

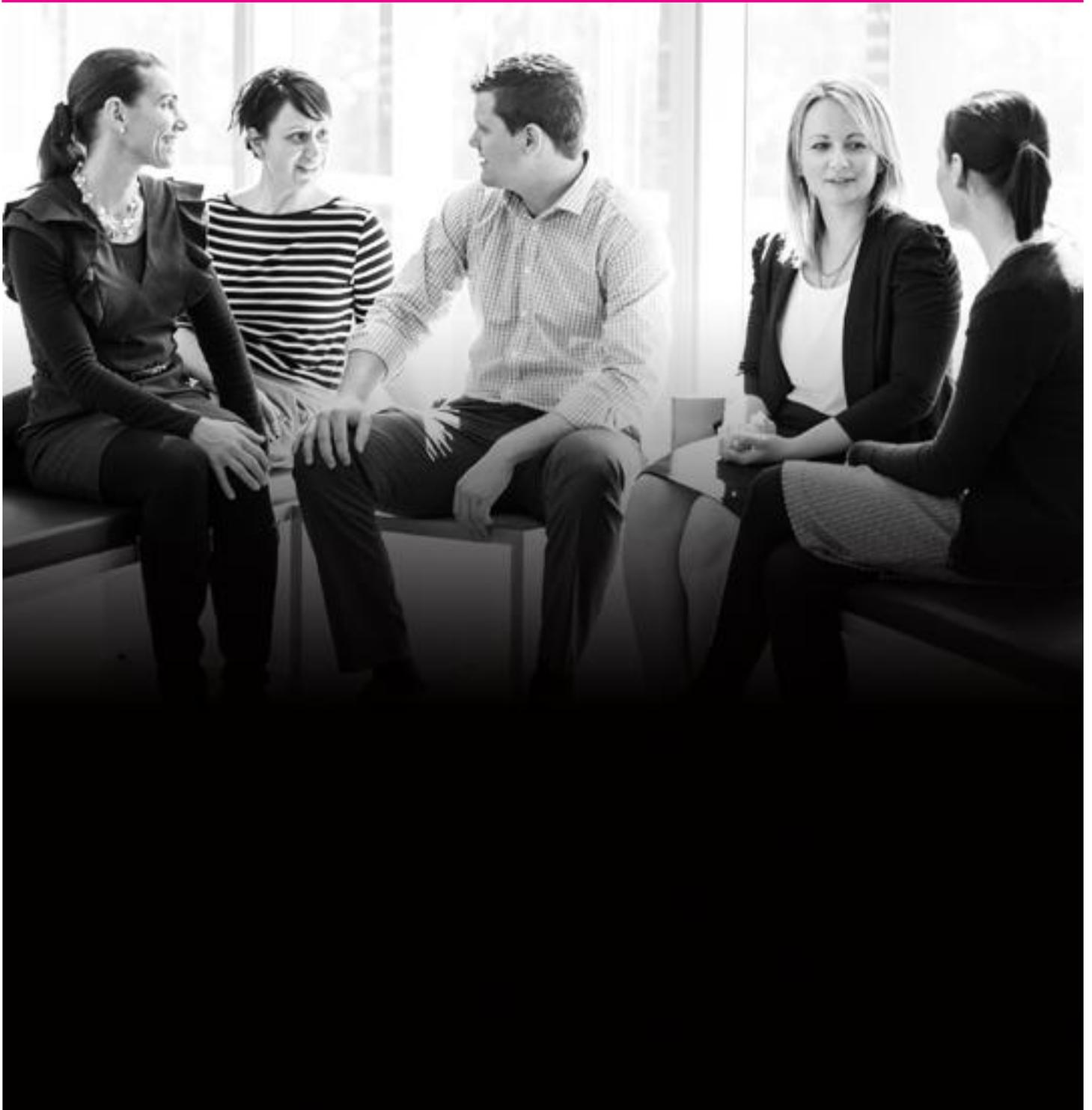
Court Network Inc.
Queensland



referral

We can help people going to court

Summer 2014





Board president

I warmly welcome you to our first Newsletter for 2014. In it you will find much of interest about Court Network's current activities and future plans. I especially commend to you the reports from our Executive Director Dr. Melanie Heenan and our State Manager Nicole Little.

In Melanie's Report she reviews in particular the presentations at our Annual Conference, held at the Melbourne Convention Centre on 20 November 2013.

Also on 20 November 2013, and following the Annual Conference, the 2013 Annual General Meeting of Court Network was held. At the Annual General Meeting, which was very well attended, reports were presented by officeholders of the Board and the financial statements and accounts for the year were presented. All these were approved by the Meeting. Substantial proposed amendments to the Rules of Court Network, which had previously been circulated, were also presented. These proposed amendments fell into three categories: those required by law as a result of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic); the introduction of direct voting (including electronic and postal voting) in place of proxy voting; and the removal of the rule requiring one-third of Board members to retire annually. The rules that Board members have three year terms and that there must be a minimum of four and a maximum of five Networkers on the Board, remain. The proposed amendments to the Rules were all passed overwhelmingly.

