



TasCOSS

Tasmanian Council of Social Service

Annual Report 2011-12

TasCOSS hopes for the season

THE festive season can be a time of great joy for many Tasmanians with family reunions, visiting friends, summer festivals, entertainment and maybe just a well-earned rest.

But this may not be the case for those in Tasmania who live on low incomes or who suffer some other form of disadvantage.

Spending costs of living, particularly for essential services such as electricity, water and sewerage, food and transport, have resulted in impossible-to-manage household budgets that leave little room for Christmas cheer.

It is a sobering reminder that one-third of all Tasmanians rely on some form of Commonwealth benefit for their principal source of income.

For TasCOSS, our wish for the holiday season and the New Year is one of hope.

We hope that those empowered to make decisions in key areas affecting the way we live in Tasmania take account of the often precarious financial situation of the thousands in our state who struggle to make ends meet from day to day.

We hope that those in Tasmania responsible for making policies, laws and regulations ensure that fairness, access and equity are foremost in their minds.

And we hope that those disadvantaged Tasmanians who rely on the dedicated workers and volunteers providing essential support and services in the community sector are able to enjoy the festive season and the prospect of a fairer, more inclusive Tasmania in 2012 and beyond.

Tony Reidy
Chief executive
TasCOSS

Vote down unfair change

FEDERAL: Parliament is set to pass legislation that will shift more than 10,000 social security recipients from a difficult financial situation to a daunting level of poverty.

Last month's arrangements introduced the "abolition of the "widow-to-work" exemption from the Parenting Payment allowance.

If Parliament passes the measure, all social security recipients will be shifted to the Parenting Payment allowance once their youngest child turns eight.

The biggest losers will be the 30 per cent of allowance recipients who already receive some form of paid work. These include some 6000 and 6000 a week will have their disposable income slashed by between \$11 and \$18 per week or as much as \$220 a week.

What will make a difference to the employment prospects of single parents is the financial prudence and training for those with limited job skills, affordable childcare services, work practices, family-friendly working hours say they will oppose this reform.

The unions say they will oppose this reform legislation. I urge other Tasmanian federal politicians to do likewise and to show consideration for the 10,000 Tasmanians who will be affected by the changes.

Tony Reidy
Tasmanian Council of Social Service



TasCOSS we

Release

Equal Pay Cas

Newstart not enough to make a difference

By TONY REIDY,
Tasmanian Council of Social Service
chief executive.



IF YOU were laid off work tomorrow do you think you could survive on \$55 a day?

That's not \$55 in spare change chocolate bar (\$2), a magazine (\$1.50), a beer or glass of wine after work (\$12.50) and a trip to the movies (\$12.50) with popcorn (\$4).

That's \$11 a day for all your food, housing, heating, power, phone, clothing, transport, health, haircuts and other living expenses. If the work, by god, goes!

of "very able binties", most people on Newstart are trying hard to lead challenges.

Most of us know or have heard of has been laid off and is struggling to get back into the workforce. Perhaps Newstart is one in three people on Newstart is aged over 45.

One in six Newstart recipients work part-time due to disability, a sole parent, needing affordable family friendly housing, and a job with every five recipients have less than four years of post-secondary education and need real and skills support.

bill — people are going into debt to the tune of \$7 a week.

The Tasmanian Council of Social Service is actively involved in a campaign led by its national counterpart, ACCOSS, for a \$50-a-week increase in allowance payments, as recommended by the Henry taxation review and the OECD. More than 100 organisations have joined the campaign, including the Business Council of Australia.

Business Council of Australia head Andrew Westcott said the low rate of Newstart was actively acting as an impediment to people getting onto paid work.

"People have to be able to stay in close proximity to returning to the workforce," Mr Westcott said.

"They need to be in good health, have decent clothes, be able to get transport to go to interviews and to have their confidence intact. And the policy allowance payment levels are hampering this."

The federal government has warned that its May 8 budget will be a severe one, although Treasurer Wayne Swan told the ACCOSS national conference last month that "it's not a choice between surplus and social policy".

TasCOSS will be meeting Tasmanian federal MPs in coming days in the hope that the plan for a \$50-a-week increase for Newstart will be heeded in Canberra.

TasCOSS is the peak body for the Tasmanian community services sector.

Planning for the city's future

TONY REIDY

If you were to ask people "What is a city?" many of them would mention commercial centres, museums, roads, streets, a city is about human beings — including those who are suffering from disadvantage or exclusion.

The Tasmanian Planning Commission is in the process of finalising a capital city plan for Hobart, as required for all Australian capitals by the Council of Australian Governments.

The plan is an opportunity to lay out a vision for Hobart's future. But its drafters face the challenge of ensuring that its benefits — economic, social and environmental — are evenly distributed across all of Hobart's 214,000 people.

As the State Government's recently released Cost of Living Report notes, 30 Tasmanians

locations show particularly poor socio-economic status. Eight of these — Gagebrook, Clarendon Vale, Bridgewater, Kildon Vale, Warrane, Chigwell, Robbery and Dorwent Park — are in the areas covered by the Capital City Plan.

Many of these areas are suffering from the consequences of past planning decisions that created pockets of disadvantage, with the very people least able to afford to run a car geographically isolated from services, employment and recreation.

Older people, the ill and the young can also face exclusion from social, economic, political and cultural involvement in the city's life due to limited transport.

Housing affordability in Hobart has been dropping sharply, and the supply of affordable private, public and social housing is far short of demand.

Many Hobart neighbourhoods



lack the infrastructure — safe and well-connected footpaths, cycleways, adequate public open space, disability-accessible facilities — that encourages healthy activity and a rich social life.

Many of these issues can be addressed by the Hobart Capital City Plan 2011-2031.

HOT TOPIC

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Organisational members

2011/12

Advocacy Tasmania
Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs Council (Tas) Inc.
Anglicare Tasmania
ARAFMI Tasmania
Arthritis Tasmania
Aspire A Pathway to Mental Health
Aurora Disability Services
Australian Association of Social Workers
Australian Red Cross
Baptcare
Bethlehem House Homeless Mens Assistance Centre
Brain Injury Association of Tasmania
Bravehearts Inc.
Break O'Day Health Resource Assoc. Inc.
Centacare Tasmania
Child Health Association Tasmania
Choir of High Hopes
Colony 47 Inc.
Community Connections Inc.
Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
Cosmos Inc.
Council on the Ageing
Cystic Fibrosis Tasmania Inc.
Drug Education Network
Early Support for Parents
Eat Well Tasmania
Epilepsy Association of Tasmania Inc.
Family Based Care Assoc. North
Family Based Care Assoc. North West Inc.
Family Planning Tasmania
Family Support Services Association
Financial Counselling Tasmania Inc.
Flourish Inc.
Foster Carers Association Southern Tasmania
Geeveston Community Centre
Glenhaven Family Care
Greek Welfare Centre
Health & Community Services Union
Hobart City Mission
Hobart Community Legal Centre
Hobart Women's Health Centre
Hobart Women's Shelter
Holyoake
Independent Living Centre
Jireh House Association Inc.
Karinya Young Women's Service
Kennerly Childrens Home
Kidsafe
Langford Support Services Inc.
Launceston Benevolent Society
Launceston City Mission
Launceston Community Legal Centre Inc.
Launceston Women's Shelter Inc.
Launch Youth Inc
Laurel House
Life without Barriers

Lifeline Hobart
Lifeline North West
Live Free Tassie (Teen Challenge)
Meals on Wheels
Mental Health Council of Tasmania
Migrant Resource Centre (Southern Tas.) Inc.
Mission Australia
Montagu Community Living
MS Society of Tasmania
Multicultural Council of Tasmania
Nexus Inc.
Nils Network of Tasmania
Oak Enterprise
Oaktree Foundation
Parakaleo Ministeries Inc.
Positive Solutions
Pregnancy Counselling & Support Tasmania Inc.
Quality Management Services
Quit Tasmania
Relationships Australia, Tasmania
Salvation Army
Samaritans Tasmania Inc.
Scarlet Alliance
Sexual Assault Support Service
Shelter Tasmania Inc.
Speak Out Association of Tasmania Inc.
St John Ambulance Australia-Tasmania Inc.
St Michaels Association Inc.
St Vincent de Paul Society (Tasmania) Inc.
Tascare Society for Children
Tasmania Recovery from Eating Disorders (TRED)
Tasmanian Association of Community Houses
Tasmanian Catholic Justice & Peace Commission
Tasmanian Centre for Global Learning
Tasmanian Council of Sexual & Gender Diverse People Inc.
Tasmanian Council on Aids, Hepatitis & Related Diseases
Tasmanian Deaf Society
Tasmanian Public & Environmental Health Network
Tasmanian School Canteen Association
Tenants' Union of Tasmania
The Link Youth Services
The Smith Family
Unitingcare Tasmania
Volunteering Tasmania
Warrawee Committee Inc.
Wise Employment
Women with Disabilities Australia
Women's Legal Service
Working it Out
Wyndarra Centre
Yemaya Women's Support Service
Youth Futures
Youth Network of Tasmania
Youth Suicide Action Group (Time Out House)

About TasCOSS

The Tasmanian Council of Social Service was established in 1961. TasCOSS is the peak body for the Tasmanian community services sector.

OUR MISSION

To be an advocate for the interests of low-income and otherwise disadvantaged Tasmanians, and to serve as the peak council for the state's community services industry.

ACHIEVING OUR VISION

We work to improve the lives of Tasmanians who are living in poverty or suffering from disadvantage or social exclusion. We do this by raising awareness and understanding of social injustice and inequality, and strongly advocating for and developing improved social policy through consultation, research and analysis.

Through our sector development role, we work with community service organisations to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness, and their ability to work together cohesively and collaboratively.

We also support the community sector in our role as peak council, by advocating on its behalf, coordinating joint advocacy efforts, and providing services to the sector that contribute to good governance, management and delivery of services.

To provide the resources to achieve this vision we continue to improve and build TasCOSS as a well-managed and effective organisation providing value and leadership to its members.

OUR VISION

A fair, just and inclusive Tasmania.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

The TasCOSS Board and staff members will continue the Council's focus on the three key areas which have formed the basis of our strategic plans in recent years:

- 1 ACHIEVING A SOCIALLY JUST SOCIETY**
- 2 STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY SERVICES INDUSTRY**
- 3 IMPROVING AND BUILDING THE TasCOSS ORGANISATION**



From the President

2011/12

Noel Mundy

President



As we reflect on the past 12 months at TasCOSS we cannot move away from the position that as a peak organisation we are continually proud and humbled by the remarkable efforts of our members in working with disadvantaged and low-income Tasmanians.

I am sure all our members would agree that 2012 has been a time when services are under increasing pressure to assist a growing number of clients whilst at the same time our funding base is decreasing and costs increasing. Members are reporting that we are now dealing with the 'working poor' as well as seeing many new clients coming through front doors who are struggling with the cost of living.

TasCOSS has been at the forefront of advocating to government about the concerns that members have been raising regarding these issues and it is encouraging to say that we are being listened to and government action has resulted from these approaches. For example in the May budget the State Government committed additional funding to support emergency relief as well as identifying other areas where funds are desperately needed to assist vulnerable Tasmanians.

