

WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE



2023/2024 ANNUAL REPORT

WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Kim Barne Barre Wadda Wurrung, Kitarra ngitj. Gin Gin bail wada nidg. Bar Nar Weering Nidj.

“Welcome to Wadda Wurrung Country, let us walk together and learn in peace.”

We would like to thank and pay respect to the Traditional Owners of the land on which we deliver our services. Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative provides services on Wathaurong, Gulidjan, Gadabanud and Boonwurrung countries. We would also like to acknowledge and pay respect to our Elders, both past and present, to the members of the Aboriginal community and to the community leaders.



2023 / 2024 ARTWORK

This year's artwork is created by proud Waddawurrung woman, **Nikki McKenzie**

Wathaurong's Commitment To Action plan outlines our goals, objectives and how we want to reach them. Centred in all of this is the "Wathaurong Way" – how we want to work, how we centre culture in everything that we do, and how we make sure that Community is our first priority always.

OUR VISION & PURPOSE

• Strong Community • Strong Culture • Strong Country.

We are here to connect, support and advocate for our Community to live their best lives. Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative aims to provide culturally appropriate health, education, aged, disability, housing and cultural services.

OUR FOUNDATIONS

• Community • Culture • Voice • Innovation

OUR VALUES - CARE

• Courage • Accountability • Respect • Engagement



Disclaimer: While all care has been taken to ensure that information and figures contained in this report are correct at the time of publication, details were based on information at hand at the time, and changes in circumstances after the time of printing may impact the accuracy of its information.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware that this document may contain images and names of deceased persons.

NB - for the purposes of this document, the term "Aboriginal" refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons.



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PROFILES OF THE CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS



Judy Dalton-Walsh

Judy Dalton-Walsh is a Wadda Wurrung Traditional Owner who has always been involved in Community and Wathaurong life. Judy works as a Koorie Engagement Support Officer at the Department of Education and Training.



Prof. Wendy Brabham

Professor Wendy Brabham is a Traditional Owner from the Wamba Wamba, Wergaia, Nyeri Nyeri and Dhudhuroa first nations. Wendy is a respected academic who has been a representative on various boards and committees.



Ammie Howell

Ammie is a Central Arrente woman born and raised on Wathaurong Country. She is a mum to 6 proud Arrente/Bundjalung kids and is an active member of the Wathaurong community. Ammie is also a former staff member of Wathaurong and Wathaurong Glass. Ammie was co-opted to the Board in December 2022 and was elected to the Board by Community in February 2023.



David Tournier Jr.

David Tournier Jr was born on Wemba Wemba Country where he spent most of his childhood before moving to Wathaurong Country in his teens. David has experience working in a cultural capacity for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organisations with local schools, universities, councils and other organisations. David is currently a Senior Heritage Cultural Officer at Boon Wurrung Land and Sea Council. David was elected to the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board in February 2023.



Jordan Edwards

Jordan Edwards is a proud Gunditjmara, Waddawurrung & Arrernte man. He has grown up in the Wathaurong community and has been involved in community and cultural business all his life. Jordan is currently one of the South West representatives on the First Peoples' Assembly and is the Youth Convenor for the Assembly. He has been leading the conversations to make sure that community are knowledgeable and empowered when it comes to Treaty and is passionate about making sure that the youth have a voice. Jordan was one of the leaders who advocated for and led the youth discussions around standing up the Karroong Kanyool Youth Hub in Forster Street.



Glenn Shea

Glenn Shea has worked for and with Wathaurong in several roles including Youth Justice and Wathaurong's 40 Year Anniversary film and events. He is an acclaimed and awarded playwright, director and actor, including Aboriginal truth-telling. Glenn has sat on the Board of Directors at Ilbijerri Theatre Company for over 7 years and was elected to the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Board in February 2023.



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE LTD BOARD DIRECTORS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2023-2024

Director	Date of commencement as Director	Date of cessation as Director	Number of eligible meetings for 2023/24	Number of eligible meetings attended
Judy Dalton-Walsh	19/9/2018 (re-elected 26/2/2023)		6	6
Wendy Brabham	7/12/2017 (re-elected 26/2/2023)		6	5
Ammie Howell	13/1/23 (Co-opted 13/1/2023, elected 26/2/2023)		5	5
Glenn Shea	26/2/23		6	6
Jordan Edwards	26/2/23		3	3
David Tournier	26/2/23	21/12/23	1	1

WATHAURONG BOARD REPORT

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's (Wathaurong) Board of Directors wish to acknowledge the Country that we work and live on is and has always been Wathaurong Country. Wathaurong provides support services to our Community living on Wathaurong, Boonwurrung, Gulidjan and Gadabanud country. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and to all Aboriginal people on Country who have contributed to the strength of the Aboriginal Community and Cultural society we have today.

The 2023/2024 financial year has been a period of growth, achievement and sorrow for our organisation and Community. This report highlights the significant achievements, and the outstanding work delivered by Wathaurong over the past year. We are committed to providing spaces and programs that support our vision of Strong Community, Strong Culture, Strong Country, some of the key achievements from 2023/24 are:

Key Achievements of 2023/2024:

- **Youth Hub Completion:** Successfully completed the renovations of Forster Street, transforming it into our vibrant Karroong Kanyool (Home of the Young) Youth Hub that we opened on 15 March 2024.
- **Rulebook Refresh:** Completed a 2-year rulebook refresh project that included extensive Community consultations to revise and update the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative rulebook.
- **Voice Community Discussion:** Established a Voice Community Committee, engaging with local Members of Parliament to advocate, discuss and develop events with our Community and broader Community about why frameworks like the voice are needed.
- **VACSAL Carnival:** We hosted the Senior Football & Netball Carnival in Torquay on 7 & 8 October 2023 attracting over 3,000 Community.
- **It's a Mob Festival:** Held our first health focused festival at the Geelong show grounds, with the focus to hold them annually.

In closing, the Board extends our heartfelt thanks to our Community members and staff for their ongoing support. We look forward to an exciting 2024/2025 year, with the launch of new initiatives and continued progress on our major projects. Together, we aspire to be an organisation that our Community can be proud of.

Nyatne, Gobota (Thanks, Take Care).

Wathaurong Board of Directors





CEO & DEPUTY CEO JOINT REPORT

Simon Flagg & Rose De Jong

Firstly, we would like to acknowledge the traditional owners on the lands we provide supports to our Community living on Wathaurong, Gulidjan, and Gadubanud countries. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and to all Aboriginal people on Country.

Year in Review

It has been another busy and successful year for Wathaurong as our Community and organisation continue to grow. As of the end of the 2023-24 financial year, we had 200 staff members, which highlights how much we have grown as an organisation and the need for our Morgan Street redevelopment to consolidate our staff and community supports at the home of the Co-op.

Major Projects

- **Morgan Street Redevelopment:** the Morgan Street redevelopment project has continued to meet massive milestones. Town Planning was submitted in late 2023 and we soon hope to have our permit issued by end of 2024. We have commenced detailed design, looking more closely at how the building will operate. Late 2024 we will finalise construction documentation, plan our transition out of the site early in 2025.
- **Housing and Homelessness Support:** we were successful in obtaining funding to establish the new Housing and Homelessness team.

- **Karroong Kanyool 'Home of the Young':** the completion of another exciting infrastructure project has been the redevelopment of Forster Street into our new Youth Hub. This new facility, complete with an outdoor basketball court, will ensure we provide a place where our youth can strengthen their connection to Community, Culture, and identity. We are excited about what this new space will create for our youth and look forward to walking this journey with them.

- **Deputy CEO position:** In January 2024, we introduced a new Deputy CEO position to further support the growing needs of our organisation. Jason Kanoa initially stepped into this role before taking 12 months leave. Rose De Jong has been officially appointed as the Deputy CEO of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. Rose has been with Wathaurong for three years and is honoured to be supporting our commitment and vision of Strong Community, Strong Culture, Strong Country.

- **Health Services Expansion:** We have completed the fit out of the new mobile health clinic and we are looking forward getting out to Community in late 2024 that will help us improve access to healthcare for our remote Community members.

Here are the financial highlights for Wathaurong's 2023-24 financial year:

1. **Revenue Growth:** The Co-operative experienced a significant increase in revenue, driven by expanded services and successful funding applications.

2. **Operational Surplus:** Achieved an operational surplus, reflecting efficient management and cost control measures.
3. **Grant Funding:** Secured several key grants that enabled the launch of new community programs and the expansion of existing services.
4. **Capital Investments:** Invested in major capital projects, including the completion of the Youth Hub and ongoing redevelopment of Morgan Street.
5. **Financial Stability:** Maintained a strong financial position with healthy reserves, ensuring the sustainability of services and programs.

These highlights demonstrate Wathaurong's commitment to financial responsibility and our ability to support and grow supports and services for the Community.

There were a few staff changes over the 2023-24 financial year. We welcome all our new staff and thank our outgoing staff for their work and commitment, wishing them all the best in their next journey.

Throughout this report, you will see more stories of the great work our team has done over the year. We would like to say thank you to our Community, Staff, Executive team, and Board for all the amazing work we have done together over the 2023-24 year to provide supports and programs for our mob. We are stronger together, and I look forward to continuing our journey together Strong Community, Strong Culture, Strong Country.

Nyatne (thank you)



Office of the CEO Staff

Chief Executive Officer - **Simon Flagg**

Deputy Chief Executive Officer - **Rose De Jong**

Business Support Officer - **Leah Parker**

Strategic Policy Advisor - **Nadia Albert**

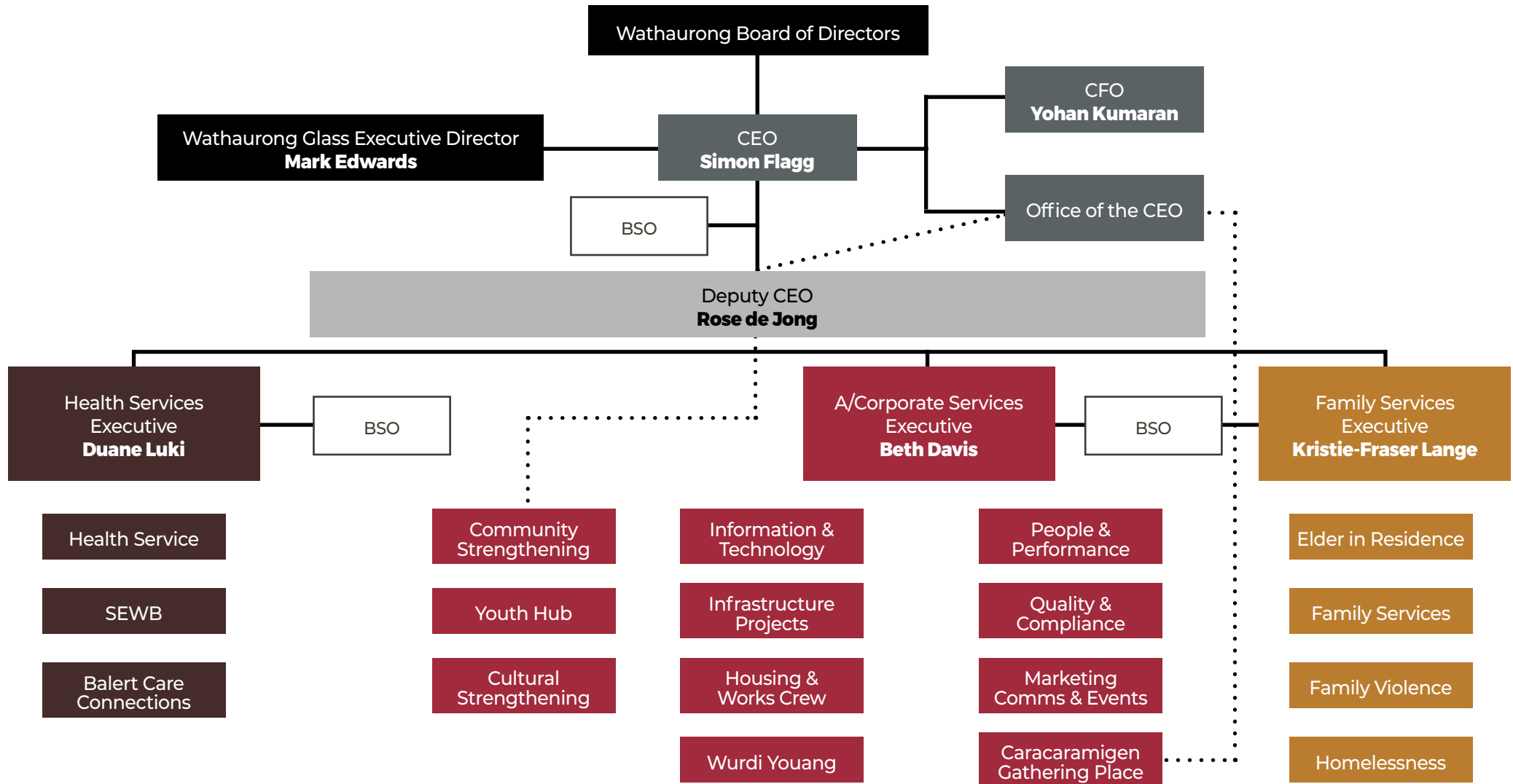
Strategic Policy Advisor - **Angela Walsh**

Strategic Projects & Grants Officer - **Julie Saylor-Briggs**

Cultural Advisor - **David Tournier**

Cultural Advisor - **Kristi Watts**

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



CORPORATE SERVICES STAFF

Corporate Services Team

Beth Davis

Acting Corporate Services Executive Manager

Andrea Tournier

Business Support Officer

Quality & Operations

Hayley Couzens

OHS Manager

Nikita Pillai

Quality & Compliance Manager

Jasmine Skye-Marinos

Quality & Compliance Officer

Nikki Caroll

Infrastructure Manager

Ella Devery

Fleet Management

Taige Crossman

Receptionist

Human Resources

Nikita Pillai

HR Manager

Tenaya Watts

HR Business Partner (maternity leave)

Erin Russell

HR Business Partner

Finance

Yohan Kumaran

Chief Finance Officer

Cameron Dodds

Finance Manager

Kathy Davis

Finance Support Officer

Diksha

Finance Support Officer

Fiona Ryan

Finance Support Officer

Housing

Jack Clark

Housing Manager

Bruce Ryan

Building Maintenance Manager

Leon Acquilina

Building Apprentice

David McLachlan

Garden Crew

Noel Hodges

Garden Crew

Marketing & Events

Beth Davis

Marketing & Communications Manager

Layla Boseley

Communications & Events Co-ordinator

IT Support

Jack Woolford

IT Manager

Greg Cooper

IT Support Officer

Michael Graham

IT Support Officer

Duane Whitlock

IT Special Projects

Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place

Ebony Hickey

Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place Manager

Tanisha Clarke

Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place Support Officer

Shelley Ferrari

Cleaner

Wurdi Youang

Reg Abrahams

IPA Manager

Megan Frazer

Project Officer

Jamie Butcher

Aboriginal Landcare Officer

Balert Care Connections

Kelly McLachlan

Manager

Liz Abrahams

Team leader

Amanda Carter

Support Coordinator

Shayesta Sharma

Support Coordinator

Lilian Kitete

Support Coordinator

Annmaree Wills

Aboriginal Disability Liaison Officer

Kiara Smith

Elder Care Connector

Plus 19 casual Disability Support workers



CORPORATE SERVICES ACTING EXECUTIVE MANAGER REPORT

Beth Davis

Since Rose De Jong took on the role of Deputy CEO, I have been leading the Corporate Services team in an Acting capacity while the recruitment process for the role takes place. During my time in the role, since February 2024, I have seen our Corporate Services

team continue to provide incredible support and opportunities for our Community through the day to day operations. Corporate Services is responsible for the overall running of the organisation and supports all of our other service areas to be able to engage, connect

and deliver support for people all across our service region. Below is a snapshot of some of the incredible work the team have achieved in 2023/2024.



CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

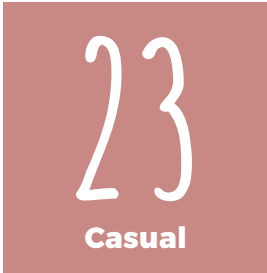
People & Performance

At the end of the 2023/2024 financial year, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative had 198 active staff.

Of those active staff, 44.5% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, which is slightly up from last year's percentage of 42.9%

We recruited 62 new staff members during the 2023/2024 financial year which is down from 75 the previous financial year.

We had 45 staff separations, and we thank them for their service and wish them well.



CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Tenaya Rossi from the People & Performance Team is a proud mum to baby Sofia and will be on parental leave until April 2025.

The new online Human Resources and Payroll system, Employment Hero, was rolled out over the 2023/24 year and is now well-embedded and well used by all staff. The Learning & Development module has also been recently implemented. It houses all the mandatory training for Wathaurong staff. We will be encouraging all staff to complete this training in the upcoming months.

Wathaurong Supervision framework is in the final stages of implementation. Multiple sessions were held with leadership and other staff to familiarise them with this framework. Many program areas have already started using this framework We will hold review sessions in the near future to finalise implementation of this framework.

The CEO's office has commenced and is committed to holding mandatory "Induction to Wathaurong" training for all new starters on a quarterly basis.

We also wanted to extend an acknowledgement and congratulations to the following staff members, who reached a milestone of more than 10 years of service with Wathaurong over the past financial year. These staff were acknowledged at one of our All Staff In Service Days and received some beautiful Wathaurong Glass in recognition of their service.

- **Aunty Gwenda Black - 27 years**
- **Uncle Reg Abrahams - 18 years**
- **Georgina Chapman - 15 years**
- **Aunty Eileen Smith - 14 years**
- **Kristi Watts - 14 years**
- **Hayley Couzens - 13 years**
- **Tahlia Dempsey - 13 years**
- **Skye Duncan - 12 years**
- **Kerrie Alsop - 12 years**
- **Aunty Naomi Surtees - 11 years**
- **Aunty Sandy Manning - 11 years**
- **Dr Ed Poliness - 11 years**
- **Liz Abrahams - 10 years**
- **Fiona Ryan - 10 years**
- **Kristie Fraser-Lange - 10 years**
- **Dr David Corbet - 10 years**

Housing

Our housing portfolio remains unchanged in the 2023/2024 financial year, with 19 properties consisting of:

3 x 2 12 x 3 4 x 4
Bedroom **Bedroom** **Bedroom**

This financial year saw the completion of upgrades to a number of properties through the Aboriginal Rapid Housing Response Program.

The Building & Works team also completed the build of a toilet block and showers at Wurdi Youang, meaning the property has a permanent facilities solution for the workers on the property and also visitors to the area for special events. The showers are also a great addition for the team working out there out in the weather daily.

There have been two identified roles for Apprentice Builders, with one being filled by Leon Acquilina and the other in the process of recruitment. These roles have opened up opportunities for two community members to gain extensive work experience and gain a trade certificate as a fully qualified builder at the end of the 4-year apprenticeship.

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Infrastructure & Facilities

Forster Street

On 15 March 2024 we launched the reopening of our refurbished Healing Spirit Youth Hub at Forster Street, now known as Karroong Kanyool (Home of the Young). The project was a collaboration with Merit Interiors and utilised funding under the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program and from the Victorian Health Building Authority. The renovations to the interior and exterior of the building, and the reimagining of the landscaping (including a deadly new basketball court and pizza oven) look and feel amazing.

The site provides a culturally safe gathering place to enable young people to connect and engage with each other on a day-to-day basis to gather and yarn, participate in cultural activities, strengthen life skills, receive support and guidance from a range of service providers and access a range of services via reach out and/or referral.

Our community have long advocated for a space where our children and young people can access a broad range of services and supports in one convenient location. We have listened to our young people, and we are thrilled to finally deliver on a space that has been developed by and for our young mob.

Morgan Street

The redevelopment of our Morgan Street site will bring Wathaurong staff and community back together in one location that holds cultural significance for the local community. The new building will include a large health services clinic, safe and secure family violence support spaces, child protection outreach and family contact spaces, as well as youth justice, legal and community outreach services areas. In addition, there will be a large 300 capacity conference and hospitality space for Wathaurong to host NAIDOC events, community celebrations and ceremonies, and also to make the space available for hire to external groups to generate ongoing revenue for the organisation.

Over the past financial year we have made great progress with the Morgan Street Redevelopment project, with a Town Planning submission going in to the City of Greater Geelong in September 2023.

On 25 June 2024, the Council endorsed the preparation and exhibition of a planning scheme amendment to rezone land at 60-62 Morgan Street, North Geelong, and part of the land at 43 The Boulevard, Norlane. This is being done in preparation for our intended purchase of the land at 43 The Boulevard which is required for car parking for the project.

We are continuing to work hard on the detailed designs for the building and are aiming to commence construction of the building in mid 2025 and move into our new building in late 2026.

Colac Gathering Place

We have applied for and been successful in getting funding through the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Projects (ACIP) funding to commence a feasibility study to find a new home for the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place, with the news that the current lease of the existing property will not be renewed as of December 2024. The feasibility study will look at renovating other properties in the area to be fit for purpose and for the Colac community to have room to grow.

Albert Street

We have been making improvements to the building we lease at 10-12 Albert Street, Geelong West to improve the experience of the building for our community and staff, including increased insulation, sound proofing and updates to our medical consult rooms. We are investing in these updates to ensure we can continue to provide high quality services to our community, as well as preparing the building for when we relocate our health services and some of our staff to this location while the new building is being constructed at Morgan Street.

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Wurdi Youang

Wurdi Youang is a diverse program focused on Conservation, Culture, Community Strengthening and Healing, and Education. Based at Wathaurong's Little River property, our team has celebrated several successes this year, laying a strong foundation for the future.

With the support of Lara MP Ella George, we secured funding from the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) for a development and research project. This project will explore how the native grasses we are cultivating on the property impact the health of the Little River waterway, which borders a large part of our Land. Over the next two years, we will be trialling different local native plant species and methods along natural irrigation paths, with the hope that our findings will guide how we and neighbouring properties care for Country in the future.

We have also engaged in exciting collaborations, such as partnering with the City of Greater Geelong to host a native grasslands bus tour for the Geelong Nature Festival. We also joined forces with the Grassy Plains Network and other friends for a seed harvesting day. Although a weather event the day before unfortunately blew all the seeds away, the feedback for both events was fantastic! We plan to host regular seed harvesting days in the future, so if you're interested in joining us, please register with our Project Officer on 0418 971 270— we'll provide a barbecue and a yarn for your efforts.

We have also been working on installing a no-impact ablutions block on the site, thanks to funding from the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). So, by the time you come out here next, we'll have some decent toilets, including a long needed accessible one so everyone can feel welcome!

And finally, our site manager Uncle Reg Abrahams has continued to build valuable connections throughout the year by attending grasslands and native food production events, both online and across the state. The knowledge gained from these experiences will help shape our future plans for the property, as Wathaurong looks to expand awareness and use of the unique native plants and seeds we are nurturing.

Colac - The Aboriginal Gathering Place

During the financial year, we had 1658 Aboriginal peoples and 1346 non-Aboriginal people through the Colac Aboriginal Gathering place. These visits were a mix of seeking information, cultural guidance and support, meetings, flexible working spaces shared with Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corporation and community events.

This year has been full of adventure and we're blessed to be able to share on Country experiences with many across Gulidjan & Gadubanud meerreeng. On top of this we hosted and supported some really successful events and exhibitions and thank all our partners, supporters

and communities for continuing to back in the work we do - week in week out, supporting and advocating in the best interests of our community and creating deadly ways to connect with one another through kinship and culture, we've continued to champion deadly mob doing deadly things; and kept pushing for a permanent home for the Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place.

Unfortunately again this financial year we were unable to obtain funding for staffing or securing a new building. We thank Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-op for closing the gap and ensuring we remain open. Our social media is always worth a follow - if you don't already follow us the best way is to follow us on Facebook, Caracaramigen - The Colac Aboriginal Gathering Place or read our newsletters on Wathaurong's website under publications. As always, we're blown away by the kindness, heart and leadership of our community.

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Information Technology

1311 tickets reported and resolved in the 2023/24 financial year.

Wathaurong currently has a Microsoft Secure Score of 79.41%. Microsoft Secure Score is a tool within the Microsoft security portal that helps organizations understand how secure their digital environment is. It provides a simple score, like a credit score, that shows how well an organization is protecting its data and systems from threats. The higher the score, the better the security. It also offers suggestions on how to improve security by taking specific actions, making it easier to protect sensitive information even for those who aren't tech experts. This is significant in comparison to most similarly sized organisations with a Microsoft Secure Score of 43.31%. We aim to continue to raise this score with a goal of over 80% reaching towards 90% within the next year. This is a constantly moving target as new security measures are created, new software vulnerabilities discovered and addressed etc. Over the year, ensuring the IT Team is busy addressing and implementing fixes to address this space as it evolves. Throughout this financial year, the IT also assisted with the following projects:

- The Youth Hub IT fit out was completed
- Successfully tested and deploying Windows 11 across the organisation.
- Upgraded old desktops across the Health Service, greatly improving the staff experience and speed of service delivered to community as a result.

- Remote Desktop applications were successfully deployed, simplifying and reducing the cost of Microsoft cloud-based resources.
- An application update process using Winget, a tool provided by Microsoft, has been tested and deployed, streamlining the update process and improving the overall security posture of the organisation.
- A new Wisenet CCTV system has been implemented at Morgan St, greatly improving visibility and reliability of the system, and saving significant time finding footage of events.
- VACCHO engaged for the org-wide Client Management System, the planning and development is now underway with an intended launch in 2024 / 2025 FY. The intention is to provide staff a system that can fit the holistic services provided to community.
- Developing our SharePoint, Power Automate and Power Apps solutions to staff streamlining database and information storing methods and simplifying the experience and manageability of data.
- New partnerships established with Utilitise IT / Land on Heart and Viatek
- Testing, trialing and deploying a multitude of AI LLM-based platforms, including Microsoft Copilot, GitHub Copilot, ChatGPT etc. to determine what benefits can be provided to the organization and to the services delivered to community, while ensuring appropriate data sovereignty and security measures are met.



CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Quality & Compliance

The Quality team manages Wathaurong's Quality Management System (QMS), which monitors:

- Accreditation
- Funding compliances and reporting
- Document Register including Policies and Procedures
- Internal reporting such as Incidents, Feedback, Audits, Risks, and Improvements.

The Quality team has strengthened our reporting for our Governance Framework, providing accurate data to the Governance Committees. Quality data relating to Incidents, Feedback, Audit and Improvements is provided to the Governance committees to monitor, analyse, and implement improvements, providing a safe workplace for staff and community.

During 2023-2024 Wathaurong has successfully completed the following Accreditations:

- National Standards for Mental Health Services September 2023
- Human Service Standards Mid-cycle Assessment October 2023
- NDIS Practice Standards Recertification Assessment March 2024

National Standards for Mental Health Services

The Quality Team and Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team did an amazing job to prepare for our first Accreditation against the National Standards for Mental

Health Services. The auditors stated "The Social and Emotional Wellbeing team aims to provide culturally appropriate support and services to Community members. The work is underpinned by the Aboriginal Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework and supports Community members in building their self-determination and to meet individual treatment goals."

The auditors also acknowledge how our staff have embedded 'The Wathaurong Way' values within the work they do. We had very positive feedback from Community members that participated in the Accreditation process.

Human Service Standards Mid-cycle Assessment October 2023

Wathaurong met all Standard indicators for the mid-cycle review. The Auditors again acknowledged how staff have embedded 'the Wathaurong Way' in our service delivery.

The Auditors stated "The Wathaurong Way guides the organisation. Monitoring and measuring activities continue to evolve to drive continual improvement. There is a continued focus on positive culture change and improvements including a focus on investing in leadership, IT systems and infrastructure, and redefining practice."

