful contribution enables our Networkers to continue providing vital support to individuals in the Family Law Courts by keeping the atmosphere calm and preventing bad things from happening when coming out of court.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge the two anonymous donors who were inspired by the Baer Family and donated \$10,000 each.

Thank you for helping us for the next financial year.



“

Thank you to Mr David Baer for a \$130,000 donation to Court Network, which allows their vital work to continue for another 12 months after state and federal governments have refused to provide this funding.” Chawla Family

“Thank you to Mr David Baer for a \$130,000 donation to Court Network, which allows their vital work to continue for another 12 months after state and federal governments have refused to provide this funding. Court Network is one of those things that people don't often think about. But they are all volunteers and they do such important work to support court users that often goes unrecognised. I remember when my family was in the Supreme Court after my sister was murdered. One of the volunteers made us cups of tea and just sat with us. It was a small gesture, but provided such comfort during one of the lowest moments of our life. Court Network volunteers are proof that it's always the little things that count. I'm glad they can continue and hope that governments put their money where their mouth is and support victims by providing ongoing funding.”

Chawla Family

National Volunteer Week

18-24 May 'Changing Communities, Changing Lives'

A special message from the Governor of Victoria, the Hon Linda Dessau AC



"Congratulations to Court Network on your 40th anniversary! You have survived, thrived and evolved for over the four decades. Thank you for everything you do I know how much you are appreciated". Watch the Governor's full message [here](#).

Social media message from our Queensland Court Network Staff



Court Network's Queensland staff thanked volunteers for their dedication and hard work during the National Volunteer Week celebrations which had to be held online due to the COVID-19 lockdown period. You can see the thank you [here](#).

'The Networking Song' by our Networker Robyn Ivers



Queensland Networker Robyn Ivers revisits the lyrics of 'When I'm 64' by John Lennon and Paul McCartney in her adaptation of Networking in the age of COVID-19. You can see her in action [here](#).

William & Lonsdale - Lives in the Law Podcast interview with Networker Joan Murphy



Joan Murphy was a guest on Green List Barristers' William & Lonsdale podcast during National Volunteer Week. Joan shares her Court Network journey beginning in her childhood when she was in the courts, to working with Melbourne's iconic criminal defence lawyer Ray Dunn and then her 25 years of volunteering. Watch the podcast [here](#).

Celebrating our Networkers

Social media highlights from our Thank You Campaign 2020

“Volunteers Are awesome. Thank you for the wonderful work you do within the Moorabbin Justice Centre. I know that the staff and public appreciate the care and support you provide, it makes such a positive difference to their court experience. Volunteers are unsung heroes and I would like to say Thank you, you are important and very much appreciated.”
Vanessa Roberston, Forensicare

“Court Network volunteers were very supportive, helped with organising to view court room prior to day which was good for me. Support was given every step of the way, from impact statement to every moment of trial days. I was grateful for all their time and effort.”
Court user, Victim Support Unit, Queensland

“These people do magnificent work. The dedication in de-mystifying the arcane working and terminology of the court today made my day much easier. I am a journalism student and the time all the volunteers took to assist me really left an impression.”
Court User, Brisbane Magistrate Court

“Without the volunteers here, who have been so kind and generous with the unstinting help and support, the people affected by family violence and those choosing to use it, in my opinion, would be at a great loss at being kept safe, and supported in keeping others safe.”
Mahesh Bhandary, Respondent Practitioner, Dandenong Magistrate's Court

“In National Volunteer Week, the week where we celebrate and acknowledge the contribution of volunteers, I want to thank you for your hard work, dedication and service you provide the Moorabbin Court and its clients. It's heartening and reassuring to know that we have a ready, able and willing service that can assist our court users and in doing so the court itself whenever required. Your contribution is and always has been, terrific and highly regarded. Thanks for bringing you're a game consistently to the Court.”
David Christie, Managing Registrar, Moorabbin Court

“I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Court Network volunteers and workers for the wonderful treatment and support I received from you at my recent attendance at the Magistrates Court. I went there feeling very frightened and scared of seeing my ex-husband, but your support made me feel safe and really supported. You helped me with constant words of support; kept me up to date with what was happening in the Courtroom and controlled the situation for me with your safe rooms, so that I did not have to engage with my ex-husband. Your service was excellent; your volunteers linked me to other services that could help me, and I would thoroughly recommend your service to other people.”
Court User, Melbourne Magistrates' Court

Priority Three Partnerships

Build strong relationships to expand our reach and influence.