As the peak body for the community services sector TasCOSS continues to hear the needs of our members and ensure that we are putting these needs as priorities in our social policy and advocacy work. The Tasmanian Social Policy Council is our forum where members can voice their concerns and ensure that TasCOSS includes this feedback in submissions like the annual Budget Priorities Statement.

The TasCOSS Sector Development Unit works closely with member organisations to strengthen their capacity around areas such as governance and compliance. As a Board we are very pleased with the engagement that TasCOSS has with members across the state and this is a major focus of our organisation. Over the past twelve months the Board has worked closely with the CEO and staff of TasCOSS to revise the strategic plan and our three key areas of focus for 2012-2014 are: Achieving a socially just society; strengthening the community services industry, and improving and building the TasCOSS organisation.

Two key areas of advocacy from a membership viewpoint have been around funding indexation and the funding of the Equal Remuneration Order

(ERO). Tony and the staff have spent many hours lobbying with regards to both matters. Whilst the outcome of the indexation discussions wasn't as much as was sought, the effective lobbying by TasCOSS certainly resulted in an increase over what was initially discussed. We await the outcome of the ERO discussions and the results of our advocacy with much anticipation.

Tony Reidy joined TasCOSS as CEO in February 2011 and during the past 18 months he has led a team that is energetically working towards our vision of 'A fair, just and inclusive Tasmania'. On behalf of the Board I want to thank Tony for his leadership and drive and the passion that he has to ensuring that TasCOSS is an organisation that listens and speaks on behalf of members and their clients.

I am sure that everyone will agree that the profile of TasCOSS is now very high, the media seek us out for comment and the government departments and all politicians see TasCOSS as an organisation that they need to engage with to hear the voices of the Tasmanian community. TasCOSS continues to work collaboratively with other peak organisations and again the Board is appreciative of the work that Tony and the team do to ensure the views of disadvantaged and low-income Tasmanians are heard.

Another area of focus for 2012 has been a collaborative process of working closely with all other COSS organisations across the country. This will ensure we are operating as one voice on key issues as well as sharing resources across a very tight sector.

During the past twelve months the TasCOSS Board has welcomed a number of new members. Peter Middleton, Jade Barker, Glenn Campbell, Dave Willans and Paul Mallett all joined our Board. Unfortunately Peter subsequently resigned as he moved to work in another sector. All Board members bring a great commitment to their roles and I want to thank them for their leadership and support during the year.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the work of our Treasurer for the past four years, Helen Hortle. Helen has brought a great deal of rigour to our financial reporting and whilst she has indicated that she will not be seeking to renominate for the Board, Helen leaves TasCOSS in a very sound financial

position that will ensure we can continue to fulfil our vision for future years.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of the State Government and particularly DHHS for their continued funding of TasCOSS. The past twelve months have also seen additional funding come from a range of sources to allow TasCOSS to continue its work. These avenues of support are vital in ensuring that we continue to be the voice of low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians.

Our membership base continues to be strong and again I thank members for their contribution, their support and their encouragement of TasCOSS. The next twelve months will again bring challenges but we have a strong team, a strong organisation and an even stronger desire and commitment to seeing Tasmania become a fair, just and inclusive society.

Noel Mundy
President

Board Attendance

	Meetings attended	Out of total number
Noel Mundy	6	8
Helen Hortle	5	8
Suzi Edwards	6	8
Claire Vissenga	6	8
John Paton	6	8
Peter Middleton <i>(Resigned Nov 2011)</i>	5	5
Stuart Smith	3	4
Chris Jones <i>(Resigned Oct 2011)</i>	1	4
Kiros Hiruy	3	4
David Willans	4	4
Paul Mallett	4	4
Glenn Campbell <i>(Joined June 2012)</i>	1	1
Jade Barker <i>(Joined June 2012)</i>	0	1



TasCOSS staff at equal pay rally.

From the CEO 2011/12



Tony Reidy
Chief Executive

The past twelve months at TasCOSS have been as busy and productive as any comparable period in the organisation's history of more than fifty years.

Underpinning our work has been the review and adoption of a new three-year strategic plan, which is providing the focus and direction for TasCOSS as we renew our efforts in improving social inclusion in Tasmania.

The report period has been a time of increasing difficulty for low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians and the community sector organisations that support them. The spiralling cost of living, in particular in the area of essential services such as electricity and water, has placed a burden on those least able to afford these increases, and affected the operating costs of the service providers in the sector.

TasCOSS has been at the forefront in advocating for the position of low-income households to be carefully considered when pricing decisions are made, with particular emphasis on ensuring that concessions keep pace with cost increases. Our advocacy on these matters is across all the political parties and independents, and we continue to research and advise on the causes of poverty and the action needed for its alleviation.

TasCOSS is pursuing the goals set out in our strategic plan with enormous energy and commitment, and we work very closely with the peak organisations in each sector in a collaborative effort so that our combined resources are put to good effect.

Our special thanks go to those organisations and individuals who provide the funding for our vital work: the Tasmanian Government through the Department of Health and Human Services, Skills Tasmania and the Education Department, the Federal Government through provision of research funding in home and community care, Hobart City Council, the Consumer Advocacy Panel, private foundations for their helpful grant support, generous sponsors like superannuation fund HESTA, and the organisations and individuals who are the membership base of TasCOSS.

While an examination of our work and achievements throughout the year in the three key areas of our strategic plan is set out in more detail later in this annual report, the highlights are important to note.

1 ACHIEVING A SOCIALLY JUST SOCIETY

Valuable research and advocacy has been carried out throughout the year in the pursuit of this fundamental TasCOSS goal.

The cornerstone of our claims on government for disadvantaged Tasmanians, our annual Budget Priorities Statement, concentrated on recommending the very best utilisation of scarce resources after consultation with our members and the wider community sector.

TasCOSS was very active in promoting recognition of the social determinants of health, and the need for health and wellbeing to be mandatorily considered at all levels of decision-making.

Our advocacy on behalf of low-income Tasmanians on issues of the cost-of-living, and utilities reform, pricing and concession policy has been consistent and effective. Numerous submissions have also been made to inquiries or parliamentary hearings on a broad range of social justice issues.

2 STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

Effective, well-governed community sector organisations are essential to the delivery of services to Tasmanians most in need, and TasCOSS plays a vital role in working to strengthen the sector.

The success of the landmark Equal Remuneration Case, and the subsequent implementation and funding of its outcome, as well as the transitioning of community sector employees to the Modern Award, have been dominant activities for TasCOSS during this year. TasCOSS has joined the national efforts in successfully securing full Federal Government support for the wage case outcome, and is working closely with the Tasmanian Government and its officers to secure the same outcome for community sector organisations and their workers in this state.

The invaluable research into consumer engagement in the home and community care area carried out by TasCOSS is providing benefits to the sector and beyond, and will be used as a model for further development.

The work resourced by TasCOSS this year in reducing red tape in the community sector, and

providing a base for shared sector services and accommodation, have achieved their preliminary goals and set the scene for important work in both these crucial areas of sector efficiency.

And with the support of Skills Tasmania, a project aimed at improving core literacy and numeracy skills for workers and volunteers in the community sector has been very well received.

3 IMPROVING AND BUILDING TASCROSS

The past twelve months has seen an increasing range of projects undertaken in this area, all with the intention of making TasCOSS a better advocate, a better sector leader, and a more valuable member organisation.

Our longer-term project to achieve Quality Improvement Council accreditation is well underway, with benefits already being realised in better systems management. This has been accompanied by a comprehensive review of the way that TasCOSS assesses and manages risk.

Under our newly-revised and adopted strategic plan we are strengthening our work in all areas of our operations, with particular emphasis on the implementation of a carefully targeted communications plan.

Our Board and staff are determined to continue to build relevant and useful members services to give individuals and organisations more value for their membership, and this project continues throughout the coming year as we also expand our membership base.

The nature of the past year of results for TasCOSS is a recurring theme for Tasmania's community sector, working to achieve so much with very limited resources.

We are able to do this because of a dedicated, skilled and hard-working Board and staff team, and the support of an engaged membership base that contributes to all that we achieve.

As a peak organisation and vocal advocate TasCOSS will pursue its ambitious goals in the year to come, always striving to make our state a better place for those Tasmanians most in need.

Tony Reidy
Chief Executive

Staff 2011/12

<i>Jill Pope</i> Finance Officer		<i>Gabrielle Rish</i> Communications and Membership Officer	
<i>Beng Poh</i> Executive Assistant to the CEO		<i>Maureen Richardson*</i> Administration	
<i>Kath McLean</i> Senior Social Policy and Research Officer		<i>Meg Webb</i> Social Policy and Research Officer	
<i>Wynne Russell</i> Social Policy and Research Officer		<i>Melissa Iocco*</i> Social Policy and Research Officer	
<i>Elida Meadows</i> Development Officer		<i>Dale Rahmanovic</i> Development Officer	
<i>Tim Tabbart</i> Development Officer		<i>Lure Wishes</i> Adult Literacy Support Officer	
<i>Carol Patterson*</i> HACC Project Officer/Consumer Engagement		<i>Klaus Baur</i> HACC Project Officer/Consumer Engagement	

*Left TasCOSS during 2011-12

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ACHIEVING A SOCIALLY JUST SOCIETY

Highlights

Social Determinants of Health advocacy, including the publication of 10 action sheets and the beginnings of a state-wide Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network.

Policy research, input and knowledge-sharing: TasCOSS made 20 policy submissions in 2012. We also began a series of policy forums, starting with a Health Policy Forum.

Advocacy on utilities concessions and reforms, including on new proposals for reforms to Tasmania's electricity sector and water and electricity pricing mechanisms.

Social inclusion planning publications: *Social Inclusion Principles for Spatial Planning in Tasmania* is aimed at planning decision-makers, while *We Have a Plan!* is a guide for community service organisations to engage with the Tasmanian spatial planning system.

State Budget consultation, input and analysis, including the TasCOSS Budget Priorities Statement 2012-13: *Working for fairness in tough times* and a post-Budget analysis and summary.

Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation pilots: In March 2012 the State Government announced three regional development pilot projects using the Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation process. TasCOSS has advocated such a trial to increase employment since 2010.

POLICY AND RESEARCH

Analysis of social and related policy by the TasCOSS Social Policy and Research Unit developed clear and practical policy positions in 2012.

All TasCOSS policy analysis and comment is based on detailed local and national (and international, where relevant) research, as well as on consultation with TasCOSS members, others in the community services sector and relevant experts in various fields.

The TasCOSS SP&R Unit maintains close links with other policy research organisations in Tasmania and interstate, and with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, to inform TasCOSS submissions and other policy work. We continue to have a close working relationship with Anglicare Tasmania's Social Action and Research Centre.

In 2011/12, SP&R staff attended research-related conferences and events, including the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) national conference; the Brotherhood of St Laurence conference on equitable growth; the national ACOSS conference in Sydney; and ABS briefings on the 2011 Census results.

SP&R staff drew on expertise within the Tasmanian community services sector through consultation to inform its Budget and other submissions throughout the year. This included drawing on the considerable experience, wisdom and expertise of the Tasmanian Social Policy Council in five meetings held in 2011/12.

The TSPC remains a key and valuable policy consultation mechanism for TasCOSS that contributes to identifying emerging policy issues, as well as proposing policy resources and solutions. In addition, when developing policy responses for submissions and advocacy activities, SP&R staff called for input from the sector through both notices in TasCOSS e-news and direct email communication with key stakeholders within the sector.

