



**Conflict Resolution
Service**

Annual Report 2009 – 2010



*Empowering individuals to understand their differences and resolve conflicts peacefully,
by providing a skilled and accessible dispute resolution service... since 1988*

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ABOUT THE CRS



Vision

A community where Alternative Dispute Resolution processes and skills are accepted and utilised to develop mutual understanding and appreciation of differences, which will improve people's wellbeing and relationships

Mission

To provide professional, accessible and effective dispute resolution and training services to the ACT community that will help and empower people to prevent, manage and resolve disputes peacefully

Values

Professional

- Integrity: CRS will work within an ethical framework based on values we share with our stakeholders, including respect, honesty, confidentiality and transparency
- Best Practice: Relevant industry standards will serve as a minimum benchmark for service delivery in ADR, training and governance, in order to ensure competency of staff and confidence in CRS's service
- Impartiality: CRS will treat stakeholders equally, demonstrating objectivity, neutrality, freedom from prejudice and judgement.

Effective

- Empowering: CRS will empower clients to become self determining to achieve positive outcomes
- Relevant: CRS will ensure its programs and services are current and appropriate for client needs
- Influential: CRS will advise and make recommendations to government, industry and our clients on the benefits of alternative dispute resolution

Accessible

- User-friendly: CRS will provide clear, understandable, appropriate and practical processes and information in a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Available: CRS will provide equitable access to a reliable, timely, affordable and efficient dispute resolution service
- Flexible: CRS will ensure service delivery is responsive to the needs of individual client circumstances

Enabling

- Governance: Good governance practices will ensure CRS's ongoing viability, accountability, stability and security
- Profile: CRS will increase community awareness of and confidence in its services
- Resources: CRS resources will be developed, maintained and engaged efficiently in order to achieve optimum outputs, especially in the areas of human resources, infrastructure and financial sustainability.

HISTORY AND FUTURE OF MEDIATION



- **Cultural background of mediation**

Mediation has long been practiced across the world as an important means of resolving disputes out of court.

Across all major continents, members of the clergy, village elders, tribal councils and their equivalents across different cultures, have been used in the mediation role since earliest recorded times. Historians presume early cases in Babylon, with the practice thought to have developed in Ancient Greece and later in Roman civilisation. The Romans called mediators by a variety of names, including *internuncius*, *medium*, *intercessor*, *philantropus*, *interpolator*, *conciliator*, *interlocutor*, *interpres*, and finally *mediator*, which is derived from the Latin word *mediare*, meaning 'to be in the middle'.

The use of mediation can also be found in early Asian and African cultures. In China, the earliest historical books record stories of mediation as part of the oldest Chinese folklore. For example, Confucius believed the best way to resolve a dispute was through moral persuasion and agreement, based on peace and understanding, rather than coercion. Buddhist traditions also encouraged dispute resolution through compromise rather than coercion. In early Japan, the leader of the village was expected to help people resolve their disputes.

In the West there is a long tradition of mediation. In the UK, church clergy often acted as mediators between criminals and authorities, between families and also in diplomatic disputes. In America, tribal communities have practiced mediation techniques for centuries, with native Americans having adopted their own dispute resolution procedures long before the American settlement. American settlers also developed dispute resolution in the early years. Much of the early U.S. model of mediation was based on the work of the Quakers. The early dispute resolution mindset that existed in America is often noted by mediation historians by citing the fact that George Washington put an arbitration clause in his will to resolve disputes among his heirs.

In Australia, mediation has had a long and distinguished history. It is a concept well ingrained in Aboriginal history, although the consensual problem solving processes used for many thousands of years by Aboriginal communities bear little resemblance to the Western concept. Indigenous dispute resolution processes arose out of deep cultural imperatives and were based on the kinship system and a broadly recognised set of rights and obligations, with the objective of restoring social harmony in the community.

- **Formalisation of mediation process**

While the idea of mediation dates back to the earliest recorded times, the modern Western concept of mediation is of recent origin.

Mediation first became a significant dispute resolution process in the judicial and business systems in the United States in the 1960s. Prior to 1960 the use of mediation in the United States was not widespread. In the mid-1960s it became popular in labour management disputes and neighbourhood disputes. It was considered an effective way to resolve issues without resorting to the cumbersome and slow avenues offered by the American judicial and political systems and processes. It was also seen to provide a faster, cheaper and more satisfying resolution for the parties.

The demonstrated benefits of using mediation over traditional court processes were persuasive on legislators and court administrators. From the 1970s onwards, mediation grew from a small practice in these discrete areas into a formalised process that impacted every aspect of American law.

From its origins in the United States, the use of formal mediation processes then spread to other countries, including Australia.

- **Community mediation & the introduction of mediation in the legal arena in Australia**

Community mediation is a form of mediation that arose in the United States in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Its evolution is best understood as part of the broader social and political history of which it was a part: it arose at a time when community activists were committed to creating alternative institutions based on a strong ethic of community control and ownership, and which would develop a sense of collective identity for communities. Community mediation centres were also embraced as an empowerment tool for individuals and communities to take back control of their lives from a government institution (the courts) that was seen as inefficient, oppressive and unfair. At the heart of the early community mediation movement were principles of democratic participation, drawing on citizen rights and responsibilities. The momentum of the community mediation movement in the United States also grew as a result of efforts, both within and outside of government, to reform the legal system.

