



ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd
trading as ROCC for Women

ABN 94 002 660 120

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We are **ROCC FOR WOMEN** and we've been providing services to the women of the Shoalhaven since 1983.

Women leaving prison or rehabilitation often need support with rebuilding their lives and connecting with community. Our intensive case management service supports those women who are most at risk - the homeless or those at risk of homelessness.

We work with women from all cultural and religious backgrounds, inclusive of sexual identity, financial and social status and support those who have no family or community support.

ROCC for Women acknowledges Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and water we live and work on. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

ROCC for Women receives funding from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) under the Specialist Homelessness Services, Service Support Fund.



ROCC offers long-term case management for women 18 years and over who have had contact with the criminal justice system and/or where alcohol or other drugs is impacting negatively on their lives. They offer personalised, tailored, flexible supports and a wraparound, holistic approach for women who have experienced or are experiencing trauma.

Vision of ROCC

To realise the dignity and well-being of women within their communities.

Mission

To deliver trauma-informed, strength-based supports to foster resilience in, and advocate for, women.

Values and Behaviours

Diversity – Embrace everyone’s story

Feminism – Women matter

Individuality – Our own and others

Advocacy – Speak up for ourselves and others

Self-determination – The right to choose

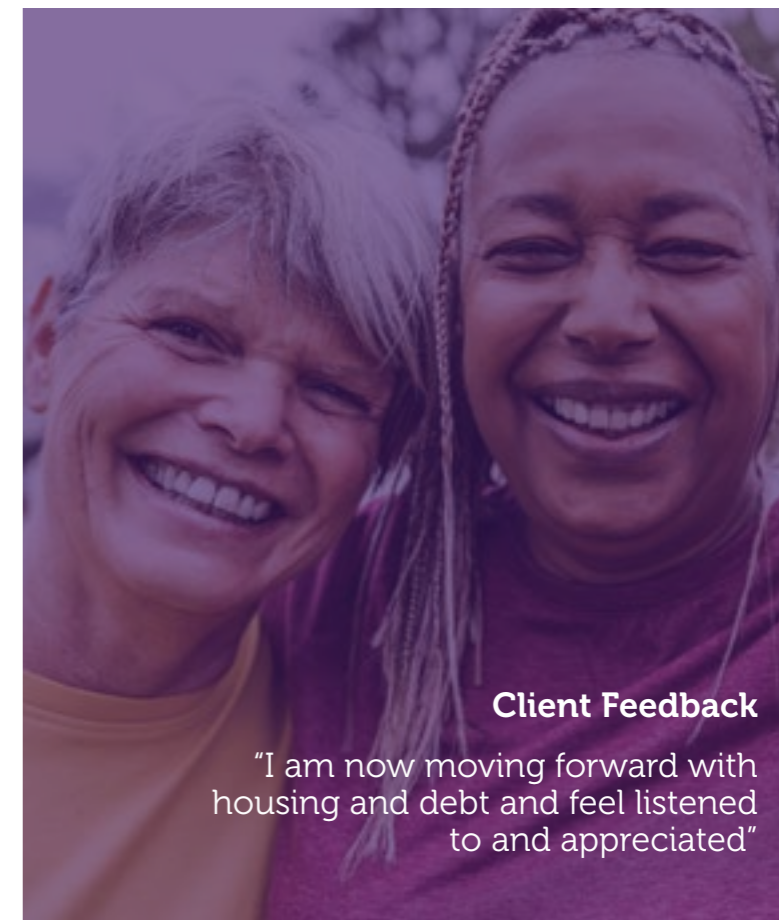
Collaboration – Working together

Resilience – Survive and thrive

Contribution – Every voice is valued

Honesty and Integrity - Openness and good intent

Holistic – Include the whole person



Client Feedback

“I am now moving forward with housing and debt and feel listened to and appreciated”

Board of Directors

Our skilled, committed and experienced Board are actively involved and passionate about our service.

Sophie Ray
Chair

Nicole Moore
Director

Sharlene Naismith
Director

Kerry Wright
Director

Denise Clark
Director

Lynne Dooley
Director

Board of Directors Report 2021 - 2022

2021/22 has been an exciting year of development and change for the Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group. The Board was delighted with confirmation that SWRG's funding from the Department of Communities & Justice had been renewed for another three years and saw this as a catalyst for thinking about the organisation's future. We have spent a significant amount of time at our Board meetings this year reviewing our strategy and focussing on ways of ensuring that SWRG and the ROCC program remain sustainable, with a strong financial footing, in years to come. In early June, we also spent a full day and a half together as a Board reviewing our strategy and planning for the next few years.

As part of our strategic development, the Board was delighted to appoint ROCC's first CEO, Coralee Rough, in October 2021. Coralee has embraced the role with enthusiasm and has already had a considerable impact on the organisation. The Board has worked closely with Coralee to develop and refine internal reporting systems and workflow processes; and to ensure the staff and Board

better understand workloads, client needs, and have measurable outcomes. Externally, the Board has worked with Coralee to build SWRG's profile in the local community and sector, to identify further funding opportunities, and to explore partnerships with other providers. Some tangible outcomes of the work done by Coralee with the team and Board this year include the development of a new logo, brand and website; additional grants; donation from a local community group; and growing referrals from other providers in the local sector.

This year we also farewelled our Program Manager, Tricia Forbes. Tricia had led SWRG through a significant period of uncertainty, in the immediate aftermath of the move away from ROSA refuge. She developed the strong service model that underpins SWRG today, oversaw the move to the current premises, and developed the partnership with Southern Cross Housing which has allowed SWRG to provide its clients with temporary accommodation in apartments dedicated to SWRG clients. The Board is extremely grateful to Tricia for her significant

contribution to SWRG and wishes her well in her retirement.

The Board has met bi-monthly this year, largely online to deal with the ongoing challenges of Covid. In between meetings, we have had ongoing discussions in person and electronically, to give input to Coralee as she's requested it, and make strategic decisions as and when they arise. I'm grateful to all Board members for their passion and commitment, and extend a particular thanks to Lynne Dooley, who will be finishing her term on the Board at the AGM.

Finally, on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our staff for their tireless work and their commitment to their clients, particularly during this challenging year of COVID. Without our staff's enthusiasm and willingness to embrace change, our service would not have been able to continue, and many women in our community would be worse off as a result. We look forward to continuing to support our staff in their work during this next exciting phase in SWRG's history.

Sophie Ray
Chair, SWRG



CEO Report

For ROCC, 2021-2022 was a year of change – in our internal and external operating environments.

I joined SWRG as CEO on 26 October 2021, in the week of the last AGM. Prior to joining, I was Community Coordinator across the Sutherland Shire for the Salvos where I experienced the value of long term case management and had the privilege of journeying alongside people as they navigated life. I witnessed lives transformed to be healthy, stable, hopeful and often happy. I have the privilege of continuing to witness this at ROCC.

