



# ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14





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## OUR 31ST YEAR OF CREATING ANOTHER CHANCE

*Message from the CEO* Karenza Louis-Smith

We are privileged to share with you ACSO's 2013–2014 annual report, a reflection and celebration of our 31st year of serving the community.

ACSO operates with a simple yet courageous vision; to create a safe and inclusive community freed of crime and prisons. This means our mission is to help people **transition from prison, assist ex offenders in the community, stop them from reoffending and intervene to divert others from committing crime.**

This annual report is a unique window into ACSO, our people and the work we do. It will give greater insight into our various programs that, last year, helped around 20,000 Victorians change their lives by moving on from the criminal justice system.

This report will share the stories of people whose lives have been transformed: people who came to ACSO for help with alcohol and drug problems, mental health issues and intellectual disabilities. Many had an offending background and were looking for help to rebuild their lives or to get their lives back on track. They were looking for support to find somewhere safe and affordable to live and to get back into education or training to help them find a stable job.

As a team, we feel proud when we see people recently released from prison participating fully in the community and no longer

committing crime. Equally, we are proud when we see people on community based orders completing those sentences and continuing on to live positive healthy lifestyles in the community. We are grateful for the partnerships we have developed to connect people who appear likely to enter the criminal justice system with a range of community based programs aimed to help them get their lives back on track. Without a working relationship with our partner community groups and organisations, the businesses and employers, and government and you, we could not deliver the outcomes that we do. Every one of you helps us make a difference.

As the CEO of ACSO, I think I have the best job in the world! I am proud of the talented team that delivers the range of services we provide at ACSO. It is their passion, commitment and willingness to go that extra mile that will continue to make a difference to the lives of people who most need our help. It is their commitment and expertise that will see us achieve our vision to build safe and inclusive communities.

This year's report also gives a sneak preview of our vision for the future. In November 2014, we will launch our strategic plan for the next five years. We have recognised the fact that ACSO is often "the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff"; the emergency service that helps pick up the pieces and supports people to rebuild their lives after they have fallen into the criminal justice system. As we look to the future, we see the value and importance of ACSO operating in the prevention space. Our golden aim is to use our skills, knowledge and expertise to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system and, in doing so, begin to "place a fence at the top of the cliff".

ACSO believes everyone deserves another chance and when that chance is offered it can, and often will, change lives.

So please enjoy reading the 2013–2014 annual report.





# WHAT WE STAND FOR

*We are about ending the cycle of crime*

“Fundamental to our work is the belief that everyone deserves another chance. Our values and behaviours that underpin that belief is at the core of everything we do.”

“Our mission is to influence change in the lives of people who have found themselves on the wrong side of the law; people with chronic addiction, mental illness and intellectual disability. People who in so many ways are often victims themselves.”

## OUR VISION

A safe and inclusive community freed of crime and prisons.

## OUR MISSION

We help people transition from prison, assist them in the community, stop them from reoffending and intervene to divert others from committing crime.

## OUR ETHOS

“Create another chance”

## OUR CORE VALUES

### Passion

Our heart and passion is at the core of everything we do.

### Belief in humanity

We believe that everyone deserves another chance and is entitled to opportunities which can help them to change their lives and realise their potential.

### Integrity

We are genuine in our relationships with clients and each other, always true to ourselves and courageous in our approach.

### Pioneering spirit

We are willing to explore and develop new and innovative solutions and take on the challenges that confront us.



## OUR OPERATIONAL GOALS

### Recover

We promote, support and believe in the values of hope and recovery in all of our work.

### Rehabilitate

We develop rehabilitation programs that divert people from committing crime or reoffending by helping them address and change problem behaviour.

### Reintegrate

We reintegrate people from prison back into the community, housing them and assisting them to successfully re-enter the workforce.



# WHAT WE DO

## Overview of our service offering

Employing close to 210 staff, ACSO delivers services across the width and breadth of Victoria. Our programs, services and supports enable us to achieve our mission to help people change their lives for the better.

Established over 31 years ago, ACSO was originally set up to support people transitioning from prison back into the community—and our work in prison is still a major part of what we do. ACSO also works with offenders in the community; that is with people released from prison or those sentenced to a range of community orders. Our goal is simple: to give people opportunities to rebuild their lives and successfully reintegrate back into society.

Last year across Victoria, around 20,000 people accessed our range of services. Our 30 years' experience informs us that behaviour change programs are important to helping people reintegrate successfully back into the community. We know that these make a huge difference in people's lives. We also know that alone, these programs are often not enough to help people break the cycle they are in.

Over the past year, our team has been working with our partners to establish a unique Forensic Housing Alliance to build pathways for people to have safe, stable and affordable housing. We continue to build strong pathways for people to get back into education and training. We work with employers to reconnect people with the workforce because we know jobs change lives. Our programs focus on building life skills that help people live successfully and independently in the community.

“ **20,000** Victorians each year are assisted by our range of services.”

## A NEW ROLE FOR ACSO

ACSO is now delivering a much larger response in the areas of prevention and diversion. As highlighted by our CEO at the start of this report, ACSO needs to be the figurative fence at the top of the cliff; the support structure that helps people take control and make positive changes in their lives before they fall into the criminal justice system.

The community services landscape is changing as a result of sector reform. Embracing that change, ACSO has worked in partnership with many community organisations and the state government to offer our unique set of skills and expertise in the areas of assessment. ACSO has been providing a state wide forensic alcohol and other drugs (AOD) intake and assessment service for the past 17 years. On top of this, we have recently established our ACSO Connect service. This service provides voluntary intake, assessment and treatment referral for consumers experiencing mental health, alcohol and drugs issues across regional Victoria. Our commitment is to provide the same quality service to a consumer in metropolitan Melbourne or a consumer living anywhere across regional Victoria, from Warrnambool to Wangaratta. We work with our partners in community based mental health and drug and alcohol services to ensure people receive the right treatment mix when and where they need it.

ACSO is the glue that joins the rich and varied tapestry of community supports to ensure that people who need help get the best response from us all.

Our team develops a transition plan for every single person. Each plan matches a specific consumer's needs; with the highest-risk consumer receiving the greatest level of intensive support. The passion and commitment shown by ACSO staff ensures the highest quality service is delivered to those who need our help. We are confident the community is a safer, more inclusive place because of our interventions, programs and supports.

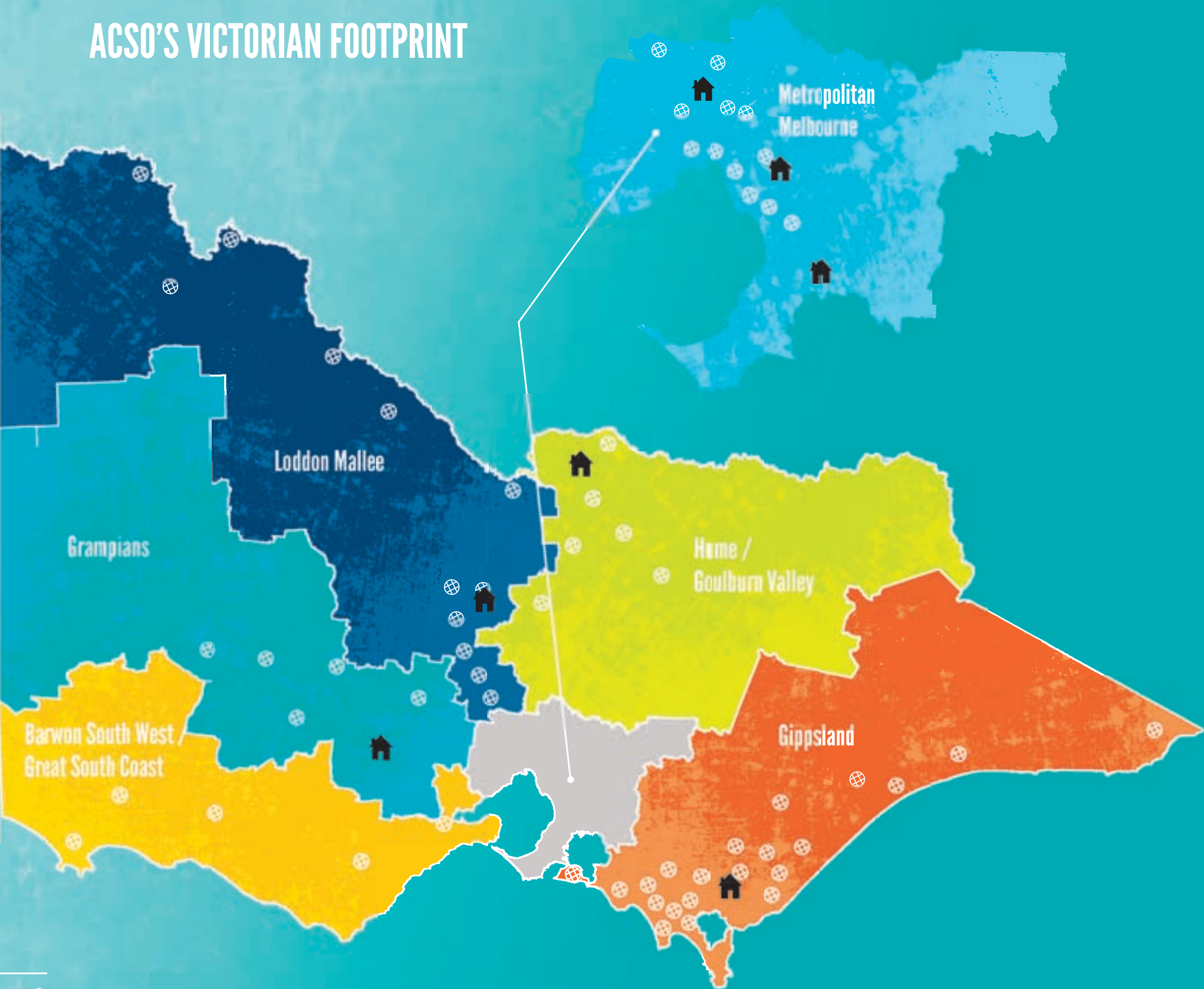


Whether it is a young man struggling with ice dependency or a serious sex offender released into the community after a nine-year sentence, **ACSO's role is to join the dots and bring together the right range of community based services** for the consumer so he or she has everything they need to successfully rebuild their lives.



# WHAT WE DO

## ACSO'S VICTORIAN FOOTPRINT



“ Our commitment is to provide the **same quality service** to a consumer in metropolitan Melbourne or a consumer living anywhere across regional Victoria. We work with our partners in community based mental health and drug and alcohol services to **ensure people receive the right treatment mix when and where they need it.** ”

Region	<div> <div></div> <div>Offices &amp; Hubs</div> </div>	<div> <div></div> <div>Residential, employment services and satellite* sites</div> </div>
Metropolitan Melbourne	Richmond, Cranbourne, Glenroy	Yarraville, Ormond, Noble Park, Armadale, Coburg, Richmond, Melbourne CBD, Dandenong ,Sunbury, Broadmeadows, Airport West
Loddon Mallee	Bendigo	Bendigo, Golden Square, Long Gully, Maryborough, Kyneton, Castlemaine, Echuca, Kerang, Swan Hill, Mildura, Robinvale, Ouyen
Barwon South West/Great South Coast		Geelong, Colac, Hamilton, Portland, Camperdown
Gippsland	Traralgon	Moe, Warragul, Morwell, San Remo, Cowes, Sale, Leongatha, Foster, Bairnsdale, Lakes Entrance, Mallacoota, Yarram, Orbost, Moe, Korumburra, Churchill, Wonthaggi, Heyfield, Tarwin Lower, Rosedale, Won Wron
Hume / Goulburn Valley	Shepparton	Wangaratta, Benalla, Cobram, Mansfield, Seymour, Wodonga
Grampians	Ballarat	Ararat, Daylesford, Stawell, Horsham, St Arnaud

Opened between July & Sept '14  
 \*co-located sites and/or shared accommodation when required.



# WHAT WE DO

## Residential Services

“Thanks to ACSO, I don’t have to stay in jail as I have somewhere to call home right now.”

### CONTRIBUTION

ACSO provides a number of community based residential services across metro and regional Victoria. The service is a unique 24-hour supported residential living model that maintains an environment reflective of community based living. It provides short term post-release residential services along with medium and longer term programs. These programs support people with multiple and complex needs that have to be met so they can transition and reintegrate back into the community. ACSO also provides therapeutic residential services for young people with mental illness and adults with mental illness and co-occurring intellectual disabilities.

The keystone of our residential programs is the ACSO “One Plan” encompassing the principles of the Good Lives Model and incorporating Positive Behaviour Support. Individuals learn social and living skills in a home setting, and when ready, transition into education, training and employment. The uniquely tailored and offence-free life plan builds a client’s strengths while helping them develop new skills. Our team provides special focus on independent living skills, using the One Plan approach to articulate a clear and supported move toward independence.

### IMPACT

**Mental health issues, trauma and a lifetime of disadvantage can manifest problematic behaviour and reduce opportunities for community reintegration.**

In response, ACSO provides an innovative balance between client development and community safety. Our service actively engages a multidisciplinary care team to develop the One Plan, enabling increased opportunities for clients to make good decisions and engage in socially acceptable activities—while maintaining a model of risk management proven to protect members of the community as well as ACSO employees and the individual receiving service. With our support, clients address their offending behaviours and develop life skills. This ultimately results in increased quality of life and develops long-lasting community connections.

### VALUE

For ACSO clients the One Plan is “their story, told only once”. The One Plan identifies areas of risk, need and responsivity, while nominating services that will enable the client to achieve their goals. ACSO’s added value lies in our ability to provide a broad range of services under one umbrella.

Francis House Forensic Residential Program was the recipient of the 2012 Crime and Violence Prevention Award.

Gerald, aged 22, resides in Francis House Forensic Residential Program with a remaining 24 months of parole. He is classified as a high-risk client with an extensive history of violent offending, no doubt compounded by his intellectual disability, acquired brain injury and diagnosis of schizophrenia. Gerald’s often violent presentation and use of alcohol and other substances had led to a tenuous relationship with his family and a breakdown in community connections. Gerald was accepted into the award-winning Francis House program where he was supported to develop a comprehensive risk assessment and an ACSO One Plan which articulated his immediate needs whilst identifying future goals.

