

# 2018-2019 Annual Report

of the Financial & Consumer Rights Council



# FCRC

Financial & Consumer  
Rights Council Inc.

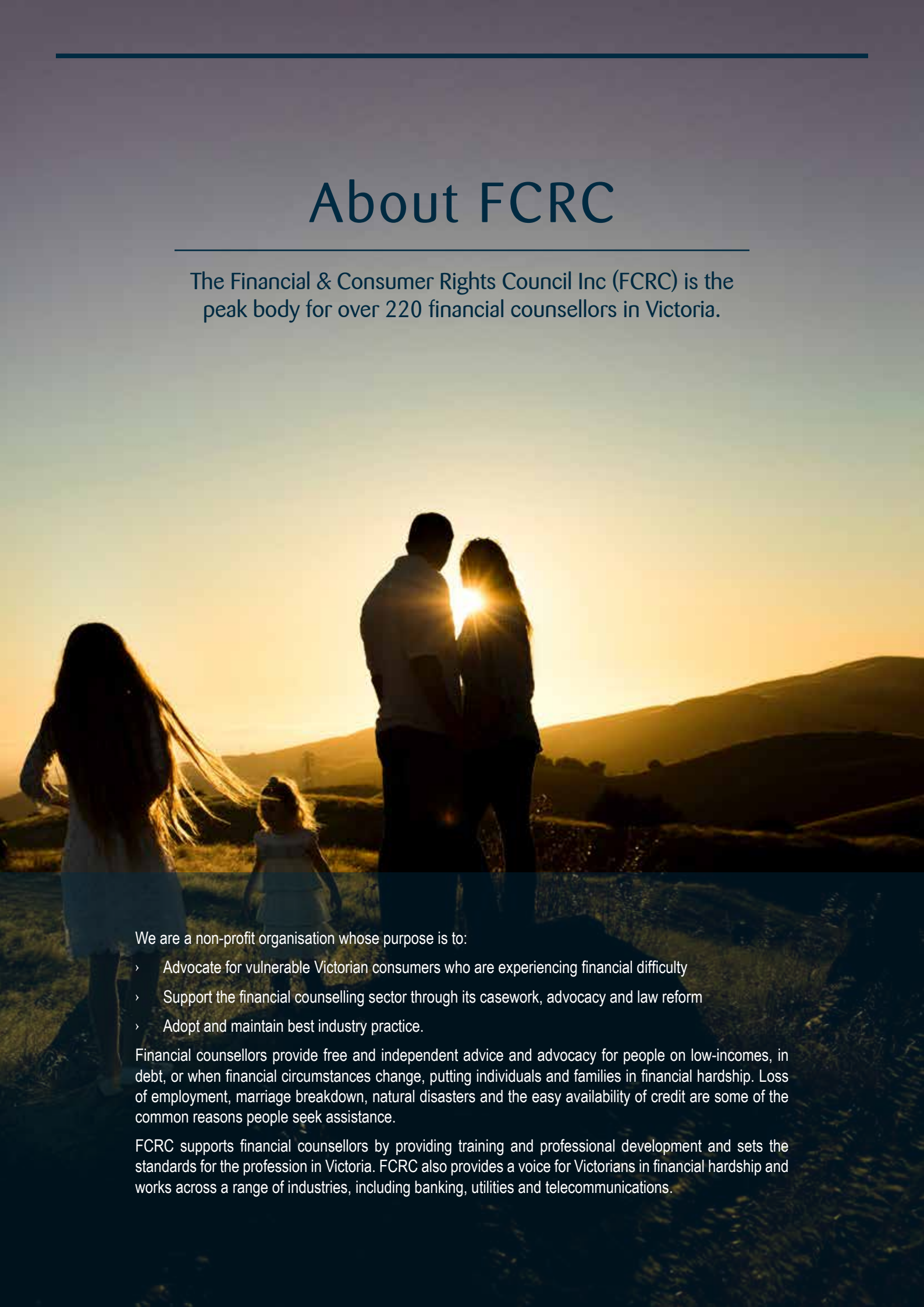


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# About FCRC

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The Financial & Consumer Rights Council Inc (FCRC) is the peak body for over 220 financial counsellors in Victoria.



We are a non-profit organisation whose purpose is to:

- › Advocate for vulnerable Victorian consumers who are experiencing financial difficulty
- › Support the financial counselling sector through its casework, advocacy and law reform
- › Adopt and maintain best industry practice.

Financial counsellors provide free and independent advice and advocacy for people on low-incomes, in debt, or when financial circumstances change, putting individuals and families in financial hardship. Loss of employment, marriage breakdown, natural disasters and the easy availability of credit are some of the common reasons people seek assistance.

FCRC supports financial counsellors by providing training and professional development and sets the standards for the profession in Victoria. FCRC also provides a voice for Victorians in financial hardship and works across a range of industries, including banking, utilities and telecommunications.

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### Acknowledgement of Country

FCRC acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work and live. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging.

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# Chairperson's report

The purpose of FCRC is to advocate for vulnerable Victorian consumers who are experiencing financial difficulty, and to support the financial counselling sector through its casework, advocacy and law reform by adopting and maintaining best practice standards.

The Board's strategic focus for our organisation over the past 12 months has included the development of new and existing collaborations with external sectors to support the expansion of the reach of financial counselling in Victoria. New areas of growth include health and aged care settings with a focus on elder abuse; a supportive role in advocating for the development of a financial counselling position to work with people diagnosed with cancer (at Cancer Victoria); and key partnerships with the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (VRGF) and Social Security Rights Victoria (SSRV).

FCRC has proactively made submissions into the Mental Health Royal Commission, review of State Trustees by the State Ombudsman and supported the work of the Australian Council of Social Service's (ACOSS) 'Raise the Rate' campaign through our Centrelink Working Group. All of these initiatives aim to raise the profile and importance of financial counselling as a preventative and proactive measure in reducing the levels of stress people face when in financial hardship.

A major piece of work by the Board in the 2018/19 financial year has included the continued review of our governance structures to ensure we maintain a high quality standard of professional practice while continuing to build capacity to meet increased demands and expansion of the financial counselling profession. The Board has an ongoing commitment to ensuring the structures developed provide opportunity for member participation and feedback.

The development of the Professional Standards Committee has enabled senior financial counsellors to take a proactive role in maintaining high quality professional standards for financial counsellors in Victoria. Similarly, the establishment of the Constitutional Review Committee has involved financial counsellors engaging with the broader membership to review and develop a constitution that will evolve with the growth of our organisation and profession into the future.

We also engaged with leaders and representatives from our networks, working groups and committees to develop the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan which was adopted by the Board at its June 2019 meeting.

We continue to work proactively to address member burnout concerns. This includes the adoption of a reviewed Professional Supervision policy, participation in the development of a national supervision policy, and the administration of a survey into the wellbeing of our members. The survey's evidence base will enable future work and advocacy to counteract the issues members face, and ensure wellbeing and longevity in our profession.

Establishing robust structures is a key strategy to enable readiness for growth in future funding and to ensure support for our members in providing quality and consistency of service to clients for the best outcomes.

Challenges faced in the last 12 months include the funding uncertainties and re-allocation during the flawed Department of Social Services tender process. We still await many changes as a result of the Financial Services Royal Commission to roll out following the Federal election. This includes the release of the Sylvan report looking at capacity in the financial counselling profession following recommendations from both the Royal Commission and Credit and Financial Services Senate enquiry.

All of this work could not be possible without the dedication of our members in stepping up into leadership roles along with the ongoing support and work of the talented staff at the FCRC office, led by Executive Officer Dr Sandy Ross.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our members and stakeholders for their tireless commitment to maintaining the quality of financial counselling in Victoria, and to the shared vision for a positive impact on more people in Victoria facing vulnerable circumstances.

This is my final report as Chair of the FCRC Board, I will be retiring from the position at our Annual Conference in October to make way for new ideas and energy. I feel confident that we have many future leaders to step up to continue to place us in good stead for the future. As I reflect back on my last four years on the FCRC Board, a significant highlight would be the growth in our relationships with members, external stakeholders and funding bodies, along with the expansion of our thinking to support future growth and sustainability for financial counselling in Victoria.



**Julie Barrow**  
*Chair of the Board*

# Secretary's report

My first twelve months as Secretary have been eventful and rewarding. This is my third year on the board, and I reflect on the amount of work being undertaken in the financial counselling sector to promote our professionalism and effectiveness. The acknowledgement, by the Banking Royal Commissioner Kenneth Hayne, of the importance of financial counselling was heartening and his acknowledgement that financial counselling services frequently struggled to meet demand is a great impetus to our continuing lobbying for more sustainable funding.

