

# ANNUAL REPORT 2016



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# Chairperson's report

This last financial year has seen a great deal of work accomplished in the DV sector. After the "Not Now, Not Ever" report early in 2015 and the CWRG's position paper "More than just a bed" was presented in October, a number of recommendations have been or are being implemented across all facets of the sector. This increased attention to the issues faced by women and children experiencing domestic and family violence has been welcomed by our services and we have spent much of the year in various consultations and working groups as we seek to see changes implemented to improve outcomes for the women and children we support.

We have participated this year in an inter-agency working group the Department of Housing have created to unite representatives from the refuge and DV sector with Area Housing Service Centre Managers and representatives from policy and program development areas within the Department of Housing. This group has identified two main objectives: firstly to work towards specific outcomes for identified high level complex cases, and secondly to identify and report on trends appearing in common barriers for women and children to access housing after experiencing domestic and family violence. A key outcome from this group already has been a policy submission to the Housing Strategy consultation to

recommend consideration to pathways for women and children escaping violence who do not have any access to income due to their residency status. This submission will now be presented by the Qld Minister for Housing to the National Housing and Homelessness Ministers' Meeting for further discussion on a federal level. We are very hopeful that this issue which we have raised over many years is finally being heard and considered on a larger scale.

Another recommendation which particularly relates to our services is the move of our service contracts back to the Department of Communities. This process has just begun and we look forward to working with our new colleagues in Communities and to a more support-focussed funding program which reflects the services that women and children find so vital in creating sustainable, long-term change.

Early in the financial year the CWRG decided to undergo a strategic planning process to identify clear goals for the coming year. This was a fantastic day with extremely productive discussion and contributions from all and we left with a clear direction for the year ahead. Our special thanks to Marnie from Majella refuge and Susan from Lions InPlace for facilitating these discussions. From this day, we have drafted mission

and values statements, and are working towards updating our constitution to reflect the work that we do, as well as establishing working groups to focus on key goals.

A few years ago it was decided to invite the referral services to bi-monthly meetings. We value their participation and encourage them to attend our meetings to share information. We aim to increase their attendance at our meetings and have more open discussions around what is happening in our sector so that collectively we provide the best response.

I would like to thank the Executive Committee for their hard work this year, they have demonstrated their commitment to this organisation, and have worked diligently to ensure that the CWRG continues to be a strong advocate for the refuge sector, and for the women and children we support.

**Sue Clark**  
Chairperson

# Combined Women's Refuge Group (SE QLD) Annual Report 2016

## 2015-2016 Executive Committee

Chairperson -	Sue Clark Koongoora
Vice Chair -	Carrie Colonna Chisholm
Secretary -	Bernadette O'Byrne Windana Support Centre
Treasurer -	Cathy Johns Ipswich Women's Shelter
General members -	Heath Truda Women's House  Stacey Larkin Jebb & Gareema

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Our special thanks to Save the Children for our meeting space and to all our guest speakers for 2015-2016:

\* The Honorable Lee-Anne Enoch MP, Minister for Housing

\* Melanie Anderson & Natasha Boyle - Department of Housing

\* Tracy Winstrom - Department of Human Services

\* Sergeant Roger O'Malia - DVLO, Qld Police Service

\* Suzette & Deborah - Department of Housing

\* Jacque Lachmund - CEO Challenge

\* Chrystal Kireka - Compass Housing

\* Katherine Saffioti - Department of Housing

\* Julia - Friends With Dignity

\* Camille Furtado - Australian Services Union

# Treasurer's report

## Year ended 30th June 2016

As Treasurer of CWRG I present the financial report for the year ending 30 June 2016. In presenting this report I acknowledge the dedicated team I work alongside which includes the Executive Committee, Liz and the membership.

### Income and expenditure

Memberships for the 2015/2016 financial year yielded \$6300, an increase of \$2205 from the previous financial year. Wages for the secretariat position cost \$8215.08. Fortunately, donations received from Assist-a-Sista and the Masters sausage sizzle fundraiser (which raised \$1171) held us in a good position and supplemented the expenses for the financial year. Next year we will continue to address

the shortfall in income to cover the Secretariat wages and administrative costs by holding fundraising activities including biannual market stalls, adopting a CEO Challenge Partner and sourcing donations.

### In appreciation

- \* Windana Support Service for covering extra administration expenses (printing, stationery, postage etc.)
- \* Assist-a-Sista for their financial contribution of \$2000 towards Secretariat wages
- \* the Department of Communities, 612 ABC radio and QLD Rail who partnered together to hold an amazing Christmas appeal to collect toys and gifts for

the women and children spending Christmas in refuges

\* Share the Dignity who collected & delivered donations of sanitary items and handbags filled with personal items for women in refuges.