SP&R staff consulted with and attended regular meetings of the Combined Area Network of Emergency Relief Providers in the south of the state, and maintained regular and close consultative relationships with other community sector peak bodies.

What we delivered

Submissions in response to policy issues and discussion papers, draft legislation and draft regulatory decisions made up a significant component of our policy work this year.

The Social Policy and Research Unit made 20 submissions that provided input into the development of state and federal policy positions from a Tasmanian social justice perspective. See separate list on page 13.

Lobbyists call for slice of budget pie



Noel Mundy and Kath McLean at the TasCOSS post-Budget briefing on 17 May 2012.

TasCOSS president Noel Mundy:
The Tasmanian Council of Social Service believes better collaboration across government agencies could save money and the state's tax base could be broadened to increase revenue, allowing the following expenditures in the budget:
● Providing concessions on water bills at a percentage rate, rather than the current plan to index the concession to the CPI.
● An immediate investment of \$5 million a year to implement the state government's cost-of-living strategy. Key in this strategy is developing networks through community houses and local councils to broker access to emergency assistance funds, concessions, energy efficiency measures, financial literacy and micro-finance.
● Another key part of the strategy is indexing government funding to the organisations that support disadvantaged and vulnerable Tasmanians. Community services workers will get a well-deserved pay rise after Fair Work Australia's equal pay case decision in February. But if organisations have to find the extra wages out of their current budgets, the crucial services they provide will suffer. The government needs to commit to funding the pay rises.
RACT chief executive Harvey Lennon:
While the RACT acknowledges the budgetary shortfall facing the state government, the...

The SP&R Unit also held a Health Policy Forum in April to inform the sector about significant changes to Tasmania's healthcare system and to provide opportunities for the sector to engage in discussions with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services and with a representative from the recently established Tasmanian Medicare Local.

What we achieved

Many of our policy recommendations were accepted and incorporated into new policies, legislation and regulatory decisions.

What's next

To continue our strong performance in the area of policy research, advocacy and sharing of information; to present more policy forums in 2013.

ADVOCACY

TasCOSS continued to be an active and successful advocate for policy initiatives to improve living conditions, access and opportunities for low-income, disadvantaged and vulnerable Tasmanians. In 2011/12 TasCOSS was involved in a number of advocacy campaigns, including for increased funds for public education; affordable housing (as part of the national Australians for Affordable Housing campaign); the introduction of electricity concessions for people with medical conditions that require temperature control (through the Keeping Cool Alliance); Anti-Poverty Week; and Human Rights Week.

TasCOSS met with state ministers, including the Premier, to advocate for increased support for the community services sector through the provision of adequate indexation; for more equitable and appropriate water and sewerage concessions for pensioners and other low-income Tasmanians; for increased assistance and protection for electricity consumers experiencing hardship; and for adequate and more timely community consultations for the 2011/12 State Budget.

SP&R staff also met with members of the Opposition and appeared before a State Parliamentary Committee on Cost of Living to advocate for more effective concessions and better assistance for Tasmanians experiencing financial hardship.

As part of the national *\$35 a day is not enough!* campaign spearheaded by ACOSS, SP&R staff met with Tasmanian federal politicians to advocate for an increase to the inadequate Newstart Allowance.

TasCOSS participated in advocacy activities on issues including water and sewerage pricing, customer service plans and concessions; electricity pricing; elder abuse prevention; socially inclusive spatial planning; cost of living; access to appropriate transport; access to affordable food; public oral health services; housing and homelessness – to name only a few.

TasCOSS continued to advocate for Tasmanian electricity consumers on issues related to the law, rules and reform of the National Energy Market through its Energy Research and Advocacy Project funded by the Consumer Advocacy Panel.

TasCOSS carried out much of its advocacy work through participation and representation on various steering and / or reference groups, councils and advisory / consultative committees.

In 2011/12, TasCOSS actively participated in the following collaborations, coalitions and alliances:

- Public Education Alliance
- Keeping Cool Alliance (with MS Tasmania and the Neuro-Muscular Alliance of Tasmania)
- Coalition for Women's Health and Wellbeing
- National Consumer Roundtable on Energy
- Tasmanian Community Sector Policy Network
- COSS Policy Networks: Energy, Transport and Health
- Australians for Affordable Housing
- Health in All Policies Collaboration
- Collaboration with Australian Health Promotion Association on Social Determinants of Health Resources Project and Advocacy Network.

SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH

What we delivered

A set of ten Social Determinants of Health action sheets was written and designed by consultant Miriam Herzfeld in a joint project between TasCOSS and the Australian Health Promotion Association. The action sheets covered: Aboriginality; Education & Literacy; Food; Health & Social Services Systems; Housing; Poverty; Sex, Sexuality and Gender Identity; Social Exclusion; Transport and Work.

The action sheets detail the reasons that these determinants are relevant to Tasmania and suggest actions that individuals, communities, organisations and governments can take to make a difference to each determinant.

What we achieved

The action sheets were circulated throughout – and beyond – the sector and have received positive feedback from across the state. The project and its action sheets prompted the development of a state-wide Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network, which began late in the 2011-12 year.

What's next

A Social Determinants of Health Advocacy Network was launched in August 2012. TasCOSS will continue to support the network throughout 2012/13.

SOCIAL INCLUSION PLANNING PUBLICATIONS

What we delivered

Research into national and international best practice social inclusion principles for planning and state planning issues led to the publication of two policy and advocacy papers on spatial planning in Tasmania, as part of a project funded by the Social Inclusion Unit of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Social Inclusion Principles for Spatial Planning in Tasmania a substantial document aimed at planners, local councils and government, offers a discussion of the ways in which good spatial planning can:

- Promote the development of affordable housing
- Promote good health and well being
- Encourage affordable and accessible transport options
- Bring basic services closer to people
- Help socially excluded Tasmanians access employment and other opportunities
- Help disadvantaged individuals and communities manage the impacts of climate change
- Encourage the activities of community service organisations.

We Have a Plan! A Guide for Community Service Organisations to Engaging with the Tasmanian Spatial Planning System offers the community services sector a clear map of the Tasmanian planning system and tips for its negotiation.

What we achieved

This well-received project has positioned TasCOSS as a key player in the Tasmanian spatial planning policy arena.

What's next

TasCOSS is planning a forum for 2013 to explore ways to improve social inclusion through transport initiatives.

STATE BUDGET CONSULTATION, INPUT AND ANALYSIS

What we delivered

The 2012-13 TasCOSS Budget Priorities Statement, *Working for fairness in tough times*, was developed from extensive consultation with the community services sector and further research by the TasCOSS Social Policy & Research Unit. It was delivered to the State Treasury in January 2012.

The Budget submission formed the basis of active advocacy by TasCOSS to the State Government in the months preceding the announcement of the Budget and provided for significant input to the

Budget process by the Tasmanian community services sector.

TasCOSS consolidated its position as a key social policy analyst in Tasmania in its response to the May 2012 State Budget. On Budget Day, immediately after the Budget was handed down, TasCOSS SP&R staff provided analysis for media comments by TasCOSS President Noel Mundy and for TasCOSS media releases.

Also on Budget Day TasCOSS held its traditional Post-Budget Briefing for the community services sector which included a presentation from the Minister for Human Services, Cassy O'Connor.

In the fortnight following the handing down of the Budget, SP&R staff produced a detailed 2012-13 State Budget analysis and summary, which was distributed and presented at a well-attended post-Budget Briefing for members in Launceston.

What we achieved

In spite of the difficult financial position of the Government, several key recommendations from our BPS submission were funded in the 2012-13 State Budget, including:

- A commitment of \$5m over two years from the proceeds of the sale of TOTE Tasmania to relieve cost of living pressures on low-income households, including funding for food security programs, home energy efficiency improvement kits and advice, improving access to financial counselling services and no-interest loans to purchase energy-efficient heating.
- An additional \$1m allocated to energy-efficiency retro-fitting of Housing Tasmania properties, bringing the total for the project in 2012-13 to \$3.5m.
- The allocation of \$3m towards funding community sector pay rises.

What's next

We have held consultations ahead of preparations for the TasCOSS 2013-14 Budget Priorities Statement, which will be delivered to Treasury in November 2012.

THE TASMANIAN SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK

The Tasmanian Social Enterprise Network (TSEN) was established in early 2012, consolidating what had previously been an informal coalition involving the TasCOSS Sector Development Unit, Tasmanian Regional Arts, Oak Tasmania, Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts, and the University of Tasmania's Institute for Regional Development.

The TSEN supports the development of social enterprises in Tasmania and has a vision of

seeing social enterprise become a 'sustainable, recognised and legitimate part of the broader economy and community'. The network sees business, in the form of social enterprises, as a vehicle to create social and environmental outcomes, and a means for some community organisations to generate their own revenue.

The network was prompted to act following the interest in social enterprise sparked by its place in the Social Inclusion Strategy, the State Economic Development Plan, the Food Security Strategy and the release of the Tasmanian Social Enterprise Study in May 2011.

What we delivered

The TSEN has a contact list of about 280 people either running a social enterprise or interested in the concept. Activities have included networking events combining research findings, stories from social enterprises and information on support services; information sessions on funding streams and aspects of developing and running a social enterprise. These have brought together people running or planning a social enterprise, local councils, and a range of stakeholders interested in supporting social enterprise.

What's next

The ongoing priorities of the TSEN are to raise awareness of social enterprise, increase access to funds and financial products, markets, and support and resources, and to ensure coordination across these various streams of work to build the social enterprise sector.

SIROLI ENTERPRISE FACILITATION PILOT PROJECTS

In March 2012 the State Government announced funding for three regional development pilot projects using the Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation process. TasCOSS has been working with a range of stakeholders to advocate for such a trial since inviting Dr Ernesto Sirolli to give our annual Dorothy Pearce Address in August 2010. The trials will run for two years in the regions of Circular Head, George Town/Scottsdale and the Huon Valley, facilitating local people to convert their ideas into viable businesses or social enterprises. The process stimulates the local economy without relying on large industries to create jobs and at the same time builds strong local networks and social engagement.

