

CRANBOURNE INFORMATION & SUPPORT SERVICE Inc.



Thirty Fourth **ANNUAL REPORT** 2012 - 2013



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MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an independent, free, impartial and confidential information, referral and support service to all members of the community.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

To assess the needs of people who access the service seeking assistance.

To provide direct aid and assistance for the people of Cranbourne and District who are in need of relief from poverty, sickness, distress, misfortune, destitution, homelessness or helplessness.

To provide people with information about, and referral to the services they require.

To provide a volunteer program which enables personal growth and a high standard of service delivery.

To coordinate a local network of community information providers.

To facilitate the provision of counselling services.

To facilitate the activities of local people and organisations who wish to contribute their time and/or resources to community service.

To pursue donations and subscriptions from benefactors, benevolent societies, philanthropic trusts and like organisations as a means of providing relief and services to people from Cranbourne and District.

To inform Government and the Community about the need of the local community of Cranbourne and District, in order to obtain, maintain and improve services.

To pursue funding from Government, Corporate and Community sources to obtain, maintain and improve services in response to local needs.

COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

President:	Kevin Bradford (October 2012 - February 2013)			
Acting President:	Susan Hopkins (February 2013 – October 2013)			
Vice-President:	Susan Hopkins (October 2012 – February 2013)			
Secretary:	Judy Symons			
Treasurer:	Julie Jones			
Ordinary Members:	Ros Larke	Di Mainwaring	John Lewis	Margaret O'Callaghan
	Mary Reilly	Louise Morgan	George Nicol (non-voting)	

VOLUNTEER STAFF – 2012/2013

Anne Haylock	Julie Jones	Mary Reilly
Susan Hopkins	Una McGuire	Dianne Bush
Judy Symons	Susan Arlove	Karthik Money
George Nicol	Dawn Wilson	Jenelle Kamande
Ros Larke	Anne Manning	Lucinda Quick
Di Mainwaring	Karen Peters	Vanessa Hobson
Gabriele Lindemann	Louise Morgan	Lorraine Shields
Patrice Maude	Laura Miller (Reception)	Jenny McGowan (Reception)

STAFF – 2012/2013

Executive Officer:	Leanne Petrides
Administration Manager:	Cathy Willmott
Coordinator of Volunteers:	Michael Cooney
Counsellor:	Joan Cavanagh
Counsellor:	Jenny Hyland
Counsellor:	Kaye Jones
Financial Counsellor:	Robyn d'Argent
Support Worker:	Doug Thompson
CfC Outreach Information:	Ann Proud
CfC Outreach Information:	Flora Warren

ACTING PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been my pleasure to be involved with the Cranbourne Information & Support Service (CISS) as Vice President and then President when Kevin Bradford stepped down half way through the year. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank Kevin for all his work and the support he had given CISS over the years.

The last twelve months have again seen an increase in the demand for our services. The complexity of the client issues has also increased. CISS has endeavoured to meet these needs, but unfortunately, there are times when we have to turn clients away due to lack of funding.

We have had several projects happening this year that are worthy of mention.

1. No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS)

The end of the financial year saw CISS officially start our new NILS program for Casey South clients. I would like to thank all those involved, particularly Louise Morgan, for their work. We now have several trained staff to service the NILS program and it is going well.

2. Another project that has taken up a lot of time has been the updating of the CISS Rules of Incorporation to ensure we are meeting our legal responsibilities. I would like to thank the sub-committee – Judy Symons, Cathy Willmott and Leanne Petrides.

3. We continue to benefit by having a Coordinator of Volunteers to ensure we meet the clients' needs and their complexity of issues. Thank you, Michael, for your excellent training of the volunteers and their mentors.

The Committee of Management has supported Leanne Petrides, the Manager of CISS, in her endeavours to keep the organisation financially viable and they have had to make some difficult decisions, I commend them for their vision.

I would like to thank the paid staff, fellow committee members and volunteers for their hard work and dedication to the cause. Leanne Petrides is to be thanked for keeping us on the straight and narrow and focussing on the ethos of the organisation and who we are working for – the community!!

Susan Hopkins

President

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

It is with great pleasure that I present my report as Executive Officer of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. This is my fifteenth annual report, and this year CISS marks 35 years of delivering information and crisis support services to the Casey South community.

I know that there will be many more years of work for CISS as we continue to advocate on behalf of those in our community who are disadvantaged in some way – whether socially or economically. Unfortunately, it appears as though the demand on services like ours will only increase as the gap between the rich and the poor keeps growing, and the people who struggle on limited incomes are trapped on a treadmill of survival. We continue to see people struggling with the costs of housing, food, education, health and transport, and we are committed to connecting with those people to provide them with services, and to speaking out against disadvantage and discrimination in our community in an attempt to raise awareness and redress the imbalance in some way.

CISS works collaboratively with many organisations to provide services to the most vulnerable individuals and families in Casey South. This collaboration includes the many funding bodies, stakeholders and community members that support our organisation in many ways. To this end, I would like to formally recognise and thank our funding bodies – in particular, the City of Casey for its funding of our operational budget, provision of our amazing building, and support from various staff including Councillors, Sophia Petrov (Director Community Services), Eva Foster, and the many hard-working staff who engage with us regularly to ensure the voices of our clients are heard. I would like to thank the federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), and the Department of Justice for their continued funding and support of our emergency relief program. I would also like to thank the R.E. Ross Trust and The Salvation Army for their financial contribution to, and support of, our Back to School and Education Assistance programs.

CISS continues to be supported by a broad array of individuals, small community groups, and other agencies – a real example of “community supporting community”. As I say each year, it is never possible to mention by name everyone who supports our agency, so please take the time to read the acknowledgements on the last page of our Annual Report. All of these groups and individuals contribute in meaningful ways to keeping CISS functioning well, and we recognise them all. Without the support of these local people, our Emergency Relief program simply would not have the resources to run for the full twelve month period.

A primary association of course, is our sister agency – Casey North Community Information & Support Service, and our joint projects - the Casey No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) and the low-income resource guide have continued for more than a decade. This year in particular, I would like to acknowledge the CNCISS NILS team for their support in assisting us establish a stand-alone NILS for Casey South. As always, I would like to thank the Executive Officer of Casey North CISS, Susan Magee, for her ongoing and invaluable support.

