

Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence Annual Report 2015 - 2016

President's Report

Once again it gives me great pleasure to deliver the President's Report for the 2015-2016 year. This year has been an important year with the celebration of 25 years of service delivery. It has also been a very busy year for staff with increasing numbers of clients seeking support and advocacy meaning the services' capacity has been tested in many ways.



There are different pressures on staff now as a result of new phenomena, for example the direct result of technology impacting on women's private experiences, changes seen at presentation by clients in this example, the impacts of

pornography. The Agency has once again been proactive in the media, in liaising with other experts in the field and formally making a Senate submission on the harm pornography causes.

Speaking personally I wondered what the effects were around the world as a result of the 24 hour media cycle of the US election and the exponential growth of reports as a result of very public expressions of sexual assault and the ensuing controversy generated as a result. Because of the nature of the publicity I'm sure many women were forced to confront their own buried or unspoken trauma either within their families or possibly by a very public figure and all the stressful fallout that creates for the victims. There would have been a very similar fallout from the Australian Royal Commission into the institutional sexual abuse of children. While over time deconstructing the secrecy surrounding these events is key in shining a light on this crime and place responsibility for its expression firmly where it belongs, with the perpetrator, in the

short term there is bound to be pressure on Agencies like GCCSAV to which they would respond to the best of their ability but for which their resources are stretched and tested to the limit to say the least.

The Management Committee really appreciates the professionalism and commitment of the staff team in a challenging area. However, we must also be mindful of staff's capacity to deliver when resources are so stretched. The practice of the Agency is to respond to every crisis in a timely manner and leave no client floundering and alone, and this priority is reflected in many positive outcomes. We must however realise the extraordinary commitment this calls for by the workers in trying to achieve the best outcome possible for clients.



I wish to acknowledge again this year the core funding provided by the Department of Communities. I hope that the next funding cycle will include a much needed expansion in funding to increase staff hours to cover increasing demand and

core business. An increase in funding will also allow for contingency to meet client demand when there are absences from work without placing pressure on team members left carrying the load. It is a matter of social justice to provide sufficient resources for staff to access recreation and sick leave without feeling obliged to keep giving over and above what they are funded for.

In conclusion I must give my personal thanks to the wonderful Management Committee and express how very fortunate I am to work with such exceptional, dedicated and professional people who give so generously of their time, knowledge and gifts. In addition to our unique and highly respected Director Di Macleod we are fortunate to have Assistant Professor Terry Goldsworthy, Bond Uni; Julia Clarke, lecturer, TAFE; Di Mangan Director CEO of DVConnect the Statewide DV and Sexual Assault Help Line; Louise Plummer a published author and International expert on Intimate Partner Sexual Violence, Cassandra Steer, business woman, stalwart and financial whizz. The contribution of the committee is a reflection both of their unstinting generosity and service and the esteem with which they hold the Agency. I look forward to continuing to learn from them in the future.

Barbara Geoghegan

**Email: admin@stopsexualviolence.com
Website: www.stopsexualviolence.com**

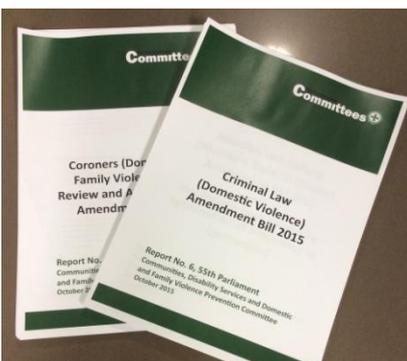
Director's Report

I am pleased to present the Director's report for 2015/16. Firstly I would like to thank and pay tribute to all of the members of the Management Committee who voluntarily gave their time in the governance role of the organisation in the past year. Thank you to Barbara Gaygan as President, Casandra Steer as Treasurer, Terry Goldsworthy as Secretary and to Di Mangan, Louise McOrmond Plummer and Julia Clarke as General Members. Your diverse backgrounds and knowledge bring another level of expertise and wisdom to the Centre.