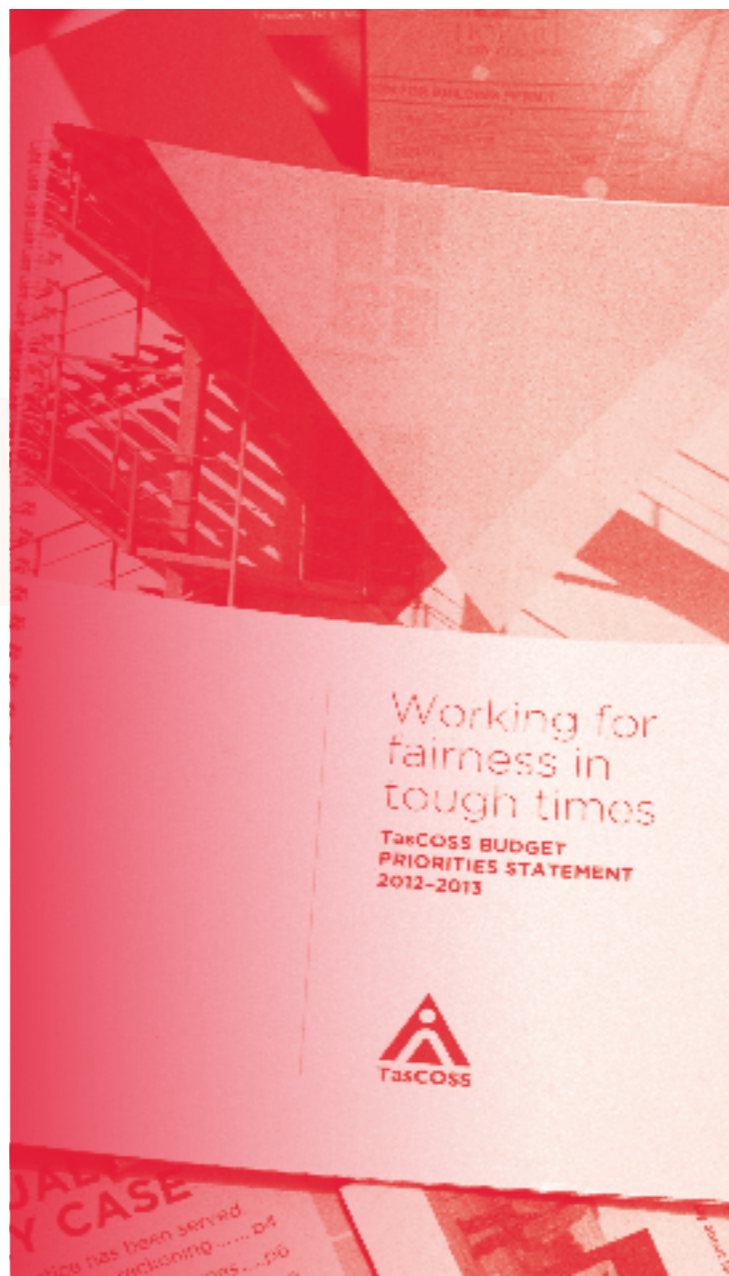
What we delivered

TasCOSS was engaged to help establish the trials. Volunteer Project Management Teams have been formed in the three pilot regions, and consist of highly respected community leaders and senior managers from some of Tasmania's largest companies. The strength of these groups bodes well for the future success of the projects. Each

group has incorporated and each are employing their own Enterprise Facilitator and recruiting a team of 30-50 volunteers who will help the Facilitator locate people, resources and information needed by entrepreneurs to make their enterprise a success.

What's next

TasCOSS will not have an ongoing role with these pilot projects, but we have leveraged our involvement to begin developing an Enterprise Facilitation service in the Hobart and Launceston regions. If funding is secured, the service will support two different client groups. The first is community organisations and individuals who wish to establish or expand social enterprises (businesses whose profits are directed to a social or environmental mission rather than personal gain for the owners). These enterprises would be from any and every field of interest, such as social service, health, environment, creative arts, energy efficiency, food and IT. The second client group would be clients of community service organisations – Tasmanians experiencing poverty and disadvantage with a business idea they wish to explore. We envision many of these would be for-profit businesses.



TasCOSS Policy Submissions 2011/12

Department of Premier and Cabinet, Community Development Unit, May 2012
Review of the Tasmanian Government's Disability Framework for Action

Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator, April 2012
Water and Sewerage Draft Price Determination

Department of Justice, March 2012
Regulation of the sex industry in Tasmania

Parliamentary Select Committee on Cost of Living, March 2012
Cost of Living Issues for low-income Tasmanians

Tasmanian Planning Commission, March 2012
'H.30' Draft Hobart Capital City Plan

Department of Education, March 2012
Review of role and function of public Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers

Australian Energy Regulator, February 2012
Draft Distribution Determination for Aurora Energy 2012-2017

Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading, February 2012
Residential Tenancy Act Review: Final Report and Consultation Paper

Tasmanian Electricity Supply Industry Expert Panel, February 2012
Tasmanian Electricity Supply Industry Review Draft Report

Department of Premier and Cabinet, January 2012
Tasmanian Women's Plan

Office of the State Architect, Department of Justice, December 2011
Draft Residential Strategy

Australian Energy Market Commission, December 2011
Economic Regulation of Network Service Providers: Rule Change Proposal

Australian Department of Climate Change & Energy Efficiency, October 2011
Community Energy Efficiency Program Design

State-wide Mental Health Services – Department of Health & Human Services, September 2012
Exposure Draft of Mental Health Act 2011

Southern Tasmania Councils Authority, August 2011
Review of Local Government Structure

Youth Development Australia (consultants) & Department of Health & Human Services, August 2011
Draft Tasmanian Homelessness Charter

Seniors Bureau, Department of Premier and Cabinet, August 2011
Future Directions for Seniors Consultation Paper

Southern Water and Cradle Mountain Water and Ben Lomond Water, August 2011
Water Corporations' Draft Price & Service Plans

Australian Energy Regulator, August 2011
Aurora Energy Regulatory Proposal for Distribution Determination 2012-2017

Tasmanian Electricity Supply Industry Expert Panel, August 2011
Electricity Supply Industry Expert Panel's Issues Paper

2

STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY SERVICES INDUSTRY

Highlights

National Equal Remuneration Case: TasCOSS worked with the national COSS network, the Australian Services Union and the Health and Community Sector Union in achieving a historic pay increase for the low-paid workers of the community services sector across Australia.

Modern Award facilitation: Support provided to stakeholders to achieve a relatively smooth transition to the new Modern Award.

Standards and Performance Pathways Tool: TasCOSS and the Tasmanian Peaks Network persuaded DHHS to subsidise access to the Standards and Performance Pathways tool. Their contribution will assist organisations to dramatically reduce the time taken to complete quality and safety reporting.

Shared accommodation and services: TasCOSS, in partnership with Hobart City Council and the Community Organisation Accommodation Working Group, undertook a project to provide the sector with strategies for sharing accommodation in an effective and efficient manner.

HACC Consumer Engagement Project: Engaged with five more HACC-funded providers in developing their

policies, strategies and services with consumers, and then passed on this approach to the benefit of many more providers.

Core Skills at Work Project: This project took core skills training to the workplace, working with 51 people from 12 community service organisations to train them across a range of skill areas.

Workforce Planning, Knowledge and Development:

- TasCOSS collaborated with the Community Services Peaks Network and Skills Tasmania to start developing the Tasmanian Workforce Development Plan for Community Sector Services.
- Ten sector development workshops and information sessions were held in 2011/12 on areas such as the Modern

Award, Equal Remuneration Case developments, workplace relations, quality standards, social enterprise, core skills, and fringe benefits, and were attended by a total of 270 participants in the north and south of the state.

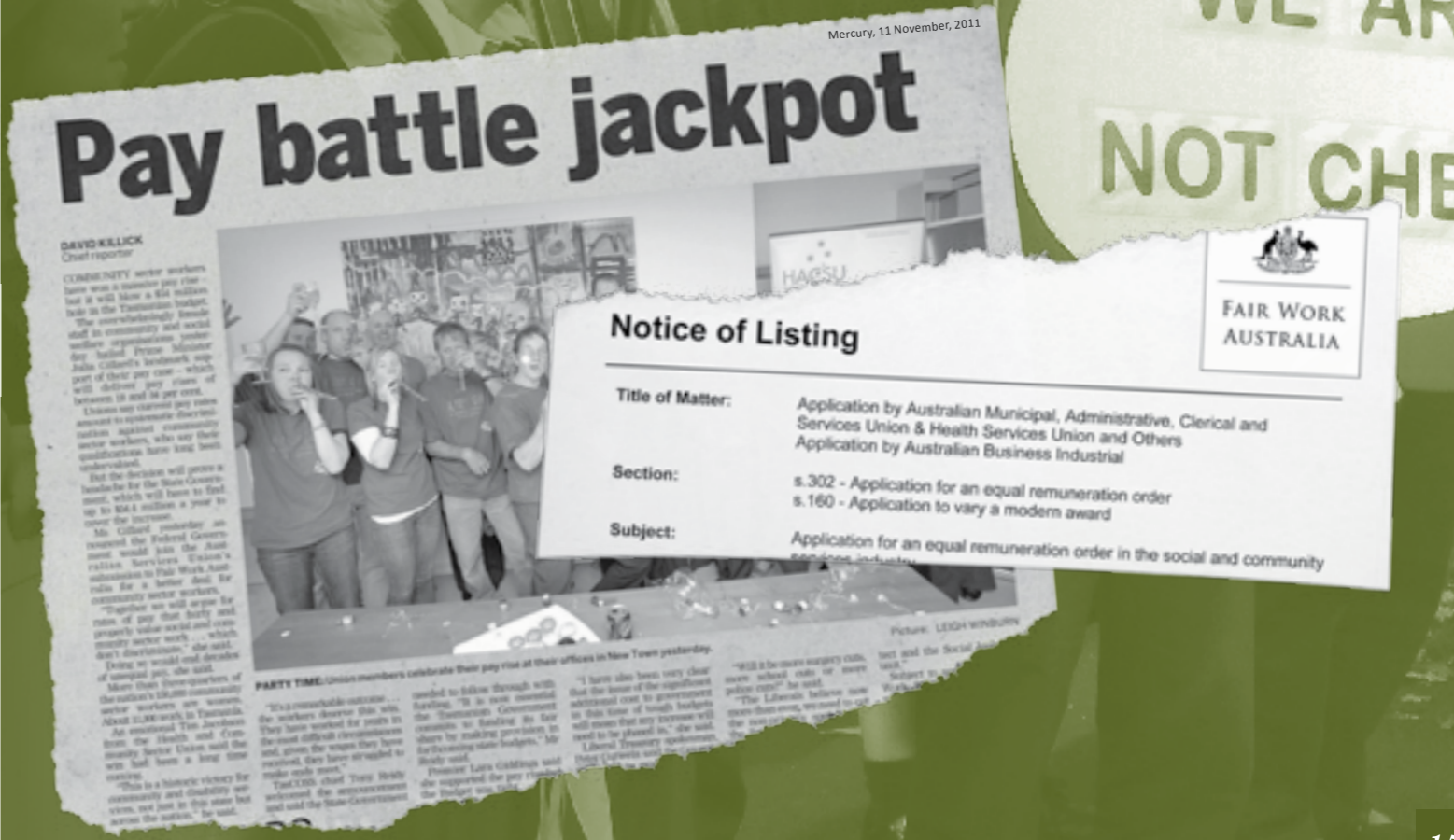
- A Workforce Development Community of Practice was trialed, with a view to rolling out further Communities of Practice in the future.
- A Certificate IV in Business and Governance was delivered with Avidity Training.
- The Workplace Diversity Toolkit was developed to assist organisations put in place strategies to capitalise on and celebrate diversity in their workplace.

NATIONAL EQUAL REMUNERATION CASE

The Australian Services Union and four other parties lodged an application for an equal remuneration case with Fair Work Australia on 11 March 2010. On 1 February 2012, Fair Work Australia handed down its decision on the Equal Remuneration Case.

The decision outlines percentage increases against the modern award between 19-41 per cent, with a 4 per cent loading, to be paid in equal instalments over nine periods from 1 December 2012. This decision was confirmed through the issuing of the Equal Remuneration Order (ERO) by Fair Work Australia on 22 June 2012.