Long term case management allows us, clients and case workers, to reflect, consider options, plan, choose new pathways, walk on, pause, reflect, breathe, feel, reassess, plan again for the next stage, achieve, sometimes fail, grow, recalibrate, make new choices, be supported, be challenged, and be encouraged to develop sustainable outcomes knowing we are not navigating the challenges alone. Our dedicated, compassionate and friendly ROCC case workers offer committed, trustworthy, informed, professional advice

throughout the journey. We provide options so our clients can make choices.

We are funded until June 2024 as a Specialist Homelessness Service by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). Housing – having a safe, secure place to call home – is considered a basic human need. Generally when our clients come to us they have limited choices and little hope. I am in awe of their courage and resilience. It is our role to understand their wants and needs, present options and be creative in supporting them with limited resources. During 2021-2022, being the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, we all witnessed the escalation of property prices, the lack of affordable housing in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven and the impact of restrictions leading to job losses, inflated prices for essentials and limited access to employment and education. Homelessness became a reality for more people, yet had been unthinkable for many prior to the pandemic. Media reported that the fastest growing sector of homelessness in Australia is women over 55 years of age.

We have focussed on improving our services and continue to grow so we can support more women who have experienced life-long trauma including domestic violence, mental health and drug and alcohol challenges, financial hardship, legal issues and are connected with the justice system. Our DCJ funding was broadened to include tenancies at risk. This opened up new referral pathways and allowed us to support women, impacted by economic, physical, mental and environmental challenges, to remain in their accommodation. In June 2022, with support of additional DCJ grants, we engaged Fox Facilitation and Planning, to facilitate a review of our service, develop our organisation's Strategic Plan for the next three years, reassess and affirm our values, and articulate strategic objectives to underpin our foundations and grow our service sustainably.

Why rebrand to "ROCC for Women"? – Rosa Coordinated Care has long been known in the community as "ROCC" and our new logo represents a path of choice for our clients to engage with us, one step at a time. It is not compulsory to access or remain with our service. The circle around the "O" in ROCC is the offer of blended wraparound services

– through us, our trusted partnering and referral pathways – providing for the client's individual needs and choices. The purple stones leading up to the right are the client's choice of a path forward, having been equipped with options.

With financial support gratefully received through grants from DCJ, Shoalhaven City Council, the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal, and PHN Coordinare, ROCC can now – in 2022-23 as we emerge from the pandemic – offer group programs for our clients to socialise, build connections, learn new skills and experience the freedom to be and create. Our ROCC team also participate in these programs alongside the clients and enjoy the wellbeing benefits of socialising and creativity while encouraging the clients to be involved. We extend a big "thank you" to Liz at ArtOriginal in Culburra. Our team and clients have loved their experiences with you.

With additional sector grants from DCJ (up to 30 June 2022), we were also able to improve our office and online security, purchase COVID-19 PPE, provide flexible work options with mobility tools and equipment and ensure we continued to

safely support our staff and clients throughout the year. We are very grateful to the staff at DCJ and Homelessness NSW for tirelessly supporting the SHS sector throughout the pandemic and equipping us with processes, procedures, information and assets and to our peers and partners for their wisdom, encouragement and honesty throughout a challenging period for all. We also gratefully received a donation which supported our service delivery.

Throughout the year, our COVID-19 Management Plan was a focus at every Board and team meeting and our staff remained vigilant about safety and education to support each other and the clients as changes unfolded and different protocols emerged.

During 2021-22 we welcomed Amanda as a new case worker; farewelled Jen, a case worker; and our program manager, Tricia Forbes and bookkeeper, Vicki Schatzman, announced they were retiring after 7 years. Thank you to Jen for your dedication and support to our clients and to Tricia and Vicki for supporting our caseworkers, through years of seemingly constant and significant change

and challenges in the economy and operating environment, to continue this valuable service.

Thank you to the Board for your leadership, wisdom and willingness to commit your skills to address all the challenges of the past 12 months.

ROCC is our case workers – women who are committed to being creative in finding the best options available for our clients. Thank you to our case workers for your teamwork in supporting each other and collaboration with our partners, dedication to continuous learning and for bringing passion, skills, commitment, hope, and often fun, to ROCC.

As our clients, and we, face more of the same and increasingly new challenges in the year ahead, I am grateful for the collaboration and commitment at ROCC as we navigate the challenges and opportunities together.

With gratitude,
Coralee

Why ROCC?

We have been providing effective support services to women in the Shoalhaven for four decades. We offer wraparound holistic one-to-one long term case management and regular group workshops/programs to facilitate improved social connection, life skills and psycho-social supports.

Our positive, professional, passionate and dedicated team of women provide client focussed services with practical supports, community and referral connections, life skills, and housing pathway supports for clients leaving NSW Correctional Centres or rehab, and supports for tenancies at risk.

Support

to stay out of prison or go to rehab and afterwards when you come home

Community Services

referral and support to connect to a range of community services

Housing

assistance with public and private housing

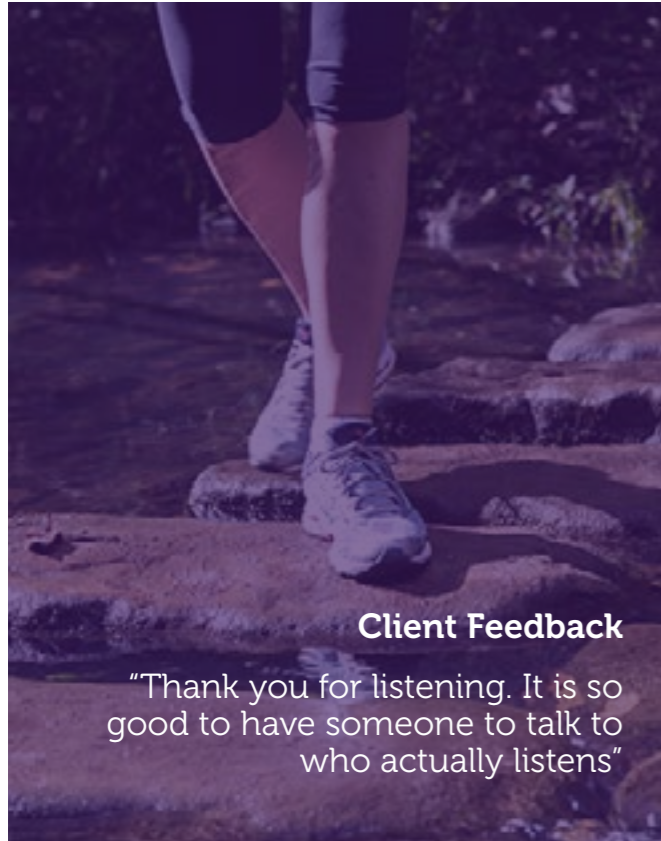
Long term support

to address the areas you identify as challenges in your life



Maree
Lawrence

Client Story



Client Feedback

“Thank you for listening. It is so good to have someone to talk to who actually listens”

The following story – Mary’s story – is common in our service. Asking for support is the first hurdle, and for many women it is the biggest hurdle.