“

I have gone through tremendous amount of grief and hardship through different court matters in the last two years. With no personal support, I honestly would not have survived without these beautiful volunteers. Someone to talk me through it, sit with me, calm me has no monetary value. Supporting the mental wellbeing of a person changes a life. Thank you!” (Court User)

Partnerships

SBS Inclusion Program

In the last financial year, we partnered with SBS and negotiated a cost-effective deal that enables us to roll out the SBS Inclusion Program to 500 Court Network volunteers and staff.

The SBS Inclusion Program is Australia's leading online inclusion training course helping organisations embrace diversity.

The Inclusion Program is designed specifically to give our staff and volunteers core skills and knowledge around inclusion in general, and also specifically around different diversity dimensions:

1. *The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence Course* is designed to assist people in understanding the importance and advantages of Australian Indigenous cultural diversity. It includes themes such as the importance of family and kinship, the impacts of colonisation and the Stolen Generation.
2. *The Gender Equality Course* includes themes of everyday sexism, sexual harassment, the gender pay gap and women in leadership.
3. *The Disability Course* focuses on raising awareness of the many aspects of disability and the barriers to being inclusive in the workplace.
4. *The LGBTIQ course* focuses on barriers to inclusion for people from the LGBTIQ community, the impact of language and the importance of allies and role models.
5. *The Age Course* examines the assumptions made about older people, age discrimination the barriers to employment.
6. The Cultural Diversity Course builds capability around cultural differences and similarities and cross-cultural communications.

Sisters Day Out

Sisters Day Out is Djirra's (Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation) long standing wellbeing workshop, where Aboriginal women come together to support each other, enjoy a day out, address family violence in a culturally safe space and engage with support services available.

Since 2007, almost 12,000 Aboriginal women have had the opportunity to attend Sisters Day Out workshops delivered by Djirra across Victoria.

Court Network participated in the Sisters Day Out event that was held in Ballnaring in February and engaged with Aboriginal communities to promote Court Network services.

Partnership with Victoria Police regarding referrals for clients

The Victoria Police eReferral system (VPeR) is Victoria Police's internal electronic referral system for consent based non-crisis and non-family violence referrals.

As a partner agency, Court Network contacts referred persons and organise further support in court by volunteers as required. In addition, Court Network is a member of a VPeR governance group which meets biannually to provide advice and guidance in the management of the VPeR system, its ongoing enhancements, service delivery, evaluation and data collection.

In June 2020, the current arrangement between Victoria Police and Court Network was extended for another two years.

Collaboration with Magistrates' Court Victoria

The Magistrates' Court of Victoria (MCV), the Children's Court of Victoria (CCV), and the Court Network, established a shared project to align court operations to the The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM). The MARAM Project Control Group provide robust leadership to ensure both jurisdictions embed the Framework and to ensure the project meets its objectives. The project's implementation roadmap outlines a three-year plan to align the courts to the MARAM framework. In addition, the project group has mapped responsibilities for initial family violence identification and screening, and risk assessment and management. Court Network also participates in the MARAM Working Group, contributing to the development of training modules.

In addition, Court Network representatives are members of the Specialist Family Violence Project Advisory Panel, MCV Family Violence Integrated Response Stakeholder Briefing and the Bendigo Court Development Working Group.

Partnership with Green List Barristers

Produced by Greens List, one of the leading barristers' lists at the Victorian Bar, *William & Lonsdale – Lives in the Law* is a podcast series about the legal ecosystem in Victoria and the fascinating people who make it tick.

In May 2020, Court Network partnered with the William & Lonsdale podcast to produce an episode featuring the story of one of Networkers.

The podcast featuring Joan Murphy, who has volunteered for Court Network at Frankston Magistrates Court for over 25 years, was released during the Law Week and the National Volunteer Week.