At the Annual General Meeting, elections for the Board of 2014 were also held. Retiring members not standing for re-election were Brian Barrow OAM and Inspector Therese Fitzgerald. Brian has given sterling service to Court Network for almost a decade and we salute him. Therese has been a great contributor to the Board and we wish her well in her future career. Garry Roach, our Vice-President, and Jennifer Evans were re-elected to the Board. We welcome two new

Board members, Deputy Chief Magistrate Felicity Broughton and Acting Senior Sergeant Anne McLaughlin who both I am sure will bring special knowledge and insight to the Board.

A notable feature of the 2013 Annual General Meeting, and of the 2013 Annual Conference which preceded it, was the positive and affirming tone of these meetings. There is a strong sense of unity and of direction and purpose in Court Network. The Board and Court Network are well placed for the future.

Since the Annual Conference and AGM, I have received warm and strong input from many persons about the good and secure position that Court Network now occupies in Victorian, Queensland and Commonwealth courts. Court Network is very well served by its Board, our committed staff, our Executive Director and State Managers, and our valued Networkers. Court Network enjoys strong support from the judiciary and government.

Over the summer break I have given thought to my position as President and as a member of the Board in the light of the strong and unified position Court Network now holds.

In September 2012 I was appointed Chair of the Victorian Law Reform Commission. I have been glad to continue as President of Court Network since that time but my role as Chair of the Victorian Law Reform Commission is a substantial and growing one.

The combination of the strong position of Court Network and my heavy workload has led me to

conclude, having considered the matter over the summer break, that I should resign from Court Network as President and as a member of the Board early in 2014. I will do so with considerable regret, as I have a great commitment to, and warmth and admiration for, Court Network as you know.

The Board had its first meeting for 2014 on 3 February. At the meeting I informed members that I proposed to resign as President and member of the Board on 3 March 2014. Board members were gracious in their expression of thanks, for which I am grateful.

I am pleased to advise that the Board voted unanimously that Vice-President Garry Roach will become President at the next Board meeting, on 3 March 2014. Garry is a director of a business consultancy to the public and community sectors. He has a strong commitment to Court Network and to volunteer-based organisations. He especially has strengths in organisational and financial areas, which are areas of ongoing significance to Court Network. I am confident that Court Network will be very well served by Garry as President and I warmly wish him well.

I propose, subject to the wish of the incoming President and the Board, as Past President to take an active and continuing role for Court Network in the future. I shall do this by continuing to meet with and present to Networkers, members of the judiciary and stakeholders, by providing training, and in other ways. I look forward to my continuing role with Court Network.

As I have said, I have reached my decision to resign as President and member of the Board on 3 March 2014 with considerable regret. I consider it a necessary decision in view of my other workload, and am encouraged and affirmed by the strength and unity Court Network enjoys. You each have my warm wishes, and I look forward to continuing to see you in the future.

The Honourable Philip Cummins
Board President

FRONT COVER

Victim Assist Queensland

Amanda Shipway, Letitia Casagrande, Anders Berquier,
Caroline Green and Megan Topping

<http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/justice-services/victims-of-crime/victim-assist-queensland>

Tribute to the late john barry

The Court Network family lost Networker John Barry in December 2013. John had been volunteering with Court Network since its inception in Cairns in 2010. Cairns Program Manager Evonne Kennedy reflects that she would arrive at the court building on a Thursday morning and would be greeted by John who would be sitting in the foyer providing information to people as they came entered the building. He loved being a Networker, and supported people through sharing his immense knowledge about the court system and processes. He had a breadth of lived experience having worked in Papua New Guinea and with indigenous communities in Australia as a teacher and later on in life branching into community work. John your absence is very much noticed and you will be missed.





Partnerships

A hearty bonne année, feliz año Nuevo, ein glückliches neues Jahr, sun nien fai lok, eutychemenos o kainourgios chromos... and finally Happy New Year everyone. Welcome to what I trust will be another year of working well in partnership together as we share in our efforts to assist people in contact with the justice system. In this insert, I'd like to take a moment to reflect on the final few months of the year just past, as well as forecast a little of what's ahead.

In terms of reflections, I want to first turn to the Annual Report. Apart from the enormous amount of energy, effort and skill that goes into its compilation and production, it is a document that lays testament to the depth and sophistication of the services you provide in the 33 courts in which we operate across Queensland and Victoria. The Annual Report featured four such jurisdictions – the Cairns Law Courts, the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal or QCAT, the Victorian Coroner's Court and Ringwood Magistrates Court about 35 kilometres from Melbourne. Alongside a brief overview of these jurisdictions lies a case study developed by Networkers themselves to bring the experiences of court users to life. They offer a compelling read. The two photo spreads in the middle of the Annual Report represent, in all their vibrancy, our “partnerships at work”. Take a few minutes to look through this collage and spot (yourself and) the many services represented of those we work with everyday in the courts, all of us united in a common purpose, of supporting a complex justice system to tick over. For us of course, it's all about the needs of court users.