\* Aurizon for collecting gift cards for women in refuge at their International Women's Day conference.

\* Master's for hosting sausage Sizzle fundraiser

\* All donors we never meet but who donate clothing, furnishings and household goods to support women and children in refuges

\* Refuge workers donating time to assist with fundraising events

\* Liz Macdonald on behalf of the membership we thank you for your dedication and continual support of CWRG. The many extra hours responding and coordinating phone calls and emails, attending meetings and your commitment to being a voice for women and children in refuge never goes unnoticed. You are an invaluable asset to the membership and the wider Domestic & Family Violence Sector.

### Treasurer's Certification

I hereby certify that the Combined Women's Refuge Group (SE QLD) keeps financial records in a way to properly record the association's income

**Catherine Johns**  
Treasurer

### Statement of Income

For the Year Ended 30th June 2016

<b>Income</b>	
Donations	\$3,171.00
Activities Income	\$0.00
Memberships	\$6,300.00
Bank Interest	\$0.35
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$9,471.35</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Bank Fees	\$22.50
Consultant's fees	\$330.00
Fees and charges	\$49.95
Wages and salaries	\$8,215.08
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,617.53</b>
<b>Net Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>\$853.82</b>



## Progress in QLD - is it enough?

It has now been over a year and a half since Anastasia Palaszczuk, Premier of Queensland, announced the release of the 'Not Now Not Ever' report written by Quentin Bryce and the Special Taskforce on the Domestic and Family Violence. When it was released, the Premier promised to implement all 140 recommendations outlined in the report and to date, there has been significant progress. One of the recommendations was the establishment of a Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council whose job is to oversee and advocate for the execution of the recommendations and to regularly report back to the Government on progress. This Council listed their achievements so far in their six month report (December 2015 to May 2016) and they included: the release of a Domestic and Family Violence Strategy; development of a Respectful Relationships education program for Queensland schools; two new crisis shelters established in Brisbane and Townsville; legislation changes – new requirements for magistrates to consider ouster orders for perpetrators, increased penalties for breaches of protection orders, new criminal offence of non-fatal strangulation, introduction of aggravating factor of domestic violence for sentencing of certain offences; specialist domestic violence court pilot program introduced at the Southport Magistrates Court; introduction of domestic and family violence leave by the Queensland Government; announcement of an integrated response pilot for the Logan/Beenleigh areas and for Mt Isa; and, appointment of the Queensland Police Service Deputy Commissioner as champion of domestic and family violence reform.

Since this report was released In May this year, the Minister for Communities, Women and Youth, Minister for Child Safety and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Shannon Fentiman stated that there have been five more recommendations which have been completed and new legislation was introduced to make the processing and issuing of domestic violence orders simpler for police and to enhance the safety of victims, including children.

We applaud these much needed and long sought after attempts to improve legislation, education and community attitudes and cultures towards domestic and family violence. However, we cannot forget the approximately 44 women and 4 children killed by domestic and family violence in Australia, including 10 women in Queensland in the last 10 months (Destroy the Joint, Counting Dead Women Australia 2016), Only last week a man killed his wife and two adult children in Hervey Bay. This statistic is still unacceptably high. As Annabelle Crabb has suggested, 'I am a feminist because it bothers me that a woman gets killed by her male partner every single week and somehow that doesn't qualify as a tools-down national crisis even though if a man got killed by a shark every week we'd probably arrange to have the ocean drained' (The Age, March 2015).

We need more refuge beds. Di Mangan from DVConnect said that there has been a massive increase in demand from women and children seeking safety from violent situations within the last year. She reported that they provided 9000 nights of motel accommodation to women and children escaping violence in the 2014/15 financial year and this was almost triple the nights of accommodate provided the year before ([www.abc.net.au](http://www.abc.net.au) 19/9/2016). Women's refuges are vital in keeping women and children safe. For a percentage of women escaping domestic and family violence, refuges are the only option that will keep them safe. For these women and children, they have exhausted all other accommodation options as the perpetrator knows where her family and friends live and will continue to harass, threaten and stalk her. These are the women and children who are at the greatest risk of being killed by their partner. There are still massive gaps in the support and accommodation sector. The Combined Women's Refuge Group published their position paper, 'More than just a bed' in October 2015 and this paper outlined the support provided in refuge and the necessity of this support to women and children to build a violence free future. The government did establish two 72 hour refuges to replace the need for women to stay in motels and to allow for greater support during that transition period while waiting for refuge accommodation, however, without allocating additional beds to refuges for these women and children to be transferred to and the greater numbers of women seeking safe havens, women are still being motelled (and many of them return to violent situations as it gets too difficult to have children in motels for any length of time) and these 72 hour refuges are accommodating women and children for greater periods of time. More refuge beds are needed to enhance the safety of women and children.

