

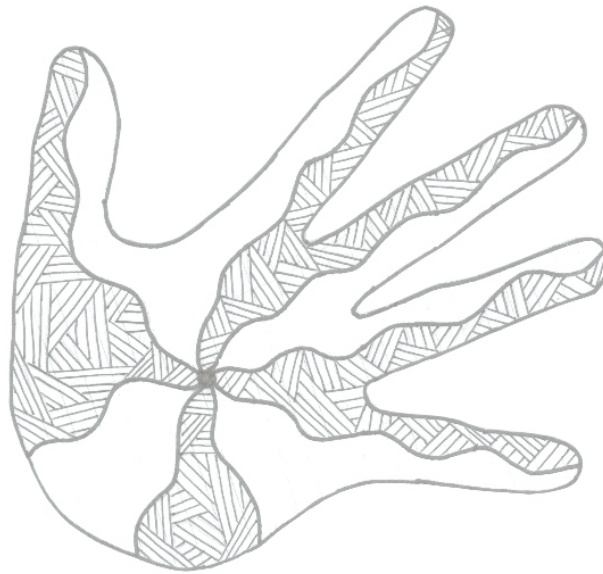
# Warrina

Domestic and Family Violence  
Specialist Services  
Co-operative Ltd



Annual Report

2024-2025

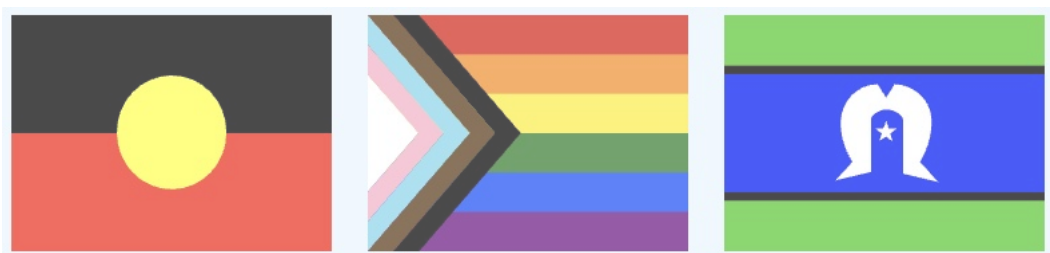


Warrina Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Services Co-operative Ltd acknowledges the traditional owners of the land on which we work and live,

the Gumbaynggirr, Bundjalung & Yaegl people and their continuing connection to land and community.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions and the culture of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across this nation.

This is and will always be, Aboriginal Land.



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## Board of Directors

Sandra Heaton	Chairperson
Meena Johnson	Treasurer
Julie Carey	Director
Vigeeta Chauhan	Director
Zehrina Hajdic	Director
Jaeva Shelley	Director
Natalie Smee	Staff Representative
Charlotte Young	CEO (Non-Director)
Helen Aiken	Secretary (Non-Director)



# STAFF

## Management & Administration

Charlotte	CEO
Sheree Smith	Finance & Governance Coordinator
Michele	Financial Administrator
Helen	Administration

## Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS)

Pru	SHS Coordinator
Jacqueline	Team Leader, Crisis Intervention Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Cassie	Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker up to Oct 2023
Diana	Housing Specialist Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker (DFVRE)
Kareena	Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Katie	Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Eve	Migrant & Refugee Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Nourah	Migrant & Refugee Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Marta	Migrant & Refugee Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker
Sam	Domestic & Family Violence Caseworker Aboriginal Focus
Talea	Children & Young People Specialist Caseworker
Tess	Children & Young People Specialist Caseworker

## Coffs-Clarence Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS)

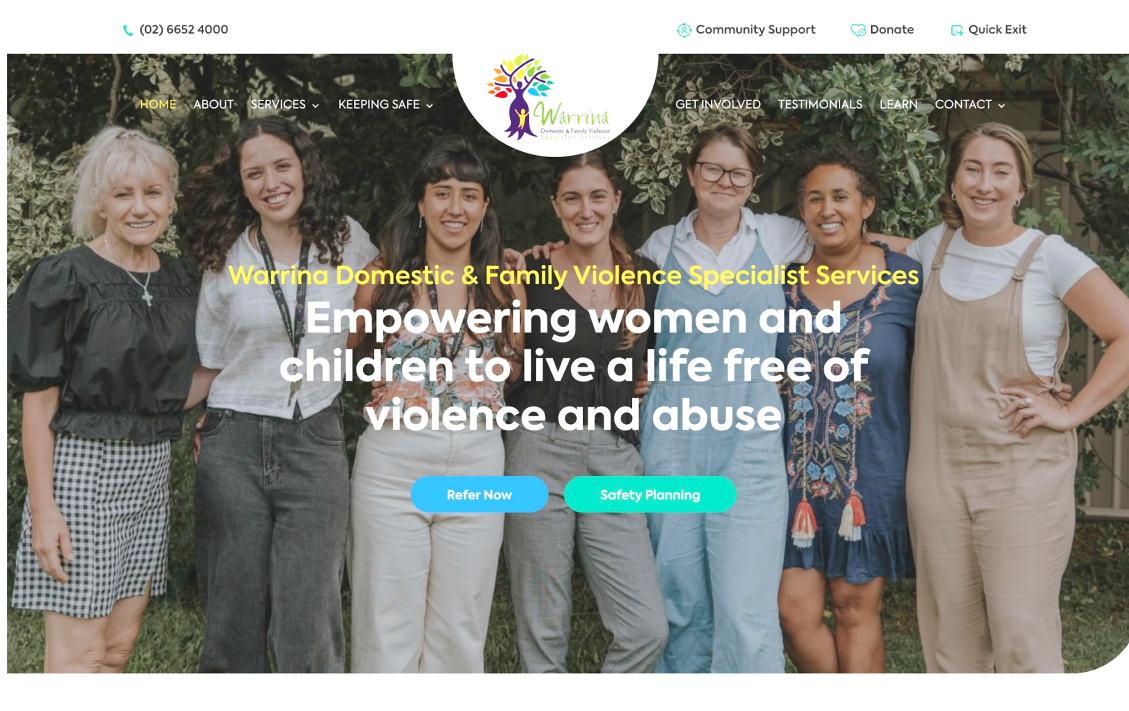
Wendy	WDVCAS Manager (Coffs Harbour)
Laraine	WDVCAS Assistant Manager (Coffs Harbour)
Natalie	Safety Action Meeting Co-ordinator (Coffs Harbour)
Leonie	Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS) (Coffs Harbour)
Helen W	Safety Action Meeting Co-ordinator (Grafton)
Bec	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Coffs Harbour)
Carrie	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Grafton)
Sharon	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Grafton)
Georgie	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Coffs Harbour)
Jo	Domestic & Family Violence Case Worker (Coffs Harbour)
Jodie	Domestic & Family Violence Case Worker (Coffs Harbour)
Lorraine	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Coffs Harbour)
Mel	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist (Coffs Harbour)
Tash	Domestic & Family Violence Specialist, Aboriginal Focus (Coffs Harbour)
Jaide	Sessional Court Advocates (Grafton)
Alison	Sessional Court Advocates (Grafton)

### Men's Behaviour Change programme, Safer Futures (SF)

Renee	Safer Futures Co-ordinator
Charna	Women & Children's Advocate
Doug	Safer Futures Men's DFV Intervention Worker
Hazel	Safer Futures Men's DFV Intervention Worker
Jeremy	Safer Futures Group Facilitator
Joanne	Safer Futures Group Facilitator
Talea	Women & Children's Advocate
Thomas	Safer Futures Men's DFV Intervention Worker
Bianca	Safer Futures Men's DFV Intervention Worker

### Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV)

Jo	SHLV Team leader
Kate	SHLV Caseworker
Skye	SHLV Caseworker
Talea	SHLV Caseworker
Kaitlyn	SHLV Caseworker



[www.warrina.org.au](http://www.warrina.org.au)

## Service Overview

Warrina Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Services Co-operative Ltd provides a broad range of client-centred services that aim to reduce the incidence and impact of domestic and family violence on women and children.

We support women and children to understand and recover from the effects of violence and abuse. We work with our communities to promote respectful relationships and to recognise and reject all forms of violence.

Our vision is to empower and support women and children to live free of violence and abuse.

As a leading provider of support services for women and children in the region, Warrina receives referrals from the NSW Police, Community & Justice, Housing and Health departments, mainstream service providers, other non-government agencies, community groups and past clients, as well as self-referrals.

The organisation employs a group of highly skilled and dedicated staff, who have developed strong partnerships with other service providers and community members. Formal referral mechanisms have been developed to enable our teams to work co-operatively with each other, as well as in collaboration with other service providers, to provide a flexible integrated service response.

Warrina is committed to supporting clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. To facilitate this, identified Aboriginal and CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) positions are nominated within the teams, and services tailored to the needs of different cultural groups.

## Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS)

The Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS) is funded by NSW Department of Community & Justice to provide services across the Coffs Harbour, Bellingen, and Nambucca Local Government Areas.

Staff use a trauma-informed case-management model, providing individual counselling, advocacy, referrals, and group-work; and work with clients to improve safety, to access and maintain long-term accommodation, as well as to address other, often complex, needs.

The therapeutic relationship established between caseworker and client is respectful of the client's need to be in control of decisions that affect their lives and the supports they require. Clients are seen as expert in their own lives, with staff working alongside them to develop their case plan.

### Women and Children's Refuge

The Women and Children's Refuge, situated in a building supplied by NSW Land & Housing Corporation, provides safe and secure crisis accommodation for single women and women with children who are escaping domestic and family violence.

### The Rainbow Room

The Rainbow Room is a dedicated space at the Refuge where the Child and Family team work with children, both individually as well as alongside their mothers. Staff support the children to make sense of their experiences of domestic and family violence, and to enhance the mother-child relationship. The team are trained in age-appropriate play and therapeutic intervention techniques, which consider the children's cultural background and particular family circumstances. The rainbow room has been transitioning over the financial year into a new space. The existing building is to be utilised as 2 independent units with the Children's dedicated space will be positioned within the refuge.

### Aboriginal Support

An identified Aboriginal caseworker position is maintained at the Refuge, with regular scheduled Goori Outreach services provided in Bowraville and Nambucca by the First Nations worker.

### CALD Support

An identified immigrant and refugee caseworker position is maintained at the Refuge, with the worker also providing individual and group CALD Outreach services in Coffs Harbour and Nambucca.

### Crisis Support

Counselling and case-management is delivered to geographically isolated communities by appointment. Additionally, follow-up support is available to clients exiting accommodation services, allowing complex issues to be addressed as they arise and promoting long-term positive outcomes for clients.

## Housing

Warrina works with Women's Housing Company, Community Housing Limited and Mission Australia to provide housing solutions within the Coffs Harbour and surrounds. These properties vary in lease length and eligibility criteria. These housing options offer a medium transitional solution and with case management, the aim being to secure long term housing.

## Coffs-Clarence Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service

Legal Aid NSW funds the Coffs-Clarence Coast Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS) to provide assistance to women who are experiencing domestic and family violence. Our service provides threat assessment, safety planning and support throughout the court process.