Our workforce meets an urgent need. An enormous number of the court users we support are appearing before the courts for the first time. Many are without legal representation. Most are confused and distressed by the court process. A high proportion are disadvantaged or disengaged. The court system itself is unable to provide the continuing assistance that its users need. It's where Court Network's value is most evident. In the 2012-13 financial year,

Networkers assisted 153,977 people (two thirds in Victoria, one third in Queensland), almost double the number assisted five years earlier.

I also want to capture some of the highlights from the Annual Conference in Victoria held at the Melbourne Convention Centre on 20 November. The Conference offers Networkers a significant professional development opportunity to hear from experts in the field about issues that are critical to current practice or the operation of the courts.

Justice Is as Justice Does was the theme of the conference. A little cryptic I admit. But intended to make you think. For me it aligned well with the values and principles underlying our existence. Justice Is – and perhaps can only be, what it actually Does in practice. If people's access to justice is dependent upon being able to rely on proper legal representation in court, on being highly literate, on feeling safe at court, on being able to properly convey the impact of a crime on oneself to the court, on understanding the court process, and of being cognizant of your role within it, then we know justice can and does fall short.

There were over 180 attendees on the day. And we were thrilled to have amongst us such a strong Queensland delegation to enrich the conversations. They included: Nicole Little (Queensland State Manager, Adrienne Irvine (Victim Support Unit Manager), and Evonne Kennedy (Cairns Program Manager) in terms of Court Network staff, along

with Networkers Coral Cole from Cairns; Susan Pandeli and Giovanna Quesada from Brisbane, and Susan Malcolm from Townsville. Board Members Julie Steel, David Munro and Patricia Byrne were also in attendance.

Hugh de Kretser (Executive Director of the Human Rights Law Centre) and Judge Evelyn Bender (Federal Circuit Court of Australia) did a most eloquent job of bringing to life the conference theme – Justice Is as Justice Does. Hugh focused on what access to justice ought to mean, and suggested it was much more than access to lawyers, but was in fact better evidenced by processes that were fair and equitable, and attuned to the impact of the system on those seeking redress from it. He gave us personal insights into his own experiences as a lawyer and contrasted the practice habits he had acquired as a young corporate lawyer with his subsequent transition to the world of Community Legal Centres in responding to the needs of clients, many of whom in the latter context had little or no capacity to pay. Hugh suggested ‘access to justice’ was also compromised when people’s legal claims, while with merit, took years to progress through the courts, and at great risk and personal and financial cost to the individual, and with an uncertain outcome at the end. He also spoke about the importance of prevention, of the underlying causes of crime, and of the developing science that is identifying how to get in front of the social and economic determinants of crime. For Hugh, real justice is about a legal system that is accessible in its broadest sense, that includes: easy availability of targeted information about the law; easy access to quality legal help when it’s required including the availability of free help for those who can’t afford a lawyer; and easy access to methods of dispute resolution that are fair, timely, transparent, effective and efficient.

Judge Bender focused our attention on what justice does in the courtroom. She spoke candidly about the impact of legal aid cuts on the operation and experience of the Federal Circuit Court. She spoke particularly about this effect on parenting matters where post January 2013 those who would be eligible for legal aid on the means and merits tests for preparing the matter for trial, were now no longer eligible for legal aid in relation to the trial itself unless the other party involved was legally represented. In

other words, in those matters where both parties are legally aided, or where one party is self-represented and the other legally aided, neither party will be funded for the final hearing and are required to appear and try to conduct their trial themselves.

She listed a range of difficulties that parties often have to manage, including: not having an adequate understanding of the law or of court practice or procedure; social disadvantage such limited education or literacy barriers, poverty, mental health or ill-health and alcohol and drug dependence; not to mention the high levels of personal distress experienced by parties in these matters. She drew particular attention to the implications for women impacted by domestic violence in having to face the prospect of questioning at the hands of their husband or partner; and of the profound difficulties for people from diverse cultural backgrounds with little or no English, no family in Australia and who, in leaving their relationship are often isolated from their community and any support base. Her view from the bench on how these difficulties played out in cases over which she must preside provided a most disturbing though compelling exposé. Judge Bender concluded on a more optimistic note by drawing attention to the Court Network project that has been funded by the Legal Services Board Victoria to strengthen our support of people who come to court unrepresented. The project is a pilot and will only be conducted at the Melbourne Registries of the Federal Circuit Court and the Family Court of Australia. Stay tuned though, we will report on its progress throughout next year.

