
Court Network Annual Report

2018 – 2019



Court Network Inc

VICTORIA

—
Court Network
Head Office

5/555 Lonsdale St
Melbourne VIC 3000

Phone: (03) 8306 6966
Toll free: 1800 681 614
Email: admin@courtnetwork.com.au

QUEENSLAND

—
The Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law
Brisbane Supreme and District Courts

415 George St
Brisbane QLD 4000

Phone: (07) 3738 7790
Toll free: 1800 267 671
Email: queensland@courtnetwork.com.au

www.courtnetwork.com.au

Who We Are

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

OUR VISION

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

OUR MISSION

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



President & Executive Director's Report

Dear colleagues, friends and supporters,

It is our great pleasure to present Court Network's 2018/2019 Annual Report. It has been a busy year for Court Network during which we continued in our dedicated work and efforts to support people involved in the court system.

The increase in our client numbers demonstrates the extent of the need we meet. In 2018-19 we helped a record number of 205,416 court users. This is an increase of almost 8% compared to the 190,595 court users we assisted the previous year. Across our 37 locations in Victoria and Queensland, Court Network volunteers collectively contributed at least 129,600 hours, which is the equivalent of 65 full time positions.

While we reflect on those impressive statistics, it is important to remember that these numbers represent support to individual court users. These are members of our community who often feel frightened, unsafe and unsure about what to expect during their time in court. These are people who may be unfamiliar with the processes of the court room and who are in need of someone to listen and help them on what is often an extremely difficult day.

A significant focus this year for Court Network was supporting our Networkers as they strove to cope with the additional numbers of people seeking help and the complexity of issues that they experience. In September 2018, we commissioned a review of the Court Network Recruitment, Learning & Development (RL&D) program. The review process uncovered a number of challenges, including the need for more volunteers to meet service demands; lengthy recruitment and intake training processes; lack of diversity in the volunteer workforce; and a high workload for Program Managers. A revised recruitment, intake training and continuous education model was developed, which included a three-year Action Plan. We are still in the process of refining the intake model. However, we are pleased to report that in the first six months of this year we trained 50 new volunteers

under the new model in Victoria, which is an increase of more than 300% compared to the same period last year. In 2018-19 more than 300 volunteers attended 14 Continuing Education sessions and 11 family violence training sessions.

In Victoria, Court Network's family violence support and capacity building has been and continues to be underpinned by our family violence vision developed in 2015. This vision states that Court Network will:

- Provide effective support to people affected by family violence;
- Strengthen our capability to identify family violence risk;
- Complement the Integrated Service Response available to maximize women's and children's safety; and
- Connect victims and perpetrators with appropriate referral pathways.

Because Court Network in Victoria is specifically funded for the provision of services at five Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVC), we focused our efforts on training our teams of Networkers at these courts throughout the 2018-19 year. We are proud to report that the work has progressed as planned and Court Network teams are prepared for the opening of the SFVCs in Shepparton and Ballarat, which are due to commence by the end of 2019, and the Moorabbin, Frankston and Heidelberg SFVCs, which are scheduled to open in 2020.

In May 2019, Queensland Victim Support Unit (VSU) Networkers received significant recognition for their outstanding work by winning Volunteering Queensland's Volunteer Impact Award. Since its establishment in September 2013, VSU Networkers have been helping adult victims of violent crime, their loved ones, and witnesses to the crime navigate the criminal justice system, assisting them to feel heard, empowered and safe. They provide services during some of the most difficult days in a victim's life, second only to the day of the crime. As one

VSU Networker recently said, "Our work changes people's thinking from 'I'm a victim to I'm a survivor'".

The Court Network Queensland team was also successful in securing new funding to establish Court Reception Services at four Specialist Domestic & Family Violence Courts in Southport, Beenleigh, Ipswich and Brisbane. This project is funded for a period of 30 months and implementation of the service will commence in late 2019.

As we have grown in numbers and built the capabilities of our volunteers to meet the increased demand, Court Network has been working hard to bring a new level of sophistication and strength to its operations:

- On request from Court Services Victoria (CSV), Court Network developed the Court Network Opportunities Report, which was presented to court stakeholders. The report focused on short-term and long-term opportunities in alignment with Court Network's strategic priorities and has the potential to guide future negotiations for Court Network's expansion and growth.
- We have started our digital transformation journey. Introduction of the Better Impact Volunteer Management platform will revolutionize the way we operate. By developing a consistent approach to our IT, including an accessible electronic document management system, and building staff capacity to use Microsoft Office applications, we will considerably improve our efficiencies around activities, processes and competencies.
- In April 2019 we finalized Court Network's Communications Strategy and 12-month Action Plan. These documents establish communications as a core function of the organization and will guide our work in raising Court Network's profile across the broader community.

The non-for-profit sector is a challenging one. Issues it has to confront range from limited resources that do not match increased demand, to compliance, risk and

quality matters. The Court Network Board manages these issues through its strong governance framework and subcommittees, including the Risk and Quality Subcommittee and Finance Subcommittee.

As we mark the end of another remarkable year, we would like to thank our committed and hardworking volunteers. Court Network's service is only possible because of your generosity and dedication. We would like to acknowledge our Board of Management for their guidance and support, and our staff for their commitment and outstanding work. Due to the outstanding effort of the entire Court Network team, we were able to help improve access to justice for an increasing number of court users.

Court Network cannot help vulnerable court users alone. Thank you to all funders and corporate partners that have provided funds and in-kind support. Without your support, it would have been simply impossible to provide our service to the large number of people who sought help from Court Network over the past year.

We value our partnerships with others involved in the justice system - the courts, court staff and the judiciary - who consistently support our work.

As we turn our attention to 2020 and Court Network's 40th anniversary, we look forward to another year of changing lives as we continue together to improve access to justice for everyone.

Kind Regards,
Marcia & Maya



From Our Founder

We are in court to help and support all court users, we are not in court to make judgements about who is worthy of our support – the victim or the offender. Judging the innocence or guilt of a defendant is the role of the jury in criminal trials for serious offences. Directing juries and determining guilt in less serious criminal offences is the responsibility of highly skilled and learned members of the judiciary. We are there to respect and care for members of our community in their time of need. Our tasks are to increase their confidence and empower them to present in court in the best possible manner, and then after the matter has been dealt with, refer them or their families on to community agencies for continuing care.

I know that it's easy to receive referrals to support victims because our hearts go out to them and we instinctively move to protect them from further damage ... but with 2 of you on duty, I urge and encourage you to discuss how you will manage your responsibilities and make sure that both the

alleged offender and his or her victim are offered support.

I raise this because we are all liable to make decisions about who we prefer to spend time with it's part of being human, and that's OK if you are aware of doing it and what your biases are but if you can stand back and be objective, you will recognize the importance of supporting the alleged offender and his or her family too.