FCRC has been actively involved in lobbying for new funding models. This has led to increased funding in new areas such as elder abuse. The relationship with Consumer Affairs Victoria continues to be strong and respectful.

Work has been undertaken this year to produce our next strategic plan. The involvement with representatives from our working groups and networks, to workshop our strategic plan has led to a more cohesive plan. I believe this also reflects the increased engagement of financial counsellors with FCRC. The Board have been very conscious of improving our communication with our members, this is reflected in summary Board minutes being released each month as well as engaging leaders in the sector to assist in working groups and strategic planning.

Special acknowledgement must go to the staff of FCRC who definitely punch above their weight. The amount of communication, and training that is provided to financial counsellors and the advocacy work undertaken by FCRC staff is amazing considering the small number of staff.

Much time has been spent on reviewing and improving policies with a new supervision policy being released this year. A working group consisting of Board members, other financial counsellors and some external experts has also spent a great deal of time in preparing a draft constitution for members to consider. This has been a very thorough and consultative process.

The stress and burnout survey had a very high participation rate. Anecdotally, financial counsellors are experiencing a very high level of stress due to the increased demand and complexity of their work. The results from this survey are currently being developed into an extensive report which will be a great tool for lobbying for increased funding and better conditions for financial counsellors. The continued wellbeing of our members given the heavy and complex workload they have is of utmost importance to the Board.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their commitment to the Board. All Board members spend a great deal of time undertaking their Board duties, however I would like to particularly acknowledge our Chair Julie Barrow who has worked tirelessly in the interests of members and our sector and is an inspiring Chair.

**Cathy Clark**  
*Secretary*





# Executive Officer's report

During the last year FCRC has continued to focus its work on supporting financial counsellors in Victoria, and to build support for, and capacity in, the sector. There have been many changes of note as we continue to professionalise financial counselling and adopt systems and policies to support this, while advocating for system changes to improve the lives of vulnerable Victorians.

## **Professional Standards**

In November 2018, the FCRC Board resolved to establish a professional standards committee, including senior expert members, to provide it with expert and independent guidance on key professional matters. This committee has assisted with the development and implementation of policies in relation to professional development and professional supervision. We now have clear and consistently mandated requirements of members wishing to apply to be professional supervisors, including CPD. We continue to work with agencies towards supporting

professional supervision as a means of developing and empowering their financial counsellors, in line with the supervision policy adopted by the FCRC Board in late 2018.

In 2019 the Board also adopted a complaints policy to establish clear and fair procedures to deal with complaints concerning professional conduct that aim to place the emphasis on protecting clients and enhancing professional standards along with an emphasis on remedial rather than punitive action.

## **Stress in the Sector**

In February 2019, we conducted a detailed survey of stress and burnout issues in the sector. It is perhaps a mark of the success of the survey that we are still preparing a report on it, as we work through rich and complex data and seek to do justice to the insights our members have generously provided. However, it is clear that financial counsellors are working under significant pressure and



that there is a lot more to be done by funders and agencies to support their roles and manage health and safety risks.

One big driver of damaging stress and potential burnout comes from the sheer volume of demand. We are now in a recession, but a recession in the context of unprecedented levels of debt being held by a large proportion of the population. We also have the least accessible or adequate Federal government safety net provisions in living memory, increasingly linked to humiliating and unworkable 'conditionality' requirements. It can be anticipated that unmet demand for financial counselling support will continue to expand in the foreseeable future.

### **Federal Funding**

It was disappointing in this context to see the Federal Department of Social Services (DSS) engage in late 2018 in a destructive and badly run tendering process with illogical and unfair outcomes to allocate federal funding for financial counselling. It is a mark of the weaknesses in the tender that the Government took on board urgent advocacy from our sector and extended the funding of defunded agencies by 12 months. FCRC worked effectively with FCA and our NSW sister body FCAN to conduct this advocacy.

Another outcome of these events was that FCRC has begun advocating with FCA and State and Federal governments for a Federal/State agreement to be put in place to leverage better state funding arrangements from the Federal funding in states with weak financial counselling, and to ensure the allocation of funding occurs through arms of government that are more likely to have relevant policy and service structure expertise, and awareness of community needs.

### **Other highlights for 2018-19**

FCRC developed and adopted a new **strategic plan** for the period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2021. In doing so we drew in particular on input from our convenors forum. This forum, first held in August 2018, brings together representatives from all the networks and working groups, together with Board members, and is part of new developments in broadening member involvement in governance processes, and supporting members active in our membership structures.

We held our **Conference** at the Pullman in East Melbourne in October 2018, with record breaking registrations and member attendance. A personal highlight for me was at the Conference dinner when **Bernadette Pasco** was awarded a life membership.

Speaking of Bernadette, she has been the lead on our **Elder Abuse project**, running over 2018-19 and funded in June 2019 for a further year by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) building financial counselling skills, and an understanding of financial counselling amongst aged care and health professionals. Also funded in 2018-19 was an Integrated Service Project, part of Department of Justice grants program administered by the Federation of Community Legal Centres. This has been a partnership with **Social Security Rights Victoria** aimed at boosting their staff's understanding of financial counselling, better supporting financial counsellors through their advice line, collaborating with FCRC on Professional Development and advocacy, and building stronger and deeper integration of financial counselling and legal services in the social security area.

Another highlight has been FCRC's work with Consumer Action Law Centre (Consumer Action) on the reform of the **Utility Relief Grants Scheme (URGS)**. Advocacy by us and Consumer Action in recent years helped lead to a review of URGS by DHHS in 2018, followed by implementation of a redesign of URGS which should see it become more generous and accessible to people with utility debts.

To conclude, I want to thank the staff and Board of FCRC – they are wonderful colleagues and friends to work with and make many things possible to achieve.



**Dr Sandy Ross**  
*Executive Officer*

# Our people

## FCRC Board

### **Chairperson**

Julie Barrow

### **Secretary**

Kay Dilger (until Oct 2018)

Cathy Clark

### **Treasurer**

Mark Phillips

### **Board members**

Carly Baker

Colin Harte

Heather Barclay

Jenny Elvey (until Oct 2018)

Jo McMahon-Hide

Max Smart

Norm McMurray

## FCRC staff

### **Executive Officer**

Dr Sandy Ross

### **Executive Assistant**

Georgia Robenstone

### **Training Manager**

Tanja Haeusler

### **Campaigns & Advocacy Manager**

Rene Ploegmakers (until Mar 2019)

Lyn Dundon

### **Membership & Communications**

James Degenhardt

### **Family Violence Project Worker**

Donna Letchford (until Dec 2018)

### **Elder Abuse Project Lead**

Bernadette Pasco

### **Conference Coordinator**

Melanie Keenan

### **Accounts**

Ron Rowley



# Our work

## **Projects**

FCRC & SSRV Integrated Service Project  
Elder Abuse Project  
2019-21 Strategic Plan

## **Submissions**

Mental Health Royal Commission  
National Disaster Resilience Conference (poster)  
Customer Owned Banking Association Code review  
Victorian Ombudsman investigation of State Trustees  
Telecommunications Consumer Protections Code review

## **Consultations**

URGS reform  
Economic Abuse Reference Group  
RMIT Industry Advisory Committee



# Strategic Plan 2019-2021

At the time of developing this plan, the financial counselling sector is on a journey towards significant expansion and recognition for its importance and value, while at the same time struggling to meet demand and provide practitioners with sustainable work roles. The key strategic challenge for FCRC is to be outward looking and expansionist, while at the same time improving practice standards and protecting practitioners from trauma, stress and burnout.

## WHY

Contribute to a fairer society with greater economic inclusion	Empower clients to resolve financial and linked life issues	Reduce indebtedness and hardship, and associated harms to mental health	Improve industry practices and treatment of vulnerable consumers	Achieve systemic reforms to protect and enhance the lives of vulnerable people
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## WHAT

### Recognition

- Advocate for sector alongside system advocacy from sector
- Develop existing and new collaborations with other sectors
- Reach multiple audiences in community and political sectors through projects, including 'A Day in the Life'
- Develop and deploy advocacy and training resources focused on building an understanding of role of financial counsellors
- Gather evidence of impacts of financial counselling

### Professionalism

- Maintain and develop professional standards
- Ensure qualifications, training and CPD are up to date, relevant and of a high standard
- Develop a strong professional culture in the sector
- Support consistency in professional standards
- Maintain a dynamic professional identity fitting a diverse and changing sector
- Play a leadership role in the development of national standards

## HOW

### Sector sustainability

- Ensure growth in funding levels and capacity of sector
- Develop work roles, management and professional supports to ensure workplace wellbeing of financial counsellors
- Build meaningful career paths for financial counsellors
- Encourage diversity in the sector, developing networks, communities of practice and integrated service models to reach diverse client groups
- Balance sector expansion with maintaining professional standards

### Governance/ Organisational

- Ensure effective governance and accountable decision making
- Support members and sector through relevant and engaging organisational structures and advocacy
- Develop strong member ownership of FCRC through access and engagement
- Appoint skilled staff, skilled Board members and provide development paths for emerging membership leaders
- Ensure funding is sustainable/ commensurate with role of peak body

# Training report

44 CPD sessions delivered

8 regional deliveries

6 online deliveries

1431  
total attendances

75%  
survey evaluation completion rate

It's been a busy year of training at FCRC. A record number of 44 sessions were delivered within the one-year period. Simultaneously attendance numbers increased by 36% compared to the previous financial year totalling 1431. We continued with our efforts in supporting regional financial counsellors by providing two face-to-face professional development sessions in each of the four regional network areas: Hume, Western region, Gippsland and Southern region as well as providing six online deliveries, accessible from anywhere in the state.