“Court Network Volunteers are people who care, they care about human beings, they care about court users, they help them get through their traumatic days in courts. We are there to give them the best help that they can get. We are humanising what's going on for them in courts.” (Joan Murphy, Networker)

Corporate Partnerships

We would like to acknowledge the ongoing and generous support of our corporate partners MinterEllison and law firms and express our thanks to Robert Reed, Special Counsel at MinterEllison and Jo Renkin, Pro Bono Partner at Lander & Rogers for their continued support of Court Network.

In August 2019, MinterEllison hosted our inaugural Brisbane Forum which was an overwhelmingly successful event. Guest speakers Magistrate Maxine Baldwin, Mr Terry O'Gorman AM and Ms Debbie Kilroy, OAM, delivered presentations addressing the question “Is there Justice in the Legal System?” and participated in a panel discussion. The event was attended by more than 80 Networkers and staff members. Without MinterEllison's generosity and very capable support services we would not have been able to run this event.

In December 2019, MinterEllison hosted a magnificent Christmas party for our Brisbane volunteers who felt very special as they enjoyed a spectacular meal in the MinterEllison beautiful Brisbane function room.

“What a wonderful luncheon we Networkers shared last Friday at Waterfront Place. It was just a perfect ending for those attending to enjoy the company, friendship and conversation with each other at the end of the year. I greatly appreciate the generosity of MinterEllison staff, and the gracious and attentive service. It really was a highlight for me.” (Networker)

Priority Four Organisational Capability

Secure the organisational base needed to achieve our Mission.

“

“Amazing service! So compassionate and caring. Thank you again so much for everything. I have had a previous bad experience at court and was very nervous and upset about returning. But I spent a day in Court Network room and am enormously grateful for the support and information I received about the court process.” (Court User)

Our plan to be great – not just survive!

The current COVID-19 global health crisis, and the ensuing uncertainty that it brought, has allowed Court Network to reflect and consider the bigger picture in terms of its existing operations, its level of adaptability and its potential sustainability for the long term.

Much of the root of this reflection leads back to the safety and quality processes and practise that Court Network adopts. It was timely to focus on these areas during lockdown as it coincided with the appointment of a dedicated National Quality and Operations Officer.

In doing so, we organically moved through several stages:

- Emergency response to COVID-19
- Agile Management
- Foundation strength
- Looking to the future

Emergency Response to COVID-19

In this stage the focus on keeping employees and volunteers safe meant that we had to suspend face to face services and working in the office. For employees, in particular, working from home was alien; therefore, we had to provide structure, support and formal processes to ensure that wellbeing, connectedness and productively remained.

We developed Working from Home procedures, we provided 'learn as you go' technology opportunities, we even scheduled in coffee mornings. From there a program of works developed to review and improve operations processes and structures, all the while

monitoring the evolving situation and ensuring we complied with changing government and department of health directives and requirements.

Agile Management

When we realised that we had no end date to this pandemic, we put our focus in adapting our services to the new environment. Our Telephone Service was born in less than eight weeks (Go Live 27th May 2020). We ensured that we researched the best platform and we developed resources tools and education for Program Managers and Networkers.

Data collection to understand what worked and the impact of the service was also another essential component. This service has also moved our focus to supporting court users, not just on the day of court, but also before and after their court date. This service is still evolving and expanding and, whilst its initial intention was to respond to service need during COVID-19, it is anticipated that it will become a strong program element to complement the face to face service in the long-term.

Providing services in two separate states meant that we have adopted a dual approach to return to service. Queensland has slowly begun to return to service, whilst at the time of writing Victoria is still in lockdown. A COVID-19 Safe Plan has been developed and implemented to ensure a safe and appropriate return. It covers aspects of precautionary measures (e.g. Physical distancing, PPE, cleaning and a change in some areas of service delivery) as well as how we will respond if we are unfortunate to have a positive COVID-19 case occur in the workplace. In addition,

each court location is risk assessed and individualised measures implemented as necessary. A COVID-19 Risk Register considers, anticipates and addresses any safety issues that arise, and volunteer daily checklists ensure safety measures are consistently applied.