Explaining the process of the hearing is only part of your responsibilities. The other part is to find out and understand the contextual issues so that you can offer referrals to community agencies that will help them to manage their lives more effectively. This is the two-way process of court support. It offers a creative opportunity for change for the person concerned and is what makes Court Network particularly relevant inside court buildings. And then you are not only a Court Networker - you become an agent of change.

Carmel Benjamin AM, Founder
Address to Court Network Volunteers
November, 2018

Victoria's Highlights for 2018 – 2019

128,509

total people assisted in Victoria

110,965

Total Volunteer hours for Victoria

TOP THREE CLIENT GROUPS ASSISTED / SUPPORTED



35,798
Defendants



32,380
Family / Friends



26,463
Applicants

TOP MATTERS HEARD



44,710
People assisted/
supported for family
violence matters



43,970
People assisted/
supported for
criminal matters



11,709
People assisted/
supported for civil
matters



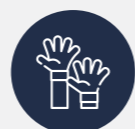
17,198
Information offered
via Court Info Desk



103,953
People contacted
through outreach



15,413
Referrals made to
specialist services



91,980
People assisted/
supported in
Magistrates Courts

Queensland's Highlights for 2018 – 2019

76,907

total people assisted in Queensland

18,635

Total Volunteer hours for Queensland

TOP THREE CLIENT GROUPS ASSISTED/ SUPPORTED



3,928
Unrepresented
Defendants /
Litigants



3,881
Family / Friends



3,437
Represented
Defendants /
Litigants

TOP MATTERS HEARD



11,979
People assisted
/supported for
criminal matters



5,894
People assisted
/ supported for civil
matters



59,045
Information offered
via Court Info Desk
& Helpline



17,702
People contacted
through outreach



977
Referrals made to
specialist services



29,250
People assisted/
supported in
Magistrates Courts

Priority 1. Service

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

OBJECTIVES

- Respond to the changing needs of court users and the dynamic court environment
- Develop our model to improve access to justice in emerging areas such as family violence, victim support and in our work with unrepresented court users
- Integrate with other services that operate within and beyond the courts

MEASURE

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

Victorian Family Violence Program

SHEPPARTON

Shepparton is the first of five Victorian courts operating as a Specialist Family Violence Court (SFVC) and will officially launch in October 2019. The launch of the Shepparton SFVC will be undertaken by the Attorney-General of Victoria, The Honourable Jill Hennessy, in the presence of Chief Magistrate Peter Lauritsen.

Together with the fantastic cooperation and enthusiasm of Shepparton Court Networkers, the following steps were taken to ensure that we built capacity within our volunteer group to deliver a comprehensive service to court users accessing the new SFVC.

- May & June 2018: Three days of compulsory family violence training was delivered to all fourteen Networkers in Shepparton by the Court Network Family Violence Program Manager and guest facilitators including No to Violence, Victoria Legal Aid and the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre.
- 1 July 2018: The Regional Program Manager commenced family violence practice supervision for Shepparton Court Networkers on family violence listing days three days per week.
- November 2018 – August 2019: The Judicial College of Victoria delivered three days of sector-wide integrated training in Shepparton to equip relevant stakeholders to work collaboratively

within their scope of practice upon the launch of the Safe Waiting Area. Five Shepparton Networkers attended a minimum of one day of this training.

There is still work to do. Over the next months, Court Network will implement the following actions to ensure our service delivery model is ready:

- Establish a Court Network Information Desk on the ground floor of the main court building to provide better access and support for court users, and
- Recruit and train at least four new Shepparton Networkers by early 2020 to meet the needs of the new Separate Space.
- Develop processes for working with the new Shepparton Orange Door service, which will provide a single point of contact for adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence.

BALLARAT

Ballarat is the second Victorian court to launch as a SFVC. It is expected to commence operations on the 11 November 2019, upon completion of the court building renovations.

In preparation for this, Ballarat has recruited and trained several new volunteers, bringing our team up to twenty-two Networkers. We have developed our practice through continuing education sessions and all Networkers have undertaken three days of family violence training in preparation for the new integrated service delivery that will be

required. Networkers have attended Judicial College of Victoria training and will share their learnings with the wider team prior to the launch. It is an exciting time of change for Court Network Ballarat, along with everyone involved with the Ballarat Court, and we are all looking forward to the new challenges that the SFVC will bring.

MARAM

In March 2016, The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence delivered its report that made 227 recommendations to improve Victoria's response to family violence. These changes aim to improve the foundations of the family violence service system; transform how individual professionals and organisations identify, assess and respond to family violence risk; and build structures and systems to guide and oversee long-term family violence system reform.

The Family Violence Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework is now a legislative instrument under Part 11 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) and has been renamed the Multi-Agency Assessment Management (MARAM) Framework. The MARAM Framework can be used by all services that encounter individuals and families experiencing family violence. The MARAM Framework aims to establish a system-wide shared understanding of family violence and will guide professionals across the continuum of service responses, across the range of presentations, and the spectrum of risk. It will provide information and resources that professionals need to keep victim survivors

safe, and to keep perpetrators in view and accountable for their actions.

Court Network's service corresponds with Tier 4 of the MARAM Capability Framework, which requires us to identify and screen for family violence. Out of ten responsibilities, the following six apply to all Court Network staff and volunteers:

- Responsibility 1: Respectful, sensitive and safe engagement
- Responsibility 2: Identification of family violence
- Responsibility 5: Seek consultation for comprehensive risk assessment, risk management and referrals
- Responsibility 6: Contribute to information sharing with other services (as authorised by legislation)
- Responsibility 9: Contribute to coordinated risk management
- Responsibility 10: Collaborate for ongoing risk assessment and risk management

CASE STUDY

Victoria

I outreached to a woman, Megan*, who was very distressed following the police taking out an Intervention Order against her 16 year old son who had been physically and verbally abusive to her, his younger sister and brother. Megan told me that he had dropped out of school. During her time in court, I spoke to Megan about services in the community that may be of assistance.

During the course of the day a second Networker spoke to her son who was on edge. He was not that interested in our support, however, the Networker touched base with him throughout the day. The matter was finally heard towards the end of the day and the outcome was an Interim Intervention Order with a return date of 2 weeks.

On leaving the court, I sensed Megan's feelings of frustration, hopelessness and despair. I suggested that before she left she should go and have a chat with the Specialist Family Violence Practitioner (SFVP) to do some safety planning and to get a better understanding of the court processes around the Intervention Order. Megan left and was glad to have had us supporting her.

Two weeks later, she was back at court and found me to tell a different story.

Outside of court, her son's behaviour had escalated and Megan told him she was not driving him home, whilst he was in this state. He followed her to the car and became violent, so she got out, and went into a shop to call triple 0 as the SFVP had told her to do. The police were called and the son was remanded in custody.

Whilst on remand he had been visited by a Youth Justice Support Program Social Worker. Megan had also been visited by the support team and, as a result, she and her other children were now seeing a counsellor. She had been to a meeting at the school to develop a contract about her son going back to school and a return home plan had been developed. The return home plan outlined Megan's expectations about the behaviours she required from her son and she was going to stick to them. He could come home but only if he agreed with the plan, and she now had the support she needed to enforce this.