Our partnerships with Windermere’s Communities for Children program, and the Cranbourne office of the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) have continued to strengthen referral pathways and support options for our clients.

As well as delivering services to the community, CISS is committed to networking locally and at a broader level – indeed, we believe that advocacy at the macro level is the only way to initiate change. Our clients and community continue to benefit from CISS being represented on and involved in many consultative committees, projects, and groups. A large part of my role is representing CISS staff and client issues in a variety of settings and to a broad cross section of stakeholders. One important outcome of this representation and advocacy is that CISS remains front and centre as an agency that understands, achieves and continues to move forward, as well as attempting to ensure the often silent voice of the vulnerable is heard.

The other day, I overheard a client say to one of the volunteers, “thanks for your time, and your smile”. For me, this comment sums up what the amazing CISS volunteers do on a daily basis. Our clients may or may not leave with some material assistance, but we always try to ensure that they leave having been listened to and respected, and this shows in the positive feedback we receive. One of our students on placement designed a client satisfaction survey, which clients were asked to fill in and anonymously place in a locked box on the front counter. This survey was undertaken over a four week period and we received a 100% satisfaction rate. Even when we were unable to provide the assistance requested, clients stated that they understood the limitations of our service, but appreciated our support.

Our volunteers contributed almost 8,000 unpaid hours to the community over the year, and continue to deliver a huge range of services, and respond professionally, and with empathy and respect, to individuals and families in crisis across our community. I would like to officially recognise their continuing hard work and support of me, the agency, and of course, our community.

As always, I would like to extend my thanks and congratulations to the Committee of Management for their constant hard work and support. This year has been one in which some difficult decisions have had to be made, and they have done so compassionately and only after thorough exploration of all options. I would also like to take the opportunity to recognise our counselling team – Joan, Jenny, and Kaye and our financial counsellor, Robyn. I would also like to acknowledge Doug, our Support Worker, who undertakes both casework duties and counselling, Michael, our Coordinator of Volunteers, and Ann and Flora, the Infolink team. Cathy, our Administration Manager, always deserves a special mention for her commitment and dedication. All of them continue to work extraordinarily hard, and their contribution to the agency and their support of the volunteers and me has been invaluable.

I encourage everyone to take the time to read our Annual Report and I look forward to another year of working with CISS for the residents of Casey South.

Leanne Petrides

Executive Officer

COUNSELLORS' REPORTS

Joan Cavanagh

It is with pleasure that I present my thirteenth annual report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service.

Our work continues to provide us with ongoing challenges as we service our client population, especially with the issue of funding difficulties as the financial year came to an end. However the challenges are offset by the ongoing rewards of working in a wonderfully supportive environment with a high morale level.

Professional Development

This year I attended the Mental Health First Aid Training for 2 days and the James Bramson seminar (also 2 days), which provided skills and knowledge in the areas of Emotional Focused Therapy and Internal Family Systems, which have been useful tools with which to work.

I undertook regular external supervision with Ann Garden and weekly peer supervision with Jenny, Kaye, Doug and Robyn. These continue to be important sessions not only for professional supervision but for team building and good communication.

Statistics

During the last financial year 245 counselling sessions were provided to 151 clients.

A significant figure of concern is the number of appointments not kept by clients (usually first time clients). It is unclear why this phenomenon occurs but we assume that often appointments are made in a time of crisis which passes. If these appointments were kept our volume of service would increase dramatically.

Acknowledgements

Thanks as always goes to Leanne (a special thanks for the work in advocating for CISS), Cathy (also a special thanks for technical and administrative support), Jenny, Kaye, Doug, Robyn, Michael, Ann, Flora, Volunteers and the Committee of Management for their roles in providing a supportive environment and for creating and sustaining a positive working environment. Thanks also to SECASA and WAYSS who share our building and provide assistance and support to CISS.

Joan Cavanagh

Counsellor

Jenny Hyland

I am pleased to present my ninth annual report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. I currently work on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for a total of 17 hours per week and continue to enjoy the challenge of working with a diverse range of issues presented by clients from a diverse range of backgrounds. I find the work rewarding and stimulating. My clients are my best teachers and I value the opportunity to continue learning and developing my knowledge, skills and abilities as a counsellor.

Professional Development

I continue to receive supervision once a month from psychologist Leni Foster at her private practice in Emerald. The CISS counsellors have continued to meet for peer supervision on a weekly basis.

During the past financial year I attended the 'Living Hope: Suicide Bereavement Training Program' – Salvation Army.

Statistics

During the last financial year 280 counselling sessions were provided to 179 clients.

These numbers reflect a decrease in both number of sessions and clients counselled. This decrease can be attributed to the writing of an extensive report to the Victims of Crime Tribunal which I undertook in support of a client who had suffered many years of extreme childhood sexual abuse. The writing of this report took 17 hours from counselling/client time, a big commitment in the context of my part-time work fraction. Although a valuable and educative experience, such an undertaking will not be agreed to again, as it detracts from the counselling focus of my work.

Compared to 2011-12, the number of clients I have counselled living below the \$20,000 income limit has approximately doubled in 2012-13, whilst the number of clients earning above \$50,000 has reduced by two thirds.

I have experienced an increase in the number of clients presenting with mental health issues, and also in the number of clients disclosing severe sexual abuse.

Acknowledgements

Leanne, the volunteers, counsellors and support staff together form a very balanced, committed and skilled team. It is a privilege to be part of this team where I feel valued and supported. I am grateful to Leanne and the COM for the autonomy and trust I am given in the management of my caseload, an experience which is hard to come by in today's workplace culture.

Special thanks go to the COM for all their support supporting throughout the year, including the counsellor's professional development needs. Many thanks to Leanne for her commitment to ensure CISS remains a welcoming and happy work environment for both staff and clients and for her ready availability concerning difficult clients.