- Gerald received priority access via our RAPIDS program. Once his substance use was stabilised he was supported through our Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service (COATS) to commence engagement with ReGen AOD Service where he has recently completed counselling.
- He is currently engaged with the Francis House program where he is acquiring independent living skills and being supported to look for future independent living options.
- Gerald was referred to ACSO’s Employment Services where he received pre-employment training. He successfully gained employment in October 2013 and maintains his role as a cleaner in a city office.
- While at Francis House, Gerald was able to attend an anger management course and work on his problem-solving skills. With support, he has slowly reconnected with family and continues to voluntarily engage with AOD counselling.



# WHAT WE DO

## Complex Care Programs

### CONTRIBUTION

Complex Care's overarching philosophy is to provide a second chance to those who have no one left to turn to. The service is targeted in this regard, staffed by specialised multidisciplinary team members who are committed to supporting individuals who have been turned away from every door or whose complex needs have created a barrier between them and a life mainstream society takes for granted.

We provide specialised and innovative community based outreach and post-release services to over 250 clients, who are at risk of or in current contact with the criminal justice system. Whilst providing stability to clients in the community, we work to promote community and social inclusion, create positive behaviour change and build resilience, life skills and independence.

For many clients, the journey begins "inside"; thus we work to a model of "through-care" by engaging with clients in the prison setting. It is here where we develop a tangible vision for their transition to an offence-free lifestyle. Upon release, we're "waiting at the gate" ready to support the client by implementing their transition plan. Our skilled staff undertake holistic service planning and coordination, which focuses on addressing the clients' short term goals. We work with our clients to develop a unique One Plan as well as gaining input from a dedicated care team to ensure any potential risk to the client, staff or the community is mitigated and that each client's opportunities for success are maximised.

### IMPACT

Our clients experience multiple risk factors, including addiction, mental health issues, intellectual disability, low-level educational and vocational attainment and negative peer pressure. Yet, our clients have strengths and can make positive reparations to society—but they require support to do this.

Through our individually-tailored planning and the supported implementation of the One Plan, clients experience improved pathways to services, better access to services despite negative behaviours and opportunities to practice new skills and develop community connections. By working with local service providers and community supports, we provide clients with opportunities to engage and develop supportive relationships within their community. Through this they can develop a web of support and encouragement.

**I am the holder of my own destiny; the next step is to live life on my own.**  
(Vernon 2014)

### VALUE

This report on Vernon comes from Kylie Crawford, an ACSO Link Out Case Manager

Vernon was referred to Link Out after serving five years inside. Before this he had served four terms of imprisonment owing to a life marred by family violence and bullying. Feeling powerless, Vernon retaliated with violence and withdrew from those around him. To deal with depression and trauma he turned to drugs and alcohol, which led to a career of offending.

When Vernon became my client he had a history of poor relationships with women, but as I worked to develop a rapport with Vernon I was careful to ensure we were both aware of our roles and responsibilities, and more importantly that ACSO and I understood Vernon's journey and did not judge him for it.

Life was not easy for him; during our time working together Vernon was ready take responsibility for his health in an effort to maintain his freedom and pro-active lifestyle, yet life threw him every curveball. In early 2013 Vernon was hospitalised for lithium toxicity. Meanwhile his mother, who had been unwell for a long time, passed away leaving Vernon to face the biggest challenge of his life—managing the particulars of his mother's funeral, reconnecting with distant family and then dealing with subsequent homelessness all while maintaining strength in the face of grief.

During this period, it was easy for Vernon to question his long-term goals, to question his own ability and motivations and to succumb to the temptation of drug use. Since his release from hospital however, Vernon has made significant lifestyle changes. He no longer abuses illicit substances. He drinks alcohol only on social occasions and can engage harm minimisation strategies on a night out with friends. Vernon secured permanent housing in August '13, a significant achievement for a person who had always suffered from anxiety and found new experiences a challenge.

Overall he summed up his time with Link Out as being:

**Not as intensive as I thought it would be for support, but in the end it was enough as I realised I had to do the work myself and couldn't rely on someone else to do it for me. Without ACSO support I don't know where I would have been. Who knows what I would be doing. I was just glad all those years in jail put me in a criteria where I needed a worker.**  
(Vernon 2014)



# WHAT WE DO

## Clinical Services

### CONTRIBUTION

Clinical Services comprises a suite of complementary programs that provide therapeutic assessment and treatment interventions to address behaviours of concern and reduce offending behaviour.

Our specialised team contribute to and build upon ACSO's clinical governance framework to guide organisational practice and build the capacity of ACSO staff.

#### PSBS

The **Problematic Sexualised Behaviour Service (PSBS)** is a unique preventative service providing treatment to reduce the risk of sexual offending by males aged 12 and over who have an intellectual disability and who exhibit problematic sexualised behaviours. PSBS clients undergo a comprehensive assessment regarding their risk of sexual offending. The results enable our clinicians to develop a holistic treatment plan to address offence-specific and related issues. The aim of treatment is to balance the boys'/men's risk with expected treatment benefits, and enable them to make decisions and take responsibility for their behaviours. The long-term goal of this motivational approach is to increase their self-management skills, positive self-image, problem-solving skills and pro-social behaviours in order to live a more independent life in the future.

#### NOVO

The **NOVO Program**, established through the generosity of the Pip Wisdom Community Corrections Grant, addresses the issue of limited support services that exist for female remand prisoners with mental health issues. NOVO provides a comprehensive and collaborative assessment and release planning service. It addresses the transitional support needs of women in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC)—many of whom are released with, or are at-risk of, significant mental health disorder. The aim is to improve the likelihood of a prisoner being released from remand with appropriate supports, by leveraging our relationships with housing services, our employment partners and through our role as lead alcohol and other drugs and mental assessment and referral provider across regional Victoria.

These women are more likely to receive remand than bail when first arrested and then more likely to receive a term of imprisonment when sentenced. Consequently, the program assesses the women's needs, including mental health treatment and support needs. The aim is to have transitional support plans and appropriate linkages in place so women will be deemed suitable for non-custodial sentences when returning to court for sentencing.

“‘Life skills’ are those psychosocial abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.”  
(UNICEF 2003).

#### LIFE SKILLS

**Life Skills** offers innovative and comprehensive group based programs and interventions. Through weekly life skills sessions, the broad and flexible program targets each individual's skill deficits. While we adapt our programs to suit need and client demographics, all are designed to develop psychosocial abilities. Each term comprises a mix of educational, therapeutic and recreational programs and activities such as anger management, peer mentoring, independent living skills, gardening, cooking, art therapy, fishing and pool competitions. As well as facilitating these programs, ACSO's social educators work one on one with clients who have been identified as needing extra help with a particular life skill.

What Life Skills offers is quite unique, as the program is tailored to current individual and group needs. Participants are allowed to learn at their own pace in a relaxed and positive environment. Regular clients benefit from the structure regular classes and activities give to their life. As well as structured classes, the program holds outings and events. One such program is the Social Activities program. Incorporating several ACSO program areas, the Social Activities program is grounded in the philosophy that clients benefit from the opportunity to “test drive” social skills via involvement in a supported and controlled community setting.

## VALUE

### PSBS

NF, aged 40, was referred to PSBS after being found guilty of willful and indecent exposure in a public place. A comprehensive assessment was conducted which ascertained that, in addition to having a low intelligence score, he experienced social skills deficits and had limited sexual knowledge and experience. All this contributed to his sexual offending. The PSBS clinician delivered treatment involving offence specific counselling, psycho-education regarding Victorian sex laws, social skills training and relationship counselling. NF's care team worked collaboratively to find opportunities for him to meet his social needs, including securing employment, joining a social group and engaging in recreational activities.

### NOVO

At 22 years of age, GN had already experienced a lifetime of physical and sexual abuse. To survive, she performed sex work and self-medicated with a range of illicit substances. In early 2014 her lifestyle led to her being charged with unlawful assault, failure to answer bail, contravening a Community Corrections Order, criminal damage and recklessly causing injury. She was remanded in custody. During pre-release assessment, GN identified her desire to gain employment, education and mental health counselling but it was clear these goals could not be achieved unless her urgent housing needs were met, particularly as she was at risk of returning to an environment plagued by domestic violence. In line with her mutually agreed One Plan and to address GN's immediate needs, the NOVO worker linked GN in with the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service, Resourcing Health & Education in the Sex industry and Project Respect. While waiting for secure housing, GN—despite having no fixed address, mobile phone, forms of identification or a bank account—attended all appointments without prompting and remained engaged with ACSO. GN worked through these barriers and to date is undertaking a Certificate III in Beauty Services with NMIT. She has also secured safe housing.



# WHAT WE DO

## Employment Services

### CONTRIBUTION

ACSO's Employment Services, as part of the National Job Futures Network, provides a range of employment and return to work services for both employers and jobseekers from our seven service sites located in the inner Melbourne and north west region. Over the past year we have made significant inroads to try to shape recruitment culture and encourage employers to open up job opportunities for people with convictions. Our service aims to divert people from crime and sway ex offenders from reoffending.

Our Job Services Australia "Jobs Change Lives" employment program provides generalist employment services to all jobseekers. It also aims to divert at-risk people from a life of crime and into meaningful employment.

**Employment with Conviction**, our specialist disability employment services for ex offenders with mental health and cognitive disabilities, provides assistance through a range of return-to-work measures. This service exists to support and encourage ex offenders not to reoffend, and instead to build pathways back into the work force.

"The Pantry", "Pass it On" and "21st Century Filing" are work experience programs designed to develop employment skills while individuals undertake unpaid work experience in food handling, retail clothing and administration.

The award winning "The Pantry" and "Pass it On" continued to add value to our wider community throughout the year by providing food and clothing assistance to more than 2,500 people. "The Pantry" provides daily food hampers to local community members in need of food assistance and "Pass it On" provides clothing for everyday use, job interviews and employment. With the opening of our new Glenroy Hub, both programs have extended their services beyond the inner Melbourne community to include members of the north west Melbourne community.

### IMPACT

Project New Dawn is a joint partnership with BP and Bunnings that exemplifies ACSO's innovative approach to employment for ex offenders. The project aims to provide homeless people with both a home and a job. BP and Bunnings have committed to opening up job opportunities for homeless jobseekers or those at risk of homelessness, while also providing those people with safe housing in company-leased private properties.

Houses are located near BP and Bunnings stores and are typically three bedrooms (two tenants and one lead tenant). Project New Dawn promotes and develops self-reliance, independence and responsibility as all participants are required to work a minimum of 30 hours per week and make weekly financial contributions to their houses and maintain their upkeep.

### VALUE

After more than two years without a job and struggling to find regular safe housing, Jesse was disillusioned about his future. Without stable housing and paid employment, Jesse was feeling more and more vulnerable. His ACSO employment consultant encouraged him to complete a language, literacy and numeracy course and then a motor mechanic pre-apprenticeship course. ACSO's employer liaison officer and employment consultant spruiked Jesse's resume to local motor mechanic businesses and arranged a paid work trial. The employer was very impressed with Jesse and offered him a full-time apprenticeship. Safe and affordable housing was also secured through our partnership with supportive housing provider Common Ground. Jesse has now been employed for more than nine months, and has retained stable accommodation in that time. His employer is very pleased with him.

“ ACSO helped me find a place to live and get me a job. My job is going great and I am now saving for my own home. ”

Jesse

“ ACSO is to be commended on the hard work and discipline they have shown as a business to assist Manpower in filling a high percentage of the number of vacancies we had available at Woolworths' Melbourne distribution centres in late 2013 and early 2014. ”

Manpower Services Australia.

Our ACSO team coordinated weekly recruitment drives, candidate interviews and assessments both within the Manpower office network and ACSO service sites to ensure we met all our recruitment deadlines. More than 100 ACSO jobseekers were referred to these positions with more than 80 jobseekers being successfully placed into paid employment. To date, 68% of these jobseekers who commenced employment are still working at the distribution centres.

“ A home & a job, that's a real game changer. ”

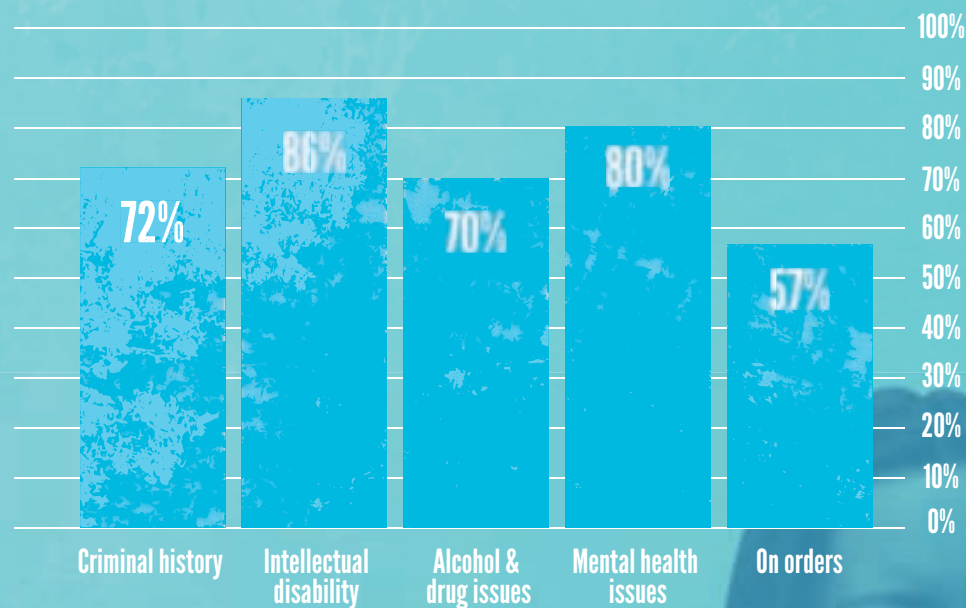


# WHAT WE DO

## 2013-2014 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### SPOTLIGHT ON Residential Programs

#### CLIENTS BY PRESENTING ISSUES

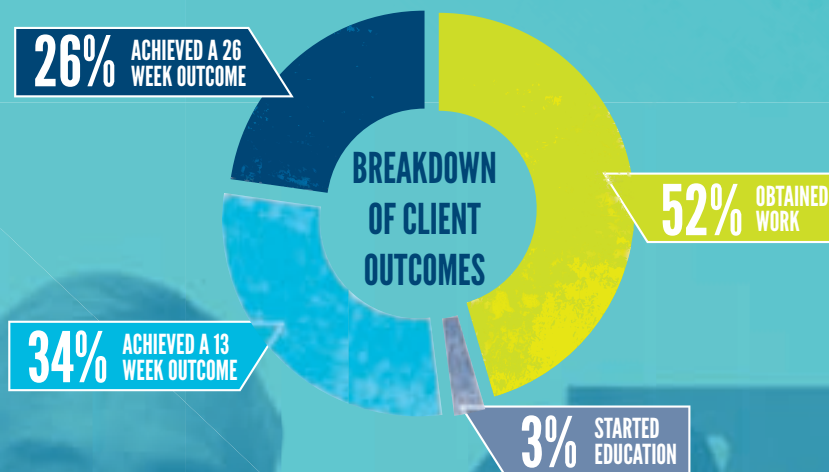


■ Around **30 clients** completed our community based residential program last year, of which approximately **80%** indicated they had **improved their mental health condition** and approximately **90%** indicated they reduced their dependency on alcohol and other drugs.



