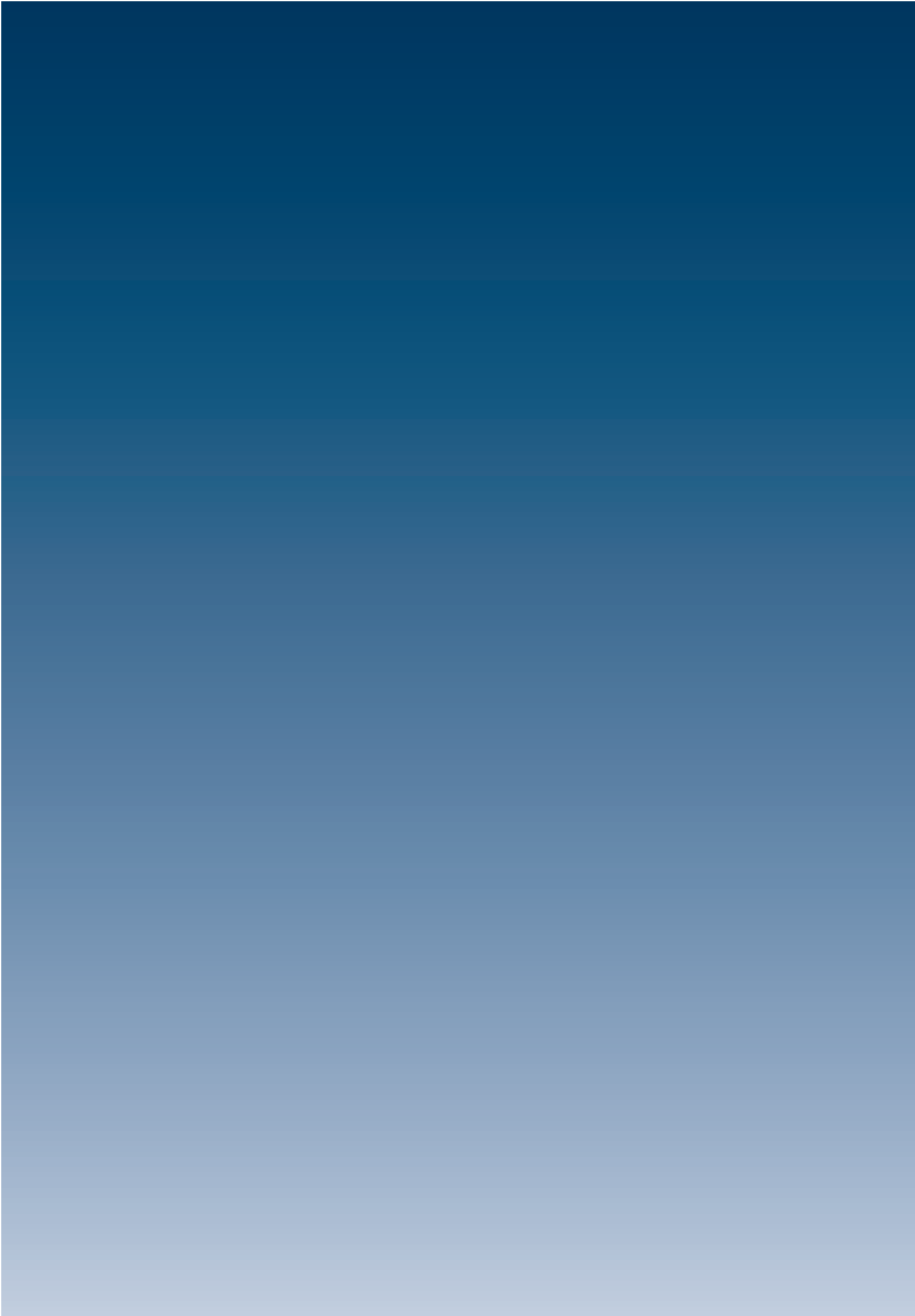


ANNUAL REPORT 2015 16



VICTIMS AND WITNESSES OF
CRIMES COURT SUPPORT INC



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

VWCCS celebrated its 10th Anniversary in 2016 and it has been a decade of incredible growth and commitment having expanded from 2 Volunteers in 2006 to over 130 in 2016. The majority of the volunteers have professional backgrounds unrelated to the legal system. They have committed themselves to acquiring new skills and knowledge and continue this exceptional commitment through the attendance at VWCCS' Professional Development/Refresher Program comprising 4 days each year. VWCCS prides itself on its high retention rate of volunteers which I believe is confirmation that they have found something special about the organization and indicates a high level of satisfaction in the services they provide.

The last financial year has been one of consolidation in the existing locations at Parramatta, the Downing Centre and Orange as well as in the new locations of Waverley and Bathurst.

I would like to again recognize the invaluable work undertaken by the VWCCS Volunteers – in particular to commend all those volunteers involved in supporting the large number of witnesses during the Lindt Café Coronial Inquest.