Secondly I would like to thank and pay tribute to everyone who contributed to GCCASV this year. To the volunteers who helped out with administrative tasks and facilitated a diverse range of groups. Thank you to Felicia, Bill, Beth, Jeanette, Vicki and Christine. To the students and interns who contributed to policy and projects thank you to Descenna, Ada, Stephanie, Mollie-Blue and Goldie. Especially to all of the employees – Kellie, Narelle, Anne, Isabell, Ana, Cristina, Leslie, Marjorie, Kerrin and Thi Thanh Tam Pham (Lucie) your passion and commitment and to the cause is amazing. I appreciate and respect your expertise and professionalism and the challenging work that you do every day in the area of sexual violence. I value your contribution and have witnessed the positive difference you make in the lives of women. I also want to thank you for the support, understanding and kindness you have shown me as Director which has sustained me over time. Farewell and best wishes to Leslie who left after 6 years service.

Achievements and challenges

This past year I have lobbied Premiers office, Minister for Communities; Attorney General, Shadow Minister for Communities, all local state members and many city councillors at least once. In 26 years I have never been engaged in so many consultations, targeted workshops, roundtables, senate submissions, parliamentary committee enquiries, legislative reform discussions and grant submissions to increase women's safety. Some positive changes have already occurred in the increased focus on sexual violence in the Third



Action Plan, the establishment of the new Domestic Violence Death Review Board; new Domestic and Family Violence legislation and the circumstance of aggravation and strangulation.

This year through our Sexual Assault Linkages Initiative (SALI) we achieved: enhanced awareness of the work of GCCASV; enhanced awareness of the

nature and impact of sexual violence; enhanced awareness of IPSV and the intersection of DV and SV; cross agency training; outreach of GGCASV counsellors to other agencies; partnering for specific projects / programs; greater integration of support; and better outcomes for clients.

The 25th Anniversary lunch at Parkwood International was a wonderful sell out event attended by 180 people. A great opportunity to showcase the work that we have done in the past and continue to do. Over \$17,000 was raised through ticket sales, donations, raffle and auction. Thanks to everyone who assisted and particularly to Rob Molhoek and the Parkwood Golf Club who hosted the event for us.



2015 Sexual Violence Awareness Month was very successful and included a community breakfast at Sharks attended by over 120 people; survivor speak out; school education; candle lighting event; clothesline project and launch of the Book of Hope.

The biggest challenge again this year was increased demand for counselling, information and support with no corresponding increase in resources. Despite the scant resources, there was no waiting list during the year and due to priority scheduling of crisis appointments, all clients were responded to within their requested time frame.

The use of technology and social media in the area of sexual violence has continued to be a challenge with stalking, multiple dating apps, prevalence of sexting and revenge porn as a growing concern.

Domestic Violence homicide was again a concern this year. GCCASV organised Red Rose Rallies on the Gold Coast to raise awareness of and commemorate each life lost and attended and presented in the Forum at Parliament.

Trends this year

High level of presentations relating to Intimate Partner Sexual Violence (IPSV) reinforcing that

women who are subjected to domestic violence rarely enjoy a safe, consensual sexual relationship with their partners.

Sexual Harassment in diverse employment scenarios from small business to government to national and international corporations. Women are staying in unsafe employment positions because there is no immediate financial alternative.

Complex cases often relating to the intersection between sexual violence, domestic violence, mental health, homelessness and alcohol and other drugs. More than half our clients have reported, or have been assisted to report, sexual crimes to local, Queensland, interstate and international police. Unfortunately we have not seen any corresponding increase in convictions for these crimes.

Alcohol and drug facilitated sexual violence has continued involving both casual and long term partners affecting women of all ages.

Levels and types of sexual violence resulting in physical injuries remains a concern and in many cases pornography plays a role.

Women raped in share houses by flatmates don't feel safe staying and do not qualify for domestic violence refuges. The reason these women are in share houses in the first place is a lack of affordable housing on the Gold Coast. Safe, affordable accommodation options for women who have been raped is urgently needed.

Funding and donations

I would particularly like to thank the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services who provide our core funding. I would also like to thank all of our supporters and donors for their assistance in terms of money and goods in kind. This year we have relied on small grants and donations to assist with service delivery and the upgrading of client facilities such as soft furnishings, a new coffee machine and massage chair. I would like to recognise the support of all local state politicians and their staff in particular Rob Molhoek our local member; all GCC Councillors in particular Cr Dawn Crichlow; Bill Wakefield from Combined Martial Arts; My Friend's Place; Vicky Hogg; Renee Peterson; Gold Coast Cabs; Lucinda Leveille; Sonya Black from Advance Family Law; Ramsay Health; Friends with Dignity; Marriott Resort; Gillian Rumpf and Catherine Maluish.