Jenny Hyland
Counsellor

Kaye Jones

It is my pleasure to present my seventh annual report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service. I continue to work 20 hours per week over Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Working with clients at CISS continues to be challenging, inspiring, rewarding and, at times, frustrating. When I hear of some of the hardships people face I am filled with admiration for their perseverance and strength. While there are a few clients who gain little from the counselling process, the majority of our clients make progress of some kind in their lives and it is a privilege to walk with them as they do.

Professional Development

Our weekly peer supervision group with Joan, Jenny, Robyn and Doug continues to be an opportunity for sharing ideas, experiences and information. It also enables us to consult on difficult counselling situations and with other counsellors who may be seeing the same client or a client's partner.

As in past years I have received monthly professional supervision from Hans Schmidt.

Statistics

In this past financial year 270 counselling sessions were provided to 163 different clients.

A great many of our counselling clients have quite complex issues and in some cases the counselling process continues over several years. There are some clients who finish with us but will occasionally call for an appointment when they confront another problem in their life. With many of our clients it is rewarding to see how far they have come since our initial contact. It is also rewarding to know that clients felt they received the help they needed at a difficult time and were comfortable contacting us again.

The number of clients presenting with drug, alcohol and gambling addictions continues to increase. With regard to the gambling addiction I have "shared" many clients with Robyn d'Argent and it is very beneficial to those people that CISS is able provide the combined counselling/financial counselling service in one location.

Acknowledgements

Each year I express my thanks to our staff and volunteers here at CISS and this year is no different. The culture at CISS is of care, support, tolerance and patience in dealing with our clients and with each other.

To my fellow counsellors – Jenny, Joan, Doug and Robyn - I express my gratitude for their ongoing support, understanding, and good humour. Leanne is, as always, an exemplary leader and has never failed to be anything but compassionate, supportive, and caring to all of us. Thanks also to Cathy, Ann, Flora and Michael for assisting us with many different requests, problems and suggestions.

Kaye Jones

Counsellor

COUNSELLING STATISTICS

(Statistics in parentheses provide a comparison to the 2011/12 financial year)

Sessions by location	Number	Percentage %
Cranbourne	624 (790)	78 (84)
Within catchment	86 (70)	11 (7)
Outside catchment	85 (88)	11 (9)
TOTAL	795 (948)	100 (100)

Sessions by income	Number	Percentage %
Pension or benefit up to \$20,000	409 (340)	51 (36)
Between \$20,000 and \$30,000	136 (100)	17 (11)
Between \$30,000 and \$40,000	75 (117)	9 (12)
Between \$40,000 and \$50,000	42 (108)	5 (11)
Over \$50,000	133 (283)	17 (30)
TOTAL	948 (1068)	100 (100)

Client Contacts by Type	Number	Percentage %
Males	108 (142)	22 (27)
Females	385 (385)	78 (73)
Couple sessions	77 (151)	
Total number of clients	493 (527)	100 (100)

Issues raised: -

1. Addictions: Drug, Alcohol, Gambling
2. Personal, Inc. Anxiety & Depression
3. Relationship
4. Separation / Divorce
5. Family
6. Family Violence
7. Anger Management
8. Sexual Abuse
9. Parents of children with ADHD / Asperger's Syndrome
10. Chronic Illness / Injury / PTSD
11. Grief & Loss
12. Other

SUPPORT WORKER'S REPORT

This year has again been a busy one. Referrals have been from many different sources, but mainly from the front-line CISS Emergency Relief volunteers. Referrals also came from the CISS counsellors, Enhanced Maternal Child Health, Connections, WAYSS, primary and secondary schools, City of Casey, Centrelink and employment agencies.

Assistance provided included financial help in the form of vouchers and discretionary funds, and increasingly there has been a need for advocacy. This included applications for Utility Relief Grants (URG), negotiating payment plans with Civic Compliance (fines) and assistance with completing a myriad of Centrelink forms.

In December and January I worked with Julie on our Back to School Support Program (BTS). This is an invaluable service to the families in our community, especially in the future when Governments plan to cease the School Kids Bonus and Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

I have also assisted to deliver the Education Assistance Program (EAP) during the year between January and August, seeing 57 families and assisting them with over \$7,000. Again we are seeing an increase in people requesting assistance with TAFE and Vocational courses.

This year has seen a large increase in asylum seekers in community detention attending our service for assistance. This has been a learning curve for the agency and has involved advice and assistance from Red Cross and AMES as part of their Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme (ASAS). Communication has been an obstacle, as most asylum seekers have little or no English language.

Statistics (July 2012 - June 2013)

Clients

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
CLIENTS	10	15	16	27	13	12	11	20	19	16	18	27	204
SESSIONS	11	15	18	33	15	14	12	23	20	19	18	30	228
NEW	7	8	6	17	8	7	2	11	12	9	12	14	113

Location

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
3977	9	14	14	20	11	9	8	14	14	10	14	20	157
3976	1	1	2	4	2	2	3	1	3	3	2	5	29
OTHER	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	5	2	3	2	2	18

Gender

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
MALE	3	5	7	12	7	10	6	7	9	5	5	10	86
FEMALE	7	10	9	15	6	2	5	13	10	11	13	17	118

Counselling

Again this year, counselling has been an important component of my work, with increasing numbers of grief and bereavement clients. Other areas covered have included relationship issues, domestic violence, separation, self esteem, anger management, anxiety and depression. Last year I completed a Vocational Graduate Certificate in Bereavement Counselling and Intervention at the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement and am currently completing an internship there.

Issues Presented

The main issues that are being presented are financial, housing problems, increased costs of rent and utilities, and costs associated with medical expenses. For a lot of the clients coming in for assistance, the main problem is that the money coming into the household (ie Centrelink payments) does not cover their basic living costs for food and shelter. This includes young families through to the aged pensioner. Newstart base payment is \$528.68 per fortnight (ie \$264.34 per week) with some people paying \$180 to \$200 or even more per week for a room in a rooming house.

By far, the largest group of Centrelink recipients seeking our assistance were in receipt of Newstart and Parenting Payment Single (PPS) which is decreasing as parents move to Newstart (NS), with Disability Support Pension (DSP) recipients also being well represented.

