

President's message

The past year has seen CISVic further consolidate its position as a leading peak body in the not for profit sector. The work that Kate and the team have undertaken successfully ensures the continued strength of the organisation.

The establishment of the CISVic Consortium and the successful tender result was an extremely important step for the organisation and its leadership role. Many of the small member agencies would not have been successful in the Department of Social Service tender round had this partnership not been formed. I know that it has created a new level of work for the organisation but the short and long term benefits are immeasurable.

The move to new premises has provided an opportunity for all programs to be provided at a central base as well as an opportunity to grow the organisation.

I would like to thank the whole CISVic team for their work in the past year and congratulate them on the successful outcomes. Their efforts in maintaining training programs and providing support for agencies has continued at a high level while many new initiatives have been undertaken.

I also thank members of the Board of Management for their commitment and professionalism throughout the year.

I, on behalf of the Board of management would particularly like to express our thanks to Kate for her professional and positive leadership of CISVic during this period of growth.

Anne Coughlin
President



Key achievements and challenges

Our focus over the last year has been around raising the profile of our members and the work they do while responding to their individual and collective support needs. We continue to advocate for those in our community who are experiencing personal or financial hardship.

Power of the collective

CISVic's Emergency Relief consortium bid to the Department of Social Services was successful, securing funding until June 2017. The agreement commenced 1 March 2015 and makes us the second largest funded agency in Victoria.

The consortium consists of 30 member agencies across 14 regions, delivering just under \$2,000,000 annually. The funding has strengthened our relevance and increased our capacity to advocate for those in our community who are experiencing personal or financial hardship.

Harnessing the power of data

Key to effectively managing a consortium of 30 members is the capacity to collect, collate and analyse data. We now have the capacity to do this using Community Data Solution's client registration management database which we provide free of charge to all consortium members.

Professional development

We continue to deliver both accredited and non-accredited training programs. These include:

Assess and deliver services for clients with complex needs

A six-day accredited training program delivered to 142 new community support workers. Nine programs were delivered in metropolitan Melbourne and two in regional Victoria.

Tenancy Rights and Responsibilities

Four sessions were delivered with the Tenants Union of Victoria to 70 participants.

Utilities Hardship Training

Three sessions developed and piloted in partnership with Kildonan UnitingCare and Financial & Consumer Rights Council (FCRC)

Dealing with Challenging Behaviours

A targeted program delivered to 18 participants.

Advocacy body

Advocacy is a key function of any peak body, and CISVic is no different. We have maintained and strengthened relationships with key stakeholders, advocating for members and the communities they work with at the local, state and federal level.

In this reporting period we participated in 10 various reference groups and in August attended the Australian Council of Social Services Advocacy Day in Canberra. Further, we have made four policy submissions and endorsed three submissions by other parties.

Strengthening local networks

CISVic's local networks provide an important mechanism for information sharing and communication between members and the peak body. We have continued to support and grow our regional networks. With the creation of Inner South regional network, we now have six active networks; five in metropolitan Melbourne, and one rural network.

Growth in membership and workforce

The CISVic membership grew by three associate members in this reporting period; from 61 to 64. We now have 38 full-members and 26 associate members. Consequently, our collective workforce has also increased from 250 to 380 paid staff, and 2,700 to 3,100 volunteers.

Volunteers remain vitally important to our sector and their participation extends from roles in administration, to community support workers, to managers and coordinators, and to Committees of Management and Boards.



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Community Information & Support Victoria

2014–2015 Annual Report summary



Helping local communities help local people

Executive Officer's message

It gives me great pleasure to present Community Information & Support Victoria's (CISVic) 44th annual report. I've now been with the organisation for seven years, and I'm pleased to say, still experiencing immense satisfaction from the work.



The last year has been a difficult one for the community sector. While the 2015 federal budget was slightly softer than the tough and divisive one of 2014 budget, we've still seen significant cuts to key services. The Federal Government's introduction of an open, competitive tender process for emergency relief, financial counselling and microfinance programs mid 2014 caused much anxiety and stress for our members and the broader sector.