Community members interviewed for this assessment were generally very happy with services provided, they generally felt informed and all noted the culturally safe service environment.

NDIS Practice Standards Recertification Assessment March 2024

Wathaurong has been Recertified for the NDIS Practice Standards. The previous corrective action plan was reviewed, and each corrective action is now implemented. 2 minor non-conformities have been identified in this recertification assessment; a corrective action plan has been developed to implement continuous improvements within the NDIS program.

We would like to thank all staff and community that participated and provided feedback through each Accreditation.

Some of the feedback provided by Community members include:

"Fantastic - they are my biggest support."

"They always treat me respectfully and have helped me through so much."

"I am so grateful for everything."

"I get guidance, but I always get to choose."

"Everything was tailored for me and what I was ready for."

"I achieved all my goals - I made a friend."

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Balert Care Connections

The Balert Care Connections team supports our community through services offered by the NDIS and My Aged Care. Over the 2023/34 financial year, the team supported:

34 NDIS clients

16 PYP clients

41 My Aged Care clients

16 ADLO clients

This year saw the introduction of a new software, MYP, to streamline our client management, rostering and reporting system. We also received funding through VACCHO and NACCHO for positions in the Elder Care connector and coordinator roles, to further support our community in accessing My Aged Care supports.

The biggest success in this team for this financial year was the support of two young women within our program that the team were able to support into more independent living and experiencing more social activities with 24-hour support. They've experienced the joy of feeling the sand beneath their feet and the waves on their toes at the beach—something they had never known before. They've strolled through Sunday markets, discovered treasures in op shops, and shopped for clothes at Kmart. With guidance from their support workers, they've even learned to shop online and eagerly awaited parcels delivered to their doorsteps. Through these newfound experiences, they've started to

develop their identities, exploring their preferences in fashion and learning what they like and dislike. They've celebrated birthdays with decorations, cakes, and gifts—milestones that were once out of reach. Moreover, they've gained access to basic healthcare rights, ensuring their well-being is prioritised.

This is just the beginning. In one short year, these women have made incredible strides, and the future holds endless possibilities. Their journey of growth and self-discovery is far from over, and the opportunities for progress are boundless. The transformation they have undergone is a testament to the power of support, freedom, and the right to live life on their own terms.

Marketing, Communications & Events

The 2023/24 year saw a huge number of events and activities across our community. Our social media and digital presence has continued to grow, and the highlight of our year is always our incredible NAIDOC week celebrations.

In October 2023, we hosted the statewide VACSAL Senior Football & Netball Carnival in Torquay. The event was a huge success with more than 3000 people attending to enjoy the festival-style atmosphere, including kids rides and activities, food trucks, and DJ entertainment. Our Wathaurong football team even took out the Div 2 men's football title!

Our marketing and events team were also involved in helping to bring together people for information sessions on The Voice to Parliament across the year. While the result of the vote is not what we had hoped for, the strength of community in coming together to support was encouraging to see.

In November 2023, we also hosted the music and health promotions festival, "It's a Mob Thing."

Our Community Christmas party returned to the Geelong Showgrounds in 2023 and it was great to see all of our families coming together, and the kids getting to see Santa arrive on a motorbike!

COMMUNITY EVENT NUMBERS

2023 / 2024

400

NAIDOC Ball

1000

NAIDOC Flag Raising

40

NAIDOC Elders Lunch

50

NAIDOC Day at the Farm

30

NAIDOC Youth Ball

20

NAIDOC Bush Craft workshop

100

NAIDOC Kids Disco

50

NAIDOC March (Melbourne)

300

NAIDOC basketball Indigenous round

40

NAIDOC Running Festival

150

Children's Day - ALL 4 Kids

200+

Voice to Parliament information sessions

40

Community Dinner

20

Visit from Aunty Pat Anderson

50+

September School Holiday program

3000+

VACSAL Senior Football/Netball Carnival

30

Referendum pre-polling station

200

Post-referendum BBQ

200+

It's a Mob Thing Health Music Festival



500+

Community Christmas Party

200+

Day of Mourning Dawn Service

30

Rulebook Refresh Members Consultation

50

International Womens Day Brunch

50+

April school holiday program

25

Headspace Youth Reconciliation event

50+

January School Holiday Program

25

Koori Surfing Titles

400

Pako Festa

30

VACSAL Basketball Carnival

20

Community Seaweed Workshop

200

National Sorry Day

30

Ready for Learning Day

30

Deadly games

100

Wathaurong AGM

200

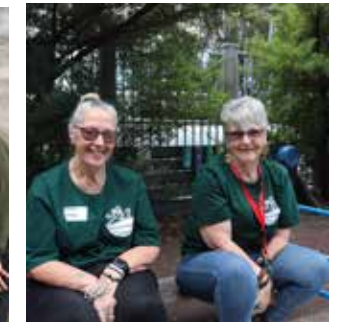
Karroong Kanyool Youth Hub Launch

30

Kindergarten Registration Day

25

Connecting Culture/ Youth Workshop



TOTAL 7915

NAIDOC WEEK

The 2023 NAIDOC week events held from 1st July through to 10th July saw more than 2000 people attending a range of events, kicking off with the annual NAIDOC Ball which was held at The Pier Geelong to fit even more people, making it the biggest ball yet with 400 people celebrating. We also held our own Elders lunch at Morgan Street, with our youth supporting by serving our Elders their delicious roast lunch! The Flag Raising event at Morgan Street on the Monday was also a great success with the return of the Blak Market, and our 2023 Wathaurong Community NAIDOC Awards were presented. Congratulations to all winners!

Nedok Yoongga **(Elder/Respected Person)**

Winner - Aunty Sandra Manning

AUNTY SANDRA MANNING was nominated for going above and beyond for the Wathaurong community, in her role as a Community Strengthening Facilitator and local justice liaison. Aunty Sandy never stops, her heart and soul are all for community. She is described as “young at heart” and respects everyone no matter their age, and a positive influence and hard worker.

Koolay Goopma **(Young Male Achiever)**

Winner - Vaughan Gray

VAUGHAN GRAY was nominated for his passion and dedication to his work with the Wathaurong youth. Vaughan goes above and beyond for community, outside of what is required in his Youth Justice role, and connects with the young mob. Vaughan is described as a caring and loving person.

Ngarrwa Ngitj **(Community Person)**

Joint Winners - Jay Hickey & Nicole Kirby

JAY HICKEY was nominated for his outstanding support for community and his engagement with people of all ages and from all walks of life. Jay goes above and beyond lending a hand to people. Jay shares his passion and skills such as art or skating with community, and has a positive influence on those around him.

NICOLE KIRBY was nominated for her dedication and support in being actively involved in the running of the Wathaurong Women's Group. As well as being a regular attendee and volunteer for Women's Group, Nicole and her family are always involved in Wathaurong community events and willing to put up a hand to help out with whatever is needed.

Moordeemoondeek Goopma **(Young Female Achiever)**

Winner - Layla Boseley

LAYLA BOSELEY was nominated for her outstanding work in organising and participating in community events. Her hard work has been recognised and appreciated by many community members, and she was honoured earlier this year by winning the Victorian First Nations Trainee of the Year Award. Many staff and community members have watched Layla grow in various aspects over the past year and her work and commitment has been rewarded. Layla is such a positive influence on community and her happy smiling face is always a joy to see at community events and activities.



2023 Wetland Community NAIDOC Awards For Our Elders
Kaitly Higgins
Young Man Achievement
Vaughan Gray

2023 Wetland Community NAIDOC Awards For Our Elders
SUNEC
Jay Murray

2023 Wetland Community NAIDOC Awards For Our Elders
Sandra Manning

2023 Wetland Community NAIDOC Awards For Our Elders
Layla Bonney

FAMILY SERVICES STAFF

Family Services Management

Kristie Fraser-Lange

Executive Manager, Family Services

Greg Reardon

Family Services Manager

Naomi Edwards

Family Services Manager

Elyssia Graham

Family Services Practice Leader

Jane Clements

Family Services Team Leader

Olivia Lund

Family Services Team Leader

Shannon Moulton

Early Years Team Leader

Tahlia Easton

OOHC Team Leader

Nicole Smith

OOHC Team Leader

Fiona Schlenso

Homelessness Manager

Karen Anderson

Homelessness Team Leader

Ruby Bennett

Acting Family Violence Manager

Karen Scanlon

Acting Family Violence Manager

Taige Crossman

Mackey Street Receptionist

Family Services Team

Maya Saunders

Senior Family Services Case Worker

Kristen Holmes

Senior Family Services Case Worker

Hannah Wentworth

Family Services Case Worker

Rebecca Smallwood

Family Services Case Worker

Joniemarree Marty

Family Services Case Worker

Alicia Gregory

Family Services Case Worker

Danae Haynes

Family Services Case Worker

Ebony Carmagnola

Family Services Case Worker

Aimee Scott

Family Services Case Worker

Carley Trajkovski

Family Services Case Worker

Out of Home Care Team

Stephanie McLachlan

AFLDM Co-convenor and Cultural Planner

Megan Verhoeven

Foster Care Recruitment

Kyly Davies

Senior OOHC Case Manager

PJ Graham

OOHC Case Manager

Christine Onesmo

OOHC Case Manager

Freya Taylor

OOHC Case Manager

Danielle Faumuina

OOHC Case Manager

Jana Fosita

Better Futures and Home Stretch

Isaiah Harrison

Better Futures and Home Stretch

Paul Pitt

Cultural Support Worker

Early Years Team

Bri Apma Hayes

Playgroup facilitator

Kristi Watts

Playgroup Facilitator

Cassandra Surman

Early Years Support Worker

Gabby Middleton

Koorie Families as First Educator Practitioner

Gina Chapman

Koorie Families as First Educator Practitioner

Jackie Brown

Koorie Families as First Educator Practitioner

Hayley Bohem

Koorie Pre School Advisor

Chantelle Chant

Best Start Facilitator

Family Violence Team

Rory Charles

Aboriginal Tenants at Risk Support Worker

Blake Natoli-West

Local Justice Worker

Olivia Mathieson

Youth Justice Worker

Vaughan Gray

Youth Justice Worker

Naomi Surtees

Cultural Support Worker

Violet Pearson

Aboriginal Hub Practitioner

Robyn delRio

Family Violence Project Worker and Mentor

Homelessness Team

Fiona Schlenso

Homelessness Manager

Karen Anderson

Homelessness Team Leader

April Angus

Initial Assessment and Planning

Georgina Pilkington

Initial Assessment and Planning

Ben Atkinson

Aboriginal Private Rental Assistance Program Broker

Carolyn Bean

Housing First

Also acknowledging the work of Family Services Team Members who have worked with us over the past year:

Elijah Satala

Out of Home Care Team Leader

Teagan Fraley

Initial Assessment and Planning

Virginia Murray

Aboriginal Practice Leader

Dora Smith

Family Violence Manager

Alyssa Wilson

Out of Home Care Worker

Rachael Topp

Foster Care Recruitment

Sally Laver

Case Support Worker

Seth Clay

Cultural Support Planner

Shurooq Al Barhi

Orange Door Hub Practitioner

Sue Riddell

Family Violence Worker

Trent Latta

Family Services Case Worker



FAMILY SERVICES EXECUTIVE MANAGER REPORT

Kristie Fraser-Lange

Family Services Management

The leadership team would like to thank the whole of the family services team who continuously go above and beyond to support the community.

Our Family Services team delivers 27 programs to promote connection, safety, stability and development for our children, young people and families.

The team are continuously focusing on a holistic approach, considering all external issues that may prevent families from reaching their full potential, including health or housing issues, physical or social isolation, financial difficulties, relationship issues, family conflict, substance use, disability and more. Each situation is different, and we build on the strengths of the families in our service to empower people giving them the skills and abilities to make lasting change.

Our Early Years team continues to be recognised as a leader across the state, providing mentoring to teams from other ACCOs delivering Parenting Programs. It was fantastic for our team to be recognised through presenting at the SNAICC conference in September 2023 in Darwin.

Our Family Services team have identified a gap within our service delivery of Youth Case Work support so towards the end of the year our team have started stepping into youth targets. Whilst at this stage we have only been able to support a small number of youth cases, this is an area that our leadership team will continue to advocate to ensure we can better support our young people moving forward.

This year we received additional funding to support expansion of what we are already doing as well as grow into new spaces:

- Playgroup received additional funding to commence 24/25 financial year
- Orange Door received funding for an additional two practitioners to commence in 24/25 financial year
- We were lucky enough to be one of two ACCOs in the State to receive 18 months funding to be a Homelessness Entry Point provider. Unfortunately, this funding didn't come with additional housing stock or resources however, it has given us the opportunity to work with community facing homelessness in a more holistic and culturally safe way.

Through this we continue to advocate to get the resources that the community need and we are hoping through participating in the evaluation of the program we can receive ongoing funding.

Over the next 12 months our Family Services team looks forward to further implementing the Commitment to Action and taking it down to the team level to continue improving our practice and support to community. We look forward to continuing to challenge our practice to ensure community are getting the best possible support through celebrating our successes and learning from our short comings.



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FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

Family Services

Integrated Family Services (IFS) and Family Preservation and Reunification (FPR)

Our IFS and FPR programs support families with children aged between 0-18 years where parents and/or families may need extra support, or, in circumstances where there may be concerns of parenting capacity, mental health, family violence or other aspects that impact upon their children's lives. With the IFS program, the need for support can be identified by individuals themselves, or there may be a referral from another agency, organisation or Child Protection. The aim of the program is to improve the safety, stability and development of children and for Wathaurong, it is about ensuring this is done so from a perspective which puts culture at the forefront of what we do, how we engage our families and the way in which we can foster meaningful, ongoing relationships between Community. Our programs work closely in partnership with Child Protection to work alongside and advocate strongly in decision-making, ensuring that services are culturally appropriate and emphasising the importance for the cultural needs of families and that self-determination of families is always embedded through their processes. Further, ensuring that everything is in the best interest of the children, and that we are supporting families to reach the best possible outcomes.