The WDVCAS has been funded to provide case-management to their clients considered at serious threat and who are unable to access other case management services in the community. The WDVCAS has also received Federal funding to provide support to women who are navigating the Family Law system through the Family Advocacy Support Service (FASS). Legal Aid rolled out a Hearing Support pilot project for twelve months from November 2023, providing Warrina funding for one additional worker.

The WDVCAS operates in Grafton, Coffs Harbour and Maclean local courts, and has offices located in both Coffs Harbour and Grafton.

Staff attend the courts on Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVO) "list" days to provide clients with information, advocacy, support, and referrals. Where resources allow, support is also provided at ADVO hearings or domestic violence-related charge matters.

WDVCAS staff work closely with the Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, the Police Prosecutor, and other legal professionals to ensure that ADVO conditions are appropriate to the client's needs.

Staff respond promptly to referrals from police via the Central Referral Point (CRP) platform as well as other service providers. Staff conduct safety assessments using the common assessment tool, offer access to financial compensation and counselling, assistance with security, and costs of relocation, as well as referrals to other specialist services in the community.

Safety Action Meetings (SAMs) are held on a fortnightly basis and include relevant government agencies and non-government service providers, Safety Action Plans are developed or women assessed as being at serious threat of harm.

## Safer Futures

### Men's Behaviour Change Program - Registered

The **Safer Futures** Men's Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) is a registered program that provides an opportunity for men to learn about the impact of their harmful behaviours, take responsibility for their choices and be a safer man. Hurt and harm can come in many forms, so our program provides an opportunity for men to learn more about their behaviour and the impact of their choices on women and children.

A man's journey of change can be strengthened by engaging in learning with peers which can happen in our groupwork sessions. The group environment is respectful and non-judgmental, offering a supportive space to learn and grow. Through these sessions, men can gain practical tools and strategies to choose to be safer and more respectful in their relationships.

The Women & Children's Advocate is central to the program and offer's support to partners and former partners while men are in the program. This invitational space provides them with an opportunity to share their experience, and/or access support or advocacy for their needs. The safety and well-being of women and children is our highest priority in Safer Futures.

### Tailored For Change

In 2023 Safer Futures received additional funding for the **Tailored for Change** program, an innovative initiative focused on expanding the accessibility of men's behaviour change for people living with a cognitive impairment. Through this initiative Safer Futures have developed two adapted offerings of our registered MBCP, a small-group based program or an individualised program.

## Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV)

The Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) program is funded by NSW Department of Communities & Justice to provide services in support of women who are ending a violent relationship to remain safely in their own homes.

Caseworkers conduct safety assessments, implement safety improvement plans for the home, and work alongside clients to develop case plans to improve social, health, economic and legal outcomes for women.



## Chairperson's Report

A very warm welcome all members of Warrina to this year's Annual General Meeting.

Another year has literally flown by and on reflection of the year I am thinking of the challenges, triumphs, the amazing work achieved and the families helped through the extremely difficult and heart wrenching circumstances that comes along with domestic and family violence. Cannot help but feel incredibly honoured and humbled of being a part of this amazing organisation that is Warrina.

I must say it has been an absolute privilege and pleasure to work alongside fellow Board Members, Meena Johnson, Zehrina Hajdic, Julie Carey, Vigeeta Chauhan, Jaeva Shelley and Staff Representative, Natalie Smee. As a Board of Directors, we have a responsibility for the overall Governance of Warrina which can often be time consuming and complex. The financial viability of Warrina is an important aspect of our monthly reviews and it is great to note that Warrina is in good financial health to fulfil its operating objectives and continues to ensure compliance with Warrina's funding bodies. Thank you Board of Directors for your service, wisdom and dedication. I would also like to make a special thank you to our wonderful CEO, Charlotte Young, and special thank you to the wonderful Warrina Team and Volunteers.

We have this year farewelled Financial Administrator, Michele Thomas and Secretary, Helen Aiken, both of whom had enormous responsibilities, provided years of service and expertise and whose roles played a big part during our board meetings. Thank you again and all the very best to you and your families for a bright and happy future!

Unfortunately, due to various circumstances, it has taken some time to fill the vacancies of the positions of Financial Administrator and Secretary and it is without a doubt that during this period an enormous amount of pressure has been felt by the Management team in continuing with the work required by these roles and their own day to day work requirements. Certainly a challenging time and a special mention to Charlotte Young and Finance & Governance Manager, Sheree Smith who cannot be thanked enough for soldiering on through such a heavy workload. It was at our last board meeting that we learnt that Warrina is now almost at full quota of personnel which was just so fantastic to hear after what seems to be such a long time of vacancies for some of the positions. It is without doubt that pressure across the team was felt whilst filling these vacancies. Thank you everyone and a very special "Welcome" to all new staff to the Warrina Team!

A special mention and acknowledgement to our funding bodies, 'NSW Department of Communities and Justice' (DCJ) and "Legal Aid NSW" who make this critical work possible. Your support for Warrina is very much appreciated and is crucial in helping to continue to work towards a community where respect and safety is key, especially for the women and children who have and are experiencing domestic and family violence. As always, a thank you also to those organisations and individuals who support so generously throughout the year with your time and donations.

A final thank you to all services for your reporting throughout the year. Your information, stories and photos are truly valued and help the Board to understand the challenges and achievements through your amazing day to day work. The reports also provide

opportunities for the Board to focus on areas where we can provide our assistance. We totally understand that it is not always possible to complete reports, but love to receive them when the time allows you to do so.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, we wish everyone a Safe and Happy Christmas and look forward to working with you again in 2026.

*Sandra Heaton – Chairperson*



It is my great privilege to walk and work alongside such skilled and passionate women and men who are committed to addressing the complexities of domestic and family violence. We consistently hear that domestic and family violence is everyone's business. While this is true for communities, for those who work on the front line it becomes a lifestyle. Within our day-to-day lives we consistently stand behind the belief that domestic and family violence is a gender-based issue, supported by patriarchy, power and control. We speak of the resilience of clients, when in fact staff must be extremely resilient as they face the adversities and systemic failures that are faced by victim survivors and their families daily.

A critical housing shortage across the coast, combined with the state highway expansion and the population movement driven by Covid, has resulted in rental properties being out of the reach of Warrina's client group. The repercussions from this are that victim survivors are staying in unsafe and life-threatening living situations, perpetuating the cycle of violence as children witness and normalise domestic abuse. The increasing demand for services has seen the systems that support our work being stretched to the limit. The fortnightly Safety Action Meeting which provides the space for services to collaborate on solutions to increase safety for victim survivors is seeing a significant drop in participation. I suspect, as like us, the presentation of clients with multi layered needs, unfilled staffing positions and limited options is seeing the service system stretched to the limit.

Another productive year has seen service delivery expand across Warrina's programs. Demand and current research has driven this expansion along with increased funding for pilot programs. Our annual Data for individual services has highlighted an increase in funding is required to maintain and meet demand across all Warrina's services. Unfortunately, neither the State nor Federal Government have announced new funding in recognition of the growth in DFV services across the state particularly in the Specialist Homeless sector, which has not seen an increase in funding since the Going Home Staying Home reform.

Warrina has been successful in a partnership with Housing Plus which will result in Coffs Harbour having its own purpose-built core and cluster refuge. Warrina has been selected to provide the wrap around support services with Housing Plus as the housing provider. We have been consulted in the design and landscaping and have the greatest confidence that what we are building together is of the highest calibre. Client's will have their own individual unit, there will be open areas for conversation, mixing with other residents, barbeque, gardens and play areas for children. Designated Office spaces will allow for practitioners to see clients on site ensuring safety and confidentiality. Healing and recovery are prioritised with all aspects of the build being guided by trauma informed principles.

Coffs harbour consistently rates in the top five local area police commands for DFV. Our existing refuge is constantly full, and outreach staff are working with women in the community exploring housing options and developing safety and exit plans. The new centre will provide access to 6 independent crisis units. The centre will be monitored after hours by a local security company ensuring safety for residents and the neighbourhood.

Warrina is excited to be delivering a holistic service to victims of violence that aims to address their needs in a DFV and trauma informed way.

The work being undertaken in the WDVCS space with new funding to support case management and support in the Family Law arena has exceeded expectations. The demand for the specialised support for women accessing the judicial system both within the local court for ADVO's and Family Law court support exceeds funding staff levels. I am recognising that The Family Law work will continue to increase due to limited solicitors working on a legal aid grant. I would hope that this is an area government will consider for expansion funding within the budget next year.

Staying Home leaving Violence has seen a change in staffing with Skye transitioning across to the refuge to work with children and young people in a designated role. It is hoped that SHLV will see an increase funding to enable them to provide a more rigorous, child focused case management program to children and young people. Evidence and research tell us gender-based violence and the values that support that belief's/ privilege are imprinted very early on in a young Child's life. Positive role modelling and consistent messaging are vital to change the trajectory for girls and boys in a society that attributes power to gender.

Safer Futures, our accredited voluntary men's behaviour change program, has proven to be very much in demand. Waiting lists continue into next year with the women's and children's advocate holding space for victim survivors who may have had an ex-partner in the groupwork program in the past or on the waiting list.

Warrina strives for best practice in all the arenas we work in. Sheree joined the team in September 24 as the finance and governance coordinator. She has considered many of our policies in light of our ASES accreditation, the expansion of the WHS legislation and our responsibilities as an employer. This has resulted in rigorous policy review this past 12 months. As we continue to grow it is vital that we are guided by policy that recognises the specialty of our work, is informed by legislation and provides staff with the guidance required to fulfil their obligations and prioritises the safety of victim survivors.

Michele, our long-term financial administrator retired early this year. I would like to acknowledge Michele's work and her commitment to Warrina. She came into our world when we were a much smaller organisation, managing the refuge and a discreet Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy service. Her abilities with budgets and her eye for detail held us in good stead for the growth we have gone on to achieve. Helen, the Office Administrator also retired prior to Michele's departure, leaving a hole in the fabric that has made up Warrina for many years. I applaud Helen for her work with the ASES accreditation, the way she supported the Board in her role as Secretary and kept us all on task with the governance calendar. I wish both Warrina Warriors, a meaningful and rewarding retirement and thank them for their years of dedication to the organisation, the funding bodies, their colleagues and the community we work in.

The past twelve months has seen staff actively participate in community events, committee's and forums that enable the voices of clients to be heard. We continue to work in partnership with the broader service system, collaborating with other agencies and expanding the networks of women and children seeking solutions that are tailored to their specific needs.

I would like to thank the professional group of women who make up our Board of Directors. They give freely of their time and expertise and have supported Warrina as a leader in the delivery of specialist domestic and family violence services in our community. Each woman brings a unique set of skills and understanding of our work ensuring Warrina is consistently striving for best practice under their guidance.

It is with the ongoing support of our funding partners that we have the capacity to deliver specialised services across the district. I would like to thank Legal Aid NSW and Department of Communities and Justice for their support and expertise. We have moved to monthly meetings with the SHS contract manager, this has increased the understanding of budgets and compliance for service coordinators. Not to mention the open and transparent relationship staff have with her.

I would like to acknowledge the staff- their passion and commitment to victim survivors is inspiring. As a team of professionals, they are a well-oiled machine. I take great pride in their achievements this year. They continue to show up, working with clients in a respectful and client centred way to find solutions that support their recovery.