Foundational Strength

A review of our safety and quality framework revealed the need to strengthening our foundations to be even more effective now and also beyond the COVID-19 crisis. Several activities were initiated including:

- Clarifying committee and meeting responsibilities with regard to quality and risk;
- Reviewing the risk management framework and recognising that this needed to be brought up to date and consistently applied;
- Developing and implementing a rolling program of policy and procedure review;
- Accreditations for both states occurred, or are planned, in 2020. We created a process that not only ensures we provide appropriate evidence to demonstrate we comply with the relevant standards but also a process that utilises the vast amount of accreditation resources available to drive a structured quality improvement program. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Developing and implementing an internal audit program that supports improvements in our operational management;
 - Maintaining records to record employee education and training, thereby providing the organisation with valuable information on capability and education gaps we need to fill;

- Board recruitment and voting procedures to ensure diversity of board members who fill identified skills gaps as well as transparency in the voting process to ensure a fair and equitable result;
- Development of a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan that provides certainty when an unexpected event occurs. Roles, responsibilities, tasks and timeframes are defined to ensure service disruption is minimised and risk is mitigated as much as possible;
- A robust and centralised system for incident reporting instruction, monitoring and opportunities for lessons learnt.

Looking to the future

Whilst the past few months have been challenging, it has allowed Court Network to be better positioned to deal with similar crises in the future, with the ability to scale up, down or sideways with ease. We have also been able to undertake advance planning in order to accelerate post-crisis recovery. Our quality and safety framework and practises have been strengthened considerably and enabled us to innovate. This is due to positive can-do attitudes of employees and volunteers and well as inspirational Board leadership.



Awards

2019 Volunteering Victoria State Award for Excellence



In the Queens Hall at State Parliament House on Wednesday 20 November, Court Network received the 2019 Volunteering Victoria State Award for Excellence. This was in recognition for our demonstrated commitment to going beyond best practice volunteer management.

2019 Premier's Volunteer of the Year, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch Award



On 1 December 2019, at Government House, her Excellency Linda Desseau AC, honoured Carmel Benjamin AM for her work as a victim counsellor, official prison visitor, board member, ambassador and consultant on ministerial advisory committees; as well as the 'woman 2 woman' program designed to assist women transition from prison into the community.

2019 Impact 25 Award for Innovation and Victorian Women's Honour Roll



In March 2020 Maya was bestowed with Pro Bono Australia's 2019 Impact 25 Award for Innovation; and was also, one of 32 inspirational women inducted into the Victorian Women's Honour Roll.

“

I am deeply concerned about the powerlessness of people who lack understanding of complex systems, and am fortunate to have had the opportunity to create a more informed and compassionate society for individuals caught up in the criminal justice system.”

(Carmel Benjamin)

Getting our message across...

This year has seen us embark on a whole new range of communication strategies to meet our challenges. Most importantly our funding issues and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on service delivery. We were able to successfully respond to both of these situations with innovative communication tools and new remote delivery service.

ADVOCACY

312

Parliamentary newsletters were distributed to MPs in Queensland and Victoria promoting the new telephone support service. Numerous meetings were held with key decision makers (politicians and public servants). The Victorian Women's Trust supported us by running a letter writing campaign to MPs.

AWARDS

4

Staff were recognised at both state and national level for their outstanding contribution to the sector and volunteering management.

CAMPAIGNS

2

We designed and implemented two campaigns addressing funding issues and launched our new telephone support service.

EVENTS

2

Our inaugural Queensland Forum was hosted by Minter Ellison. Attorney General, The Hon Jill Hennessey was one of the keynote speakers at our 2019 Victorian Annual Conference.

MEDIA

22

We featured in 20 local, state and national newspapers (both print and online) and 2 Radio interviews on 774 ABC.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

1600 posters
26,000 postcards
130,000 business cards

Produced and circulated to 1500 stakeholders promoting the launch of the new telephone support service.

SOCIAL MEDIA

8

Videos were produced with messages of thanks to Networkers during National Volunteer Week and shared on Instagram, LinkedIn and Twitter



The Court Network Board

Board President

The Honourable Marcia Neave AO

Appointed AGM 2016, re-elected AGM 2019

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

Vice President

The Honourable David Harper AM

Appointed AGM 2015, re-elected AGM 2018

David 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. He became a Member of the Order of Australia in 2008 for service to law reform, the judiciary, international humanitarian law and the community. In 2015 David chaired a panel which advised the Victorian Government on the management of serious offenders. A result of the panel's report was the establishment of the Post Sentence Authority, to which David was appointed inaugural deputy chair for six months ending in October 2018.