Our supports have always been focused on strengthening parental capacity which is important for our families, however we have always identified a gap with our youth needing intensive one to one work also. So through this year our team has advocated strongly

to receive targets allocated to our youth. Whilst we only received a small commitment we now have a couple of targets to work intensively with young people in navigating changes in their lives and linking them in with key supports such as mental health services, AOD, cultural connections and many more.

Over the course of the year our team has supported over 90 families. We have been able to support many of our families in creating and implementing strong routines, enhancing their parenting skills, strengthening capacity through engaging with appropriate supports to understand and manage challenging behaviours of their children. As always, we continue to advocate for families within the housing services and to education providers, to find collaborative and positive outcomes to best support our community.



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Out of Home Care

Aboriginal Family Lead Decision Making (AFLDM)
The Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM) Program is deeply rooted in traditional Aboriginal values and decision-making practices, where the responsibility for raising children is a collective effort shared by parents, extended family, the community, and guided by the wisdom of Elders. This program emphasises the importance of bringing together family members, extended family, Elders, and other significant individuals in the child's life, along with the child or young person themselves, to collaboratively make decisions that foster

the safety and well-being of those involved in the Child Protection system.

Over the past year, our AFLDM Convener has demonstrated exceptional dedication, each session was carefully structured to provide a culturally safe and comfortable environment, allowing families to engage in meaningful discussions that prioritise the best outcomes for their children. These sessions were instrumental in ensuring that a cultural lens was consistently applied, empowering families to participate fully in the decision-making process.

Our AFLDM Convener's efforts have been particularly successful in adopting a holistic approach to support our families, ensuring their active engagement in the AFLDM process. This approach has been crucial in amplifying the voices of Aboriginal families, enabling them to exercise self-determination and make decisions that reflect their own needs, values, and aspirations. By fostering an environment where families feel heard and respected, the AFLDM Program continues to play a vital role in promoting positive, culturally-informed outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families within the Child Protection system.



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FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

Cultural Planning

Wathaurong plays a vital role in overseeing the Cultural Planning for Aboriginal children in Out of Home Care. Our Cultural Advisor collaborates closely with Child Protection to develop, endorse, review, and implement cultural plans for all Aboriginal children and young people in care. This program works in close partnership with Wathaurong's Out of Home Care team, Child Protection (DFFH), and community service organisations, ensuring that the cultural plans are comprehensive and meet the unique needs of each child, in collaboration with Aunty Elsie Coates, the Cultural Support and Awareness Officer in Child Protection.

Together, we ensure that child protection practitioners and case managers are culturally sensitive and fully aware of the distinct considerations involved in raising Aboriginal children and young people. Our team has dedicated significant time to upskilling child protection staff through 'Just Do It' days on the cultural aspects that must be considered for children and young people in care, sharing Wathaurong's rich heritage and emphasising the importance of cultural plans for our kids in Out of Home Care.

Over the past 12 months, we have refined the Cultural Plan template and have been rolling out the 3 template approach to ensure that children and young people in Out of Home Care remain connected to their Country and are continually immersed in their family stories, songlines, and creation stories. Through these cultural plans, we have been able to significantly enhance cultural knowledge among our young Mob and their

carers. Wathaurong continues to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to strengthening the cultural connections of our children in Out of Home Care, and fostering their ties to both their community and family.

Better Futures

The Better Futures Program is proud to have two dedicated team members who provide daily support to 26 young people, with new referrals added each week. Our team has developed a personalised Better Futures Support Plan that helps young people set and work towards their future goals. This plan outlines how Wathaurong can support them in reaching their aspirations.

We have successfully guided several clients through their transition from out-of-home care to independent living. Our support includes helping them further their education, secure employment, and acquire essential independent living skills, such as setting up Centrelink, opening bank accounts, providing financial guidance, and obtaining their driver's licence.

The program is also committed to connecting young people with their Culture, Community, and Country. We facilitate family connections, support Return to Country initiatives, and encourage participation in community events to strengthen their ties to their heritage.



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Kinship Care and Home Based Care (Foster Care)

The Kinship and Foster Care programs are responsible for the case management of Aboriginal children under child protection orders who are placed in kinship care or with foster carers. Our goal is to provide comprehensive support to the children, young people, and their carers by fostering and preserving cultural identity and connection to the Wathaurong community, while also ensuring ongoing relationships with immediate family members and addressing practical day-to-day needs. These programs play a critical role in maintaining stable placements for children in out-of-home care.

Our team conducts regular home visits, coordinates and supervises family access visits, and organises educational and training sessions to equip carers with the necessary skills to meet the needs of the children and young people in their care. We also ensure the safety and well-being of children within their placements, promote and facilitate their participation in community and cultural events, and provide support during the transition process for young people leaving care. While we work in close collaboration with Child Protection, Wathaurong serves as the primary agency, taking the lead as the contracted provider.

Within Kinship our team also delivers the First Supports program which provides initial placement establishment and support when a child first enters a kinship placement. Through this our team has supported 27 households with placement support and Part B assessments, as well as supporting 55 children and young people in Kinship Care and 11 children and young people in Foster Care.

FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

The Out of Home Care team's most significant achievement this year was the successful reunification of three families. Through dedicated support and collaboration, the team played a crucial role in supporting three parents create a safe and nurturing environment, allowing their children to return home. This accomplishment not only involved the careful coordination of services but also the successful completion of Family Preservation Orders, ensuring long-term stability and well-being for the families involved. This milestone reflects the team's unwavering commitment to strengthening families and fostering positive outcomes for children in our care.

Early Years

Best Start Program - Mingo Waloom

The Mingo Waloom Best Start program is a prevention and early intervention program that aims to improve the health, development, learning and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are experiencing vulnerability from birth through transition to school.



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Best Start brings professionals together to deliver on the Best Start outcomes for children and their families, in particular those experiencing vulnerability. Partners work collaboratively using the improvement science approach to address barriers to participation for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children.

Our partners include City of Greater Geelong, MELI,

Geelong Regional Libraries, Community Hubs, Lookout Centre, Alphabet Preschool, Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH), Northern Bay Collage Family Centre, Mental Health & Wellbeing Local, Ourplace Northern Bay, Barwon Health, Department of Education and Training (DET), Northern Bay College and The Smith Family.

The Best Start program remained focused, engaging on average 2 PDSAs (Plan-Do-Study-Act) in PDSA cycles. These efforts are aimed at fostering early development and ensuring every child has the chance to grow and thrive.

Bupup Balak Wayipungang - Koori Pre-school Advisor Program (KPSA)

The KPSA program aims to support the Wathaurong community with accessing and participating in local kindergarten services. The KPSA also supports the broader Kindergarten community with ensuring their services are culturally safe and inclusive for families and their children.

In the past financial year, KPSA has supported 57 children with their journey through kindergarten. KPSA has also worked alongside 71 Kindergarten services in the past 12 months.

In January 2024 we hosted our Ready for Learning Day, which is all about making sure our children have all the resources they need to prepare them for Kindergarten and School. We had 35 children attend, 11 had their eyes assessed, 2 families transferred their Maternal Child Health Case to Wathaurong, Barwon Audiology received 9 referrals and booked 7 future appointments, and Geelong Regional Libraries got 6 new membership sign ups. All the children got a certificate at the end of the day to celebrate their new educational journeys!

In May 2024 we had our second ever Kindergarten Registration Day. We had 16 families attend, which is double the numbers we had in 2023! 14 of the families have enrolled into kindergarten for 2025. The other 4 still have a couple more years until their children are the right age, however wanting to start the process of looking for the right kindergarten early. We also had Wathaurong Health Services and Barwon Audiology there to offer assessments on the day. Wathaurong provided 7 Aboriginal Health Checks, and Barwon Audiology did 5 hearing assessments.



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Milla Milla and Kitjarra Booboop Playgroups

Milla Milla Playgroup Playgroup is a culturally safe and inclusive space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their parents, carers, Grandparents and other family members to attend.

We know that children learn and develop through play and social interaction, so it is important for us to have a culturally safe space where children have the opportunity to strengthen their cultural identity through play, song, stories and other cultural activities.

Playgroup provides an opportunity for children to interact with other children and families in the community. Attending playgroup gives our children that sense of belonging and being around community, not only helps our children grow Strong, Proud and Deadly but it is great space for the adults to connect to other families within the community.

FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

The KSPA worker Hayley, often comes to playgroup to offer help and support to our parents in getting their children enrolled and ready for kinder or school.

The Milla Milla Facebook page is a social platform we still use. Our Facebook page provides us the opportunity to share community events, resources and information to keep our families connected to the Wathaurong community. We currently have 38 families enrolled at Wathaurong, over 45 children have attended our Wathaurong playgroups space and 230 members on "Milla Milla and Kitjarra Booboop Playgroup" Facebook group.

Playgroup acknowledges the many partnerships with mainstream services including City of Greater Geelong, Barwon Child Youth and Family, Geelong Art Centre and Korayn Birralee Family Centre. We will continue to value these networks and utilise them in the most supportive way for outcomes for our children in community.

Kitjarra Booboop (Baby playgroup) Our baby playgroup is for children aged 0-12 months. All young, old and new parents/ carers are welcome. This space was created to help parents and carers with new booboop (babies) feel comfortable, and welcome in a cultural safe space, where they can yarn about all the exciting things and not so exciting things that their booboop (babies) are doing. It is a more relaxed environment where all parents feel that they can come and yarn.

On average 30 families each month joined our playgroups, enjoying creative and educational playtime that supports both child development and parental connection.

22 families on average continued to benefit from these sessions, where play is a key component of early learning in a culturally safe space.



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FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

Balert Gerrbik: Koorie Families as First Educators (KFFE)

KFFE is an early intervention program to assist families with supporting and strengthening their parenting capacity and improving the health, development, learning and wellbeing of Aboriginal children aged 0-5 years. The KFFE team focuses on promoting positive family functioning and reducing the stressors that impact on caregiving. The KFFE team does this by utilising a strengths-based approach and supporting families with systematically identifying and managing family risk factors, and providing additional supports to set and successfully complete achievable goals that support their children's early learning and development.

Our KFFE staff are trained practitioners in the Indigenous Positive Parenting Program (Triple P), Triple P For Baby, Smalltalk, Tuning into Kids and Circle of Security Parenting (COSP) Program. The team use these programs to provide supports to families either in a one-on-one capacity in a culturally safe and comfortable setting, or in a group setting. Throughout the year the KFFE program supported 65 families through both one on one and group work directly through the KFFE program. The KFFE team also supported many more community members through being involved in community events like NAIDOC Week, Kindergarten Registration Day, Ready for Learning Day and supporting Kitjarra Booboop and Milla Milla playgroups.

31 families on average each month were supported through our KFFE program, setting the stage for a strong start in kindergarten. We



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continued this momentum, assisting 29 families on their educational journey, ensuring they're well-prepared for early learning.

Family Violence

Family Violence Case Management

Over the past twelve months, the Holistic Family Violence program has directly supported 16 women and indirectly extending its reach to 28 children. Through the comprehensive support provided by this program, we have witnessed women and children not only reclaim their inherent right to safety but also begin to embrace a path toward healing and empowerment. This experience has been deeply personal for each individual, as they navigate and inform their own healing journey.

The program has worked on continually strengthening and building relationships with key stakeholders, ensuring a collaborative and cohesive approach to addressing the needs of women and children seeking family violence support. By fostering these partnerships, the program has created a network of support that extends beyond its immediate services, involving a broader array of organisations and professionals within the wider service system. Continuing to work on this collaborative approach ensures that the experience of those seeking family violence support is recognised but also provided with timely, appropriate, and effective response tailored to their specific circumstances.



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Justice

Over the last 12 months, the youth and adult justice programs have supported 58 Community Members. This support included court assistance, referrals to other services, advocacy and coordination with key stakeholders to ensure positive justice outcomes. Notably, the team have continued to be a welcomed and respected presence at court, regularly being commended by the magistrates, court staff and legal services for their commitment to showing up for community whilst navigating the justice system.

In the 2023-24 financial year Wathaurong assisted 43 Community Members to sign up to the WDP scheme to address their outstanding fines. To date, Wathaurong has supported Community Members to "work-off" a total of \$63,829.92. The WDP has played an important role in enabling individuals to resolve their financial obligations in a constructive and community-focused manner, ultimately contributing to their well-being, resilience and overall community connection.

Further, in the past year the Local Justice Program successfully reintroduced the delivery of 'Fines Days', an initiative that had been temporarily halted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Through 'Fines Days' the program has once again been able to offer support and relief to individuals by linking Community to the appropriate support to address any outstanding fines. This initiative has been delivered in collaboration with legal services, Sheriffs Officer's, and the RAJAC EO, to ensure Community feel supported and are being provided with the opportunity to address outstanding fines in a Culturally safe manner.

FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

Across three days:

- 28 Community Members were assisted with their outstanding fines
- 12 Community Members signed up to the Working Development Permit (WDP) Scheme.
- 6 Community Members were assisted by the Sherriff's Officer to address further matters.
- 2 Community Members were linked with additional legal assistance.

Men's Family Violence

The Men's Family Violence program has continued to be a vital resource in the community, offering comprehensive support to men who are committed to making positive behavioural changes. This program has been instrumental in helping men develop a deeper understanding and insight into their own actions, guiding them through the process of self-reflection and accountability. Additionally, the program has actively connected participants with essential services that address underlying factors contributing to their behaviours, such as substance abuse, mental health challenges, or other social determinants of health.

The Men's program has opened a total of 24 new cases in the 2023-2024 financial year and supported many successes. The program has seen Men take responsibility for their behaviours, accept referrals and engage in Aboriginal Healing Centres, and ultimately a reduction in risk present within community. Men's Family Violence program continues to play a critical role in promoting safer, healthier, and respectful relationships and fostering a community environment where everyone can thrive.

Orange Door

The Orange Door Aboriginal Response Team (ART) has been working through some staffing changes in the last 12 months. Whilst this has presented some challenges, we have remained focussed on aligning with Wathaurong's core values of CARE and supporting Community.