In the 23-24 year there was a %35 increase in women killed by a current or ex-partner in Australia. Statistics reflect for the 24-25 year that we are still averaging one murder a week, she is a mother, a sister a daughter and friend. She will die in horrific circumstances, alone and her fear is debilitating. This is the reality of our work.

Gendered based violence continues to reign supreme, together we must continue to support each other in our work, we must strive for change and not be deterred. I pay my respects to the women and children who have lost their lives, and I honour the journey of all victim survivors.

*Charlotte – Chief Executive officer*

## Operations & Governance Report

Strong governance underpins the integrity, accountability, and effectiveness of our organisation. Warrina's Board of Directors and the executive team continue to be committed to ensuring that Warrina operates transparently, ethically, and in alignment with our mission to serve the community. Throughout the year, the Board have provided strategic oversight, monitored performance, and overseen compliance with Warrina's regulatory and legislative requirements. Guided by our values we continued to strengthen our governance frameworks, manage risk responsibly, and support our leadership team to deliver quality services and sustainable outcomes for the people and communities we serve.

The executive team at Warrina has faced significant challenges this year including the departure of key staff members **Helen and Michele** who held critical knowledge and expertise essential to the organisation's operations. We have been very sad to see such valued colleagues move on and we sincerely thank them for their many years of dedicated service.

**Compliance activities** for the organisation were carried out throughout the year. The Annual Accountability requirements for our various service agreements with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ), as well as the annual submission of Legal Aid Financial Reports, were successfully completed. Warrina also underwent its triannual Accreditation Assessment which was successful, resulting in certification being issued for the next three years. In addition, our Community Housing regulatory compliance return was submitted to the National Regulatory System for Community Housing (NRSCH) as required, and our Annual Information Statement was submitted to the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) in January. The cooperative annual return was submitted to Dept Fair Trading following the AGM.

This year, Warrina successfully transitioned to **Employment Hero** as our new payroll system, marking an important step in modernising our human resources and payroll processes. The implementation has streamlined payroll management, improved accuracy, and enhanced reporting capabilities, allowing us to better support our staff and ensure timely, compliant payment of wages. Throughout the transition, we focused on staff training and data integrity to minimise disruption and maintain confidence in our payroll operations. This upgrade reflects our commitment to leveraging technology to improve organisational efficiency and staff experience.

A comprehensive **Business Continuity** risk assessment was completed towards the end of 2024 and a plan developed to manage risks in accordance with the new compliance obligations set by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). We implemented updated policies and procedures to support the continuity plan and by doing so strengthening our operational resilience. These initiatives help safeguard our services, protect staff and clients, and maintain organisational stability through times of crisis. The ongoing development and embedding of these practices demonstrate Warrina's consistent commitment to proactive risk management and sustainable service delivery.

During the year, the executive team have worked on strengthening **Risk Management** oversight of the organisation, assessing systems and processes to align with the ever increasing compliance requirements within the complex DFV environment and the financial limitations of our funding agreements. The improvements that have been and continue to be made have strengthened our ability to identify, assess, and mitigate risks across the

organisation, building on the safety of our staff and clients while maintaining service quality and accountability. By embedding more robust risk management practices we are better positioned to operate responsibly, meet regulatory expectations, and deliver more sustainable outcomes for our communities.

Throughout the year the executive team maintained a strong focus on organisational stability and workforce capability. Recognising the significant workforce gaps across several key programs, the team prioritised targeted recruitment initiatives. Despite experiencing a period of internal change and transition within the executive team itself, concerted efforts were made to extend **focused recruitment support** to program leaders. This collaborative approach not only mitigated workforce pressures but also reinforced the organisation's commitment to building a resilient and capable

A key achievement during the year was the leasing of an additional property to expand service delivery for our outreach workers. Though successfully identifying and securing a fit-for-purpose facility amid limited local options proved challenging, we are excited that this new facility includes a large, accessible group meeting space designed to support all programs and enhance collaboration across teams. The site has enabled the reinstatement of the former Women's Resource and Information Centre (WRIC), now renamed the **Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC)**, providing a welcoming and inclusive space for women to access support, information, and community connections. The establishment of this centre also attracted the support of Mortgage Choice, who generously donated **\$5,000** towards setup expenses, reflecting growing community recognition of Warrina's impact and mission.

In **summary**, the past year has been one of significant transition and strengthening for Warrina. The organisation has continued to uphold high standards of governance and accountability while navigating workforce changes and increasing regulatory demands. Through investment in infrastructure, new systems, enhanced risk management frameworks and proactive leadership, Warrina has reinforced its operational resilience and capacity to deliver safe, sustainable, and high-quality services to the community. These achievements reflect the Board and Executive Team's shared commitment to continuous improvement, transparency, and the wellbeing of both staff and clients.

*Sheree – Finance & Governance Coordinator*



## Treasurer's Report

It is my pleasure to present the Treasurer's Report for the financial year, outlining key financial movements, operational changes, and funding outcomes that have shaped our organisation's work and sustainability.

One of the highlights of the year for the finance team was as a result of a comprehensive review of our banking arrangements. This brought to fruition Warrina's participation in the *Community Partnerships Program* with **Regional Australia Bank** in February. This partnership strengthens our financial management by providing access to tailored banking services, as well as initiatives that support members of the community to financially contribute to our organisation. Engaging in this program reflects our commitment to building sustainable financial practices while fostering relationships with organisations that share our values and mission. The program has already begun to deliver financial benefits, and the community has shown strong support by choosing our organisation as a recipient through the program.



Warrina has continued to experience financial pressures throughout the 2024–2025 financial year, largely due to the continued upward pressure on staffing costs resulting from **workforce-related reforms**. Although some funding relief has been provided, it remains insufficient to meet the organisation's rising operational demands. As a result, we have had to implement innovative and resourceful problem-solving strategies to maintain service delivery within constrained financial parameters. This has included managing heightened service demand alongside **increasingly complex compliance requirements**, which have required substantial staff time and further compounded existing resource limitations.

This year, the organisation faced a significant rise of more than 20% in our **Workers Compensation** insurance premium. Combined with compounding superannuation obligations as well as cash flow impact as a result of the upcoming pay-as-you-earn and portable long service leave provisions, these factors are placing substantial strain on our projected operating budgets. We are actively exploring strategies to address these pressures and will seek to understand DCJ's willingness to recognise these increased costs as part of the **recommissioning** process for the 2026–2031 period.

During the year, we **purchased three new vehicles** to support service delivery and **disposed of four older vehicles**. This renewal strategy will reduce ongoing maintenance costs and improve safety and reliability for staff and clients.

The year saw positive developments in several funded initiatives:

- The **Legal Aid Hearing Support Pilot** was extended, providing continued funding for one dedicated worker.
- The **Commonwealth “Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes” initiative** also continued through extended funding, enabling ongoing delivery of crucial safety upgrades for women and children.
- **Solar installation on the refuge** was completed, which is expected to reduce ongoing energy costs and contribute to long-term sustainability.

We continue to auspice the **Committee Against Domestic & Family Violence**, supporting community-driven prevention and awareness initiatives. A **grant of \$11,500** was received from the **Coffs Harbour Christmas Cup Charity Golf Day**, organised by the Coffs Harbour Liquor Accord, which will go towards costs of key community promotional events including the 16 days of Activism and Reclaim the Night.

## Donations

The organisation benefited greatly from community generosity throughout the year:

- Various short-term investments generated **interest income**
- The **Coffs Ex-Services Club Community Crew Sleepout** in June raised **\$25,000** in donation revenue
- An additional **\$44,141** was received in other donations, philanthropic grants, and fundraising. This includes contributions made through **GiveNow, MyCause** as well as direct donations to Warrina

We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from businesses, community groups, and individuals whose contributions strengthen our capacity to provide essential services.

On behalf of the Board and staff at Warrina, I extend heartfelt thanks to all donors, partners, and community members who share our commitment to safety, dignity, and empowerment for women and families in our region. Your support ensures we can continue delivering vital programs and adapting to emerging needs.

Annexed at the end of this Annual Report a copy of Extracts of the audited Financial Statements for 2024-2025 can be found. A copy of the full, audited Financial Statements can be requested by email to [finance@warrina.org.au](mailto:finance@warrina.org.au), or any enquiries in relation to specific program expenditure.

I would like to thank Charlotte, Sheree, Michele, Helen and all our staff, as well as my fellow Board members, for their dedication to our Co-operative and the women and children we support throughout the year.

*Meena Johnson - Treasurer*



## Specialist Homelessness Service (SHS)



*From left to right: Grace (SWCYP), Skye (SWCYP), Jacq (Coordinator), Katie, Cassie, Sam (First Nations), Marta (CALD), Marissa, Diana (Team Leader) and Linda (CALD).*

The 2024-2024 financial year has been a big year for the Specialist Homelessness Services team of Warrina. This year we have witnessed first hand the pointy end of the housing crisis on the Mid North Coast with increasingly limited options for **safe and affordable housing** for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. That being said, the team has worked harder and smarter than ever, thinking outside the box and strengthening our partnerships in the community to continue to achieve positive outcomes for our clients.

The Women and Children's Refuge has operated at full capacity for most of the financial year, filling every room possible and supporting as many families as we could that are experiencing crisis and have no safe place to live. Our refuge has seen an increase in **cultural diversity** with residents from widespread cultural backgrounds seeking support. Roz's Unit has housed multiple families with specific accessibility requirements including physical disabilities and mobility challenges, neurodiversity, mental health conditions and mothers with premature babies requiring regular external services visiting. Having the **self-contained units** at the refuge has been an incredible advantage to us to be able to house not only more families, but families with specific needs that cannot be supported or met by motel providers or in other emergency housing.

This year we saw our dream of becoming a **pet-friendly** refuge come true through a close partnership with the RSPCA and dedication and commitment from the SHS refuge team. Warrina Women and Children's Refuge now has the ability to house animals that are accompanying families seeking refuge. This includes 2x purpose built large animal enclosures (mainly dogs) and 1 smaller enclosure for a small dog, cat, rabbits or other small family pets. Women and children experiencing domestic violence and homelessness in our

community will no longer have to choose between safety and their beloved animals. Thank you to Warrina's Board or Directors for their approval to spend donation funds on this incredible support for our community.

In May 2025 our fearless leader Pru Young was farewelled as she embarked on the greater journey of motherhood. Jacq Vella stepped up from Team Leader to Coordinator for Pru's parental leave and Diana Wilson was promoted to Team Leader to cover Jacq. The introduction of the Team Leader position back in early 2024 proved a wise strategic decision by Warrina leadership, resulting in an ease of **succession planning and flow** for the SHS team with minimal disruption as we continue to grow and develop into one of the largest teams within Warrina. Diana has taken the promotion to Team Leader with confidence and enthusiasm and the entire SHS team are incredibly grateful to have her expertise and leadership available to us. Diana has taken on the SHS project of the **Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (The WROC)** with gusto and brilliance to build what started as a big empty building into a vibrant and welcoming community outreach centre. The WROC now has a regular **community cooking group** for the multicultural women of our community to come together and share a meal and their stories of life, building friendships and community connections. Our CALD workers Linda and Marta have been instrumental in getting this up and running.