ROCC staff appreciate the privileged position we are in to offer long-term, intensive support; to walk alongside women on their journey of recovery and reconnection.

It can take several months for women to begin to trust staff, and several more to be willing to share their very personal stories. ROCC staff focus on- the woman- not only their conditions and addictions- but finding out about the “person “ underneath those labels – building rapport is key to long term positive outcomes.

At this time in our sector’s history it cannot be overstated that the current housing crisis is having a greater and more devastating impact on clients’ capacity to manage their lives than anything else they are dealing with. During 2021-22, the COVID Pandemic impacted access to services and supports and employment and resulted in increasing social isolation while inflating the housing crisis.

Mary’s story

Mary worked with ROCC for three years after being referred to through Nowra Community Corrections. The referral and subsequent intake provided a picture of a woman whose life had been one of violence perpetrated from early childhood in her family of origin and then repeated through many of her adult relationships.

Mary had a diagnosis of PTSD, Bipolar disorder, anxiety and depression. Intake revealed Mary had attended multiple mental health facilities, including rehabilitation, and had served 3 separate prison terms for shop lifting, driving while disqualified, and credit card fraud. Mary disclosed that over the years she had challenges with drugs and alcohol but wanted to remain sober and had been sober since her release from prison.

Mary had a remaining parole term of 6 months, was homeless, and her mental health issues had largely been untreated for several months at the time of referral to ROCC. Mary had 3 adult children who lived interstate and Mary wanted to re-connect with them.

Mary requested ROCC for case management support to assist her attain stable housing, counselling and support to manage her long standing drug and alcohol dependency.

Due to past trauma and conflict in family relationships, Mary found it difficult to trust and connect with support services and it took several months of regular contact before the ROCC case worker was able to actively engage with her.

During this time Mary’s mental health had noticeably deteriorated, and she was finding it challenging to meet her parole conditions as she remained homeless. Mary was now couch surfing and moving around between distant family members and a few friends. This presented even more challenges as many of these friends were still active drug users.

With the support of her case worker, Mary completed a housing application and agreed to attend a doctor to have both physical and mental health assessments and to get referrals to specialist mental health supports.

A few months later Mary was able to access a psychologist who assisted her to apply for Victims Compensation, ensuring continuation of her regular psychologist appointments and Victims Compensation payment.

As her story was slowly revealed, it was apparent that Mary's last prison term was a direct result of a violent relationship. Mary had left the relationship suddenly and ended up living on the street with no access to money as her partner had stolen her key card. Mary was caught shop lifting for winter clothes, and she was on a CCO (Community Corrections Order) from a previous charge at the time of her arrest.

Eventually Mary disclosed the history of debt issues that she had been too ashamed to discuss previously. Mary's previous partner had taken out multiple payday loans in her name and Mary had used afterpay to purchase items for her home. Mary had then turned to gambling to try and recoup funds to pay debts and pay mounting bills. Mary's gambling had quickly spiralled, leaving her very little money for food, clothing and other personal items.

Just as Mary's parole was ending her daughter contacted Mary to say she was in a violent relationship and wanted to leave but had nowhere to go. Mary became angry that she was unable to offer her daughter a safe place to stay as she was still waiting for a home of her own, Mary started to disconnect from support services and began missing her appointments. Feelings of grief and loss about her daughter and feelings of failure at being unable to help her daughter overwhelmed Mary and she returned to drug use as a way of coping. Mary disconnected from ROCC and did not respond to messages from her case worker until she chose to reconnect several months later.

Following many meetings with her case worker, Mary agreed to re-enter rehabilitation for her drug use and after 6 months she returned to the community. Through support including documentation, and referral to another Shoalhaven homeless service, Mary was able to obtain a unit. Lega Aid assisted with afterpay loans and other debt issues and together, with a case worker referral to a financial counsellor, Mary formulated a payment plan for the remaining debts including undertaking a work development order with ROCC.

Obtaining housing was critical to Mary's ongoing sobriety, stability of her mental health and hope of reconnection with her children. Mary resumed appointments with her doctor and other mental health supports including her psychologist. With support with job applications, Mary secured part time work and remained focussed on her recovery. Mary met with her daughter on several occasions



and met two of her grandchildren for the first time. Mary attended ROCC's art group programs and started to make new connections and said that this was positive for stress management.

Mary continued to develop insight and understanding of her underlying mental health conditions and the impact of the many experiences which resulted in her drug use and prison time. Mary continued to maintain contact with ROCC as needed.



M Bush

ROCC Clients

Service information for 2021 – 2022

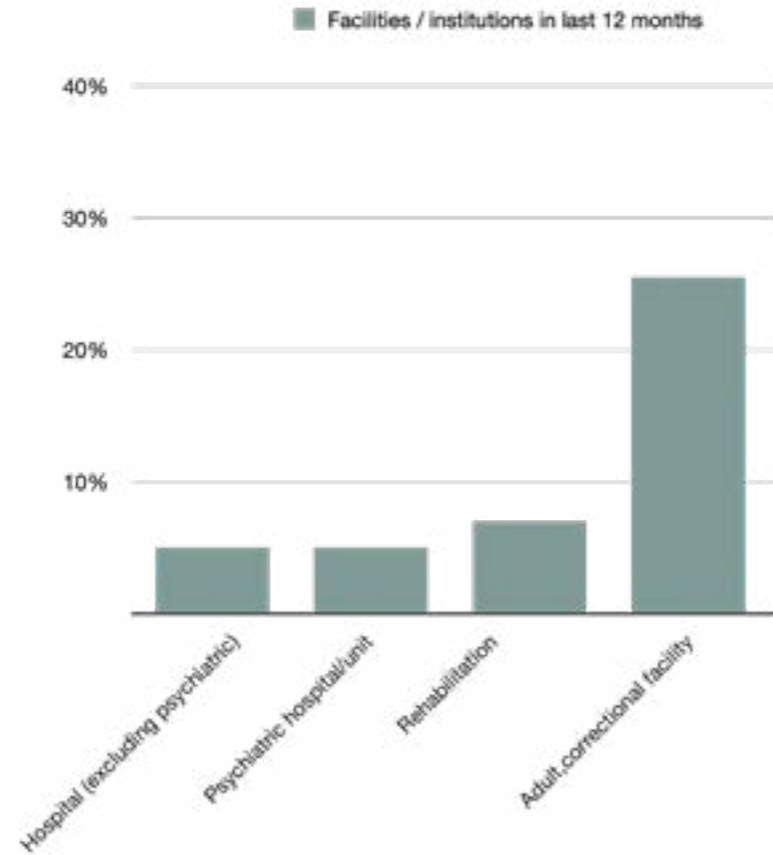
- 89 Clients
- 119 Support periods (the following statistics and graphs are based on support periods)
- 35% experiencing homelessness
- 49% at risk of homelessness
- 43% stated housing issues as the main reason for seeking assistance
- 34% were seeking specific mental health supports and 73% had information regarding mental health issues
- 27% were sleeping rough or in non-conventional/short term/emergency accommodation in the last 12 months