I would also like to acknowledge the financial assistance that has been provided this year by a number of generous individuals and organizations. Parramatta City Council provided funds for various resources including mental health first aid training workshops for VWCCS Volunteers, Dr Roger Allen, Hyecorp, Lendlease Management Services Limited and the Scully Fund provided funds for the 2016/17 financial year.

In addition the contributions of Simon MacKenzie (IT Volunteer Consultant), Peta Nugent (Graphic Designer), Bauer Media (supply of magazines for clients) and Paul Diener (PRDPrint for the printing of the Annual Report) are highly valued.

VWCCS continues to grow its service at the Downing Centre Local and District Courts, the Children's and Local Courts at Parramatta and also the Local and District Courts at Orange. Over the last twelve months VWCCS has also established its service at the following Courts:

District Court at Parramatta where VWCCS operates five days per week with a team consisting of Volunteer Court Support Officers and Volunteer Reception and Information Desk Assistants.

Bathurst Local and District Courts where VWCCS operates two days per week and during District Court Circuits

the agency's service is requested on a needs basis. Waverley Local Court where VWCCS operates two days per week.

Special acknowledgment must be given to Dr Wendy Hastings, VWCCS' Coordinator, Bathurst Courts, and Kerrie Blowes, Coordinator at Orange Courts and Court Support Officers Bruce Valentine and Judy James. The assistance they provide to their communities in the Central West of NSW is outstanding.

I also want to thank all VWCCS Volunteers who have worked so hard this past year and continue to make a much-valued contribution for the benefit of victims and witnesses in their justice journey. The spirit, dedication, camaraderie and professional approach to the work undertaken by all VWCCS Volunteers, including its various Sub Committees, has and continues to be VWCCS' greatest strength.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Management Committee Members without whom VWCCS could not operate –

Maggie Weiley (VWCCS Vice President)
Leanne Hillman (VWCCS Operations Manager)
Sheila Curson (VWCCS Human Resources Manager and Downing Centre Principal Coordinator)
Denis O'Connell (VWCCS Parramatta Courts Coordinator and Website Manager)
Chris Burgess (VWCCS Parramatta Principal Coordinator)
Val de Rome (VWCCS Legal Officer)
Maria Pirrello (VWCCS Psychologist)
Irene Addison (VWCCS Reception and Information Coordinator – Downing Centre)
Rosemary Day (VWCCS Reception and Information Coordinator – Parramatta)
Jill Paton (VWCCS Administration – Parramatta)
Jenny Templeman (VWCCS Management Meeting – Minutes)
Joy Christian (VWCCS Downing Centre and Parramatta)
Jo Stewart (VWCCS Downing Centre)



PIETA THORNTON, OAM
VWCCS Inc President

2016 REPORT

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of VWCCS are to provide the following:

A unique, high standard and non-judgmental court support service for its clients: victims and witnesses of crime, their family members and close friends in both State and Commonwealth criminal matters.

A unique and high standard court support service providing continuity by extending its service to cover clients whose matters begin in the Children's or Local Courts of New South Wales and which later may progress to a higher Court.

A unique and high standard court support service which does not duplicate any other court support service operating in the New South Wales and Commonwealth criminal jurisdictions, but supplements such services when required.

AWARDS

VWCCS was a finalist in the 2015 Law and Justice Awards

ORGANISATION PROFILE

VWCCS PATRONS

Professor S Caroline Taylor AM

Professor S. Caroline Taylor AM is recognised as one of Australia's leading experts and consultants in the field of child and adult sexual violence and domestic violence and the criminal justice response to victim/survivors and social models of trauma and recovery.

Professor Gordian Fulde MBBS, FRACS, FRCS (Ed), FRACS/RCP (A&E) Ed, FACEM

Prof Fulde was awarded the 2016 Senior Australian of the Year.

Professor Fulde is the Director of the Emergency Department at St Vincent's Hospital and Sydney Hospital and is the longest serving Emergency Department Director in a major hospital in Australia. He is actively involved in teaching and training students and staff in many facets of medicine and emergency medicine as well as consistently contributing and offering his time to many schools

and organisations in the Community. He is a member of the curriculum committee for the Faculty of Medicine, University of New South Wales. Professor Fulde is also a founding father of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine (ACEM) and has played an integral role in establishing the ACEM training course. He continues to examine for the College, as well as the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, the University of New South Wales and the University of Notre Dame.

VWCCS also acknowledges the valuable contribution of our previous Patron, The Honourable Jerrold Cripps QC who sadly passed away on 28 December 2015.

INCORPORATED COMMITTEE

VWCCS became incorporated in March 2008 and the current Committee is made up of the following members:

Pieta Thornton	President, Founder and Director of VWCCS.
Maggie Weiley	Vice President and Secretary
Leanne Hillman	Treasurer and Operations Manager
Sheila Curson	Committee Member and VWCCS Principal Coordinator Downing Centre
Chris Burgess	Committee Member and VWCCS Principal Coordinator Parramatta
Denis O'Connell	Committee Member and VWCCS Parramatta Courts Coordinator
Joy Christian	Committee Member and Downing Centre Coordinator
Peter Thornton	Committee Member and Lawyer
Dr John V Basson	Committee Member and Consultant Psychiatrist (Forensic & General Adult Psychiatry) and VWCCS Consultant.