One of our focuses for the past year was on the delivery of the Complex Needs training that was piloted and delivered in the 2017/18 financial year. A further four sessions were conducted this year resulting in almost exactly half of our practising members having undergone this important training on working with clients with multiple challenges, and supporting them on their way to independence.

We've received outstanding feedback for those deliveries with a consistent 100% satisfaction rate for each individual session.

Furthermore, Family Violence training provided by Women's Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) and WIRE continued throughout this training period with a new format added, a Family Violence Masterclass, to the already existing Foundation and Advanced level sessions. The Masterclass was specifically designed to provide specialist and leading family violence financial counsellors with opportunity to continue building best practice skills and knowledge in responding to the needs of clients impacted by family violence.

I'd also like to mention our Professional Development Advisory Group (PDAG) that provided an important platform to test training ideas and support me in creating a relevant and effective training calendar. Since the last financial year, the PDAG has embraced some new members and farewelled a couple of long-standing contributors. We thank Colin Handreck, Annette Lumsden and Kay Dilger for the wisdom and support they shared since the inception of the PDAG in 2014. Welcome to Christopher Richardson, Martin Stevens, Donna Johnson, Cathy Clark and Bronwyn Seiter.

Ongoing members of PDAG as at the end of the 2018/19 financial year were:

- › Melanie Hallam (AFCA)
- › Sandy Ross (FCRC)
- › Preethi Vergis (CALC)
- › Jillian Williams (CALC)

**Tanja Haeusler**  
*Training Manager*



# Working Group reports

Working groups connect financial counsellors with FCRC's advocacy work; linking casework and policy. The groups consist of FCRC members, however, relevant professionals are regularly involved on an invitational basis.

Not only can group members make a difference to systemic issues, but working groups offer the chance to develop new skills and gain valuable experience, not to mention excellent networking opportunities with other FCs, industry and government representatives.

At the end of the 2018/19 financial year, there were four FCRC working groups, each of which operates within their own terms of reference. These groups are:

- › Bankruptcy
- › Centrelink
- › Gambling Issues
- › Infringements

The Utilities Working Group did not meet this financial year.



# Bankruptcy Working Group |

The Bankruptcy Working Group was re-convened after a hiatus of some two years and held its first meeting in August 2018.

The initial meeting was held in the Australian Financial Security Authority's (AFSA) offices, with AFSA staff attending that meeting, and subsequent meetings, by video conferencing, telephone conferencing and in person. A small number of financial counsellors attended the first meeting, but the numbers grew as meetings were held in 2018 and into 2019. One member attended via telephone link and on speaker.

The Terms of Reference for the group were carried over from its previous operation. The ongoing plan is to meet at least four times a year with AFSA, to work together to maintain a good working relationship, liaise with them regarding ongoing professional development needs, and provide feedback and advocacy for change to AFSA's policy and procedures, documents and website.

Minutes of meetings were made available on the FCRC website and matters regarding bankruptcy were provided to members via the FCRC Gazette.

While most members waited for the introduction of new

legislation, mainly the end of a three-year term to a one-year term, the group reported in the Gazette in July 2019 that the Bill had lapsed.

The other major change was the new guidelines around Part IX that commenced on 27 June 2019. A future professional development session late in 2019 will explore and report on the impact of those changes to the financial counselling sector, debt agreement administrators and to AFSA. Early indications are that there might be a significant drop in the numbers of debt agreements being lodged with AFSA.

The main areas identified within the group were the increase of clients presenting with complex needs when considering bankruptcy as an option. These complexities included family law, family violence, small business and sometimes a company structure, problem gambling, tax debts and Centrelink debts. The group recognised the need to work with other working groups where common issues prevail and that will occur in the future.

Apart from financial counsellors, AFSA and FCRC staff, others that attended the group meetings included Bryn Overend from Social Security Rights Victoria, Tom Cobban from Berrill & Watson and Melissa Glenn from Australian Debt & Insolvency Solutions Pty Ltd.

**Ian Liddell**  
*Convenor*

# Centrelink Working Group

The Centrelink Working Group (CWG) was established at the beginning of 2018 and was just getting momentum when a majority of financial counsellors on the working group were advised that their agencies had not been successful in the tendering for Federal funding beyond 2018. It was a real blow for the group and a sad way to end the last meeting of the year. However before the year was out we were overjoyed to find out the government had given our positions a 12 month reprieve and so could continue with involvement with the working group. Despite this, the Convenor Joy Mason made a decision to leave financial counselling in Victoria and head off to work in outback Western Australia. It's many months since Joy left but we would like to formally thank her for the year she participated in the CWG.

The new year 2019 felt like starting over again. Over the year along with our financial counsellors we have invited more groups onto the working group including Social Security Rights Victoria (SSRV), Consumer Action Law Centre (Consumer Action), Council for Single Mothers and their Children (CSMC), Berrill & Watson Lawyers, Financial Counselling Australia (FCA), Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) and Nicole Spicer - Criminal Law Specialist.

The issues we have worked on over the year include:

- › The commencement of the Integrated Service project between SSRV and FCRC. The project has employed a lawyer and financial counsellor within SSRV and, as well as direct casework practice, delivers information sessions regarding debts and appeal processes
- › Attendance at Centrepay stakeholders forum held biannually
- › Meeting with Director of Centrepay regarding removal of paper application for Centrepay and issues faced by vulnerable consumers, as well as discussing the need for dedicated contact point for financial counsellors
- › Issues relating to Centrepay and consumer leases spearheaded by Consumer Action.
- › Disability Support Pension (DSP) applications and appeals processes and the Toolkit developed by John Berrill and SSRV

- › Resource kit developed by National Social Security Rights Network for FCA
- › The ParentsNext Program and its insidious impact and punitive measures on single parents, particularly disadvantaging women and targeting vulnerable communities.
- › Family violence issues related to Centrelink and work FCA and family violence project worker have been working together on with Centrelink
- › Centrelink debts in particular the oppressive Robodebt system with many legal questions yet to be answered by the court system
- › 'Raise the Rate' Newstart campaign



*Bryn Overend and Leanne Khan from SSRV*

## 'Raise the Raise' Campaign

Financial counsellors work every day with clients relying on social security as their primary means of income support. The impacts on clients living in abject poverty are increasingly obvious, particularly for those on Newstart allowance – which has not been raised in 25 years. The CWG discussed for some time last year how it could support the ACOSS campaign of raising Newstart and related payments.

It was decided that gaining statistical data from financial counsellors could be done simply with the existing information that financial counsellors gather in terms of a simple Income and Expenditure statement and simple questionnaire on what people cannot afford to buy or miss out on in their lives. Some additional questions were asked which highlighted the disadvantage and difficulty that people were experiencing whilst living below the poverty line. Carmel Stafford and myself met with Adam Bandt, Federal MP for the seat of Melbourne (*pictured right*), who provided information and commended the campaign as a great tool in further lobbying of the Federal government. In the lead up to the Federal election the group canvassed the financial counselling sector to collect the data of their clients on Newstart and over a three week period obtained 115 responses with the following results:

- 52% Housing arrears
- 78% Arrears in utilities
- 36% Credit card arrears
- 41% Loan arrears
- 30% Schooling cost arrears
- 83% Accessed Emergency relief in previous 12 months
- 83% Accessed Food relief in previous 12 months
- 76% Skipped meals
- 42% Experienced homelessness in previous 12 months
- 43% Experienced Family Violence in previous 12 months
- 70% identified Mental health issues
- 66% experienced Social isolation
- 49% experienced Chronic illness
- 3% had a terminal illness



Whilst these are things we see every day with the people we work with it was overwhelming reading response after response of how people could not afford basics and missed out on real necessities, such as adequate and healthy food, personal hygiene products, safety and security, variety of medical and health needs, simple educational requirements and any form of recreation. This list was completely overwhelming and heart-wrenching.