Support information for 2021 – 2022

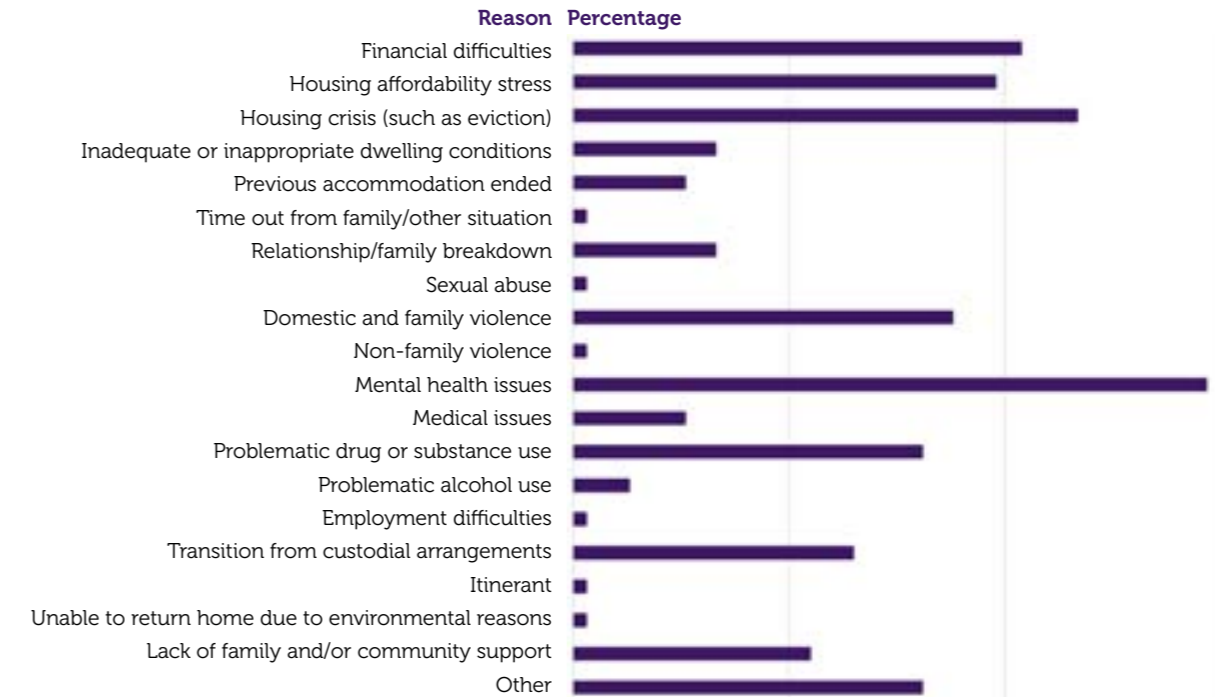
Total number of support period days	11714
Average length of support period (days)	192
Total number of support periods	119

Referrals were received from

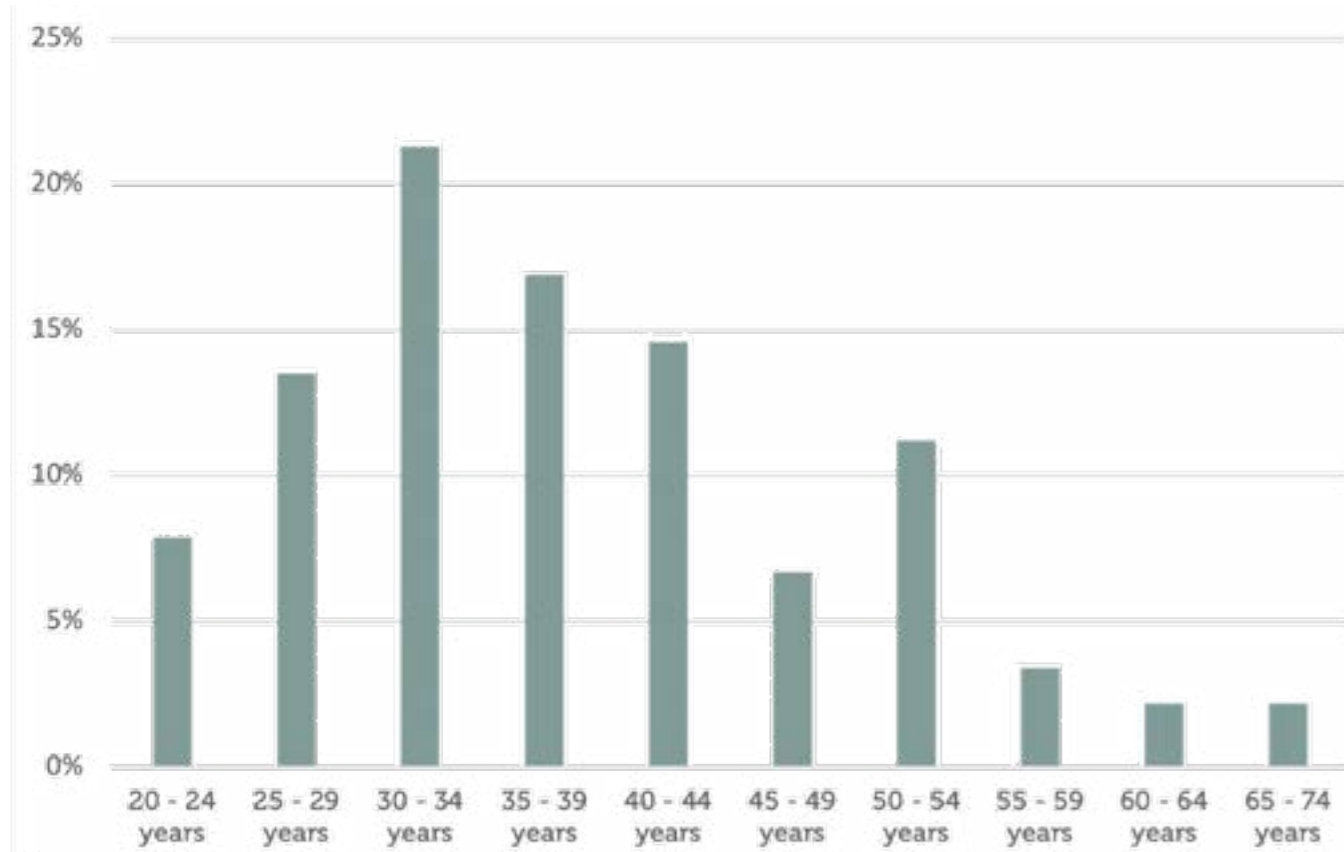
- Community Corrections
- Waminda
- Southern Cross Housing
- Nana Muru
- Nowra Court
- Correctional Centres
- Justice Health
- Legal Aid
- Shoalhaven Homeless Hub
- Shoalhaven Women's Health
- Self-referral or client referrals
- DCJ
- Community or family
- SALT Care
- CHADD
- Link 2 Home
- SAHSSI