The WROC hosts multiple group meetings including the **Coffs DFV Action Group - "GRACE"** (formerly known as the Coffs Coast Committee Against Domestic and Family Violence), which has grown in membership and gained momentum over the past 12 months. A credit to the Chairperson Cassie Valentino and other Warrina members who take the time to commit their energy to raising awareness and increasing education around DFV in the general public and Coffs community.

The SHS team consistently take part in **community awareness** campaigns and engagement events to increase the general public knowledge of domestic violence and services available to them. The SHS team have participated in many events over the past financial year including the annual NAIDOC week Housing Forum at Yarilla Place, the "Who you gonna call?" event in Coffs CBD, the Coffs Harbour Country Women's Association Apron Project, Youth Homelessness Matters day, The CEX annual Sleepout, annual Real Estate Agent partnerships luncheon, the 16 days of activism, Reclaim the Night annual street march, Argyll St family fun days and community events at Pete's Place. The SHS team are passionate about educating other service providers with information around our service and general DFV knowledge. SHS staff have engaged in regular "in-services" with organisations such as NSW Health, Medicare Mental Health, TAFE NSW, Southern Cross University, Services Australia, Service NSW, Mission Australia and Wesley Youth Services - increasing knowledge of DFV in the local support services we work alongside.

Warrina leadership continue to offer the SHS team generous support to attend conferences, external **training opportunities** and events to increase our knowledge and skills as specialist domestic and family violence practitioners. This financial year all SHS staff were given the opportunity to travel away for conferences focussed on topics such as coercive control, impacts of DFV on children and young people, working with multicultural communities and people from non-English speaking backgrounds around DFV, engaging Indigenous Australian young people and pathways to healing, the world conference of women's shelters, regional community services networking events and more. Offering up to date training and exposure to networking events like these keeps staff motivated and

inspired by the work they do. It also keeps our staff up to date with changing legislation, trends in Australian society and our community, what's happening in other states and territories and exposure to different projects and programs that we can learn from.

As we close another remarkable year of operating the Specialist Homelessness Services of Warrina, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my incredible team of staff for their **unwavering commitment** to supporting women and children in our community. Their courage and compassion, continually showing up with respect, kindness and expertise is nothing short of inspiring. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Warrina's senior management and leadership team, whose guidance and encouragement has been instrumental to our success. A special thank you to Charlotte and Sheree who have kept our ship pointing in the right direction during the storms and to all of the Warrina staff that answer our calls and offer support when we need it. The refuge is a busy work environment and at times can be overwhelming and never-ending - it's the support we all provide each other that helps us persevere and continue to speak up for those who have had their voices taken away.

Onwards and upwards.

*Jacq – SHS Coordinator*



## Children & Young People

This year has been one of significant change and growth for the CYP program. With the extension of the SWCYP funding, our team expanded, welcoming two new permanent staff members. This brought our team to a total of three permanent staff, alongside a casual team member. Throughout the year, the team structure evolved, but we remained a cohesive and dedicated unit, committed to supporting the children and families residing at the refuge.

The beginning of the year saw the addition of two permanent staff members, allowing us to provide more specialized support for the young residents. As the year progressed, staffing changes required flexibility, but the team remained unified in its mission to deliver high-quality case management. Currently, we are a team of two permanent staff, continuing to focus on offering individualized support and ensuring a safe, nurturing environment for all those in our care.

The **SWCYP** program is a critical part of our work at Warrina's Domestic and Family Violence Refuge. This program identifies accompanied children and young people in refuge who require specialist support because they have experienced, or are experiencing, **domestic and family violence (DFV)** and are **homeless or at risk of homelessness**. SWCYP workers

provide support either directly within the refuge, through outreach, or by linking families to relevant mainstream or specialist services. Children and young people are recognised as clients in their own right, and support is delivered in a **trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate, and child-centred way**.

Our case management model focuses on **four key domains** of wellbeing: **educational, psychological, physical, and social**. Each child's needs are assessed holistically, and individual case plans are created in consultation with the child (where appropriate), their caregiver, and relevant professionals.

- **Educational Support:** Many children arrive at the refuge after prolonged disruption to their schooling. SWCYP workers assist with enrolling children in local schools or early learning centres, provide advocacy with school staff, and help the child transition smoothly into new learning environments. For example, a child who has missed significant schooling may be supported to re-engage with education through a flexible learning plan, access to tutoring, and direct communication between our team and the school's wellbeing staff to monitor progress and emotional adjustment.
- **Psychological Support:** Children who have experienced DFV often carry trauma that impacts their emotional regulation and sense of safety. SWCYP workers provide emotional support through one-on-one sessions using age-appropriate therapeutic tools such as play, art, and storytelling. Where necessary, children are also referred to specialist services including psychologists, child trauma counsellors, or family therapists. For instance, a child showing signs of anxiety and withdrawal may be linked with a local trauma specialist while continuing to engage with SWCYP staff for regular emotional check-ins and safety planning.
- **Physical Wellbeing:** We support children in accessing general health and developmental care, including doctors, dentists, optometrists, and paediatric specialists. SWCYP workers also provide support in establishing routines around nutrition, sleep, and hygiene—essential components of stability and wellbeing. Children in our care might participate in physical activities such as obstacle courses or group games run in collaboration with local allied health professionals, such as an exercise physiologist, who also helps us identify developmental concerns early.
- **Social Support:** Children who have lived with DFV may struggle with social connection, trust, and confidence. Our program helps them build these skills through structured group play, community-based activities, and safe peer interactions. For example, a child may be encouraged to take part in group art sessions, after-school clubs, or sport as a way of rebuilding self-esteem and developing healthy relationships. We also support families to connect with cultural or community groups, ensuring children maintain links with their identity and community of origin where appropriate.

The SWCYP program is central to providing children with a **sense of stability, agency, and hope** while they are in refuge. Our team works not only with the children but also in partnership with their non-offending parents or caregivers, ensuring a wraparound model that strengthens the entire family unit and supports long-term safety and healing.

## Key Highlights of the Year

### CYP Space @ WROC (Women's Resource and Outreach Centre)

A major accomplishment was the creation of the CYP space at the new Women's Resource and Outreach Centre. Designed as a safe and welcoming environment, this space offers children of all ages a place to engage in activities, feel secure, and connect with others from various backgrounds. The space has proven to be an essential resource, where young residents can express themselves creatively and emotionally, all within a culturally inclusive setting.

### School Holiday Programs and Activities

The school holiday programs provided an opportunity for fun and engaging experiences during the school breaks. These activities allowed the children to develop resilience, self-esteem, and social bonds through creativity, teamwork, and skill development. The programs also served as a chance for families, many of whom are new to the area, to become familiar with the Coffs Harbour community. With the support of staff, families were able to access local events and services that they might not have had the opportunity to engage with otherwise, all in a relaxed and stress-free environment. This initiative helped foster a sense of connection to the broader community while ensuring children continued to receive ongoing emotional support.

### Afternoon Sessions in the Rainbow Room

A key highlight this year was the introduction of several external professionals who contributed their expertise to the Rainbow Room.

We welcomed **Ash from Open Studios**, the first male to be included in the refuge space. A local artist specializing in spray painting and street art, Ash facilitates afternoons with the children that are filled with creativity, conversation, and collaboration. Together with the children, Ash has created signage for the Rainbow Room and is currently running and creating several other creative projects that allow the children to express themselves artistically.

Additionally, **Alex**, an exercise physiologist from *Coffs Kids in Motion*, contributes to physical programs designed to enhance motor skills and physical development. Alex helps CYP staff to facilitate activities such as obstacle courses, pilates, basketball games and much more, ensuring children stay active while also identifying any developmental concerns. She provides valuable referrals to allied health specialists to support the children's ongoing development.

We also introduced a variety of professionals from the **Coffs Coast Education Centre**. These skilled workers, many with experience supporting children with special needs, assisted with the creation and implementation of educational and creative programs. Their involvement has helped create a stimulating and supportive environment where children can develop cognitive, emotional, and social skills.

## **The Refuge Chickens: A Valued Part of Our Environment**

The chickens at the refuge have remained a much-loved and integral part of our community. Their presence offers both educational and emotional benefits to the children, fostering a sense of responsibility, empathy, and connection to the natural world. The children are actively involved in all aspects of their care, including feeding, cleaning their enclosure, and providing general maintenance. This hands-on experience not only teaches our young residents about the importance of emotional regulation and patience but also allows them to witness the direct impact of their care.

Caring for the chickens gives the children a sense of purpose and encourages them to contribute to the refuge environment in a manner that is meaningful and fulfilling. The chickens also provide an opportunity for physical contact and comfort, allowing children to develop a nurturing bond with the animals. These interactions can be soothing and provide emotional support, creating a sense of calm and connection to something outside of themselves.

In addition to caring for the chickens, the children are involved in planting, growing, and picking leafy greens and various vegetables from our veggie patches. This hands-on involvement increases their knowledge in areas such as sustainable living, healthy eating, and the joy of gardening. Through these activities, children learn about the simple yet rewarding process of growing food, cultivating an appreciation for nature, and contributing to the quality of life at the refuge. These experiences help foster a deeper understanding of the environment, self-sufficiency, and the importance of caring for the world around them.

Despite the year's successes, we faced several challenges, primarily stemming from staffing transitions and the adaptation to a new working environment at the Women's Resource and Outreach Centre. However, the team remained flexible and committed to the well-being of the residents. Our continued focus on collaboration, alongside the introduction of new programs and resources, allowed us to adapt to these changes while ensuring that the young people in our care received the support they needed.

As we look to the future, we are excited to build upon the progress made this year. We remain committed to expanding our program offerings, strengthening our community partnerships, and enhancing the support systems available for the families we serve. Our goal is to continue providing a space where children and young people can have ownership, heal, grow, and thrive, despite the challenges they encounter.

This year has marked a period of transformation for the CYP program, with new initiatives, successful collaborations, and valuable additions to the support network for children and families at the refuge. We are deeply grateful for the continued support of our team, volunteers, and community partners, and we look forward to the continued development of our program in the year ahead.

*Skye & Grace – Children and Young People Specialist Workers*



## Housing Support

In 2025, I stepped into the role of Acting Team Leader while continuing as an SHS Housing Specialist Worker. This coincided with the opening of our new premises at 93 West High Street and the launch of the **Women's Resource Outreach Centre (WROC)**—a space that has become a multicultural community hub, and a safe place for women to talk and be supported in a respectful, inclusive, and empowering environment.

I feel incredibly privileged to work alongside a team of SHS CALD , Outreach Support workers, and a CALD peer support worker. Together, we bring language skills, cultural knowledge, and lived experience to our work, connecting with women from diverse backgrounds including Egyptian, Kurdish, Arabic, Amharic, Tigrigna, French, Spanish, and Serbian. Our work is guided by acceptance, respect and cultural understanding.

One of my favourite parts of the week is the Cook and Share group on Fridays, where more than 25 women gather to cook, share food, and share their lives. The room is often filled with laughter, music, stories, and sometimes tears. It is a powerful reminder of resilience, courage, and the strength of community. Beyond this, there is growing engagement with multicultural programs and partnerships in the community.

As the Housing Worker, I continue to work alongside women and their children, who have been able to move from crisis accommodation into transitional or medium-term housing, taking important steps towards stability, safety, and rebuilding their lives.