Following the collation of data, FCRC put out a media statement and this was followed up with an interview on regional ABC radio. The Federal election was a disappointment with the return of the Liberal National Party who continues to disagree to raise the rate of Newstart. However, our group will not give up the fight. We have joined forces with FCA to make a submission into the Senate Inquiry into Raising Newstart with the information collected so valuably by our financial counsellors.

We also do not support any further implementation of the Cashless Welfare card which takes away dignity and control, implies stigmatisation, and creates other problematic issues. We know the battle to raise Newstart will continue for a while and we will pursue collecting this data to demonstrate that this rate does not provide a New Start - it provides No Start.

The issues with Centrelink are big, but we urge financial counsellors to join our group and become involved.

**Liz Stary**  
*Convenor*



# Gambling Issues Working Group

The FCRC Gambling Issues Working Group (GIWG) members have continued to meet and collaborate with our strategic partners, including the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (VRGF) and Financial Counselling Australia (FCA).

We have been approached by these key stakeholders to offer our knowledge, case studies and opinions regarding Gambling Harm in our local communities and the state.

We are lucky to have the expertise and commitment of our local Gambler's Help programs and financial counsellors along with the Commonwealth Department of Social Services Problem Gambling funded positions. We have invited Lauren Levin (FCA) to most of the GIWG meetings, and she has provided us with the insight and change management of state and federal influences regarding gambling harm. This has seen the introduction from the 'big four' banks of a gambling harm strategy – which includes self-exclusion of use of credit cards within venues and acknowledgment that gambling for some people isn't 'fun' and needs intervention on many different levels, as well as changes in legislation at a state and federal level.

More recently, a GIWG member and VRGF staff member attended a national meeting of all the first and second tier lenders regarding gambling harm and supports/identification for affected others (those impacted by someone else's gambling who may have joint bank accounts or requesting information on an account that they are not the signatory).

Whilst the discussion was valuable, all attendees recognised the limitations that client authorities (especially a partner who can't access funds to pay daily expenses) can have. There wasn't a solution, but there was discussion and that is the first valuable step in supporting those experiencing gambling harm (the gambler, the affected other and their families).

We have remained committed to reducing the stigma regarding gambling behavior in our communities. We recently had some productive conversations with media, FCA and VRGF regarding gambling harm and what we are seeing in our communities and offered some solutions and suggestions to highlight gambling harm.

Our members have also continued to provide local education regarding gambling harm where appropriate and necessary to bank branches and councils to keep the conversation going regarding gambling harm.

Whilst pokie losses in Victoria are seemingly on the decrease – by 7 million in 2018 – to 2.61 billion, sports betting is increasing by 16.6% in Victoria<sup>1</sup>. In client presentations we are also seeing a shift from pokie concerns to sports betting. But make no mistake: 5.48 billion total gambling loses in Victoria (2018) is still too high and is impacting our clients and communities. We also remain concerned about young people and 'gaming to gambling' pathways and are starting to see this impact at our services.

**Annette Devereaux**  
*Convenor*

1 Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation 2019, *Expenditures on Gambling in Victoria and Australia*, accessed 18 August 2019, <<https://responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/resources/gambling-victoria/expenditure-on-gambling-victoria-and-australia/>>

# Infringements Working Group |

**Co-convenors:** *Cameron Lavery and Nic Anderson (Justice Connect), Shifrah Blustein (WEstjustice), Joanne Parkin (Uniting Regen)*

The Infringements Working Group (IWG) is a joint-working group of FCRC, Federation of Community Legal Centres and Victoria Legal Aid. The IWG involves over 30 member organisations, and has worked closely with government and other stakeholders to highlight the challenges faced by vulnerable people trying to navigate the complex infringement system.

The major challenges in the infringement space continue to be the implementation of the Fines Reform Act. On top of considerable legislative change the Department of Justice and Community Safety has been replacing its old IT system, contracting a new contact centre operator Civica, and establishing Social Justice Initiatives including Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme, Family Violence Scheme and Time Served Scheme. The IWG have continued to advocate to the key stakeholders including:

## **Work and Development Permit Scheme**

The availability of WDPs is still limited to a few sponsor agencies and IWG continues to advocate for a more accessible and sustainable scheme. There has been a review of the WDP scheme which will hopefully resolve some of the issues being experienced.

## **Family Violence Scheme**

The IWG advocacy has included the impact of demerit points and communication between Victoria Police, Fines Victoria and VicRoads. The scheme commenced in January 2018 and the IWG continues to monitor the accessibility and effectiveness of this scheme.

## **Fear of Fines PD at FCRC conference**

IWG members developed and delivered a very successful professional development session at the FCRC conference in 2018.

**Strategic advocacy with other stakeholders** including Public Transport Victoria, Victorian Ombudsman, Tolling Ombudsman, VicRoads and State Trustees.

## **Seven Day Notice**

Fines Reform has restricted options after expiry of the seven-day notice. As there is little sheriff enforcement activity, the impact of this has not yet been tested. IWG continue to alert Fines Victoria to the negative impact this change will have on vulnerable people, and agencies will struggle to meet demand if issuing of seven-day notices is rapidly scaled up.

## **Special Circumstances List at Melbourne Magistrates Court**

It appears Victoria Police will continue to refer public safety infringements, already proven by Fines Victoria to meet the special circumstances criteria, to court. Due to Fines Reform these matters are listed in the court closest to the offending, so there is no longer a Special Circumstances List at Melbourne Magistrates Court. IWG is concerned this will further disadvantage unrepresented vulnerable people and place a larger burden on IWG agencies

IWG continue to advocate for an accessible, fair and effective fines system. Membership is open to financial counsellors and meetings are every two months.

**Jo Parkin**  
*Co-convenor*



# Regional network reports

Regional networks offer a forum for FCRC members to meet and discuss casework, undertake professional development and debrief with their peers.

Regional networks are a way for financial counsellors to discuss casework related matters emerging that are particular to the geographical area; discuss approaches and work together.

The Regional Networks are:

- › Eastern metro
- › Southern metro
- › Hume
- › Northern metro
- › Gippsland
- › Western regional

A Western metro network was re-established in 2019.

Beyond the geographically specific local networks, the **Statewide Network** is open to all members and is a chance to meet colleagues from across the state.

# Eastern metro network

Our Eastern Metro Regional (EMR) Network is alive and flourishing! We have been operating for many years and cover the inner east and the outer east of Melbourne.

The local government areas include Whitehorse, Maroondah, Knox and the Yarra Ranges. Our agencies include Anglicare, Better Place Australia, The Salvation Army and EACH Social and Community Health.

Our network meets four times each year. It is our time to share, educate, grow and catch up! It offers a perfect opportunity for members to network, discuss complex cases and systemic issues. It's good to get together and discuss ongoing frustrations including our ever increasing workload and our dealings with creditors.

It's important to introduce new staff and to find out what's happening at the various agencies. There is never a dull moment here at the EMR Network.

Since last year we have had the following meetings:

- › August 2018 Financial Information Services (FIS) officer from Centrelink.
- › November 2018 Maurice Blackburn (Workcover, Super and TPD)
- › February 2019 Social Security Rights Victoria
- › April 2019 Lyn Dundon from FCRC and new team leader Lesley Conway from Anglicare.

Two of our members attended the FCRC strategic network planning day. This offered a good opportunity to provide suggestions from our members so as to influence FCRC's support and representation. We found the session productive and we are keen to continue exploring ways to work with FCRC for the benefit of the whole sector.

## Gambler's Help

Mandy Zhang has offered the following comments regarding the Gambler's Help inner east service:

The LGA EGM monthly published statistics<sup>1</sup> shows there is still a high amount of loss in the Eastern Metro Region; however, they have no statistics regarding online betting or casino gambling losses. It is important to state that there continues to be a significant gambling harm impact on the eastern region.

The same report indicates gambling is slowly transferring to other forms. It is impossible these days to compete with the many gambling commercials: advertising on TV, at various events and pop up apps on our computers and phones.

The impact of gambling harm cannot be underestimated. Although we identify different gambling reform through our network meeting, it is important to note that people are experiencing many forms of harm by gambling and it is much more than we can imagine.

However, to fill up the gap or protect people financially isn't as easy as in previous times.

At a recent meeting, we confirmed that most financial institutions are making changes to their credit card systems to prevent gambling harm. However, there is so much more we can do to better assist our community, especially when people have fewer options in their life.

Through our Gambler's Help community engagement, we work hard to promote gambling harm awareness and to reduce the stigma of gambling. We will continue our work to support our community impacted by gambling harm.