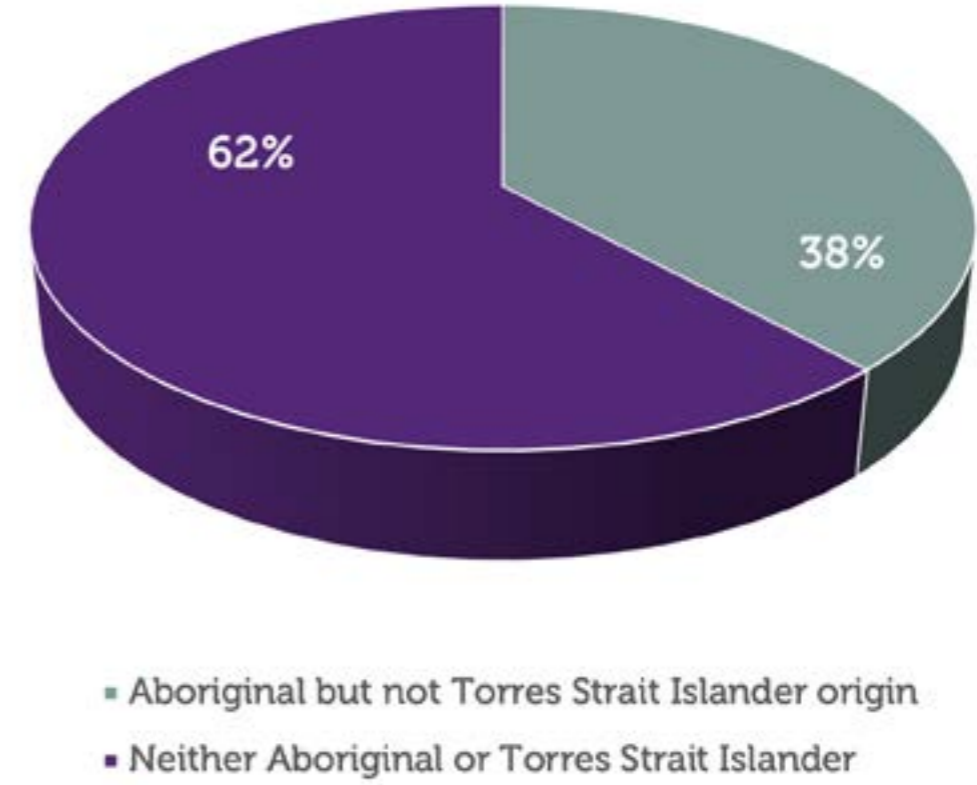
Reasons for seeking assistance



Age Range



Cultural Identity



Client Satisfaction

SHS 2022 Client Satisfaction Survey (6 June to 22 July 2022) – 15 ROCC clients responded

The table below compares the scores received for Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group LTD to the client aggregated dataset of 36 services for the key indicators or service experience and impact:

Indicator	SWRG %	BENCHMARK %	DIFFERENCE
Emotional state improved	93	81	12
Staff sensitive to ethnic and cultural background	100	90	10
Cost of my current accommodation	80	74	6
Staff understood my needs	100	95	5
I have participated in setting my case plan	93	89	4
Staff treated me with respect	100	97	3
Staff have made me feel accepted for who I am	100	96	4
Staff referred me to other services to support my other needs	87	87	0

Key indicators that were negative and mostly impacted due to COVID-19 restrictions and lock downs in the Shoalhaven and the property market: referrals to other services due to availability and access, employment and education opportunities, housing options, connections with others/the community. These are all areas of focus for ROCC for 2022-23.

Client Feedback

In the Beginning I:

- could not leave the house
- was not on my medication
- was evicted because the rent increased in a private rental
- was stressed and depressed most days
- cancelled my appointments

ROCC assisted me with:

- cleaning of my yard
- my medical appointments
- finalizing my Community Service Order with Community Corrections
- temporary accommodation and
- a permanent residence close to everything and still local

I am now Feeling:

- very well with my health and well-being
- incredibly happy and supported
- I have my independence back
- I can now leave home to shop and do basic things again
- I know that someone is always there - is comforting
- ROCC is a great service in supporting women
- overall, my head is not spinning anymore
- my decisions are now clear and concise
- I can live my life again

Specialist Homelessness Services - funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice

The SHS program's primary objective is to ensure people who are experiencing homelessness, or who are at risk of homelessness are supported to achieve safe and stable housing in the community. Where possible, people receiving a service from an SHS are:

- Identified and supported to remain safely in their existing housing, or to secure stable housing which is affordable for the person
- Provided with safe and secure accommodation and supported to access stable housing which is affordable for the person
- Re-housed after experiencing homelessness and are supported across the broader service system to stay housed
- Supported to access mainstream and specialist services
- Supported to connect with community and family

Specialist homelessness service providers are required to deliver services in a person-centred, 26

collaborative and connected way. Service providers will continue to operate from, or integrate the following principles, where appropriate to their service model, to deliver a person-centred response and provide effective support:

- Person centred – recognising that a person's needs are not static
- Informed choice – commitment to individual informed choice and self determination
- Trauma informed and evidence based – recognising the impact of trauma and implementing policies and practices based on evidence of what works
- Strengths based – building on individual and family capacity, skills, resilience and connections to community
- Collaborative – with other services/ providers to problem solve, share expertise and resources

- Early intervention – to reduce risk, prevent homelessness and facilitate support

- Rapid re-housing – re-house people as quickly as possible to prevent further breakdown of connections, routines and relationships

- Stable housing options – support people into sustainable, independent living as early as possible ensuring housing options are affordable for the person

- Coordination of supports – identify and coordinate multi-disciplinary support early to build sustainable change

- Reintegrate – maintain, re-establish or establish family, community, education, training and employment connections where practical and appropriate

- Risk mitigation – recognise and manage the risks to support people through change

- Strategic use of funds – to facilitate timely implementation of support plans to address long term needs

- Client voice – ensure clients are able to express their views in the design, delivery and continuous improvement of services

- Continuity of care – creating trust, respectful and positive relationships, able to access the same support worker

- Culturally safe – the service must be culturally sensitive and provide culturally appropriate services.

(Source: Specialist Homelessness Services – Specifications June 2021)

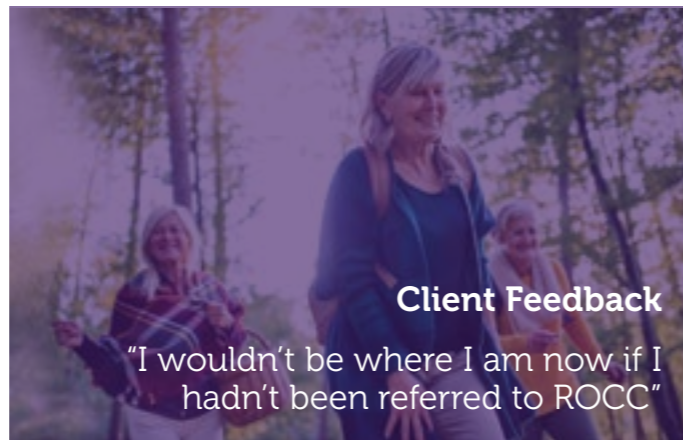
Resilience and Wellbeing

One of ROCC's Values stated in our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan is "Resilience – Survive and Thrive"– but what is it? Is it an outcome or a process or a characteristic? Does it come naturally or is it learned?