The second session highlighted some of the significant project work that has take place this year. Paul Drost, Victorian Program Manager, was masterful in providing a comprehensive and highly visual overview of the results of our cost-benefit research conducted on our behalf by KPMG. Adrienne Irvine, who is well known to you all, then spoke to the establishment of the Victim Support Unit (VSU) in Brisbane. The VSU commenced its service on September 3rd with a seasoned Networker team that has also participated in additional training with respect to ensuring our service model aligns with best practice in victim support. Adrienne eloquently walked us through the great strengths of the Unit in having a paid worker

(Adrienne herself) managing the intake and assessment of victims needs, and the critical in-court support that the VSU Networker team provides to victims in the Brisbane Magistrates' Court and across jurisdictions if necessary, including with their applications for financial assistance or with victim impact statements.

And finally there was my presentation on the results from the Victorian cohort of a Networker Survey that was conducted in October last year. The survey was conducted a little later in Queensland but we will likewise be reviewing the results and bringing to you any findings that could be helpful in supporting the collaborations that Networker teams enjoy with court-based and other community-based services. We are also keen to implement a stakeholder survey later this year that will give you an opportunity to provide feedback to us on your experiences and perceptions of working with us, as well as insights you might wish to share about areas in which you think we might improve.

The AGM then followed that same day; however, I will leave it to our esteemed President, the Hon Philip Cummins to report on this highly successful meeting. Suffice to say that we are very fortunate to have secured two new Board Members this year – Deputy Chief Magistrate Felicity Broughton (Melbourne Magistrates' Court) and Senior Sergeant Anne McLaughlin (Victoria Police). The Membership also voted overwhelmingly in favour of changes to our Rules. Again, I will leave Philip to report on this important milestone.

In Brisbane, a highly significant event occurred in the week after the conference. On 27 November, 2013, Brisbane held its inaugural Stakeholder Meeting, with over 30 key stakeholders in attendance. This follows the highly successful Stakeholder Meetings held in Cairns and Townsville over the past two years. The meeting in Brisbane was chaired by Julie Steel (Executive Director of Supreme, District & Land Courts' Services in Queensland and also a Court Network Board Member), with presentations provided by Nicole Little, Adrienne Irvine and Teresa Snow (Brisbane Program Manager). I also presented on the outcomes of the Cost Benefit research. Stakeholders included the Hon. Justice Rosalyn

Atkinson (Supreme Court of Queensland), Terry Ryan (State Coroner) and other senior representatives from across courts and court-based services. It was a most valuable meeting of key stakeholders in Brisbane, many of whom we work with in close partnership. We were most fortunate to have their attendance at this very first Stakeholder Meeting in Brisbane and appreciated their significant contributions on the day.

Briefly I wanted to also advise that Nicole and I are in close contact with our funders for our work in the Queensland State Courts (through LPITAF), and separately, with the Commonwealth funders that support our operations in the Brisbane Commonwealth Law Courts. Nicole reports further on the LPITAF submission in her report in this Newsletter. But we will certainly keep you updated on the success of our negotiations with funders over the coming months.

However as part of responding to the increasing reporting requirements, quality standards and expectations of funders, we will be undertaking a review of the organisation's operating model and looking at the structure and suitability of this model for underpinning the delivery of our services to the courts in the future. There will be an independent consultant undertaking the review that will include looking at the effectiveness of the management structure, roles and functions of staff, investigating the many and varied regulatory frameworks that we must observe as a volunteer organisation - and the impact this has on operations - as well as exploring operating models used by other organisations to see what we can usefully learn and potentially adapt from them. The results from the Networker Surveys will be helpful in exploring some of these questions.

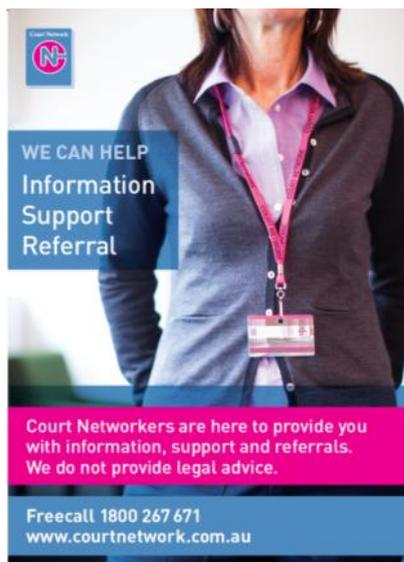
Finally, I want to draw attention to the recent resignation of Board President, the Hon Philip Cummins that will come into effect on 3 March. You will see further correspondence from Philip about his retirement in this Newsletter. However I want to take the opportunity to personally express my thanks to him for his incredible stewardship of this organisation over the past 4 years. I have had the pleasure of working with him for the last two years. In that time he has been an extraordinarily committed President, who has been highly visible in

both states, and enjoyed building relationships with scores of stakeholders. He has also remained fiercely supportive of Court Network and its incredible workforce of volunteers of which he has a deep and abiding affection. Of course it was inevitable that such an accomplished and unique President as ours would be in significant demand. We are most fortunate to have had the benefit of his leadership for as long as we have. Of course, Philip's support for the organisation will continue well into the future. He tells me is a lifetime member and supporter of Court Network regardless of where his other commitments might take him.