The Orange Door ART consists of 2 Hub Practitioners, a Team Leader and an Aboriginal Response Practice Leader, with growth funding for the next financial year adding an additional two Hub Practitioners.

As part of our commitment to strengthen Cultural Safety in the Orange Door, Expressions of Interest (EOI's) were sent out to our colleagues in the Orange Door who are employed by Partner Agencies. The successful applicant worked closely with Wathaurong to strengthen knowledge and develop experience working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people referred to TOD for support.

What we know needs to be considered with a stronger Cultural lens in the Orange Door is:

- 'Cold calling' from Police reports raises suspicion more commonly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients. Cold calling can cause anxiety/worry about a government service making contact.
- The MARAM document is unsuited to Aboriginal experiences of FV - family make-up, number of perpetrators (family or community)
- High complexity in cases, barriers to accessing support as the greater impact on workload.
- There are a higher number of Aboriginal and Torres

Strait Islander clients with CP involvement, compared to non-Aboriginal clients, despite similar protective concerns, especially relating to FV.

- Community have observed and experienced a difference in Vic Pol response to clients. Stereotyping. Misidentification, racism.

This opportunity required the successful applicant being involved in and holding Aboriginal cases over a period of 6 months commencing early 2024. They were supported for Cultural consults with the Aboriginal Response Practice Lead.

Additional works within the Orange Door have been guided by Aunty Naomi Surtees, Aboriginal art work has been locally sourced and displayed to ensure a Culturally safer space for Community.

Community is welcome to make a time to come in and see the spaces that have been created and provide feedback.

Adolescents Using Violence in The Home (AVITH)

Over the last 12 months, the Family Violence team have been developing the Adolescents Using Violence in The Home (AVITH) program. Recognising the unique challenges that come with supporting adolescents who use violence in their homes, the team has committed to creating a program specifically tailored to increasing safety and security within families. This program aims to foster an environment where young people can learn to make safer and more informed choices, while also encouraging them to connect with their culture and identity, allowing them to thrive both within their

FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

homes and in the broader community.

The development of the AVITH program has been a comprehensive and collaborative process. The Family Violence team has actively engaged with a variety of key stakeholders to ensure that the program is both relevant and effective. This has included consulting with experts in the field of adolescent behaviour and violence, as well as seeking valuable input from existing Wathaurong staff who have firsthand experience working with youth and families affected by violence. The team's commitment to developing a well-rounded and impactful program is further demonstrated by their participation in ongoing Community of Practice (CoP) sessions. These sessions provide a forum for sharing best practices, discussing challenges, and refining the program to meet the specific needs of adolescents who are choosing to engage in unsafe behaviours within their homes and communities.

By incorporating the insights and feedback gathered from these consultations and collaborative efforts, the Family Violence team is working to ensure that the AVITH program is not only responsive to the immediate safety concerns within families but also supports long-term positive outcomes for adolescents. The program aims to provide these young individuals with the tools and resources they need to change their behaviour, connect with their culture and community, and ultimately, build a safer, healthier future for themselves and their families.

The AVITH program is set to begin accepting referrals in the second half of 2024, marking an important milestone in its implementation. As the program rolls out, we actively encourage and welcome feedback,

suggestions, and input from the community and stakeholders to ensure its continued development and effectiveness. Your insights are invaluable in shaping a program that truly meets the needs of our young people and their families, fostering a safer and more supportive environment for all.

Homelessness

Quoted from Blueprint for an Aboriginal-specific homelessness system in Victoria:

The Victorian Aboriginal Housing and Homelessness Framework (VAHHF or Framework) was published in 2020 in response to the overwhelming challenges faced by Aboriginal people at risk of and experiencing homelessness in Victoria. The Framework provides the core building blocks for reconceptualising Aboriginal housing in Victoria and outlines a fresh approach to achieving quality housing outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians in a generation. This will enable a shift beyond crisis management of Aboriginal housing, towards achieving housing equity and addressing the drivers of housing outcomes.

The Vision overall is:

- Secure housing improves life outcomes
- Build supply to meet the demands of a growing Aboriginal population
- Open doors to home ownership and private rental
- An Aboriginal focused homeless system
- A capable system that delivers Aboriginal housing needs

As a result of the development of the framework a first ever opportunity was available to tender for an Aboriginal Specific Homeless Entry Point. We learnt of our success in December 2023, and were one of two successful locations, the other sits with Ngwala.

We were funded for a Manager, Team Leader, 3 Initial Assessment and Planning Workers and 2 Housing First Workers. We quickly went to recruitment over the Christmas/new year period and had our first team members commenced in mid February.

At a similar time, we were also advised that we were successful in being nominated to be the next location to be funded for the Aboriginal Private Rental Assistance Program (APRAP). This funding goes for 17 months. This has added a further two positions of APRAP Broker and APRAP Plus Worker to the team.

From January we commenced meeting with various stakeholders across the Barwon Region who are currently providing a range of housing and homelessness services to community. Identifying pathways into the current homeless system in the area. This quickly identified areas where we needed to do more advocacy and strengthen the voice for community. To ensure they have equitable access to new and existing housing and homeless services.

These conversations opened up an opportunity with Meli Youth Entry Point to support the team in training to conduct Initial Assessments for young people. Wathaurong staff attended Meli and were able to shadow staff to enhance their learning. This also allowed the opportunity to build a strong relationship with the Youth Entry Point.

FAMILY SERVICES REPORT

Since commencement we have had various challenges in supporting community. Early on the team highlighted that after intake with us the referral pathways to housing, short, medium or long term were extremely limited. We have had to advocate strongly with other homelessness providers to get community considered for options and resources where they were the only pathway in.

Out of these challenges we have been able to work with stakeholders to bridge any gaps and have yarns about providing culturally appropriate support to community.

The mainstream homelessness system across Victoria has been up and running for some time in comparison to the goals set out in Mana-na woorn-tyeen maartakoort (Every Aboriginal Person Has a Home) the blueprint for an Aboriginal specific homelessness system. We acknowledge that there is a need for a staged approach to ensure that we get it right for community and embed the current funded services the right way, as well plan and prepare to hopefully expand further across Victoria, and increase the breadth of an Aboriginal led and Aboriginal specific homelessness system.

Our current conversations are focused on housing pathways such as crisis and transitional housing. Hoping that we can work towards holding our own portfolio of crisis and transitional housing that we can directly place community into whilst supporting them to work towards long term housing such as social and community housing, affordable housing, shared housing private rental or even home ownership.

Summary of support Provided

We have funded 100 different stays, with a total of 456 nights accommodation.

Housing Outcomes

Community had the following long term housing outcomes; two Women's Housing Properties, one Aboriginal Housing Property, three households exiting homeless into private rentals,

Additional Supports

7 applications to the Homeless Children's Resource Broker were submitted and successful, we were able to purchase items such as extra-curricular activities, household items, furniture, and items to personalise kid's bedrooms when moving into a range of housing.

We will continue to work in collaboration with local stakeholders whom our community may already be linked in with to help our people achieve best possible outcomes in establishing and maintaining tenancies.

New building- Walk-ins

In the near future we are moving into our new location of Level 1/8 Station Street where community will be able to walk in and access support on the day.

The team will be able to conduct assessments and then refer community to appropriate support. In some cases, brokerage may be used for emergency accommodation, rent arrears, rent in advance, bond loans, household items and material aid.

Please note that there are also many other avenues of financial support, and the team will consider referral to these services in the first instance

Aboriginal Tenants at Risk (ATAR)

Aboriginal Tenants at Risk Program supported 69 households with things such as property clean ups, repairs and maintenance, rent in advance and household items.

HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

Health Services Staff

Duane Luki

Acting Executive Manager Health Services

Emma Brown

Business Support Officer

Health Promotions

Mick Ryan

Health Promotions Manager

Alf Oram

Cultural Support Advisor & Men's Group Coordinator

Benjamin Silva

Active Community Coordinator

General Practitioners

Dr Ed Poliness

Medical Director

Dr Kevin Chang

Senior GP

Dr Brigette Agostinelli

Senior GP

Dr David Corbet

Senior GP

Dr Lucy Dobson

Senior GP

Dr Eimir Diviney

Senior GP

Dr Sneha Kini

Senior GP

Dr Edward Carson

Senior GP

Dr Mohana Priya Govardhanan

Senior GP

Dr Thomas Dilks

GP Registrar

Dr Chloe Jackson

GP Registrar

Dr Alex Webster

GP Registrar

Dr Edward Plant

GP Registrar

Dr Mei Lin Lee

GP Registrar

Registered Nurses

Skye Duncan

Clinical Team Leader

Tim O'Callaghan

Todd Fry

Jacqui Myers

Hope Mathumbu

Bridie Bracken

Women & Children (MCH & KMS)

Debbie Woolnough

Woman's and Children's Program Co Ordinator

Fiona Bell

MCH Nurse

Elyce Henry

MCH Nurse

Kaela Schlenso

Aboriginal Health Worker with MCH

Lauren Kittelty

Koori Maternity Service

Claire Galbraith

Koori Maternity Service

Erin

Koori Maternity Service

Piper Knox

Aboriginal Health Worker with KMS

Aboriginal Health Workers

Kerrie Alsop

Piper Knox

Jannalli Lilburn

Ryan Trickey

Kaela Schlenso

Medical Reception & Admin

Samantha Watts

Admin Team Leader

Lynne Lancaster

Senior Reception/Paediatrician Co-Ordinator

Atawhai Ogle

Medical Reception

Jane McInnes

Medical Reception

Valinda Dimovsky

Medical Reception

Ella Devery

Medical Reception

Tracey Watts

Medical Reception

Eileen Smith

Patient Transport

Steven Blackney

Patient Transport

Tommy Kornmann

Patient Transport

Specialist Consultants And Allied Health

Penelope Wood

Pharmacist

Orisi Qaranivalu

Pharmacist

Inga Tribe

Liver Clinic Nurse

Olga Lutzko

Diabetes Educator

Dr Samantha Worboys

Endocrinologist

Dr Aaron Choy

Endocrinologist

Dr Susan Blair

Renal Physician

Dr Christine Somerville

Renal Physician

Dr Kara Thomson

Obstetrician

Dr Jane Standish

Paediatrician

Dr Philippa Shilson

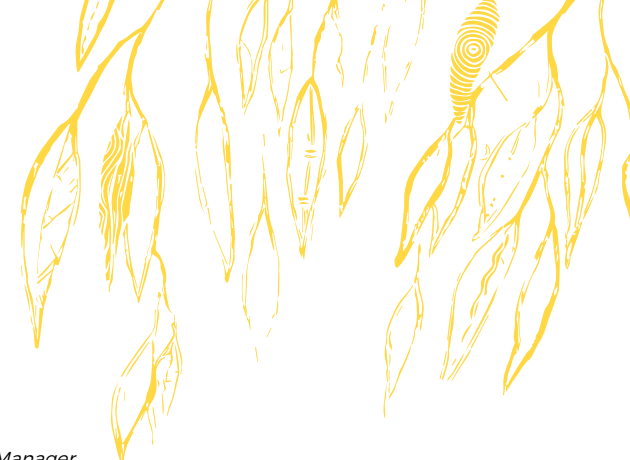
Paediatrician

Dr Alex Gordon

Paediatrician

Dr Daniel Peyton

Paediatrician



Dr Marg Fulton
Paediatrician

Dr Sophie Dunn
Paediatrician

Dr Kate Wilkins
Paediatrician

Dr Rachael Harwood
Paediatrician

Dr Stef Louey
Paediatric Fellow

Dr Nicholas Mills
Paediatric Registrar

Dr Georgia Murray
Paediatric Registrar

Care Co-Ordination And Supplementary Services

Kerrie Alsop

Todd Fry

Social & Emotional Wellbeing

Grant Gibson
Social & Emotional Wellbeing
Manager

Emily McDonald
Social & Emotional Wellbeing Team
Leader

Shirley Darcy
Social & Emotional Wellbeing Clinical
Lead

Phil King
CCC Suicide Prevention Coordinator

Philip Drummond
Alcohol & Other Drugs Clinician

Misty Collins
Alcohol & Other Drugs Clinician

Sharon Linsell
Alcohol & Other Drugs Clinician

Achford Waini
Alcohol & Other Drugs Clinician

Michelle Gray
SEWB Worker & Women's Group
Coordinator

Nicole Kirby
Women's Group Coordinator

Jade Atkinson
SEWB worker

Sara Shanahan
SEWB worker

Michelle Polidano
Intake worker

Jess McCoach
Bringing Them Home worker

Judy Rosson
SEWB Counsellor

Pepa Castro
SEWB Counsellor

Ben Gray
Neuropsychologist, & Step Thru MH &
AoD worker

Natasha Ling
Psychologist

Gwenda Black
Cultural Support Advisor

Brook Keating
CCC Aftercare worker

Nyawli Black
CCC Aftercare worker

Kaitlyn Stokes
GCQ Locals MH AoD worker

Brooke Williams
Head to Health SEWB worker

Community Strengthening

Jordyn Flagg
Community Strengthening Manager
(maternity leave)

Jayden Hickey
Acting Community Strengthening
Manager

Natalie Sullivan
Acting Team Leader Community
Strengthening

Mikali Harrison
Community Strengthening Facilitator

Sandra Manning
Community Strengthening Facilitator

Mia Clay
Community Strengthening Facilitator

Rylie Events
Healing Co-ordinator



HEALTH SERVICES EXECUTIVE MANAGER REPORT

Duane Luki

Since Wathaurong's successful accreditation was undertaken by the RACGP Wathaurong has been able to maintain its various changes, implement new processes and streamline work flows.

I want to thank all the staff and community members involved for the dedication to this continuous improvement of practice.

Throughout the year Wathaurong Health and SEWB, have worked relentlessly in securing and strengthening external partnerships through various areas, regional, statewide, and national levels to ensure the voice of our community is heard on the various platforms and make sure our services met community need.