We have heard this word used repeatedly by media over the past few years in relation to bushfires, floods, pandemic and other crises and disasters. Our clients have been faced with these and many more difficulties throughout their lives. Working from a strengths-based approach, we focus on identifying, assessing and collaborating on growing positive areas that clients are doing/ thinking; link clients to resources for assistance where they consider they need supports; focus on wellbeing, including making positive connections with community and culture; provide information and options to build knowledge and skills; support clients to be equipped to make meaningful and sustainable choices for their own lives as they are the experts; and acknowledge the courage to engage with services. Throughout our interactions, we encourage the client to focus on safety,

security, particularly housing, health, connection to education and employment, and building or re-building healthy relationships and connections. Surviving and overcoming adversity should be acknowledged and celebrated and can lead to thriving – that is, wellbeing.

We all carry our histories and have diverse experiences and backgrounds. Our interpretation of resilience and wellbeing will vary. Building resilience may improve a person's capacity to positively adapt



to change, feel more in charge of their lives and be open to access supports on the path to wellbeing.

Employers and government are specifically focusing on wellbeing, particularly following the aftermath of the pandemic.

DCJ has defined outcomes measures of Wellbeing for our clients as:

Clients have improved personal wellbeing.

Clients have increased capacity to tackle future challenges measured by demonstrated progress in engaging with services to address wellbeing needs and achieving their wellbeing goals in relation to:

- *Improved engagement with health services*
- *Improved relationship with family (where appropriate) & support networks*
- *Improved connection to community*
- *Improved connection to education & employment.*

For clients such as ours that are being case managed, DCJ has implemented a process

of capturing information through the Personal Wellbeing Index (PWI), a series of questions repeated periodically throughout case management to measure movement in the client's wellbeing as a result of engaging with the Specialist Homelessness Service. That is, data collected is designed to inform continuous improvement to meet client needs. The PWI contains seven items of satisfaction, each one corresponding to a quality life domain as: standard of living, health, achieving in life, relationships, safety, community-connectedness, and future security.

Outcomes measurement is being progressively implemented by DCJ over the course of 2021-2024 contracts for SHS providers such as ROCC and will inform accreditation and future funding.

ROCC Staff

Case workers

Maree Lawrence

Amanda Keaton

Jen Somers

Senior case worker

Sharon Millet

Program Manager

Tricia Forbes

Bookkeeper

Vicki Schatzman

CEO

Coralee Rough

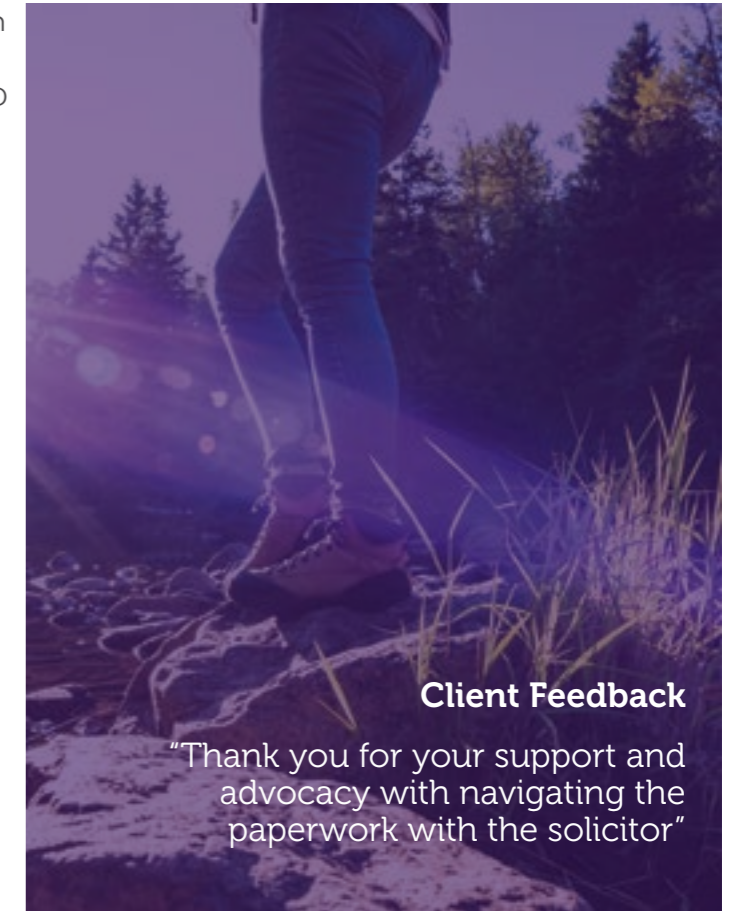
This year we welcomed Amanda in August 2021 and Jen left in early 2022. The community went into compulsory lockdown two weeks after Amanda started so it was a challenging start and the team and clients needed to adapt to new ways of engaging. Everyone worked together to continue to support each other and the clients as we all navigated everchanging service requirements and external landscapes. Staff continued with regular external, professional supervision and team meetings continued on a weekly basis with a growing list of considerations and requirements each week. The challenges were shared openly and we collaborated to find the best outcomes along the way.

With the transition to online meetings with our partners, service network and government, staff embraced technology and were able to maintain meaningful and effective communication to support our clients. Staff participated in regular network, interagency and case management meetings including with DCJ, Homelessness NSW, DIAC, LIAC (Local implementation and coordinating committee), other Specialist

Homelessness Services, Waminda, SAHSSI, Southern Cross Housing, SALT Care, Legal Aid, Community Corrections, Shoalcoast Community Centre, CHADD (Corrections, Housing and Dual Diagnosis), The Police and Services Sector fortnightly meetings, Shoalhaven Domestic and Family Violence Committee, Southcoast Medical Service, Rural Outreach Mental Health Service, Nana Muru and employment networks.

We also participated in community events such as Christmas in the Park (Southern Cross Housing) and a Homelessness Workshop sponsored by Shoalhaven City Council but unfortunately NAIDOC was cancelled due to weather. There were limited events due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The staff also took the opportunity to pursue professional development which was mostly on-line due to COVID-19 restrictions.