Treasurer, Catherine Hopper

Appointed AGM 2019

Catherine Hopper is a finance professional with over ten years of experience in corporate finance within investment banking, funds management and Australian corporates. She brings a range of skills to the board, particularly strategic and financial expertise focused on strategic planning and financial governance. Catherine holds a Master of Applied Finance from Macquarie University and a Bachelor

of Laws (Hons) / Bachelor of Commerce from Monash University. She is also a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) with a strong understanding of financial and tax matters for not for profit entities.

Secretary

John Albert

Appointed AGM 2018 resigned March 2020

John is a current Court Network volunteer at the Melbourne Magistrates, Children's Court and more recently County Court and has volunteered with Court Network for three years. Since retiring John has also been involved as a mentor and committee member of Big Brothers, Big Sisters, refugee settlement assistance through the Brigidine Sisters. Prior to retirement, John was the global director for a multi-national textile company and has spent many years on boards and committees and been part of the decision-making process.

Secretary and Networker,

Nicky Bromberg

Appointed AGM 2016, re-elected 2019

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 18 months. Prior to social work, Nicky had a 25-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.

Brigita Cunnington, Member

Appointed AGM 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. She 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.

Ian Lang, Networker & Member

Appointed AGM 2017

Ian is a current Networker at the Supreme and District Court in Queensland. He has had extensive experience in governance roles with other community based not for profit organisations, including sitting on the board of the Mount Gravatt Community Centre for twelve years, with seven of those years as president. Ian is a current member of the steering committee at the Mount Gravatt Police Citizen's Youth Club. Such positions have given Ian strong experience in governance, financial oversight and strategic planning as well compliance with legislation and service agreements. Prior to retirement Ian has worked as a project manager with the Queensland Government and as a Senior Policy Advisor to a Queensland Government Minister.

Neil Michael, Networker & Member

Appointed AGM 2017

Neil is a current Court Network volunteer at the Wangaratta Magistrates' Court where he has been providing services to court users for the past seven years. Neil spent his working life in the service industry in Melbourne. Since retirement he has volunteered as a Community Visitor and a Panel Secretary for the Office of the Public Advocate (Disability Stream), a position he has held for nine years. He has also been the Coordinator of his local Neighbourhood Watch for seven years. Neil's aim is to represent Metropolitan and Regional Networkers, in Victoria and Queensland, as he was born in Queensland, and give them a voice on the Court Network Board and achieve the best possible outcomes for everyone. Since retirement, Neil has devoted his spare time to volunteering and to giving back to the community by assisting vulnerable people who find themselves in difficult circumstances.

David Bartlett, Member

Appointed AGM 2019

David is a research fellow with the Griffith Criminology Institute and sessional lecturer with the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Griffith University. Prior to academia David had a 24 year career in the Queensland public sector, working in a range of frontline, research and management roles across justice and health sector agencies. He commenced his career in Queensland's Magistrates Courts Service, where he developed a strong appreciation for the important contribution made by court volunteers. David's last public sector role

was Director of Governance of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service where he supported the board and was also responsible for corporate governance functions. He is an independent member of the Australian Diabetes Educators Association's board complaints committee and member of the Gold Coast Community Policing Board. David holds degrees in psychology, criminology and management and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Karen Gelb, Member

Appointed AGM 2019

Dr Karen Gelb is an experienced criminologist, social scientist and researcher. She is passionate about the need for informed, data-led and evidence-based policy to underpin practice in the justice arena. Karen has spent 15 years researching courts, including more than eight years with the Victorian Sentencing Advisory Council and more than six years as a private consultant. Her key areas of expertise are courts, family violence, sentencing, public opinion, sex offenders, youth justice, female offenders and remand. She has extensive experience in critically analysing research material, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, undertaking stakeholder consultations and writing accessible reports. Karen is currently a Consultant Criminologist, a Lecturer at the University of Melbourne's Department of Criminology and a Senior Research and Policy Officer at Penington Institute. As someone who has had her own personal experience with the Victorian courts – and the support offered by a Court Networker – Karen hopes to be able to contribute in some small way as a Board member for this valuable organisation.