Having said all of that, I wish to join with the Board in welcoming former Vice President, Garry Roach, as our new Board President, effective from 3 March. We will continue to have the benefit of his significant expertise in strategic planning, organisational development and governance. He is also a very personable man, who is passionate about this organisation. I look forward to working closely with him throughout the year.

On that note, and with an apology for the length of this insert, I wish you all a great start to the year everyone. The Year of the Horse is underway....

Dr Melanie Heenan
Executive Director



To order copies of the CN brochure or A5 poster please contact us on toll free 1800 267 671 or email queensland@courtnetwork.com.au

Networker experience

A court Networker shares an experience with a court user.

I noticed an extremely frightened looking young woman in the foyer and approached to offer directions and assistance.

She rapidly became very distressed and crying, so I took her and her mother to the Court Network room, where she stated that she had been threatened with death if she gave evidence in a particular trial. She was visibly distraught. I spoke to the Police Prosecutor in the relevant court. He came to the Networker room to speak with her.

Over a couple of hours, during which she continued to be extremely distressed, I was able to provide support and liaise with the Police Prosecutor, Detectives in the case, and the Court Network Victim Support Unit.

Coordinating with my colleagues we arranged for a Court Network volunteer to stay with her so she could feel safe. Eventually she calmed down, secured an adjournment. Furthermore, the Police advised they were going to check her mobile and trace the threatening calls. She still has to face court soon, but hopefully in a calmer state of mind, and with continued Court Network support.

Networker Survey 2014 Results



Queensland

You may have noticed the 'new look' Stakeholder newsletter which we feel better highlights and speaks to the nature of our partnerships.

Court Network's Annual Report 2012-13 showcased those affiliations through a range of photos and case studies. I extend my thanks to those stakeholders who were willing and available to be 'snapped' and commemorated in this report.

The following is an update which looks back over the past few months and at what lies ahead for our Queensland branch.

We had several opportunities during 2013 in which to engage, secure feedback from and acknowledge our wonderful stakeholders. Events included the Brisbane, Cairns and Townsville Stakeholder meetings, Cairns Solicitors Information Session, initial Networker training followed by Graduation ceremonies in Townsville and Brisbane, continuing education sessions across the State and at the launch of the new Victim Support Unit in Brisbane. I would like to also extend my thanks to Chief Executive Officer Jo Bryant from PACT for availing herself to attend the Court Network Victorian State Conference 'Justice is as Justice Does' and AGM representing an ever increasing Queensland presence at this auspicious occasion.

Our staff team have been steadily representing the organization at a variety of stakeholder team meetings and presentations to services around the State. Not only to speak on the services Court Network can provide and how best to refer clients but to better understand the abundance of valuable services available to court users. This allows Court Network to connect those who are at most at risk within the community. Through our partnerships we

are building pathways for 'warm referral' or assisted referral options for clients, particularly persons who are disadvantaged. Our approach to referrals is to increase contact for court users at pre-court stage. Allowing clients/court users an opportunity to participate in a pre-court tour, alleviating some of the anxiety and angst caused from being in a unique and formal environment. This then follows into in-court support and onto post court referrals.

Over the past 6 to 12 months we have identified and strengthened referral pathways with PACT, ODPP, Victim Assist Queensland, YETI, Relationships Australia (Victim Counseling Service, Townsville), Prison Mental Health, Indigenous Sentencing List, Court Innovation, QAILS, Carers Qld and QADA.

Many of you attended the Brisbane Victim Support Unit (VSU) official launch in August 2013. Tremendous work was put into the implementation, training and establishment of referral pathways for this program. Sourced from our experienced Brisbane Networkers, 12 volunteers have joined the blue lanyard VSU team under the guidance of Program Manager Adrienne Irvine. It has been a slow but anticipated start to referrals in most part due to the requirements of obtaining consent and the scheduling of matters before the Courts. During this period the VSU Networkers have gained considerable experience through further observations and additional training. The Courts are coming into full swing and we are pleased to see referrals commencing. In relation to the extension of that program to Ipswich referrals have been coming in strong. The

collaboration between the Victim Assist Queensland Court Coordination Officer in Ipswich and Court Network's Victim Support Unit highlights an extremely complimentary partnership.