Client Feedback

“Thank you for your support and advocacy with navigating the paperwork with the solicitor”

Staff Professional Development

Title	Provider
▪ Wise Employment	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ Time Management for Frontline Staff	▪ DCJ
▪ Stolen Generations Reparations Scheme	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ Security Awareness	▪ NSW Corrective Services
▪ Self-Care	▪ ACWA / CCWT
▪ Disputing Penalty Notices	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ Risk Assessment	▪ ACWA / CCWT
▪ COVID Risk Management policies and procedures - various	▪ DCJ and Homelessness NSW
▪ Personal Wellbeing Index	▪ Homelessness NSW
▪ Success Works	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ Owning Your Past	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ Social Supports for Non-Citizens	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ ASES to Greatness	▪ Homelessness NSW
▪ Inside Outside Program	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ Co-occurring AOD and Mental Health	▪ University of Sydney
▪ Trauma and Addictions	▪ CHIA

▪ Mental Health First Aid	▪ Mental Health First Aid Australia
▪ Managing Conflict and Difficult Conversations	▪ ACWA / CCWT
▪ Improving Transition from Rehab into Housing	▪ AHURI
▪ Public Health Orders and Fines - WDO	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ Renting Matters	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ Family Law Basics – Separation	▪ NSW Legal Aid
▪ Ex-offenders and Recidivism	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ RU OK	▪ RU OK
▪ Discrimination in Private Rentals	▪ AHURI
▪ Trauma Informed and Diversity	▪ Blue Knot
▪ Mental Health Awareness	▪ NSW TAFE
▪ Housing after Prison for People with Complex Support Needs	▪ Reintegration Puzzle
▪ Trauma Informed Care	▪ NSW TAFE
▪ Strengths Based Tools	▪ NSW TAFE
▪ COVID-19 Risk Assessment	▪ Justice Reconnect
▪ Changes to the SCHADS Award	▪ Jobs Australia
▪ Cultural Immersion	▪ Waminda

Partnering – Housing Options for People Leaving Custody Program (PLC)

As reported in the Annual Report for 2020–2021, SWRG partnered in the Housing Options for People Leaving Custody pilot project (PLC) over two years. The final draft evaluation report has been delivered to DCJ in September 2022 and is awaiting publication.

The stated aim of the project was to develop local service system responses to the housing and support needs of people leaving custody and was made possible by funding provided by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) under the NSW Community Housing Industry Development Strategy, being a partnership between the Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA NSW) and DCJ.

The PLC project was expressed to be designed in response to research commissioned from the Housing Action Network identifying a lack of housing pathways for people leaving custody and proposed an opportunity for community housing providers to take the lead in implementing a more joined up approach to housing and support for people leaving custody.¹

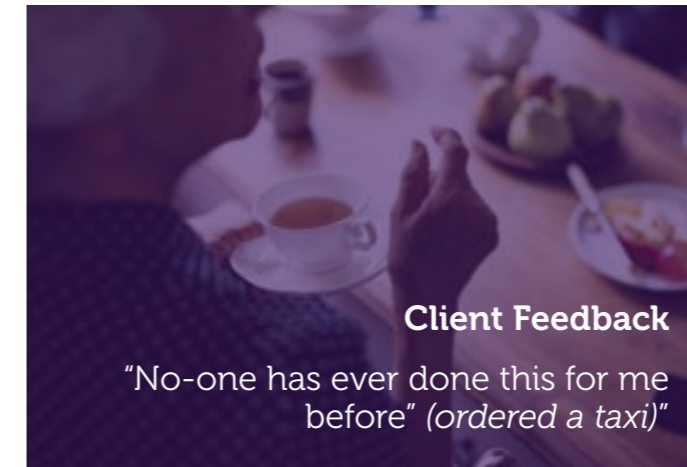
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The broader value to the community of sustainable social housing for people leaving custody has since been quantified in research released by AHURI. The research estimates savings to policing and justice agencies of between \$5,200 and \$35,000 after five years when social housing is accessed by a person leaving custody with complex needs.²

The PLC project was piloted on the Mid North Coast (until late 2021) and the Shoalhaven (until June 2022) using existing housing and support resources. In the Shoalhaven, Southern Cross Community Housing took the lead, with the participants including Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd, Corrective Services NSW and Community Corrections Nowra, Waminda (South Coast Women's Health and Welfare Aboriginal Corporation), Initial Transitional Services/Arbias, Illawarra Shoalhaven Men's Homelessness Service (St Vincent de Paul), together with FACS as a division of DCJ. The service providers resourced participation in the project from existing resources including provision of housing,

brokerage, promotion, management of referrals and governance.

During the two year pilot, both regions experienced bushfires (with resultant impact on housing supply), the COVID-19 pandemic and general market housing supply challenges with demand for housing in regional areas outstripping supply. This only compounded the challenges for people leaving custody. Research has shown a link between homelessness and incarceration and both elements impacting employment opportunities.



Client Feedback

"No-one has ever done this for me before" (ordered a taxi)"

The lack of accommodation options generally in the Shoalhaven have been apparent throughout 2021-22 and options for people leaving custody have been very limited particularly for those without positive rental history, affected by trauma and mental health challenges, with a history of illicit drug use and having been isolated from supports. Our experience is that for some women, homelessness following incarceration can result in returning to violent relationships to secure accommodation.

1. Dr Tony Gilmour, 'Pathways Home: NSW community housing's role delivering better outcomes for people exiting corrective services', Housing Action Network, February 2018

2. Martin, C., Reeve, R., McCausland, R., Baldry, E., Burton, P., White, R. and Thomas, S. *Exiting prison with complex support needs: the role of housing assistance*, AHURI Final Report No. 361, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute Limited, Melbourne, 2021, <https://www.ahuri.edu.au/research/finalreports/361>

Finances

**SHOALHAVEN WOMENS RESOURCE
GROUP LIMITED
A.B.N. 94 002 660 120
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL
POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2022**

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	209,572	305,488
Trade and other receivables	5	3,405	3,405
Other current assets	6	14,833	18,689
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>227,810</u>	<u>327,582</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	27,461	36,914
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>27,461</u>	<u>36,914</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>255,271</u>	<u>364,496</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	8	28,024	15,824
Short term provisions	9	81,323	61,622
Other current liabilities	10	120	25,684
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>109,467</u>	<u>103,130</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>109,467</u>	<u>103,130</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>145,804</u>	<u>261,366</u>
EQUITY			
Retained earnings	11	145,804	261,366
TOTAL EQUITY		<u>145,804</u>	<u>261,366</u>

**SHOALHAVEN WOMENS RESOURCE
GROUP LIMITED
A.B.N. 94 002 660 120
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
AS AT 30 JUNE 2022**

	2022 \$	2021 \$
INCOME		
DCJ Grants Received	585,475	472,854
FRRR Grants Received	5,410	13,400
Donations Received	1,000	-
Management Fees	151,769	169,135
Less Management Fees	-151,769	-169,135
Members Fees	22	19
Rental Income	269	538
Interest Received	301	605
SSSF Grant	13,045	-
SSTF Grant	27,000	-
Client Contribution- Brokerage	838	1,900
Cash Flow Boosts	-	24,626
	<u>633,360</u>	<u>513,942</u>