Megan said that this had all happened because Court Network had cared enough to check in about her safety and wellbeing on her day in court. If she hadn't been seen by the SFVP, she wouldn't have called the police when she did, and she would have continued to make excuses for her son's behaviour.

*Name has been changed



Queensland Service Development

Queensland Court Network has used this year to continue to build our service capability in courts across Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville.

This year, the focus in the Brisbane CBD courts was consolidation of current services. Each court runs a very busy and popular information desk. Discussions are underway with stakeholders regarding a range of potential service enhancements including:

- participation in a review of the Coroners Court support service
- focus on Traffic Court operations to strengthen the service
- working with the Courts Innovation Program to explore options to improve services for people with mental health or drug and alcohol issues
- work with the Office of Public Guardian (OPG) to improve information and support for people for whom Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) appoints OPG as their guardian
- ongoing review of tenancy and domestic violence support services in QCAT.

Townsville has spent the year stabilising our volunteer numbers, which has resulted in the team being back at capacity. We held Graduation Ceremonies for new volunteers and we continue to recognise the invaluable work and achievements of our Networkers.

Court Network in Cairns continues to strengthen our relationship with Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) to provide court support for adult victims of crime. All new Networkers have been trained in this role by VAQ, which has greatly assisted with our understanding of the needs of victims in the courts. Due to demand within the court, the Cairns team implemented an afternoon shift trial on a Monday through Wednesday, which resulted in a regular Wednesday afternoon shift being established. The increased hours in the court are greatly valued by court users and court personnel. In March, we held a Graduation and Recognition Ceremony to celebrate new and established Networkers in Cairns who have provided service for over 1 and 2 years. With the number of Networkers and program workload increasing, an Administration Volunteer role was established to provide regular and valuable assistance to the Cairns Program Manager.

CASE STUDY

Queensland

Zoe* is an Indigenous lady, whose partner had been sentenced to a custodial period of time in gaol. I encountered her outside the courtroom, which had been used earlier in the day for long pleas. Zoe expressed a wish to visit her partner but had no idea of how to go about it.

I was able to talk her through the "Prison Pack" that Court Network has compiled but quickly realised there were considerable literacy issues. This meant she was unable to read, understand or follow through with the requirements outlined in that information simply by being provided with it. Additionally, she is not from the local area, lives alone now and has no transport.

Given that there is a strict process to follow regarding prison visits and a distinct sequence to observe

in which a visitor application is likely to be accepted, it was important for Zoe to understand for herself what she needed to do and in what order to do it. Even with good reading ability and comprehension, the forms are a bit of a challenge. We were able to obtain a Justice of the Peace witnessing of her three items of ID, find out which company offers transport to the gaol, complete the Form 27 and clarify when, and at what time, visits are allowed and when contact with the prison needs to be made to formalise this. Before we concluded, I asked Zoe to outline in her own words, the four main steps of the process which she was able to do.

The entire court user connection took a good hour. When she departed it was to say, 'Thank you so much; I couldn't have done this without you'.

*Name has been changed

Victim Support Unit

The Victim Support Unit has had a very successful year, publishing *A Guide to Supporting Victims of Crime Through the Court Process* and receiving the 2019 Volunteer Impact Award from Volunteering Queensland.

Further to these achievements, we have spent the year strengthening referral pathways; advocating for the rights and needs of victims; developing a Continuous Improvement Action Plan; and running successful volunteer intakes in Brisbane and Ipswich.

We revitalised the VSU-specific training program, which now consists of 5 full days of training and up to 9 days of supervised practice. Our induction training covers topics such as the judicial system, suicide awareness, self-care, vicarious trauma, unconscious bias, and the Networker role. We have also developed a VSU Supervised Practice Workbook to guide trainees through key activities and requirements.

Guide to Supporting Victims of Crime

One of our most highly anticipated projects of the year was the development and publication of our *Guide to Supporting Victims of Crime through the Court Process*. The guide focuses on the role of providing support to a victim, which makes it a one-of-a-kind educational resource. Practical details about making the decision to become a support person, confidentiality, safety plans for attending court, and advice on evidence giving are included in the publication.

The guide was formally launched in Brisbane on 24 October 2018 by Jenny Lang, Deputy Director-General at Department of Justice and Attorney-General, with special guest speakers, The Honourable Marcia Neave, Court Network Board President, and His Honour Judge Ian Dearden, Judge of the District Court of Queensland and Judge of the Children's Court of Queensland. At the launch, guests heard a first-hand account from a victim of crime about the importance of independent court support, as well as from two VSU Networkers who shared their experience as volunteers.

To inform community organisations and stakeholder networks about the guide, the VSU team organised education events, which focused on the needs and expectations of victims within the criminal justice system. VSU also operated an information stall at the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group (QHVSOG) Homicide Awareness Day held in May 2019.

This guide was published to fill a need in the community. The VSU team works with a large number of victims and witnesses who are required to provide evidence at trials. This is a very emotional and stressful experience, which can cause significant distress to already traumatised members of our community. Through VSU's work, it became evident that it was essential for a guide to be developed to help people properly hear and support victims. So far, Court Network has received fantastic feedback from court users and community services.

'I'd like to compliment Court Network on a fabulous information booklet. This booklet has been an invaluable source of information that our counsellors, in all our three locations, have used to assist clients.'

– Stakeholder, Queensland



921

Victims Supported



40%

Improvement in VSU service capacity due to recruitment and onboarding of new volunteers



33%

VSU cases that were new clients



9 months

Average duration of support relationship between clients and VSU volunteers



317

Cases that were successfully closed by the VSU team

CASE STUDY

Victim Support Unit

Emily*, a victim of rape, requested support for her day in court, as she did not want to face the accused and she possessed only limited English. The VSU Networker arranged a pre-court tour of the law courts and special witness room, using a translator app to assist with some of the conversation.

An interpreter was arranged for the court date, which proved invaluable in helping with the case. On the day of the trial, in-court support was provided to both Emily and her family. Emily was very distraught and became more noticeably upset during cross-examination. She had to leave the special witness room a few times due to stress and re-triggering of trauma.

After being calmed and reassured by Networkers, Emily was able to complete the cross-examination, which meant she did not have to come back to court for more questioning. After the trial, VSU assisted Emily and her parents to complete Victim Impact Statements and a Financial Assistance Application, which was approved.

The mother expressed her appreciation for the services received from Court Network and said they were not sure how they would've coped without assistance.

*Name has been changed





Priority 2. Volunteer Workforce

Provide high-quality services through a skilled volunteer workforce.