## Our mission:

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“The Combined Women’s Refuge Group unites Domestic and Family Violence refuges to advocate for women and children’s right to live a life free from violence.”

## Our values:

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**1. Stand against DFV:** The CWRG acknowledge that no level of violence against women and children is acceptable. We support the right for women and children to have immediate access to safe and supported accommodation to escape domestic violence, as well as the range of other specialist women’s services that exist when refuge is not required.

**2. Advocate for women & children, and refuges/services:** The CWRG advocates for social justice, for the interests of women and children escaping domestic and family violence, and for the services which provide them with information, referral, accommodation and support, so that women and children can live free from violence.

**3. Best practice:** The CWRG is used as a platform to encourage best practice and aims to provide a space to encourage, innovate and share ideas, to ensure that women and children accessing services can be assured of receiving the same level of service provision no matter which service they access.

**4. Inclusive access:** We support inclusive access for all women and children escaping domestic and family violence and do not discriminate. We also recognise the vital need for specialised support for particularly vulnerable women and children escaping violence including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD clients - particularly those further disadvantaged by lack of access to income, women and children in rural areas, and women and children with disabilities.

**5. Have a voice:** For CWRG to have a strong voice in the community and with key stakeholders, working together towards our ultimate aim - for women and children to live a life free of violence.

## Our history:

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The CWRG provides a forum for women's refuges in the South East QLD region to meet, share information, and discuss and respond to emerging issues in the sector.

CWRG Herstory:

\* The existence of women's refuges as a service response to DV in QLD predates the first regional DV service by around a decade.

\* The first meeting of CWRG in SE QLD can be traced back to 1978. Women's Refuges state conferences held in 1979 and 1980 discussed topics including the Housing Commission, child care, rape counselling, self help, health care, volunteers and "where are we going?"

\* By 1980 the CWRG had 12 operating refuges on its contact list including refuges for alcohol and drug dependent women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, and women with mental health care problems. Issues regularly discussed at meetings included: the need for child care workers at all refuges, relations with police, migrant women, child protection, housing and school enrolments.

\* Minutes from a CWRG meeting in Dec 1993 reveal that there seemed to be general agreement that the accommodation program SAAP was not the best fit in terms of a funding program for refuges as our core business was to provide women and children escaping violence with support and safety rather than accommodation. This is an ongoing issue and was identified by the Not Now, Not Ever DV taskforce report in 2015.

\* CWRG has identified a concern regarding the inability of service funding to cope with Award pay rates. Services have had to reduce staff numbers and hours of work to cope with this. Meanwhile across Australia, on average, one woman is killed every week by a violent partner or ex-partner. This has got to stop!

\* DV refuges have a proud legacy and wealth of experience and skills in working with women and children who have experienced violence and abuse.

\* In addition to advocating on behalf of individuals, women's refuges have a strong tradition of lobbying and campaigning for law reform and improved institutional responses to DV as well as providing community education. From their activism and inspiration, other specialist DV services have emerged, laws have been established and lives have been saved.

## About us:

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The Combined Women's Refuge Group in South East QLD (CWRG) is a peak body representing the interests and concerns of the domestic and family violence refuge sector in South East Queensland. Our main aim is to continue to support women and children who are the victims of violence. Domestic and family violence continues to be a serious issue in our community.

In Queensland alone, approximately 23 women are killed by their intimate partner each year (Queensland State Coroner cited in DVConnect 2013). Between 80 and 100 Australian women die at the hands of their male partners every year – and a woman in Australia is more likely to be killed in her own home by her male partner than anywhere else or by anyone else. (ABS Personal Safety Survey 2006 cited in DV Connect 2013) In the Australian component of the International Violence Against Women Survey, over one third of women who had a current or former intimate partner reported experiencing physical and/or sexual violence since the age of sixteen. (Mouzos & Makkai 2004, p. 44).

As a peak body, the CWRG aims to provide a platform for refuges to have their concerns raised and action taken to bring these issues to the public's attention. The CWRG is vital to ensuring the refuges and the women and children we support continue to have a voice and to ensure that the issues they face are raised in the public arena, as well as providing a forum for encouraging best practice and collaboration to ensure a high standard of service delivery and improved pathways for women escaping violence.