**Liz McCarthy**  
Convenor

<sup>1</sup> Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation 2019, *Monthly LGA EGM Statistics*, 26 August 2019, <<https://www.vcgr.vic.gov.au/CA256F800017E8D4/VCGLR/2C4FB00D26AF1EFFCA257B320078D3F5?OpenDocument>>



# Northern metro network

The Northern Region Network (NRN) has been attended by financial counsellors across the Northern Region including from the following agencies:

- › Anglicare
- › Better Place Australia
- › National Debt Helpline
- › The Salvation Army
- › Uniting Lentara
- › Uniting ReGen
- › Banyule Community Health
- › Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- › Odyssey House Victoria
- › Sunbury Community Health
- › Uniting Kildonan
- › VincentCare

Over the past year the NRN has been very active in providing support to the network attendees as well as providing input into various projects and working groups such as the convenors' gatherings that occurred a couple of times as well as projects such as the Centrelink Working Group's Newstart Campaign.

Over the past year the NRN has also had presentations from stakeholders including guest speakers from:

- › Energy Efficiency Care Ring Program
- › Berrill & Watson on superannuation changes from 1 July
- › Wombat Housing Support
- › The Orange Door

Advocacy and lobbying has included input and discussion regarding federal funding for financial counselling and the medium term impact of the DSS Financial Capability funding affecting agencies from January 2020, as well as the DSS Problem Gambling funding from July 2020.

**Maria Turnbull**  
*Network representative*



*Northern Metro Network members - August 2019*

# Southern metro network |

The Southern Metro Network met five times over the past year. There was a change of convenor with Julie Di Giovine stepping down after several years in the position. Julia's contribution includes developing an Annual Work Plan and Terms of Reference, as well as organising a variety of interesting guests and providing group supervision as needed. Thank you, Julia, for your hard work.

Our meetings were:

**August 2018** – Dandenong

Hosted by South East Community Links

FCRC rep: Tanja Haeusler

Board rep: Kay Dilger

Followed by FCRC CPD

**November 2018** – Springvale

Hosted by South East Community Links

Guests: Susan – Firmer Foundations (a course to empower women to understand money)

Cassandra & May – NAB Assistance Program

FCRC rep: Rene Ploegmakers

**February 2019** – Cheltenham

Hosted by Better Place Australia

Guests: Bryn & Leanne – SSRV (integrated Services Project)

**April 2019** – Dandenong

Hosted by South East Community Links

Guest: Sacha Close - Reg Tech (Credit Reporting update)

FCRC rep: James Degenhardt

**June 2019** – Cranbourne Community House

Guest: Laura – Peninsula Community Legal Service (Work Development Permits Project)

FCRC rep: Lyn Dundon

Followed by FCRC CPD – Mortgage Stress

The attendance at meetings has been variable due to the availability of members within their organisations and covering such a large area the distances needed to be travelled for a meeting when time restraints are tight. We have tried to invite relevant guests for updates and informal discussion as well as group supervision or FCRC CPD after the meeting to maximise time.

Topics discussed at the meetings included political and legal events that affected our sector as well as casework and self-care topics.

**Jenny McGowan**  
*Convenor*

# Gippsland network

Gippsland is a large and diverse area. Gippsland farmers are now in their third year of a green drought, when paddocks look green but pasture growth is struggling with low rain and weeds. The East Gippsland and Wellington shires are the only two deemed to be in drought rather than experiencing dry seasonal conditions. Farmers are struggling and say that outsiders 'don't understand' nor realise they have lost as much as 70 per cent of their regular income. This doesn't stop at the farm gate, with many towns feeling the knock-on effect.

Agencies that provide financial counselling services throughout Gippsland are:

- › Anglicare Victoria (Warragul, Wonthaggi, Korumburra, Morwell, Yarram, Sale, Bairnsdale)
- › Orbost Regional Hospital (Orbost and far East Gippsland)
- › Better Place Australia (Gippsland wide)
- › Rural Financial Counselling Service (Gippsland wide)
- › Salvation Army Eastern (Leongatha, South Gippsland)
- › Latrobe Community Health Service (Problem Gambling – Gippsland wide)

We have only been able to facilitate two network meetings during the past 12 months. The first meeting was held in Sale on 19 September 2018, with the next meeting held in Morwell on 19 February, 2019.

## Discussion points for Gippsland:

- › Rent affordability: most rents are typically 50%+ of Centrelink payments
- › Many elder Australians presenting with credit card and mortgage debt, which is often not sustainable on Centrelink-only incomes
- › FCRC undergoing a structure/rebuild with work to continue with strategic planning
- › Funding for Elder Abuse workshops
- › Closure of Hazelwood has not had impacts on any service (at the table)
- › Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
- › Agreement to reduce network meetings to 2 per year
- › Better Place Australia setting up in the National Debt Helpline space
- › Issues with utilities

## Training at Network Meetings:

September 2018 – *New Frontiers of Gambling*, Tony Phillips (10 participants)

February 2019 – *Vicarious Trauma and Self-care*, Julie Aganoff, Principal Psychologist, Julie Aganoff & Associates. (20 participants)

Our meetings will continue to provide a professional space to discuss cases, support workers, identify issues and improve professionalism so we can drive our skills to benefit the lives of our clients. Now that we have a sense of security due to the increased length of contracts our focus can remain on service delivery and skill development

**Christine Jones**  
Convenor

# Hume network |

The network maintained its annual cycle of four meetings this year, offering welcome opportunities for the growing numbers of financial counsellors and financial capability workers from a variety of agencies in this region to brush up on news and information and engage in valuable professional development activities.

Benalla remained our base for much of the year – thanks to Benalla Community Care for their continuing support on the accommodation side of things, and thanks too for Primary Care Connect in Shepparton for stepping up with alternative arrangements when dates for our winter meeting didn't work out at our usual venue.

Guests and presenters this year included:

- › Cassandra, from NAB Customer Care
- › Sarah Brown-Shaw from Consumer Action, on how the National Debt Helpline operates as a telephone financial counselling service, and current projects
- › Wilma Ruyters, Local Engagement Officer, CAVLaura Pringle, Customer Experience Manager, and Matt Stokes, Head of Collections, Credit Corp

Professional development events were held on:

- › Credit card reforms (Consumer Action)
- › Couples and conflicts of interest (Adam Blanch, Good Psychology)
- › Challenging Centrelink decisions (Bryn Overend, SSRV)

As always, we were glad for the support and participation from FCRC Head Office - Rene Ploegmakers, Sandy Ross (by phone), Tanja Haeusler, and Lyn Dundon.

The network and members have jointly or individually contributed to discussion on surveys about Newstart, the FCRC strategic plan, workforce stress, and the value of networks. An interesting kettle of fish is currently being stirred with discussion about pay rates and employment conditions in the sector.

Network members are drawn from a number of agencies in the Hume Region, including:

- › Family Care
- › Nexus Primary Health
- › Primary Care Connect
- › Salvo Care
- › Uniting Wodonga
- › Upper Murray Family Care
- › Vincentcare Victoria

**David Newport**  
*Convenor*



# Western regional network

Welcome to our first report as co-convenors for the Western Regional Network. David and Claire hit the ground running with the February meeting held in Geelong at the Orange Door complex. It was a great experience to coordinate all that was necessary, so a huge thank you and hats off to Eleanor and Jo for their efforts over the past two years.

The February meeting was well attended and had valuable content with professional development on self-care and vicarious trauma presented by Julie Aganoff. This was followed by Bryn Overend and Leanne Khan from Social Security Rights Victoria (SSRV) introducing the Integrated Service Project between SSRV and FCRC. We welcomed two new members Tracey and Sue who have taken on financial counsellor roles with CAFS Ballarat. Thanks Sam and Good Shepherd for hosting the meeting.

In June (Whale Season) in Warrnambool we were fortunate to have Laura Pringle from Credit Corp and Rhys Chamberlain from Maurice Blackburn visit us at Bethany, South West. Carly kindly hosted Laura in Horsham prior to travelling down to Warrnambool and Rhys is a country lad from Hamilton-way so he felt quite at home as well. It was great to get an update from Laura on waiver applications and FCs present were able to offer feedback on what was and wasn't working well. Rhys presented changes

to superannuation and insurances resulting from the Royal Commission and fitted in some relevant Total and Permanent Disability (TPD) information as well.

August saw the membership travelling to Anglicare Bendigo. Thanks to Troy, Paul and the team for hosting the day. We were fortunate to have the Mildura crew present, due to the very large area our network covers, it is difficult for them to travel to the Southern areas, so we appreciated hearing Mildura updates in person. Melissa Glenn from ADAIS (Australian Debt & Insolvency Solutions) presented Debt Agreement Changes which created a great Q&A segment. The network welcomed Sandy and Lyn from FCRC who appreciated hearing concerns and updates from members present and were able to take on board and respond to those concerns.