Juan Muñoz, Member

Appointed AGM 2019

Juan is passionate about the work of Court Network in supporting people to access the court system. He practices as a lawyer and was a former judge's associate. Juan has extensive experience advising boards and in relation to risk management and governance. Juan wants to serve on the Board because he understands how the courts work and he knows the vital role that the Court Network plays in assisting people during the court process. He is passionate about volunteering and wants to assist the Board in ensuring that Court Network supports its

diverse users with its services. On a personal level, he is a first-generation migrant to Australia, and this has given him an appreciation for the lived experiences of a broad range of people in the community. He enjoys spending time with his partner, family, friends and my two dogs.

Susan Wakeling, Member

Appointed AGM 2019

Susan Wakeling is a Victorian Magistrate of almost 20 years' experience and currently holds the position of Regional Coordinating Magistrate of the court at Melbourne. In this role Susan is responsible to promote the fair and efficient operation of this busy Court, and to build relationships with community and court user groups. Prior to undertaking this role, Susan held the position of Regional Coordinating Magistrate at Heidelberg Magistrates Court for 7 years, and the Supervising Magistrate (joint) of the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal for 5 years. Susan is a member of the Court's Family Law and Family Violence Portfolio Committee and the Sexual Offences Committee. Susan's particular interest is in the challenge of facilitating a court experience which is safe and meaningful for each participant. Prior to her appointment as a Magistrate, Susan worked as a solicitor advocate in criminal, family law and family violence. Susan enjoys travelling, hiking, reading and time with family.

Martin Mowlam, Networker & Member

Appointed 15 June 2020

Martin has been a Networker at the Supreme Court since 2012 and is also a member of the Education Team at the court. He has also been a volunteer Independent Third Person with the Office of Public Advocate attending police interviews of people with acquired brain injuries, mental health issues and drug dependence. Martin is tertiary educated and his professional background has been in the sports, exhibitions and entertainment industries as a manager, director and producer, both in Australia and the US. Immediately prior to retirement Martin was a postman in the city sorting and delivering mail.

Treasurer's report

I am pleased to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2020. This financial year has a surplus of \$110,558.

This surplus represents a meaningful increase on prior years, due primarily to reduced expenditure as a result of the impact of COVID-19 on Court Network operations. COVID-19 has dramatically changed the operating landscape of the Australian Courts since March 2020, and as a result, the delivery of Court Network's services has been varied to include telephone and other online modes.

Funding

Court Network receives funding from Queensland and Victorian Governments, Court Services Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services Victoria, Victoria Legal Aid, Legal Aid Queensland, Victims Assist Queensland and for this we offer our sincere thanks. In addition, Court Network has received COVID-19 related funding from the Federal Government to support operations during the final quarter of FY20.

Court Network would also like to acknowledge the support of the Baer Family Trust for their donation to fund the Victorian Family Court Program for FY21, following the cessation of funding from Victorian Legal Aid for this service. This donation will be recognised in the FY21 Financial Accounts.

The organisation's total income for the year was \$2,952,703, which was an increase of \$274,279 on FY19. The key driver of the increase is the additional funding from the Queensland Department of Justice for the Domestic and Family Violence Court Reception Desk which commenced in September 2019.

Expenditure

Expenditure for the year increased by 7% to \$2,842,145. The result was influenced by increased wages and on-costs as a result of mandated award pay equity increases, additional staffing required for new programs.

Financial position

Court Network continues to diligently manage its cash reserves to ensure the organisation remains solvent and can meet its financial obligations. The FY20 year has demonstrated the importance of Court Network's strong cash position, providing capacity and flexibility to develop and implement new services in response to the COVID-19 impacts on the courts.

The financial position of the organisation remains sound with a cash balance of \$1,860,531 and net assets of \$733,923. The strong financial result for FY20 has been achieved through capable management and our ongoing partnership with our key funders.

I would like to extend my thanks to Ms Ming Zhou, our Finance Manager, for her support during my first year as Court Network Treasurer and for her skilled stewardship of Court Network's financial matters.

Catherine Hopper

“

COVID-19 has dramatically changed the operating landscape of the Australian Courts since March 2020, and as a result, the delivery of Court Network's services has been varied to include telephone and other online modes.”