One of the partnerships created this past financial year was with the Local Adult and Older Adult Mental Health and Wellbeing Service that supports mental health and wellbeing treatment, care and support. The new facility has finally been built and staff have moved in as of March this year. Wathaurong has three dedicated roles, one position is filled, and two are currently vacant. The service is intended to provide moderate to acute treatment, care and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 26 years and over.

Wathaurong's engagement in Cherry Creek youth justice centre shows another unique way in which Wathaurong is pushing the boundaries to get cultural/ clinical services to its community within these walls. Since opening, Wathaurong and Barwon health have added 2 SEWB positions besides our 2 Aboriginal health workers to assist our youth. This will create a strong support team not only for our youth but for the workers on site also. The Wathaurong partnership allows for a great flow of information sharing/ referrals to Wathaurong health service to ensure our continuity of care.

The Wathaurong Health and SEWB staff have shown year after year great empathy and dedication to their work and on going support at all levels for our community unwavering. We are humbled by your trust in us. While we strive to provide the best care and support services to our community, we know we have more to learn and do and we are truly committed to being the best we can be.

Wathaurong has stood up a health-based response to Public Intoxication Operating 7 days pwk . It is no longer against the law to be intoxicated (affected by alcohol) in public in Victoria. Police cannot arrest or fine you for being intoxicated. A health-based model is now in place

with some of the local ACCHO's around Victoria. Laws on being affected by alcohol in public has harmed some communities. Their advocacy over decades resulted in this legal change. We recognise this advocacy, especially that of All First Nations communities. Wathaurong's team is made up of several on call staff with 2 x Drug & Alcohol workers supported by a Drug & Alcohol Team Leader and Social Emotional Well-being Manager set up to respond to referrals directly from VicPol for those Intoxicated (affected by alcohol) in public. Wathaurong has received great support from Vic Pol & Barwon Health Emergency departments in helping assist the roll this program out.



HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

Wathaurong Health Services had seen 2,022 patients access the clinic across all sites during the financial year. Our community are accessing the service for face to face or Telehealth with our GP's, Nurses and AHP. Within this financial year of 2023/24, a total of 937 Health Checks were completed, which is a substantial increase from 483 completed the previous financial year.

This year, 483 GP Management plans were completed, this is up from the 271 in the previous year. 422 Team Care Arrangements were put in place, up from last financial year's numbers of 156, with 237 Team Care Arrangements reviewed this year as well. We are continuing to provide a culturally appropriate health service in Colac with GP and AHP visiting that site 1-day per week. We have been successful in delivering a

high-quality standard of service in this financial year even with a growing population of community members accessing the Health Service.

This financial year has seen the Active Community coordinator Ben Silva deliver the Woonggoorweel Community Deadly Games Program that has been delivered to our community for the second year running. The program runs for 6 week blocks throughout the year and is available to all community at all ability levels. Wathaurong staff are also able to participate in the Corporate Deadly Games which is ran in a similar capacity. Ben has been working with our community in the gym setting from referrals recieved from our GP's to develop exercise programs for our community to participate in, and finally the Merreedyeg Tucker



HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

program has been trialled with staff in 2024 to be implemented to community to engage and provide healthy cooking and social connection for our mob.

The Men's Group facilitator Alfie Oram is running men's programs every Tuesday and Thursday, with engagement made through ReLink to participate in activities available for our men. Alfie also provides supports to our Elders, Aunts and Uncles on Mondays and Wednesdays and visits the men in the prisons Marngoneet and Barwon on Fridays. Alfie offers a culturally inclusive program for men 16 and older to participate in.

Koori Maternity Services

In 2023/2024 we said farewell to the previous Women & Children's Coordinator Merrin Kelly, and welcomed midwife Debbie Woolnough stepping up in to the Coordinator role.

KMS provides culturally appropriate care for Aboriginal women and support to their families.

The overall aim of the program is to:

- Optimise the health and wellbeing of women and their babies
- Identify and manage maternal and foetal risk factors, particularly early in pregnancy

It is important for Aboriginal women to have available access to KMS (Koori Maternity Service) so that both mum and baby are provided with culturally appropriate pregnancy care and are healthy for when the time comes to have their baby.

Our services provide support to women during their pregnancy and when it's time for both mum and baby to

be discharged from hospital, KMS continue that care by providing a home visiting service.

This financial year our KMS team supported 82 women with their pregnancy care, with 48 babies born with KMS over the year, including one set of twins!

Maternal & Child Health Services

Wathaurong provided a MCH service in partnership with City of Greater Geelong (COGG). The Maternal Child Health nurses employed with COGG delivered this service to the Wathaurong community.

On 10th June 2024 - Wathaurong established its first Independent Maternal Child Health Service. The program was developed to help improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, by:

- Giving them choice to access an Aboriginal led MCH service
- Culturally centered
- Accessibility to their local Aboriginal community and organization
- Self-determination and empowerment - a core principle in delivering this program.
- Tailored support to the unique needs of the families.
- Enhanced programs to offer intensive support for families at risk.
- The Program is delivered by an Aboriginal Health service.

The MCH Service provides both Universal and Enhanced programs to cater for all families.

Between July 2023 and end of June 2024, the Wathaurong MCH team have welcomed 51 newborn Aboriginal babies and their families into the service.

Social & Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB)

Our range of SEWB programs have provided support to over 400 community members over the past 12 months, through a range of group & individual service delivery approaches.

During this time, our community's need for support has continued to grow, and the number of staff supporting our work has also grown. SEWB services continue to experience high levels of demand, and particularly for community members who experience unstable housing and financial hardship. We have worked hard to ensure Community members don't have to wait longer than necessary to receive support. Over this course of this year, the following programs and support were available:

- Social and Emotional Wellbeing program
- Alcohol and other drugs program
- Public Intoxication Response program
- Bringing Them Home program
- Psychology, including Neuropsychology
- Therapeutic Counselling services
- Support for Community Member access to external therapeutic counselling services
- Culture Care Connect - Suicide Prevention Support

HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

We are continuing our support to a range of external partnerships, with Wathaurong workers involved in the following services:

- **Head to Health:** NEAMI & Meli & Drummond St
- **GCQ Locals:** Barwon Health, Wellways & ERMHA
- **Step Thru Care:** NEAMI, Drummond St & Windana

Over this financial year we have welcomed many new and returning staff members to the SEWB team and have consolidated our new Leadership Team and approach to supporting our staff. We've worked hard to strengthen our team culture, our direct leadership support and our opportunities for continuing professional development for our staff.

We have strengthened our care pathways, and our service entry points have been expanded to include all internal Wathaurong Program areas.

Over the past 12 months, we have maintained strong engagement with our women's group, with 20-25 women attending weekly groups led by local Aboriginal facilitators connected to the Wathaurong community. The program featured cultural crafts, excursions to exhibitions, guest speakers and presenters, and informational and workshop sessions, which were highly anticipated and well-received by the Women. These activities provided a culturally safe and supportive environment, allowing women to connect, learn, and access valuable health information and community resources. The entire Wathaurong staff team, and in particular the Social & Emotional Wellbeing team, also acknowledges the sad passing of team member Michelle Gray. Michelle was a beautiful person who was instrumental in coordinating the women's group

activities and she is dearly missed by all in community. Our Bringing Them Home and SEWB team has continued to support community events, including Sorry Day, Apology Day and It's a Mob Thing.

We have seen many examples of growth and positive outcomes for community members, including strengthened family relationships & community connection, improved housing stability, participation in, employment and improved social and emotional wellbeing.

Community Strengthening

The Community Strengthening team has been in motion for a little while now and it has been fantastic watching the Mob connect through our events and by popping in the Co-Op to have a yarn. We have found ourselves working across a whole range of areas and this has kept us on our toes!

The Community Strengthening team has been working collaboratively with Wathaurong's other deadly teams and services where we can, and this has been a lot of fun. We have had the opportunity to assist our youth hub with the YAM program on Monday nights, visiting schools, spending time at Milla - Milla (playgroup), and attending any and all community events in Geelong, Colac and across the Bellarine Peninsula.

This year has had heaps of stuff for Mob to look forward to. From the VACSAL football and netball carnival, basketball carnival, junior sports carnival, NAIDOC week events, Reconciliation in the park, weekly Women's group, Aunties and Uncles events and outings and many school holiday activities to name a few.

Our team has also launched the Aboriginal Access Point (AAP) and this has been a major piece of work that we are very proud of. The AAP is a new way of looking at the family violence space. The AAP provides culturally appropriate supports and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on Wathaurong, Guldjian and Gadubanud country, in the Geelong, Bellarine and Colac regions. We have Journey Walkers that are here to help Mob navigate the family violence space in a way that is led by our community, and hopefully by somebody you know in community!

Aboriginal Access Points are being delivered under the Dhelk Dja: Safe Our Way strategy, to help strengthen the lives of Aboriginal people, families and communities and ensuring that Aboriginal people live free from family violence.

The AAP is continuing to build strong relationships with external agencies to help ensure community have the consistent and culturally safe support from the Co-Op, even when navigating in the mainstream system. The AAP has hit the ground running, and we already have so many success stories that range anywhere from finding housing, referrals and support with mentioned external services, financial counselling, leaving difficult situations at home, starting school, food support, employment, youth mentoring support, attending and advocating for Mob across many areas and most importantly, getting together for important yarns and cups of tea.



Scan QR for video link



WATHAURONG GLASS AND ARTS EXECUTIVE MANAGER REPORT

Mark Edwards

I would like to first pay my respect to our respected Elders past and present and to those community members who have passed during the last 12 months. I would also like to thank my staff, Executive management the Wathaurong Co-Operative Board for their commitment shown to this business over this period.

Financial Summary

Once again expenses exceeded income by \$20k, however this was foreseen, in part was due to planned expenses of 18 Rodney Rd fit out (see pie chart), we have capital dollars sitting in the bank to counter these expenses however they will show up on the other side of the ledger with asset growth.

Wages, Workcover and super are our biggest expense, there is no escaping this cost, so again we have to increase our service fee's to counterbalance those and another additional expenses that have caught us by surprise.

Sales are getting back to pre-COVID data, we need to be generating around \$550k + to ensure we are trading positive, this year we were \$25k short of this goal.

I do believe we are tracking upwards and plans in play with additional product opportunities will help to succeed.

Operation

We are slowly moving next door (18 Rodney Road), we are about to start internal building with the aid of our in-house maintenance crew (circulating \$ within).

Laser machine is proving to be of great benefit, freeing up labour time and streamline design / mold making capacity, the laser allows us to both generate income and reduce expense (out sourcing), we are still learning and have a way to go before we see the real benefits and opportunities.

Staff

Jarrold, Jermaine, and Daniel are all still working hard at providing quality products to our customers, I'm extremely grateful for their commitment and loyalty to Wathaurong Glass.

Jarrold will have been at Glass for 14 years come January 2024, while Jermaine hits 10 years up in March 2024.

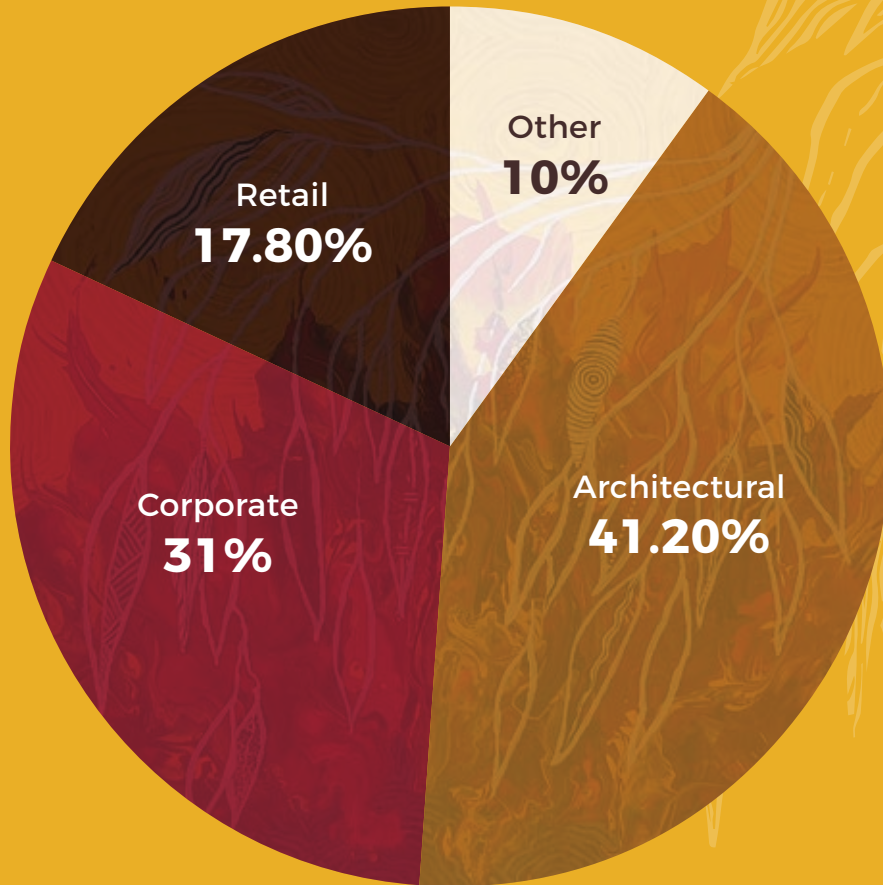
Daniel has been with us now for 3.5 years and has become a master of spray paint, slumping glass and is turning his hand to master the laser machine.

I started glass in 1998 and here I am still writing AGM reports 26 years on, I think I need a scan of my brain, I believe it has officially turn to glass!