Working with the national COSS network, the Australian Services Union and the Health and Community Sector Union, TasCOSS played a significant role in achieving this historic pay increase for workers in community services across Australia.



The successful outcome of the remuneration case decided by Fair Work Australia, although it will be implemented over a long time-frame, will see a strengthening of the ability of service organisations in the sector to retain and attract suitably qualified and experienced workers.

For TasCOSS, fair wages have always been an essential factor in building viable, effective and strong community sector organisations capable of providing relevant support and services to the many Tasmanian people and communities that rely on them.

What we've delivered

Following the Fair Work Australia decision, TasCOSS has combined with other sector peaks to work with the DHHS to ensure that community sector organisations will receive an adequate grant supplement to provide fair wages that cover their obligations under the Equal Remuneration Order.

The DHHS, being the largest government funder of the Tasmanian community sector, has established an Equal Remuneration Implementation Steering Committee and Project Team, on which TasCOSS, other sector peaks, government departments and the wider community sector are represented.

The main objective of the project is to analyse the impact of the Fair Work Australia decision on the community sector and provide advice to the Minister for Human Services and the Treasurer on the implications of the ERO. The State Government has allocated an additional \$3 million in this year's budget, increasing to \$12 million in 2015/16, towards the additional cost of the ERO.

What's next

TasCOSS continues to work with DHHS and other community sector organisations to ensure that all state government-funded sector organisations receive an adequate grant supplement to meet the costs of the Equal Remuneration Order.

TasCOSS has committed to playing a key role in ensuring that sector organisations complete the DHHS Salary Census, to provide DHHS with the data needed to offer adequate remuneration to our organisations.

TasCOSS will continue to provide regular updates on the ERO through our website, e-news and information sessions.

The community sector peaks organisations will consider further campaigning efforts as required, dependent on the grant supplement offer from the Government.

Separately, this advocacy will also include the continuing representations to the state and federal governments on the decrease in the indexation on grants, and the increased operating costs for sector organisation resulting from the introduction of the carbon tax.

MODERN AWARD FACILITATION

Tasmanian community service organisations, along with their colleagues across Australia, grappled with the details and implications of the introduction of the new Social Community Homecare and Disability Services (SCHADS) Award, replacing the Tasmanian Community Services Award (CSA) and the Disability Service Provider Award (DSPA) on July 1, 2012.

What we delivered

The TasCOSS Sector Development Unit worked closely with a range of stakeholders to inform community service organisations about the changes and what they needed to do to respond to them. While aspects of the changes were complicated and presented organisations with an unwanted distraction from service delivery, a relatively smooth transition to the new Modern Award was implemented.

ADVOCACY ON COMMUNITY SECTOR FUNDING INDEXATION

Indexation for Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) grants to community service organisations was provided at 2.25% in 2011/12.

This is below the agreed rate negotiated between the sector and the Department, which provided a formula for 3.3% indexation for the four years prior to 2011/12. The agreed formula linked community sector funding indexation to state public sector wage movements and to the Consumer Price Index.

What we delivered

TasCOSS vigorously advocated for funding indexation to be restored to rates within the agreed formula for 2012/13 onwards. This was, unfortunately, not heeded by the State Government in the 2012/13 State Budget. The estimated saving for the Government of reduced indexation in 2012/13 is \$3.6m.

What's next

During the early stages of 2012/13, TasCOSS will be collecting evidence from DHHS-funded organisations about the impacts of reduced indexation on organisations, clients, staff and volunteers. Through survey work and case studies we will be looking statewide at impacts of reduced indexation, including on planning, reallocations and cuts, service provision and effectiveness.

This evidence will be used to advocate with government on restoring funding indexation to agreed formula levels from the 2013/14 budget allocations. Additionally, TasCOSS will be advocating for similar levels of indexation for funding received by community sector organisations from other state departments.

THE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE PATHWAYS PROJECT

In June 2012, DHHS committed \$99,000 to enable TasCOSS to establish an online portal allowing community service organisations to complete the processes required to meet industry quality and safety standards in substantially less time. The portal also gives access to tailored tools and resources to support organisations to continuously improve their management and governance.

The online portal will provide cheaper access to the Standards and Performance Pathways (SPP), a patented commercial tool designed specifically for community service organisations by BNG NGO Services Online – a national consultancy delivering support services to community service organisations.

TasCOSS and the national COSS network have supported BNG in the development of the Standards and Performance Pathways over a number of years in order to address the enormous burden of red tape involved in reporting against the multitude of quality and safety standards community service organisations need to respond to.

A trial of the SPP by the National Association of Community Legal Centres, and early-adopting community service organisations in Tasmania and mainland states, has demonstrated reductions in time required to report against quality standards in the order of 80%. National research conducted by BNG and supported by the COSS network, estimated that compliance with standards may be costing Tasmanian CSOs up to \$4.5m per annum. Use of the SPP by the approximately 240 DHHS-funded community service organisations in Tasmania would allow the redirection of an estimated \$3.8m from compliance reporting to service delivery each year.

What we delivered

TasCOSS and the Tasmanian Peaks Network successfully lobbied DHHS to subsidise access to the tool. Their contribution will pay for the establishment of the online portal and subsidise organisations' subscription to the service for one year. In subsequent years, TasCOSS believes the cost savings the SPP will generate will lead organisations to see paying for the service themselves as a very sound investment.

What's next

During 2012/13 the TasCOSS Sector Development Unit will promote the SPP across the state to encourage community sector organisations to take up the discounted access. TasCOSS will be providing support to the sector in accessing and using the service, in partnership with BNG.

SHARED ACCOMMODATION AND SERVICES

In response to evidence of the lack of affordable accommodation and the need to improve efficiencies across the community sector, TasCOSS accepted an invitation from the Hobart City Council's Community Sector Reference Group to lead a Community Organisation Accommodation Working Group.

A stable, affordable, accessible and appropriate place to do business is essential for the community sector's effectiveness. Without it, community sector organisations may experience a range of problems and difficulties that have implications across their organisations, for service delivery and ultimately for the people and communities they are aiming to support.

Led by the TasCOSS Sector Development Unit, funding was obtained through the Hobart City Council to employ a consultant to look at a range of options for implementing a more coordinated approach to addressing accommodation problems for the sector.

The project was aimed at community service organisations in southern Tasmania from a range of areas including community service, arts, environment, and progress associations.

What we delivered

The consultant built upon on a survey of organisations and a workshop in April 2011, to look in detail at national and international models of CSO accommodation, consult with stakeholders through interviews and focus groups, and identify specific actions to move toward a more sustainable accommodation situation for CSOs.

A final report, *Accommodation for the Community Sector Organisations*, was delivered to the sector and key stakeholders in August 2012.

What we achieved

The project achieved the following:

- Provided the sector with a range of models for shared accommodation
- Summarised the benefits of a coordinated approach to the issue
- Identified ways to move towards the vision identified by the community sector
- Consulted with a range of stakeholders about possible ways forward
- Developed clear proposals with specific actions that can be taken to move toward a more sustainable accommodation situation for CSOs.

What's next

In response to the recommendations from this project, TasCOSS is launching the Shared Services project, which has expanded on the scope of

the initial accommodation project by taking a statewide approach and including shared services. Shared services include back office support such as human resources, accounting and other administrative services.

The Shared Services Project will include collation of an information base, sharing information and resources on the TasCOSS website and communicating opportunities to the sector.

HACC CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT PROJECT

The HACC-funded Consumer Engagement Project supports government and community sector providers to implement more comprehensive strategies and activities that involve consumers in planning, delivery and review of services and programs. Building on the model and toolkit, developed during 2010/11, in 2011/12 the following five HACC providers dedicated their time and efforts to innovate and enhance their consumer engagement strategies, activities and experiences:

- The Italian-Australian Pensioners Association
- Lifeline's Chats Program
- The Burnie/Wynyard Community Health Centres
- The Migrant Resource Centre
- Community Care NESB

What we delivered

During 2011/12, activities, workshops and project work were based on the TasCOSS HACC Consumer Engagement model and tool kit and a continuation of the work accomplished in the previous two years. The participating HACC providers planned and implemented consumer engagement pilot projects according to their needs, issues or interests. The five projects were delivered in all of the state's three regions.

To cascade learnings and the consumer engagement model further, we delivered regional HACC forums and the final of four state-wide events in November 2011, where the experiences and stories of the five providers were shared with all HACC providers and associated stakeholders.

We assessed the impact of the project via a TasCOSS-developed and administered HACC program and state-wide survey. The findings were published in the *Survey on Consumer Engagement in HACC* report in December 2011.

The TasCOSS consultative and research efforts of the past two years, together with the learning and shared experiences of a wider HACC team of the past two years, were published in the report *Consumer Engagement Literature Review, Good-Practice Approaches and Pilot Projects in HACC in Tasmania*.

This report formed one of the foundations of a *Consumer Engagement Handbook*, in turn to be the basis of the work of the forthcoming year.

What we achieved

At the state-wide Consumer Engagement event in Hobart in November 2011, the experiences and stories of the five providers, their staff and clients were shared with all HACC providers and associated stakeholders. Examples of the project's impacts included:

"I have become a better listener in what our clients have to say."

"I have noticed staff have changed in the way they look at Client Engagement."

"I find that to be able to see clients' confidence grow and change is wonderful."

Several providers reported that the constant flow of consumer engagement information, presentations at the regional HACC forums and the earlier workshops and forums had led to other ad hoc or planned improvements across the sector. For example, one provider invited consumer input and consumer participation in the production of its next strategic plan for the first time.

"What has changed for me is the way I look at our clients now and that they have feelings and want to be part of (the) decision-making process in relation to everything we do, for example meals, projects, outings or workshops."

What's next

The comprehensive, practical and activity-based *Consumer Engagement Handbook* was published in September 2012 to continue to support the HACC sector and participating HACC providers.

What has surfaced in the pilot projects are several themes that we look forward to exploring further during 2012/13. We hope to continue to support HACC services and the wider community sector through our work, networking, workshops and making publications available.

CORE SKILLS AT WORK PROJECT

The TasCOSS Core Skills at Work Project started in July 2011. Funded by Skills Tasmania, its aim was to improve the core skill levels of paid and unpaid employees within the Tasmanian community services industry workforce. Core skills include the skills of reading, writing, oral communication, numeracy and learning.

What we delivered

We held four consultation forums in October 2011 for the Core Skills at Work Project – two in Hobart and one each in Devonport and Launceston.

During 2011/12, we worked with 51 people from 12 community service organisations across a range of skill areas, including preparing budgets for grant submissions, documentation skills for disability support staff, grant writing and giving short talks.

What we achieved

While the formal evaluation has not yet been completed, feedback we have received has included many personal testimonies to participants' development in their workplace skills and the impact that is having on organisations' effectiveness. Examples are given below:

"It was not just two or three hours and then she was gone. It was spread over a few weeks, allowing it to sink in a bit more...What was great was the flexibility – she worked in with what suited us. There were lots of emails and phone calls. The level of communication and her coming to us made it easy, and Lure herself. We had great reports back from staff."

"Thank you for your time, patience, effort and the planning that you put into delivering the Core Skills Program to our service Not only has the model of deconstructing budgets that you presented demystified them for us, it was actually fun! The Core Skills legacy is that it has given us a focal or starting point for getting our grant application underway... We gained real benefit to our organisation and I sincerely hope that we will be able to participate in future programs. Keep up the good work!"