OBJECTIVES

- Implement the Court Network Service Charter that defines the services delivered by skilled volunteers who share our goal of empowering court users
- Recruit and train a diverse and adaptable workforce that reflects the communities we serve
- Ensure best practice by linking intake training, continuing education, reflective practice and reviews to the needs of court users

MEASURE

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

Learning & Development

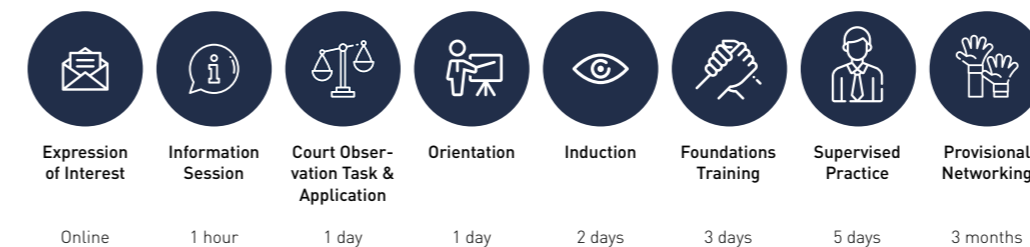
Late in 2018, we undertook a comprehensive review of Court Network’s recruitment, learning and development program. The review involved consultations with large numbers of internal and external stakeholders, including 146 Networker interviews.

The review acknowledged existing strengths and drew attention to areas that could be improved, such as the cumbersome and lengthy recruitment and training process, lack of diversity in the current Networker cohort, high Program Manager workload, and limited on-the-job support for new volunteers.

Importantly, the review posed several questions for consideration and proposed alternate models of recruitment and intake training. This review exposed an overwhelming appetite for change within Court Network and a strong and positive commitment from Learning & Development and Program Managers to co-design and develop an intake program that:

- ensures service demand is met;
- guarantees recruitment and training that is fit for purpose, matches volunteer and organisational requirements; and
- overcomes known limitations, issues and concerns.

INTAKE & TRAINING PROGRAM



660

Expressions of Interest from members of the community



11

Information Sessions held across 5 cities



116

New Networkers trained in Victoria and Queensland



520

Attendances at Continuing Education sessions



25

Topics covered in Continuing Education sessions

Thank you, Court Network, for allowing me to do the first module of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competence Course. It's been quite a revelation to discover that many things I held as true were incorrect. I'm sure moving forward that my new understandings will improve my interactions with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in my networking role. I will be less clumsy and awkward in my approach with both court staff and court users as a result of my new awareness.



The Networker role is complex and it takes a special member of the community to fit the position. We are delighted that, not only have we received substantial interest from new volunteers, our current Networkers continue to show their support and commitment to Court Network. We do not take for granted the passion and dedication of our Networkers, and we recognise that they are the heart of Court Network.

QUEENSLAND VOLUNTEERS

With pressure on the court system ever increasing, the Queensland branch of Court Network has been focused on growing and stabilising our volunteer workforce. After successful intakes in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and Ipswich, the volunteer count is now the highest it has ever been, standing at 155 Networkers.

There continues to be a keen interest in volunteering for Court Network, with 242 people attending our Information Sessions this past year. 52 volunteers graduated to Networkers, which is the largest graduating class since the organisation was established in Queensland in 2006.

VICTORIA VOLUNTEERS

The new recruitment and intake model was piloted in Victoria. An additional aspect of the model was a recruitment to vacancies approach. After applications are received, a 'matching' process occurs wherein court vacancies are matched with applicant's location preferences. In the second intake, 50 out of 52 applicants were matched, resulting in 40 metropolitan and 10 regional placements. Combined with the 14 Networkers from intake 1, the total number of people trained in Victoria for this year is 64. Courts across Victoria are currently being serviced by 375 dedicated Networkers.

VSU IMPACT AWARD

This year has been marked with great recognition for Court Network, our volunteers and our programs.

A highlight during National Volunteer Week was our Victim Support Unit winning the Volunteer Impact Award at the Volunteering Queensland Awards. This award celebrates a volunteer program that has made a positive, measurable and sustainable social impact on the Queensland community. This year there were 240 nominations across all award categories, which makes this an amazing accomplishment for the VSU team.

30 YEARS AS A NETWORKER

Sally Barnes

How long have you been a Court Networker?

30 wonderfully interesting and rewarding years. Nine at the Coroner's Court followed by various years at Prahran, Heidelberg and Melbourne Magistrates' Courts, plus several postings with numerous other courts and programs throughout the years.

How did you hear about Court Network and why did you choose to volunteer with us?

Carmel Benjamin AM was a close family friend and encouraged me to become involved after almost a decade volunteering at CAMCARE, a counselling and care service within the Citizen's Advice Bureau. I was keen to experience a new and challenging role since all my children had started school.

What do you think makes Court Network such a unique organisation to be a part of?

We are the only court-based volunteer service liaising with court staff, participants and support services; we are a dynamic group of unique, caring and non-judgmental volunteers; we often encounter people at their most vulnerable, endeavouring to support them through what can be a hugely challenging and emotional journey through our justice system.

What changes have you seen in the justice system over the last 3 decades?

There is no doubt that dramatic increases in the number of service users, particularly in the area of family violence, have placed both the court and social service systems under immense pressure. This struggle to keep up with demand has served to further validate our service, presenting increasingly challenging situations but proving we are now needed more than ever.

What does volunteering mean to you?

I love volunteering and every day has been a true learning experience. Volunteering with Court Network has been so rewarding, it has allowed me to form both professional relationships and friendships with like-minded individuals. It has educated me in the areas of grief, human behaviour and the law. Volunteering has taught me so much, for which I am eternally grateful.

CASE STUDY

Queensland

The mother of the accused, Shirley*, and two other family members arrived. Her son, Eric* was in the watch house being held in relation to a high profile attempted murder case and had undergone a mental health assessment.

Shirley was extremely upset and her priority was to be in the court to support her son. I showed the family where they could sit in the court room to be closest to Eric when he was brought up from the watch house. I was able to confirm with an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Legal Service representative that Eric had been attended to in the morning and relayed this information to Shirley.

She was clearly comforted by this. She started crying when they brought Eric in and I sat with them in court for the mention, explaining what was happening as the process went along. Eric was remanded in custody to be transferred to gaol. Shirley asked me what to do and where to get the paperwork to visit him. I had a Sentencing Pack, which included the forms to fill out so I was able to go through this with her. She was extremely grateful and thanked me repeatedly, as did the other family members.

*Names have been changed

Priority 3. Partnerships

Build strong relationships to expand our reach and influence.

OBJECTIVES

- Build our reputation as an evidence-based service provider and a source of quality information
- Advocate for court users to improve access to the justice system for all
- Create new relationships that advance the needs of vulnerable court users

MEASURE

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

The Orange Door

To strengthen our referral service in the courts, Court Network has developed a collaborative working relationship with The Orange Door. Established by Family Safety Victoria, The Orange Door is a free family violence service for adults, children and young people who are experiencing or have experienced family violence.