The following are areas where support was provided: -

Bereavement	Education	Legal	Assistance with Centrelink Forms
Employment	Drug/Alcohol	Financial	Housing – Rental/Mortgage
Health Issues	Domestic Violence	Advocacy	Child Support/Separation

Professional Development

During the year I attended a number of courses, and represented CISS at information sessions:

Living Hope (Hope for Life) – Suicide Prevention and Bereavement Training Program
Gambling and Mental Health training
City of Casey – Summit on Suicide
CISVic - Vulnerable Groups caseworkers network meetings & 2012 Forum
Centrelink Case Coordination meeting
Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal Forum
AMES - South Eastern Region Refugee and Asylum Seekers Network Group
SECASA – Information session
Compassion Fatigue and Burnout training

Counselling Statistics (July 2012 – June 2013)

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
CLIENTS	7	-	5	4	4	6	4	5	5	4	7	9	60
SESSIONS	9	-	7	8	8	8	5	6	6	6	10	16	89
NEW	4	-	4	-	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	3	30

Doug Thompson

Support Worker

COORDINATOR OF VOLUNTEER'S REPORT

It is again with great pleasure that I present my report for the 2013 AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service (CISS).

Since commencing work with CISS in March 2012, I have enjoyed being an active part of an effective and productive team. The volunteers and employed staff at CISS not only support me in all my endeavours, but also remain dedicated and committed in ensuring the delivery of an exceptional service to those clients in need.

Workplace Activities and Initiatives

The main focus of my activities continues to be on recruitment, training and retention. Since my last report there has been a steady stream of potential volunteers attending for interviews. Following the completion of the nationally recognised accredited Volunteer Training Course, which was conducted between February and April 2013 at the Cranbourne Salvation Army Centre, two of the successful volunteers now work at CISS.

Earlier this year a revised formal induction program was developed, which now forms part of the overall training package for newly recruited volunteers. Mentors are provided with a 'Mentors Manual' which guides them through the process of mentoring their respective volunteers.

During the last financial year I successfully negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Department of Human Services (DHS - Centrelink, Cranbourne) and CISS. The MoU sets out the terms and conditions when DHS refers to CISS clients who are in need of assistance in completing a range of official documentation. Generally, these clients suffer from some form of physical or literacy disability.

A further initiative includes the positive working relationship I have developed with Max Employment Agency located in Cranbourne. With the assistance of Max Employment we have been able to provide clients with the services of a receptionist for most of the working week.

From a reporting perspective to the CISS Committee of Management, I have continually developed my reports to reflect the ongoing status of volunteer recruitment and training. I also produce data which provides monthly and annual statistics of the number of clients in need of our emergency relief services.

I also provide support to the staff responsible for inputting data into the CISS record management data program. This support enables me to monitor the quality and standard of information being recorded by volunteers.

During the last financial year I also prepared and submitted Victoria Police National Records Checks for all staff and volunteers.

Individual Performance Appraisals were also conducted and completed by me on each of the CISS Volunteers. Some of the feedback provided by these appraisals has already been acted upon.

Professional Development

Recently I successfully completed a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Following attainment of this qualification I have been appointed by Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) as one of their qualified Trainers. This position allows me to conduct training for potential volunteers who are required to complete the nationally recognised accredited volunteer course, namely; 'Assess and Provide Services for Clients with Complex Needs'.

In addition, I was approached by CISVic and invited to form part of their Training Sub-Committee. This committee is responsible for reviewing and developing accredited training for volunteers.

Training and Individual Development

During the last financial year I have initiated the following training:

On Thursday 16th August 2012 a training session was conducted at Cranbourne Salvation Army Centre on general CISS house-keeping. This was followed by a presentation by Mr Robert Philpott from Centrelink.

On Thursday 8th November 2012 a presentation was made by WAYSS at CISS. Also that day, another presentation was made by a representative of Kildonan on the subject of the Home Energy Saver Scheme.

On Wednesday 27th February 2013 an information session was conducted at the Old Shire Offices on the revised data cards and associated recording and general-housekeeping.

Between February and April 2013 I conducted a six week Volunteer Training Course held at the Cranbourne Salvation Army Centre. Thirteen students attended this course, all of whom successfully completed the training.

Future Development

Demand for our services continues to grow. Therefore, it is imperative that my main focus and commitment is to continue to attract, recruit and retain suitably qualified volunteers.

Finally, identifying and developing relevant training needs for our volunteers also continues to be a significant factor in my consideration for the future development of CISS, especially as we become more reliant on computer management programs.

Michael Cooney

Coordinator of Volunteers

FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present my 2012-2013 report to the AGM of the Cranbourne Information and Support Service.

It has been another very busy year working with vulnerable people and families in the Cranbourne and Casey South suburbs.

Referrals from other services in our area have all increased, and agencies including WAYSS, Centrelink, Windermere, Oz Child, Department of Human Services, Office of Housing, SECASA, Cardinia Casey Community Health Service, New Hope, Connections, Good Shepherd, Money Help, Migrant Resource Centre, and local Churches all phone for financial counselling appointments for their vulnerable clients.

Professional Development

All Financial counsellors in Victoria must be a member of the Financial & Consumer Rights Council (FCRC), which requires all Financial Counsellors to do 15 points of Professional Development each year.

During this financial year, I have attended the following training: -

- Elder abuse Prevention
- Consumer Action Law Centre – relevant to Financial Counsellors
- Forum on Collection Companies
- Neighbourhood Justice Centre – relevant to Financial Counsellors
- Family Violence
- Council Rates & Hardship Forum
- Working with people with Mental Health Issues

Supervision

Financial Counsellors are also required to undertake 10 hours of supervision with another Financial Counsellor which I have been undertaking for the past 12 months.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers for an enjoyable place to work and thank you also to the Committee of Management for all your support.