This is a pilot project and some of the key learnings about the challenges of improving core skills within community service workplaces are being noted for future projects. Lessons include:

- That it takes time to communicate with managers and supervisors about core skills development and how it might apply to organisations.
- Many people think that the discussion of literacy issues only applies to people with very low skills in these areas but in reality, literacy or core skills development takes place throughout our lives and across all levels of education and skills. There is a fundamental shift in attitude needed so that core skills can be accepted as an integral part of workforce training and development. One success of this project is that some of the participating organisations have already made this shift.

What's next

Further core skills development sessions will occur across the state from July to October 2012, planned for 62 staff in four organisations.

An important part of the project is developing the skills and capacity of organisations to refer employees to further support for literacy after the project ends: these links are being built.

The project will be completed in November 2012, with an evaluation report on lessons for further core skills development work.

WORKPLACE PLANNING KNOWLEDGE AND DEVELOPMENT

The TasCOSS Sector Development Unit provides and facilitates a number of information sources, tools, events and practice-based communities for community sector workers and volunteers to enhance their knowledge, skills and practice, building the sector's ability to plan, deliver and evaluate effective services for Tasmanians. We have highlighted some of the workforce development initiatives offered by TasCOSS during 2011/12 below.

Workforce Development Plan

In 2009, TasCOSS worked with community sector peaks and organisations across the state to develop and launch the Tasmanian Industry Development Plan. This was designed to provide a strategic focus for developing the community services sector in partnership.

During 2011/12, TasCOSS, in partnership with the Community Services Peaks Network and Skills Tasmania, and in consultation with the community sector, has been working towards a Workforce Development Plan for the community services sector. This was one of the key actions from the Industry Development Plan and will provide the sector with a tool for jointly developing our paid and volunteer workforce to deliver efficient and effective services for Tasmanians.

What we delivered

TasCOSS, funded by Skills Tasmania, convened a Working Group to develop the Plan.

What's next

The Workforce Development Plan will be formally launched in late 2012. TasCOSS, in partnership with the Peaks Network, will consider and develop an action plan and pathway to implementation.

WORKSHOPS AND INFORMATION SESSIONS

We continued to partner with Skills Tasmania, DHHS and outside experts to provide the sector with opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills over a range of areas to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of services to low-income and vulnerable Tasmanians.

What we delivered

Ten sector development workshops and information sessions were held in 2011/12. These covered areas such as the Modern Award, Equal Remuneration Case developments, workplace relations, quality standards, social enterprise, core skills, and fringe benefits. The sessions were attended by a total of 270 participants in the north and south of the state.

What we achieved

Participant feedback consistently showed a high level of satisfaction and relevancy with the sessions.

What's next

During 2012/13 the Sector Development Unit will continue to develop and grow development pathways for community sector workers, volunteers and organisations, focusing on two areas:

- Management and Governance
- Finance and IT

In consultation with the sector, we intend to ensure that pathways include foresight issues (such as diversifying funding), planning and practice (including piloting new sessions within Management and Governance around areas such as communication and advocacy skills), and reporting and evaluating services.

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

TasCOSS convened the first Community of Practice to trial this approach to development for community sector workers who share an area of professional interest.

What we delivered

The Workforce Development Community of Practice was a group of 16 community sector workers with responsibility in the area of workforce development who met monthly for six months to discuss and share knowledge, networks and information on this important topic. Feedback provided showed a high level of satisfaction.

What's next

TasCOSS will take learnings from this first group and consider further Communities of Practice to convene and develop over the coming year. The first one will be for finance officers, but these will be added to in consultation with the sector, and linked to our information, training and toolkits, to provide pathways of development for sector workers and volunteers.

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Funding was received from the Productivity Places Program to allow TasCOSS to partner with Avidity Training, a Registered Training Organisation, to

provide a Certificate IV course in Business and Governance tailored to the community sector.

WORKPLACE TOOLKITS

During 2011/12, the TasCOSS Sector Development Unit produced the *Workplace Diversity Toolkit*. This toolkit will assist organisations to put in place strategies to capitalise on and celebrate diversity in their workplace. The toolkit presents broad principles to enhance awareness and consideration of diversity and well as tools and techniques that organisations can tailor to suit their own situation and needs.

The toolkit emerged from SDU workforce development work focused on organisational culture and its role in recruitment and retention of staff and volunteers. It began with a research project in 2009-2010 and its content was shaped and refined through Diversity in the Workplace workshops held in April 2011.

What's next

The *Diversity Toolkit* will be formally launched in late 2012.

E-NEWS AND WEBSITE RESOURCES

The popular TasCOSS e-news continued to grow during 2011/12 as a central point of information for the Tasmanian community services sector.

What we delivered

The Communications and Membership Officer appointed to TasCOSS in February 2012 reconfigured the fortnightly e-news so that it offered many more notices of interest, edited for brevity and readability, as well as adding a roundup of sector-related media reports.

The TasCOSS website is now updated regularly with new notices, publications, submissions and media releases.

What we achieved

The e-news has become a valuable source of sector information and is also an important means for organisations to get their notices widely distributed. The TasCOSS website is now a useful hub for finding out about TasCOSS work and notices of importance to the sector.

What's next

The TasCOSS website will be upgraded in 2012 as part of our quality accreditation process, with content reorganised and design improved to enhance its role as a key resource for the community services sector.

COMMUNITY SECTOR PEAKS AND GOVERNMENT STRATEGIC FORUM

This is a working committee co-chaired by the Secretary of the DHHS and the Chair of the Community Sector Peaks Network, which is currently held by TasCOSS. Its membership also includes representatives from all the sector peaks, and senior officers of the DHHS and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The group's emphasis is on strategic approaches; current working groups TasCOSS is either leading or contributing to are:

Partnership Agreement

A project between the community sector peaks, and the Departments of Health & Human Services and Premier & Cabinet, to formulate and promulgate a partnership arrangement between government and the sector through which the partners' roles, rights and responsibilities will be understood and respected.

Governance

This Working Group is examining how the governance arrangements of community service organisations can be supported so they are most effective.

Red Tape Reduction

This Working Group seeks to identify and remove or reduce unnecessary burdens or impediments to the efficient and effective operation of community organisations, including unnecessary or ineffective regulatory requirements and governance arrangements, and/or funding, contractual and reporting arrangements with government, while having regard to the need to maintain transparency and accountability.

A Competent Workforce

Using a workforce development and planning approach, this working group seeks to identify and formulate strategies for current and emerging issues facing the sector workforce while building upon the many strengths that exist in the community services sector.

COMMUNITY SECTOR PEAKS NETWORK

This forum, which is currently chaired by TasCOSS, comprises all of the community sector peak bodies, and convenes quarterly to exchange information and plan strategic approaches to issues and developments affecting sector organisations and their clients.

What we delivered

TasCOSS provides the administrative support to the Peaks Network through our Sector Development Unit, arranging and facilitating the meetings of the Network, and following through on actions decided by the group.

What we achieved

The Peaks Network met regularly throughout the year, using meetings for valuable information-sharing, and preparation for the peaks' involvement in the Community Sector Peaks and Government Strategic Forum, through which joint projects are being carried out in key areas for the sector such as a partnership agreement, workforce development, reducing red tape for sector compliance and strengthening governance of organisations.

What's next

The Peaks Network will be the principal vehicle for a range of sector-wide advocacy issues in the year ahead, including the funding of the Equal Remuneration Order, restoration of grant indexation arrangements, and lifting the profile of the community sector and its hundreds of service delivery organisations.

SDU REFERENCE GROUP

During 2011/12, the Sector Development Reference Group was formed to provide advice to the TasCOSS SDU on its work supporting the capacity and sustainability of the sector. The Reference Group will provide strategic advice on current and emerging issues and priorities of the sector, access to networks and resources to facilitate the work of the SDU, critical but constructive feedback and advice on building the capacity of the SDU itself. It will have 7-10 members including representatives from a range of organisations and areas with a stake in building the community services sector.

What we delivered

During 2011/12, the Reference Group held its inaugural meeting.

What's next

SDU will continue to work with and develop the SDU Reference Group during 2012/13, as part of how we plan, provide and evaluate our services for the Tasmanian community sector. We also plan to review and refresh how we ensure that we are consulting widely with our sector and members to provide relevant and effective services.

EMERGENCY RELIEF PROVIDERS NETWORK RE-ENERGISED

TasCOSS continued to actively support and advocate for emergency relief providers on the Emergency Relief State Advisory Group.

What's next

During 2012/13, TasCOSS will continue to liaise with the federal Department of Community Services (FaHCSIA) to support effective emergency relief for Tasmanian communities.

3

IMPROVING AND BUILDING THE TasCOSS ORGANISATION

Highlights

Revision and adoption of the TasCOSS Strategic Plan: TasCOSS staff and Board members undertook a successful review of the Council's strategic plan, utilising an external facilitator and broad membership involvement. The result is a clear and precise set of strategies that will guide TasCOSS for the next three-year period.

Development and implementation of TasCOSS communications plan: Including the appointment of a Communications and Membership Officer, significant improvements to our fortnightly e-news, resulting in a 10% increase in subscribers, as well as a lift in the media profile of TasCOSS and the commencement of a rebranding project to revitalise all TasCOSS communications and publications.

Progress towards recognised quality accreditation for TasCOSS: After signing on for external accreditation under the Quality Improvement Council standards, TasCOSS has engaged a project manager and is strengthening and improving all of its governance and operational procedures as it works its way through the accreditation process.

Strengthening resources and building capacity:

Key resources such as motor vehicles, computers and office equipment have been renewed during the year, improving the organisation's capacity, and contributing to improved staff health and safety.

Building TasCOSS membership base: Overall membership numbers have been maintained and expanded during a fiscally constrained period for all sector organisations.

Improved risk management: The TasCOSS Risk Register and monitoring procedures have been comprehensively reviewed, with evaluation of risk exposure better understood and practised.

SERVING TasCOSS MEMBERS

What we delivered

TasCOSS worked throughout the year to serve our membership base through the provision of a broad range of member benefits, including information, issues-based training, leadership and advice on key and emerging sector issues, and participation in the policy formulation and governance of the Council.

What we achieved

Members have been consulted on key issues, significant numbers have participated in the training and policy input opportunities provided by TasCOSS, all of which are offered to TasCOSS members at significantly reduced rates.

TasCOSS has appointed a specialist officer to coordinate all membership services, and work has started on identifying and testing a number of possibilities for additional, valuable services to members.



Post-Budget briefing in Launceston.

What's next

A key plank of the TasCOSS 2012-2014 Strategic Plan is to expand the membership base, thereby providing key support and services to a broader range of sector organisations, and diversifying our income base through increased private subscriptions.

A number of options for delivering improved services are being examined during the year ahead, with particular emphasis on adding useful, valuable services to the member benefits package so as to retain and increase organisational and individual membership.

THE TasCOSS BOARD TEAM

The governance of TasCOSS is managed by a group of dedicated volunteers drawn from the community sector, who contribute their time and skills to ensure that we work to a strategic and relevant plan.

While turnover on the Board during the report period has been quite high as a result of a number of employment and other changes to Board members' circumstances, this has not reduced the performance of the Board team.

