

*The Women's Services Network*

**WESNET**

*Australia's peak women's organisation working to  
eliminate domestic and family violence*



**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2006 - 2007**

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# CHAIRPERSON

## PAULINE WOODBRIDGE

North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service (Townsville)

Over the 06-07 financial years I have once again had the privilege of acting as the National Chair of WESNET. Over the past year WESNET has undergone quite a few changes in terms of the wonderful women involved, but little change in terms of the environment we are operating within.

Thanks to the commitment and strength of the women representatives and the member organizations involved with WESNET we are able to continue as the sector peak body and represent the issues for women and children who are living with Domestic Violence.

WESNET has continued to talk to politicians about the importance of WESNET as a peak body and the need for it to be refunded. We also have lobbied around the underfunding in SAAP and the need for children to be funded as clients in their own right. WESNET is planning to produce another book to follow the fantastic 'Making Children Count' production. Julie Oberin has once again offered her great knowledge and skills for this project.

Our partnership with the Bodyshop has been strengthened again this year by being involved with their current campaign to address the issue of Domestic Violence. In this campaign as well as producing a booklet called 'Let's Air it Out', they have raised specific funds through the sale of 'daisy' soaps. They then called for submissions from the D&FV sector for project funding. In my role as Chair, I was part of a broad selection committee who worked through the short list of applications from organizations from across Australia, all seeking a grant for the fantastic ideas and projects that their organizations were planning. The Bodyshop bucket of funds clearly could not support all the very worthy requests, but many of the projects were funded. It was gratifying for me to see so many innovative projects from the services in the violence against women sector.

Campaigns such as this are fantastic and add so much to our efforts in this work. I can't help thinking though, of the possibilities that would arise if the whole sector were funded adequately and much more was done in the public arena to send strong messages that violence against women is not acceptable in our society and if you do it, there will be real consequences. I guess we all hope and work hard for this level of activity that could bring about the behavioral and attitudinal change needed for women and children to be safe in our communities.

It was during the past year that WESNET said farewell to Sira Nichols after many years as our Office Manager. Sira provided us with stable administration and organizational cohesion and it was with a mixture of regret and grateful thanks that we said goodbye to her. Sira was replaced by Lis Cameron who joined the organisation in July and took over the running of the WESNET office. Lis has tackled the many tasks required, and is currently organising the November face to face meeting. She is gradually sorting through the day to day responsibilities of running the office and becoming familiar with the long past and hopeful future of WESNET. Lis has a long background of working in a feminist violence against women service in North Queensland, before relocating to Canberra, just at the right time for WESNET. As the WESNET office and the Homelessness Australia (AFHO) office share space, Lis has been linking with the HA workers and working towards a harmonious and helpful relationship.

Many of the reps assisted with the organising of the WESNET network and my thanks go to Penny Becker, Sira Nichols and Kiki Korpinen for assistance in the Canberra office, to Shirley Slann for managing the email lists, to Cat for preparing the Election lobbying kit, and to Sue Brownlee for working on the DGR status. Some members of WESNET - Kedy, (WA), Sue, (NT), Shirley (IND) and Annabelle Allimant (NESB) also provide further support to the organization in the executive roles, managing the legal and financial responsibility aspects of WESNET. The Qld rep, Lindy Edwards on behalf of WESNET, has been involved with planning for the National Homelessness Conference to be held in 2008. Also Lindy, along with Kedy and myself are the WESNET reps on the board of Homelessness Australia (AFHO).

The long term arrangement between WESNET, NYCH and CHPA as the founding members of Homelessness Australia (AFHO has changed names this year) is also changing. HA continues to evolve and establish itself and the structure of that organisation is undergoing change. Annually WESNET reviews its relationship with HA and considers the future arrangements.

Elections for half the committee positions are held at the AGM each year and the positions to be filled in November 2007 are Tasmania, Northern Territory, Non-English Speaking Background (CALD), Australian Capital Territory, and Victoria. We have received nominations for the rep and alternate positions for election by member services.

Each of the States and Territories provide a D&FV sector Representative and an Alternate. I would like to recognize the terrific and important work they do in their own organisations, their local and state networks as well as for WESNET. The women involved with WESNET during 06 – 07 have demonstrated their skills and commitment over and over as they work with passion towards the goal of stopping violence against women and children. My thanks and appreciation goes to:

Shirley Slann and Marilyn Fogerty as Indigenous reps  
Annabelle Allimant and Vivienne Pillay as NESB reps  
Julie Oberin and Fiona MacCormack for Victoria  
Vicki Lachlan and Desi Alexandridis for South Australia  
Cat Gander for New South Wales  
Mary Swaffer for Tasmania  
Sue Brownlee and Jo Theodoropoulos for Northern Territory  
Penny Becker for Australian Capital Territory  
Lindy Edwards and Jane Doyle for Queensland  
Kedy Kristal and Arina Aoina for Western Australia

And my thanks and appreciation goes to all the women who work towards the goal of stopping violence against women in whatever form it takes and wherever it is happening.

# AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

**BILJANA PETROVA and KIKI KORPINEN**

Women's Centre for Health Matters Inc

## **Current Territory Domestic/Family Violence Issues and Legislative Changes**

The Domestic Violence Prevention Council is the peak advisory body to the ACT Government on domestic violence issues. Its guiding principles are consistent with the ACT government Policy Framework "Justice, Options and Prevention - Working to Make the Lives of ACT Women Safe" and with the ACT Office for Women's "Action Plan Addressing Violence and Safety Issues for Women in the ACT". As the ACT Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) reports, this year marks the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ACT Domestic Violence Prevention Council (DVPC). The DVPC is an independent statutory body established in 1997 under the *Domestic Violence (Amendment No.2) Act (ACT)*, its statutory purpose being to 'reduce the incidence of domestic violence offences in the Australian Capital Territory'. The four strategic priorities directed at achieving its statutory purpose are to;

- encourage and facilitate systematic early intervention strategies aimed at the prevention of domestic violence;
- generate a sense of community awareness of and involvement in the prevention of all forms of violence within intimate and family relationships;
- encourage and facilitate a coordinated criminal justice and community response to domestic violence;
- encourage and facilitate measures that reduce recidivism and the opportunities for re-offending.

The Anniversary will be celebrated in with a function held at the ACT Legislative Assembly.

Next year also marks the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the ACT Family Violence Intervention Project (FVIP). The FVIP is a coordinated, collaborative criminal justice and community response to family violence in the ACT. The focus of the FVIP is the criminal justice system and is a concerted and sustained attempt to improve criminal justice responses to allegations of family violence in the ACT. The FVIP is comprised of police, prosecution, courts and corrections and coordinates externally with other key agencies such as DVCS and Child Protection Services (CPS). Pre-FVIP, the ACT had the lowest arrest rate in Australia relating to domestic violence matters. The FVIP has made a significant difference to the criminal justice response including to the safety needs of women and children who have lived with violence. However, as we are all aware, there is always room for ongoing change and improvement in all systems that work with issues of domestic violence, particularly relating to safety concerns of women and children, and responsibility and accountability of men who use violence in their relationships.

The ACT is currently re-drafting some Amendments to the *Domestic Violence and Protection Orders ACT 2001*. Amendments will consist of a number of issues which include ensuring the definition of 'relevant person' under the Act includes boyfriend/girlfriend situations where the parties do not, or have ever, resided together. Currently, boyfriend/girlfriend matters can fall through the criminal justice 'gap' which means they are generally not identified as 'family violence' by police and therefore do not come to the notice of the FVIP and the support that might be provided under that program.

Many family violence matters often also include sexual violence. The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) reports that the ACT Government is in the process of introducing phase II of the *Restorative Justice Act* where adult offenders of family violence and sexual assault may be referred to this process. This is in addition to any criminal justice processes occurring through the court and is intended to occur between conviction and sentencing. DVCS, DV Prevention Council, the Women's Legal Service and CRCC are working together to ensure that this process is as victim focussed as possible and that safety is the primary consideration. .

### **Domestic/Family Violence Sector Issues**

Throughout this financial year ACT Women's Services were involved in the *Pathways Project* in an effort to provide a united response to issues facing the sector identified in previous years.

The *Pathways Project* was primarily initiated through an ACT Women's SAAP services consultation process which was driven by the ACT Department of Housing and Community Services. It has since grown into a sector wide framework including both government and non government organisations in the Women's Sector, Families, Youth and Men's services.

The Pathways 'group' continues to meet on a regular basis, and has held an initial gathering with all sectors represented.

Its overarching framework works to:

- Resolve crisis
- Re-establish family links where appropriate
- Re-establish a capacity to live independently of SAAP
- Increase involvement in early intervention and prevention strategies
- Provide better assistance to people who have a number of support needs
- Provide ongoing assistance to ensure stability for clients post crisis

The service system provides support and/or accommodation to:

- Women without children
- Women with accompanying children
- Women whose children are in the care of someone else some of the time or all of the time
- Women in families, including any partnership of adults, related people or people who have made a family together.

The service system aims to provide:

- A range of options for support and accommodation
- A streamlined pathway through the system with minimal points of contact
- Consistency in the response to women throughout the system
- Consistent practices and understanding in the response to children throughout the system
- Flexibility to meet the needs of women and their children
- Working for social justice change and addressing social justice issues wherever they arise.