It is an ongoing challenge for all to attend the meetings due to the very large area our network covers. This year we have endeavoured to set the meetings across various different locations to try and accommodate the network. Our final meeting in November will be held in Ballarat. In the past Ballarat had been determined as central and most meetings have been held there. We look towards the membership to try to get the balance right moving forward.

**Claire Browne | David Lodge**  
*Co-convenors*



# Statewide network

The Victorian Statewide Network of Financial Counsellors is an independent group meeting every two months, and has been a regular event for financial counsellors for many years. It's an opportunity for financial counsellors to come together with their own agenda and discuss current matters of interest, emerging issues, working group and FCRC news, and undertake professional development presented by guest speakers.

*"The Victorian Statewide Network of Financial Counsellors is not only a forum but an opportunity for new members and students to meet other members, and tap into the skills and collective knowledge-base of the sector."*

## Guest speakers

Over the past 12 months, the Network has been fortunate enough to host a range of diverse guest speakers from the following organisations in relation to our forums:

- › Department of Justice, Work and Development Permit
- › Social Security Rights Victoria
- › Berrill & Watson
- › Social Security Law - Victoria Legal Aid
- › Centrelink Engagement Team
- › Financial Information Services Officer, Centrelink
- › Maurice Blackburn

We would also like to acknowledge our MC, Garry Rothman, for all the fabulous work he does with all the Statewide Network professional development forums.

## Sponsorship

We appreciate the generosity of Maurice Blackburn, ANZ and FCRC for kindly providing venues and food for this year's meetings.

The meetings have maintained the following format:

- › Introductions and networking
- › Updates from FCRC and FCA
- › News from working groups
- › Casework discussions
- › Emerging issues within the sector
- › System issues
- › New ideas for training and professional development

## Professional development

The Network works closely with FCRC to offer members professional development opportunities alongside the meetings. This allows attendees to acquire CPD points accredited by FCRC. The professional development sessions delivered this year included:

- › Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Debts forum
- › Superannuation
- › Work and Development Permit scheme
- › Complex needs and pathways to independence

## DSP Forum

One of the highlights of this past year was the “DSP Forum” in April 2019. ANZ generously donated the venue situated in the Docklands with a beautiful outlook onto the water.

We had a very interesting, skilled and diverse panel including:

- › Bryn Overend – Lawyer, Social Security Rights Victoria advice and information services
- › John Berrill – Principal, Berrill & Watson Superannuation & Insurance Lawyers
- › Len Jaffit - Senior Technical Specialist, Social Security Law Victoria Legal Aid, Civil Justice Program
- › Graham Wells- Senior Technical Specialist, Social Security Law Victoria Legal Aid, Civil Justice Program
- › Tom Danskin – Community Engagement Services Officer, Centrelink
- › Jack Intziadis – Financial Information Services (FIS) Officer, Centrelink

The forum looked at the barriers in applying for DSP, the requirements, the impairments tables, how cash payouts such as compensation or income protection affect pensions, how to appeal rejection of applications, debts and how to appeal, and more. There were approximately 50 financial counsellors in attendance and the response was overwhelmingly positive from both panellists and attendees.

*“Thanks for putting together a great panel for yesterday’s CPD on Centrelink DSP and debts. Every member gave generous amounts of information and advice that will benefit our clients. Your questions, too, helped guide discussions. The venue and food couldn’t be faulted either!”*

**Lynda Horn | Liz Stary**  
Co-convenors



Lynda Horn, Liz Stary, Garry Rothman



DSP Forum - April 2019



# Recognising excellence

Every year at our conference we recognise financial counsellors who have demonstrated excellence in service to our profession and the wider community, through three awards:

- › Jan Pentland Memorial Award
- › Virginia Noonan Award
- › Rising Star Award

In 2018, FCRC also awarded Life Membership to Bernadette Pasco.

## Jan Pentland Memorial Award

The Jan Pentland Memorial Award is named after one of our esteemed Life Members, and recognises a member of FCRC who has worked in service to the wider community.

In 2018, the award was presented to **Jo Parkin** for her dedicated work within the sector over many years.

In particular, Jo was instrumental in advancing the Work and Development Permit scheme, and has made significant contributions to the Infringements Working Group.

*Jo Parkin (left) was presented with the Jan Pentland Memorial Award*



# Virginia Noonan Award



*Colin Handreck accepted the 2018 Virginia Noonan Award*

The Virginia Noonan Award is awarded to a Full member of FCRC who has demonstrated excellence in service to the profession or their clients over and above their normal duties as a financial counsellor.

In 2018, **Colin Handreck** was presented with the Virginia Noonan Award for his exemplary casework and service to the sector.

Colin's contributions include providing a valuable outreach service to regional prisons, and community development sessions for various audiences. Colin has also served as a member of the FCRC Board, and has been a contributing member of the Professional Development Advisory Group.

## Rising Star Award

The Rising Star Award recognises the work of a new Full or Associate member of FCRC, having held membership for less than three years, who has demonstrated excellence in service delivery.

The 2017 recipient of the Rising Star Award was **Issam Alameh**.

Within only a few years of membership, Sam demonstrated an exceptional drive for social justice, which included identifying an online data breach resulting in an investigation by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC).



*Issam Alameh (right) was awarded the Rising Star Award*

## Life Membership

Life Membership is awarded to an individual member who has demonstrated excellence in financial counselling over a long and distinguished career.

In 2018, FCRC awarded the honour to **Bernadette Pasco** for her tireless commitment to lifting the professional standards of financial counselling in Victoria and nationally.

Through Bern's various roles - from financial counsellor to Chair of the FCRC Board and later Training and Development Manager at FCRC - she has been integral to improving areas such as Continuous Professional Development (CPD) and Professional Supervision, as well as ensuring the development and delivery of the Diploma of Financial Counselling in Victoria. She continues her commitment through her current role as Project Lead for FCRC's Elder Abuse project.



*Bernadette Pasco (right) was presented with Life Membership*



**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**

**ABN 89 498 543 075**

**GENERAL PURPOSE FINANCIAL REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**



**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**

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**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 076**  
**BOARD REPORT**

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Your Board members present the special purpose financial report on the entity for the financial year ended 30 June 2019.

**Board Members**

The names of Board members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Portfolio</b>
Julie Barrow	Chairperson
Cathy Clark	Secretary ( <i>From 17 October 2018</i> )
Mark Phillips	Treasurer
Carly Baker	Board Member
Colin Harte	Board Member
Norm McMurray	Board Member
Heather Barclay	Board Member
Jo McMahon-Hide	Board Member ( <i>Elected 17 October 2018</i> )
Max Smart	Board Member ( <i>Elected 17 October 2018</i> )
Jenny Elvey	Board Member ( <i>Ceased 17 October 2018</i> )
Kay Dilger	Board Member ( <i>Ceased 17 October 2018</i> )
Chris Walsh	Co-opted Board Member ( <i>Appointed 19 March 2019/ Ceased 19 August 2019</i> )

**Principal Activities**

The principal activity of the entity during the financial year was:

The Financial and Consumer Rights Council Inc (FCRC) is the peak body for Financial Counsellors in Victoria. The FCRC actively supports Financial Counsellors by promoting the needs of those experiencing financial hardship.

**Significant Changes**

No significant changes in the nature of the entity's activity occurred during the financial year.

**Operating Results**

The surplus for the year attributable to the entity amounted to \$48,186 (2017: \$8,853 deficit).

**Significant Changes in State of Affairs**

No significant changes in the entity's state of affairs occurred during the financial year.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Board.

Chairperson

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Julie Barrow

Treasurer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Phillips

Dated this

17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2019

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Grant funding income		358,548	277,088
Other income	2	354,238	346,981
Project income	2	132,900	5,000
Interest received		7,135	5,676
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		<b><u>852,821</u></b>	<b><u>634,745</u></b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
Administration expenses		48,025	41,699
Communication expenses		4,363	5,006
Conference expenses		213,842	137,760
Facilities and equipment expenses		12,444	20,071
Operating expenses		800	-
Project expenses		91,812	4,549
Rent expenses		22,256	26,606
Staffing expenses		411,093	407,907
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<b><u>804,635</u></b>	<b><u>643,598</u></b>
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) before income tax</b>		<b><u>48,186</u></b>	<b><u>(8,853)</u></b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association</b>		<b><u><u>48,186</u></u></b>	<b><u><u>(8,853)</u></u></b>

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	48,186	<b>(8,853)</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	<b><u>48,186</u></b>	<b><u>(8,853)</u></b>
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to the Association</b>	<b><u><u>48,186</u></u></b>	<b><u><u>(8,853)</u></u></b>

The income statement is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2019**

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	338,049	380,474
Trade and other receivables	4	136,620	45,555
Other current assets		21,791	39,358
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>496,460</b>	<b>465,387</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	5	-	5,241
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>5,241</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>496,460</b>	<b>470,628</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	6	33,124	36,176
Income received in advance	7	161,746	197,001
Provisions	8	56,054	40,101
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>250,924</b>	<b>273,278</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Provisions	8	-	-
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>250,924</b>	<b>273,278</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>245,536</b>	<b>197,350</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated funds		245,536	197,350
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>245,536</b>	<b>197,350</b>

The balance sheet is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.