You will see case studies featured in our newsletters. These examples were provided by Networkers through their 2013 survey. Securing feedback from Networkers on their views, recommendations and case studies go a long ways to ensuring our service best supports, equips and responds to Networker and court user needs. Over the coming weeks and Melanie and I will be circulating information as to the results for both States and coordinating opportunities to speak to them personally. Overall Networkers reported a sense of feeling "highly valued", "multi-skilled" and "challenged". They conveyed feelings of being supported and cared for within their teams along with a strong sense of pride towards the organization. They identified wanting to improve the relationship and awareness between Court Network and other services/Departments. A focus which continues into 2014 and features predominantly in our Strategic Plan. I look forward to speaking with you further on these results, future mechanisms to record stakeholder feedback and to the recommendations which will follow.

Now on a funding update in 2012 Court Network responded to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's request for submissions into the review of the Legal Practitioners Interest Trust Account Fund (LPITAF). Over the years this funding pool has provided Court Network with a recurrent grant (3 years) covering the Supreme and District Court in Brisbane. It has also provided a transitional grant, renewed annually, for all our other State based programs. One of our recommendations, alongside many other services, is that the transitional grant, given the nature of its ongoing 12 month renewal generates difficulties in longer term organizational planning and increases administrative need to respond to reporting requirements.

The Department made 33 recommendations from this review including a focus on frontline service delivery for Queenslanders, prioritizing services assisting vulnerable persons and disadvantaged community members to access justice, along with three year funding cycles commencing from 2014-

15. The final report and recommendations can be reviewed on the Department's website:

http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/178719/lpitaf-review-recommendations.pdf

Following this, Court Network was invited to submit an Application for funding in November last year and we anticipate being in receipt of the outcome by the end of March 2014.

In relation to the Commonwealth Law Courts funding grant, since its inception Court Network has received transitional Government funding. In 2012-13 the Federal Government provided a one-off funding grant for Court Network to conduct cost benefit analysis work. You may have heard Melanie or myself speak to the KPMG report. Those results spoke volumes in relation to the advantage of our organization and its front line service delivery. The report was also able to provide the Federal Government with a very reserved dollar amount that for every dollar the Government invests in our service it receives benefits of \$3.40 (Qld) in return.

Court Network requires a funding commitment to be able to continue offering a service in the Commonwealth Law Courts. We are currently in discussions with government and stakeholders to establish their support for us to continue.

In this issue both Melanie and Philip have spoke on the Hon Philip Cummins' resignation as President and member of the Board. I have had the absolute pleasure and benefit of working alongside Philip these past 4 years. Court Network has gone from strength to strength under his guidance. He has espoused great enthusiasm, steadfastness and leadership during this time. On behalf of the Queensland team of staff and volunteers I wish him all the best and thank him for his tenure as President. I too extend my warm salutations to Garry Roach as he steps into the role of Board President. Garry's continued professional expertise will be of tremendous benefit to the organization.

I look forward to strengthening our partnerships during 2014.

Nicole Little
State Manager

Election results

from the 2013 AGM

We are pleased to announce the results of the Board member election at the 2013 Annual Meeting held in Melbourne. Court Network welcomes Deputy Chief Magistrate Felicity Broughton and Acting Senior Sergeant Anne McLaughlin.

Deputy Chief Magistrate Felicity Broughton

Felicity was appointed as a Victorian magistrate in January 2000 and has been a Deputy Chief Magistrate since 2007. She was supervising magistrate for the court's sexual assault portfolio from 2006 to 2012 and supervising magistrate for the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal from 2001 to 2004. Felicity is currently a supervising magistrate for the Family Violence and Family Law Portfolio having been in that role since August 2011. She is a member of both the Victorian Institute of Forensic Medicine's Council and Ethics Committee. Prior to her appointment as a magistrate, Felicity was a solicitor in private practice with particular experience in matters relating to violence, especially sexual assault and family violence. She was a council member of the Victorian Community Council Against Violence from 1994 to 2006, a board member of CASA House from 1989 to 2000 and a board member of the Children's Protection Society (CPS) from 1993 to 2000 serving as CPS president from 1996 to 1999.



Acting Senior Sergeant Anne McLaughlin

Anne has been a member of Victoria Police for over 11 years and has been performing duties in the Prosecutions Division for the last eight years. Anne is currently the Acting Manager of the Research & Training Unit and is responsible for delivery of the Prosecutor Training Course and coordinates the provision of legal advice to the Director, Legal Services Department. Anne is an experienced prosecutor within the Magistrates' Court and Children's Court and has specialised in the prosecution of sexual offence matters. She has a strong focus on achieving therapeutic outcomes for offenders and is committed to the application of restorative justice principles. Anne is a current member of the Therapeutic Treatment Board. Anne has previously completed a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Criminology and is currently completing her law degree at Victoria University.