### SPOTLIGHT ON Employment Services

#### BREAKDOWN OF CLIENT OUTCOMES



■ Our **Specialist Employment Services** support long term unemployed job seekers with a focus on assisting people at risk of entering the criminal justice system and ex offenders with mental health issues. The team supported over **850** job seekers last year with over **50%** obtaining work and **26%** achieving a 26-week work outcome.



■ Our new **diversion program NOVO** addresses the transitional support needs for women on remand, 100% of which present with a mental health condition. A total **75%** of those who completed the program indicated they improved their mental health condition.



■ **Life Skills** provide tailored day programs with a goal to help our clients connect with the community. A total **90%** of those who completed the programs indicated they had improved their life skills and increased community connectedness.

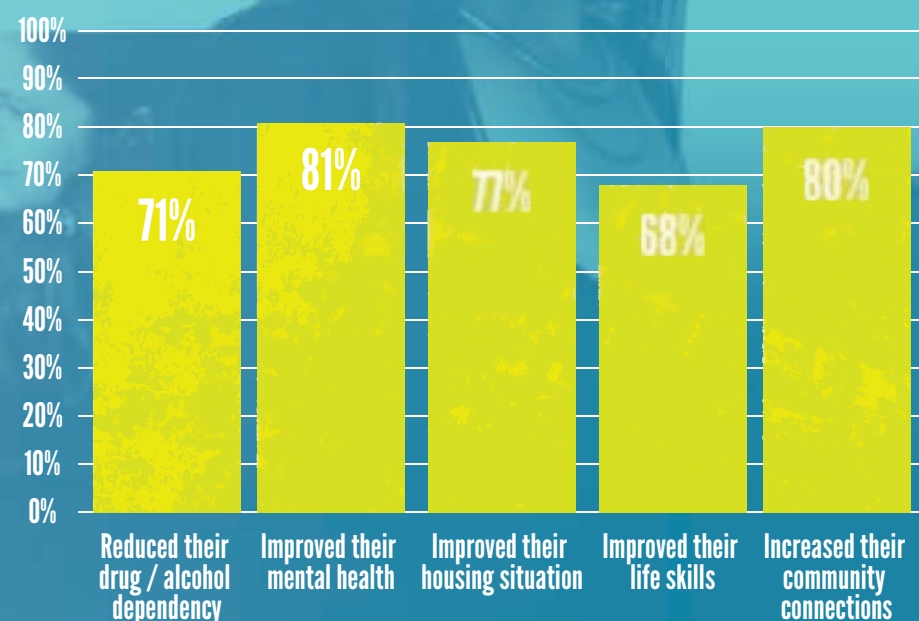


■ **Link Out** supports men leaving prison, of which **85%** presented with mental health issues and **90%** presented with alcohol and drug issues. All clients who completed the program last year increased their social inclusion, which is indicated by **80%** improving their mental health condition and **70%** reducing their dependency on alcohol and drugs.



### SPOTLIGHT ON Prison Transition

#### CLIENTS BY OUTCOMES ACHIEVED





# COATS

## Community Offenders Advice and Treatment Service

COATS provides specialist forensic alcohol and drug assessments, treatment planning and brokerage of (including the purchase of) treatment for clients referred from the criminal justice system. COATS therefore provides a link between justice and drug treatment services. A 17-year-old state wide service, COATS administers both State and Commonwealth funded treatment pathways.

COATS is one of the key component of the Victorian Government's response to the drug problem. It's found to significantly improve forensic clients' access to alcohol and drug treatment services.

- COATS is a specialist independent service that ensures forensic clients have timely access to alcohol and drug treatment services.
- Purchasing alcohol and drug treatment services strengthens the capacity of services to meet demand.
- As we engage forensic clients with alcohol and drug issues during treatment, these clients form positive relationships with the alcohol and drug service system.
- Providing timely access to drug treatment for forensic clients results in a reduction in drug-related crime and deaths.

Our specialist assessors undertake assessments for Corrections Victoria, the Adult Parole Board of Victoria and the courts, and are located at over 40 sites across the state to maximise accessibility and liaison opportunities.

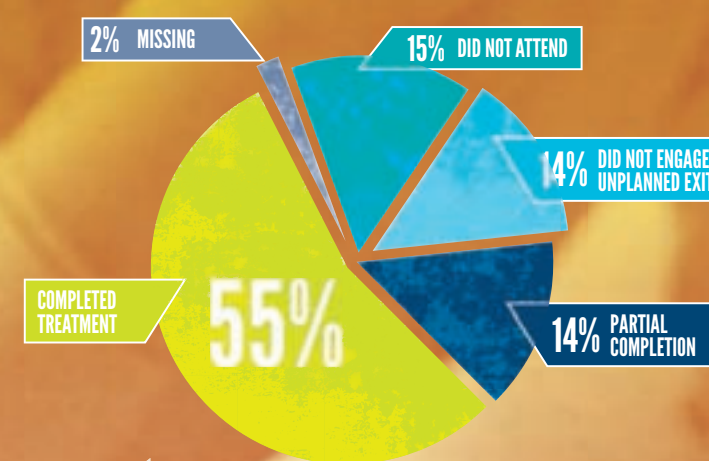
- Over the past 12 months our team managed over 25,000 inbound and outbound assessments and referrals from prisons, courts and Community Corrections and connected them into a wide range of drug treatment programs across Victoria.

## DUETS

Developing Understanding Expertise and Treatment Systems in Dual Diagnosis (DUETS)

A big focus of our work has been building a team to identify and respond to mental health issues in regard to people seeking drug treatment. A main focus of the DUETS project has been to up skill our COATS program assessors so they can implement a common assessment tool for clients. To make the change, our team has developed its online training in addition to providing face-to-face support and supporting documentation. More broadly, our team has developed a forensic checklist. This checklist is to be used in collaboration with the common assessment tool as an optional module across the wider drug and alcohol sector. It exists to support drug and alcohol treatment agencies in their assessment of forensic clients, and to provide a method for collecting information about a client's criminogenic status. The program has facilitated two audits of dual diagnosis capability—one agency-wide and one for COATS. Those audit results will dictate future directions for the project, as well as assist in the planning of training opportunities for all staff. DUETS has developed a dual diagnosis specific internal reference group, which meets bimonthly to discuss staff dual diagnosis capability and how to ensure all staff are equipped to meet the needs of clients with mental illness and substance misuse tendencies.

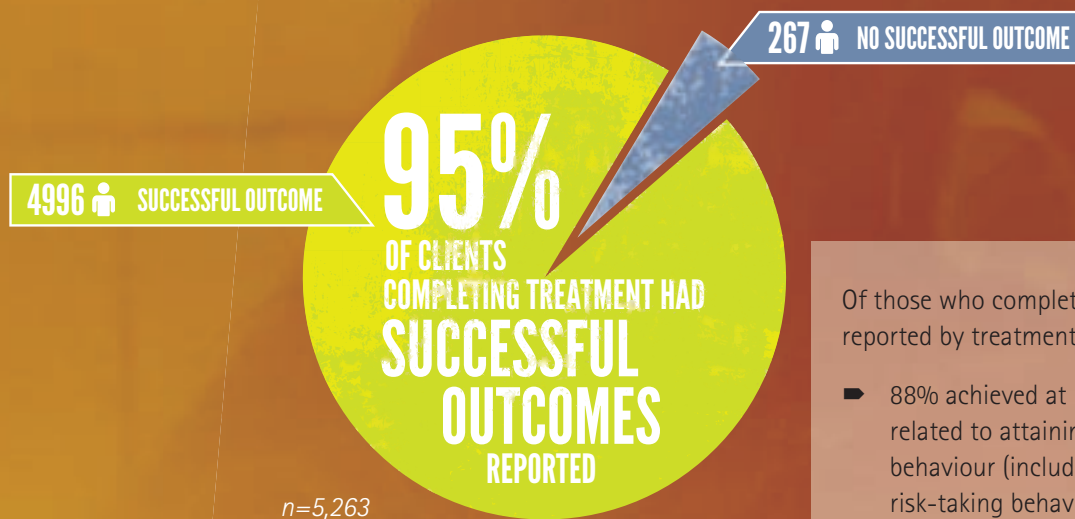
TREATMENT COMPLETION RATES FOR ALL TCA'S RETURNED IN 2013-2014



- 82% of clients for whom a Treatment Completion Advice (TCA) was returned had an Individual Treatment Plan (ITP) developed. Includes repeat clients referred for multiple treatment.
- Of these, approximately 86% achieved significant treatment goals in their ITP and 67% completed treatment.



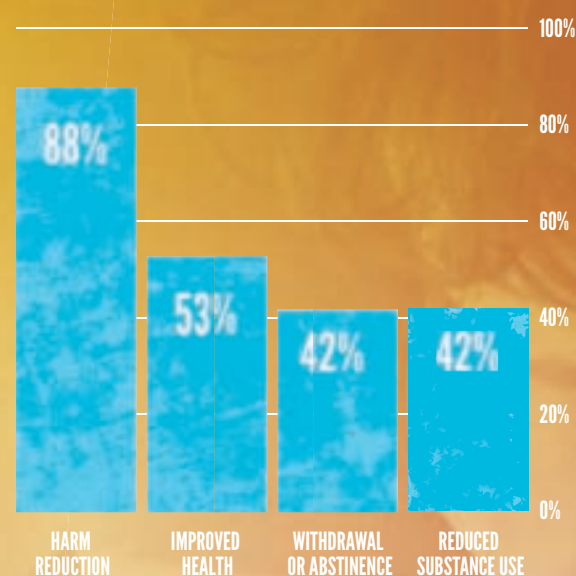
## TREATMENT OUTCOMES FOR CLIENTS REFERRED THROUGH COATS



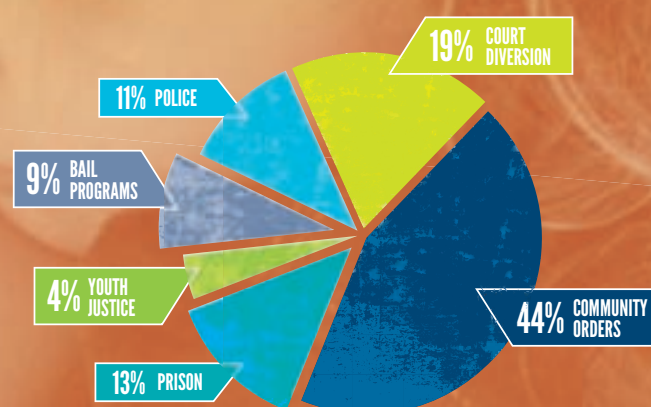
Of those who completed treatment, (as reported by treatment agencies),

- 88% achieved at least one outcome related to attaining harm reduction behaviour (including reduced offending, risk-taking behavior and self-harm behaviour, learnt relapse prevention and resolution of presenting issues),
- 53% achieved at least one outcome related to improved health outcomes (including increased self-efficacy, link to medical practitioner and/or to health services and improved physical health),
- 42% achieved at least one outcome related to achieving withdrawal or abstinence, (including completed residential program and stabilised drug withdrawal), and
- 42% achieved at least one outcome related to reduced substance use (including poly substance use, stabilised on pharmacotherapy).

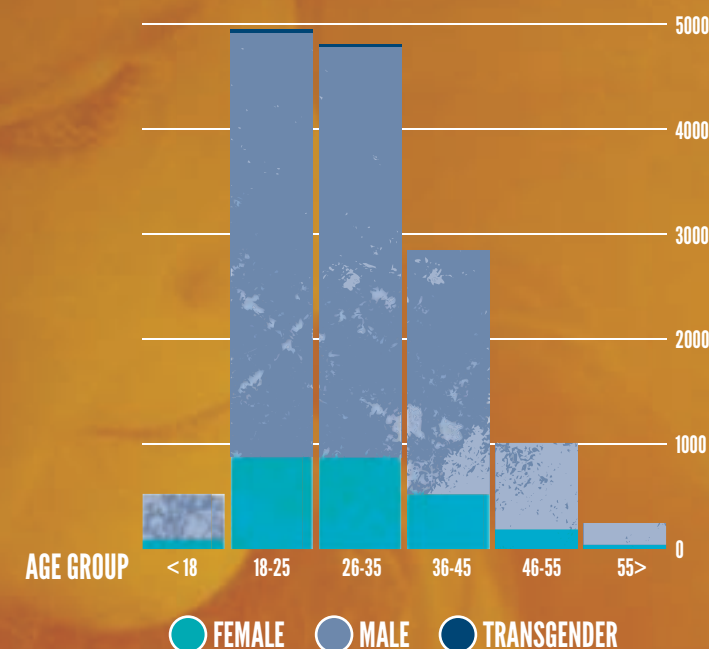
## CLIENTS WHO COMPLETED TREATMENT 2013-14 BY TYPE OF OUTCOMES (MULTIPLES INCLUDED)



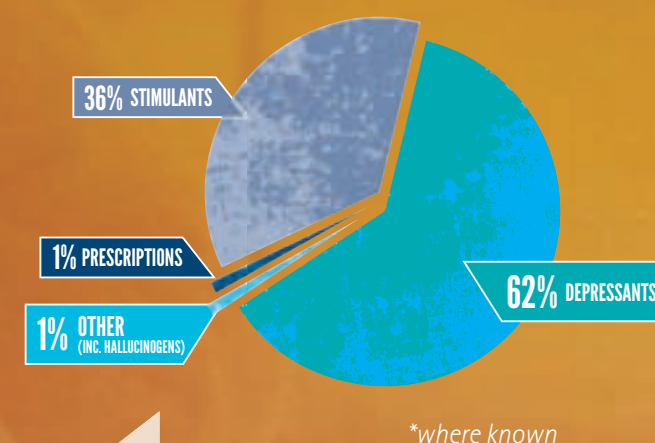
## SOURCE OF REFERRALS



## REFERRED CLIENTS BY AGE GROUP AND GENDER



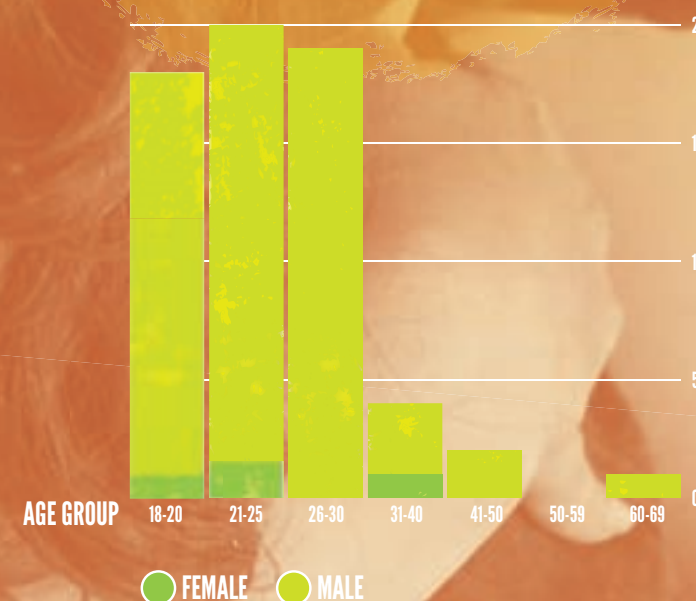
## PRIMARY DRUG OF CHOICE\*



- Majority of clients identified primary drug of choice as depressants, followed by 36% of clients reporting stimulants.