Robyn d'Argent

Financial Counsellor

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING STATISTICS

New Clients

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
NEW CLIENTS	16	16	13	12	21	17	30	15	18	17	19	25	219
MULTIPLE SESSIONS	14	27	30	17	15	18	22	30	17	18	10	9	227
WALK-IN	1	-	6	2	-	2	9	3	-	2	-	4	29

Location

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
3977	23	28	38	23	28	23	46	38	25	23	23	25	343
3976	7	12	8	7	8	12	11	9	6	12	4	9	105
OTHER	1	3	3	1	-	2	4	1	4	2	2	4	27

Issues

	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
DEBT MANAGEMENT	8	29	37	29	12	12	38	18	22	18	16	20	259
CREDIT CARD	20	18	30	29	26	20	46	42	25	25	22	20	323
ADVOCACY	30	40	2	25	35	19	50	41	33	19	28	33	355
BANKRUPTCY	9	8	12	11	11	15	10	14	7	15	11	7	130
MORTGAGE	11	16	23	21	9	13	23	13	11	13	10	8	171
CAR LOAN	9	12	18	15	12	4	26	24	8	4	13	13	158
PHONE	23	29	33	26	26	16	40	38	27	16	18	19	311
UTILITIES	20	32	38	20	30	16	43	38	31	16	21	26	331
RENT ARREARS	3	3	4	2	9	4	3	9	9	4	10	3	63
U.R.G.	6	9	12	11	11	8	18	16	7	8	10	12	128
CENTRELINK	8	15	4	3	18	16	33	32	24	16	14	20	203
FINES	10	11	7	4	11	8	20	15	6	8	8	8	112
RATES	10	7	25	22	8	9	15	9	4	9	5	2	125
ACCESS SUPER	7	5	7	4	3	4	15	6	6	4	9	8	78
FAMILY ISSUES	13	22	18	16	18	14	27	24	18	14	15	23	222
MENTAL HEALTH	8	17	16	13	22	13	27	19	15	13	13	18	194

CRANBOURNE 'INFOLINK' REPORT

The last financial year was one of constant and sustainable progress. Our twice monthly outreach visits to Centro Shopping Centre still attract around 15 – 20 enquiries each visit. Our weekly visit to Cranbourne Centrelink is going from strength to strength. Not only do we see clients referred from the Centrelink staff at the office on our visits but we are now receiving many referral phone calls from them outside those hours as well. This is creating a win/win for all concerned, particularly our mutual client base.

Our monthly ADHD Support Group meeting is maintaining a steady attendance of 8-10, with new members commencing at a rate of two each month. The group is most welcoming to the new members and provides a safe and confidential environment for all concerned. The Infolink team want to thank not only our CISS staff but also Jan & Ima from SECASA who have referred clients to us as well. This truly is a service that recognises the expertise of all staff.

A successful Professional Forum was well attended in March 2013 at the Old Shire Hall. The purpose of the forum was to better inform service providers around the changes that the federal government was implementing around moving some Centrelink recipients from Parenting Payments to Newstart Payments, and the effect that it would have on the family. This in turn has put added pressure on the already over stretched services of local Community Organisations. Centrelink staff were in attendance on the day and provided thorough details of what the likely outcomes would be for all concerned. It was a well attended forum and the feedback from those in attendance was positive.

Over time, Childcare Centres & Kindergartens in the area either have new management or have changed ownership completely, which often includes a new name change. Flora maintains regular contact with these services to ensure that they are aware of what is available in the area and where to obtain what is needed for their families. Flora still provides an outreach service which may include presenting to the staff/parents and/or providing printed materials.

We are most excited to be commencing a new year of services not only to the Cranbourne Community but to CISS & CfC as well.

Ann Proud & Flora Warren

'Infolink' Team

No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

NILS enables approved low income earners obtain affordable credit for essential household goods such as washing machines, fridges, computers, heaters and furniture.

In the financial year July 2012 - May 2013, 22 loans were issued from the Cranbourne site, totalling \$17,739.

The Casey No Interest Loans Scheme commenced operation in April 2001 at Casey North Community Information & Support Service Inc. The Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc was invited to assist deliver the program across the southern suburbs of Casey, and we have delivered this program in partnership until May 2013, when CISS received a grant to start a stand-alone scheme for the southern suburbs of Casey.

On the 1 June 2013, Cranbourne Information and Support Service Inc commenced their own NILS program, The Cranbourne and District NILS. After numerous hours of research, phone calls, emails, paperwork, and a few obstacles, which all took a little longer than expected, we were up and running with a big thanks to Louise Morgan and Leanne Petrides for their time and efforts.

We are excited to be delivering the Cranbourne & District NILS, and we know that our excellent working relationship with CNCISS continues.

Back to School Support Program

The Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc (CISS) delivered its seventh Back to School (BTS) Support program between the months of November 2012 and March 2013, in conjunction with The Salvation Army Cranbourne Community Support Services.

The Salvation Army Cranbourne Community Support Services contributed \$18,000 towards this program. A further \$26,000 was received from The R.E. Ross Trust, and \$2,000 was provided through CISS from various sources including CISS funding and donations. Additional further funds from The R.E. Ross Trust were provisioned for use towards educational needs that present throughout the year.

In the last two years we have tried to focus the funds distribution towards the more senior years of schooling - Years 10, 11 and 12 (VCE, VCAL and VET years). Assisting these parents with educational expenses will hopefully encourage students to stay at school after turning 16.

The money was used to assist families in the Casey South community with the costs of sending children to school, and covered items including non-voluntary fees, textbooks, stationery, shoes, uniforms, and sundry items like lunch-boxes and bags, etc.

A total of 248 families were assisted, which consisted of 520 children (90 being VCE students), attending 61 schools. Of the 248 families seen, 40% were new to the program, and 99% of families were in receipt of Centrelink payments.

Julie Jones

Back to School Program Coordinator

SERVICES

Information and Referral

Information and referral services are the core activity of the agency, and are available on a wide range of subjects including:

- * Accommodation
- * Community Affairs
- * Education
- * Employment
- * Health
- * Legal
- * Support Services
- * Counselling
- * Consumer Affairs
- * Emergency Relief
- * Environment
- * Income
- * Recreation
- * Transport

Trained volunteers provide information in person or over the phone. A current, comprehensive community information database, pamphlets, booklets, and manuals enable access to thousands of agencies, services and procedures. Data is maintained on National, State, regional and local agencies, and provides people with improved access to resources and services, and knowledge of their rights and responsibilities.

Crisis Support

An intervention service is provided for people in crisis. This can include a 'listening ear', support, practical assistance (such as filling in forms or writing letters), information, and referrals to appropriate specialist supports. Demand for our crisis support service grows each year as increasing numbers of people present with complex needs and numerous issues.