What's next

The Board elections in October 2012 will see seven of the nine Board positions up for election, with the potential for significant change to occur.

Under the continuing leadership of the TasCOSS President, the Board induction and training process will be strengthened so as to properly equip existing and new Board members for their responsibilities.

THE TasCOSS STAFF TEAM

TasCOSS has been fortunate in attracting and retaining talented and experienced professionals to its staff team over the years. The 2011/2012 year has seen a turnover of staff members in all areas of our operations.

From our research and policy team we saw the departure of Melissa Iocco and Carol Patterson, who both moved on to pursue career interests. The work of TasCOSS in sector development was strongly supported for many years by the experience and skills of Elida Meadows, who is now developing policy for the Mental Health Council of Tasmania.

Our goal to provide a strategic focus on communications was finally realised through the appointment of journalist and communications specialist Gabrielle Rish. Administration stalwart Maureen Richardson retired during the year, and we welcomed well-known community sector administrator Beng Poh to a new role in assisting the Chief Executive and other members of the staff team.

What's next

The new financial year will see a complete revamp of the TasCOSS staffing structure to incorporate line

managers in social policy and research, and sector development. Through targeted recruitment and strengthening of existing positions we are revitalising the staffing arrangements to resource the team for the ambitious goals we've set in research and advocacy, working with the sector to build capacity, and continuing to expand and improve the delivery of services to TasCOSS members.

TasCOSS COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

A TasCOSS communications plan was developed and a Communications and Membership Officer employed as part of that plan in February 2012.

Communications objectives set out in the plan included:

- Utilising effective communications to achieve social change in Tasmania.
 - Increasing understanding within target audiences of TasCOSS objectives, activity and achievements.
 - Strengthening community understanding of TasCOSS role as the peak body for the community services sector in Tasmania.
 - Establishing high levels of recognition of TasCOSS communications.
 - Reinvigorating digital media engagement.
- Key strategies for achieving those objectives included revising the contents of the TasCOSS e-news and printed newsletter, revising the TasCOSS website design, publicising individual reports and submissions, and commissioning new design templates for all TasCOSS communications to create more cohesive branding.

What we delivered

The Communications and Membership Officer reconfigured the fortnightly e-news so that it offered many more notices of interest, edited for brevity and readability.

The TasCOSS website is updated regularly with new notices, publications, submissions and media releases.

Clarity of communication and professionalism of presentation were key in the April edition of the TasCOSS printed newsletter, which used attractive magazine-style layouts.

The TasCOSS rebranding brief was assigned to a graphic designer in June 2012.

What we achieved

The response to the revised e-news was very positive, with an increase from 620 to 700 subscribers in four months.

Direct feedback has included comments such as:

“I wanted to thank your team. I receive the TasCOSS newsletter and have each edition found something useful in it for myself or that I share with others.”

“I was a bit naughty and forwarded your newsletter on to my contacts list. It is not something I am going to make a habit of as I appreciate it is to paying members but it had so many brilliant things in it. And thank you so much for the great work you do. The newsletter is good tool to find out what is going on.”

“I usually get the Tas COSS e-news at my office and would like to receive it at home – it’s good!”

Community recognition of our roles was strengthened by proactive media work, such as newspaper articles on social inclusion planning and the inadequacy of the Newstart allowance.

We also kept up a high profile by providing media reaction to news and policy developments.

What’s next

The 2012 TasCOSS Conference will be held in Hobart on 15-16 November, strengthening and building the TasCOSS organisation through the participation of delegates and presenters from the community services sector and media exposure, and the networking and learning opportunities it will offer to our members.

The TasCOSS rebranding project will be completed and the changes implemented before the end of calendar year 2012, giving TasCOSS a cohesive and professional presentation for all communications.

The TasCOSS website will be updated in 2012 as part of our quality accreditation process, with content reorganised and design improved to make it an even more useful resource for the sector and communications means for TasCOSS.

Once the major establishment projects for the Communications and Membership Officer are completed, we look forward to boosting our proactive media work and campaigns on behalf of low-income and other disadvantaged Tasmanians and our sector.

We will also trial the use of social media for communications purposes and to create a “meeting place” for those working in the sector.

PROGRESS TOWARDS RECOGNISED QUALITY ACCREDITATION FOR TasCOSS

The achievement of our strategic plan goals and contractual obligations at TasCOSS, as well as meeting the expectations of our growing membership base, requires modern, well-developed and accountable governance processes at all levels of the organisation.

What we delivered

With the support of the DHHS, TasCOSS has signed onto a structured program to achieve quality accreditation under Quality Improvement Council standards.

The achievement of this standard of accreditation will strengthen our organisation, enhance all our accountability obligations, and position us as a high-quality, complying community sector organisation as we continue to seek the resources to advocate for disadvantaged Tasmanians and the sector that serves them.

What we achieved

The TasCOSS Accreditation Project Group has been working throughout the year to identify all the areas to be addressed in achieving standards.

The Group has appointed a skilled project manager, Lynn Slade, who is guiding us through the accreditation program and working to revise procedures and documentation.

The primary focus of the Group during the year has been the review and development of a new TasCOSS management system, with an accompanying intranet portal to support the system and provide a smooth base for communications within the organisation.

What’s next

During the year the Accreditation Project Group will be undertaking an analysis of the entire management process for TasCOSS’s operations, identifying where gaps exist, and implementing the programs of revision required to lift each system to the necessary quality standard.

Representation

During 2011/2012 TasCOSS participated in many consultative and advisory groups in which we were able to advocate for the needs and concerns of low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians and represent the experience of community service organisations. Some of these bodies were:

Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs Council (ATDC) Expert Reference Group

Reference group to provide advice or input to relevant workforce development projects from individual members’ areas of expertise and/or sector representation. This group provides input into the development of project plans through analysis of, and advice on, key issues affecting projects and is a forum for brainstorming, problem-solving and general discussion. It also promotes projects through networks and dissemination of key learnings.

Anti-Poverty Week Facilitating Group

Anti Poverty Week was 16-22 October 2011. The Facilitating Group responsible for coordinating and promoting the Tasmanian events associated with Anti-Poverty Week.

Aurora Energy Vulnerable Customer Stakeholder Group

This group meets quarterly to discuss issues relating to Aurora Energy customers who are vulnerable to hardship, serious debt and disconnection. It provides a venue for dialogue between frontline community sector workers, sector policy workers and Aurora Energy staff about these issues, as well as a venue to seek improvements to systems and arrangements for vulnerable customers.

Australian Energy Regulator Customer Consultative Group

This is a national group on which TasCOSS represents the interests of low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians to the national energy regulation authority, the AER. The AER regulates energy transmission and distribution revenue and activities, and retail activities (non-price), including consumer protections. The group meets three times per year.

Australian Research Council Linkage Grant Community Engagement for Productive Ageing Reference Group and Research Group

Reference group for an Australian Research Council-funded project conducted as a partnership between TasCOSS, the University of Tasmania’s Department of Rural Health and the Department of Health and Community Services.

Child and Family Centres, Service Delivery and Implementation Committee

Advisory committee to provide advice on service integration and delivery in the new Child and Family centres.

Combined Agency Network (South)

A member of the Social Policy and Research team attends regular meetings of this network of emergency relief providers to keep in touch with the needs of low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians who use emergency relief services. Both long-term and emerging needs and trends in cost of living pressures are identified by ER providers.

Community Organisation Accommodation Working Group

This Working Group originated from the Hobart City Council’s Community Sector Reference Group and has become independent. It is developing strategies to address the lack of affordable, accessible and appropriate space for offices and service delivery for community organisations in southern Tasmania.

Community Sector Learning & Development Program Training Needs Analysis Sub-Committee

The Sector Development Unit of TasCOSS provided support to the Community Sector Learning and Development Program with representation on the ‘Training for the future’ Community Sector Learning & Development Program Steering Committee and the CSLDP Training Needs Analysis Sub-Committee. The purpose of the CSLDP Training Needs Analysis Sub-Committee was to:

- Determine training needs for each sub-sector eligible to participate in the CSLDP program
- Prioritise training delivery within the budget parameters of the program.

Community Sector Peaks Network

A forum currently chaired by TasCOSS, comprising all of the community sector peak bodies, convening quarterly to exchange information and plan strategic approaches to issues and developments affecting sector organisations and their clients.

Community Services Reference Group for the Tasmanian Polytechnic

This group has a broad representation of organisations and bodies from the Tasmanian community services industry. Its primary function is to identify and discuss both current strengths and areas for development in relation to workers entering the sector on completion of Cert IV and Diploma level qualifications.

COTA Tasmania Policy Council

The COTA Policy Council provides advice and policy direction on issues of concern for older Tasmanians.

COTA You’re Worth It Project Reference Group

The Project Reference Group contributes to the development of COTA Tas’s You’re Worth It Project, a peer education program on preventing financial elder abuse of older Tasmanians.

DHHS Consumer Engagement Strategy

Reference Group

Overseeing the implementation of the 'Your Care Your Say' consumer engagement strategy.

Emergency Relief State Advisory Committee

The Emergency Relief State Advisory Committee represents providers receiving emergency relief funding from FaHCSIA, community sector peak bodies and FaHCSIA. The purpose of the advisory committee is to:

- Provide advice to FaHCSIA on communities and areas of need in Tasmania
- Identify emerging priority areas and issues that will impact on the provision of Emergency Relief to identified communities within Tasmania
- Provide advice on training and support needs for Tasmanian Emergency Relief service providers.

Health and Wellbeing Advisory Council

The TasCOSS CEO sits on the Health Minister's advisory body, which is comprised of medical, community and government leaders. The HWAC analyses information and provides policy advice to the Minister on healthcare and preventive health issues.

Health in all Policies Collaboration

Collaboration with the Tasmanian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, the Australian Health Promotion Association (Tasmanian Branch) and the Public Health Association of Australia (Tasmanian Branch) to progress a whole-of-government approach to health promotion.

Hobart City Council Community Sector Reference Group

Convened as part of HCC's Social Inclusion Strategy.

Homelessness Consumer Engagement Advisory Group

This group was established to provide expert advice and feedback on the creation of a Homelessness Consumer Engagement Strategy for Tasmania, an action from the Tasmanian Homelessness Plan 2010-2013: Coming in from the cold. Also to review and provide feedback on the development of a Tasmanian Homelessness Charter.

Homelessness Reference Group

Advising Housing Tasmania on the development and implementation of the Tasmanian Homelessness Plan.

Human Rights Week Organising Committee

This committee organises and coordinates activities that occur in Human Rights Week in Tasmania, including annual Human Rights Weeks Awards which are presented at the Week's launch.

The Industry Association Forum convened by Skills Tasmania

The Forum includes industry association representatives across various industries who work with the Skills Tasmania Workforce Development team to enhance the capability of businesses and industry associations to identify and respond to workforce development needs and to provide a mechanism to encourage and enable industries to develop their own workforce

plans. The forum also seeks to identify other opportunities for the group to explore in terms of fostering relationships between industry associations, strengthening the network and exploring the common ground for further collaborations.

Magistrates Court Users Groups

The Court Users Groups are convened in Hobart, Launceston, Burnie and Devonport. A relevant TasCOSS member acts as the TasCOSS representative at each CUG.