The CWRG relies on our annual membership fees and donations to operate. These funds go towards costs of: monthly meetings, training, statewide and local meetings, updating resources, payment of secretarial wages and other administrative costs. The CWRG membership is made up of domestic violence refuges and specialist domestic and family violence services. All Executive Committee members are voluntary and the CWRG employs a secretariat to assist in the administration of the CWRG.



# CEO Challenge Partnerships

This has been another successful year for refugees in partnerships with the business sector, and we have also seen a large increase in Government departments joining and taking part in this valuable program which is fantastic to see.

## Australia's CEO Challenge - who we are:

Australia's CEO Challenge is a Charity that works with the business sector to address the issue of domestic and family violence in the workplace, because people affected by or who use violence are the same people employed in our workplaces and living in our community: they are our co-workers and employees, our customers and suppliers, and our friends, neighbours and family.

The aim of ACEOCs Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program is to create workplaces that are appropriately and proactively responsive to staff affected by domestic and family violence. It provides:

- A best practice domestic and family violence policy document for workplaces to adapt to their organisation.
- Specialist training for Human Resource and Management professionals on applying the policy to support staff experiencing domestic and family violence.
- Domestic and family violence awareness training for all staff on prevalence, signs and how to respond.
- Opportunities to partner with local domestic violence shelters and provide resources to support women and children who have escaped domestic and family violence.
- An E-learning tool has been developed which, covers both

understanding domestic and family violence, and the impact of domestic and family violence in the workplace, as well as how to respond to staff and colleagues who may be impacted by domestic and family violence.

## Developing Awareness and Supporting Relationships between Workplaces and Services;

In the past financial period, Australia's CEO Challenge (2015-2016 Financial year) facilitated and supported 9 new partnerships between workplaces and local domestic violence shelters. In total, we have 22 current partnerships between businesses and shelters.

These Workplaces contributed \$280,000 in cash, donated goods, in kind, pro bono and volunteer support to their partner shelters.

## What is a partnership?

Each partnership is unique because each business has something different to offer and each community organisation has differing needs.

- Our partnerships provide mutual benefits through: Raised awareness of the complex social issues facing families affected by domestic violence
- Increased safety through knowledge and skills development in relation to domestic violence and its impact on the workplace
- Increased resources to services which are traditionally not resourced to the extent that is required to adequately address the needs of their clients
- Opportunities for staff engagement through volunteering and other activities that benefit everyone involved.



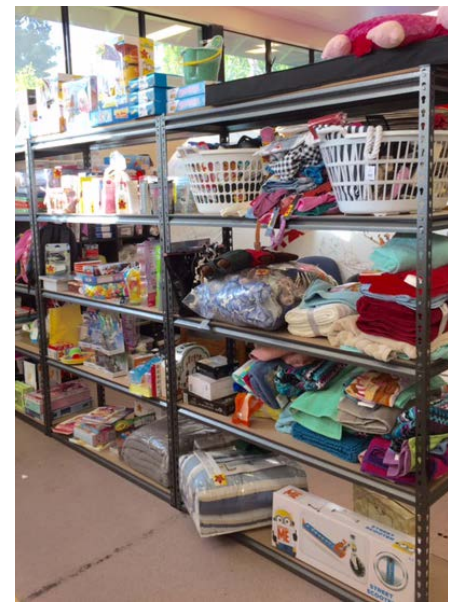


# Fundraising and Donors

Share the  
Dignity  
donations



Christmas  
care  
appeal



Masters  
sausage  
sizzle  
January  
2016



# Domestic violence

## Key statistics

How often police in Australia deal with a domestic violence matter:

every 2  
minutes

Number of charges for new Non-Fatal Strangulation offense

239

In the six months since a stand-alone criminal offense was created for non-fatal choking, strangulation and suffocation in a domestic relationship, 239 people have been charged with these offenses. That's 1.3 per day.

Cost of domestic and family violence to the QLD economy is estimated to be up to:

\$3,200,000

## Breaches of domestic violence orders in QLD

↑ 195%

Breaches of DVO's have increased over 195% from 2001 to 2015 and forward estimates based on the first 10 months of 2016 indicate the increase to 2016 will be at least 266%. (Breaches have increased from 519 in January 2001 to 2406 in October 2016).



## Proportion of homicide victims related to domestic and family violence (ie where the offender is a partner, ex-partner or family member per QPS)



where women are victims:

68%



where men are victims:

4%

2,406



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