### **Current ACT Women's Services Issues**

A number of services have undergone an evaluation in this period. Work has commenced to creatively address recommendations from these evaluations due to funding cuts the sector has experienced. Recruitment, staff training and retention has proved to be an on going challenge with many services operating with smaller staff teams. Services are continuing to experience a lack of crisis beds and the sector continues to find it difficult as the need outweighs the capacity. Due to limited resources and teams concentrating on day to day service provision, development and training issues have often needed to be put on hold.

Services are more and more being accessed by women in paid work on low incomes who do not meet the eligibility criteria into public housing. Housing affordability remains an issue - with high costs of the private rental market preventing most women accessing this option, many are forced to leave paid employment and reside in a refuge in order to gain affordable housing.

Housing ACT changes impacting directly on women in crisis services have included issues such as lengthy meetings and needing to gather lots of documentation for this process without a guarantee of gaining priority housing.

ACT Women's Services continued to support women with high and complex needs including drug and alcohol issues, mental health, sexual assault, trauma, financial hardship and acculturation – whose primary reason for seeking assistance was domestic violence.

Migrant and refugee women particularly from Muslim and African backgrounds have required an increased response from the sector due to the greater numbers of refugee women coming to the ACT. DV specific services report approximately 60% of all referrals are women and children from CALD backgrounds. Services have needed to further increase knowledge about different cultural practises, in order to gain more understanding of cultural issues impacting on an appropriate response from service providers.

Immigration issues present a challenge for both women and services due to the long decision making periods and lack of appropriate legal support/advice available. Women on sponsorship visas escaping DV are eventually placed on a special benefit which has to be repaid to Centrelink by the sponsor (who is often the perpetrator). This increases perpetrator's anger and consequently women often cancel the payment for fear of being further harmed.

A gap remains in the ACT of appropriate Indigenous services. The ACT Domestic Violence Prevention Council has on their agenda as a priority to support, encourage and facilitate the extension of appropriate legal services to Indigenous victims of violence and to improve access to these services. A shortage of appropriate services for Indigenous families is experienced across the sector as resources are inadequate. Coordination can prove difficult when there are many players involved. Services have the responsibility to come up with improved responses whilst support to families needs to be intensive and ongoing. Some services have expanded their capacity to provide accommodation and support to Indigenous families, (without increased resources) in an endeavour to at least partially respond to the need.

Women continue to report difficulties in accessing female GP's and GP's in general who bulk bill. Many women choose not to go to a doctor for the costs incurred are too great and often the decision to attend to own health issues is outweighed by the need to provide food for their children

Some services which provide crisis accommodation and support (not DV specific) are changing policy to allow men who are a part of the woman's support network to come to the premises – in stand alone properties. This has been voiced as an ongoing need by women. For many women having family around in times of crisis is very important.

Women's services once again combined strengths to offer additional residential support services to women and children escaping DV over a three month period between December 2006 and February 2007. Housing for this *Christmas Initiative* was provided in partnership by DHCS, Anglicare and Women's Services. DVCS provided after hours and weekend support to women's services for the purpose of referral and intake, which was greatly appreciated by the sector.

# NEW SOUTH WALES

## CAT GANDER

NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre (Sydney)

The NSW SAAP peaks NSW Women's refuge Movement Resource centre; Homelessness ACT.NSW and Youth Accommodation Assistance have maintained strong links throughout the year undertaking a number of projects together; including working together to progress SAAP V issues the Risk Assessment Tools for SAAP services, the Client Complexity Tool and the performance based contracting of SAAP services

NSW has continued to provide advice to government and other organisations on a number of issues impacting on women and children experiencing or escaping domestic violence and on refuge service provision, such as Family Law, Reshaping Public Housing, and input into the NSW State Plan.

NSW has also attended numerous meeting with the Department of Community Services on issues such as the Performance Monitoring Framework and the DOCS Costing Manual, as well as meetings with State and Federal Ministers and Minister advisors and MPs on a number of issues, including the Orana Project, SAAP funding, the NSW State Plan and the need for a NSW a Homelessness strategy and a Domestic and family Violence strategy.

### 1. OTHER ACTIVITIES

#### 1.1. PERFORMANCE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

NSW has continued to advocate concerns and issues raised by refugees regarding the change in DoCS funding arrangements, the Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF).

The WRM RC is a member of the PMF Implementation Group meetings. The Peaks have accompanied DoCS and the NGO Training Unit at the Performance Monitoring Framework Workshops that toured the state. Part of our role has been to make sure that services know that the Peaks are available if member services have any queries or concerns about the framework. We have encouraged all services to participate in the framework so we can maximize our input in the pilot stage of the process. There was a high response from services whose service agreements end this year, to participate in the trial.

The Peaks organised a forum on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2007 to discuss the PMF. The Sydney area forum was well attended by member refugees.

#### 1.2.FAMILY LAW

In November 2006, the WRM RC completed a submission into the NSW Legislative Council Inquiry into the Impact of the Family Law Amendments on behalf of the WRM. The submission outlined the concerns in relation to the impact of the Family Law changes on women and children leaving an abusive relationship and made some recommendations relevant at State level to increase protection of women and children.

The submission is referred to in the NSW Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice report on the inquiry into the impact of the *Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Act 2006* released in December 2006. The report proposes 14 recommendations to address the implications of the changes to the *Family Law Act 1975*, including the concerns around exposing women to family violence and the subordination of the best interests of the child to the interests of the parents.

### **1.3.EXIT OUTCOMES PROJECT**

NSW has been working in partnership with the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) to develop a research project on the role of housing in determining outcomes for women and children exiting refugees.

The aims of the research are to:

- Track the interactions each of the women have with the housing market
- Record satisfaction levels with housing

Assess impact of housing on their children

- Assess the housing aspiration of women
- Collect basic information about the household

The pilot will consist of 15 interviews with women in three (possibly four) geographical regions. The regions identified were the Hunter, Riverina and Inner Sydney. However, the WRM RC will revisit this plan to ensure we have a good spread of services as different regions are experiencing different issues. We will also investigate including two interviewees from the Staying Home Leaving Violence Project. The WRM RC will be in touch with some refugees about engaging participants once ethics approval has been given.

### **1.4 .RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL**

NSW continued to participate in the Reference Group for the Risk Assessment Tool project. This project arose from the 2004 Ombudsman's Inquiry into Exclusion in SAAP services. In response, a project was funded by DoCS to develop and pilot a valid risk assessment tool that would enable NSW SAAP funded services to make informed decisions about a person's appropriateness for acceptance as a SAAP client.

### **1.5 LONGITUDINAL SERVICE TRACKING PROJECT**

The WRM RC together with the other 2 SAAP peaks has continued to be involved in the Longitudinal Service Tracking project, with the aim to investigate the relationship between the funding of a range of SAAP services and the operation of these services over a five-year period, so as to document how funding issues will impact on service delivery. There are 15 Women refugees participating in this long term project.

### **1.6 SAAP CLIENT COMPLEXITY TOOL**

WRM RC has been attending the advisory group for this project. The project is a partnership between NSW Department of Community Services and Mission Australia. Other agencies involved in the project are HomelessnessNSW.ACT, YAA, FaCSIA and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

Many refuge workers have said that more and more clients accessing their services have complex needs. This tool will help to identify the number of clients accessing services who have high and complex needs.

The role of the advisory group is to assist in the development and evaluation of the Client Complexity Tool. The tool will be piloted across a range of SAAP services. Refugees will be asked if they would like to participate in the pilot

The NSW Client Complexity Tool project is to merge with the National Client Complexity Tool Project. Training will be developed and rolled out nationally to SAAP agencies. There will be a field test in October consisting of 16 agencies, 8 agencies will trial the forms in NSW.

## **1.7. CHILD RESOURCE BROCHURES**

The WRM Resource Centre developed a set of children's age appropriate resources brochures. The brochures were distributed to WRM refuge workers.

The children's age appropriate resource brochures are designed to give to mothers when they arrive at the refuge. They outline:

- the development attributes of the child in relation to their age
- how they may have experienced the violence in relation to their age
- how they might be feeling now if the mother has left their home and the violent partner and
- ideas on how mothers can help their child/ren

The brochures give mothers information on some of the normal developments that can be attributed to their child's age along with how children at different ages may experience or be affected by domestic violence. Most importantly the resource starts to talk about some of the things that mothers can do to help their children.

For over a decade there has been an ongoing education campaign on the 'list' of effects that domestic violence can have on children. It was very important to establish that children are affected by domestic violence. But the 'list' tends to lump all children together and can give a grim outlook for their future. Furthermore it makes mothers feel guilty that their children are damaged and doesn't empower them to help heal their children. The brochures are an attempt at trying to add another layer to the way we support mothers and their children.

The WRM Resource Centre will be doing an evaluation of the resources in the near future to build on and improve the resources.

## **2 SPECIAL PROJECTS**

### **2.3 WOMEN'S FAMILY LAW SUPPORT SERVICE**

The WRM Resource Centre has had a key role in the establishment of the NSW WRM Women's Family Law Support Service (WFLSS), which opened on 7<sup>th</sup> March at the Sydney Family Court Registry. This service provides non-legal support, information and referrals for women attending the Sydney Family Law Registry in relation to separation, with a particular focus on women and children who are separating from a partner who is violent and abusive. The service is a joint project of the WRM and the Sydney Family Law Registry (FLC). WRM RC continues to co-ordinate, develop and promote the service.