## VICROADS SAFE DRIVING PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

We work with clients referred through Youth Justice and from prevention and diversion programs such as the VicRoads Safe Driving Program, Victoria Police drug diversion programs and bail programs, as well as from specialist courts.



- The VicRoads Safe Driving Program commenced in 2013 and has had 64 participants successfully complete the 5 hour behaviour change program (100% success rate).



# CLIENT LED SUCCESS

**BRANCHING OUT**  
2014 ACSO ART EXHIBITION

## 2014 Art Exhibition

### BRANCHING OUT

A shining example of how ACSO plays a vital role in its clients' journey to recovery

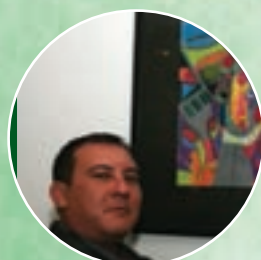
Because of our clients' histories and their complex issues, they are often excluded from community programs. ACSO, therefore, provides a range of day programs which promote reintegration and a sense of social connection.

**Creative Art** is one such program where drawing, painting, printing and design is a therapeutic way for our clients to express emotions, feelings and thoughts. Each year around ten to 20 budding artists from our community based residential and outreach services benefit from this program, run by ACSO's Life Skills Team. The program acts as a stepping stone into other community arts programs.

For 16 years, ACSO has held biennial art exhibitions. These colourful exhibitions offer the public a unique opportunity to gain an insight into the issues our clients face and to view those clients' creative endeavours and talent which, without the right supports, would go unrealised.



James



Paul B



Joanne



Malcolm



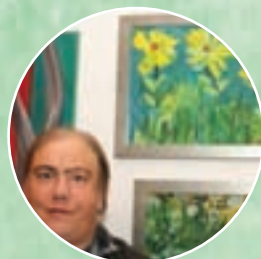
Dimitri



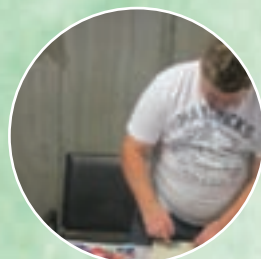
Ian



Paul



Brenton



Scott

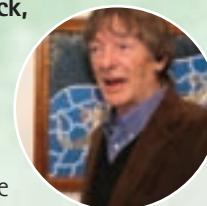
Through 2014's theme, Branching Out, our clients sought to convey their individual pathways to recovery. The exhibition showcased how these ACSO clients have had to branch out by recognising and harnessing their diversity, strength and creativity. This included self-portraits exploring their identity and belonging as an essential branch to the ACSO community. Prints and other media offered a more abstract method to illustrate a pathway to recovery while simultaneously highlighting learned skills and resourcefulness.

2014 was also the first time the arts program was facilitated by our **artist in residence, Melinda Wills** who collaborated with the nine 2014 artists to create over 100 amazing works. Of these artworks sold, 50% went to the artist and 50% was invested back into the Creative Art Program.



ACSO was also privileged to showcase the talent of guest artists at this year's exhibition.

ACSO's founder, **Stan McCormack**, realised his talent for creative expression after receiving private tuition while incarcerated in Pentridge Prison. Upon release in 1983, he established the Epistle Centre (later renamed Australian Community Support Organisation) because he wanted to "help people get out and stay out of prison and provide them with support and hope for a better life". After 30 years Stan's vision is still at the core of what we do.



**Fulham Correctional Centre** provides Indigenous inmates with the **Koori Art Program** as an opportunity to practice their culture. There are currently 15 Indigenous inmates attending the program and some of their artwork was on display and for sale at the exhibition, with 100% of the proceeds going to suicide prevention for Indigenous youth. Michael Morgan, a participant of the Koori Art Program, attended the exhibition on behalf of the program.



For the first time, this year's exhibition was held at The Yarra Gallery at Federation Square: Melbourne's premium art precinct that exemplifies the creative, inclusive and supportive nature of Victoria's art community.

Branching Out was officially opened by the Victorian Minister for the Arts, The Honourable Heidi Victoria. The opening night was an unprecedented success with 260 guests in attendance. The exhibition ran for a week attracting around 600 Victorians to the Yarra Gallery.

A TOTAL OF **60%** OF THE 116  
DISPLAYED WORKS OF ART WERE **SOLD**,  
RAISING OVER **\$7,600.**

The 2014 exhibition showcased our clients' talent and contribution, and the "soul" of ACSO.

"Wiseman" by Dimitri





# SOLID FOUNDATIONS TO BUILD THE FUTURE

Message from  
the Chair



Stewart Leslie

It is almost traditional for a Chair to end these reports with an expression of thanks to Councillors, the Chief Executive and the team. I would like to start with thanks to ACSO's councillors and Chief Executive Karenza Louis-Smith and her team. All have made my transition from Council member to Chair a lot easier than it might have been.

I was appointed Chair of ACSO on 1 October 2013, succeeding Michael Wright, who was Chair for five years. Council's role is to inspire, control and direct ACSO. This role requires a group of people committed to ACSO's vision. Fortunately, I inherited a committed Council with a range of skills, experiences and motivations. Michael assembled this team. When Michael stepped down as Chair, our Patron, Sally Brown, paid tribute to Michael; a tribute reproduced elsewhere in this report.

Michael's decision to step down as Chair and stay to help me in a smooth succession is a testament to his commitment to ACSO. Thanks Michael, for helping and guiding me through the transition.

I took on the Chair's position because I believe our community needs ACSO. This need became clear to me in 2012 when a day in the field showed me what ACSO does, from first contact with a client to outcome. The need was reinforced when I attended ACSO's 7th Criminal Justice Conference and was further reinforced when I met Stan McCormack, ACSO's founder, for the first time. Stan's innate desire to help others is inspirational.

The need for ACSO led to our vision—a safe and inclusive community freed of crime and prisons. How will ACSO realise the vision? Founding father of the People's Republic of China Mao Tse-Tung said: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." ACSO's dedicated, passionate committed team, led by Karenza, will take this journey. Every team member I've met has something that motivates him or her to share our vision and work with us to realise our vision.

The journey to realising this vision takes planning. In the middle of this year, management and Council met to update our Strategic Plan. The priorities set by this plan—a desire to inspire, innovate and lead; to grow sustainably; to maintain our unique culture; to build capability—will direct our activities over the next five years.

Two councillors chose to retire this year. Tony Cant joined Council in 1997 and chaired our Risk Audit and Compliance Committee for much of that time. Tony has guided ACSO through its growth from a small organisation to the organisation it is today and leaves us well positioned to realise our plans for the future. David Parsons joined the Council in 2007. As a County Court judge, David provided us with insights from the bench and encouraged and challenged us to consider how ACSO should embrace the diversity of our community. I thank Tony and David for their contribution to ACSO.

2014 saw five new members join the council adding to our skills, experiences and motivations. Andrew Chadwick brings expertise and leadership in risk, audit and corporate compliance; Dr Danny Sullivan, a leading forensic psychiatrist, brings expertise in clinical governance; Louise Glanville brings expertise in policy and design in relation to offenders and people with a disability; Karen Corry brings expertise in the design of systems and business architecture; and Jacqui Watt brings expertise in housing services and developing housing co-ops. With their help, and that of the longer serving councillors, ACSO will meet the challenges in realising our vision—a safe and inclusive community freed of crime and prisons.

# TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL WRIGHT

By the Hon. Sally Brown AM,  
ACSO's Patron



**An organisation like ACSO can never rest on its laurels. The milieu in which it operates—where social, economic, legal, political and personal factors intersect—is always changing: government commitments can be fickle and the needs of our clients are complex. The period during which Michael has chaired the ACSO Council has seen more than its fair share of challenges but its successes have far out-weighed its disappointments.**

Under Michael's steady, able and thoughtful leadership a new constitution was developed, ACSO moved to its current premises in Hoddle Street and was selected as a specialist Job Services Australia provider. A major restructure established three service streams to provide an integrated, wrap-around service for our clients, Nicholson House was approved and finance was obtained from DHS to operate an eight-bed forensic disability house.

Other programs flourished. COATS notched up ten years in 2007, and a steady stream of new initiatives evolved: Scanners R Us, Link Out, Konnect, Restore Program, the Community Advisory Group, Life Skills Program, RAPIDS and DUETS. The recent funding by the Federal Government's Substance Misuse Service Delivery Grants Fund, which will allow ACSO to develop new pathways into mental health programs for offenders with substance abuse and mental health problems, is just the latest in a string of successful applications to government and philanthropic bodies.

Michael commenced as chair when Antony Calabrò was CEO and theirs was a fruitful partnership. In 2011 Karenza Louis-Smith was appointed CEO and she and Michael, supported by the staff and the Council, have taken ACSO where many other organisations feared to tread; motivated always by a passionate commitment to our clients who desperately need another chance.

Creating those chances has become, in practice as well as theory, ACSO's raison d'être.

Michael, like all good chairs, has the gift of getting the best from his Council. He has not been afraid to ask the hard questions; no Council member has worked harder. His integrity, knowledge of the sector and genuine interest in every aspect of ACSO's work inspired others to contribute; his sense of humour and deft touch defused the tensions which must, on occasions, confront every council.

It was ACSO's good fortune that Michael accepted the position of Chair in 2006. It is ACSO's good fortune that he had led the Council with such clarity of vision, creativity, commitment and compassion. That he has agreed to remain a Council member after retiring as Chair is a bonus.

Michael, thank you from the members of the Council you have chaired, the management team, ACSO's staff and the many clients who have benefited under your watch.



# ACSO COUNCIL

*A rich history*



**By Christine Cappello, ACSO Founding Member and Council Secretary**

The ACSO Council was established in late 1983 when Justice Alastair Nicholson (then a Supreme Court judge and Head of The Adult Parole Board) was approached and agreed to become the inaugural Council Chair. He was impressed with founder Stan McCormack and the fact the Epistle Centre (later renamed ACSO) was a courageous organisation with a vision of making a difference in the lives of prisoners and ex offenders.

The inaugural Council consisted of helpful businessmen Brian O'Connor and Bill Bartlett, Father John Brosnan (then Chaplain at Pentridge Prison), Major Brian Corfield of the Salvation Army (also associated with Pentridge), Professor Peter Sallmann (later Crown Counsel and CEO of the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration), and Kathleen Woodden (a social worker). I was the Secretary with Stan as the Administrator. Antony Calabrò became the Administrator when Stan left to get married.

We gained credibility and through Justice Nicholson were able to increase our networks with the judiciary, government and other agencies. A turning point came when we received our first funding from the Office of Corrections. We were advised, on winning that and other tenders, that we were successful because of our "strong links" to the judiciary and the fact we concentrated our efforts on people in the "too hard basket".

These traditions are ongoing and the current Council still has strong links to the judiciary, as well as members with expertise in related sectors such as government, housing, employment, drug and alcohol and mental health. The Council—through its sub-committees of Risk, Audit and Compliance, and Quality, Safety and Service Delivery—has guided and supported ACSO over three decades of change and significant growth and, to this day, continues to inspire and direct the work of ACSO and its staff.

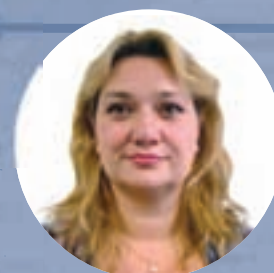
## 2013–2014 Council Members



**Member:** ACSO Council

### Stephen Atkinson

Mr Atkinson is a partner at Reos Partners working with corporate, government and community service clients to co-develop interventions in order to tackle complex problems in new ways, and deliver measurable improvements. He has been in management consulting for over 20 years, working with numerous multi-national corporations and government institutions. He has worked within a range of industries and sectors including resources, telecommunications, healthcare, financial services and education. He also leads his own consultancy, specialising in building high-performing organisations, business strategy, leadership development and work culture transformation. He holds Bachelor of Science (Honours) and Master of Arts (Organisational Psychology) degrees from the University of Melbourne. He has also completed the Oxford Scenario Programme at the Said Business School, University of Oxford and is a registered psychologist.



**Member:** ACSO Council

**Deputy Chair:** ACSO Council

### Ersilia Barbone

Appointed to Council in 1996, Ms Barbone is a Registered Legal Practitioner and a partner with White Cleland Pty Ltd. She has been practising law for over twenty years, having practised as a solicitor almost exclusively in the area of commercial litigation, enforcement and insolvency work. She is a member of the International Women's Insolvency and Restructuring Confederation—Australian Network Victorian Branch and an associate member of the Insolvency Practitioners Association of Australia.

Over her career, Ms Barbone has held a number of appointments in various organisations including Chair of a school advisory board, Deputy Chair of philanthropic organisation Enable International (since deregistered) and Chair of ACSO's former Governance and Strategic Positioning Committee. She continues to provide pro bono advice to various non-profit organisations.

Ms Barbone has witnessed ACSO's growth and change from the early days of the Epistle Society to its expansion as VOSA and subsequently its current form as ACSO.