**SHOALHAVEN WOMENS
RESOURCE GROUP LIMITED
A.B.N. 94 002 660 120
SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION
PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT
AS AT 30 JUNE 2022**

EXPENDITURE	2022 \$	2021 \$
Accountancy and Bookkeeping Fees	7,300	-
Advertising	-	1,892
Board Expenses	178	1,000
Auditor's Remuneration	7,000	7,000
Bank Charges	232	200
Brokerage	18,831	16,080
Computer Expenses	10,003	3,535
Consultancy Costs	-	2,108
Corporate Overheads	9,911	2,099
Client Expenses	6,382	13,530
Depreciation	9,453	10,285
Electricity & Gas	1,989	2,644
Cleaning	5,363	3,552
Cyber Insurance	1,875	-
Filing Fees	34	132
Insurance	8,486	8,555
Leave Provision - Long Service Leave	15,353	13,435
Leave Provision - Annual Leave Membership Fees	3,632	12,936
Membership Fees	2,742	1,328

Minor Equipment Purchases	22,702	1,443
Motor Vehicle Expenses	7,057	7,110
Postage, Printing & Stationery	3,957	4,679
Project Costs	1,125	3,974
Project Management	409	2,991
Recruitment Expenses	45	17,857
Rent- Short Term Operating Leases	49,380	48,605
Repairs & Maintenance	5,309	6,250
Salaries	459,009	328,146
Staff Training & Welfare	2,186	7,257
Subcontractor Costs	-	685
Strategic Planning	5,543	-
Supervision	1,798	2,085
Superannuation Contributions	45,169	30,422
Telephone & Fax	10,659	5,664
Transitional Housing	19,654	23,888
Travelling Expenses	260	340
Writing & Reporting	-	3,909
Workers Compensation	5,896	5,773
	<u>748,922</u>	<u>601,389</u>
NET DEFICIT	<u>-115,562</u>	<u>-87,447</u>

Female Incarceration

The Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) has produced a report: “Double Jeopardy: The economic and social costs of keeping women behind bars” (the Report) which states there are significant benefits, economic and social, in reducing the rates of female imprisonment.

CEDA, an independent membership-based organization, brought together community services/groups, prison operators, academics and policy advisors, service providers, business leaders and professional services to collaborate with diverse perspectives and obtain evidence to create an effective path forward. CEDA states that the report “does not seek to detail all the complexities of the issue of the incarceration of women”.

A summary of findings include:

- Serious crime rates are falling but incarceration rates for women, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, are increasing;
- Female incarceration has grown by more than 60 per cent in the last decade (male: 45% in the same period);

- Many women are in prison for short sentences and are considered a low risk to the community;
- Many women are sentenced to less than the time they spend in remand;
- More than 50% of women in custody in Victoria are unsentenced;
- Many women in prison are themselves victims of violence and face significant physical and mental health challenges. This affects their children and families and contributes to intergenerational disadvantage;
- Nationally the government is spending on average \$330 per prisoner per day with government spending having increased by more than 5% to \$5.4 billion in 2020-21 and a projected growth to more than \$7 billion a year by 2030;
- If 50% of sentenced women were not incarcerated, in 2030 government could save \$405.3 million (based on current incarceration

rates) – being potential savings of \$288 million in direct costs and at least \$117.3 million in indirect costs.

CEDA’s Five Recommendations:

1. Focus immediately on reducing female incarceration by: Significantly reducing the number of women in remand by raising bail release rates; providing better support to those released on bail; and eliminating short sentences for minor offences by working with civil society and social enterprise to divert women towards community-based sentences.

2. Set and report against targets to reduce rates of imprisonment and reoffending. Targets focus the policy efforts of governments, increase accountability and challenge spending decisions. National momentum for a coordinated approach to reducing rates of imprisonment and reoffending should be built through the Standing Council of Attorneys-General.

3. Prioritise justice reinvestment. Justice reinvestment programs seek to redirect resources from prisons into rebuilding human resources and

community-based support. They have proven to be effective. Preventative measures can also be applied where conditions that make offending likely have been identified.

4. Invest in targeted re-engagement programs and improve essential services. Reducing reoffending rates requires better support for prisoners to build a bridge between prison and re-engagement in society focusing on housing, work and health. Governments must examine women’s pathways to criminality and create preventative measures to divert them from the criminal justice system.

5. Build a national, long-term evidence base and community of practice. To achieve sustained performance, there must be greater and more effective investment in the collection and sharing of data on the criminal justice system and programs aimed at reducing rates of crime and recidivism, as well as diversion.

The Report also notes that many incarcerated women are victims of violence, have mental health issues prior to incarceration, drug or alcohol dependency, lack secure housing, higher rates of

disability than is found in the general population, live in poverty and disadvantage and “many already have even greater experiences of disadvantage through intergenerational trauma, having been in state care or the justice system at an earlier age”. The Report states that “(women) are usually in custody for breaching community corrections or justice orders, such as bail.”....“A high proportion of these women present little or low risk to the wider community, as evidenced by the high proportion receiving short sentences of less than six months”....“Short sentences are more disruptive than rehabilitative.”....“Not only do they leave prison traumatised and stigmatised, their connections to family and critical support networks have been severed, making it even harder for them to secure paid employment.”

One conclusion from the report is that “Understanding the root causes and the levers to bring about systemic change is vital to creating approaches that take into account the various factors, needs and motivations of everyone involved. In the context of increasing female incarceration rates, this means looking for opportunities to address cycles of violence,

intergenerational trauma and disadvantage through connected, holistic services.....choosing community-based outcomes enables women to access support programs, financial resources or medical and psychological support without being exposed to further violence and trauma.”

(Source: <https://cedakenticomedia.blob.core.windows.net/cedamediacontainer/kentico/media/attachments/double-jeopardy-the-economic-and-social-costs-of-keeping-women-behind-bars.pdf>)

As at June Quarter 2022, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reported:

- There were 837 female prisoners in NSW.
- The national imprisonment rate for female prisoners was 29 persons per 100,000 adult female population.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imprisonment rate for female prisoners was 423 persons per 100,000 adult female Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.
- Of all persons serving community-based corrections orders, 19% were female.



ROCC’s value proposition of offering long-term case management for women 18 years and over who have had contact with the criminal justice system and offering personalized, tailored, flexible supports and a wraparound, holistic and trauma informed approach brings benefits of:

- Fostering a trusted relationship with a dedicated case manager
- Adaptive and flexible supports responding to evolving needs
- Prioritising securing safe and appropriate accommodation
- Advocacy for supports and services particularly where there are complex interacting issues of trauma, mental health challenges and drug and alcohol dependency together with debt, homelessness and health issues. Integrated services can help resolve issues that led to offending and thereby reduce the risk of reoffending.
- Building social connections, skills, and links to community, family, education and employment.

Shoalhaven Womens Resource Group Ltd trading as ROCC for Women

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*ROCC for Women is a not-for-profit Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) with
funding provided by NSW Department of Communities and Justice*