The WRM has been a member on the Family Law Reference Group since 2004 and has provided training for court staff and lawyers on issues of domestic violence. In recognition of the increasing number of women without representation attending the Family Law Court (FLC) with support workers, the WRM put forward that the FLC hold an information session for domestic violence workers on FLC processes. The places were filled quickly and the FLC ended up running 3 sessions attended by close to 90 domestic violence workers.

With evidence of number of workers providing court support the Family Law Reference Group began to discuss formalising a court support service for women who have experienced domestic violence and are going through FLC processes. The FLC and the WRM reviewed Family Law Court support models in other states.

Neither the FLC nor the WRM had any funds to support the development of such a service. The WRM sent out a request for expressions of interest to WRM refuge workers to be seconded to work in the service and received a very positive response. Comprehensive training sessions were held at the FLC at the end of last year, with over 30 refuge workers completing the training. The training was delivered by a range of presenters from the Family Law Court, DoCS, Legal Aid, Law firms, Family Relationship Centres and Women's Legal Services NSW. Barb Kilpatrick and Wendy Roberts (Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre), Sally Steele (Essie Women's Refuge) and Kate Sawtschuk (WRM RC) provided numerous presentations to Family Law Court staff to introduce the service and to raise awareness of the service.

The service operated on Wednesdays for the first three months, and now operates on Wednesday and Friday 9am – 1pm. Wendy Roberts and Barb Kilpatrick are Supervisors for the service and Kate Sawtschuk is coordinating the service. Two court support workers (trained seconded workers from WRM refuges) are rostered on each shift.

The progress of the service has been positive. Client feedback suggests that the service is proving to be a useful support and resource for women. The main form of support provided to women to date includes assistance in navigating the court process, referral to other organisations including local domestic violence court assistance schemes and linking women with legal representation. While the service has been in an establishment phase with no external promotion until August 2007, the service had already assisted 128 women as at the end of September 2007. Since the introduction of compulsory mediation from July 2007 there has been a notable increase in the number of women requiring assistance through the service.

The Project Group (consisting of Family Law Court staff and WRM representatives including the WRM RC) has met several times to discuss further service development, policies and resources for the service. WRM representatives including the WRM RC have met with the Chief Justice of the Family Law Courts Diana Bryant to discuss the service's history and progress.

The WRM RC is currently exploring funding opportunities for the service. Lesley Laing from the University of Sydney has agreed to undertake the evaluation of the WFLSS. Lesley visited the service to observe the operation of the service and talk to staff. The project group has since met with Lesley to discuss evaluation strategies.



*ABOVE: The WRM refuge workers who completed the training at the Family Law Court in October and November 2006*

## **2.4 BACK OFFICE COST SAVINGS AND BULK PURCHASING SERVICE**

The WRM Resource Centre developed a funding proposal to set up a back office cost savings and bulk purchasing service that would be available to all WRM refuges. Funding was provided under the Commonwealth Innovation and Investment Fund. The back office savings/bulk purchasing service would be available for items such as: stationery, motor vehicle fleet, phones, security systems, furniture, play equipment, sanitary disposals, insurance and auditing services.

The service would become self sustainable after the set up funding terminates and would provide financial savings to refuges, as well as time savings in time spent on researching and purchasing items. Both financial and time savings could be redirected into service provision.

This project was initially developed by the WRM in response to positive feedback received from member services about the concept during the development of the WRM Business Plan in 2004. Funding was received in February 2007 from the SAAP V Innovation and Investment fund to develop the back office bulk purchasing support service.

The Business Centre manager, Edith Magnussen, commenced in August 2007.

## **2.5 ORANA FAR WEST SAFE HOUSES PROJECT**

This project aims at strengthening the viability of the Orana Safe Houses and to identify a model that best meets the needs of Aboriginal women and children experiencing and escaping domestic and family violence and sexual abuse in each community. The Final Stage One Orana Report was launched in Bourke in December 2005 by Tanya Plibersek, Shadow Minister for Women and is available on the WRM RC website.

The WRM RC has continued to work to progress the recommendation of the Orana Report. The WRM RC has met with DoCS, the Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaCSIA) and other relevant organisations with responsibilities in the Orana region regarding funding and training opportunities and other resource issues.

In September 2006, DoCS announced additional funding for the Safe Houses and the plan to develop broader domestic violence strategies in the Orana Far West region. DoCS have now employed a worker for 3 years who will be dedicated to supporting the implementation of the Orana Report. Funding has since been received for Child Support positions in Bourke, Brewarrina, Lightning Ridge, Walgett and Wilcannia Safe Houses. The WRM will continue to provide support in the Orana. Fundi

# NORTHERN TERRITORY

## SUE BROWNLEE AND JO THEODOROPOLOUS

Dawn House Women's Shelter (Darwin)

### **Family Relationship Centres**

Having won the tender in 2005/06, Anglicare Resolve and Relationships Australia continue to provide the Family Relationship Centre in Darwin. They also provide an outreach service to Katherine, and Anglicare Resolve is responsible for the Family Relationship Centre in Alice Springs. The Centres a reference group made up of community representatives, and employ designated indigenous liaison staff. There is a screening process to identify the presence of domestic or family violence in the relationship, but concern has been expressed about the variable skills base of mediators. Support workers are not permitted to sit in on mediation, and this has provided some anxiety for clients who do not have English as a first language or who are uncomfortable with formal processes. It has also been reported that some clients aren't sure what it is that they are agreeing to. At this stage, the flow through effect on Family Court orders is yet to be seen.

### **Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse – *Little Children are Sacred Report***

On 15 June 2007 the Chief Minister of the Northern Territory released the report *Little Children are Sacred* arising from the Inquiry into the Protection of Aboriginal Children from Sexual Abuse. The Inquiry was wide ranging and comprehensive - 261 meetings were held with individuals and groups, written submissions received from 65 individuals, organizations and groups, and regional forums held in Katherine, Nhulunbuy, Darwin and Alice Springs.

The report specified 97 recommendations, including:

- the establishment of a Child Death Review and Prevention Committee (Recommendation 10);
- the creation of family support infrastructure (services and programs) targeted to support children and their families in urban and remote settings, making it clear that short term or pilot program funding should be avoided as a long term investment is required (46a); and,
- called for the critical mass construction in targeted communities of new housing and essential repairs and maintenance given the extent of overcrowding in houses and the fact that this has a direct impact on family and sexual violence (84).

### **Exit Points**

Lack of exit points from SAAP funded services has now reached crisis point. Some women are forced to remain in violent or abusive homes because there is nowhere for them to go. In the Dry Season in the Top End of the Northern Territory it is almost impossible to find accommodation of any sort as hostels, motels, and caravan parks are either full, or booked ahead to full capacity. Crisis shelters are overflowing because exit options for women are so limited. Although domestic violence is a criteria for going onto the priority housing list, waiting times for public housing continue to increase, and housing stock is not growing.

Rental rates have increased enormously, putting the private rental market out of the reach of most women and their families escaping violence.

Some shelters own community housing properties, but experience conflict that arises from being both the landlord and the support service. In any case, there are insufficient properties to meet demand. NT Shelter has recently applied for \$16 million dollars from the Commonwealth government to establish a strong community housing sector with accommodation suited to various cohorts, including women with children.

### **Increasing pressures on staff in crisis services**

The Community Service Sector is finding it increasingly difficult to recruit skilled staff, and shelters providing domestic and family violence intervention have reported positions being left vacant for months. Once filled, it is not uncommon for workers to be lured to the public service (also having problems filling positions) for an additional \$10,000-\$12,000 per year.

After a successful campaign in South Australia, the NT Council of Social Services, in conjunction with key community sector employers and the Australian Services Union, is in the early stages of planning forums and meetings with government representatives about sector reform which will include addressing wages and conditions.

### **Support for children**

The NT Department of Health and Community Services put out a tender for the provision of counseling services to children who have experienced domestic and/or family violence in the amount of \$100,000 a year. The model determined by the Department brokered psychological services for assessment, screening and counseling. No Darwin agencies submitted a tender. Concerns expressed by services related to insufficient funds being available, that the model failed to offer the option of therapeutic group work, and excluded the majority of children who would not evidence a diagnosable condition.

### **Review of the Domestic Violence Act**

As of end June 2007 there has been no release of a draft bill following extensive consultations throughout 2005/2006. Key discussion points have included:

- The capacity of young persons aged 15-18 years to obtain domestic violence orders on their own behalf;
- The possibility of young people aged 15-18 years having orders made against them;
- Fear of domestic violence to become reasonable grounds for an applicant to get an order;
- Broadening the legal definition of domestic violence to include economic abuse;
- Increasing penalties for breach of an order;
- A presumption that victims with children will remain in the family home; and,
- Most controversially, the mandatory reporting of domestic or family violence by health practitioners. This has raised concerns for the safety of unsupported health workers in remote communities.

# QUEENSLAND

*LINDY EDWARDS*

Sera's Women's Shelter, Townsville

Looking over my previous reports, it is interesting how some of the issues are still there. In Queensland, as I'm sure in other states, we still have a chronic shortage of affordable, accessible housing. This is making it extremely difficult for women to exit from Shelters, and we no longer seem to be just a crisis response, with women now staying much longer, simply waiting to find housing. The huge injection of funds by the State government in their Responding to Homelessness Strategy, has done little to increase the number of beds/properties, there is simply a lot more workers trying to tackle the problem of homelessness, adding further strain to the sector workforce.