In 2018, The Orange Door was opened in five key locations across Victoria- Barwon, Bayside Peninsula, Inner Gippsland, Mallee and North Eastern Melbourne. With Court Network well-established in all of these areas, our Regional Program Managers were invited to meet and present to the agency representatives.

These meetings gave our Program Managers the opportunity to discuss collaborative opportunities and strengthen referral pathways with The Orange Door, as well as obtain an overview of their operations and service delivery. Our Program Manager in Mildura was personally invited to present on Court Network's evolving role in Specialist Family Violence Courts. Our relationship continues to develop, with 10% of incoming referrals to Court Network now coming from The Orange Door.

Thank you for the support that you all provide to us as practitioners and, more significantly, to our clients. Court Networkers can make such a difference to their experience of court, and greatly assist us in doing our work as lawyers. In particular, on days that we are providing a duty lawyer service and may have to see a large number of clients, we simply do not have the time to sit with clients and provide that extra layer of support and reassurance. Knowing that there is another option, and that

we are not having to choose between dealing with a distressed client at the expense of assisting other clients, or abandoning them in their distress while we move on to the next person in the queue, makes a big difference and makes our job a whole lot easier.

In obtaining instructions, we often have to ask clients about the difficulties in their lives (current and historical), and it feels awful and in some respects irresponsible to open

up traumas of varying degrees only to then turn them out of the office and tell them to wait until their matter is called. Knowing that we can drop them into the Court Network office where they can get some emotional support and a cup of tea, and that there will be someone to sit with them if necessary, is a huge help. Many clients are supported by friends or family at court, but for those who are not, having the option of a Court Networker to provide that support can be very important.

Victoria University Project

In January 2019, Court Network partnered with Victoria University to create a digital resource for students studying Criminal Justice. The interview-style video focused on Court Network's service in the courts and our volunteers' knowledge of issues faced by court users. These include reasons for people going to court and questions commonly asked by convicted offenders, victims and family members when at court.

Students studying BA Criminal Justice and BA Criminal Justice – Psychological Studies are shown the video during the introductory unit. The Learning & Development Manager and two Networkers featured in the video, which can be found on Victoria University's YouTube channel.

In addition, for some clients, just the fact of having an interaction with someone who is completely neutral and non-judgemental can make a difference to how they experience the day/s at court.

Victoria Legal Aid
Warrnambool



Corporate Partnerships

The corporate partnerships we have developed with law firms, MinterEllison and Lander & Rogers, enable us to provide volunteers with quality events, education and recognition. In December 2018, MinterEllison hosted a Christmas Lunch for seventy Queensland Networkers. In March 2019, forty Networkers attended an exclusive friends and family session with The Resilience Project, hosted by Lander & Rogers. Our National Volunteers Week event in May 2019 was also hosted by Lander & Rogers. We would like to express our thanks to Robert Reed, Special Counsel, and Jo Renkin, Pro Bono Partner, for their continued support of Court Network. We interviewed both Rob and Jo about their pro bono work and their views on Court Network.

OUR PARTNER

Rob Reed, MinterEllison

What draws MinterEllison to pro bono work?

MinterEllison has always recognised that as lawyers there is a professional obligation to contribute to building a safe and just society through use of the firm's skills and experience. Alongside our commercial activities, we want to give back to the community and help break cycles of disadvantage across the country.

What do you think are the biggest barriers to people accessing the justice system?

I would say the biggest barrier is whether people can afford legal help. The second is whether they are aware they have a legal problem and where to go to get help. Our longstanding work in Homeless Persons' Legal Services is based on the premise that many people have a lot going on in their lives and the law can help with many of these issues - we can assist by making that help more accessible.

Why do you appreciate the work Court Network does?

Through our involvement in initiatives like LawRight's Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic and Self Representation Service, we see that a lot of vulnerable clients aren't aware of the legal system, how it can assist them and how to access it. The prospect of going to court is daunting for anyone, but especially for people who don't have the proper support systems.

We have only recently partnered with Court Network, but I can see that it involves volunteers who will help these people, which breaks down some of those barriers. Making the experience more comfortable for people, even giving simple instructions on where they need to go, makes things easier. The work Court Network does fits well with what MinterEllison does - we provide the legal support and Court Network provides the holistic support. By making the courts more accessible to those who need it, Court Network is benefiting the justice system and making it work more efficiently. I believe Court Network makes a great contribution to the justice system.

OUR PARTNER

Jo Renkin, Lander & Rogers

What draws Lander & Rogers to pro bono work?

Jo: As a firm, we think it is the right thing to do. We want to contribute to our community and facilitate access to justice. Not everyone has legal skills but we have people who do, and we feel it is our responsibility to use these for other's benefit. The majority of our firm want to use their skills to help people and contribute to society in a positive way. We know that we can make an impact through pro bono work and this is really valued by lawyers as one of the purposes of being at the firm.

What do you think are the biggest barriers to people accessing the justice system?

There are so many reasons why the justice system is not accessible - studies consistently show that those most marginalised in our community are least likely to have access to lawyers and often experience the most legal problems. . Barriers can be a lack of understanding about what a legal problem looks like, or the way the legal system works. Further barriers arise due to language, disability or cultural background. Lawyers and legal professionals are helpful as they can recognise legal problems, assist with solving these and simplify the messiness of legal issues helping people to navigate the court system. They can teach people legal knowledge, about what information

is important and what needs to be done to get the best result or even how the law operates so that the issue doesn't arise again.. to look out for the most disadvantaged people, or at least not overlook clients who are in need and are hard to reach.

Why do you appreciate the work Court Network does?

Court Network performs a vital role as it is able to assist people at a time of crisis -whether they are people involved in a court proceeding as a party, family member or other associated person. Court is intimidating by design and process and people attending court are often experiencing other stress associated with their attendance whether emotional, financial or psychological. Court Network assists the process and delivery of justice by enabling people who are at court to have a greater understanding of what is occurring and to be able to participate with better understanding. This means that people can actively engage and have some agency rather than feel the process is occurring outside their control. Court can be an emotional process and many people leave court feeling more confused and anxious than before. Court Network makes things less chaotic on the day. It helps people to have a greater ability to reconcile what has gone on at the end of the day. I cannot underestimate the value of Court Network - to have just one person reach out to you at court is very meaningful.

Priority 4. Organisational Capability

Secure the organisational base needed to achieve our Mission.

OBJECTIVES

- Preserve existing funding arrangements and expand our funding sources
- Optimise our management and reporting systems to ensure we are efficient and effective
- Build the capability of our workforce to deliver our strategies

MEASURE

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

Celebrating Our Staff

Ming started working at Court Network in 1999. She has been Finance Manager since 2008 and continues to be a valued and highly respected member of the team. Ming brings a wealth of knowledge to the organisation and is a warm and caring colleague and friend.

We wanted to ask Ming about her time at Court Network and what she values most about the organisation.

Can you tell us about how you got your start at Court Network?