**Member:** ACSO Council

**Chair:** Quality, Safety and Service Delivery Committee

### Kathleen Barker

Appointed to Council in 2009, Ms Barker draws on almost 20 years leadership and operational experience across the health, insurance and human resource sectors. Formally a senior executive with the Transport Accident Commission, she successfully led that organisation's workforce transition from Melbourne to Geelong.

She is the founder and principal consultant of Andeol Consulting established in 2009, where she specialises in organisational coaching, leadership and team development and business transformation. She is an alumni of Leadership Victoria, is actively involved in community leadership and has been a member of the National Excellence in Personal Injury Management Awards Judging Panel, Personal Injury Education Foundation (PIEF) since 2010.





**Member:** ACSO Council  
ACSO's Patron

## The Hon. Sally Brown AM

Appointed to Council in 2004, Ms Brown was elected Patron in 2011. After working as a solicitor, tertiary lecturer and barrister, Ms Brown was appointed a magistrate in Victoria in 1985; one of the first two women appointed to the Court. In 1990 she was appointed Chief Magistrate. Between November 1993 and June 2010 she was a judge of the Family Court of Australia. As a decade-long board member of the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration and a member of the inaugural board of the National Judicial College, Ms Brown was instrumental in the development and delivery of judicial education in Australia, particularly education relating to gender and culture, and the incidence and impact of family violence and sexual assault.

She has maintained a long-standing interest in juvenile justice, sentencing, child protection and human rights; she chaired the Board of the Australian Institute of Criminology for seven years, has been a member of the Alfred Hospital Board and the Board of the Australian Drug Foundation, and is a member (and former Victorian president) of the International Commission of Jurists. Her name was entered on the Victorian Honour Roll of Women in 2003 and she was appointed a member of the Order of Australia in 2006.



**Member:** ACSO Council  
**Chair:** Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee

## Andrew Chadwick

Appointed to Council on 2014, Mr Chadwick is an Associate of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand. He has been a member of the Risk, Audit and Corporate Compliance Committee since 2009 and was appointed Chair of the Committee in March 2014. He has been with BHP Billiton since 2003 and is a senior manager in Group Reporting, which included responsibility for external financial reporting for six years. Previously he was a partner with accounting firm KPMG for 12 years, where he specialised in assurance and advisory services. Mr Chadwick first became involved with ACSO in 2001 and 2002 when he was engaged to provide financial consulting advice.



**Member:** ACSO Council

## Justice Paul Coghlan

Justice Paul Coghlan was admitted to practise in 1969. After nine years as a solicitor, he joined the Victorian Bar in 1978, where he specialised in criminal law. He was a judge of the Supreme Court from 2007 until 2013 and was the principal judge of the Criminal Division of the Court between 2010 and 2012. In 2001, following highly-regarded service as a Senior Crown Prosecutor and Chief Crown Prosecutor, he was appointed Victoria's fifth Director of Public Prosecutions. He was appointed as a judge of the Court of Appeal of the Supreme Court in 2013 and retired in early 2014 after over 40 years in practice.



**Member:** ACSO Council

## Karen Corry

Appointed to Council in 2014, Ms Corry is a qualified Chartered Accountant and built her career at KPMG, where she was a partner at KPMG Consulting until 2002. She is a professional consultant and Director of her own consulting business, where she focuses on strategy, governance and risk services, particularly focusing on the interaction between business and information technology. She is an independent member of two committees: the Department of Premier and Cabinet Audit and Risk Management Committee and the ICT sub-committee of the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority.



**Member:** ACSO Council  
**Member:** Quality, Safety and Service Delivery Committee

## Dr. Leigh Gassner

Appointed to Council in 2007, Dr Gassner has extensive experience in social policy development and working through the complexity of government and non-government sectors to achieve sustainable social outcomes. His experience spans nationally and internationally. His fields of expertise are family violence, Aboriginal health, perpetrator intervention regarding violence against women and gender equity in medical research. He continues to work with the Australian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission in China, specialising on system and legislative reform in responding to violence against women.

A former assistant Commissioner of Victoria Police, Dr Gassner is a partner at Reos Partners, a Fellow member of the Institute of Public Administration Australia (Victoria) and a member of the Victorian Coroners' Systemic Review of Family Violence Deaths Reference Group. He is also a former member of the Commonwealth Government Violence against Women Advisory Group, Victorian Government Mental Health Reform Council and White Ribbon Day Council.



**Member:** ACSO Council

## Louise Glanville

Appointed to Council in 2014, Ms Glanville commenced as the Deputy CEO and General Manager, Governance Division, with the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) in February 2014. In that role she is responsible for the areas of Governance, Legal Services, Media, Communications and Engagement, Risk Management, and People and Culture.

Prior to joining NDIA, she spent three years at the Attorney-General's Department as First Assistant Secretary and Department Secretary in the Civil Justice and Strategic Policy and Coordination Groups.

Before joining the Attorney-General's Department in 2011, Ms Glanville worked with the Victorian Department of Justice as Executive Director, Legal and Equity Group. In her career she has held positions in local and state government, academia, the private sector and ministerial offices. She holds a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Social Work from Melbourne University, a Bachelor of Laws from Monash University and a Master of Arts (Research) from Victoria University.



**Chair:** ACSO Council  
**Member:** Risk, Audit and Compliance Committee  
**Member:** Quality, Safety and Service Delivery Committee

## Stewart Leslie—Council Chair

Appointed to Council in 2009, Mr Leslie is a Fellow of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and holds the Graduate designation from the Australian Institute of Company Directors. For 15 years he was a partner with accounting firm KPMG, where he specialised in assurance and advisory services. Since retiring from that partnership in 2001 he has been appointed to a number of governance roles in the public sector. He is a member of the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority, which provides emergency call-taking and dispatch for the State of Victoria. He is also a board member of 100 Story Building, which provides opportunities for marginalised children and young people to build literacy skills, confidence and a sense of belonging. He also holds a senior management role at a significant philanthropic foundation. Mr Leslie is a past member of the Board of the Royal Women's Hospital.





Member: ACSO Council

Member: Quality, Safety & Service Delivery Committee

## Dr. Danny Sullivan

Appointed to Council in 2014, Dr Sullivan is a consultant forensic psychiatrist. He holds a medical degree from the University of Melbourne, and Masters degrees in Law (Melbourne) and Bioethics (Monash). He is a Fellow of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists, a Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK) and an Associate Fellow in the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators. He holds honorary academic positions at the University of Melbourne, Swinburne University and Monash University, and is active in research, teaching and publishing academic articles. He sits on the Therapeutic Treatment Board and has sat on a range of other committees and expert advisory groups in areas of ethics, psychiatry and legal issues.

Dr Sullivan has been the Assistant Clinical Director of the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health (Forensicare) for nine years and has also worked as consultant to the Multiple & Complex Needs Initiative. At various times he has been the visiting psychiatrist to most Victorian prisons and has clinical experience with offenders, including those with disability. He frequently provides expert evidence in criminal, child protection, coronial and regulatory jurisdictions.



Member: ACSO Council

## Jacqui Watt

Appointed to Council in 2014, Ms Watt is a member of the Chartered Institute of Housing. With a Social Policy degree from Edinburgh and a Masters in Management, her previous board roles include the Community Housing Federation of Australia and Social Enterprise Coalition in Scotland. Previous work experience includes being CEO of two peak bodies advocating for Community Housing and a year as Director of Client Services at Anglicare Victoria. Ms Watt has had direct service delivery responsibility in the fields of alcohol and drugs, mental health, disability and social housing over the past 30 years.

Recently, via consultancy, she has provided strategic advice and facilitation of stakeholder engagement think tanks for both government and NGO's. With a strong commitment to building skills in change management and leadership, Ms Watt is also current Secretary of Organisation Development Australia and a member of ACFE (Adult, Continuing and Further Education) Council for Loddon Murray.



Member: ACSO Council

## Michael Wright

Appointed to Council in 2004, Mr Wright was Council Chair between 2007 and 2013. He is currently Managing Director of Monash Partners Academic Health Science Centre. He has held senior positions in the Victorian Government: Deputy Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Ministry of Transport, and CEO of the Victorian Channels Authority and the Victorian Cancer Agency. Mr Wright has been a member of several state and federal public sector boards, including TAC and National Rail Corporation. He was Managing Director of the Miller Consulting Group for 25 years. He is currently also a member of the Board of Oxfam Australia.

# TRIBUTE TO FOUNDING MEMBERS

At the 2013 Council Annual General Meeting, three founding staff members were recognised for their dedication to helping marginalised and disadvantaged groups and for their contribution to ACSO over the last three decades by having residential services named after them. ACSO provide community based residential services for people who are eligible for a service under the *Disability Act 2006* and who have a forensic history.

### WESTERN RENAMED CAPPELLO HOUSE

Western House is a long-term community based residential service. Thirty one years ago Christine Cappello left her secure job in the commercial sector to work with a former prisoner in a job with no pay. In doing so, she became an integral part of an incredible legacy. One of Christine's initial roles was to manage the Epistle Centre: a 13-bed facility for men leaving prison. She now runs the Consumer Advisory Group, is the Council Secretary and is an inspiration to all at ACSO.



### SOUTHERN RENAMED CALABRÒ HOUSE

Southern House is also a long-term community based residential service.

Antony Calabrò was appointed as Administrator in July 1986 and left ACSO in 2010. He was instrumental in steering ACSO's growth from a half-way house to becoming one of Victoria's leading community service organisations.



### GULLY RENAMED MCSHEE HOUSE

Based in Bendigo, Gully House is a medium-term community based residential service.

In 1986, Sister Clare McShee was given permission by her order, The Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, to leave Bendigo (where she was a radiographer at Mt Alvernia Hospital) and work full-time for the Epistle Centre. Sr Clare pioneered ACSO's outreach services to prisoners by establishing the Prison Outreach Support Program. She also managed ACSO's first intellectual disability Service at Francis House. She retired from there in 2008 when appointed Patron in Residence in recognition of her pioneering work, particularly her work with sex offenders. Last year, the Council further acknowledged her contribution by appointing her Patron in Emeritus at the 2013 Annual General Meeting.





# TRIBUTE TO SISTER CLARE MCSHEE FMDM AM *Pioneering spirit*

Sr Clare Agnes McShee is remembered for her work in supporting prisoners in Victoria for over two decades. She specialised in providing support for people with no other supports, and those who have been convicted of sex offences.

A member of the Catholic order of the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood, Sr Clare was born in England and came to Australia in 1968. Being a trained radiographer she worked in her order's Mt. Alvernia Hospital in Bendigo.

In 1980 Sr Clare commenced visiting HM Prison Bendigo, initially on behalf of the St Vincent de Paul Society as part of a prayer group. She soon commenced separately visiting individual prisoners providing support for those with no family or friends. This initial contact with the prison system showed to Sr Clare a need which was not being met by the correctional or prison support system.

It was at this time that Sr Clare made contact with ACSO (then known as Epistle Centre Inc.). Sr Clare continued to support prisoners after they left Bendigo prisoners.

This was recognised by her order in 1986 when she was released from her radiography responsibilities to come to Melbourne and work for ACSO on a full time basis. Soon after arriving at ACSO, Sr Clare saw that there was a huge challenge in supporting sex offenders. She recognised that the group needed support, supervision and effective treatment to reduce the risk of them reoffending. She contributed significantly to the establishment of the sex offenders program in Pentridge Prison and supported both the prisoners and the staff in this difficult work.

In 1990 Sr Clare was the first Manager of ACSO's Intellectually Disabled Offender Program. The model which Sr Clare created and its work in the area of dealing with intellectually disabled offenders (most of whom are sex offenders) set up the structure for the network of programs which ACSO operates to support this client group. In recognition of this work Sr Clare was awarded in 1996 the Pascoe Vale Rotary Jack Davies Memorial Award for Correctional Services (Jack Davies was a former Pentridge Prison Governor who used that branch of Rotary to support offenders on their release from prison).

During the many years that Sr Clare worked with ACSO, I formed the highest possible opinion of her ability, courage, dedication and enthusiasm in supporting prisoners and their families. She coupled this with a gentle humility and a completely selfless approach to her work in accordance with the highest traditions of her faith. In the early stages of her work with prisoners, Sr Clare was faced with enormous difficulty in gaining acceptance, not only from the prisoners themselves, but from the traditional prison bureaucracy that ran the prisons at that time. She showed enormous courage and perseverance, which, coupled with determination and an infectious charm, enabled her to overcome those obstacles. She made an invaluable contribution to ACSO and was a person that I was honoured to count as a friend.

The Hon Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC, inaugural ACSO Council Chair

For the 19 years that Sr Clare was with ACSO, she worked primarily in the area of visiting and supporting prisoners. She specialised in providing support for sex offenders and worked with both correctional officers and the Adult Parole Board in assisting them to find appropriate accommodation, meet parole conditions, and implement the relapse prevention strategies taught to them by the in-prison sex offender treatment programs.

In 2006, Sr Clare was appointed a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia. She retired in 2008 when she was appointed ACSO's Patron in Residence, in recognition of her pioneering work with prisoners, particularly with sex offenders. She returned to England at the end of 2009. The ACSO Council further recognised her contribution by appointing her Patron in Emeritus at the 2013 Annual General Meeting and renamed one of our residential facilities McShee House in her honour.

Sister Clare Agnes McShee FMDM AM, died at Ladywell Convent, Surrey, UK on 27 October 2014. Her pioneering legacy is written large in ACSO's vision: to build a safe inclusive community freed of crime and prison.

During her time working with us, I never heard her talk religion to anyone except to say 'a little prayer may help you feel better'. She saw the best of and potential in everyone she met. She was a passionate and determined advocate for all our clients and she often used to say 'everyone deserves another chance'.

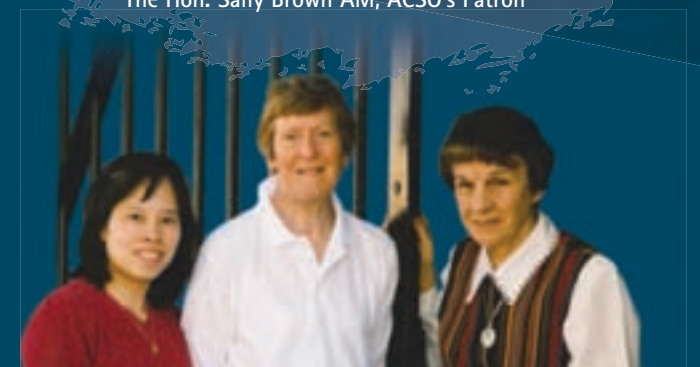
Christine Cappello, ACSO's founding member

I was honoured to have known Sr Clare for a quarter of a century. Sr Clare worked with the worst clients in the Victorian prison and post release system. She was able to temper her compassion with a realistic attitude to the clients. This earned her credibility and respect from all sides of the criminal justice system from police, the judiciary to corrections officers and the Parole Board. A measure of this respect is her being bestowed an Australian Honour. She was an inspiration to everyone who had contact with her.