National Consumers Roundtable on Energy

A national coalition of advocates who focus their attention on energy policy and the interests of small consumers, particularly low-income and disadvantaged households. The Roundtable meets about three times a year for briefings on regulatory issues and government policy, and to plan and coordinate research and advocacy activities to promote consumer protections for and affordability of household energy supply.

Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator - Customer Consultative Committee

This committee meets quarterly and covers electricity, gas, water and sewerage regulation and also some other regulatory issues relating to Metro, MAIB and other government business enterprises or state-owned companies that the Government Prices Oversight Commission used to regulate before it was subsumed by OTTER.

The Oral Health Services Tasmania Community Consultative Committee

The Committee comprises community sector and government representatives to advise on consumer and community issues relevant to specific initiatives and services provided by Oral Health Services Tasmania.

Community Sector Peaks and Government Strategic Forum

A working committee co-chaired by the Secretary of the DHHS and the Chair of the Community Sector Peaks Network, with membership also from all the sector peaks, senior officers of the DHHS and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The group's emphasis is on strategic approaches, and current working groups include:

Partnership Agreement

A project between the community sector peaks, and the Departments of Health & Human Services and Premier & Cabinet, to formulate and promulgate a partnership arrangement between government and the sector through which the partners' roles, rights and responsibilities will be understood and respected.

Governance

This Working Group is examining how the governance arrangements of community service organisations can be supported so they are most effective.

Red Tape Reduction

This Working Group seeks to identify and remove or reduce unnecessary burdens or impediments to the efficient and effective operation of community organisations, including unnecessary or ineffective regulatory requirements and governance arrangements, and/or funding, contractual and reporting arrangements with government, while having regard to the need to maintain transparency and accountability.

A Competent Workforce

Using a workforce development and planning approach, this working group seeks to identify and formulate strategies for current and emerging issues facing the sector workforce while building upon the many strengths that exist in the community services sector.

Power Saving for Tenants Program Steering Committee

The focus for this Committee is the Power Savings for Tenants Program, an energy- efficiency retro-fitting and advice program for tenants in private rental. The program is run by Sustainable Living Tasmania and funded by the Tasmanian Climate Change Office.

Public Education Alliance

A collaboration of employee, parent, professional and community sector groups campaigning for the better resourcing of public education, and improvement of opportunity for children from low-income and otherwise disadvantaged Tasmanian households.

Residential Tenancy Act Review Reference Group

As part of the Residential Tenancy Act Review, the Office of Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading is consulting with key stakeholder groups to promote common understanding of the review process, the issues to be addressed and options to be considered. The role of the Reference Group is to provide expert advice and feedback on the Options Paper developed by CAFT and other aspects of the Review.

Skills Tasmania Equity Committee

The Committee advises and makes recommendations to the Skills Tasmania Board on equity in the provision of access to skills training for disadvantaged Tasmanians.

Statewide Elder Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee

Comprised of key community and government stakeholders, the Advisory Group assists the Government in implementing the Strategy to combat elder abuse in Tasmania – Protecting older Tasmanians from abuse: awareness, empowerment, action, support. TasCOSS also participates as a member of the Community Education Working Group of this committee, providing input and direction on the development of a community education campaign on elder abuse, a key action from the Strategy.

Tasmanian Gambling Consultative Group

Stakeholder consultative group in relation to State Government gambling policy.

Tasmanian Social Enterprise Network Core Management Group

This group serves to coordinate activities and policy developments aimed at expanding the social enterprise sector in Tasmania to achieve social and environmental outcomes, and as a means for some community organisations to generate their own revenue and increase their impact and sustainability.



**Tasmanian Council of Social Service
Inc.**

Financial Report

For the Year Ended 30 June 2012

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Statement of Financial Position
Statement of Income and Expenditure
Notes Forming Part of the Accounts
Officers' Assertion Statement
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Accru⁺
Hobart

Chartered Accountants + Business Advisors

**Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc
Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2012**

2010/11 \$	Notes	2011/12 \$
	ACCUMULATED FUNDS	
114,446	Retained Earnings	151,233
36,787	Add Operating Surplus	60,838
<u>151,233</u>	ACCUMULATED FUNDS	<u>212,071</u>
	represented by:	
	ASSETS	
	Current Assets	
379,895	Cash at Bank and on Hand	466,111
21,339	Accounts/Grants Receivable	27,521
10,331	Prepaid Expenses	8,465
<u>411,564</u>	Total Current Assets	<u>502,098</u>
	Add Non-current Assets	
138,217	Furniture & Equipment	141,416
(105,906)	Less Accumulated Depreciation	(111,870)
32,312		29,546
59,795	Motor Vehicles	62,288
(23,726)	Less Accumulated Depreciation	(9,311)
36,069		52,977
10,582	Leasehold Improvements	10,582
(6,614)	Less Accumulated Depreciation	(8,377)
3,968		2,205
72,349	Total Non-current Assets	<u>84,727</u>
<u>483,913</u>	TOTAL ASSETS	<u>586,826</u>
	Less LIABILITIES	
	Current Liabilities	
40,156	Staff Leave Provisions	44,726
33,246	Accounts Payable	5,247
151,572	Income in Advance	108,900
84,998	Unspent Funds Carried Forward	182,329
8,244	Payroll Deductions Payable	10,295
14,464	Net GST Tax Liability	23,259
<u>332,680</u>	Total Current Liabilities	<u>374,754</u>
<u>151,233</u>	NET ASSETS	<u>212,071</u>

Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc
Statement of Income & Expenditure for the year ended 30th June 2012

2010/11	Notes	2011/12
\$		\$
INCOME		
14,441		84,999
685,249		777,966
106,699		149,470
36,445		30,239
43,091		2,439
38,704		5,268
65,175		35,525
-		3,590
<u>989,804</u>		<u>1,089,497</u>
EXPENSES		
455		
6,409		7,494
5,903		6,466
19,346		10,590
31,807		33,321
4,519		2,209
92,795		110,003
643,536		720,563
130,908		101,534
4,617		10,995
16,954		25,483
(4,230)	2	-
<u>953,017</u>		<u>1,028,659</u>
<u>36,786</u>		<u>60,838</u>

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE INC.
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

NOTE 1 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

These financial statements are a special purpose financial report prepared for use by directors and the members of TasCOSS. The directors have determined that the Organisation is not a reporting entity.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements:

AASB 1031 - Materiality
AASB 108 - Accounting Policies
AASB 110 - Events Occurring after the Balance Sheet Date

No other applicable Accounting Standards or mandatory professional reporting requirements have been applied.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis. They are based on historic costs and do not take into account changing money values or current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements:

Income Tax

TasCOSS has been assessed by the Australian Taxation Office (March 2000) as an Income Tax Exempt Charity (ITEC) under Section 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Property, Plant & Equipment

Property, plant and equipment are included at cost. All assets, are depreciated on a prime cost method over their useful lives.

Note 2 Prior Year Adjustment - Motor Vehicle Purchase

This refers to an adjustment made to 2009-10 Motor Vehicle Purchase incorrectly allocated to Interest on Loan - Motor Vehicle purchase expense not Loan - Esanda Finance Liability

Financial Report

2011/12

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE INC. NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note 3 Unspent Funds Carried Forward

This refers to funds given as grants or contracts for ongoing projects unspent at year end. TasCOSS is the auspicing body and has contracts in accordance with agreed guidelines.

2010/11		2011/12
\$		\$
6,503	HACC Consumer Consultation Project	48,949
	Enterprise Facilitation - Trinity of Management	
6,098		-
6,419	National Elec Panel	7,699
17,796	Sector Development Unit	43,469
16,008	Social Policy & Research	37,371
-	Adult Literacy Support	14,060
-	Community Sector Skills Plan	3,400
-	Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation	25,648
-	Dorothy Pearce Address	1,732
-	Core Operating	-
32,174		-
84,998		182,328
HACC Consumer Consultation Project		
5,027	Funds brought forward	6,503
119,165	Income	125,114
117,689	Expenditure	82,668
6,503	Unspent funds carried forward	48,949
Enterprise Facilitation Trinity of Management		
-	Funds brought forward	6,098
31,318	Income	1,182
25,220	Expenditure	7,280
6,098	Unspent funds carried forward	0
National Elec Panel		
3,240	Funds brought forward	6,419
58,290	Income	35,855
55,111	Expenditure	34,575
6,419	Unspent funds carried forward	7,699
Sector Development Unit		
166	Funds brought forward	17,796
327,168	Income	339,780
309,538	Expenditure	314,107
17,630	Unspent funds carried forward	43,469
Social Policy & Research		
6,008	Funds brought forward	16,008
246,965	Income	252,289
236,966	Expenditure	230,936
489,939	Unspent funds carried forward	37,371

Financial Report

2011/12

TASMANIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE INC. NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Adult Literacy Support	
-	Funds brought forward
-	Income
-	Expenditure
-	Unspent funds carried forward
	116,072
	102,012
	14,060
Community Sector Skills Plan	
-	Funds brought forward
-	Income
-	Expenditure
-	Unspent funds carried forward
	20,000
	16,600
	3,400
Sirolli Enterprise Facilitation	
-	Funds brought forward
-	Income
-	Expenditure
-	Unspent funds carried forward
	-
	70,828
	45,180
	25,648
Dorothy Pearce Address	
-	Funds brought forward
-	Income
-	Expenditure
-	Unspent funds carried forward
	-
	2,082
	350
	1,732
Core Operating	
-	Funds brought forward
201,058	Income
168,884	Expenditure
-	Profit on Sale of Asset
-	Transferred to retained earnings
32,174	Unspent funds carried forward
	32,174
	213,071
	187,997
	3,590
	60,838
	-

Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc.

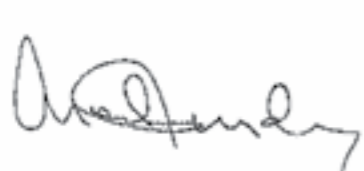
OFFICERS' ASSERTION STATEMENT

The Board has determined that the organisation is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Board, the attached financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. as at June 2012 and its performance for the period 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012;
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board and is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:



.....
PRESIDENT



.....
TREASURER

Dated at Hobart this 7th day of September 2012

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc.

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose report, of Tasmanian Council of Social Services Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2012, the statement of financial performance for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the officers assertion statement.

Officers' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The officers of Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. are responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1-3, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1964* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The officers' responsibility also includes such internal control as the officers determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the officers, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Qualification

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. to maintain an effective system of internal control over

Donations, Fundraising and other income until their initial entry into the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to donations, fundraising and other income was limited to amounts recorded.

Qualified Opinion

In our opinion, except for the effects of such adjustments, if any, as might have been determined to be necessary had the limitation discussed in the qualification paragraph not existed, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. as at 30 June 2012 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act (1964)*

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1-3 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the officers financial reporting requirements under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1964* and as such may be unsuitable for another purpose.

The officers have determined that the financial report shall be prepared in accordance with a special purpose framework. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose as only the accounting standards specifically stated in note 1 to the accounts have been applied in the preparation of this special purpose financial report.

As such, this report should not be distributed or used by parties other than Tasmanian Council of Social Service Inc. and its members.



.....
Michael J Burnett B.Com. FCA
Registered Company Auditor
Partner, Accru[®] Hobart
Lvl 3, 6 Bayfield Street
ROSNY PARK TAS 7018

Date: 10 September 2012