Warrina manages 13 transitional properties in partnership with Women's Housing Ltd, Community Housing Ltd, and Mission Australia. These homes offer medium-term stability with wraparound support, enabling women to rebuild their lives and move toward long-term housing. I also maintain strong relationships with real estate agents and housing providers to advocate for women facing systemic barriers and stigma.

This year we have seen 2 families exit Women's housing properties after 5 years, and 2 new families have entered into new lease agreements. We have also had movement with our Community Housing properties, where 2 families have been permanently housed, and 1 large family has just been offered a 4 br property in Nambucca Heads. There is also a pending vacancy at a transitional Mission Australia property.

These housing movements involve quite considerable advocacy and negotiation with the local housing providers. A particularly successful outcome was achieved through strong advocacy with the Aboriginal Housing Office, where a large family residing at the Refuge was offered a brand new 4-bedroom stand-alone property in Coffs Harbour.

I am fortunate to be able to participate in the monthly Housing Partnership Meeting, which allows me to collaborate with other housing providers, share knowledge, and advocate for women with complex needs. These meetings strengthen partnerships and ensure women have access to safe, sustainable housing pathways. Further to this, it has allowed for services to actively participate and give input to The City of Coffs Harbour Homelessness Strategy and Homelessness Policy. As a result of my meeting with a Councillor at the 7th National Housing and Homelessness Forum, which I was privileged to attend in May this year, I was able to advocate for this vital process of community engagement.

One woman's journey over the past few years demonstrates the importance of this support. She first came to our refuge after leaving a violent relationship, struggling with addiction and the parental loss of her children. The refuge gave her safety and stability, and the chance to begin her recovery. She was able to successfully complete detox and rehab. She was then able to move into transitional housing, where she focused on maintaining her sobriety, rebuilding confidence, developing tenancy skills and building upon her positive parenting strategies

Over time, two of her children were restored to her care, and she has now secured permanent social housing, providing her family with a safe and stable home. Her journey, from refuge, to transitional housing, and finally to permanent housing, highlights the vital role of long-term, supported pathways in helping women heal, recover, and rebuild their families. Importantly, it also gave her the space to focus on the true reasons she wanted to maintain her sobriety.

Transitional housing is a pathway to safety, independence, and wellbeing. My work involves walking alongside the woman and her children over a long period of time, and because of this I am privileged to be able to witness women regain their confidence. I have witnessed women overcoming dependency, gaining employment, and successfully gaining tertiary education degrees.

I am truly inspired by the courage of the women and children that I walk alongside with, and my hope for them is always to be able to reclaim their sense of self-worth and break down the cycle of violence and homelessness.

### *Diana - DFV Caseworker & Specialist Housing Support*



Women's Resource  
& Outreach Centre



## Coffs-Clarence Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service

I would like to acknowledge the 103 women and 16 children that were killed in Australia in 2024.

This year all Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services (WDVCAS) received an increase in base funding to acknowledge the huge increase in demand for our service over the years. This meant that we were able to employ another 35 hour a week position which has been allocated to the Grafton office. WDVCAS's throughout the state also received ongoing funding for a hearing support position, which was originally only funded as a pilot.

### Staffing

In January this year, Helen, the Safety Action Meeting(SAM) Coordinator in Grafton, retire from the sector after being with our service since 2016. Helen was also employed at the Clarence River SHS service for 8 years previously. Congratulations to Helen and we all wish for her health and happiness.

Carrie was the successful applicant for the SAM position in Grafton and is truly amazing in her new role. We also welcomed Sharon on board as the DV Specialist worker in Grafton who has brought great knowledge and skills from her previous work in the DV sector.

Tash went on early parental leave in August and we are blessed to have a beautiful little woman who couldn't wait to arrive. Tash returned to the team in April, and we were so happy to have her back.

Lorraine resigned in November to return to her homeland in Ireland. We were fortunate enough to be able to offer the position to Stacey who has years of previous experience working in the homelessness sector. In December we also welcomed Marie to the team, then leaving in April as she was offered other employment in the local courts.

### A little bit of Data

Coffs-Clarence WDVCAS received **3,654** referrals through DV Connect, which is the electronic platform to receive and action referrals for the period. It is noted that Coffs Harbour received 2,361 and Grafton 1,293. There are only 2 staff covering Grafton, Carrie and Sharon, so a big shout out goes to them both in their ability to manage the workload. Of course, the team in Coffs are always available to lend a hand, however often Carrie and Sharon manage all the referrals and have Grafton and Maclean courts to manage as well. The additional team member for the Grafton office will therefore be very welcome to help spread the workload.

Our service received an additional **253** referrals from external agencies/services (other than police), including Community Corrections, Warrina DFVSS, Health services, Pete's Place, Legal Aid DV unit, and Uniting Brighter Futures. External services/agencies often call or email with information regarding client being referred and support required. Most services are being directed as well as encouraged to use the WDVCAS referral form, in particularly if referring to the Safety Action Meetings (SAM). The exception is often made for Pete's

place as it is a very busy homelessness service and has limited resources and staffing to complete the WDV CAS referral form. Use of the form ensures all relevant information is provided and the appropriate response/s actioned. The use of the referral form is particularly necessary for SAMs referrals where client consent has not been obtained to ensure that referrer has assessed at serious threat and consent is not required as per Part 13A of the Crimes Act.

Manual referrals are created within DFV Connect and support needs addressed within 24 hours of receiving the referral as are referrals received from police.

### Life at Court

List days in Coffs harbour have at times been very challenging over the year. The Domestic Violence Officer has taken a very rigid and inflexible stance against varying or changing ADVO conditions. He advocates against Protected People, ie our clients, attending court and mostly declines to engage with them when they do. This has resulted in an increase in demand on our service to support a higher number of clients in lodging their own application to vary with the court. These applications however are nearly always opposed by the police and then dismissed by the magistrate. In the past 6 months alone we have supported clients with over one hundred applications to vary orders.

The number of misidentified primary aggressors is increasing steadily resulting in our team supporting a growing number of clients as defendants or with Cross ADVO's. This is a disappointing challenge requiring many hours of staff time advocating on behalf of our clients to police with limited success. These women are further disadvantaged by the lack of representation when the court matters are ADVO only matters, with Legal Aid and the Aboriginal Legal Service only giving advice and not offering representation in court. Their trauma is further exacerbated where criminal charges are pressed with the consistent approach by solicitors being to plead guilty and hope to get a Community Release Order with a non-conviction for efficiency sake. While this approach may resolve matters more efficiently, it often undermines justice and fails to acknowledge the client's experience as a victim-survivor.

As a result, many clients have expressed a loss of trust and confidence in the justice system. A growing number have reported that they will no longer seek police assistance, citing previous experiences where police intervention in domestic and family violence situations made their circumstances worse. This erosion of trust not only impacts individual safety but also contributes to broader community reluctance to engage with law enforcement, further entrenching cycles of violence and disadvantage.

*Wendy – Coffs-Clarence WDV CAS Manager*



## Family Advocacy Support Services (FASS)

### Leonie

Leonie is the sole worker in this magnificent service funded by the Commonwealth. The FASS supports women who are facing at times many years in the Family Law courts, which is beyond the capacity of one person. Legal Aid NSW are lobbying for further funding however we recognise that it may take some time to reach any successful outcome.

Most court appearances are occurring via video link either in solicitors' offices or in the FASS office, however there have been a number of longer hearings where Leonie has attended in the Family Law Court in Coffs Harbour. Leonie has developed great working relationships with local and out of area Family Law solicitors and barristers, as well as the Senior Registrar and the Family Court and security staff.

The FASS offer pre-court support for assisting in preparing, printing and typing affidavits, referrals for legal representations as well as liaising with the courts regarding client safety. The FASS has also assisted several clients with dash cams, laptop computers and vouchers for financial assistance for themselves or their children. Leonie is also available for emotional support for the handing down of Family Reports and/or Child Impact reports that can be extremely confronting and sometimes not favourable to our clients.

FASS receive referrals via DV Connect as well as the Early Intervention Unit and Domestic Violence Unit with Legal Aid; Warrina services; Clarence River SHS services; NSW Health; both the Registrar and Senior Registrar within the Family Law Court and local Family Law solicitors.

FASS has made referrals on behalf of clients to Shark Cage; Circle of Security; Warrina for outreach or case management support; and Mission Australia. The service has also assisted clients with Start Safely applications, Escaping Violence Payments, Victims of Crime counselling and Immediate Needs Support packages as appropriate.

Several barriers have been identified including long waiting lists due to a lack of availability of DV Specific Victims of Crime Counsellors. There is a shortage of specialist counsellors who will see children without insisting that both parents sign consent or suggesting they come back after family law process is complete. In addition most counsellors won't see children under 10. The lack of affordable housing continues to compound the difficulties encountered by the women accessing FASS services.



## Case Management

### Jodie and Jo

The WDVCS case management team comprising Jodie and Jo are based in the Coffs Harbour office. This financial year has supported 54 women for an average of a 6-month period with most referrals have been identified by the SAM coordinator or the WDVCS team as needing ongoing case management due to the complexity of their needs and/or being assessed as under Serious Threat. Some referrals have also come through Leonie, our Family Advocacy Support worker following discussions with key team members.

Safety planning is a priority and generally assessed and completed during the initial stages of case management. We then focus on financial supports such as Escaping Violence Payments (EVP) and Victims of Crime applications where needed. Counselling options are explored and encouraged, and where consent is obtained referrals are made to appropriate therapists. The other key areas of focus for support include housing, financial resilience, health (including regular emotional support) and education.

Safe and secure housing is regularly identified as an area of need, and we strive to support our women to support stability in this essential but challenging area in the current environment. Jo and Jodie assist with connecting women to the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service, advocate directly with real estates around rental arrears and/or DFV related damage as well as housing transfers.

We also advocate with childcare centres to waiver outstanding childcare fees if our client is left with joint debts and unable to maintain rent and cost of living during separation.

We also provide domestic and family violence education for women. This can include assisting them in accessing resources, educational discussions during case management meetings, as well as referrals and participation in the Shark Cage program run across all of the programs at Warrina.

## Local Co-ordination Point

### Coffs Harbour Safety Action Meeting (SAM) Coordinator - Nat

The Safety Action Meetings are continuing to operate effectively, resulting in creative and comprehensive safety action plans. SAM's continue to be held every fortnight in Coffs Harbour and Grafton. Attendance by stakeholders has remained consistent with continued dedication and professionalism. This commitment provides a platform for rapid and integrated responses in effectively reducing risk for victims on the SAM.

SAM continues to see an increase in referrals from external agencies. This is assisting in closing the gap for women who are hesitant to report DFV to police. The background, experience and knowledge of the team members bring exceptional professionalism and ethical practice in this space. The team functions within a cohesive and supportive environment. This allows for creative, thorough, and streamlined safety action plans which provide the best outcome for clients and their children.