Emergency relief is provided for people experiencing financial hardship, and includes food, food vouchers, gas and petrol, Myki Day Passes, Telstra vouchers, nappies, baby food/formula, and pharmaceutical needs. Guidelines and eligibility criteria apply, and a 'holistic' rather than 'bandaid' model of service delivery is used.

Counselling

A generalist crisis intervention and counselling program is provided, with individual, couple, and family counselling offered; with financial counselling also available. The service is free and available to individuals, couples and families who live or work in the Casey South area.

Advocacy and Negotiation

This is provided on behalf of clients with Government departments, service providers, utility companies, landlords, businesses, and neighbours, etc, with regard to issues including debts, services, complaints, and procedures. Emphasis is placed on the client developing these skills for future use.

No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

The No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) offers low-income earners an accessible source of credit for the purchase of essential household goods with an achievable repayment plan that does not compromise the household budget. Loans can be provided to approved applicants for goods such as fridges, washing machines, furniture, and even health aids and educational expenses.

The Cranbourne & District NILS commenced in June 2013 with a \$50,000 grant from the National Australia Bank. This follows the successful delivery of the Casey NILS in conjunction with Casey North CISS since April 2001.

The two agencies will continue to work collaboratively to ensure that this flexible and effective form of micro-finance is available across the entire municipality of Casey.

Share Accommodation Register

A register for people looking, or offering to share accommodation is available on site. Sharers are resourced with a "Sharing Kit", and staff can act as mediators in establishing share arrangements. Sharing can be an economical and practical way of finding accommodation in the local area, and this free service has enabled many people find suitable, affordable housing, and is a useful community resource.

Tax Help

Volunteers are trained by the Australian Taxation Office to assist people fill in simple tax returns. This service is offered to people on low incomes, the aged, people with disabilities, people whose primary language is not English, Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, young people, pensioners, unemployed, and people with literacy or numeracy difficulties. CISS is the only agency providing Tax Help in the Casey South area, and the demand is such that many people cannot be assisted.

Volunteer Register

A register of service providers and community groups who offer opportunities for people interested in volunteer work is available on site.

Volunteer Program

CISS volunteers undertake an extensive training program, including a nationally accredited course – "Assess and Provide Services to Clients with Complex Needs", orientation, and a probationary period before becoming accredited community information workers. A focus on personal development enables volunteers to further develop particular skills or interests in fields such as public relations, information management, research, administration and computers, amongst many more.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

For the Year Ended 30 June 2013

GENERAL ACCOUNT

	2013	2012
<u>INCOME</u>		
Grants		
- City of Casey	368,864	329,394
- City of Casey ER Network	2,769	2,638
- FaHCSIA Mark II Grant	214	-
- Ian Potter Foundation	-	9,889
- School Holiday Activities	-	3,500
- VG Funding Administration	-	1,200
- Vulnerable Groups	11,755	9,940
- Windermere Volunteer Training	1,150	4,916
- Windermere CFC Infolink	79,129	65,000
Interest Received	206	790
Miscellaneous Income	620	265
Other Reimbursements	220	10
Prior Year Expense Adjustments	7,367	-
Services Provided	136	182
Room Hire	20,523	19,190
TOTAL INCOME	492,953	466,915
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Advertising	-	931
AGM Expenses	311	295
Audit Fees	680	680
Bank Charges & F I D etc	77	88
Bad Debts	-	227
Computer Software/Hardware	656	3,000
Computer/Printer Supplies and Maintenance	1,050	1,152
Depreciation Expenses	3,327	4,989
Electricity	15,438	11,120
Employment Expenses	307,651	265,989
Equipment and Furniture	88	108
FaHCSIA Mark II Grant	508	-
Fringe Benefits Tax	-	3,785
Ian Potter Research Expenses	-	4,575
Insurance	1,720	1,266

Making Ends Meet Guide	1,857	1,719
Miscellaneous	1,153	1,376
Other Training	1,076	1,183
Postage	852	1,710
Policy and Planning	121	-
Photocopying, Printing and Stationery	6,725	7,708
Provision for Annual Leave	25,462	23,305
Provision for Equipment Replacement	2,000	2,000
Provision for Long Service Leave	8,225	11,600
Repairs and Maintenance	77	1,723
Resources	303	230
School Holiday Activities	-	3,983
Security	761	890
Social Committee Expenses	219	39
Staff Amenities	1,693	1,674
Stay on Track Guide	1,113	1,089
Subscriptions & Memberships	2,084	2,943
Telephone, email and Webpage	10,966	12,548
Vulnerable Groups	11,755	9,860
Water Charges	44	237
Windermere CfC Infolink Expenses	69,247	57,208
Windermere Volunteer Expenses	1,150	4,916
Workcover	5,620	4,387
Working with Children Checks	465	80
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>484,472</u>	<u>450,612</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	<u>8,481</u>	<u>16,303</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

For the Year Ended 30 June 2013

EMERGENCY RELIEF FUNDING ACCOUNT

	2013	2012
<u>INCOME</u>		
Back to School Program		
Cranbourne Arthritis Support Group	-	2,000
Hunt Club Community Grant	990	1,000
Inner Wheel Club	1,000	-
R.E. Ross Trust	26,400	26,400
Salvation Army Funding	19,000	14,000
Bruce Greenland	1,000	-
CISS ER Support	-	7,000
COC Ward Funds Grant	-	2,000
Donations	26,006	24,928
Grant - City of Casey	10,000	10,000
Grant - FaHCSIA		
Emergency Relief	137,039	129,839
Vulnerable Groups	5,000	5,000
Interest Received	9,357	8,788
Miscellaneous	1,566	-
TOTAL INCOME	<u>237,358</u>	<u>230,955</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Back to School Program		
Hunt Club Community Grant	990	990
Other BTS Donations	2,000	2,000
R.E. Ross Trust	26,400	26,400
Salvation Army Funding	19,000	14,000
Bank Fees	-	15
Christmas Support Expenses	3,196	-
CISS Vouchers	10,303	10,017
COC Ward Funds Grant	-	2,000
Client Relief - Chemist	7,046	6,203
Client Relief - Supplies	11,573	11,808
Client Relief - Day Pass	1,500	-
Discretionary Fund Expenses	3,000	3,000
Discretionary Fund Expenses - Medical	5,000	2,000
Met Tickets	-	3,000
Miscellaneous	231	-
Nappies	247	660
Vulnerable Groups Vouchers	5,000	5,000
Relief Food Vouchers	137,039	129,839
Swags for Homeless	1,293	1,475
Ward Fund Donations	-	500
TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>233,818</u>	<u>218,908</u>
OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	<u>3,540</u>	<u>12,047</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the Year Ended 30 June 2013