Antony Calabrò, ACSO CEO 1986-2010

When Bonge and I were walking early this morning we reminisced about Sister Clare, from her startlingly blue eye shadow (she came late to make-up) to her prayer at the start of each Council meeting, and agreed that few of us leave such a legacy. Somehow she managed to see and acknowledge the reality of people's lives and crimes while never losing sight of the possibility of change, and of redemption. If only we could clone her.

The Hon. Sally Brown AM, ACSO's Patron





# CLIENT LED SUCCESS

## Garden to Gob

### CALABRÒ HOUSE GARDEN PROJECT

The Calabrò House Garden Project commenced mid-2013. The Project began quite organically when one of the residents came home from his new job with a huge amount of discarded flower seedlings. At this point Calabrò had very little in the way of a garden. A staff member had access to recycled timber. The group used this timber to build sectioned garden beds in which they planted the seedlings. This was the start of our garden project.

One resident had worked as a gardener in the past, and had grown fruit and vegetables as a hobby for many years. It was decided that a section of the new garden was to be used to grow edible plants for the residents to use in everyday cooking and food preparation. This quickly became a weekly "Garden to Gob" program facilitated by the Social Educator Team. The program taught the residents how to plant new seedlings, maintain the garden and harvest a crop so as to be able to prepare a healthy meal. As the residents had been composting for quite some time, the compost was used to enrich the soil. Vegetable seedlings and seeds were being planted and successfully harvested.

The residents, so proud of what they had achieved, decided to expand the garden project. With the full support of the Social Educator Team, the residents drew plans and tried their hands at real landscape design and construction. The team drafted a garden plan that involved building large planter boxes for fruit trees and paving a large area of the property. The project took a lot of hard work and dedication—but the results speak for themselves!



It was decided that a section of the new garden was to be used to grow edible plants that the residents could use in everyday cooking and food preparation.



## FUTURE VISION

# A VISION FOR ACSO'S OPERATIONS

*Client led success*

The 2011–2014 strategic plan is coming to an end. There were some set key organisational goals that focused on reviewing, modernising and growing ACSO's programs and services. These changes were initially focused on breaking down silos between program areas and to commence integrating the services.

In 2011, we restructured the service, moving away from grouping programs based on funding bodies and instead towards grouping programs by service type. We found this structure provided a number of improvements such as increased resource efficiencies and enhanced specialised services. It strengthened our quality improvement and risk management systems. As part of these changes we grew to understand that our "centralised by service" structure also needed to deliver a client-centric model; a model that responded to our clients' changing needs while at the same time establishing a foundation that can manage and deliver services compliant with ACSO's growth strategy.

Building on these changes, by the end of this year, ACSO will implement a new operational structure focused on responding to a client's needs as well as their successful outcomes.

### OUR SERVICES WILL BE STRUCTURED TO REFLECT THE "CLIENT JOURNEY" VIA THESE THREE MEANS:

**Connect** = intake and assessment and early intervention and diversion to mainstream supports and services.

**High Risk and Complex Needs** = intensive intervention to address behaviours of concern.

**Community Reintegration** = build social and vocational skills to transition to independent living and secure a job.

## ACSO'S OPERATIONS

*Early intervention and support for people presenting with substance abuse and mental health concerns, to divert them into mainstream supports and away from the criminal justice system*

### CONNECT

Intake and Assessment Services that triage and assess highly disadvantaged individuals in the community and divert them into community services for support before their issues become seriously problematic.

*Preventing offending through specialist interventions and community based recovery focused supports for people already in, or at risk of, entering the criminal justice system.*

### HIGH RISK & COMPLEX NEEDS

**Intensive Clinical and Support Services** for young people and adults presenting with multiple and complex needs that address behaviour change. Focused on reducing risk to self and others and creating pathways to less intensive step down services delivered by ACSO or other community partners.

### COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

**Step Down Services** and recovery focused supports that achieve successful transition into the community from institutional settings and intensive clinical and support programs. Focused on building independence, resilience and skills to have a safe place to live and social and economic participation.

*To mainstream community support service partners providing services for people across Victoria who are not in (or on the fringes of) the criminal justice system*

## ACSO'S INAUGURAL INTERSTATE EXPANSION

### JOINT VENTURE WITH arbias IN NSW

In 2014, ACSO and arbias partnered up and were awarded the Initial Transition Service (ITS), contracted by the Corrective Services New South Wales Funded Partnership Initiative. arbias has been delivering its Acquired Brain Injury Services program in NSW for five years. This is ACSO's only funded service outside Victoria. The ITS is a 12-week case work support program for newly-released prisoners on parole. It is delivered in partnership with Corrective Services. The joint venture was awarded ten sites across NSW with a contract value of \$1 million per year, with ACSO delivering the service from Campbelltown, Wollongong, Dubbo and Wagga.

ACSO and arbias have been developing a strategic alliance for the past five years, based on shared goals to deliver innovative services to ex prisoners with complex and co-morbid ABI and mental health presentations. Staff and the Executive from both organisations have shared values and strategic objectives in order to enhance and grow these services in Victoria and other states.



# LEADING SECTOR REFORM

*Alcohol & Other Drugs and  
Mental Health Support Services*

### ACSO'S VISION FOR SERVICE DELIVERY IS A PRETTY SIMPLE ONE:

*Connecting the mental health and drug treatment service sectors to create integrated intake, assessment, support and treatment services. We believe this is a universally accepted goal within government and community sectors, and have commenced delivering on this vision.*

### ACSO IS PLAYING A LEADING ROLE IN THE REFORM PROCESS BY IMPLEMENTING A VICTORIAN FIRST:

A coordinated dual diagnosis entry point for mental health support, voluntary and forensic alcohol and other drugs treatment and prisoner transition across regional Victoria.

## OUR INVESTMENT IN REGIONAL VICTORIA

ACSO has worked in regional Victoria for the past 17 years delivering COATS. We have also been a long-term provider of community based residential services for persons eligible under the *Disability Act 2006*, and who have a history of contact with the criminal justice system. The new services in the areas of alcohol and other drugs and mental health provided an important opportunity for ACSO to consolidate and expand its investment in regional Victoria.

Due to our commitment to enhance access to services in regional Victoria, we have co-invested over \$1.7million in local infrastructure, people and partnerships. We have expanded our regional workforce by employing team leaders, clinicians and peer support workers. These professionals are based across the state with mobile capacity to provide onsite assessments, training and support where required. Wherever possible this workforce was derived locally from people who may have been made redundant or lost their positions as a result of the Department of Health's recommissioning process.

ACSO has self-invested in and opened new consumer-accessible hubs in the key regional cities of Warrnambool, Ballarat, Shepparton, Bendigo and Traralgon. We have strengthened our catchment presence in multiple satellite locations and share accommodation space with partner agencies; locating staff in rural shires and townships to ensure services continue to reach the most isolated communities. This investment was over and above any funding provided for the newly reformed service system.

This significant investment in regional Victoria is an important step forward for ACSO. Our multi-disciplinary workforce is now involved in local networks and partnerships and we are further embedding our organisation and services within each catchment as a high profile local provider. We have and maintain significant catchment partnerships to ensure consumers continue to receive a single entry point to alcohol and drug treatment and mental health services, as well as responsive "on-the-ground" triage as required.

Reflecting our commitment to enhancing access to services in Regional Victoria, we have co-invested over \$1 million in local infrastructure, people and partnerships.



## CONSUMERS TELL THEIR STORY ONCE

Our primary goal is to prevent people who are presenting with problematic substance use, mental illness, cognitive disability and homelessness from either deepening their involvement or coming into contact with the criminal justice system. We know from experience that people with these most complex health and social barriers require multiple support and treatment responses—no one agency can effectively respond to such high complex needs. In the context of sector reform, ACSO is joining up services and entry points through local collaboration—through our new ACSO Connect division—to ensure consumers are not bounced between mental health, drug treatment and/or disability services and the courts and correction services and, in doing so, having to tell their stories multiple times.

Since 2011 ACSO has partnered and invested with **Athena Software** to develop the Penelope Case Management System (CMS). This management system enables us to fulfill our vision to connect and integrate services across government and community services. ACSO and Athena Software believe this is a true "game changer" for government and the not-for-profit sector. Penelope CMS enables accurate, real-time consumer information. With its designers, Athena Software, we have developed an online agency portal with a shared "case file" where ACSO communicates consumer information with key external agencies. Our one shared consumer file means consumers share their stories only once.

“ACSO is joining up services and entry points through local collaboration to ensure consumers are not bounced between mental health, drug treatment and/or disability services, having to tell their stories multiple times.”

In 2012, ACSO "turned on" Penelope to streamline COATS, investing over \$500,000 to deliver a centralised, clearly defined service entry point for all forensic drug treatment clients in Victoria. The COATS external user portal has approximately 1,200 AOD treatment and Corrections staff, sharing client information with ACSO. The Penelope Portal is currently being enhanced and expanded to also include the Department of Health funded Voluntary AOD and Mental Health Community Support Service intake functions in regional Victoria. The system provides the opportunity to see all treatment types the consumer has previously engaged in and their achieved outcomes—rather than addressing each treatment episode as a stand-alone response. ACSO has also commenced discussions with the Department of Human Services to explore the opportunities for Penelope CMS to be part of the upcoming Services Connect trials.

“ACSO’s Dual Diagnosis Intake Model is delivering an innovative way to manage the needs of clients with mental health issues who may have co-occurring substance misuse problems and other complex needs.”

## LEARNING FROM OUR COATS EXPERIENCE

For over 17 years, ACSO has been delivering COATS centralised and state wide, triage and assessment and brokerage service for forensic clients requiring AOD treatment. COATS currently manages around 25,000 inward and outbound referrals per year, meeting strict KPIs and ensuring that each consumer receives the right treatment in the most timely manner.

ACSO's Dual Diagnosis Intake Model is building a stronger more robust AOD treatment system which in turn will achieve stronger recovery outcomes for consumers and their families. This model runs parallel with COATS, utilising our existing infrastructure and systems. We know that consumers need access to treatment and support that is **responsive**; is the **right** treatment type; and **helps** them address their needs with clear treatment goals and pathways for ongoing support. Our service delivery model ensures that consumers' families and carers are at the centre of their treatment. By applying the COATS framework to mental health and AOD reform, ACSO is delivering an innovative way to manage the needs of clients with mental health issues who may have co-occurring substance misuse problems and other complex needs.



# FUTURE VISION

# LEADING SECTOR REFORM

## ACSO CONNECT

The new ACSO Connect service is delivering a joined response between the mental health and alcohol and other drugs sectors. This ensures mental health and AOD specialists share responsibility for treatment and services, and are seamless and consistent in their approach. This is possible through the combination of our resources and service models and their simultaneous availability via COATS-Forensic AOD intake and assessment, MHCSS intake service and the voluntary AOD Intake and Assessment Service.

Across regional Victoria, ACSO Connect is the consistent and visible point of entry joining services for priority groups. These include those experiencing homelessness, people with

an intellectual disability, people with a forensic history and those from the Indigenous population. The merit of this integrated dual diagnosis approach was prompted as early as 1999 when, at a US national conference for co-occurring disorders, participants overwhelmingly endorsed the "no wrong door approach": a single entry point offering clients a facilitated pathway to improved functioning through integrated treatment provision. This eliminates unnecessary duplication of services and reduces the likelihood that an individual will fall through the cracks of an uncoordinated system<sup>1</sup>. ACSO's model of multi-catchment intake for both mental health and AOD services provides a clearly visible entry point for consumers and their families. This removes the challenges of trying to navigate a disjointed service system.



Our model for assessment and referral into services is based on six core pillars. They are:

### 6 CORE PILLARS

1

Visible and easy access points across regional Victoria with phone, web-based and face-to-face intake assessment and brief carer screening.

2

A simple, responsive and immediate intake process.

3

A system and process to triage and to prioritise need, ensuring those with the highest risk and need receive priority access to services.

4

A co-ordinated dual diagnosis response that helps consumers access mental health services, where appropriate. We join this with our Penelope portal.

5

Referral to funded MHCSS and AOD providers across catchments, as well as into other necessary services. Peer workers and clinicians offer telephone bridging support and suggest support groups to engage people while they are awaiting service.

6

Our ICT platform Penelope that manages the service and referrals to providers.

## YOUTH RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

For the past 26 years, ACSO has delivered a number of Victorian residential services that assist over 50 high-risk clients to transition back into the community every year. Those clients can be either adults or young people who present with multiple and complex issues, including mental health, substance misuse, intellectual disability and/or a history of offending. We have built a 24-hour-a-day sleep-over model that enables us to provide the best level of care, co-ordination and support for those who present with greatest risk.

As part of the mental health sector reforms, ACSO was awarded the contract to operate the Bendigo Youth Residential Rehabilitation Service (YRR) as a 24/7 ten-bed residential program. The focus of this program is to assist young people with a mental health condition to recover and successfully transition into independent living. The program provides client-directed, personalised support with a focus on improving health, social connectedness and economic participation for those most disabled by their psychiatric condition. The program operates according to a person's individual stage of development. The Bendigo YRR expands and diversifies ACSO's delivery of residential services. It provides an opportunity to operate a service focused on prevention and recovery, while enhancing life and vocational skills for young people and the care and treatment of mental health conditions.

<sup>1</sup> (NASMHPD and NASADAD 1998).



## FUTURE VISION

# OUR NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

*a Sneak Preview*

ACSO is excited to launch our strategic plan for the next five years, in November. We have recognised the fact that ACSO is often "the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff": the emergency service that helps pick up the pieces and rebuild people's lives after they have entered the criminal justice system. As we look into the future, we see the value and importance of ACSO operating in the prevention space by using our skills, knowledge and expertise to prevent people from entering the criminal justice system and, in doing so; begin to "place a fence at the top of the cliff".

Priorities that have shaped the new strategic plan were driven by a comprehensive consultative process led by the Global Leadership Foundation. The process involved a broad range of key stakeholders, including government, community sector partners, our staff and most importantly the consumers of our services.

Four pillars are the foundation of our new strategic plan. They are:

## 4 PILLARS

1

### Inspire, Innovate and Lead

ACSO will provide thought and practice leadership to influence better client, community and policy outcomes.