Catherine Hopper

Financials

COURT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	NOTE	2020 \$	2019 \$
INCOME			
Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies	3	2,850,175	2,657,334
Interest Revenue		20,956	19,050
Other Revenue		81,572	2,040
		2,952,703	2,678,424
EXPENDITURE			
Employment Costs		2,267,282	2,074,393
Travel Expenses - Staff		62,365	67,869
Volunteer Expenses		56,079	65,327
Telecommunication Costs		22,669	20,451
Board Costs		4,880	4,358
Consultants		2,959	15,402
AGM and Conference Event		24,414	20,522
IT and Office Equipment Maintenance		52,542	45,520
Publications, Marketing, Printing and Stationery		37,483	36,154
Staff Recruitment, Learning and Amenities		16,533	20,761
Depreciation		3,265	5,785
Court Support and Meetings		4,197	6,361
Insurance		5,489	5,275
Rent		262,150	243,540
Other Administration Expenses		19,838	20,374
		2,842,145	2,652,092
OPERATING RESULT FOR THE YEAR		110,558	26,332
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		110,558	26,332

COURT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	NOTE	2020 \$	2019 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,860,531	1,345,329
Receivables and Prepayments		6,116	5,061
		1,866,647	1,350,390
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	5	2,979	6,244
		2,979	6,244
TOTAL ASSETS		1,869,626	1,356,634
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and Accruals		156,984	129,162
Income in advance	6	756,810	402,292
Provisions	7	221,909	201,815
TOTAL LIABILITIES		1,135,703	733,269
NET ASSETS		733,923	623,365
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Accumulated Surplus		733,923	623,365
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		733,923	623,365

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

COURT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	NOTE	Retained Earnings	Reserves	Total
		\$	\$	\$
Balance 1 July 2018		590,954	6,079	597,033
Surplus for the Year		26,332	-	26,332
Transfer to/ (from) Reserves		6,079	(6,079)	-
Balance 30 June 2019		623,365	-	623,365
-1		110,558	-	110,558
Transfer to/ (from) Reserves		-	-	-
Balance 30 June 2020		733,923	-	733,923

Funds set aside in the Reserve is for the on-going maintenance of Networkers Online Database.

COURT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	NOTE	2020	2019
		\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts			
Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies		2,810,301	2,613,566
Interest		20,956	19,050
Other		163,814	2,040
Payments			
Employment Expenses		(2,221,995)	(2,057,489)
Supplies		(257,874)	(342,827)
Net cash (used in)/ provided from operating activities	8	515,202	234,340
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for purchase of plant and equipment		-	-
Net cash used in investing activities		-	-
Net (decrease)/ increase in cash held		515,202	234,340
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		1,345,329	1,110,989
Cash at the end of the financial year	4	1,860,531	1,345,329

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes on Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

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). Court Network is registered with the ACNC under the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012*.

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2020 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 to advocate for the needs of all court users.

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

Unless otherwise stated, all accounting policies are consistent with those applied in the prior year. Where appropriate comparative figures have been amended to accord with current presentation.

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

New or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations adopted

Unless otherwise stated, the Association has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

New Accounting Standards and Interpretations not yet mandatory or early adopted

Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations that have recently been issued or amended but are not yet mandatory, have not been early adopted by the Association for the annual reporting period ended 30 June 2020.

NOTE 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 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*.

These special purpose financial statements do not comply with all the recognition and measurement requirements in Australian Accounting Standards.

The recognition and measurement requirements that have not been complied with are those specified in *AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and *AASB 1058 Income of Not-for-Profit Entities* as, in accounting for income, recognition of all grant income has been deferred until the related expenses are incurred without assessing whether there are enforceable performance obligations to transfer a good or service to a third party which are sufficiently specific to know when the performance obligation has been satisfied.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the incorporated association's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are disclosed in note 2.

NOTE 2: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

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.

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.

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.

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 three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in values.

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.

The residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

An item of plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when there is no future economic benefit to the incorporated association. Gains and losses between the carrying amount and the disposal proceeds are taken to profit or loss.

IMPAIRMENT OF NON-FINANCIAL 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.