This leads on to the second issue which does not seem to have improved at all in the past couple of years – a chronic shortage of workers in the sector, and in particular workers with strong feminist values. As we compete with the government departments who offer much higher wages, our lobbying to Department of Communities simply leads to the development by them of costly strategies to assist the sector to 'market & promote' themselves better to the potential workforce. A lot of money is poured into strategies such as the "Full Cost of Service Delivery" and "Fair Level of Funding", but we are not optimistic this will lead to the increase in funding that is needed for services to be able to pay workers appropriate wages.

A successful Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Month was held in May, with activities held around the state, raising awareness of the issues. In Townsville funding was received from the Department of Communities to have advertisements put on the side of buses, with relevant local phone numbers. As in previous years, a Candlelight Ceremony was held at the same time in all centres across the State, to remember those women and children who have lost their lives as a result of domestic violence.

Queensland still does not have a properly funded women's services peak, but we have attempted to hold a state-wide meeting once a year, to bring together women's services and shelters from around the state. The state government does fund a Domestic Violence Ministerial Advisory Committee, which is fairly well resourced and provides an opportunity for input from the sector, however, the process of selecting members to this in previous years has been of some concern. Whilst there has been a good cross section of Indigenous, NESB and regional representation, some experienced domestic violence workers were overlooked in favour of others with little experience and no links to the sector.

Queensland still does not have a SAAP ministerial advisory arrangement, despite lobbying by the sector and QCOSS. The previous Minister did seem keen to have input from the community sector, but this has been done through one or two SAAP Ministerial Roundtable Forums during the year, by special invitation rather than a more formal advisory committee. At the last one, held in June, it was announced that there would be some funding available for an advisory process, but there were no details about how this would happen, and nothing further has been heard.

We have been fortunate for some years to have a good Minister, who is keen to hear from the sector, and very concerned about regional and rural issues. He has now been replaced by what we hope will be an even better Minister, a woman from the Townsville region, who has close links with the sector and whom we are confident we will be able to work closely with.

The Department of Communities has recently introduced a set of standards for community services, which is going to prove a nightmare for services who have to go through the self assessment process to show that we meet the standards. The self assessment tool that has been produced is very bureaucratic and extremely laborious for already under resourced services. A one-off grant of \$7,000 has been made available to assist services undergo this process.

Around the state as more Family Relationship Centres are set up, there is growing concern in the sector about how this process will disadvantage our clients. Workers do not appear to be well trained with regard to domestic violence issues, and women not always well informed about the process. At a local level we have done some work to establish a positive relationship with the FRC to ensure that we are able to address our issues of concern, however, of greater concern to us is the actual legal process and the huge push for more of our clients to have to agree to 50/50 access, with a seeming disregard for the on-going abuse of the women, and the extremely difficult financial position that results, because of reduced Centrelink benefits. With only 50% of Family Payments, it is virtually impossible for the women to get any sort of rental accommodation.

Within Queensland, in the SAAP Sector generally, there have been concerns about subtle moves to have SAAP brought under the Department of Housing, which we believe would be very disadvantageous for the organisations and the clients. There has been nothing definite, simply meetings between the two departments, but as this is not the first time the issue has been raised, it appears that the Minister for Housing may continue to push this idea. The SAAP sector and particularly the women's services will have to be working closely with our new Minister around this, to ensure our concerns are heard.

Within the Qld. Police Service, there has recently been established a Domestic & Family Violence Unit whose primary focus is the implementation of a new strategic direction for policing domestic and family violence. At a recent state wide domestic Violence Police Forum, held in Brisbane, amongst topics were discussed, were the issue of the predominant aggressor principle, looking at it with a view to recommending legislative amendments to support it's use, also the development of a Police DV Code of Practice. Obviously a lot more work needs to be done on these, and will wait to see what positive outcomes there are for the women and children.

# SOUTH AUSTRALIA

## VICKI LACHLAN

The Women's Housing Association Inc

The Coalition of Women's Domestic Violence Services of SA are currently participating in a whole of SAAP Review in SA. There has been an extensive round of consultations; however we are keenly pursuing the notion of keeping DV services unique and different from the rest of the Homeless sector. The same issues that WESNET are facing – in that there is little recognition for the fact that women, with or without children, who have experienced domestic violence are not just homeless – they have been made homeless because of either an abusive incidence or many incidences, and therefore require specialist services around their need for safe and secure housing away from the abuse. The SAAP structure in SA has been in turmoil for a number of years – personnel within the department change constantly, SAAP has been moved almost annually from department to department, and now that it appears that there is a stable 'home' for it with the Department of Families and Communities which now has responsibility for SAAP has decided to review it – to firstly check where the dollars go; and secondly to check why there is so many services in SA – it couldn't possibly be because we are a huge geographically spread state with a single main city economy and limited localised/regionalised service for disadvantaged people, and SAAP services try to breach the divide!

The SA Domestic Violence Laws are currently being rewritten, after quite an extensive consultation and submission process with DV services, police, justice, housing, SAAP and all other services working with DV being part of the process. Women who have gone through current systems were also consulted and all other state's legislation was taken into consideration in the redevelopment of the thinking around it - so we are keen for the laws to be quite comprehensive, and considerate of women's needs. SA services continue to monitor the implications of the *Welfare to Work* legislation, although we have no concrete data produced as yet.

Our Minister for Housing, Jay Wetherill, has set up a Strategic Housing Advisory Committee – it is good that the Manager of our indigenous DV service has a seat at the table; however there are no other women's specific services represented – which is disappointing.

The DV Action Group network will have its annual conference in November, this year focusing on CALD issues.

The SA Women's Housing Caucus has recently launched a research report titled "*TOO BIG TO IGNORE – Future Issues for Australian Women's Housing 2006 – 2025*". After extensive research along with a range of relevant issues for all women, it complies with WESNET's previously highlighted concern that "...it is important for governments to recognise the very real impact of violence in the home and provide adequate supports to women who are forced to address this corrosive and damaging issue, frequently forced out of their homes by their partner's behaviour; ...there is a need for both additional facilities and a working strategy to identify and provide pathways back into conventional, safe, secure and affordable housing for women and their children".

The SA Family Safety Framework (FSF) whole of government reference group has been working on a Family Safety Agreement, Common Risk Assessments, Protocols for Information Sharing and a process of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the FSF to focus on those at very high risk, where confidentiality can be treated differently to ensure the safety of lives of women and children in cases of extreme domestic or family violence.

A group of SA DV Service workers are collecting data and feedback from clients about the Family Law Act changes, to feed into any future review or evaluation of the changes. Workers are ensuring they interview women to obtain the most comprehensive information they can.

Additionally a working party has been set up to look at the issues for women with disabilities who experience domestic or family violence.

Tually, S., Beer, A., Faulkner, D. 2007, *TOO BIG TO IGNORE Future Issues for Australian Women's Housing 2006-2025 Research Report*, Adelaide, October 2007

# VICTORIA

## JULIE OBERIN

Annie North Inc. Women's Refuge and Domestic Violence Service, Bendigo

You will recall that Victoria implemented wide reaching reform on the domestic and family violence sector over the last two years. We are currently heading into the second year of a three year funding contract round developing and providing an *Integrated Family Violence Strategy*.

As I said last year the whole process was a fiasco and completely unnecessary. I again ask how much of our valuable funding went into this exercise and how many clients suffered because resources in the way of extra time and resources had to go into the preparation of tender documents, and developing and implementing new programs and an 'integrated' framework without adequate funding?

I still believe it was an exercise to mainstream our women's domestic violence services and rationalise their funding by introducing unit costing. In any ones eyes, it was a very clumsy way of cutting funding to services.

As I reported last year it was shameful that a Labor government suddenly did this in an environment of genuine partnership. Our sector had been sitting on the State-wide Steering Committee over the previous 2 years working collaboratively on reform when despite the articulated 'whole of government approach' the Office of Housing decided to tender and thus rationalise and mainstream the women's domestic violence sector. So much for trust and partnerships with the Victorian Labor government. Pleas to the Premier and the other 4 Ministers involved, Mary Delahunty, Minister for Women, Tim Holding, Police Minister, Cheryl Garbutt, Minister for Community Services and Children, and Rob Hulls, Attorney General, all fell on deaf ears unwilling to intervene because the 'whole of government' was complicit in the rationalisation of our services. Ironically as I write this report Mary Delahunty and Cheryl Garbutt are no longer Ministers.

Regarding the reforms, many services are experiencing problems with lack of certainty and high levels of change within organisations. Some of the newly funding programs however, with the good will of our sector and despite the under-funding are on the ground and operational. These include:

- Women's counselling (specialist domestic/family violence counselling)
- Women's support groups
- Intensive case management
- Private rental brokerage
- Men's Behaviour Change Programs.

The state-wide risk assessment framework and tool being developed by private consultants KPMG is due to be released in the next few months after consultations across the state.

### **Indigenous Family Violence.**

The Indigenous Family Violence Strategy remains underway.

This includes:

- Healing and Time Out Services to respond in culturally appropriate ways to the high levels of family violence in Aboriginal communities.

It aims to deliver services to respond to the particular needs of Indigenous men, women and children to help prevent, reduce and respond to family violence in Indigenous communities.