**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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	<b>Accumulated funds \$</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2017</b>	206,203	206,203
Surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	(8,853)	(8,853)
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2018</b>	<u><b>197,350</b></u>	<u><b>197,350</b></u>
Surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	48,186	48,186
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2019</b>	<u><u><b>245,536</b></u></u>	<u><u><b>245,536</b></u></u>

The statement of changes in equity is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from grant funding		323,293	356,913
Receipts from other income		396,073	371,512
Payments to employees		(393,035)	(439,258)
Payments to suppliers and others		(375,795)	(231,003)
Interest received		7,038	5,651
<b>Net cash generated from/(used in) operating activities</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>(42,426)</b>	<b>63,815</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payment for property, plant and equipment		-	(5,240)
<b>Net cash (used in)/provided by investing activities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>(5,240)</b>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(42,426)	58,575
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		380,474	321,899
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>338,049</b>	<b>380,474</b>

The statement of cash flows is to be read in conjunction with the audit report and the notes to the financial statements.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies**

This financial report includes the financial statements and notes of the Financial And Consumer Rights Council Inc., an incorporated association, which is incorporated in Victoria under the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

**Basis of preparation**

Financial and Consumer Rights Council Inc. applies Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements as set out in AASB 1053: Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards and AASB 201 0-2: Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements.

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards- Reduced Disclosure Requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Victoria) 2012*. The association is a not-for-profit association for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

Australian Accounting Standards set out accounting policies that the AASB has concluded would result in financial statements containing relevant and reliable information about transactions, events and conditions. Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless stated otherwise.

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

**Accounting Policies**

**a. Income Tax**

The Association is exempt from paying income tax under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

**b. Property, Plant and Equipment**

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value as indicated less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and any impairment losses.

**Plant and Equipment**

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis and are therefore carried at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. In the event the carrying amount of plant and equipment is greater than its estimated recoverable amount, the carrying amount is written down immediately to its estimated recoverable amount and impairment losses recognised either in profit or loss or as a revaluation decrease if the impairment losses relate to a revalued asset. A formal assessment of recoverable amount is made when impairment indicators are present.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**b. Property, Plant and Equipment (*continued*)**

**Depreciation**

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets, including buildings and capitalised lease assets, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

The asset's residual values and useful lives are reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at each balance date.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are included in the comprehensive income statement.

**c. Leases**

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are recognised as expenses on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

**d. Financial Instruments**

**Initial Recognition and Measurement**

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the association becomes a party to the contractual provisions to the instrument. For financial assets, this is equivalent to the date that the company commits itself to either purchase or sale of the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instruments are initially measured at fair value plus transactions costs, except where the instrument is classified 'at fair value through profit or loss', in which case transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss immediately.

**Classification and Subsequent Measurement**

Finance instruments are subsequently measured at either of fair value, amortised cost using the effective interest rate method, or cost. Where available, quoted prices in an active market are used to determine fair value. In other circumstances, valuation techniques are adopted.

Amortised cost is calculated as (i) the amount at which the financial asset or financial liability is measured at initial recognition (ii) less principal repayments (iii) plus or minus the cumulative amortisation of the difference, if any, between the amount initially recognised and the maturity amount calculated using the effective interest method; and (iv) less any reduction for impairment.

*The effective interest method* is used to allocate interest income or interest expense over the relevant period and is equivalent to the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments or receipts (including fees, transaction costs and other premiums or discounts) through the expected life (or when this cannot be reliably predicted, the contractual term) of the financial instrument to the net carrying amount of the financial asset or financial liability. Revisions to expected future net cash flows will necessitate an adjustment to the carrying value with a consequential recognition of an income or expense in profit or loss.

*Fair value* is determined based on current bid prices for all quoted investments. Valuation techniques are applied to determine the fair value for all unlisted securities, including recent arm's length transactions, reference to similar instruments and option pricing models.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)**

**d. Financial Instruments (continued)**

**(i) Financial assets at fair value through the profit and loss**

*Financial assets are classified at "fair value through profit or loss" when they are held for trading for the purpose of short-term profit taking, or where they are derivatives not held for hedging purposes, or when they are designated as such to avoid an accounting mismatch or to enable performance evaluation where a group of financial assets is managed by key management personnel on a fair value basis in accordance with a documented risk management or investment strategy. Such assets are subsequently measured at fair value with changes in carrying value being included in profit or loss.*

**(ii) Loans and receivables**

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market and are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Gains or losses are recognised in profit or loss through the amortisation process and when the financial asset is derecognised.

**(iii) Held-to-maturity investments**

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets that have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and it is the association's intention to hold these investments to maturity. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Gains or losses are recognised in profit or loss through the amortisation process and when the financial asset is derecognised.

**(iv) Available-for-sale Financial assets**

Available-for-sale investments are non-derivative financial assets that are either not capable of being classified into other categories of financial assets due to their nature or they are designated as such by management. They comprise investments in the equity of other entities where there is neither a fixed maturity nor fixed or determinable payments.

They are subsequently measured at fair value with any remeasurements other than impairment losses and foreign exchange gains and losses recognised in other comprehensive income. When the financial asset is derecognised, the cumulative gain or loss pertaining to that asset previously recognised in other comprehensive income is reclassified into profit or loss.

Available-for-sale financial assets are classified as non-current assets when they are expected to be sold within 12 months after the end of the reporting period. All other available-for-sale financial assets are classified as current assets.

**Financial liabilities**

Non-derivative financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost. Gains or losses are recognised in profit or loss through the amortisation process and when the financial liability is derecognised.

**Impairment**

At the end of each reporting period, the association assesses whether there is objective evidence that a financial asset has been impaired. A financial asset or a group of financial assets is deemed to be impaired if, and only if, there is objective evidence that impairment as a result of one or more events (a "loss event") has occurred, which has an impact on the estimated future cash flows of the financial asset(s).



**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**d. Financial Instruments (*continued*)**

**Impairment (*continued*)**

In the case of available-for-sale financial assets, a significant or prolonged decline in the market value of the instrument is considered to constitute a loss event. Impairment losses are recognised in profit or loss immediately. Also, any cumulative decline in fair value previously recognised in other comprehensive income is reclassified to profit or loss at this point.

In the case of financial assets carried at amortised cost, loss events may include: indications that the debtors or a group of debtors are experiencing significant financial difficulty, default or delinquency in interest or principal payments; indications that they will enter bankruptcy or other financial reorganisation; and changes in arrears or economic conditions that correlate with defaults.

When the terms of financial assets that would otherwise have been past due or impaired have been renegotiated, the association recognises the impairment for such financial assets by taking into account the original terms as if the terms have not been renegotiated so that the loss events that have occurred are duly considered.

**Derecognition**

Financial assets are derecognised where the contractual rights to receipt of cash flows expires or the asset is transferred to another party whereby the association no longer has any significant continuing involvement in the risks and benefits associated with the asset. Financial liabilities are derecognised where the related obligations are either discharged, cancelled or expired. The difference between the carrying value of the financial liability, which is extinguished or transferred to another party and the fair value of consideration paid, including the transfer of non-cash assets or liabilities assumed, is recognised in profit or loss.

**e. Impairment of Assets**

At the end of each reporting period, the association assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another Standard (e.g. in accordance with the revaluation model in AASB 116). Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other Standard.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the association estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

**f. Employee Entitlements**

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may not satisfy any vesting requirements. Those cash outflows are discounted using market yields on national government bonds with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cash flows.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**g. Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at-call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities in the statement of financial position.

**h. Revenue and Other Income**

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable.

Revenue is brought to account when received and to the extent that it relates to the subsequent period it is disclosed as a liability.

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

***Grant Income***

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of comprehensive income when the association obtains control of the grant, it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the association and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before it is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

When grant revenue is received whereby the association incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue is recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant is recognised as income on receipt.