## FEEDBACK

### Well-Deserved Pat-On-The -Back:

*“Dear XXXXX, my name is XXXXX, in January this year I had the pleasure of meeting XXXXX under grim circumstances.*

*I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for the exceptional support XXXXX has provided me, her expertise, help, kind and calm words, her advice and assistance has made a very significant impact for me. I truly appreciate XXXXX help throughout this very difficult and dark time, I wanted to ensure her efforts are acknowledged and recognised and to pass on my sincere gratitude. Thankyou Helen from the bottom of my heart. and to thank you Wendy for having such a warm hearted and dedicated team members.”*

### And another one from WDVCA Unit:

*“Dear Wendy*

*Hope this finds you well.*

*I’m writing to pass on some lovely feedback that I received from a client of yours called XXXXX*

*I met XXXXX through work, and she asked me to pass on her thanks to you and your team. She said the support she has received from the WDVCA has been fantastic, despite the Police not taking action in relation to her matter.*

*Well done to the team!*

*Kind regards”*

### From the Team:

*“What I enjoy about the job is the people I work with foremost. Coming to work is like coming to another family that I can laugh with and whinge to and know that it is all taken in a positive way. The system is frustrating at the best of times, the women we support are at most possibly the hardest point in their lives and when they come to our office one of the most consistent comments made is how homely it feels. To have women come to our space and feel comfortable, supported and feeling better than when they came in I think is a testament to our work culture.*

*In my role I have flexibility with times to start and finish, I feel heard with my suggestions and endless support from my team. I am very grateful that I found the role that I have within the WDVCA team”. Jodie*

*"What I most enjoy about my job.... Is that I get to spend everyday with my Sistas/family"*  
*“One thing I’ve come to value in my role as Grafton SAM Coordinator is seeing the collaborative effort across our local services in action. I wasn’t sure how changes would land with members who had been attending the SAM for years and were used to a certain way of doing things. But instead, I was met with genuine engagement and a shared openness to new ways of working. It’s incredibly rewarding to know that the collective work we’re doing is actually helping to increase safety and support women and their children.”*

*“I feel fortunate that my role as WDVCS DFV specialist worker provides opportunities to share in the stories and experiences of women from diverse backgrounds. It is far from boring work and keeps me interested and learning.*

*Stories shared can be traumatic and the work can be chaotic and stressful at times. I feel blessed to have a supportive team and organisation. There is always space in the team for debriefing and real and useful ideas offered when faced with challenges in the work.*

*Listening to women’s stories of resourcefulness and bravery in navigating difficult and scary situations within frustrating systems can at times be awe inspiring and uplifting. Talking through what often has just occurred but maybe a pattern that has occurred for many years or generationally clearly has the potential to make a difference both small and big in people's lives. We can provide practical support and assist in navigating and understanding the complex systems. What is most rewarding is when bit by bit, little bit at a time you can hear and see change towards healing, self-belief and hope for a safe and happy life.*

*As Jelena Dokic states “if we can be open about our pain and experiences, maybe we have a chance to create a world with less pain, more love, support and understanding. Ultimately a better world”.*

Anonymous

*“It’s a privilege working within the Coffs/Clarence WDVCS team.*

*Let’s face it we spend more time in our working environments than we do in our own homes and with our families.*

*WDVCAS is a highly demanding job, we deal with some very intense and sad situations. Hear and listen to victims that have been through traumatic situations, all the while trying to provide support and providing vital information regarding court proceedings, what will happen next and still hold these victims through their most vulnerable moments.*

*It's a rare position working with colleagues that are more like family (sisters).*

*The support and safety of our team is amazing. Each day I feel blessed to work with these inspiring, caring and supportive women. All are working with women that are experiencing crisis and trauma and are still able to support and hold each other. Truly Blessed.”*

*“As a newish member to this wonderful team WDVCS, I wanted to share how collaboratively both teams work to create an encouraging and positive framework for the betterment of all women that cross our paths daily. A special mention for the management team that continues to support and encourage myself and I am sure all the team to work with dedication and drive for a stronger future for this service. It is a privilege to be a part of the WDVCS team.”*

*‘Vulnerability is not weakness; it’s our greatest measure of courage’*

*- Brene Brown*

As I reflect on another 12 months of our program passing, I am filled with pride at the achievements of my team, in the work we do and the outcomes we continue to achieve daily in this challenging field of work. Working with men who have used hurt and harm in their relationships can be a personal journey of its own, and yet my team continue to lean in with courage and find new and innovative ways to open safe spaces for men seeking to make a change in their lives. As a collective, Safer Futures remains focused on contributing to Warrina’s vision of all women and children living free of violence and abuse by increasing the ways we can work at the source of DFV. We continue to share our work and wisdom in this space with the community to promote respect and equality in relationships and to hold men to account for their own journey of change towards non-violence.

To my growing team Charna, John, Bianca, Doug, Tom, Hazel, Talea, Jo, Jeremy and Agah – It has again been my privilege to share your journey of growth and development both professionally and personally. I am proud of how you all commit to evolve in ways that embody the ethical lives we hope to invite men to engaging in. You demonstrate that vulnerability is safe, and change is a journey worth taking. The way you support and guide each other is the true strength of our program, individually you are inspiring and together your strength is boundless. I value and appreciate the support you have provided me as a leader to navigate what has been a challenging year. Thankyou each of you.

### Safer Futures Men’s Behaviour Change Program

Safer Futures is a registered Men’s Behaviour Change Program (MBCP) that offers an opportunity for men to learn about their use of harmful behaviour in relationships. Through engagement with the program men explore their choice to use violence and abuse towards women and the impact of their behaviour on them. Through curious reflection men are guided to learn more about the harmful attitudes and beliefs they hold that underpin their behaviour. They also learn ways to be a safe and respectful partner, father, man and community member so that they build the knowledge and capacity to see equality in relationships as essential to the safety and wellbeing of women and children and for themselves.

At Safer Futures, the safety of women and children is paramount, and so our Women & Children’s Advocate plays a pivotal role not only by offering support to women who have a current or former partner in our program, but in guiding the work we do. Women are offered an invitational space, reinforcing their autonomy and choice to engage in this journey. We respect and value the insight offered by our Women and Children’s Advocate ensuring that women’s voices are always at the centre of the work we do at Safer Futures.

During the financial year we have received 132 referrals for men to engage in the Safer Futures Program. 83 of these referrals accepted the opportunity to attend an intake and assessment meeting to explore their readiness for this journey. 46 men completed their intake, assessment and pre-group requirements and proceeded to a group space. Of the 5 groups we delivered during the financial year, 26 men completed all requirements of the full group program. There are also currently 18 men engaged in the group-work phase of their journey across the two groups currently being delivered.

These numbers are reflective of the non-linear aspect of men's journeys towards non-violence. Quite often men are embarking on their change journey with external motivations of compliance and find that the internal reflection required for this space is too confronting or shame is experienced to painfully and it is not yet their time so they may disengage at any stage along our program continuum. We offer spaces of compassionate accountability and respect, so that men who are not yet ready for this journey can still experience a positive encounter in their attempt and are more likely to return when the time is right.

We also leave space for this for the women and children in their lives, as many of them have yet to be visible in our service system and once men engage in their first intake meeting, an internal referral is activated to our Women's and Children's Advocate. The space offered by Charna focuses on empowerment for women and their children, as she invites them to honour her with a space in their journey supporting them to increased safety and wellbeing. Charna has also offered her practice wisdom through mentoring of Talea who joined our Women and Children's Advocacy space during the year. Thank you for sharing your expertise and guiding Talea to build her knowledge and skills in this work. Charna has contributed to this report sharing her experiences and work that we are always grateful for.

### Safer Futures – Tailored for Change Project

Throughout the year our team continued to explore ways of increasing the accessibility of our program to support people living with a cognitive impairment. Under Round 2 of the NSW MBCP Development Grants we have been able to build on the work we undertook in the previous financial year to further extend and shape our work to provide an opportunity of meaningful engagement in the learnings of our MBCP for this priority group. We continued to work closely with our inspirational local occupational therapist, Luisa Eckhardt, from *iThrive Occupational Therapy* who further guided us with her expertise to explore ways of adjusting our program and our practices to support men living with a cognitive impairment to access the learnings of our program. Luisa - we have felt honoured to share in your wisdom and unwavering passion to address barriers for people living with a disability. You are truly valued.

As part of this project, we delivered a further 2 trial adapted group-based programs for men living with a cognitive impairment resulting from a brain injury, complex PTSD or they lived with a brain neurodiversity such as ASD or ADHD. These groups are run on a Monday morning and comprise of no more than 7 men. We recently commenced a third trial near the end of the financial year, so that by the completion of our second round of this grant we will have been able to trial our initiative 4 times, gathering valuable information about what can work to support this priority population to access much needed learning for themselves and the women and children in their lives.

As part of this project, we also developed a series of resources to support the delivery of the adapted program, including a *Participant Workbook* that is used for the individualised delivery of the program to men who are assessed as unsuitable to undertake this learning in a group space due to barriers arising from their cognitive impairment. Another resource developed in this process was a *Woman and Children's Advocacy Guide*, which provides guidance and information in delivering advocacy support to women who have partners or former partners engaged in the program. We also commenced the process for registration for our adapted program with the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). We are hoping for a positive outcome to this later in the next financial year.

### Community Engagement Highlights

Across the financial year Safer Futures continued to engage in our community in a variety of ways, supporting our focus on collaborative ways of work and increasing awareness on the importance of working at the source of DFV through Men's Behaviour Change.

This year our team again had the privilege of presenting at the *Mid North Coast DFV is Everyone's Business Community Conference* during the 16 Days of Activism. Our staff also attended the Conference and engaged in a valuable development opportunity from speakers such as Michael Flood and Ashlee Donovan. During the conference, Doug and I delivered 3 break out workshops focusing on centring women and children's safety in the work we do with men. We provided a taste of the work we do with men in the group space, highlighting the central voice of women's experience.



It was such an amazing opportunity to share the work we are so passionate about and invite people to consider the work we do as integral to the compliment of interventions necessary to end men's use of violence. We even managed to snag a pic or two with Michael Flood, one even made the local paper!

Safer Futures also hosted training again from the NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence, being the '*Essential Skills in Working with Male Family Violence*'. Our team collaborated with ECAV staff and promoted the opportunity throughout the mid-north

coast, then hosted this training virtually, which meant that practitioners from some of our neighbouring rural areas could access the learning without the costs of travel. We maintain a commitment to offering our community opportunities to develop their skills in opening safe and accountable spaces for men using DFV. After advertising this opportunity, ECAV received an overwhelming positive response that resulted in them allocating a second set of facilitators so that two groups of the training could be run concurrently over the two days. I attended both groups during the delivery of these sessions and spoke with them about Safer Futures, Warrina and our work in MBCP.

Additionally, our team attended numerous forums, committee meetings and stakeholder engagement opportunities throughout the year sharing information about our program and our enthusiasm for the work. This has included the Coffs Coast Committee Against DFV and the Coffs Family Interagency meetings, the Coffs Harbour Local Court Users forum, Coffs Coast International Women's Day Breakfast, Family Pathways Network Annual Conference, NAIDOC week Aboriginal Health Forum, Community Corrections Day Breakfast and the St John Paul College Charity Golf Day. We have also engaged in service introductions at Wellways- Health Matters, Medicate Mental Health Centre, Sawtell and Dorrigo Rotary Community Meetings, and students undertaking various courses at the Coffs Harbour TAFE. Throughout the year I also continued my duties as one of the NSW Men's Behaviour Change Network's Co-Chairs facilitating bi-monthly state network meetings and supporting the development of a MBC Position Statement that reflects the work we do, our intentions and our framework of action.