While our CISVic consortia tender was successful the cuts and re-distribution of funding has seen agencies lose 20-70% of their funding. CISVic and the consortia members are now significant players, and we see opportunity here to strengthen our voice. Our contract commenced in March this year, and we've included data in this report about the first four months of service delivery. This funding has enhanced our capacity to deliver advocacy and sector support.

We welcomed new staff to our team; Meagan Skehill (Sector development manager), Cherry Ching (Administrative officer), and Lisa Hansen (Project officer, six month contract).

In January we entered into a new auspice relationship working with The Salvation Army Training Plus. We have found that this a good fit in terms of our services and training, and the Salvo's a great resource and support.

We attracted additional funding for two projects; *Energy Information Fund* (Department of Economics, Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources), a partnership project between CISVic, FCRC and Kildonan to develop and deliver energy hardship training programs for volunteers and financial counsellors; and *Fire Services Levy Monitor project* (Department of Justice); aimed at developing and delivering targeted information to our workforce around insurance issues for vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

I believe that during this last 12 months, we've been able to really consolidate our organisation and work, and we're in a sound position to respond to the needs of our members and the community.

The current social, economic and political context will certainly drive our work over the next 12 months. Recent discussions about tax reform or increasing GST is unsettling, as modelling indicates that this will hit those who can least afford it. Government budgets at every level are under pressure, but the remedy should not be found in cutting or withdrawing vital education, health and welfare services, or shifting their costs to the public. The gap between the haves and have nots continues to rise – by 13% over the last decade. We consider it unacceptable that 600,000 children are living below the poverty line and children in single-parent households are in poverty at over twice the rate of children living with two parents.

In closing, I would like to thank my staff and Board for their ongoing support and dedication. They continue to work with integrity and passion. I'd also like to acknowledge our core funding body, the State Department of Health & Human Services, with whom we enjoy a good working relationship.

We look forward to a new year; with whatever kind of opportunities and challenges it may bring, while firmly focusing on helping local communities help local people.

Kate Wheller
Executive Officer

A snapshot

CISVic members

64 member agencies
38 Full members (across 44 sites)
26 Associate members

344,000

Total client contacts for CISVic (and membership)
↑13% from previous year

March – June 2015 CISVic Consortium

helped **13,643** emergency relief clients



distributed **\$776,053** emergency relief funding

"We are impressed and grateful for the level of support and expertise CISVic has provided over the last 12 months. The hard work undertaken by all at CISVic has been greatly appreciated and has been mirrored at agency level. CISVic continues to impress and has achieved remarkable results"

CISVic member



CISVic Emergency Relief Consortium

Members of the consortia are located throughout Victoria.

Regional networks: Eastern, Inner South (NEW), Northern, North West, Rural, Western Port.



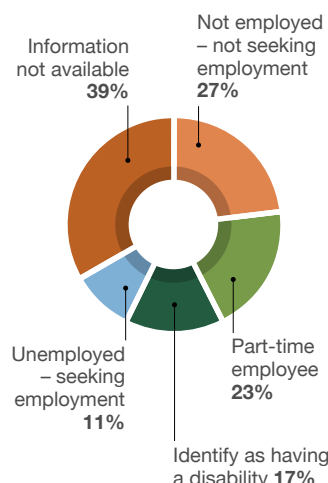
Our collective workforce
380 : 3140
paid staff : volunteers
(1:8 ratio)

"The trainer was inspiring and the experience and anecdotes she gave us supplemented my learning very well"