	2013	2012
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
CBA General Account	7,191	20,014
Online Account	35,061	-
Petty Cash	100	100
Term Deposit	200,000	200,000
Trade Debtors	1,683	385
Emergency Relief Account - CBA	58,676	49,534
Cranbourne & District NILS	1,744	-
Furniture & Fixtures at Cost	26,471	26,471
Computers - Cost	10,135	10,135
Furniture & Equipment/Computers	14,148	14,148
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(38,988)	(31,661)
Imput Tax Credit Control	2,072	2,503
VG Discretionary Fund	69	-
TOTAL INCOME	322,361	291,629
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
Healthy Families Project	1,500	1,500
Education Assistance Program	14,159	12,366
FaHCSIA Mark II Grant	5,286	-
Key Deposits	150	150
Minor Capital Works	1,000	1,000
NAB – NILS Overdraft Account	1,744	-
Provision for Annual Leave	38,087	40,182
Provision for Discretionary Fund	484	797
Provision for Holiday Program	1,000	-
Provision for Long Service Leave	64,886	56,661
Provisional for Medical Discretionary	4,287	2,000
Provision for Staff Backfill	12,710	12,856
Provision for Metcards	-	963
Provision for Equipment Replacement	10,264	8,960
Provision for Staff Training	534	689
Provision for Webpage	1,636	2,000
PAYG Tax Payable	3,564	3,208
GST Payable Control	16,360	16,576
Salary Sacrifice Payable	2,192	5,127
Superannuation Payable	375	7,256
Temporary Holding Account	-	496
Trade Creditors	3,946	3,854
Windermere CfC Infolink Grant	2,270	-
Windermere CfC Provision for Future Programs	10,000	-
Windermere Volunteer Training	-	1,084
TOTAL LIABILITIES	196,436	177,724
NET ASSETS	125,926	113,905
<u>MEMBERS' FUNDS</u>		
Accumulated Surplus/(Deficit)	129,870	117,850
Historical Balancing	(3,944)	(3,944)
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	125,926	113,905

Schedule 1

Regulation 15

Form 1

Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012

Sections 94(2)(b), 97(2)(b) and 100(2)(b)

This form is required to be provided to the members at the AGM with the association's accounts.

Annual statements give true and fair view of financial position of incorporated association

We, JULIE JONES and SUSAN HOPKINS

being members of the Committee of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc., certify that—

The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc. during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2013.

Signed:



Dated:

11/10/2013

Signed:



Dated:

11/10/2013

CRANBOURNE INFORMATION & SUPPORT SERVICE INC.

(CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU)

AUDITOR'S REPORT
For the Year Ended 30th June 2013

This audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. I have examined the financial statements for Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc. for the year ended 30th June 2013. The records examined are free from any material misstatement and in my opinion the accounts show a true and fair view of the financial position of the incorporated association during and at the end of its last audit year.

On the basis of that examination we advise that we are satisfied that the accompanying financial statements accurately reflect the transactions of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc. as recorded in those books of accounts, and that of the bank reconciliations for the year ended 30th June 2013. Noting only that; the CBA General Account (CBA...4443) and Cranbourne & District NILS (NAB...8659) had minor bank reconciliation discrepancies arising from uncleared transactions. The related transactions have been included in the provided reports and bank reconciliations have since been recitified.

Furthermore, the 'Prior Year Expense Adjustments' figure in the 'Income' section of CISS' statement of financial performance is due to 'Superannuation Payable' and 'Salary Sacrifice Payable' amounts which have been journalled in the 13th period of the current 2013 audit year. These amounts are in relation to payroll amounts which have been expensed in prior year profit and loss reports; but subsequent payments of the liability accounts were posted to incorrect accounts.

Furthermore, the 'balancing adjustments' figure in the equity section of CISS' statement of financial position is due to a depreciation entry journalled in the 13th period of the 2009 audit year. It must be noted that the omission doesn't affect the 2013 figures presented in the provided reports.

Our audit is limited to an examination of those books of accounts, and is not a verification of the day to day activities of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc. for the year ended 30th June 2013. It is not practical for the agency to establish control over income for certain fund raising activities prior to its initial entry in the accounting records, nor is it practical for me to perform audit procedures to satisfy myself that all such income has been received and recorded.



Anthony Karadeas FIPA
Insight Accounting Pty Ltd
Shop 5, Corner High & Sladen Streets
CRANBOURNE, VIC 3977
October 2, 2013



EMERGENCY RELIEF

Many of our clients are dealing with complex personal and financial issues that dominate their lives. Seventeen percent of clients attending our agency for assistance with emergency relief are approaching us for the very first time, reflecting both the growth in population, and the number of families in our region living below the poverty line, and therefore increasingly dependent on the welfare system to survive.

It is important to note that all people accessing our service receive a comprehensive and holistic service, often receiving a range of support services in addition to material aid. Some people requesting emergency relief may only require assistance once, but generally, families in this area need further support during times of crisis or prolonged hardship. Requests for assistance with transport costs (both petrol, and public transport expenses) have increased substantially from the previous year, as have requests for assistance with medical and pharmaceutical costs, emergency relief, accommodation, and financial counselling.

Once again, we are proud to acknowledge the support of many local organisations and individuals who donated to our Emergency Relief program throughout the year. We received donations from the Inner Wheel Club of Cranbourne, Rotary Club of Cranbourne, Cranbourne Arthritis Support Group, Cranbourne Country Women's Association, Hampton Park Uniting Church, Lucky 7 Tattoos, Mr Bruce Greenland, and various anonymous donors.