I started in 1999 as a part-time bookkeeper and administration officer. At that time, the organisation was operating in Victoria with 10 paid staff members, was under resourced and on a tight budget. Though I was employed on a part-time basis I was driven to learn new knowledge about all aspects of running the organisation and often I put in full time work to assist the then-ED. The Treasurer at the time said to the then-ED, "Finally you've got someone who knows what she's doing."

As the organisation grew, the reporting and administration became more complex so the admin role was separated from my job around 2004. Following the organisation's expansion to Queensland in late 2006, my workload greatly increased and it became obvious my part-time hours were not viable. I started working full time as Finance Manager in mid-2008. Today the organisation has 30 paid staff members.

What makes Court Network a special place to work?

The people. My co-workers and the Networkers. When I started, I was new to the country and to the culture and what I experienced at Court Network was that the people were so embracing and welcoming and supportive.

When I started we had volunteers in the office, who were all retired, and they were very friendly and patient. I was raising a child at the time and they were always giving me advice and support.

I worked hard and I pushed myself to learn about the organisation, the culture and the working environment of Australia but if you didn't know something, there was always someone who would try to help.

As I was new to the country and had no extended family, I adopted them as my family. To me, Court Network is like a family.

What is your favourite memory of your time at Court Network?

What stands out are the volunteers. What has struck me most is the dedication of our Networkers. I think the volunteers are incredible and I really admire and respect them.

I think it is the volunteers that are the heart of this organisation.

How important do you think the work of Court Network is?

This is a very unique service and I believe that anything that helps the community is important. When I started, I had come from a country where human rights were not high on the government's agenda. It was a widely held belief that people who were going to court were criminals.

I now see the whole picture. What is important in this society is humanity. Helping people during difficult times, who may find themselves in court, is an important thing to do. The volunteers who do this work for Court Network have my utmost respect.

Communications Strategy & Events

In April 2019, Court Network introduced its first ever Communications Strategy with the aim of increasing our profile in the courts and with local community services. Secondary aims of the strategy involve attracting a more diverse volunteer base and strengthening relationships with stakeholders.

Overtime, the organisation will focus on increasing fundraising activities and developing relationships within the media to promote and publicise the Court Network brand and service. The invaluable time and insight provided by Networkers to assist in the development of the communications resources are greatly appreciated.

So far, the Communications Strategy has produced:

- a very successful National Volunteers Week event
- a court audit and improved visibility project
- the development of promotional assets to aid in recruitment and stakeholder engagement.



Quality Accreditations

In 2018, Court Network Victoria undertook the Quality Innovation Practice (QIP) Assessment Cycle, and was awarded a three year Human Services Standards (HSS) Enhanced Accreditation. A mid-cycle review of Court Network Victoria was conducted by external reviewers from QIP in June 2019.

The QIP report highlights our achievements stating that 'Court Network has been operating in a reasonably stable environment since the last Assessment, providing it with the opportunity to address almost all improvement actions, as intended. Almost all improvements are either completed or on-track to be completed as planned.'

Court Network Queensland is required to demonstrate compliance with Human Services Quality Framework (HSQR) through a self-assessment against six Human Services Quality Standards:

- Governance and management
- Service access
- Responding to individuals
- Safety, wellbeing and rights
- Feedback, complaints and appeals
- Human resources

In April 2019, the Queensland team successfully completed the HSQR self-accreditation.

Board Biographies

THE HONOURABLE MARCIA NEAVE AO PRESIDENT | APPOINTED AGM 2016

Marcia 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.

JOHN ALBERT SECRETARY | APPOINTED AGM 2018

John has been a Networker for almost five years. Prior to retirement he was the Global Marketing Director for a multi-national textile company based in the UK. John has been on a number of boards and committees involved with strategic planning, change management, product development, managing design and creative teams in Europe, Australia and North America. John has been a mentor and committee member for Big Brothers, Big Sisters and continues to assist and advocate for refugees in Australia.

JOANNA WRIEDT MEMBER & NETWORKER | APPOINTED AGM 2016

Joanna is a current Court Networker. She is the chairman of the National Asthma Council of Australia and a director of Dairy Food Safety Victoria. Joanna chairs the Victorian Government's Radiation Advisory Committee. Previously, Joanna was a director of Fitted For Work and deputy chair of UnitingCare ReGen. She previously worked as a lawyer and as an adviser to a Federal Health Minister. Joanna holds a PhD in medical research and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

INSPECTOR ANNE RUDD MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2013, RE-ELECTED AGM 2016

Anne is a serving member of Victoria Police and over the past 18 years she has performed duties within the bayside area, Prosecutions Division and Family Violence Command. More recently, Anne has been based in the North West Metro Region and is currently the Yarra Local Area Commander. Anne is a lawyer and an experienced prosecutor within the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court where she specialised in prosecuting sexual offences and family violence matters. Anne was a board member of the Therapeutic Treatment Board from 2010-2015 and is a current serving board member of WAM (Women and Mentoring).

DEPUTY CHIEF MAGISTRATE, FELICITY BROUGHTON VICE PRESIDENT | APPOINTED AGM 2013, RE-ELECTED AGM 2016

Felicity was appointed as a Victorian Magistrate in January 2000 and has been a Deputy Chief Magistrate since 2007. Felicity is currently a Supervising Magistrate for the Family Violence and Family Law Portfolio, Felicity is a member of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine's Ethics Committee. Felicity was a board member of CASA House from 1989 to 2000 and of the Children's Protection Society (CPS) from 1993 to 2000 serving as their President from 1996 to 1999.

THE HONOURABLE DAVID HARPER MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2015

David was a Judge of the Supreme Court of Victoria from 1992 - 2013. 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. He is presently a consultant to the Judicial Commission of Victoria and the Ombudsman for the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne and Bendigo.

NEIL MICHAEL MEMBER & NETWORKER | 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 eight 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 ten years. 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.

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 has previously been a member of the steering committee at the Mount Gravatt Police Citizen's Youth Club. 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.

DON TIDBURY TREASURER | APPOINTED AGM 2015

Don is an experienced, award winning CEO and CFO who has worked across the public health and not-for-profit sectors. As a qualified CPA and GAICD with extensive experience across hospital, primary health, disability, residential aged care services, Don has a strong record in transforming organisations to achieve major improvements in the consumer experiences, culture, clinical governance, financial performance and stakeholder engagement. Don enjoys contributing to the health, aged and community sectors via other voluntary board appointments, including the Central Victorian Primary Care Partnership.

NICKY BROMBERG MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2016

Nicky is a current Court Networker. She 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.

BRIGITA CUNNINGTON MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2017

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

MARIA DIMOPOULOS MEMBER | APPOINTED AGM 2018

Maria is nationally and internationally recognised as an expert specialising in the intersections of diversity, gender equality and the law. She was inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2002. In 2008, Maria was appointed by the Federal government to the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children. Maria is the current Chairperson of the Harmony Alliance - Australia's national coalition of migrant and refugee women. In 2017, Maria was presented with the Lifetime Achievement award by the Migration Council of Australia for her tireless devotion to Australian multiculturalism and support for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women.