In 2002, the Victorian Government released the Framework for the development of the Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Strategy: a partnership approach between Indigenous Communities and Government (the Framework). The Framework outlined a three stage process to develop and implement an Indigenous Family Violence Strategy in Victoria.

- Stage One involved establishing an Indigenous-led Task Force to provide the Government with advice about how to effectively address family violence within Indigenous Communities.
- Stage Two requires the Government to respond to the recommendations of the Task Force.
- Stage Three will see the development and implementation of the Indigenous Family Violence Plan.

Indigenous Family Violence action groups are set up across the state and a lot of good work is being undertaken. Some areas have newly funded Healing Centres which are aimed at particularly responding to the affects of physical and sexual abuse.

### **Police Code of Practice**

This initiative has been rolled out by the Victorian Police. This strategy provides three options for police to respond to incidents of domestic violence – criminal, civil and referral. Training for police has occurred and Family Violence Liaison Officers have been appointed in most stations. There is varying consistency of approaches throughout the state with some police districts faring much better than others despite the state-wide training and policy. Some police areas are understaffed in general and therefore family violence is often not a priority despite the high proportion of police work involving domestic and family violence. I am pleased to say that there appears to be improvement in previously underperforming stations regarding the Code of Practice, so stay tuned. The emergence of additional Community Legal Centres has also helped in this regard with a more coordinated and collaborative approach dealing with intervention order applications.

### **Domestic and Family Violence Sector Code of Practice.**

A Code of Practice for domestic violence services achieved completion and was launched by DVVic during the year. As we said in previous years, developing a Code of Practice was always going to be a challenge given the diversity of services and models of practice. DV Vic has been, and continues to work hard to ensure the integrity of the Code of Practice is preserved while ensuring it retains its relevance in a changing and changeable environment.

### **Accreditation and Registration.**

As we reported last year, domestic and family violence service providers are now preparing for accreditation, to be achieved by December 2008 otherwise funding will be withdrawn. The government continues to shift the goal posts on this. Originally services only had to meet department designed standards called the HASS (Homelessness Assistance Service Standards). Now it is being made increasingly clearer to us that we will have to meet externally accredited and monitored standards such as QICSA or another Quality Assurance organisation. Those organisations which also provide housing such as refuges and domestic violence outreach services will also have to meet rigorous housing registration criteria or hand the property management of their properties over to an organisation that does. Again the goal posts have been shifted and the government has made it impossible for refuges and outreach services and other homelessness agencies to meet the criteria to become a registered organisation. This is primarily because our core business is not collecting rent, our clients are not tenants, they are women fleeing domestic violence, and because of this we cannot become economically self-sufficient from collecting rent from our clients and therefore qualify. As I said last year, it seems clear that this is a way to take properties off smaller agencies that manage them locally in their community and hand them over to large housing associations with budgets in the 20 or 30 million dollars per annum range.

It is hard not to be negative when such massive reforms occur unnecessarily and without appropriate resourcing for an already over stretched sector. No funding has gone into evaluating the affects of these reforms and rationalisations on service viability, skilled worker retention or client outcomes. However, the Victorian government has just released a Workforce Development Strategy.

### **Workforce Development Strategy**

The Victorian Government has allocated \$2.1 million over three years as part of an overall strategy to develop an industry plan for the community-managed sector. A key component of that plan is the development of a workforce strategy to improve the qualifications, skills and career paths of workers in the community-managed sector.

Stage one of the strategy will lay the foundation for a comprehensive workforce strategy for community-managed housing and homelessness assistance services in line with the social housing reform agenda by:

- Conducting a census of the community managed workforce;
- Compiling baseline data that establishes a staffing profile for the community sector, including qualifications, experience and work patterns;
- Analysing the impacts for career progression and succession planning, including training and development opportunities for speciality areas (specific client groups) and career pathways; and
- Establishing priorities for retention and development of the workforce.

The OoH has appointed KPMG to undertake this workforce survey. Over the coming months, managers and workers employed in OoH funded community-managed organisations will be asked to complete a workforce survey to provide a comprehensive database on a range of critical factors.

Let us hope that the government increases serviced funding to allow for us to pay our skilled workforce the amounts they deserve.

# WEST AUSTRALIA

## KEDY KRISTAL

Pat Giles Centre (Perth)

### 1. Current State Domestic/Family Violence issues

In January 2007 the Prudence Ford report into the Dept for Community Development released its report. The review was undertaken following the death of baby Wade, numerous other complaints and calls for the introduction of mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse.

The Ford report made 70 recommendations of which, 69 were accepted by the state government. The Government decided to agree to mandatory sexual abuse reporting for government agencies by 2009. This was not a recommendation of the Ford report.

The report also recommended splitting DCD into the Dept of Child Protection and the Dept of Communities. This occurred on the 1<sup>st</sup> May.

In March 2007, Sue Ellery was appointed as the new minister to the then, Department of Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Volunteering.

### 2. State policy and/or legislative changes

The WA state government is introducing a WA Human Rights Act to address the inadequate existing legal protections for human rights and to help establish culture of human rights in the state.

Minister Sue Ellery has reformed the Women Advisory Network of WA, announcing a broadbased 14 member committee with Angela Hartwig, the EO for the Women's Council of Domestic and Family Violence Services as the Chair. The first meeting was held in August.

A review of the Restraining Orders Act 2004 is underway, there has been extensive consultations on the effectiveness of the 24 and 72 hour police orders that have been in use for the a last 3years. The police are using the 24 hours orders in significant numbers to impose a 'cooling off' period .The three SAAP Investment and Innovation pilots that are providing early intervention counseling and advocacy to victims and perpetrators when a Police order has been issued will be evaluated over the next three months.

### 3. Domestic/Family violence sector issues

#### Refuges:

The first new Refuge in the Perth metropolitan area for 14 years opened at the end of May. Damara House will operate initially from a rented house, in the northern suburbs with a purpose built facility to be established by late 2009. The client group is single women from 15yrs and women with children to 18yrs experiencing family violence, homeless single women and homeless women with children to 18yrs.

Three other community groups are also developing potential new refuge options, without government commitment yet. The Muslim community is researching and lobbying for crisis accommodation for Muslim women, children and youth. A local community group has been researching and lobbying for a young women's refuge in the Perth hills area. In south Perth, land owned by the Church of Christ has been offered to build long-term transitional accommodation, called the sustainable women's project, initial consultation and lobbying for government funding is underway.

#### Supply and Demand Forum

The Department of Child Protection held a human service industries forum to measure expected service demand, prior to the state government budget process. The crucial issues facing the non government sector are the lower level salaries they can offer compared to the booming resource sector wages, the increased service operating costs and the lack of housing particularly in the remote areas for staff.

#### **4. Indigenous Family Violence**

##### **Family Violence Courts**

Aboriginal funding to keep aboriginal men out of prison has been utilized to develop Family violence courts in five Metropolitan areas based on the Joondalup Family Violence Court model. These courts will use a case management approach remanding men, who plead guilty to criminal charges to perpetrator programs. Indigenous specific perpetrator groups have been developed. The position of victim support worker in 4 of the 6 Family violence courts will be Aboriginal to encourage the use of the courts and Violence Restraining Orders by Indigenous families. Two of the five new courts have begun in Rockingham and Fremantle

##### **5. CALD Family Violence**

At the 17<sup>th</sup> annual silent Domestic Violence Memorial March the Minister announced funding of \$60,000 to the Multicultural Women's Advocacy Service to establish 5 peer support groups for CALD women who have experienced family violence.

##### **6. Conferences/training/meetings/events**

The West Australian Safety and Accountability audit of the Armadale Domestic Violence intervention project was released in July. The report produced five recommendations:

- to develop an interagency group to design a system for gathering ,documenting and sharing information across government and non government workers in DV cases,
- to develop new methods of child protection interventions that hold the abuser accountable, produce an interagency framework for government and non government agencies to use that defines interventions from a victim safety, offender accountability perspective,
- produce guideline principles on how to account for DV in policy development, case management and resource allocation,
- to restructure the Armadale DV intervention project to enhance its effectiveness.

##### **Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services: 30 year anniversary**

A two day strategic planning meeting and celebration of this anniversary will be held in October. Refuge representatives from across the state will be attending, and a commemorative booklet outlining the WCDFVS achievements will be published.

##### **Peer education project**

This project funded through fund raising by Jordan Fogerty and matched by a previous DCD Minister, has been working in two high schools to provide Family violence information, across the entire school population following this, the numbers of disclosures by high school students stunned staff. Students were offered the opportunity to volunteer as peer educators, 50 applied, the project workers had to screen students and modify the program to provide an opportunity for those not selected to contribute in other ways at the school, as they were all so keen to take part. The 25 students selected took part in a three-day camp and will return to school to act as first point of contact for students seeking support and continue keeping the issue on the school curriculum.

The WCDFVS with the support of the Education Department and the Family and Domestic Violence unit is seeking further funding to roll this project out across 18 high schools over the next three years.

##### **Family violence training for GP's**

WA received - \$478,520 from the Attorney General's Crime prevention community partnership for the Working with General Practice doctors to reduce Family Violence. The project aims to increase the capacity of local medical services within the Perth area to identify incidents of family and domestic violence. The project aims to assist these medical practitioners to deliver appropriate interventions primarily through the provision of information and referrals to specialized local family and domestic violence services.