During the year our team also finalised the implementation of our contractual reporting data system, along with our primary risk assessment framework to ensure ongoing compliance as a program. We underwent our re-registration process, a tedious task providing evidence of our compliance with the NSW Practice Standards for MBCP and we are proud to confirm we remain a registered MBCP provider till 2028 when our next review

takes place. Our team has also commenced a journey towards designing a custom-built client record management system with an amazing stakeholder, which will streamline many of our processes and support long term sustainability of our program.

It has been my privilege to work another year with my inspiring team, always dedicated to exploring new and innovative ways to address DFV in our community. This year we welcomed new staff with John, Bianca, Talea and Agah joining our team, all bringing their own strength and passion contributing to the rich tapestry of skills, knowledge and experience we have at Safer Futures. We also farewelled Hazel and Jo as they stepped away from our space each to bring new life in the world, adding to the blessings we share in our journeys together in our space.

Each day my team come to work, they bring courage, persistence, innovation and most importantly they bring their hearts. Thank you for the authentic ways you offer yourselves in our work. It is through your compassion, that men in our community have a safe space to explore the darkness within and find ways to let go and invite space for equality for the women and children in their lives.

Thank you also to Charlotte for your leadership and guidance throughout the year, you are inspiring, and we are grateful you see our strengths and honour our work the way you do. Thank you also to Michele, Helen and Sheree who are always focused on ensuring our organisation has the stable ground we need for our work. Your efforts in the background are always noticed and valued.

## Safer Futures Women & Children's Advocate

*"The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not on fighting the old, but building the new" - Socrates*

I would like to take this time to extend, on behalf of myself and our entire team, our deepest and most sincere gratitude to Renee, our coordinator. Renee your valuable time, energy, compassion, understanding and expertise you bring to your workdays is truly exceptional and it sets an admirable example for all of us, in your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts and support you provide us never goes unnoticed we promise you that. Time and again, you go above and beyond, always ensuring we have access to the right training, the resources and information we need to flourish in our respective roles. Your ability to balance your own demanding workload and responsibilities while remaining present and attentive to us is nothing short of remarkable, the way you foster a work environment that is not only positive and collaborative but also inclusive and empowering, allows us to all learn, grow, and achieve more together. We are profoundly blessed to have your steady guidance and inspirational leadership steering our team and your steadfast commitment is a cornerstone of our continued success.

Charlotte, words cannot fully express my gratitude towards you, your constant presence, support, time, your willingness to listen, debrief and your mentorship means the absolute world to me as you do and for that I am forever grateful.

To my colleagues at Safer Futures, it is truly an honour to work alongside you, every day, I witness your unwavering commitment to the safety and wellbeing of women and children, and your dedication to our shared mission continually inspires me. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your endless support and inclusiveness whilst I have had to navigate a challenging time with my health and not been physically present in our workspace; our unity and camaraderie make this team an extraordinary place to be, and I look forward to our journey moving forward.

My appreciation also extends to my colleagues at Warrina, thank you for the invaluable time you dedicate to our shared efforts, whether we are coordinating cases, strategizing for safety, engaging in risk management discussions, or simply supporting one another through the complexities of our work and life, please know your generosity and valuable time is deeply appreciated, and I do not take our time together for granted.

The privilege of walking alongside women and children as they navigate their unique journeys within our program is both profound and humbling and we approach this responsibility with reverence and purpose, recognising that their first connection with us often occurs over the phone, during a moment that can be vulnerable and transformative. It is essential that we create an environment that is invitational, safe, and empathetic from the very first interaction and by centering our practice in trauma-informed and client-focused principles, we strive to be sensitive to everyone's individual needs, and we continue to remain steadfast in our commitment to our ongoing professional development.

By uplifting the voices of women, and through them, those of their children, we honour the depth and complexity of their lived experiences and we acknowledge the far-reaching impact of a men's choice to use violence and abuse as we try to empower those we support to share their stories, validate their feelings, and begin a journey towards healing and resilience and it is through continuous safety planning and thorough risk assessments, we protect those who entrust us with their stories, always meeting them where they are at and allowing their needs and choices to guide the work we do.

#### Positive feedback from clients and stakeholders

Stakeholder feedback provided after the Women and Children's Advocate panel at the NSW MBC Network Meeting:

*"Charna your words were like poetry or a mantra for keeping women and children safe!"*

Client feedback -

*"My family are I have been so lucky having Charna in our lives, her commitment to the wellbeing of my family has been amazing".*

*" Now, this is both too easy and a little hard; hard because there is not enough words I could string together to justify the kind of support Charna has given me over the years....Yes*

*years... I can truly say there is no way I would have been able to keep fighting what I have been dealt without her by my side... ”.*

### Safer Futures Men’s Behaviour Change Program

This year we received 82 referrals from the men’s intakes which ultimately gave us the names of 132 women and we continued to walk alongside 38 women whose partners had previously been involved in Safer Futures groups, meeting them where they were at with support or referral moving forward, these numbers consisted of 49 current partners, 120 former partners, and 1 family member and through their voices was the voices of 299 children and of those women 4 were pregnant.

*Renee – Safer Futures Co-ordinator*



## Staying Home Leaving Violence

Warrina Staying Home Leaving Violence (SHLV) is a specialised DFV program that is designed to assist women and their children to stay safely in their own home or a home of their choice after leaving a violent relationship.



Jo, Talea, Ruthie and Bianca

*“A house where a woman is unsafe is not a home”  
- Women in Liberia*

In delivery of the Staying Home Leaving Violence program staff focus on 4 pillars:

1. **MAXIMISING WOMAN’S SAFETY** – the initial focus of all referrals is to assess immediate safety concerns or needs. SHLV staff undertake a thorough face to face intake with clients, including safety planning discussions. Clients are offered a home safety Audit as part of the safety planning process these are generally undertaken at the client’s residence but can be undertaken remotely when necessary. The result of the home Safety Assessment is that SHLV can provide brokerage in the form of security upgrades to increase client safety in the home of their choice.
2. **A CO-ORDINATED OR INTEGRATED RESPONSE** – partnering with local services to best address individual client’s needs.
3. **SAFE AT HOME AS A HOMELESS PREVENTION STRATEGY** –Providing support for women to maintain their housing or seek alternative accommodation of their choice in the community of their choice.
4. **ENHANCING WOMEN’S ECONOMIC SECURITY** -helping clients to maintain security in employment or study, maintaining security in education/childcare for children and assisting women to develop financial literacy.

Security upgrades we have provided include:

- External Lock Changes
- Doorbell Cameras
- Sensor Lights
- Meter Box Keys
- Wireless Eufy Security Cameras
- Padlocks
- Dash-Cams

- Safe phones
- Safe Rooms
- Window and Door alarms

### MCare personal alarm devices

These devices are easy to use and include a quick SOS activation feature which makes calling for help simple and effective. Our service operates with 2 Mcare Watches and 5 pendants They available on loan to clients generally for a period of 3-6 months during times of increased serious risk.

### Case Management and Case Co-ordination

Total Clients for 2024-2025 = 157

Service Type	SHLV 2024-2025 KPI's	Services Provided in 2024-2025
Case Management (primary victim)	40	73
Case Co-ordination	15	84
Direct Services to Child	20	29
Brokerage	40	138
Educational Activities	4	8

### Agency Collaboration and Co-ordination

On the 25<sup>th</sup> October 2024 Kate and I both attended Reclaim the night, what a magical experience to walk alongside these warrior women advocating for safety in our community.



On the 7 November 2024 SHLV staff along with other Warrina Warriors hosted an exhibitor stall at Feel the Vibe '24: Feel the Vibe is dedicated to addressing the gaps in sexuality, sexual health, and sexual fulfillment education for people with disability. The expo featured exhibitor stalls, adult product displays, and entertainment, all within a safe, engaging, and supportive environment. With a goal of Increase Community Awareness: Help challenge myths and taboos surrounding sexuality and disability.



On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2025 Ruth attended Ti Tree Gaagal Wanggan women's Well Being Day sponsored by Jaanyмили Bawrurunga, NSW Health held at Gaagal Wangaan National Park. 50 ladies attended from Nambucca valley LGA and had the opportunity to participate in cultural workshops including weaving, painting, Gumbaynggirr language lessons and native foods.



On 1 June 2025 SHLV staff attended Bellingen Community Services Day. There were approximately 20 stall holders, and the day was well attended by the Bellingen community. Workers gained valuable information and were forwarded networking opportunities with other service providers



Our Team Leader Jo braved the cold and attended the 2025 C.ex Community Sleep Out held at C.ex International Stadium on Wednesday 25 June 2025.



Naidoc Celebration Macksville High School

## Family and Domestic Violence Education

**Breaking Dawn Art Therapy Group** ran for 6 weeks commencing on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The group was facilitated by Tania and Heidi at ReCreate Art Therapy and supported by our SHLV Team Leader – Jo.

People can use art therapy to explore their emotions, understand conflicts, or feelings that are causing them distress, and use the art to help them find resolutions to those issues.

The underlying concepts are that in expressive arts therapies, people can understand and respond to their emotions and thoughts with a valuable new perspective, and that artistic expression is good for mental health.

Clients don't have to think of themselves as creative or artistic to benefit.

The art therapist will guide the client through expressing themselves through art, usually by asking questions, and discuss the results of both of their art and what the client felt



## Client Testimonial

*“The information and beauty that there needs to be a fundamental reconnection between my head/body feelings and emotions. the need to be whole.*

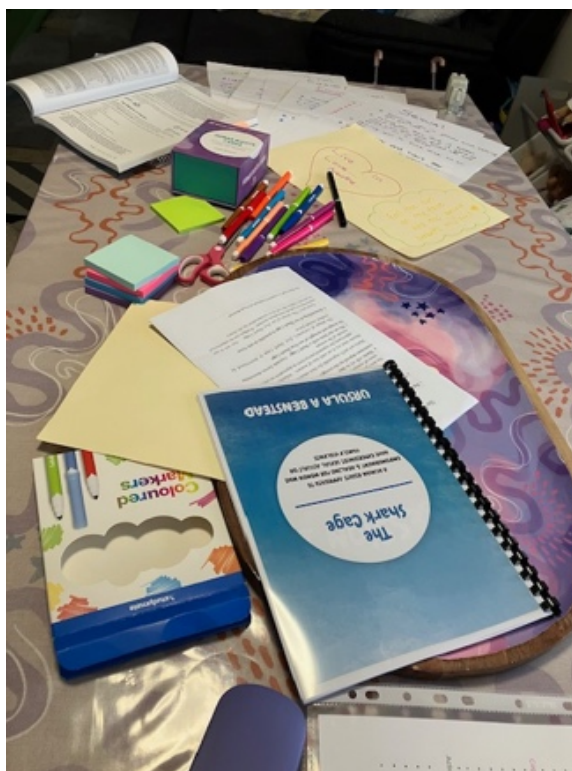
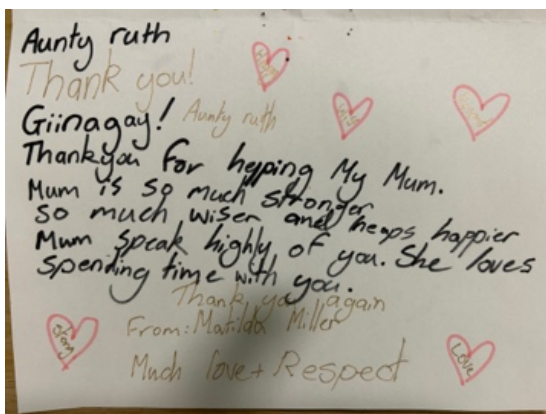
*I would recommend this group it is so needful in a cruel-sometimes unfair world. Just to know – it’s not always their fault.*

*I would recommend doing both sharkcage and this course. Doing them alongside is very beneficial helps you along your journey.*

*Everything everyone was lovely activities were really good and seemed to cater for every part of me emotionally, my senses, my thought processes too many to name.”*

## Shark Cage

All SHLV case managers attended Foundational Shark Cage training throughout the year which provides a practical framework for prevention and addressing re-victimisation in Girls and Women. Staff have delivered both as an individual program and as a group program.