3

### One ACSO

We will maintain our unique, flexible, unified and outcome-focused culture.

2

### Sustainable Growth

We will continue to grow a planned, vibrant and sustainable ACSO.

4

### Building capability

We will leverage our information, technology and intelligence systems to create better client, community and organisational outcomes.

Some of the major projects we will embark upon in the next five years include:

#### Establishing our Justice Innovation Lab

to test new approaches and develop new solutions to emerging problems as we endeavour to become the leading voice in the criminal justice system. We will continue to connect with and influence other service systems in order to provide the best outcomes for people in the criminal justice system.

#### We will identify and pursue growth opportunities

that fit within our vision and purpose. Specifically, we will build new business in the early intervention and diversion space. We have identified this as a vital element in achieving our vision. We will also continue to develop and provide new programs aimed at preventing recidivism across Australia.

**We will continue to invest** in the building and strengthening of a team of people who love their jobs, are passionate about working for ACSO and are committed to the vision, values and behaviours that underpin that vision. Our workforce is the heartbeat of our organisation.

#### We will grow our partnership with Athena Software

to optimise our Case Management System (Penelope). Penelope can help us join a wide range of services and supports we can wrap around an individual as he or she receives the various help they need in the community.

Our ultimate goal is to deliver services that change our community for the better and make it a safer, more inclusive place to live. As we forge a path into the future, this strategic plan links back to our vision. This vision is anchored to that of our founder, Stan McCormack, who over 30 years ago set up an organisation to give people another chance to change their lives.



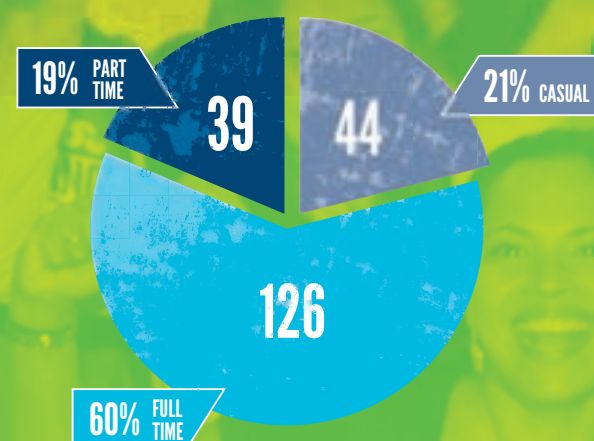
# OUR PEOPLE

*ACSO's staff details during 2013-2014*

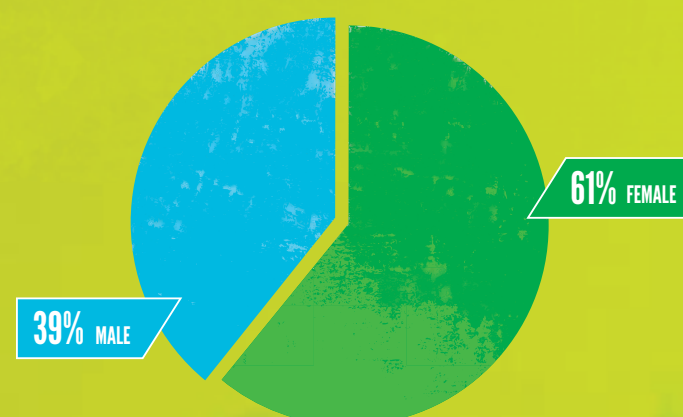
There has been no significant change to the complexion of ACSO's workforce in the past year. Staff turnover was 12%, significantly lower than the previous year (over 30%).

A notable initiative during the year regarding general improvement was to successfully link recruitment and the probation and performance appraisal processes to ACSO's values. This was done to ensure initial and on-going staff alignment and highlight the value and behaviours that underpin it.

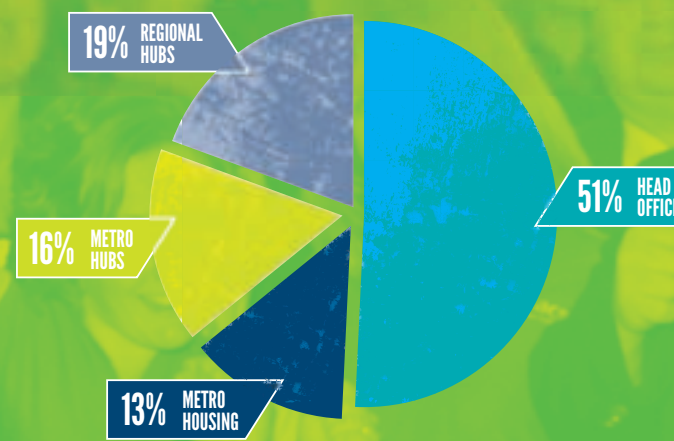
EMPLOYEE TYPE



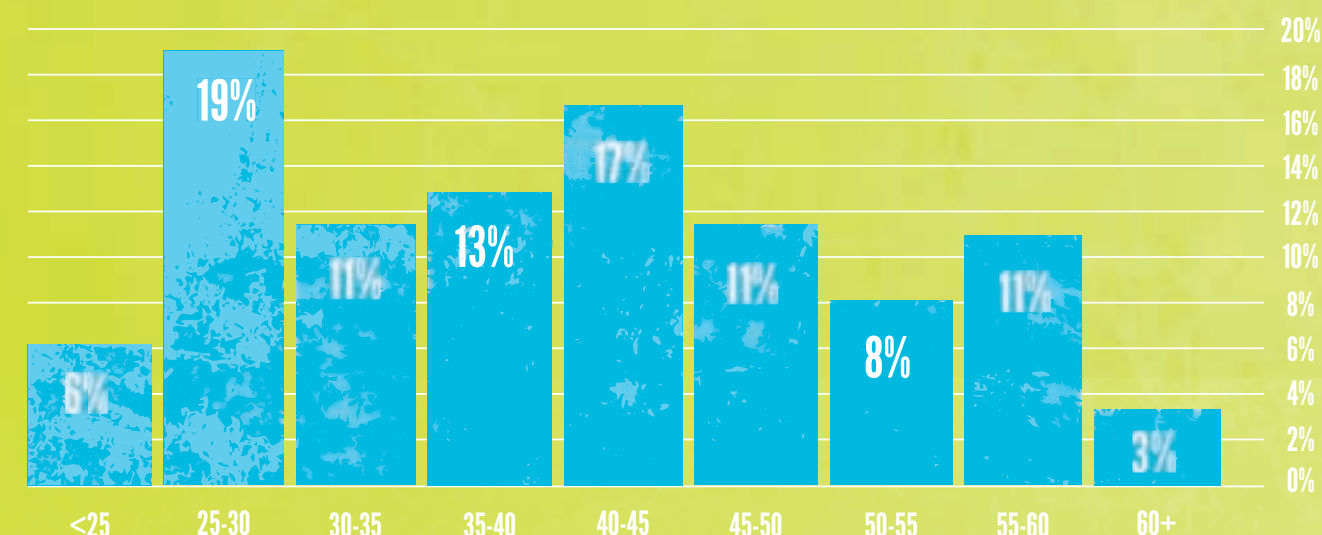
GENDER %



STAFF LOCATION



AGE PROFILE



## INVESTMENT IN EXCELLENCE—GLOBAL LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION PROGRAM

In order to have a common leadership language, understanding and capability, all ACSO leaders are invited to participate in a leadership program. During 2013-2014, 17 members of the ACSO leadership team undertook the ACSO (Global Leadership Foundation) Emerging Leaders Program.

### Building on the previous years' program, new features of the 2013-2014 program included:

- A graduate of the 2012-2013 program mentored each participant, giving them support and an opportunity to develop mentoring skills.
- Under the guidance of senior staff members, participants were involved on a "real" project in which they were encouraged to test and develop what they had learned during the program.

### The projects were:

- Development of a Social Enterprise named ACspresSO Cafe;
- Streamlining the process of managing student placements within ACSO;
- Establishing a phone service to provide support to those considering offending; and
- Defining and measuring the staff culture through an employee engagement and satisfaction survey.

The program culminated in a graduation ceremony attended by all participants and their mentors. The inclusion of the projects allowed the leaders to practice and demonstrate their learning. The outcomes of these projects are progressively being implemented within the organisation.



## WORKFORCE PLANNING

We also held our inaugural careers events across regional and metropolitan Victoria. Seven events were held, attracting over 200 people interested in working with us. The attendees heard about ACSO and interacted with staff members to discuss career pathways. All attendees were given "first access" to any subsequent advertising of vacant positions, as well as receiving regular "job feeds" with information about upcoming possibilities. ACSO also participated in the "CareerOne Virtual Expo"; an online career event. We were able to advertise key positions, attract candidates to our site and hold positive "chat" sessions with numerous potential employees. Both the career events and the CareerOne Virtual Expo allowed us to be ready for the tender success that ensued during 2014.

## CONSUMER ADVISORY GROUP— AN EXTENSION OF THE ACSO TEAM

ACSO's Consumer Advisory Group (CAG) represents and advocates for the interest of all ACSO consumers by assisting the organisation to improve its programs and services. The group provides advice, knowledge, guidance and participates in ACSO activities as required. It produces a quarterly magazine called "Tides" which contains informative articles, resources and support networks for our consumers.

Thanks ACSO for allowing me to use my experience to help others.

### Over the last year, the CAG team has:

- Developed and reviewed ACSO program brochures to ensure that they are client-friendly, and promote accessibility.
- Re-designed the outreach "Passport to Success" workbook for clients transitioning from prison.
- Worked with the Practice Leader to revise the ACSO Practice Framework Model.
- Provided feedback to upgrade the ACSO and CAG websites to make them as "user friendly" as possible.
- Contributed to the development of the Forensic Services Standards.

A highlight of the year was CAG's invitation to give presentations three times a year at Navitas College, a tertiary institution which offers courses on the criminal justice system, law and order and associated subjects. CAG now also takes short term placements of students from the college.

## INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION AND TECHNOLOGY IS THE KEY

ACSO has invested in its people, processes and systems to ensure we have strong foundations to deliver our growth strategy and a client-centric service model. Our small yet vibrant ICT team is a shining example of both pillars.

### Over the last year, the ICT team has:

- Invested **\$1 million** in core systems.
- Supported **1,550** customers and generated **8,000** tickets a year with an internal **Net Promoter Score of 10.3**.
  - One of the first organisations world-wide to implement **Standard+Case**. (*Standard means we know how to fix the problem and Case means we don't how to fix the problem but once we case manage to a solution, it becomes part of standard practice.*)
  - 80% of ICT staff are **ITIL certified**, targeting 100% in the next year.

## INDUSTRY RECOGNISED WORK— OUR EMPLOYMENT HEROES

Our passion for our work was recognised at the National Employment Services Association (NESA) 2014 Excellence Awards. Congratulations to Maria Pace and Giulia Teti from our Employment Services team for being nominated as finalists in the Excellence Awards. With more than 2,000 employment consultants working across Australia, reaching the finalist stage was an outstanding achievement for both women.

Maria was a finalist in the Bright Star Award; a nomination that duly recognised her contribution to Work Experience programs and her significant community work in providing food and clothing assistance through "The Pantry" and "Pass it On" projects.

Giulia won the National Employment Consultant of the Year Award. The judges said Giulia's work as a clinical support employment consultant had a lasting impact on her clients' lives, and that she demonstrates tenacity in exploring a variety of avenues in education, training and life skills every time she assists her clients.



# OUR APPROACH TO MANAGING RISK

As an organisation, ACSO is committed to a culture where risk management is integral to our organisational plans, objectives and management systems. Due to the nature of its work, ACSO operates within a context of inherent risk. The potential for adverse effects upon the organisation's ability to achieve its objectives is, therefore, very real.

Because of this we have been very proactive in the last three years in developing a comprehensive set of policies and procedures and investing in new technologies that allow us to deliver a high quality standard of services to our clients; but in a very safe environment for our staff, partnering stakeholders and the community.

The development of our risk framework has been led by our Council of Governance which has established the risk appetite for the organisation:

**In achieving its strategic and operational objectives ACSO will operate within a low overall risk range.**

**The organisation's lowest risk appetite is for client and staff health and safety, and regulatory compliance; with a marginally higher risk appetite for our strategic and operational objectives. This means that minimising risks associated with service delivery to clients, providing a safe work environment to staff and meeting regulatory compliance obligations will take priority over achieving other strategic and operational goals.**

Our Council's clear leadership in this regard has helped management develop a Risk Management Framework that enacts the principles set in the organisational Risk Appetite Statement.

As well as adopting and embedding the framework in our policy and practice to create a culture of risk awareness, the organisation invests heavily in technology which enables staff working in service delivery to be safe at all times.

Good examples of our commitment to and investment in technology are:

1

ACSO invested \$125,000 last year to provide every staff member who worked alone with a Safety Card Personal Alarm device. This device is GPS enabled and monitored 24 hours a day 365 days per year. It is a personal piece of equipment staff wear when working alone with clients. When activated, the device transmits live voice and data to a control room, from where—in the case of an emergency—police are contacted and provided directions so they can attend promptly.

2

ACSO invested \$2,250 per worker to provide every staff member working alone with a mobile office (comprising an internet wireless-connected laptop or tablet, a mobile phone and personal alarm). This not only keeps them in touch with the organisation at all times, but also provides them with the capability to access and update client information and case notes from wherever they might be working, be it in Victoria or NSW.

3

Over the last three years ACSO invested close to \$1million in Penelope—our web enabled Client Management System. This allows us to flag dangerous clients to staff and other partners, and highlight any precautions necessary when providing services to these types of clients.

The Framework consists of:



The adopted framework follows best practice principles embedded in the AS/NZS/ISO 31000.