**The Women Council has received Federal funding of \$182,000 to develop a media website and DVD called HURT**

HURT lifts the curtain on the hidden devastation and family turmoil of domestic violence, confronting the shame and investigating the issues from the incomparable perspective of those involved. The primary focus will be to raise community awareness, change beliefs and build community resources and capacity to eliminate domestic and family violence within the Australian community.

HURT is a media rich website accessible to the Australian community, as well as training and education DVD's that will explore and interpret the experiences of families and individuals who have endured violence and sexual assault at the hands of a family member. At its core HURT will focus on the interviews and stories told from the points of view of the people involved - victims, perpetrators and witnesses, offering a unique opportunity to see through the eyes of those who have experienced domestic violence first hand. HURT will use actors to recreate original interviews and situations, preserving the anonymity of the people involved and facilitating greater access to true stories told in the most engaging way possible.

**Knowledge Management pilot project**

West Australia and Queensland took part in this pilot to map the formal and informal sharing of information in the SAAP sector. A draft report has been developed from the sector survey and 'sense making' workshops in Perth and Brisbane. The report identifies the networks in use and the type of information sought and shared within the SAAP sector. This knowledge will also support and inform the National SAAP/Homelessness Clearinghouse content.

# INDIGENOUS

## SHIRLEY SLANN

North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service (Mt Isa)

The biggest issue that has impacted on Indigenous people this year has been the involvement of the Australian Government in addressing issues of child abuse in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory. The Australian Government's interaction and intervention process has raised a number of issues and concerns.

The Federal Government has sent police and the Australian Defence force into Indigenous Australian communities in the Northern Territory as part of their response to the Little Children are Sacred report. Although community, government, Indigenous and non Indigenous groups have welcomed action to deal with the problem of alcohol and child abuse in Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, there is concern over the way such an intervention has been designed and is being implemented.

Of the 91 recommendations of the Little Children are Sacred report, the majority of recommendations have been ignored in the Government's response. There is concern from Indigenous people and a wide range of organisations that this intervention by the Government fails to uphold the cultural and legal rights to Indigenous land and does not include Indigenous people in the decision making about their own future.

John Howard and Minister Brough's measures for communities in the Northern Territory include:-

- Alcohol restrictions
- Control over how welfare payments are spent
- Compulsory health checks
- Removal of permit system (That is the issuing of permits by Indigenous people to Non Indigenous to enter and remain on their land in NT) and compulsory acquisition of land, etc.
- 60 or so communities will be controlled by the Commonwealth Government.

Firstly, the abuse of children cannot be dealt with effectively without also addressing the other issues impacting on Indigenous communities. Alcohol management plans in other communities have shown that they actually create further problems. In a majority of places, alcohol management plans were put into place with no support services available to assist the person coming off the alcohol. No detoxification centres, people with alcohol addictions expected to go "cold turkey" over night.

Let's also be aware that every person that commits sexual abuse is not necessarily affected by alcohol. Let's not look for excuses, but look at the big picture and find the underlying issues that are affecting communities.

I would also like to mention that child sexual abuse does not discriminate, it can affect any child regardless of race.

### **NATIONAL ABORIGINAL TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN'S GATHERINGS**

National Indigenous Women's Gatherings were held in Adelaide from 21-22<sup>nd</sup> September 2006 and also 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007 and 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007. This year's theme was "Women and Economic Status". Delegates discussed a range of issues relating to economic independence, employment and training, increased business opportunities, education and home ownership.

I was lucky enough to attend the NATSWIG Working Party in Hobart as the Australian Government Representative on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2007. I and other state and Territory reps met together to discuss the NATSIWG 2007 recommendations and to also present them to the Ministerial Conference on the Status of Women (MINCO).

The three main recommendations were around:-

- 1. Increased business opportunities for Indigenous women
- 2. Economic Independence for Indigenous Women
- 3. Employment & Training for Indigenous Women

The other working Party members in attendance were:-

- Bronwyn Penrith – NSW
- Michele Clarke – NT
- Daphne Naden – QLD
- Helen McNeair – WA
- Erica Maynard – TAS
- Eunice Aston – SA
- Traci Harris – ACT
- Julie Saylor – VIC (not present)

The recommendations were well received and the MINCO ministers supported the recommendations made by the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Gatherings.

Each working party member had an opportunity to discuss the many issues affecting their areas. I talked about the issue of Domestic & Family Violence and requested that it stay on the National Agenda as it is the biggest concern that affects women and children. Everyone in attendance agreed.

#### **QLD DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

My term as North Qld Representative on the QDFVMAC finished in September 2007. I have enjoyed my 2 year term on the council and it has been an interesting experience.

Nominations were called from interested persons to apply for membership on the council. I have since renominated. Minister's appointment of council members will be advised in January 2008.

#### **WOMEN NO LONGER SUFFER IN SILENCE ABOUT DOMESTIC & FAMILY VIOLENCE FORUM**

North Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service Mount Isa, organised and hosted a Domestic & Family Violence Forum in Mount Isa on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> September 2007. The forum focused on Indigenous communities in the Mount Isa region. Mount Isa geographical location takes into account 23% of Queensland. The purpose of the forum was to bring together women workers, community members and interested people, to exchange information, skills, knowledge and wisdom on how they deal with Domestic & Family Violence within their own communities. The forum was well attended and the Keynote Speaker was Dr Jackie Huggins AM. Dr Huggins discussed "Background and Current Measures in NT Interventions". Debbie Kilroy (Sisters Inside) also did an excellent presentation on women in the corrective services system.

Domestic & Family Violence is still one of the biggest issues affecting women and children. It does not discriminate. However, Indigenous women and women in rural and remote communities have limited opportunities in regards to accessing resources and getting on the ground support. Although funding is available for some new projects, it is obvious that it is not enough and there needs to be more funding put into place to address the many issues surrounding Domestic & Family Violence.

Domestic & Family Violence affects the whole family, women, children and men. We know that statistics show that about 90% of domestic & Family violence victims are women. However, there needs to be assistance available for the whole family. Lets all work together to improve resources and education and as a community to say no to violence of any form. Safety for women and children is paramount.

# NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING BACKGROUND

## ANNABELLE ALLIMANT

Immigrant Women's Support Service (Brisbane)

This report is written in my role as the non-English speaking background (NESB) representative in WESNET. I coordinate Immigrant Women's Support Service (IWSS) in Brisbane and have held the position of NESB representative in WESNET for the last 12 months. I asserted the following in the report I prepared in 2006 for WESNET Annual Report and include it again as it remains a relevant consideration *"I use the term NESB and CaLD (culturally and linguistically diverse) however, a person from NESB experience is marked by their inability to negotiate and know systems, access information about their rights and legislative processes as a direct result of language barriers. CaLD is used in most current policy documents as a result of a review of previous terminology like NESB that was considered to contain negative connotations and a focus on a deficit in these communities. The term CaLD is considered more inclusive. On the other hand, it is argued that this terminology is part of a move towards mainstreaming diversity and minimises the complexity of impact of differences connected to language barrier"*.

The majority of the issues for CaLD communities remain similar to those raised in previous years, nonetheless they need to be identified as they continue to place strain in service delivery. Furthermore women and their children are at risk in their own homes should they remain in violent relationships or return to unsafe environments. Women from NESB need to learn and acquire the information and rights they have in this country as is highlighted in this report.

Writing this report affords the opportunity to continue to raise awareness of the issues women and their children from CaLD backgrounds experience in their settlement in Australia. I also identify policy changes that can potentially exclude and penalise those who are particularly marginalised and at risk after marrying Australian citizens or Australian permanent residents. Whilst I have identified specifically humanitarian entrants I note that other residents from CaLD communities also experience issues of settlement that is often left unattended as they receive no settlement support on arrival. This includes family reunion; skill migrants; international students; partner Visas and other temporary Visa holders.

### **Humanitarian Entrants and Refugees**

Australia continues to support the international strategy to support the relocation of refugees under the humanitarian program. Some critical issues are identified in their journey to settle in Australia particularly for new and emerging communities, but not restricted to.

**Housing** - Accessibility of emergency housing, transitional and long term housing is an issue relevant for the whole of the community, but particularly for women and their children escaping violent households. Specific issues however, for women from NESB and/or new and emerging communities, include women with a number of children and the impossibility to be housed adequately. The issue of housing also places risks with Department of Child Safety and leads to difficult financial hardship as rent is expensive when needing a house with a number of rooms. This is a condition from the Department which needs to be met to ensure the return of children after they have been in care.

**Domestic Violence** – Some key issues identified for women from NESB, particularly from new and emerging communities are: understandings of women's rights in this country; language barriers; access to appropriate interpreters particularly where some dialects are not available through TIS or other providers; life skills; understandings of the definitions of domestic violence in Australia; cultural stigma associated with breaking patterns of violence; understandings of legal alternatives around family law and domestic violence and community isolation. Furthermore, cultural practices such as dowry places additional strain when women leave violent relationships and/or Centrelink allocates money to the woman. Strong traditional cultural beliefs see dowry as the 'expense' men incurred in the country of origin. There are expectations in relationships that traditional roles and cultural values continue in Australia.