Court Network Board Members at the 2013 AGM

Patrons

Her Excellency the Hon.
Quentin Bryce AC CVO
Governor-General of the
Commonwealth of Australia

Her Honour Chief Judge
Patricia M Wolfe
Chief Judge of the District
Court of Queensland

The Hon. Diana Bryant AO
Chief Justice of the Family
Court of Australia

The Hon. Marilyn Warren AC
Chief Justice of the Supreme
Court of Victoria

Board Members

President

The Hon. Philip Cummins

Vice President

Garry Roach *re-elected*

Treasurer

David Spiegel

Secretary

Rosemary Syme

Members

Brian Barrow

Win Swanton

Julie Steel

Jennifer Evans *re-elected*

Therese Fitzgerald

David Munro

Rudy Monteleone

Patricia Byrne

Deputy Chief Magistrate

Felicity Broughton

Acting Senior Sergeant Anne
McLaughlin

Looking back at the 2013 conference

The Victorian Conference was held Wednesday, 20th November 2013 at the Melbourne Convention Centre. The theme 'Justice is a Justice Does' was addressed by special guests Judge Evelyn Bender, Federal Circuit Court of Australia and Hugh de Kretser, Human Rights Law Centre.

Presentations were made by Adrienne Irvine on the establishment of the Victim Support Unit in Brisbane, Paul Drost on the cost-benefit analysis for our work in the Commonwealth Law Courts, and Dr Melanie Heenan on the findings of the Victorian Networker survey.



Adrienne Irvine
Victim Support Unit Manager



Paul Drost
Melbourne Program Manager

Special thanks to the event sponsors





Volunteer Intake

In view of the retention rate of our Volunteers, Court Network will not be conducting an intake for new volunteers in Brisbane in 2014.

Court Network Queensland currently has over 700 people on the waitlist to attend the Information Sessions.

Information, selection and training is to start in Cairns from April and from June for Townsville.

Court Network is extremely appreciative to the numerous Government Departments and non-government agencies who provide their valuable time and expertise to provide our volunteers with training.

86%

2013 Brisbane
Volunteer retention

100%

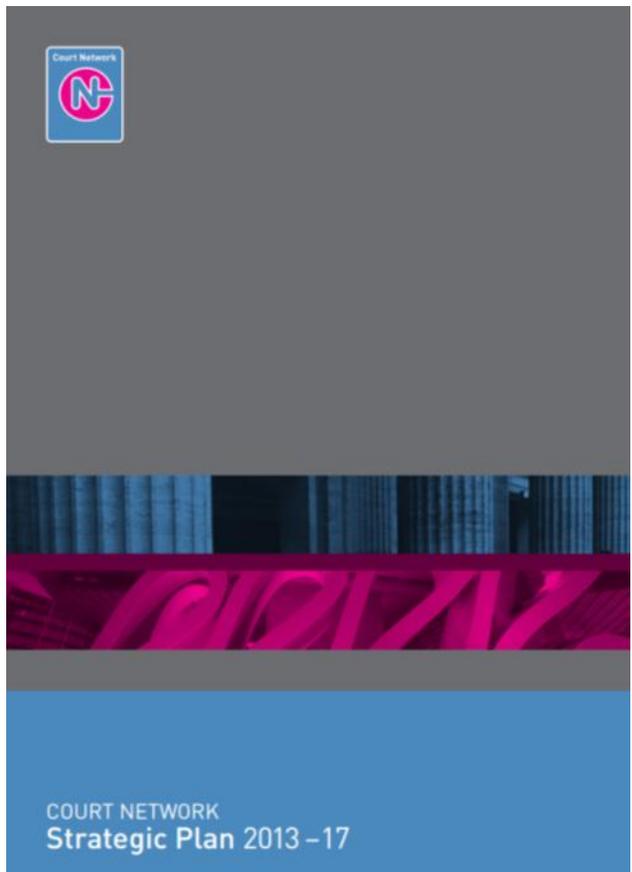
2013 Townsville
Volunteer retention



COURT NETWORK
Annual Report 2012-2013



Court Network Annual Report 2012-13
[http://www.courtnetwork.com.au/files/
CN_ARReport13_web.pdf](http://www.courtnetwork.com.au/files/CN_ARReport13_web.pdf)



Court Network Strategic Plan 2013-17
[http://www.courtnetwork.com.au/files/Strategic%
20Plan%202013-2017.pdf](http://www.courtnetwork.com.au/files/Strategic%20Plan%202013-2017.pdf)

Victim support unit

As we move into a new year it is with great anticipation and optimism that I look forward to seeing the hard work of the past year begin to reap significant rewards as the victim support unit begins to provide support to victims and witnesses of violent crime in the Brisbane courts.