The association receives non-reciprocal contributions of assets from the government and other parties for zero or a nominal value. These assets are recognised at fair value on the date of acquisition in the statement of financial position, with a corresponding amount of income recognised in the statement of comprehensive income.

***Interest Revenue***

Interest revenue is recognised when the association obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

***Donations***

Donation income is recognised when the association obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt.

**i. Borrowing Costs**

Borrowing costs directly attributable to the acquisition, construction or production of assets that necessarily take a substantial period of time to prepare for their intended use or sale are added to the cost of those assets, until such time as the assets are substantially ready for their intended use or sale.

All other borrowing costs are recognised as expenses in the period in which they are incurred.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**j. Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

**k. Comparative Figures**

When required by Accounting Standards, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year.

**l. Trade and Other Payables**

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the association during the reporting period that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

**m. Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

**n. Economic Dependence**

The association is dependent on the Department of Justice for the majority of its revenue used to operate the business. At the date of this report the Board has no reason to believe the Department will not continue to support the association.

**o. Key Estimates**

**(i) Impairment**

The association assesses impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluation of conditions and events specific to the association that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amounts of relevant assets are reassessed using value-in-use calculations which incorporate various key assumptions.

**p. Key Judgements**

**(i) Provision for Impairment of Receivables**

Included in trade receivables and other receivables at the end of the reporting period are amounts receivable from members in relation to unpaid memberships. The Board has made no provision for impairment due to doubtful debts.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**q. New, Revised or Amending Accounting Standards and Interpretations Adopted**

The Association has adopted all of the new, revised or amending Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the AASB that are mandatory for the current reporting period. The adoption of these Accounting Standards and Interpretations did not have any significant impact on the financial performance or position of the Association.

Any new, revised or amending Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

**New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods**

The AASB has issued a number of new and amended Accounting Standards that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods, some of which are relevant to the Association. The Board of Board Members has elected not to early adopt any of the new and amended pronouncements.

**i) AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers**

AASB 15 is applicable to annual reporting periods of not-for-profit entities beginning on or after 1 January 2019, as deferred by AASB 2016-7: Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Deferral of AASB 15 for Not-For-Profit Entities.

When effective, AASB 15 establishes a single comprehensive model for entities to use in accounting for revenue arising from contracts with customers. Based on a preliminary assessment performed over each service and customer contract, the effects of AASB 15 are not expected to have a material effect on the Association.

**ii) AASB 1058: Income of Not-For-Profit Entities**

AASB 1058 is applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019.

When effective, AASB 1058 requires that where a Not-for-Profit entity acquires an asset for a payment that is significantly less than its fair value (for example grants, bequests, donations, or other similar voluntary contributions), the timing of income recognition will depend on whether the transaction gives rise to a performance obligation. Where a performance obligation exists, the amount is recognised as revenue in accordance with the principles of AASB 15, which would mean recognising the proportion relating to the performance obligations as income only when they are satisfied. Where a performance obligation does not exist, the amount is immediately recognised as income.

Based on a preliminary assessment performed by the Association, the effects of AASB 1058 are not expected to have a material effect on the Association.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

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**Note 1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies (*continued*)**

**iii) AASB 16: Leases**

AASB 16 is applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019.

When effective, AASB 16 will replace the current accounting requirements applicable to leases in AASB 117: Leases and related Interpretations. AASB 16 introduces a single lessee accounting model that eliminates the requirement for leases to be classified as operating or finance leases.

Based on a preliminary assessment performed over each line of business and product type, the effect of AASB 16 is expected to be:

- (a) An increase in Lease Liabilities, with a commensurate increase in Right-to-Use Assets. These changes are not expected to materially impact Net Assets.
- (b) An increase in Amortisation Expense (of the Right-to-Use Asset) and an increase in Interest Expense (on the Lease Liability), with a commensurate decrease in Lease Expense and/or increase in revenue recognition where lease arrangements are below market value. These changes are not expected to materially impact Total Comprehensive Income.



**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>Note 2. Other Income</b>		
Conference income: delegate fees	96,420	72,450
Conference income: sponsorships	197,284	165,939
Donation income	4,438	23,651
Membership income	56,037	56,202
Sundry income	59	26
Training income	-	28,713
	354,238	346,981
<b>Project Income</b>		
Family Violence	10,800	5,000
Elder Abuse	100,000	-
Other Projects	22,100	-
	132,900	5,000
<b>Note 3. Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>		
Cash on hand	67	380
Cash at bank	13,452	38,205
Cash on deposit	324,530	341,889
	338,049	380,474
<b>Note 4. Trade and Other Receivables</b>		
Trade receivables	136,620	45,555
Less provision for doubtful debts	-	-
	136,620	45,555
Prepayments	15,863	33,527
Accrued interest income	2,874	2,777
Security deposit	3,054	3,054
	21,791	39,358
	158,411	84,913
<b>Note 5. Property, Plant and Equipment</b>		
Computer equipment - at cost	11,467	11,467
Less accumulated depreciation	(11,467)	(11,467)
	-	-
Office fitout - at cost	29,114	29,114
Less accumulated depreciation	(29,114)	(23,873)
	-	5,241
Total property, plant and equipment	-	5,241

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>Note 6. Trade and Other Payables</b>		
Trade creditors	560	1,886
Sundry creditors	-	8,723
Net GST payable	24,232	19,340
PAYG withholding tax payable	4,712	3,240
Superannuation payable	3,620	2,987
	<u>33,124</u>	<u>36,176</u>
<b>Note 7. Amounts Received in Advance</b>		
Conference revenue	60,490	93,501
Unexpended grant funding	101,256	103,500
	<u>161,746</u>	<u>197,001</u>
<b>Note 8. Provisions</b>		
<b>Current</b>		
Annual leave	26,691	20,250
Long service leave	7,685	6,457
Personal/carers leave	21,678	13,394
	<u>56,054</u>	<u>40,101</u>
<b>Note 9. Leasing Commitments</b>		
<b>Operating Lease Commitments</b>		
Payable - minimum lease payments:		
- not later than 12 months	38,845	40,051
- between 12 months and 5 years	3,248	40,068
- greater than 5 years	-	-
	<u>42,093</u>	<u>80,119</u>

The property lease is a non-cancellable lease with a 58 month term, with rent payable monthly in advance. The lease does not include the option to renewal at the end of the lease term. The lease must instead be renegotiated at the end of each term, which for the current lease is 31 July 2020. The Committee have no reason to believe that the lease will not be successfully renegotiated at that time.

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2019**

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>Note 10. Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows</b>		
<b>Reconciliation of Cash Flow from Operations with Profit from Ordinary Activities after Income Tax</b>		
Net surplus/(deficit) attributable to the Association	48,186	(8,853)
<b>Non-cash flow items:</b>		
Depreciation	5,241	6,720
<b>Changes in assets and liabilities:</b>		
- (Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	(73,498)	(4,711)
- Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(3,053)	15,973
- Increase/(decrease) in income received in advance	(35,255)	79,825
- Increase/(decrease) in provisions	15,953	(30,355)
	(42,426)	58,599
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year</b>		
Cash on hand	67	380
Cash at bank	13,452	38,205
Cash on deposit	324,530	341,889
	338,049	380,474

**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC.**  
**ABN 89 498 543 075**  
**STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE BOARD**

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In the opinion of the Board the financial report as set out on pages 2 to 16:

- 1 Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Financial And Consumer Rights Council Inc. as at 30 June 2019 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards.
- 2 At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Financial And Consumer Rights Council Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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

**Chairperson**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Julie Barrow

**Treasurer**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Phillips

**Dated this**

17th day of September 2019

**TOWARDS A VISION SHARED**



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**FINANCIAL AND CONSUMER RIGHTS COUNCIL INC**

**A.B.N. 89 498 543 075**

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS**

***Opinion***

I have audited the accompanying financial report of Financial and Consumer Rights Council Inc (the Association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2019, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the statement by the members of the Board.

In my opinion, the financial report of the Association is in accordance with *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its performance for the year ended; and
- ii. complying with Australian Accounting Standards as per Note 1, *the Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and *the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012*.

***Basis for Opinion***

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. I am independent of the Association in accordance with 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 my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

***Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report***

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.



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

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole 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 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 on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, I exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. I also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my 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.
- Obtain 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 registered entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the responsible entities.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the responsible entities 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 registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify my opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of my auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate 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.

I communicate 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 controls that I identify during my audit.

**Auditor:**            **Frederik Ryk Ludolf Eksteen**

**ASIC Registration Number: 421448**

**Address:**        **Collins & Co, 127 Paisley Street, FOOTSCRAY VIC 3011**

**Signature:**

**Date:**            **19 September 2019**