MEETINGS ATTENDED

Name	Year Joined	Meetings Eligible in 2018-2019	Meetings Attended in 2018 - 2019
Marcia Neave	2016	8	8
Felicity Broughton	2013	8	8
Don Tidbury	2015	8	7
John Albert	2018	5	5
Anne Rudd	2013	8	4
David Harper	2015	8	6
Nicky Bromberg	2016	8	7
Joanna Wriedt	2016	8	6
Brigita Cunnington	2017	8	6
Ian Lange	2017	8	4
Neil Michael	2017	8	5
Maria Dimopoulos	2018	5	3
Rudy Monteleone	2012	4	3
Charlene Micallef	2017	2	0

MEMBERS WHO RESIGNED OR RETIRED FROM CN BOARD DURING 2018 - 2019 FINANCIAL YEAR

Rudy Monteleone (Immediate past Secretary) Appointed AGM 2012, re-elected AGM 2015, term ended November 2018.

Charlene Micallef Appointed AGM 2017, term ended October 2018.

OUR STAFFS IN VICTORIA

Bernadette Burchell	Victorian State Manager
Sarah-Jane Terrill (from May 2019) Paul Drost (until May 2019)	Victorian Training Manager
Sarah-Jane Terrill (until May 2019)	Victorian Trainer
Jo Staunton (from May 2019) Jennie Child (until March 2019)	Family Violence Program Manager
Deb Brown, Georgie Cockram, Sarah Harris, Mary Rahilly, Julie Toohey	Metropolitan Program Managers
Claire Connell, Chris Howe, Michelle McKay, Patricia Mullins, Lyn Wilson	Regional Program Managers
Ming Zhou	Finance Manager
Katherine Morgan (from April 2019) Amber Rose (until January 2019)	Communications & Operations Officer
Ileana Guizzo	Quality Coordinator
Joao Goncalves	Support Officer - Program Management
Ann Barrett	State Administration Officer
Sash Samarasinghe	Receptionist/Admin Support Officer

OUR STAFFS IN QUEENSLAND

Annette Hogan	Queensland State Manager
Tina Thomas	Brisbane Program Manager
Gail Jackson	Cairns Program Manager
Jason Meldrum (from May 2019) Madeleine Rudge (until May 2019)	Townsville Program Manager
Jodie Mullens	Victim Support Unit Program Manager
Sandra Scobie	Victim Support Unit Services Manager
Tracey Wood (from October 2018) Renee Dillon (until October 2018)	State Administration Officer



Treasurer's Report For the Year ended 30 June 2019

I am pleased to present the audited financial statements for the year ended 30th June 2019. This financial year has a surplus of \$26,332

This result is the product of strong engagement with our wonderful volunteers, effective negotiations with our valued funding partners, good financial management and close monitoring of expenses over the entire financial year.

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 warmest thanks and sincere appreciation.

The organisation's total income for the year was \$2,678,424, which was an increase of \$264,412 on 2017/18. The increase is primarily attributed to increased funding from Court Services Victoria to deliver a new service in the MCV Specialist Family Violence Courts.

Expenditure for the year increased to \$2,652,092. 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, and costs related to the MCV Specialist Family Violence Court Program.

Court Network continues to diligently manage its cash reserves to ensure the organisation remains solvent, can fulfil all of its financial obligations and has adequate funds available to accommodate any unplanned emergencies.

The financial position of the organisation remains sound with a positive net equity of \$623,365, representing an increase of 4.4% on the previous year.

While the financial result for the year was solid, it was ultimately achieved through good management. We are, however, totally aware of the potential difficulties and level of uncertainty in the future due to likely funding constraints from providers in the current challenging fiscal environment.

I would like to personally thank Ms Ming Zhou, our Finance Manager, for her sound oversight and diligent stewardship of the financials of the organisation.

This is my final year as Treasurer of Court Network. Over the last four years, it has been an honour and a privilege to work with our fantastic volunteers, our talented & dynamic employees, our brilliant executive team and my highly dedicated fellow colleagues on the Court Network Board.

Don Tidbury
Treasurer

Financial Statutory Statements

INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	NOTE	2019	2018
INCOME		\$	\$
Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies	3	2,657,334	2,393,282
Interest Revenue		19,050	15,406
Other Revenue		2,040	5,324
		2,678,424	2,414,012
EXPENDITURE			
Employment Costs		2,074,393	1,808,108
Travel Expenses – Staff		67,869	65,118
Volunteer Expenses		65,327	75,633
Telecommunication Costs		20,451	20,483
Board Costs		4,358	8,401
Consultants		15,402	15,438
AGM and Conference Event		20,522	16,294
IT and Office Equipment Maintenance		45,520	47,419
Publications, Marketing, Printing and Stationery		36,154	45,794
Staff Recruitment, Learning and Amenities		20,761	13,321
Depreciation		5,785	4,916
Court Support and Meetings		6,361	4,706
Insurance		5,275	4,721
Rent		243,540	237,139
Other Administration Expenses		20,374	18,933
		2,652,092	2,386,424
OPERATING RESULT FOR THE YEAR			
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR		26,332	27,588

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2019

	NOTE	2019	2018
CURRENT ASSETS		\$	\$
Cash and cash equivalents	4	1,345,329	1,110,989
Receivables and Prepayments		5,061	7,831
		1,350,390	1,118,820
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Fixed Assets	5	6,244	12,029
		6,244	12,029
TOTAL ASSETS		1,356,634	1,130,849
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Creditors and Accruals		129,162	123,960
Income in advance	6	402,292	202,519
Provisions	7	201,815	207,337
		733,269	533,816
TOTAL LIABILITIES		733,269	533,816
NET ASSETS		623,365	597,033
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Reserve	9	-	6,079
Accumulated Surplus		623,365	590,954
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		623,365	597,033

Financial Statutory Statements

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	NOTE	Retained Earnings	Reserves	Total
		\$	\$	\$
Balance 1 July 2017		563,366	6,079	569,445
Surplus for the Year		27,588	-	27,588
Transfer to/ (from) Reserves	9	-	-	-
Balance 30 June 2018		590,954	6,079	597,033
Surplus for the Year		26,332	-	26,332
Transfer to/ (from) Reserves	9	6,079	[6,079]	
Balance 30 June 2019		623,365		623,365

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

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

	NOTE	2019	2018
		\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts			
Grants from Government and Statutory Bodies		2,613,566	2,148,763
Interest		19,050	15,406
Other		2,040	5,324
Payments			
Employment Expenses		[2,057,489]	[1,847,905]
Supplies		[342,827]	[363,101]
Net cash (used in)/ provided from operating activities	8	234,340	[41,513]
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for purchase of plant and equipment		-	[11,439]
Net cash used in investing activities		-	[11,439]
Net (decrease)/ increase in cash held		234,340	[52,952]
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		1,110,989	1,163,941
Cash at the end of the financial year	4	1,345,329	1,110,989

Notes to the Financial Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

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 2019 were providing personal support, non-legal information and referral to those in contact with the justice system. The Association provides support, information and referral to persons attending court and advocates for the needs of all court users.