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. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Short-term employee benefits

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.

Other long-term employee benefits

The liability for annual leave and long service leave not expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflow.

Superannuation

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

OTHER 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.

LEASES

The Association is using office space provided by the Court Services Victoria (CSV). Resources received free of charge are recognised as rent expense based on payment in kind determined by CSV under AASB 1058.

CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS, ESTIMATES AND ASSUMPTIONS

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. The resulting accounting judgements and estimates will seldom equal the related actual results. The judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities (refer to the respective notes) within the next financial year are discussed below

Employee benefits provision

As discussed in note 1, the liability for employee benefits expected to be settled more than 12 months from the reporting date are recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, estimates of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

Note 3: Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies

	2020		2020
	\$		\$
	-		-
Court Services Victoria	1,447,295		1,380,124
Victoria Department of Health & Human Services	384,054		340,380
Victoria Legal Aid	127,781		136,353
Queensland Department of Justice	891,045		800,477
	2,850,175	#	2,657,334

Note 4: Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash on Hand	1,660		1,299
Cash at Bank	1,345,371		839,053
Cash on Deposit	513,500		504,977
	1,860,531		1,345,329

Note 5: Fixed Assets

Office Equipment	55,553		55,553
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(52,574)		(49,309)
	2,979		6,244

Note 6: Income In Advance

Court Services Victoria	286,387		205,701
Queensland Department of Justice	140,998	#	33,892
Victoria Department of Health & Human Services	185,883		162,699
Victoria Legal Aid	11,299		-
Baer Family Trust	130,000		-
Ipswich City Council	2,243		-
	756,810	#	402,292

Independent Auditor's Reports

2020 2020
\$ \$

Note 7: Provisions

(a) Employee Entitlements		
Annual Leave and Other Entitlements	140,314	112,277
Long Service Leave	50,186	51,733
	190,500	164,010
(b) Other		
Children's Court Project	9,429	11,805
Quality Management	20,980	25,000
Victim Support Unit Brisbane Volunteer Support	1,000	1,000
	31,409	37,805
	221,909	# 201,815

Note 8: Cash Flow Reconciliation

Reconciliation of net cash used in operating activities to operating results

Operating Result	110,558	26,332
Depreciation	3,265	5,785
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables and Prepayments	(1,055)	2,770
Increase in Creditors and Accruals	27,822	5,202
Increase in Provision for Entitlements	26,490	21,759
Decrease in Provision for Projects	(6,396)	(27,281)
Increase in Income in Advance	354,518	199,773
Cashflows (used in)/ from operations	515,202	234,340

Note 9: 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	-	1,520
- between 12 months and 5 years	-	-
	-	# 1,520

Note 10: Contingencies

The Association had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2020 (30 June 2019: nil) .

Note 11: Events After The Reporting Period

Independent Auditor's Report



Independent Auditor's Report To the Members of Court Network Inc

Opinion

We have audited the special purpose financial report (the financial report) of Court Network Inc. (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2020, 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 the statement by the management committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association is in accordance with the Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (the ACNC Act), including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

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 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 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Association's financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and the Management Committee for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the ACNC Act and the needs of the members.

Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is the Crowe Australasia external audit division. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

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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 intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The management committee are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

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.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Independent Auditor's Report



We communicate with the management committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during the audit.

Crowe Melbourne

CROWE MELBOURNE

C. Gravenall

CASSANDRA GRAVENALL
Partner

21 September 2020
Melbourne

Auditor Independence Declaration



Auditor Independence Declaration under 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act* 2012 to the Members of Court Network Inc.

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2020 there have been:

- 1) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the APES110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*; and
- 2) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Crowe Melbourne

CROWE MELBOURNE

C. Gravenall

CASSANDRA GRAVENALL
Partner

Melbourne Victoria
21 September 2020

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is the Crowe Australasia external audit division. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

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Queensland

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- Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court
- Collingwood Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- Dandenong Magistrates' Court
- Dandenong Family and Federal Circuit Court
- Frankston Magistrates' Court
- Heidelberg Magistrates' Court
- Moorabbin Justice Centre
- Ringwood Magistrates' Court
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Thank you to all our
volunteers and staff for
making 2020 fabulous.