Last year was very important in implementing the service and developing important relationships with key stakeholders. The establishment of the Reference Group was an important milestone and has been instrumental in developing relationships and providing guidance and direction to the service establishment. Meetings were held with many strategic groups both within and external to the courts and the VSU Networkers spent many hours familiarising themselves with the various courts and furthering their training in areas relevant to the victim support unit. The unit is now fully operational and ready to provide the appropriate support as the relevant courts become fully functional in February/March.

Closely aligning with Court Network's new Strategic Plan, a priority for the VSU for this year is working to ensure a responsive service to people of indigenous and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds and people from multicultural backgrounds. Our aim is to build positive relationships and undertake culturally appropriate training through the Courts Innovation Program (Magistrate's Court Brisbane) and the Multicultural Development Association in Brisbane. Strengthening our communication and referral processes with these organisations and the wider community supporting these groups is intended to bring about a significant change in their experiences of coming to court.

The start of the new year has seen a very busy time for the Ipswich outreach service with three VSU Networkers attending on a regular basis. A number of complex cases involving multiple victims and witnesses has proven to be a challenging but very interesting time for the Networkers whose work has been extremely well received and appreciated by both staff and persons supported within the court.

Expectations are that Ipswich will be a very busy court

environment and I am very keen to recruit further Networkers who are able to travel to Ipswich and spend extended time periods with victims attending court. If you would like further information please contact me on 3109 9254.

I was very fortunate to attend the Court Network Conference in November last year where I had the opportunity to talk about the new service while meeting many new people and the Court Network staff. It was very evident that Court Network is an amazing organisation that has earned enormous respect for the work that it does and the commitment of the volunteers. I was also very fortunate to return to Melbourne a fortnight later to a Victims Support Agency Symposium on "Promoting a neutral and transparent criminal justice system for victims of crime". The symposium was held by the Victorian Department for Justice and the Hon. Philip Cummins was a key note speaker on the day. I also had the privilege of meeting Carmel Benjamin (Court Network Founder) completing my introduction to Court Network. There were a number of excellent research papers presented on various topics relating to the victim and their role/rights within the court process. While it may be a long way to go victims voices are clearly being heard and the victim support unit is one important step in that direction.

Adrienne Irvine
Victim Support Unit Manager
www.victimsupportunit.org



Courts and tribunals

news and updates

Media statements

11 February 2014

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice The Honourable Jarrod Bleijie

Youth justice reforms crack down on repeat offenders

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2014/2/11/youth-justice-reforms-crack-down-on-repeat-offenders>

19 December 2013

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice The Honourable Jarrod Bleijie

Three new Magistrates have been appointed in regional Queensland

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2013/12/19/new-magistrates-for-regional-areas>

4 December 2013

Attorney-General and Minister for Justice The Honourable Jarrod Bleijie

JP QCAT trial marks 6 month milestone

<http://statements.qld.gov.au/Statement/2013/12/4/jp-qcat-trial-marks-6-month-milestone>

Court calendars

Queensland Court Calendars

<http://www.courts.qld.gov.au/courts/magistrates-court/court-calendars#Magistrates Court>

Brisbane Magistrates Court for 2014

http://www.courts.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/217714/mc-brisbane-2014.pdf

Cairns Magistrates Court for 2014

http://www.courts.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/216188/mc-cairns-2014.pdf

Townsville Magistrates Court for 2014

http://www.courts.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/216557/mc-townsville-2014.pdf

Supreme court of queensland library

SCLQ Books

<http://www.sclqld.org.au/news/books.php>

SCLQ Publications

<http://www.sclqld.org.au/publications/>

Queensland Legal Yearbook 2012. A consolidated record of the year's legal highlights. Free download.

A Unique Collection: The Artworks of the Supreme Court of Queensland

Supreme Court of Queensland - A Concise History

to date Queensland has assisted

212,589
court users

The numbers

July to December 2013

27,125
assisted in
Queensland

82%
of contact between
court users
1-10minutes

109
volunteers in
Queensland

23,343
assisted
In Brisbane

52%
assisted were
Male

99
external referrals
received

1,360
assisted in
Cairns

38%
assisted were
Defendants

2,163
assisted
in Townsville

39%
assisted were
Criminal

Book a Networker to provide your client with

Information Support Referral

on their day in court

<http://www.courtnetwork.com.au/Referral.aspx>

Online Referral

Court Network Referral Form

* Court Date: 25/Jul/2013

* Court: --Select--

Please Note: If your referral is today or within 48 hours please call the Victorian or Queensland office.
VIC:1800 681 614
QLD:1800 267 671

* Service User Name:

Email (service user):

* Tel (service user):

Referred By:

Tel (Referred By):

Cultural Background:

Preferred Language:

* Matter: Intervention Order

Family Law

Criminal

Civil

Crimes Compensation

Victim Impact Statement

Other

Coronial Matter

* Charge:

Name of Victim/Witness:

* Name of Defendant/Accused:

* Name of Applicant:

Name of Respondent:

Name of support person:

Major Issues:



Court Network

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