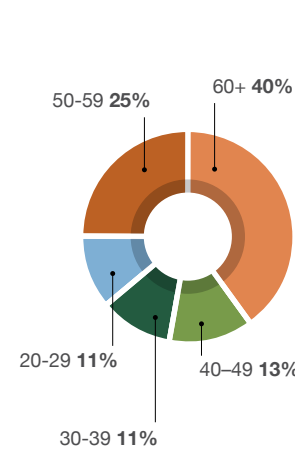
volunteer

About CISVic volunteers trained in the last 12 months

Work status



Age range



Country of origin of volunteers*

Australia	67%	Italy	1%	South Africa	1%
Cameroon	1%	Malaysia	1%	Switzerland	1%
Croatia	1%	Mauritius	1%	United Kingdom	12%
Egypt	1%	New Zealand	1%	Zambia	1%
Hong Kong	1%	Pakistan	1%		
India	7%	Philippines	2%		

* CISVic volunteers trained in the last 12 months



11 sessions delivered for new workers: 'Assess and deliver services for clients with complex needs'

142 new Community Support Workers trained: 86% female, 14% male

"The course has been great in equipping us with the skills to feel confident at interviewing clients"

volunteer

CISVic members

- Banyule Support & Information Centre Inc
- Bayside Community Information & Support Service - Hampton East Centre
- Bayside Community Information & Support Service - Sandringham
- Box Hill Citizens' Advice Bureau
- Camcare Inc - Camberwell
- Camcare Inc - Ashburton
- Casey North Community Information & Support Service Inc
- Chelsea Community Support Services Inc
- Cobram Citizens Advice Bureau Inc
- Coburg Community Information Centre Inc
- Community Information Centre Hobsons Bay Inc.
- Community Information Glen Eira Inc
- Community Support Frankston Inc
- Cranbourne Information & Support Service Inc
- Dandenong Community Advisory Bureau Inc
- Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Service Inc
- Diamond Valley Community Support Inc.
- Doncare Community Services
- Essendon Citizens Advice Bureau Inc
- Goulburn Valley Community Care & Emergency Relief Inc
- Information Warrandyte Inc
- Knox Infolink Inc
- Lilydale Assist Inc
- Living Learning Pakenham
- Maroondah Citizens Advice Bureau Inc - Ringwood
- Maroondah Citizens Advice Bureau Inc - Croydon
- Maryborough Community Information Centre Inc
- Mentone Community Assistance & Information Bureau Inc
- Monash Oakleigh Community Support & Information Service Inc
- Monash Waverley Community Information & Support Inc
- Mornington Community Information & Support Centre Inc
- Mt Alexander Community Information Centre Inc
- Port Phillip Community Group Inc - St Kilda
- Port Phillip Community Group Inc - Sth Melb
- Port Phillip Community Group Inc - Port Melb
- Prahran Citizens Advice Bureau Inc
- South Gippsland Citizens Advice Bureau Inc
- Southern Peninsula Community Support & Information Centre Inc
- Springvale Community Aid & Advice Bureau Inc
- Sunraysia Information & Referral Service Inc
- UnitingCare East Burwood Centre
- Western Port Community Support
- Whittlesea Community Connections Inc

Associate members

- Ardoch Youth Foundation
- Australia Help Limited
- Bendigo Family and Financial Services Inc
- Bendigo Foodshare Inc
- Bendigo Volunteer Resource Centre Inc
- Countrywide Community Missions Victoria Inc
- Diamond Valley Community Legal Centre
- Diamond Valley Foodshare Inc
- Eastern Emergency Relief Network Inc
- Endeavour Ministries Inc
- ER Victoria
- Healesville Interchurch Community Care Incorporated
- LINC Church Services Network Yarra Valley Inc
- Make a difference DINGLEY VILLAGE INC
- Manningham Community Health Services
- North East Region Volunteer Resource Centres Inc (Known as Volunteers of Banyule)
- OZ Assist Inc
- Somali Australian Council of Victoria
- Swags for Homeless Ltd
- The Gianna Centre Inc
- The Migrant Hub
- United Way Ballarat Community Fund
- Volunteer West
- Volunteering Geelong Inc
- Wimmera Information Network Inc