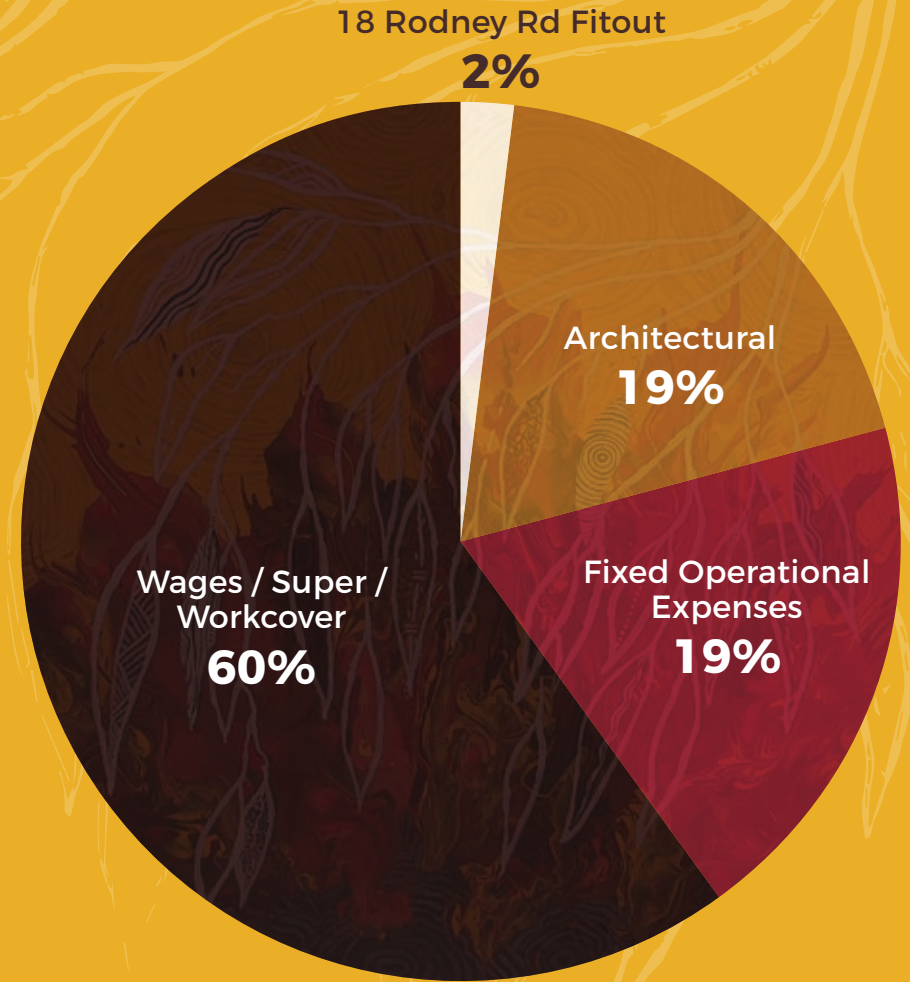
As we move to the next phase and location of this business, we will be looking for a new staff member in 2025, so keep your eye out for this opportunity.



SALES



EXPENSES



OUR PARTNERS

1 Step Communications - Telstra Partner
Acurus Pty Ltd
Adcell
AFL Barwon
Australian Hearing
Barwon Health
Barwon Local Area Education Consultative Group (LAECG)
Barwon Water
Belmont Lions Football Netball Club
BESIX Watpac
Beyond Blue
Boardriders Torquay
Child First
City of Greater Geelong (COGG)
Clinical Labs
Colac Area Health & Youth Hub
Colac Otway Shire
Commonwealth Department of Health
Commonwealth Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
Commonwealth Department of Social Services
Community Care Chemists
ConnectTel
Corangamite Catchment Management Authority
Cultura
DC Shoes

Deakin University - School of Medicine
Deakin University - School of Psychology
Dell
Dementia Australia
Department of Education and Training
Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
Department of Justice and Community Safety
Drummond Street
Element Skateboards
ermah365
Freedom Internet
Geelong Arts Centre
Geelong Cats
Geelong Chamber of Commerce
Geelong Community Foundation
Geelong Food Relief Centre
Geelong Kindergarten Association
Geelong Magistrates Court
Geelong Regional Library Corporation
Geelong Screenprinting
Geelong Skate Shop
Geelong United Basketball Association
GIVIT
Goodstart Early Learning
Greening Australia
Hanes Group
Head Space

HP
HPE
iiNet
Indigenous Land Corporation
JB Commercial
Kangan Institute
Killara
Larrakia Bilirra
LBW Auditors
Lifeworks
Mackillop Family Services
Meli
Microsoft
MultiTek Solutions
Murray City Country Coast GP Training
National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO)
National Indigenous Knowledges Education Research Innovation (NIKERI) Institute
Neami
Northern Bay College
Off Your Back
One Fire Reconciliation Group
Orange Door
Peter Wlodarczyk - Gagin Pty Ltd
Pharmacy Guild of Australia (QUMAX)
Quicksilver
RMIT
Roxy

Royal Childrens Hospital Melbourne
Samsung
SC Technology
Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre (SAFV)
Surfing Victoria
Swinburne University
Telstra
The Marquee Guy
The National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Worker Association (NATSIHWA)
The Salvation Army
Total Events
VFA Learning
VicHealth
Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)
Victorian Aboriginal Community Services Association Limited (VACSAL)
Victorian Police
WellWays
Western Victoria Primary Health Network
Workplace Legal
Worn Gundidj
YMCA Anglesea



With thanks to our major Corporate Partner, VIVA Energy, who partnered with us to get our 22 seater Community Bus up and running this year



FINANCIAL REPORT

Directors Report

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements, on the co-operative for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Directors

The following persons were directors of the co-operative during the whole of the financial year and up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Wendy Brabham

(Re-elected 3 March 2024)

Judy Dalton-Walsh

(Re-elected 26 February 2023, Chairperson from 14 March 2023)

Glenn Shea

(Elected 26 February 2023, Secretary from 14 March 2023)

Ammie Howell

(Elected 26 February 2023)

David Tournier

(Elected 26 February 2023, ceased 3 March 2024)

Jordan Edwards

(Elected 3 March 2024)

Activities

The establishment of the Co-operative was to create a gathering place (home) for our Community, we continue to reshape the Co-operative to be the home for our Community where they can access holistic support to strengthen their identity, Culture, health and wellbeing aspirations.

Results for the year

The total comprehensive surplus of the Co-operative for the year was \$6,637,690 (2023 surplus - \$2,553,614). The surplus for 2024 was primarily due to an increase in the asset revaluation reserve of \$3,063,766 (2023 asset revaluation increase - 2,480,838). Operational surplus increased to \$3,573,924 (2023 surplus - \$72,775) as the organisation has continued to grow its programs and infrastructure works for the Morgan Street development continue to progress.

Total revenue of \$26,979,282 was a large increase in comparison to total revenue derived in the 2023 financial year (\$20,408,337). This was primarily due to additional grant funding that Wathaurong secured in relation to new program initiatives and the Morgan Street redevelopment. Grant funding accounted for 87% of total revenue, trading activities contributed 10%, while rental income and other capital related income contributed a total of 3%.

Total expenses of \$23,405,358 represents a significant increase on prior year expenditure (\$20,335,561) as Wathaurong continued to grow its services. The increase in expenses is attributable primarily to an increase in staffing costs, training, and onboarding. All other operational expenses remain at similar levels to the prior year.

We would like to acknowledge and thank our Commonwealth, State and Local partners for their ongoing support that enables our self-determination to deliver many supports to our members and broader Community. Our funding partners are:

Victoria:

- Department of Health,
- Department of Family, Fairness and Housing,
- Department of Education,
- Department of Justice and Community Safety,
- Department of Premier and Cabinet,
- Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions,
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network, and
- Victorian Health Building Authority.

Commonwealth:

- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet,
- Department of Health and Aged Care, and
- National Indigenous Australians Agency.

The directors (before the "Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income" and "Statement of Financial Position" were completed) took reasonable steps to ascertain what action had been taken in relation to writing off bad debts and making provisions for doubtful debts, and to cause all known bad debts to be written off and adequate provision to be made for doubtful debts.

At the date of the report the directors were not aware of any circumstances which would render the amount written off for bad debts or the amount of the provision for doubtful debts inadequate to any substantial extent.

The directors (before the "Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income" and "Statement of

Financial Position” were completed) took reasonable steps to ascertain whether any current assets were unlikely to realise in the ordinary course of business their value as shown in the accounting records of the Co-operative and, if so, to cause –

- i) those assets to be written down to an amount which they might be expected so to realise; or
- ii) adequate provision to be made for the difference between the amount of the value as so shown and the amount they might be expected to realise.

At the date of the report the directors are not aware of any circumstances which would render the values attributed to the current assets in the accounts misleading.

At the date of the report there does not exist:

- i) any charge on the assets of the Co-operative which has arisen since the end of the financial year and secures the liabilities of any other person; and
- ii) any contingent liability which has arisen since the end of the financial year.

At the date of the report the directors are not aware of any circumstances not otherwise dealt with in the report of accounts which would render any amount stated in the accounts misleading.

The results of the Co-operative’s operations during the financial year were not in the opinion of the directors, substantially affected by any item, transaction or event of a material and unusual nature.

There has not arisen in the interval between the end of the financial year and the date of the report any item,

transaction or event of a material and unusual nature likely in the opinion of the directors, to affect substantially the results of the Co-operative’s operations for the next succeeding financial year.

Director’s benefits

Since the end of the previous financial year, no director of the Co-operative has received or become entitled to receive a benefit (other than a benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the accounts or the fixed salary of a full-time employee of the Co-operative) by reason of a contract made by the Co-operative with the director or with a firm of which he is a member, or with a co-operative in which he has a substantial interest.

Indemnities

The Co-operative has not, during or since the financial year, in respect of any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Co-operative or of a related body corporate:

- a. indemnified or made any relevant agreement for indemnifying against a liability, including costs and expenses in successfully defending legal proceedings; or
- b. paid or agreed to pay a premium in respect of a contract insuring against a liability for the costs or expenses to defend legal proceedings.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors



Judy Dalton-Walsh,

Chairperson

North Geelong, 6 November 2024

FINANCIAL REPORT

Auditor's Independence Declaration

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit of the financial year ended 30 June 2024, there have been no contraventions of:

1. the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Co-operatives National Law (Victoria) in relation to the audit; and
2. any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

LBW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



Sripathy Sarma

Principal

RCA Registration Number: 325 444

Dated this 6th day of November 2024



STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Revenue	3	26,979,282	20,408,337
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense		-17,640,137	-14,857,218
Client support expense		-1,934,908	-1,613,570
Depreciation expense	4	-862,404	-782,189
Occupancy expense		-152,090	-124,057
Motor vehicle expense		-356,041	-246,024
Telephone & internet expense		-139,140	-127,566
Rental properties expense		-106,718	-88,053
Staff training and development expense		-451,818	-528,456
Legal fees		-93,903	-42,849
Other expenses from ordinary activities		-1,668,198	-1,925,580
Surplus before income tax expense		3,573,925	72,775
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	15	3,573,925	72,775
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	16	3,063,766	2,480,838
Total comprehensive income for the year		6,637,691	2,553,613

The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	18,305,699	11,651,565
Trade and other receivables	6	1,307,189	859,364
Other assets	7	226,838	85,197
Financial assets		5,376	1,105,529
Total current assets		19,845,102	13,701,655
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	8	28,330,498	21,801,152
Right of use Assets	10	1,224,269	710,138
Investments	9	262,500	262,500
Total non-current assets		29,817,267	22,773,790
Total assets		49,662,369	36,475,445
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	11	1,152,042	924,998
Employee benefits	12	1,823,350	1,702,929
Grants in advance	13	15,348,205	9,565,632
Lease liabilities	14	544,520	420,492
Total current liabilities		18,868,117	12,614,051
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	14	746,824	383,930
Employee benefits	12	178,115	245,842
Total non-current liabilities		924,939	629,772
Total liabilities		19,793,056	13,243,823
Net assets		29,869,313	23,231,622
Equity			
Issued capital		72	72
Asset revaluation reserve	16	15,611,405	12,547,639
Accumulated surplus	15	14,257,836	10,683,911
Total equity		29,869,313	23,231,622

The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Issued Capital \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Retained Surpluses \$	Total equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2022	72	10,066,801	10,611,136	20,678,009
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	-	-	72,775	72,775
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	2,480,838	-	2,480,838
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	2,480,838	72,775	2,553,613
Balance at 30 June 2023	72	12,547,639	10,683,911	23,231,622
Balance at 1 July 2023	72	12,547,639	10,683,911	23,231,622
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	-	-	3,573,925	3,573,925
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	3,063,766	-	3,063,766
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	3,063,766	3,573,925	6,637,691
Balance at 30 June 2024	72	15,611,405	14,257,836	29,869,313

The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	Note	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts from grants & other		33,144,555	22,713,487
Payments to suppliers and employees		-22,352,567	-19,654,882
Interest received		221,611	92,464
Interest paid		-	-5,043
Net cash from operating activities	18	11,013,599	3,146,026
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds for property, plant and equipment		142,875	1,060,537
Payments for property, plant and equipment		-3,927,600	-2,310,709
Net cash used in investing activities		-3,784,725	-1,250,172
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of lease liabilities		-574,740	-540,912
Net cash used in investing activities		-574,740	-540,912
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		6,654,134	1,354,942
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		11,651,565	10,296,623
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5	18,305,699	11,651,565

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 1. Material accounting policies

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Basis of preparation

In the directors' opinion, the co-operative is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements.

These are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the requirements of the Co-operatives National Law 2013 and Australian Accounting Standards and the significant accounting policies disclosed below. The directors have determined that the accounting policies adopted are appropriate to meet the needs of the members of the Co-operative.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements specified by the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 'Presentation of Financial Statements', AASB 107 'Statement of Cash Flows', AASB 108 'Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors', AASB 1048 'Interpretation of Standards' and AASB 1054 'Australian Additional Disclosures', as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities.

Historical cost convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the co-operative's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are disclosed in note 2.

Revenue recognition

The co-operative recognises revenue as follows:

Revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue is recognised at an amount that reflects the consideration to which the co-operative is expected to be entitled in exchange for transferring goods or services to a customer. For each contract with a customer, the co-operative: identifies the contract with a customer; identifies the performance obligations in the contract; determines the transaction price which takes into account estimates of variable consideration and the time value of money; allocates the transaction price to the separate performance obligations on the basis of the relative stand-alone selling price of each distinct good or service to be delivered; and recognises revenue when or as each performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised.