VWCCS has a legal representative, Mr Peter Thornton, who oversees VWCCS' legal requirements.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

A Management Committee was established in 2010 to oversee and make decisions about the operational issues of VWCCS. The Committee comprises representatives of VWCCS' Incorporation Committee, Court Support Officer (CSO) Coordinators and Reception and Information Desk Coordinators from each of the locations in which VWCCS provides a service. Specific time limited working parties are established as required. Members of the Management Committee have taken on some specialist responsibilities:

Pieta Thornton	Executive Chairman – oversight of all Projects
Maggie Weiley	Special Projects and Publicity
Leanne Hillman	Funding, Training Coordinator
Sheila Curson	Human Resources
Denis O'Connell	Information Technology
Jenny Templeman	Minute Taker
Maria Pirrello	Psychologist
Val de Rome	Legal Officer

SERVICE LOCATIONS

VWCCS operates at the following locations:

- Parramatta Justice Precinct covering Local, District and Children's Courts Monday to Friday
- Downing Centre covering Local and District Courts Monday to Friday and the Supreme Court on request.
- Orange Local Court two days per week and District Courts during District Court circuits.
- Bathurst Local Court two days per week and District Courts during District Court circuits
- Waverley Local Court Mondays and Fridays

Role of Court Support Officers

- Court Support Officers (CSOs) provide information and support to victims or witnesses of crime, attending court to give evidence.

Role of Reception and Information Desk Volunteers

- There are Reception and Information Desk Volunteers based at Downing Centre and its 3 locations at Parramatta. These volunteers provide an initial point of contact and referral for any member of the public (including victims and witnesses) entering the court buildings. In addition, these services also provide a general information function for all court attendees.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

During the 2015/16 Financial Year VWCCS provided Court Support to 2,845 victims/witnesses and Court Support Officers volunteered a total of 6,644 hours. The Reception and Information Volunteers at Parramatta and Downing Centre assisted 28,492 court attendees and volunteered 4,099 hours.

COURT SUPPORT OFFICER DATA

Location	No. of Clients	No. Court Support Hours
Parramatta	1,282	2,964
Downing Centre	1,308	2,806
Waverley	143	286
Bathurst	43	208
Orange	69	380
Total	2,845	6,644

RECEPTION AND INFORMATION DESK DATA

Location	Number of people assisted	Reception and Information Desk Hours
Parramatta	19,656	2,020
Downing Centre	8,836	2,079
Total	28,492	4099

TRAINING

INDUCTION AND TRAINING PROGRAM

Prior to commencing as a Court Support Officer all volunteers undertake:

- Three interviews – two prior to the induction and training program and the third after their observations and reflections assignment
- A comprehensive induction and training program over 7 days
- Minimum of 15 hours court observation followed by a written report of court observations including self-reflection
- Court Support Mentoring Program with a three months' probation period.
- Ongoing Training
- Volunteers are offered four days refresher / training per annum. Each Volunteer must attend no less than 2 of these training days.
- Volunteers can access formal debriefing as required

FINANCIAL REPORT

This report is given pursuant to the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act 2009. For the financial year ending 30 June 2016 the total income of VWCCS Inc (VWCCS) was \$26,212.77 made up of membership fees, voluntary contributions, donations and Local Government Grants.

Expenditure was an amount of \$13,618.12 comprising Centre for Volunteering Membership, office supplies (stationery and printing), insurance, costs of telephone and internet use, fees paid to Department of Fair Trading.

After taking into account a credit surplus of \$20,089.35 as at 1 July 2015, the bank balance with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia at 30 June 2016 was an amount of \$32,684

The outstanding liabilities of VWCCS as at 30 June 2016 were NIL.

There were no mortgages or charges or securities of any description affecting any part of the property of the Association as at 30 June 2016.

The assets of the Association as at 30 June 2016 comprise:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| a) Credit with the Commonwealth Bank of Australia Neutral Bay | \$32,684 |
| b) Office furniture and computer purchased during 2015/16 | nil |

There was one grant received from Parramatta City Council for \$3,039. This grant was received in June 2015 for 2016/17 financial year. Donations were received from Dr Roger Allen \$5,000, Hycorp \$500, Scully Fund \$7,541 and Lendlease Management Services Limited \$6,500. The donations from Scully Fund and Lendlease Management Services Limited were for the 2016/17 Financial Year.

In accordance with the Act, the Treasurer will submit a receipt and expenditure accounts balance sheet for the previous year that accords with this report.

Dated 6 September 2016



LEANNE HILLMAN
VWCCS Inc Treasurer

Artwork design generously prepared by Peta Nugent
and print production generously donated by PRDPrint