During the last financial year, almost \$200,000 was distributed in emergency relief on over 6,000 occasions, and a further \$43,000 was distributed through the Back to School/Education Assistance Programs. This would not have been possible without the federal department of Families, Housing, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs, The R.E.Ross Trust, The Salvation Army Cranbourne Support Services and the Dandenong Magistrates Court, as well as additional support from local churches, donations from the Ritchie's Stores Community Benefit Card, and the afore-mentioned groups and individuals. We also received and distributed \$7,000 of Telstra vouchers.

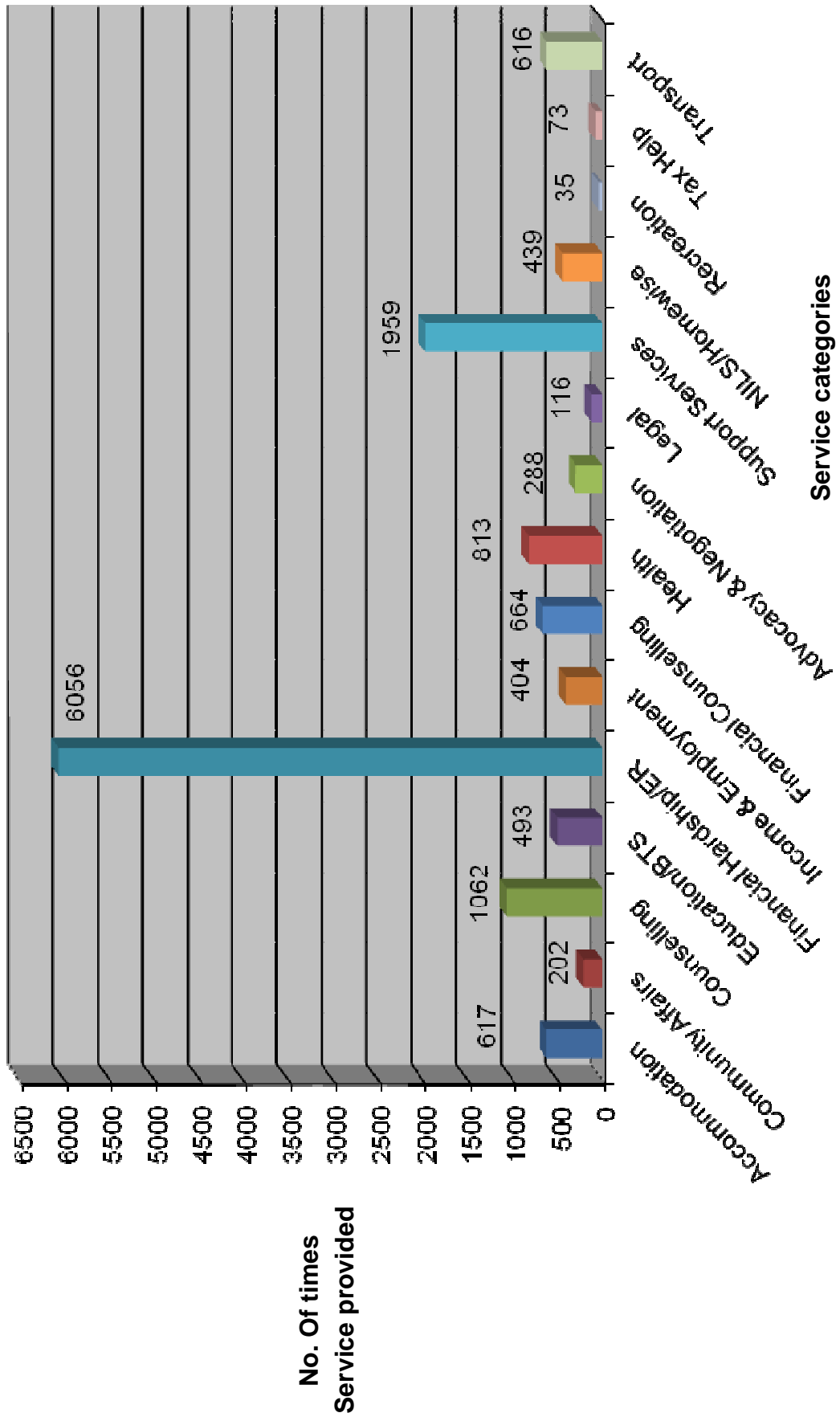
STATISTICS

Please see the following graph for a breakdown of service provision.

We provided some type of assistance on almost 14,000 occasions to almost 8,000 households. As usual, emergency relief was our most utilised service, with over 6,000 requests for assistance. This was a slight increase from the previous year, and translated to a total of 7,137 adults and 6,513 children who benefited in some way from our emergency relief service. The majority (42%) of people attending our agency were aged between 25-39 years, with a further 34% aged between 40-59 years. Six percent of clients were under 24 years of age, and six percent were aged 60 or over.

We believe the increase in the number of people seeking assistance (particularly those in receipt of Newstart) was due to the Federal Government's transition of some clients receiving Parenting Payment onto Newstart payments, and their subsequent decrease in income.

CISS Statistics 2012 / 2013



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We extend our thanks to the following individuals and agencies for their support, donations or assistance to clients and staff of the Cranbourne Information & Support Service:

City of Casey Councillors and Staff

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

Department of Justice Victoria – Southern Courts Fund

Community Information & Support Victoria

Woolworths Limited

Ritchies Stores Ltd – Cranbourne

Windermere Child & Family Services

The Salvation Army Cranbourne Support Services

The R.E. Ross Trust

St Vincent's de Paul Society

Techdeck Computer Service

Pharmore Pharmacy

Centrelink - Cranbourne

Australian Taxation Office – Tax Help Program

For donations to CISS Emergency Relief Fund –

- Ulysses Club Shearwaters Branch
- Inner Wheel Club of Cranbourne Inc
- Rotary Club of Cranbourne
- Cranbourne Arthritis Support Group
- Cranbourne Country Women's Association
- Hampton Park Uniting Church
- Lucky 7 Tattoos
- Bruce Greenland
- Robin Dzedins
- Anonymous donations
- Winepress Berwick AOG