**Single Parent Households** – Women heading households on their own are particularly vulnerable and isolated. There appears to be stigma associated with women on their own; traditional cultural patterns of bringing up children with an adult male in the household; entrenched socialisation patterns of women keeping family on their own; traditional roles of male dominated households and the result of internalised views about women's role in society. These often leads to women experiencing grave difficulties in leaving violent, often very dangerous, situations of domestic and family violence.

**Child Rearing Practices** – Is an area that consistently tends to be identified in discussions and public forums. The fact that Centrelink provides income to young people places great strain on family dynamics where the father has been traditionally the 'breadwinner', provider and asserts control over all matters to do with the family. This is seen as the 'government' indirectly supporting the breakdown of cultural traditions and is seen as leading to or exacerbating situations of domestic and family violence. This is further inflamed by 'traditional' ways of disciplining children where violence perpetrated against children/young people by the parents may be referred to Child Safety and/or police.

**Community Education** – It is identified that there needs to be intensive education on issues related to domestic and family violence to CaLD communities. The points relating to housing; domestic violence; single parent household and child rearing practices all point to desperate needs for accurate and timely information. Education is a way of raising awareness about patterns of violence, analysing them with the community around their impact as a strategy to break down the oppression towards women and their children. The levels of understandings of domestic and / or sexual violence, its legal, social and emotional implications are not adequately understood. Similarly, there are multiple myths around refuges and women's only services that need to accurately inform. It is critical that any community education be delivered with a cross-cultural framework to men and women where possible.

#### **Funding Fee-free Interpreters**

The issue of funding professional interpreters by SAAP funded services continues to be tentative and States have diverse arrangements with funding bodies around this. The outcomes of this ad hoc arrangement have led to generic SAAP funded services not engaging with professional interpreters and, at times, declining access to emergency accommodation because the woman does not speak English. This continues to be an issue of access and equity and requires significant advocacy and dialogue.

#### **Domestic Violence Provisions under the Migration Regulations**

There have been changes to the Migration Regulations 1994 in relation to the Domestic Violence Provisions. We have significant concerns at how this will effect applications made where women are relying on non-judicial evidence of domestic violence ('Competent Person' Statutory Declarations). The Migration Amendment Regulations 2007 (No 13) which was registered on the Federal Register of Legislative Instruments on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 2007 came into effect on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2007. There was no prior consultation with key stakeholders about these changes.

##### 1. Terminology

Substitution of the term 'Domestic Violence' with the term 'Family Violence' has been made throughout the Provisions which are now known as the 'Family Violence Provisions'. This change is not consistent with state based legislation in Queensland namely the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989* which acknowledges both domestic and family violence. Furthermore the amendments do not include the types of relationships that we would expect to see covered within the definition 'family violence'.

In the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989* these terms are used to describe specific relationships between persons where violence has or is occurring. The term 'family violence' includes immediate and/or extended members of a family and recognises broader kinship relationships within some cultural communities.

Under the changes this substitution of the term 'domestic violence' with 'family violence' does not extend the scope of the provisions which currently include alleged violence towards the following persons:

- a) A spouse of the alleged perpetrator;
- b) A dependent child of the alleged perpetrator / the spouse of the alleged perpetrator / both the alleged perpetrator and his or her spouse / or a person in an interdependent relationship with the alleged perpetrator.
- c) A member of the family unit of the spouse of the alleged perpetrator (who has made a combined application for a visa with the spouse, e.g. mother / father / sister / brother).
- d) A person who is in an interdependent relationship with the alleged perpetrator (e.g. same sex relationships).

It is necessary to advocate for the consistent use of terminology across Commonwealth and State legislation and the application of appropriate terminology that reflects the specificity and diversity of relationships. We assert that the term 'family violence' should be used only if the scope of these provisions were also broadened to include immediate and/or extended members of a family, and broader kinship relationships within some cultural communities.

## 2. Definitions

The definition of 'relevant Domestic Violence' previously read:

*'A reference to relevant domestic violence is a reference to violence against the alleged victim or his or her property that causes the alleged victim, or a member of the alleged victim's family, to fear for, or to be apprehensive about, the alleged victim's personal well-being or safety'. It has now changed to one of 'relevant Family Violence' which is: 'A reference to relevant family violence is a reference to conduct, whether actual or threatened, towards:*

- o the alleged victim; or
- o a member of the family unit of the alleged victim; or
- o a member of the family unit of the alleged perpetrator; or
- o the property of the alleged victim; or
- o the property of a member of the family unit of the alleged victim; or
- o the property of a member of the family unit of the alleged perpetrator;

*that causes the alleged victim to reasonably fear for, or to be reasonably apprehensive about, his or her own wellbeing or safety'.*

The insertion of a 'reasonableness' element is of particular concern to IWSS. We observed similar changes to the definition of family violence within the *Family Law (Shared Parental Responsibility) Act* which came into effect in July 2006. In order to fall within this new definition, conduct must cause a person to be 'reasonably' fearful or apprehensive about their wellbeing or safety.

The definition of 'reasonableness' for fear of family violence is unclear and we envisage multiple challenges for case workers at the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in consistent interpretation and application of this new objective element.

DIAC case workers currently apply a civil standard of evidence based on the balance of probabilities that domestic violence has occurred. The provisions do not include a predictive factor of whether domestic violence is likely to occur again as observed in the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989*.

These amendments can only be applied to those cases where the applicant is relying on non-judicial evidence of domestic violence ('Competent Person' Statutory Declarations). Judicial evidence is obtained where there is a final Domestic Violence Protection Order made and the definitions used to determine whether domestic violence has occurred are those found in the *Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 1989* which does not include a 'reasonableness' element. We have grave concerns that the definitions within the evidence requirement will now be significantly different for those visa applicants relying on non-judicial evidence.

I have put this report together with the assistance of colleagues from IWSS.

The issues named in this report are those currently being identified in service delivery when working with women and their children from NESB. There are interrelated and interconnected considerations that must be noted that place additional strain on services. The limited resources allocated to services that work with women and their children escaping domestic and family violence and the capacity to consistently deliver effective services are overwhelmingly complex. This report illustrates the myriad of issues that impact on women from NESB and their children in addition to domestic and family violence and working with professional interpreters. This is resource extensive and requires government funding and commitment to recognise the inherent complexity of issues at hand.

Prepared by  
Annabelle Allimant

**WESNET Inc**  
**Audited Statements**  
**2007**  
**AUDITOR'S REPORT**

Audit report to the members of WESNET Inc.

**Scope**

We have audited the financial statements of WESNET for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007.

While WESNET Inc is responsible for the financial report, we have conducted an independent audit of it in order to express an opinion on it to the members.

Our audit has been conducted to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report

**Opinion**

In our opinion the accounts of WESNET are properly drawn up in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act and provide a true and fair view of the accounts as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Peter Hyndal  
Director  
Brazen Books Pty Ltd

25<sup>th</sup> September 2007

Prepared by Brazen Books 25th September 2007

## CERTIFICATE FROM THE COMMITTEE

We, the undersigned, being two members of the Committee state on behalf of the Committee:

- i. That the members of the Committee during the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 were -

Pauline Woodbridge	Chairperson
Shirley Slann	Secretary, Indigenous Representative
Kedy Kristal	Treasurer, Western Australia Representative
Penny Becker (resigned)	Aust.Capital Territory Representative
Kiki Korpinen (appointed)	Aust.Capital Territory Representative
Cat Gander	New South Wales Representative
Julie Oberin	Victoria Representative
Vicki Lachlan	South Australia Representative
Mary Swaffer	Tasmania Representative
Sue Brownlee	Northern Territory Representative
Lindy Edwards	Queensland Representative
Annabelle Allimant	NESB Representative
- ii. The principal activities of the association during the year have been those of a national non-party political independent organisation of women's services in Australia dealing with violence against women and related issues. WESNET is recognised as the national sector peak body by both the government and non-government sectors and has considerable expertise in the areas of policy development and the delivery of quality advice and information to government of issues impacting on women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence. WESNET promotes innovative models of practice and service delivery, undertakes community education, and conducts or facilitates research on the key issues around domestic and family violence and related issues for women and their children.
- iii. The net surplus of the Association for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007 is **\$1969.47**.

## STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on the following pages:

- (a) Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of WESNET (Women's Services Network
- (b) At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that WESNET (Women's Services Network) Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

**Chairperson: Pauline Woodbridge**

**Treasurer: Kedy Kristal**

**Dated this day the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007**

**WESNET Inc**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As at 30th June 2007**

	2007	2006
<b>Assets</b>		
Cash At Bank		
Commonwealth Bank Account	27,115.98	11,471.00
Westpac Bank Account	(259.63)	1,483.00
Investment Account	<u>30,723.11</u>	<u>29,177.00</u>
	57,579.46	42,131.00
Other Current Assets		
General Debtors	102.71	-
Accrued Income	418.99	
Prepayments	-	904.00
	<u>521.70</u>	<u>904.00</u>
Non Current Assets		
Office Equipment At Cost	7,893.91	7,894.00
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(6,447.36)</u>	<u>(5,483.00)</u>
<i>Written Down Value</i>	1,446.55	2,411.00
Furniture & Fittings At Cost	3,879.00	3,879.00
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(3,509.40)</u>	<u>(3,263.00)</u>
<i>Written Down Value</i>	369.60	616.00
Total Non Current Assets	1,816.15	3,027.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 59,917.31</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 46,062.00</u></b>
<b>Less Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Credit Card	111.00	-
Sundry Creditors	543.17	-
Accrued Expenses	931.84	-
Income in Advance	-	700.00
	<u>1,586.01</u>	<u>700.00</u>
Provisions		
Provision for Website	6,000.00	-
Provision for Conferences	<u>5,000.00</u>	<u>-</u>
	11,000.00	-
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b><u>\$ 12,586.01</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 700.00</u></b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b><u>\$ 47,331.30</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 45,362.00</u></b>
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>		
Accumulated Funds	45,361.83	23,537.00
Add Net Surplus/(Deficit) for Year	1,969.47	21,825.00
<b>Total Accumulated Funds</b>	<b><u>\$ 47,331.30</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 45,362.00</u></b>

Prepared by Brazen Books 25th September 2007

Page 2 of 3

**WESNET Inc**  
**Audited Statements**  
**July 2006 - June 2007**

	<i>2007</i>	<i>2006</i>
<b>Income</b>		
Grant Income	-	18,088.00
Memberships	34,077.27	33,886.00
Publication Sales	622.72	6,813.00
Bank Interest	2,482.68	1,426.00
Other Income	-	929.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$ 37,182.67</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 61,142.00</u></b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Audit Fees	2,272.73	1,364.00
Bank Charges	165.86	121.00
Consultancy Fees	2,000.00	3,500.00
Depreciation	1,210.76	2,102.00
Insurance	926.87	896.00
Postage	522.95	1,249.00
Printing and Stationery	830.18	7,289.00
Provisions for Future Expenses	11,000.00	-
Wages and Salaries	11,596.63	16,430.00
Subscriptions and Memberships	186.36	186.00
Sundry	262.82	22.00
Superannuation	1,043.71	1,479.00
Telephone	612.20	713.00
Travel	2,107.13	3,441.00
Workers Compensation	475.00	525.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>\$ 35,213.20</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 39,317.00</u></b>
<b>Operating Surplus/ (Deficit)</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,969.47</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 21,825.00</u></b>

## FINANCIAL MEMBERS

### Full

Albany Women's Centre  
Alice Springs Women's Shelter  
Amelie House  
Anglicare Tasmania Inc, Limani-Anglicare.  
Annie Kenney Young Women's Refuge  
Annie North Women's Refuge  
Beryl Women's Refuge  
Blue Gum NSW  
Bramwell House  
Brenda House  
Bundabert & District Women's D.V. Service  
Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service  
Caroline Lodge  
Carrie's Place Women & Children's Services  
Catherine House  
Cawarra Women's Refuge Aboriginal Corporation  
Ceduna Domestic Violence & Family Services  
Central Eastern DV Service (Dawn House)  
Chrysalis Support Services  
Clarencor River Women's Refuge & Outreach Service  
Cumberland Women's Health Centre  
Dawn House Children & Women's Shelter  
Detour House Inc  
Dolores Single Women's Refuge  
Domestic & Family Violence Court Assistance Service  
Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre VIC  
Domestic Violence Crisis Service ACT  
Domestic Violence Crisis Service SA  
Domestic Violence Legal Workers Network  
Domestic Violence Regional Service  
Domestic Violence Resource Centre  
Domestic Violence Service of Central QLD  
Domestic Violence Victoria  
Doris women's Refuge  
Dubbo Women's Housing Program  
Elizabeth Hoffman House  
Elsie Women's Refuge  
Emma House Domestic Violence Service  
Erin's Place Inc  
Esperance Crisis Accommodation  
Essie Women's Refuge  
Eva's Project  
Gareema Women's Refuge  
Gawooleng Yawoodeng Aboriginal Corp  
GippsCare Domestic Violence Outreach Service  
Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence  
Goulburn Valley Community Health Service  
GOVE Crisis Accommodation  
Gunyah Women's Housing  
Hastings Women's & Children's Refuge  
Hedland Women's Refuge  
Hinchinbrook City Support Centre  
Huon Domestic Violence Service  
Immigrant Women's Speakout Association  
Immigrant Women's Support Service  
Inanna Inc  
Ipswich Women's Shelter  
Jenny's Place  
Jireh House Association  
Kangaroo Island Health Service  
Karinya Young Womyn's Refuge  
Katherine Women's Crisis Centre  
Kempsey Women's Refuge  
Killara Women's Refuge  
Koolkuna Women's Refuge-Eastern Region D.V.  
Lillian's  
Lismore Women & Children's Refuge  
Lotus House Indo-Chinese Young Women's Refuge  
Lucy Saw Centre Association  
Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre  
Manning Valley Neighbourhood Services  
MARCIA Women's Refuge  
Marian Community  
Marian Villa Women's Refuge  
Marnja Jarndu Women's Refuge  
Maybanke Accommodation & Crisis Support Service  
McCombe House  
Molly's House  
Monaro Crisis Accommodation Service  
Moruya Women's Refuge  
Multicultural Women's Advocacy Service  
Muslim Women's Support Centre  
Namoi House (Barwon Cottage DV Service)  
Nardine Wimmins Refuge  
NESH Women's Scheme  
Ngaanyatjarra Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Women's Council  
Ngaia House (Moree Women's Refuge)  
Ngaringga Ngurra  
Niandi Women's Halfway House  
N. Q. Combined Women's Services Inc  
N. Q. Domestic Violence Resource Service  
Northern Domestic Violence Service  
Northern Peninsula Area Women's Shelter  
NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre  
Oakleigh Court  
Olive's Place  
Orana House  
Pam's Place Crisis Accommodation R & R Service  
Pat Thomas Memorial Community House  
Patricia Giles Centre  
Pat's Place  
Port Augusta Regional Women & Children's Support Service  
Quantum Support Services – Family Violence Programme

Regina Coeli  
 Rockhampton Women's Shelter  
 Rosa Shoalhaven Women's Refuge  
 Ruah Refuge  
 Ruth's Women's Shelter  
 Sera's Women's Shelter  
 Share & Community Services-Waminda House  
 S.E. Regional Domestic Violence Service  
 South West Women's Housing  
 Southern Domestic Violence Service  
 St. George Women's Housing  
 St Louise Lodge Women's Refuge  
 Starick Services  
 Stepping Out Housing Program  
 Stirling Women's Refuge  
 Support, Help & Empowerment (SHE)  
 Tanderra Women's & Children's Refuge  
 Tennant Creek Women's Refuge  
 Tumut & District Women's Support & Housing  
 Valerie House  
 Vinnies Services  
 Warrawee Women's Shelter  
 Warrina Women & Children's Refuge  
 Wimlah Refuge  
 Windana Support Centre  
 Women's Centre Cairns Inc  
 Women's Centre for Health Matters  
 Women's Council for Domestic & Family Violence Service  
 Women's Domestic Violence Central Crisis Service  
 Women's Health Goulburn NE  
 Women's House Shelter  
 Women's Housing Association Hunter Region  
 Women's Housing Association SA  
 Women's Information & Counselling Service  
 Pt Stephens  
 Women's Information Support & Housing in the North (WISHI)  
 Women's Liberation Halfway House  
 Women's Resource, Information & Support Centre (WRISC)  
 Woorarra Inc  
 Yarrendi Services  
 Yawarra Meamei Women's Group  
 Yemaya  
 Young Crisis Accommodation Centre  
 Young Women's Support Service (Girls' Time Out)  
 YWCA of Canberra  
 YWCA of Darwin – Domestic Violence Programme  
 Zena Collective (Barwon Women's Domestic Violence Service)  
 Zonta House Refuge Association

### **Associate**

Access North  
 Albany Supported Accommodation Services  
 Alice's Cottages  
 Anglicare Tasmania  
 Canberra Rape Crisis Centre  
 CASA House  
 Centacare Transitional Support Service  
 Central Violence Intervention Programme  
 City Women's Hostel  
 Cooroonya Domestic Violence Services  
 Dept for Community Development (WA)  
 Drug and Alcohol Women's Network  
 Elouera House  
 Family Access Network  
 Family Accommodation & Support Service  
 Hanover Women's Service  
 Hanover Young Women's Intensive Support Service  
 Innan Women's Housing Scheme  
 Kamira Farm  
 Laurel House (Northern Sexual Assault Group)  
 Lifeline Australia  
 Louisa Women's Refuge  
 Lowana Young Women's Service  
 Majella House  
 Mallee Domestic Violence Services  
 Manning District Emergency Accommodation  
 Marnin Bowa Dumbara Family Healing Centre  
 Mary and Martha's  
 No to Violence  
 Northern Region Young Women's Accommodation Project  
 NSW Dept of Community Services  
 Orana Lodge  
 Ruby-Gaea-Darwin Centre Against Rape  
 Sexual Assault Support Service  
 Strengthening Families Brisbane North  
 Tweed Shire Women's Service  
 Uniting Care Wesley Adelaide Inc  
 Waratah Support Centre  
 WAYSS  
 Wollongong Women's Housing  
 Wollongong Women's Refuge (Lotties Place)  
 Women Up North Housing  
 Women's Health West  
 Young Women's & Children Support Services Coalition Inc  
 Young Women's Place  
 Zig Zag Young Women's Resource Centre

### **Reciprocal**

ACT Shelter, ACT  
 Children by Choice, QLD  
 Nat.Council of Single Mothers & Their Children, SA  
 Women with Disabilities Australia, Tas

# *The Women's Services Network*

**WESNET NATIONAL SECRETARIAT**  
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