Variable consideration within the transaction price, if any, reflects concessions provided to the customer such as discounts, rebates and refunds, any potential bonuses receivable from the customer and any other contingent events. Such estimates are determined using either the 'expected value' or 'most likely amount' method. The measurement of variable consideration is subject to a constraining principle whereby revenue will only be recognised to the extent that it is highly probable that a significant reversal in the amount of cumulative revenue recognised will not occur. The measurement constraint continues until the uncertainty associated with the variable consideration is subsequently resolved. Amounts received that are subject to the constraining principle are recognised as a refund liability.

Sales revenue

Events, fundraising and raffles are recognised when received or receivable.

Donations

Donations are recognised at the time the pledge is made.

Grants

Grant revenue is recognised in profit or loss when the co-operative satisfies the performance obligations stated within the funding agreements.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the co-operative is eligible to retain the contribution, the grant will be recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until those conditions are satisfied.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Interest

Interest revenue is recognised as interest accrues using the effective interest method. This is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and allocating the interest income over the relevant period using the effective interest rate, which is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset to the net carrying amount of the financial asset.

Other revenue

Other revenue is recognised when it is received or when the right to receive payment is established.

Income tax

As the co-operative is a charitable institution in terms of subsection 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997, as amended, it is exempt from paying income tax.

Current and non-current classification

Assets and liabilities are presented in the statement of financial position based on current and non-current classification.

An asset is classified as current when: it is either expected to be realised or intended to be sold or consumed in the co-operative's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is expected to be realised within 12 months after the reporting period; or the asset is cash or cash equivalent unless restricted from being exchanged or used to settle a liability for at least 12

months after the reporting period. All other assets are classified as non-current.

A liability is classified as current when: it is either expected to be settled in the co-operative's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is due to be settled within 12 months after the reporting period; or there is no unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period. All other liabilities are classified as non-current.

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

Trade and other receivables

Other receivables are recognised at amortised cost, less any allowance for expected credit losses.

Property, plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis to write off the net cost of each item of property, plant and

equipment (excluding land) over their expected useful life. The depreciation rates used are:

Buildings	2.5%
Plant and equipment	10-50%
Motor vehicles	20-25%

The residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when there is no future economic benefit to the co-operative. Gains and losses between the carrying amount and the disposal proceeds are taken to profit or loss.

Land and Buildings - revaluation

Increases in carrying amount arising on revaluation of land and buildings are credited to a revaluation reserve in equity. Decreases that offset previous increases of the same asset are charged against fair value reserves directly in equity, all other decreases are charged to the income statement. Each year the difference between depreciation based on the revalued carrying amount of the assets charged to the income statement and depreciation based on the asset's original cost is transferred from the revaluation reserve to retained earnings.

Property

Freehold land and buildings are shown at their fair value (being the amount for which an assets could be exchanged between knowledgeable willing parties in an arm's length transaction), based on periodic valuations by external independent valuers.

Impairment of non-financial assets

Non-financial assets are reviewed for impairment whenever events or changes in circumstances indicate that the carrying amount may not be recoverable. An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the asset's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount.

Recoverable amount is the higher of an asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value-in-use. The value-in-use is the present value of the estimated future cash flows relating to the asset using a pre-tax discount rate specific to the asset or cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs. Assets that do not have independent cash flows are grouped together to form a cash-generating unit.

Trade and other payables

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the co-operative prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to their short-term nature they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

Employee benefits

Short-term employee benefits

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Other long-term employee benefits

The liability for annual leave and long service leave not expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Fair value measurement

When an asset or liability, financial or non-financial, is measured at fair value for recognition or disclosure purposes, the fair value is based on the price that would be received to sell an asset or paid to transfer a liability in an orderly transaction between market participants at the measurement date; and assumes that the transaction will take place either: in the principal market; or in the absence of a principal market, in the most advantageous market.

Fair value is measured using the assumptions that market participants would use when pricing the asset or liability, assuming they act in their economic best interests. For non-financial assets, the fair value measurement is based on its highest and best use. Valuation techniques that are appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data are available to measure fair value, are used, maximising the use of relevant observable inputs and minimising the use of unobservable inputs.

Goods and Services Tax ('GST') and other similar taxes

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the tax authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

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 tax authority is included in other receivables or other payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to the tax authority, are presented as operating cash flows.

Commitments and contingencies are disclosed net of the amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the tax authority.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 2. Critical accounting judgements, estimates and assumptions

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. The resulting accounting judgements and estimates will seldom equal the related actual results. The judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities (refer to the respective notes) within the next financial year are discussed below.

Performance obligations under AASB 15

To identify a performance obligation under AASB 15, the promise must be sufficiently specific to be able to determine when the obligation is satisfied. Management exercises judgement to determine whether the promise is sufficiently specific by taking into account any conditions specified in the arrangement, explicit or implicit, regarding the promised goods or services. In making this assessment, management includes the nature/ type, cost/ value, quantity and the period of transfer related to the goods or services promised.

Estimation of useful lives of assets

The co-operative determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

Impairment of non-financial assets other than goodwill and other indefinite life intangible assets

The co-operative assesses impairment of non-financial assets other than goodwill and other indefinite life intangible assets at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the co-operative and to the particular asset that may lead to impairment. If an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. This involves fair value less costs of disposal or value-in-use calculations, which incorporate a number of key estimates and assumptions.

Lease term and Option to Extend under AASB 16

The lease term is defined as the non-cancellable period of a lease together with both periods covered by an option to extend the lease if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise that option; and also periods covered by an option to terminate the lease if the lessee is reasonably certain not to exercise that option. The options that are reasonably going to be exercised is a key management judgement that the entity will make. The entity determines the likelihood to exercise the options on a lease-by-lease basis looking at various factors such as which assets are strategic and which are key to future strategy of the entity.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 3. Revenue

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Operating revenue		
Grants & government funding	22,746,476	17,049,322
Fundraising & trading activities	3,593,900	2,540,831
Rental income	199,962	131,410
Other funding and sundry income	217,333	594,310
	26,757,671	20,315,873
Other revenue		
Interest received	221,611	92,464
Revenue	26,979,282	20,408,337

Note 4. Expenses

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Surplus before income tax includes the following specific expenses:		
Depreciation of property, plant & equipment & right of use assets	862,404	782,189
Computer & IT expenses	558,384	512,561
Gain/(loss) on sale & disposal of assets	48,017	303,468

Note 5. Current assets - cash and cash equivalents

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Cash on hand	200	200
Cash at bank	18,305,499	11,651,365
	18,305,699	11,651,565

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 6. Current assets - trade and other receivables

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trade & Rental debtors	1,248,993	808,979
Loan receivable - Kirrae Whurrong	58,196	50,385
	1,307,189	859,364

Note 7. Current assets - other

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Rental bonds	85,197	85,197
Prepayments	141,641	-
	226,838	85,197

Note 8. Non-current assets - property, plant and equipment

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Freehold buildings		
- Admin Building (2019 valuation)	430,000	430,000
- Children's Services (2019 valuation)	418,000	418,000
- Health Services (2019 valuation)	1,112,830	1,112,830
- Forster St (2024 valuation)	800,000	140,500
- Rodney Road (2023 valuation)	200,000	200,000
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-149,371	-127,629
	2,811,459	2,173,701

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 8. Non-current assets - property, plant and equipment (Continued)

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Health service car park - at cost	327,485	327,485
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-123,789	-115,602
	203,696	211,883
Land		
- Forster Street (2024 valuation)	550,000	359,500
- Surrey Street (2023 valuation)	835,000	835,000
- 62 Morgan Street (2019 valuation)	860,000	860,000
- Wurdi Youang (2024 valuation)	5,725,000	4,050,000
- Rodney Road (2023 valuation)	750,000	750,000
- Rental Properties at Valuation	7,735,000	6,905,000
	16,455,000	13,759,500
Rental properties		
- Buildings - Rental properties at valuation	3,075,000	2,890,000
- Rental Improvements	69,980	23,992
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-24,288	-39,872
	3,120,692	2,874,120
Furniture & fittings - at cost	56,213	56,213
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-42,910	-40,293
	13,303	15,920
Office furniture and equipment - at cost	704,437	657,231
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-422,113	-360,977
	282,324	296,254
Motor vehicles - at cost	2,002,828	1,560,658
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-779,069	-771,398
	1,223,759	789,260
Children's service equipment - at cost	35,678	35,678
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-29,572	-29,104
	6,106	6,575

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 8. Non-current assets - property, plant and equipment (Continued)

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Wurdi Youang Equipment - at cost	93,943	93,943
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-61,128	-57,364
	32,815	36,579
Health service equipment - at cost	210,970	210,970
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-168,793	-166,360
	42,177	44,610
Factory fit out - at cost	112,416	112,416
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-79,800	-76,528
	32,616	35,888
Mackey St fit out - at cost	546,747	546,747
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-272,051	-242,448
	274,696	304,299
Karroong Kanyool fit out - at cost	2,365,849	-
Less: Accumulated depreciation	-11,683	-
	2,354,166	-
Work in progress	1,477,689	1,252,563
	28,330,498	21,801,152

Note 9. Investments

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Investment in 87-91 Gellibrand St Colac		
- Investment in Land and Building (Directors' Valuation)	525,000	525,000
- Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative's share	50%	50%
	262,500	262,500

The investment in Wathaurong Glass Pty. Ltd. has not been brought to account in the financial statements of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative Limited.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 10. Right of Use Assets

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Equipment	226,853	226,853
Property	1,901,580	1,731,452
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	-904,164	-1,248,167
	1,224,269	710,138

Note 11. Current liabilities - trade and other payables

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Trade payables	220,691	238,848
Other payables	931,351	686,150
	1,152,042	924,998

Note 12. Current liabilities - employee benefits

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Current	\$	\$
Annual Leave Provisions	1,465,195	1,235,066
Long Service Leave Provision	358,155	467,863
	1,823,350	1,702,929
	1,702,929	1,331,774
Non-Current		
Long Service Leave Provision	178,115	245,842

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 13. Grants in advance

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Unspent grant funds	15,348,205	9,565,632
	15,348,205	9,565,632

Note 14. Lease Liabilities

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Current		
Equipment	30,850	51,087
Property	513,670	369,405
	544,520	420,492
Non-current		
Equipment	-	30,850
Property	746,824	353,080
	746,824	383,930
Total	1,291,344	804,422

Note 15. Equity - retained surpluses

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Retained surpluses at the beginning of the financial year	10,683,911	10,611,136
Surplus for the year	3,573,925	72,775
Retained surpluses at the end of the financial year	14,257,836	10,683,911

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 16. Equity - Asset revaluation reserve

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Asset revaluation reserve at the beginning of the financial year	12,547,639	10,066,801
Movement in asset revaluation reserve	3,063,766	2,480,838
Asset revaluation reserve at the end of the financial year	15,611,405	12,547,639

Note 17. Events after the reporting period

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2024 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the co-operative's operations, the results of those operations, or the co-operative's state of affairs in future financial years.

Note 18. Reconciliation of surplus after income tax to net cash from operating activities

	2024 \$	2023 \$
Operating profit for the year	3,573,925	72,775
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation and amortisation	862,404	782,189
(Profit)/loss on sale & disposal of assets	-48,017	-303,468
Lease liability - finance costs	52,289	47,569
Change in operating assets and liabilities:		
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other receivables	-447,825	161,231
Decrease/(increase) in other assets	-141,641	-180
Decrease/(increase) in financial assets	1,100,153	-10,617
(Decrease)/increase in trade and other payables	227,044	-760,320
(Decrease)/increase in grants in advance	5,782,573	2,539,851
(Decrease)/increase in employee benefits	52,694	616,997
Net cash from operating activities	11,013,599	3,146,026

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Note 19. Key management personnel disclosures

Compensation

The aggregate compensation made to directors and other members of key management personnel of the corporation is set out below:

	2024	2023
	\$	\$
Aggregate compensation	286,832	229,129

Note 20. Related party transactions

Key management personnel

Disclosures relating to key management personnel are set out in note 19.

Transactions with related parties

There were no transactions with related parties during the current and previous financial year.

Receivable from and payable to related parties

There were no trade receivables from or trade payables to related parties at the current and previous reporting date.

Loans to/from related parties

There were no loans to or from related parties at the current and previous reporting date.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Directors Declaration

Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited

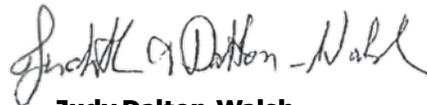
We, Judy Dalton Walsh and Ammie Howell, being two of the directors of the abovementioned Co-operative limited, state that in our opinion:

1. the financial statements and notes of the Co-operative are in accordance with the Co-operatives National Law (Victoria), including:
 - giving a true and fair view of the Co-operative's financial position as 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
 - complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Regulations.
2. there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Co-operative will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the directors made pursuant to section 273(5)(a) of Co-operatives National Law (Victoria).

Declared at North Geelong, on 6th November, 2024

On behalf of the board



Judy Dalton-Walsh
Director



Ammie Howell
Director

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Directors of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative Limited

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited (the co-operative), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2024, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of material accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria), including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the co-operative's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) that the financial records kept by the co-operative are such as to enable financial statements to be prepared in accordance with accounting policies described in Note 1.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

section of our report. We are independent of the co-operative 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 our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013, which has been given to the directors of Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative Limited, would be in the same terms if given to the directors as at the time of this auditor's report.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the co-operative's financial reporting responsibilities under the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the co-operative are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Co-operatives National Law Application Act 2013 (Victoria) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the co-operative'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 the directors either intend to liquidate the co-operative or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

The directors are responsible for overseeing the co-operative's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our 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 the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We 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 our 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 co-operative's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' 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 co-operative's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the co-operative 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.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

LBW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



Sripathy Sarma

Principal

RCA Registration Number: 325 444

Dated this 6th day of November 2024



WATHAURONG ABORIGINAL CO-OPERATIVE

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