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

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

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.

AASB 9 Financial Instruments

AASB 9 was adopted using the modified retrospective approach and as such comparatives have not been restated. There was no impact on opening retained profits as at 1 July 2018.

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 2019. The Association has not yet assessed the impact of these new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations.

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 recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements, AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows, AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors and AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures.

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.

Notes to the Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

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 determination of whether an arrangement is or contains a lease is based on the substance of the arrangement and requires an assessment of whether the fulfilment of the arrangement is dependent on the use of a specific asset or assets and the arrangement conveys a right to use the asset.

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

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.

Notes to the Financial Statutory Statements

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019

NOTE 3: GRANTS FROM GOVERNMENT AND STATUTORY BODIES

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Commonwealth Attorney General	-	4,028
Court Services Victoria	1,380,124	1,192,204
Victoria Department of Health & Human Services	340,380	320,737
Victoria Legal Aid	136,353	145,462
Queensland Department of Justice	800,477	730,851
	2,657,334	2,393,282

NOTE 4: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Cash on Hand	1,299	919
Cash at Bank	839,053	616,236
Cash on Deposit	504,977	493,834
	1,345,329	1,110,989

NOTE 5: FIXED ASSETS

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Office Equipment	55,553	55,553
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(49,309)	(43,524)
	6,244	12,029

NOTE 6: INCOME IN ADVANCE

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Court Services Victoria (Department of Justice)	205,701	6,021
Queensland Department of Justice	33,892	60,471
Victoria Department of Health & Human Services	162,698	136,027
	402,291	202,519

NOTE 7: PROVISIONS

A. Employee Entitlements

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Annual Leave and Other Entitlements	112,277	80,398
Long Service Leave	51,733	61,853
	164,010	142,251

B. Other

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Children's Court Project	11,805	11,805
Staff Professional Development	-	3,401
Tech & Communication Strategy	-	15,880
Quality Management	25,000	33,000
Victim Support Unit Brisbane Volunteer Support	1,000	1,000
	37,805	65,086
	201,815	207,337

NOTE 8: CASH FLOW RECONCILIATION

<i>Reconciliation of net cash used in operating activities to operating results</i>		
	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Operating Result	26,332	27,587
Depreciation	5,785	4,916
<i>Changes in assets and liabilities:</i>		
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables and Prepayments	2,770	(3,495)
(Decrease) in Creditors and Accruals	5,202	(38,248)
Increase/(Decrease) in Provision for Entitlements	21,759	(22,472)
Increase/(Decrease) in Provision for Projects	(27,281)	(2,421)
(Decrease) in Income in Advance	199,773	(7,380)
Cashflows (used in)/ from operations	234,340	(41,513)

NOTE 9: RESERVE

Funds set aside in the Reserve is for the on-going maintenance of Networkers Online Database.		
	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Networker Online Database Reserve	-	6,079
	-	6,079

NOTE 10: LEASE COMMITMENTS

Operating Lease commitments in relation to the rental of photocopying equipment.		
	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Payable - Minimum Lease Payments (inclusive of GST):		
not later than 12 months	1,520	3,039
between 12 months and 5 years	-	1,520
	1,520	4,559

NOTE 11: CONTINGENCIES

The Association had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2019 (30 June 2018: nil).

NOTE 12: EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2019 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the Association's operations, the results of those operations, or the Association's state of affairs in future financial years.

Statement by the Management Committee

COURT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 2 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Court Network Inc. as at 30 June 2019 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Court Network Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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


Don Tidbury (Treasurer)


John Albert (Secretary)

23/09/2019
Dated:

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 2019, 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:

- giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 2, 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 has 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.

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.

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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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.

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

CASSANDRA GRAVENALL

Partner

23 September 2019

Melbourne

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Where to Find Us

Victoria:

MELBOURNE LAW COURTS

- Coroners Court of Victoria
- County Court of Victoria
- Supreme Court of Victoria
- Melbourne Family and Federal Circuit Court
- Melbourne Magistrates' Court
- Children's Court of Victoria
- Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT)
- 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
- Sunshine Magistrates' Court

T: (03) 8306 6966
E: admin@courtnetwork.com.au

BALLARAT LAW COURTS

T: (03) 8306 6915
E: ballarat@courtnetwork.com.au

BENDIGO LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5440 4101
E: bendigo@courtnetwork.com.au

CASTLEMAINE LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5472 1081
E: bendigo@courtnetwork.com.au

COLAC LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5231 5455
E: warrnambool@courtnetwork.com.au

ECHUCA LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5480 2675
E: bendigo@courtnetwork.com.au

GEELONG LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5225 3356
E: warrnambool@courtnetwork.com.au

LATROBE VALLEY LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5116 5252
E: gippsland@courtnetwork.com.au

MILDURA LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5021 6000
E: mildura@courtnetwork.com.au

SHEPPARTON LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5821 4633
E: shepparton@courtnetwork.com.au

WANGARATTA LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5721 0900
E: shepparton@courtnetwork.com.au

WARRNAMBOOL LAW COURTS

T: (03) 5564 1125
E: warrnambool@courtnetwork.com.au

WODONGA LAW COURTS

T: (02) 6043 7000
E: shepparton@courtnetwork.com.au

Queensland:

BRISBANE LAW COURTS

- Arrest Court
- Supreme & District Courts
- Magistrates' Court
- Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT)

T: (07) 3738 7790
E: queensland@courtnetwork.com.au

CAIRNS COURT COMPLEX

- Supreme Court
- District Court
- Magistrates' Court
- QCAT

T: (07) 4048 1422
E: cairns@courtnetwork.com.au

TOWNSVILLE COURT COMPLEX

- Supreme Court
- District Court
- Magistrates' Court
- QCAT

T: (07) 4781 8695
E: townsvillepm@courtnetwork.com.au

VICTIM SUPPORT UNIT

- Ipswich (VSU)
- Sunshine Coast (VSU Outreach)
- Gympie (VSU Outreach)

T: 1800 267 671
E: vsuqld@courtnetwork.com.au



Court Network Inc

VICTORIA

–

Court Network
Head Office

5/555 Lonsdale St
Melbourne VIC 3000

Phone: (03) 8306 6966
Toll free: 1800 681 614
Email: admin@courtnetwork.com.au

QUEENSLAND

–

The Queen Elizabeth II Courts of Law
Brisbane Supreme and District Courts

415 George St
Brisbane QLD 4000

Phone: (07) 3738 7790
Toll free: 1800 267 671
Email: queensland@courtnetwork.com.au

ABN: 85 517 169 601

ARBN: 122 324 805

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