# 2013–2014

## Financial performance

### Income and Expenditure

\$'000	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
<b>REVENUE</b>						
Government funding & fees	12,511	12,744	13,245	12,792	13,828	17,542
COATS brokerage	4,363	4,757	4,912	4,726	6,022	6,433
Other income	25	510	195	235	435	757
	<b>16,899</b>	<b>18,011</b>	<b>18,352</b>	<b>17,753</b>	<b>20,285</b>	<b>24,732</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Employee benefits	9,229	9,317	10,686	9,667	11,021	12,796
COATS brokerage	4,363	4,757	4,912	4,726	6,022	6,433
Depreciation & amortisation	713	824	751	709	715	776
Rental expenses	645	615	724	779	645	788
Other expenditure	1,693	1,998	1,936	1,876	2,084	3,694
	<b>16,643</b>	<b>17,511</b>	<b>19,009</b>	<b>17,757</b>	<b>20,487</b>	<b>24,487</b>
<b>NET SURPLUS / (LOSS) BEFORE INTEREST</b>	256	500	(657)	(4)	(202)	245
Interest received	563	515	707	753	642	571
<b>NET SURPLUS AFTER INTEREST</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>749</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>816</b>

### Assets and Liabilities

As at 30<sup>th</sup> June

\$'000	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Cash & cash equivalents	17,146	17,559	18,529	20,630	19,627	17,703
Trade receivables	231	1,121	1,082	1,081	436	181
Other	165	110	155	212	237	384
	<b>17,542</b>	<b>18,790</b>	<b>19,766</b>	<b>21,923</b>	<b>20,300</b>	<b>18,268</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>						
Intangibles	138	98	75	219	526	482
Plant & equipment	2,384	2,584	2,083	1,700	1,784	2,049
	<b>2,522</b>	<b>2,682</b>	<b>2,158</b>	<b>1,919</b>	<b>2,310</b>	<b>2,531</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>20,064</b>	<b>21,472</b>	<b>21,924</b>	<b>23,842</b>	<b>22,610</b>	<b>20,799</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>						
Trade & other payables	13,093	13,513	14,261	15,444	13,582	10,858
Provisions	1,479	1,452	1,106	1,092	1,282	1,379
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>14,572</b>	<b>14,965</b>	<b>15,367</b>	<b>16,536</b>	<b>14,864</b>	<b>12,237</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>5,492</b>	<b>6,507</b>	<b>6,557</b>	<b>7,306</b>	<b>7,746</b>	<b>8,562</b>



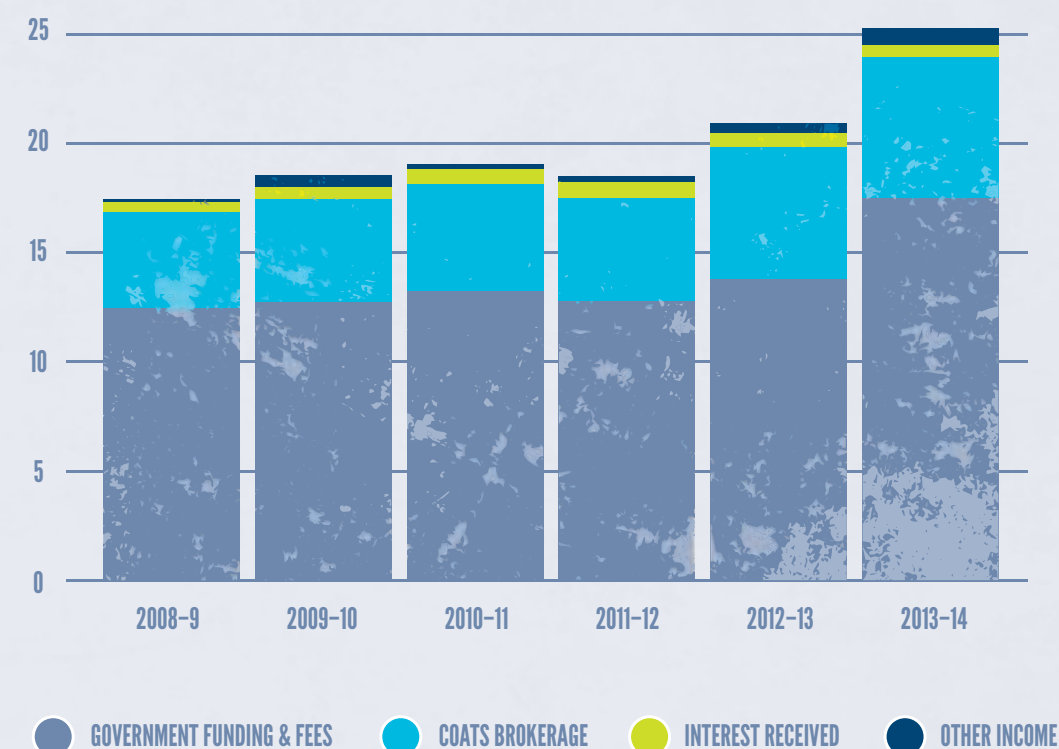
## Working Capital As at 30<sup>th</sup> June

\$'000	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cash & cash equivalents	17,146	17,559	18,529	20,630	19,627	17,703
Other current assets	396	1,231	1,237	1,293	673	565
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>17,542</b>	<b>18,790</b>	<b>19,766</b>	<b>21,923</b>	<b>20,300</b>	<b>18,268</b>
Trade & other payables	13,093	13,513	14,261	15,444	13,582	10,858
Provisions	1,479	1,452	1,106	1,092	1,282	1,379
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>14,572</b>	<b>14,965</b>	<b>15,367</b>	<b>16,536</b>	<b>14,864</b>	<b>12,237</b>
<b>WORKING CAPITAL</b>	<b>2,970</b>	<b>3,825</b>	<b>4,399</b>	<b>5,387</b>	<b>5,436</b>	<b>6,031</b>

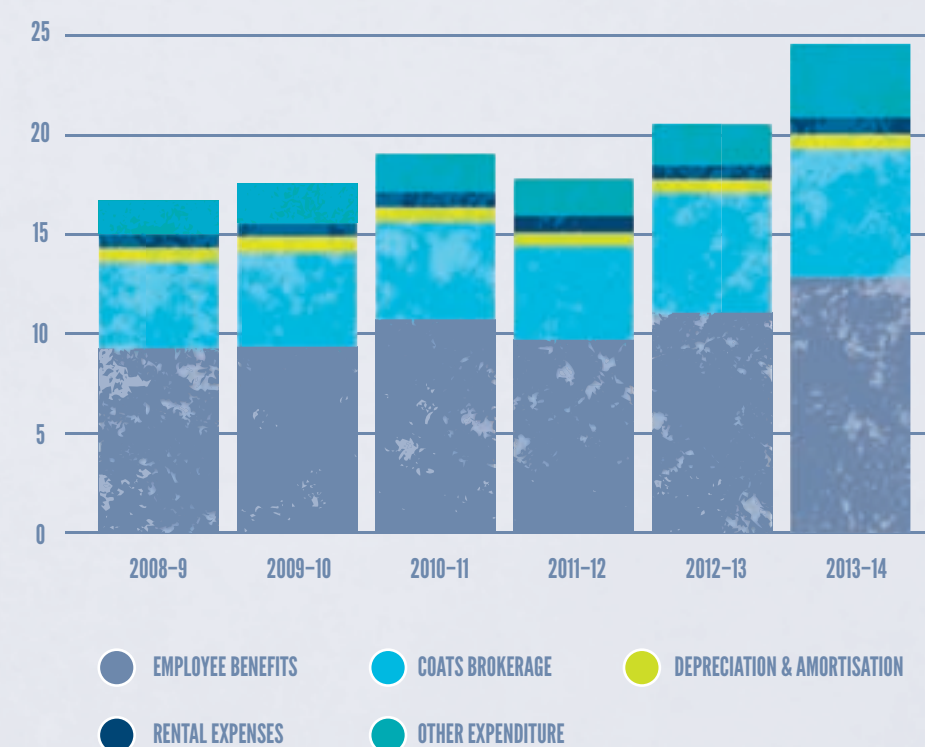
## Net Surplus (loss) \$'000



## Revenue \$'m



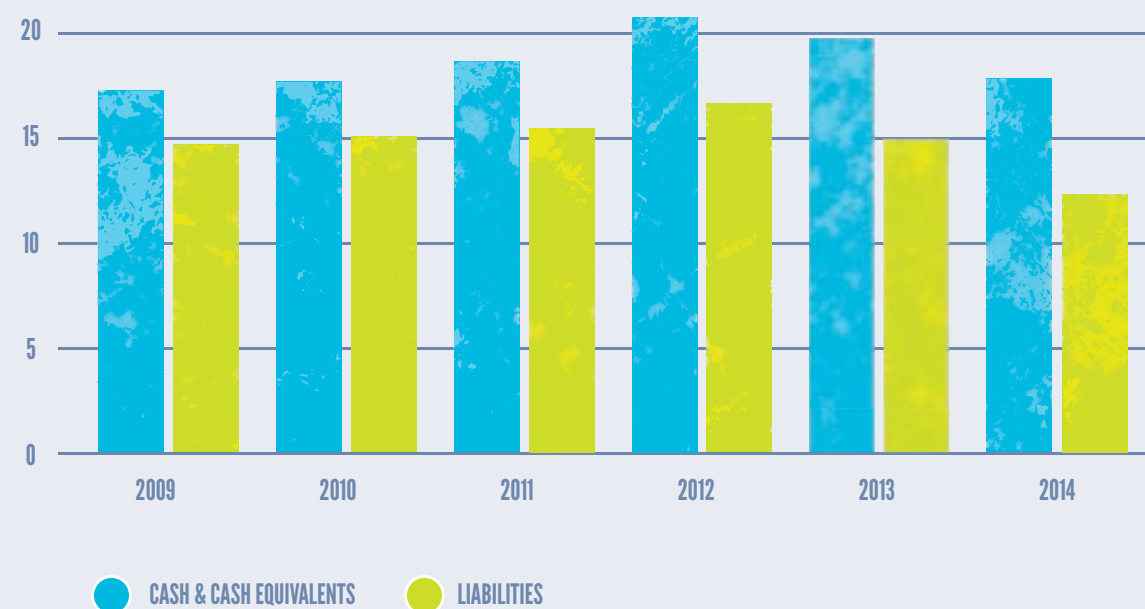
## Expenditure \$'m





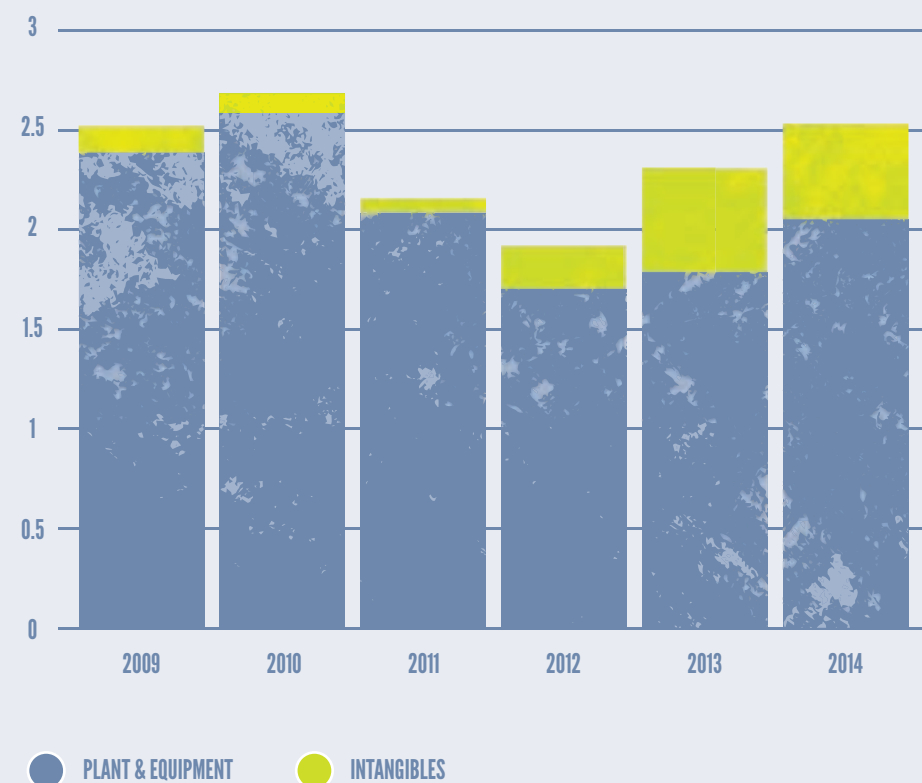
## Cash Assets to Liabilities \$'m

As at 30<sup>th</sup> June



## Non Current Assets (Closing Written Down Value) \$'m

As at 30<sup>th</sup> June



## Financial performance

The net surplus before interest for the 2013/2014 financial year was \$245,000, which compares favourably with the 2012/2013 year's loss before interest of \$202,000. Once earned interest of \$571,000 was included, ACSO was able to post a net surplus of \$816,000 (2012/2013 \$440,000).

Government funding and related fees increased from \$13.8 million in 2012/2013 to \$17.5 million, due in part to increased program activities and Employment Services related fees.

Community Correctional Services and Drug Treatment Services Protocol (COATS) brokerage activity continued to increase during the year by just under \$0.4 million to \$6.4 million for the financial year.

Interest earnings decreased by \$71,000 to \$571,000 for the year, as a result of decreased payments (caused by COATS brokerage) and decreases in interest rates. The amount of interest earned during a period is subject to the volatility of interest rates.

Employee benefits related expenditure increased by \$1.77 million (a 16% increase) during the financial year due to the impact of additional staff numbers to meet increased program demand, plus the continued increase in the salary base in accordance with the Fair Work Australia ruling and National Wage Case. The Fair Work Australia ruling and National Wage Case, which is industry wide, will see staff under the SCHADS award continue to receive above CPI increases for the next seven years.

## Financial position

ACSO's cash position remains strong, despite cash and cash equivalents decreasing by \$1.9 million over the year to \$17.7 million as at 30 June 2014. This result, however, was due to continued decreases in COATS brokerage liabilities of \$2.3 million during the period.

Non-current assets increased by just over \$220,000 due to investments in new hub locations and IT systems.

Liabilities for Trade payables decreased by \$2.7 million due to decreases in available COATS brokerage (\$2.3 million) and the timing of payments of trade payables.

Comparing current assets (excluding non-current assets) to liabilities (current and non-current), ACSO has maintained a net working capital position of \$6.0 million (\$5.4 million as at 30 June 2013).

ACSO's retained earnings as at 30 June 2014 stood at \$8.56 million.

## Financing and investing activities

Current investment policy restricts ACSO's investments to Commonwealth Bank term deposits, investment and standard business accounts.

## Continued improvement initiatives

Finance introduced new finance and payroll systems (Technology One) at the start of the 2013/14 financial year. This investment has allowed new systems and structures to be implemented to not only ensure we continue to meet operational expectations and needs, but to also have the technology in place to evolve concurrently with ACSO's growth strategy.

For a full copy of ACSO's audited financial statements email [acso@acso.org.au](mailto:acso@acso.org.au)



# WHAT WE STAND FOR

*We are about ending  
the cycle of crime*



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