In conclusion, I look forward to the next year with enthusiasm and hope, confident that as an organisation we can grow, continue high quality service delivery and contribute to a safer Gold Coast.

Di Macleod

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the Audited Financial Report for the year ended 30 June 2016.



Firstly I would like to thank the Management Committee for their support during the past year. The staff - Di, Kellie, Narelle, Ana, Isabelle, Cristina, Marjorie and Anne have continued to deliver outstanding service to clients and the broader community performing their duties to the highest level. They have supported the Management Committee and in particular myself as Treasurer. For this I would like to thank them. I would particularly like to thank Narelle for all of her assistance, support and effort in administration and finance.

Income and expenditure

Gross income	\$727,989
DOCs	\$641,705
Victim Assist	\$ 46,620
Self funding	\$ 35,119
Gaming SVAM	\$ 4,545
Gross expenditure	\$707,786
DOCs	\$632,769
Victim Assist	\$ 46,617
Self funding	\$ 4,794
Gaming SVAM	\$ 4,776
Gaming	\$ 13,360
GCCC – STEP	\$ 5,470

Note: Income from Gaming and GCCC were received in the previous financial year. DOCs monies were expended in wages, day to day operating costs including telephone, electricity, insurance etc.

Individual one-off grants were fully expended as per the grant guidelines. A full copy of the audited financial statements is available from the office on request.

Casandra Steer

Counselling & Education Manager's Report

In another year of service delivery, the dedicated team at the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence once again met the increasing demand for support, advocacy and counselling from women and young women on the Gold Coast whose lives were impacted by sexual violence. Other services provided this year have included; group work, support through the legal process, short term counselling for the supporters of victim/survivors, the production of new resources, community education and training of other professionals.



The counsellors continued to employ an eclectic range of strategies and therapies to address the many adverse effects of sexual violence experienced by a diverse range of women accessing the centre. 6723 counselling and support sessions were conducted this year which represents an increase in demand compared to the last financial year. The majority of the sessions were centre based; including face to face, phone and internet sessions. Outreach appointments were also conducted in local high schools, community centres and other not for profit organisations.

In the last financial year, the number of groups offered increased significantly thanks to the support of some committed volunteers. 360 women attended 76 group sessions which comprised of; mindfulness, self-defence, yoga, knitting, singing, healthy relationships, peer support, painting and other creative arts.

In total, 3289 individual women, young women and their supporters engaged in counselling, including 830 new clients. This denotes a 19.6 % increase in new clients accessing the centre, compared to the previous year.

Advocating for women as they intersect with other services and systems is another essential task performed by staff. During this year, the centre supported women in their interactions with police; the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; Victim Assist Queensland; lawyers; educational facilities; Centrelink; the Department of Housing; refuges; mental health services; domestic violence services; alcohol and other drug services; GP's; psychologists and psychiatrists; and the Department of Child Safety.

In addition to intervention services, the centre is committed to awareness raising and prevention work in the area of sexual violence. During the last year, over 20,000 people received education and information through both face to face sessions and web based mediums.

A further 382 health and welfare workers accessed training through 17 sessions conducted by staff. Topics such as the context, prevalence and impacts of sexual violence; healthy relationships; safety; consent; sexting and the negative impacts of pornography were explored utilising a range of diverse strategies.

In response to client feedback, this year the centre produced a new resource for women known as the Book of Hope. The unique and popular book provides women with strategies, ideas, inspiration and resources to facilitate a sense of hope for healing and moving forward after sexual violence.

Another highlight achieved this year was an expansion of the #whatdoyouexpect project. Building on the initial work completed last year through the www.whatdoyouexpect.com.au website, an interactive workshop for young people was developed. The 2.5 hour workshop explores the issues of sexual violence, sexting, sexting as a selfie and the socialisation of gender norms. The workshop was piloted at a local college and received positive feedback. It will now be offered to local high schools in 2017.



On a final note, I would like to acknowledge all of my colleagues. Thank you for the support you give me and for your dedication to the many women you work with. To those women, your courage and strength inspires us every day.

Kellie Wilk

**Email: admin@stopsexualviolence.com
Website: www.stopsexualviolence.com**