**Testimonial from client of SHLV who attended Group Program**

*I was excited to learn I was accepted into the Shark Cage Program. I had experienced a lifetime of domestic abuse which I saw very little hope of ever escaping and having the peace I desperately longed for.*

*In our first session of Shark Cage, I realised that I was about to undergo a phenomenal change.*

*Throughout the weeks I began to understand how I could create and maintain the safety I deserve. I discovered boundaries and how to hold them. I listened to the experiences of the other women. I cried with them and for them, I no longer felt alone in my journey.*

*Finding laughter and strength in their insights and sharing our pain. A healing space, the relief of being seen and heard!*

*Shark Cage is more than a program of learning. It is a foundation of knowledge which has empowered me to be able to make real change in my everyday life not just for myself but for my children also.*

## Service delivery to children

In January 2025 SHLV enrolled with **Zephyr Education Pty Ltd**, who are a charity organisation founded in 2013 with a mission to help children whose education has been disrupted by domestic and family violence make as smooth a transition as possible to their new school. With the assistance of Zephyr we have been able to provide the chn in our program with school related supplies including uniforms, hats, school shoes and socks, hats, backpacks, water bottles, lunchboxes, pens, pencils and other stationary items.

**BLOSSOM BAGS** have been created for pre-schoolers, primary chn K-4, tweens and teens. The bags were developed with the intention of showing the chn in our program that they are special and that they matter whilst also meeting some immediate needs. Each item in the bags has been specially selected



**Sensory toys** – when bigger movements like taking a walk aren't a possibility or don't feel safe a squishy toy to hold in our hands to touch manipulate and squeeze can be a grounding experience

**Book** – The Invisible String /The Shadow that Follows.  
Redirecting or focussing our attention into engaging books helps us to get some distance from the trauma trigger to enable our brains and bodies to shift gears decompress and relax.



**Blank journal or scrapbook for processing** – enables the mind to dump out the thoughts inside and make sense of what needs to be processed.



**Art Supplies** – an outlet to channel the expression of our experiences can be therapeutic through allowing the body to release held sensations and to ground us in the present moment.

**Soft toy** – when big emotions are present a soft toy to cuddle can help calm little bodies and slow thoughts.

**Throw blanket** – having a blanket to wrap around our bodies can feel like a hug which helps to ground children and slow their bodies down

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the entire **SHLV team** for the tireless effort you put into supporting Victim Survivors, each one of you is extremely valued. This year we welcomed Ruth and Bianca to the team. Special mention goes to Skye who has moved to the Warrina SWCYP role and doing amazing work in this space and Kaitlyn Whyte who left the organisation for personal reasons.

We would also like to acknowledge our CEO Charlotte Young and the Board of management for all their support throughout the year.

*Jo – SHLV Team Leader*



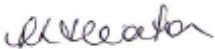
**DIRECTORS' DECLARATION**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

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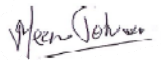
The director's of the co-operative declare that:

1. the financial statements and notes, as set out in pages 5 to 17, are in accordance with the Co-operatives National Law and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and:
  - (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Co-operatives Regulations; and
  - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the co-operative;
2. the financial statement and notes comply with International Financial Reporting Standards as disclosed in Note 1 to the financial statements; and
3. in the director's opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the co-operative will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors



Sandra Heaton  
Chairperson



Meena Johnson  
Treasurer

Dated: 19 November 2025

**WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**ABN 17 299 668 457**

**DIRECTORS REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

**Operating Results**

The surplus of the co-operative for the 2025 financial year, after providing for income tax, amounted to \$246,063 (2024 surplus: \$13,564).

**Dividends Paid or Recommended**

In accordance with the co-operative's rules, no amount may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by the way of dividend, bonus or otherwise out of retained earnings to the members of the co-operative.

No dividends were paid or recommended during the financial year.

**Review of Operations**

The results of the operations of the co-operative during the financial year are summarised as follows:

*Financial Performance*

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Revenue	4,870,563	4,577,836
Expenses	(5,116,626)	(4,564,272)
Surplus before income tax expense	(246,063)	13,564
Income tax expense	-	-
Surplus after income tax expense	(246,063)	13,564

*Financial Position*

The net equity of the co-operative has decreased by \$246,063 from \$1,831,634 as at 30 June 2024 to \$1,585,571 as at 30 June 2025.

**Significant Changes in State of Affairs**

There were no significant changes in the state of affairs of the co-operative during the financial year.

**Events after the Reporting Period**

There are no matters or circumstances that have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the co-operative, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the co-operative in future financial years.

**Future Developments, Prospects and Business Strategies**

The co-operative will continue to conduct its current activities and review opportunities for expansion as they arise.

**Environmental Issues**

The co-operatives operations are not regulated by any significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or of a state or territory.

**Emoluments or Entitlements of Directors**

No director has received or become entitled to receive, during or since the financial year, a benefit because of a contract made by the co-operative, controlled entity or a related body corporate with the director, a firm of which the director is a member or an entity in which the director has a substantial financial interest.

This statement excludes a benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the co-operative's accounts, or the fixed salary of a full time employee of the co-operative, controlled entity or related body corporate.

**WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**ABN 17 299 668 457**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	2	<b>4,771,754</b>	4,512,890
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method	2	<b>61,809</b>	64,946
Other Income	3	<b>37,000</b>	-
Administration expenses		<b>(397,646)</b>	(216,852)
Brokerage expenses		<b>(283,929)</b>	(217,496)
Depreciation and amortisation		<b>(97,613)</b>	(195,586)
Employee benefits expense		<b>(3,669,037)</b>	(3,274,881)
Finance costs		<b>(7,021)</b>	(3,108)
Occupancy expenses		<b>(149,980)</b>	(361,773)
Other expenses		<b>(314,127)</b>	(231,172)
Funds repaid to funding bodies		<b>(197,273)</b>	(63,404)
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus before income tax expense</b>		<b>(246,063)</b>	13,564
Income tax expense	1	-	-
<b>(Deficit)/Surplus after income tax expense attributable to members</b>		<b>(246,063)</b>	13,564
<b>Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax</b>		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to members</b>		<b>(246,063)</b>	13,564

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**ABN 17 299 668 457**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	2,387,034	2,584,666
Trade and other receivables	6	3,648	12,405
Other current assets	7	61,421	61,689
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>2,452,103</b>	<b>2,658,760</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	104,228	29,915
Right-of-use assets	9	168,319	26,205
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>272,547</b>	<b>56,120</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>2,724,650</b>	<b>2,714,880</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	198,470	182,330
Lease liabilities	11	69,084	27,317
Employee benefits	12	482,150	644,674
Other liabilities	13	195,577	-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>945,281</b>	<b>854,321</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Lease Liabilities	11	100,150	-
Employee benefits	12	93,648	28,925
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>193,798</b>	<b>28,925</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>1,139,079</b>	<b>883,246</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>1,585,571</b>	<b>1,831,634</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Reserves	14	38,312	234,005
Retained earnings		1,547,259	1,597,629
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>1,585,571</b>	<b>1,831,634</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**ABN 17 299 668 457**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	Reserves \$	Retained earnings \$	Total \$
<b>Balance at 1 July 2023</b>		183,027	1,635,043	1,818,070
Surplus after income tax expense		-	13,564	13,564
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserves		<u>50,978</u>	<u>(50,978)</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2024</b>	14	234,005	1,597,629	1,831,634
Deficit after income tax expense		-	(246,063)	(246,063)
Other comprehensive income		-	-	-
Transfer to/(from) reserves		<u>(195,693)</u>	<u>195,693</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2025</b>	14	<u>38,312</u>	<u>1,547,259</u>	<u>1,585,571</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED**  
**ABN 17 299 668 457**

**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025**

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from customers		<b>5,438,581</b>	4,651,436
Payments to suppliers and employees		<b>(5,555,878)</b>	(4,747,613)
Interest received		<b>61,809</b>	64,946
Interest paid		<b>(7,021)</b>	(3,108)
Net cash used in operating activities	15 (b)	<b>(62,509)</b>	(34,339)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		<b>37,000</b>	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		<b>(93,042)</b>	(121,156)
Net cash used in investing activities		<b>(56,042)</b>	(121,156)
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayment of lease liabilities		<b>(79,081)</b>	(60,410)
Net cash used in financing activities		<b>(79,081)</b>	(60,410)
Net decrease in cash held		<b>(197,632)</b>	(215,905)
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		<b>2,584,666</b>	2,800,571
Cash at the end of the financial year	15 (a)	<b>2,387,034</b>	2,584,666

**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED  
ABN 17 299 668 457**

## Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Warrina Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Services Co-Operative Limited (the Co-operative), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and statement by the directors.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Co-operative is in accordance with the Co-operatives National Law (NSW) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Co-operative's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the Co-operatives National Law (NSW) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

## Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the the Co-operatives National Law (NSW), the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

## Other Information

The directors of the co-operative are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Co-operative's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2025, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is the Crowe Australasia external audit division. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd, trading as Crowe Australasia is a member of Crowe Global, a Swiss Verein. Each member firm of Crowe Global is a separate and independent legal entity. Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd and its affiliates are not responsible or liable for any acts or omissions of Crowe Global or any other member of Crowe Global. Crowe Global does not render any professional services and does not have an ownership or partnership interest in Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd. Services are provided by Crowe Central North, an affiliate of Findex (Aust) Pty Ltd. Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation. Liability limited other than for acts or omissions of financial services licensees.

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED  
ABN 17 299 668 457**

**Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report**

The directors of the co-operative are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, the Co-operatives National Law (NSW) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the ability of the co-operative to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the co-operative or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, the auditor exercises professional judgement and maintains professional scepticism throughout the audit. The auditor also:

- Identifies and assesses the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, designs and performs audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtains audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for the auditor's opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtains an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluates the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Concludes on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If the auditor concludes that a material uncertainty exists, the auditor is required to draw attention in the auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify the auditor's opinion. The auditor's conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of the auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

The title 'Partner' conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is the Crowe Australasia external audit division. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.

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WARRINA DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE SPECIALIST SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LIMITED  
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- Evaluates the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- The auditor communicates with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that the auditor identifies during the audit.

**CROWE CENTRAL NORTH****Kylie Ellis****Partner**

Registered Company Auditor (ASIC RAN 483424)

Suite 203

92 – 98 Harbour Drive

COFFS HARBOUR NSW 2450

Dated: 19 November 2025

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