Community mediation programs have spread widely through the United States and other countries in the past two decades, including Australia.

Community mediation is characterised by elements such as:

- providing the public direct access to mediation through self referral and striving to reduce barriers to service, including physical, linguistic, cultural, programmatic and economic barriers
- providing service to clients regardless of their ability to pay
- services are provided through a private non-profit or public agency
- mediators, staff and board members are representative of the diversity of the community served
- the use of trained community volunteers as the primary providers of mediation services
- initiating, facilitating and educating for collaborative community relationships to effect positive systemic change
- engaging in public awareness and educational activities about the values and practices of mediation, and
- providing an alternative to the judicial system at any stage of the conflict.

In Australia, the introduction of mediation as a key element of the legal system occurred in the 1980s. It started in New South Wales in 1980 with the introduction of the *Community Justice Centres (Pilot Projects) Act*. The Act established the infrastructure to allow the piloting of state-sanctioned mediation of small civil and criminal disputes, in an attempt to reduce the number of proceedings filed in the lower courts. The pilot was made permanent in 1983. As a consequence Community Justice Centres were established to facilitate the greater emphasis given to mediation in the NSW justice system for the resolution of a wide range of disputes, including neighbourhood, family, environmental and employment disputes.

Other States also followed suit. For example, by 1988 in Queensland there were 28 different Acts or Regulations that provided for alternative dispute resolution, typically mediation; by the mid-1990s in Victoria mediation had become considerably more sophisticated as a result of the large number of legal practitioners that had participated in mediation training practices.

And so it was in 1988, a small group of people started the process to establish a community mediation service in the ACT. With the assistance of the NSW Community

Justice Centres to develop systems and train mediators, the Conflict Resolution Service was born. In 1997, the ACT was also the first jurisdiction in Australia to implement a Mediation Act (ACT), which is still in operation today.

The ACT was also instrumental in establishing the first competency standards for mediators in Australia. The standards were developed in collaboration with ACT Community Services and Health Industry Advisory Board and the ACT Government.

- **Future Landscape of Mediation in Australia**

At the federal level mediation is also now a key form of dispute resolution. In 1998 the then Commonwealth Attorney-General, Daryl Williams, said "the government firmly believes that mediation and alternative dispute resolution should be the norm rather than the exception." This is reflected in both the *Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)* and the *Federal Court of Australia Act 1976 (Cth)*, which now contain provisions for the courts to make orders requiring the parties to proceedings to attend mediation.

In recent times there has also been the introduction of the *Civil Dispute Resolution Bill (Cth)*. In June 2010, the Attorney General Robert McLelland introduced the bill into Parliament by saying. "*The Civil Dispute Resolution Bill is all about seeking to resolve disputes at the most appropriate level. It encourages parties to resolve their disputes at the earliest possible opportunity and to do so outside of the courts – promoting a move away from the often stressful, expensive adversarial culture of litigation*". The Bill implements the key recommendations made by NADRAC in its 2009 report, *The Resolve to Resolve*.

In 2008, the National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS) commenced operation. It is an industry based scheme which relies on voluntary compliance by mediator organisations that agree to accredit mediators in accordance with the requisite standards. These organisations are referred to as Recognised Mediator Accreditation Bodies (RMABs). The NMAS is intended to provide a base level of accreditation for all mediators irrespective of their field of work. Specific requirements that are relevant to particular fields may be imposed by other accreditation schemes, such as the accreditation scheme for family dispute resolution practitioners. Nationally consistent accreditation standards have been developed to enhance the quality of national mediation services, facilitate consumer education not only about mediation but also other ADR services, build consumer confidence in ADR services, improve the credibility of ADR and help build the capacity and coherence of the ADR field. The NMAS includes Approval Standards which outline the requirements for mediators wishing to be accredited under the NMAS; and the Practice Standards which outline the way mediators should conduct their mediation activities.

Article by
Katherine Reimers (CRS Board Members 2007-09)
and Katrina Spyrides (Executive Officer)

(Full references for this article are available from the CRS;
image courtesy of <http://www.n2nmediation.org/images/MediationMain.jpg>)

PEOPLE OF CRS



Board of Directors

Name	Positions Held
Margaret Moreton	Chair
Mick Gentleman	Vice Chair
Peter Biggs	Treasurer
Alison Smith	Secretary
Susan Abbott	Member
Rae Lacey	Member
Helen Lang	Member
Geoff Pryor	Member
Katrina Spyrides	Ex-Officio

Staff

Position	Position Holder
Executive Officer	Katrina Spyrides
Mediation Co-ordinator	Rachel Wynd
Training Officer	
Dispute Assessment Officers	Mary Hinchey Susan Rockliff
Practice and Compliance Officer	Mike Rowntree
Healthy Neighbourhood Officer	Fiona McIlroy (til Dec 2009) Susan Rockliff (from Jan 2010)
Admin Officer	Shae Miller (til June 2010)

Panel of CRS Registered Mediators in 2009-10

Anthony Melican	Elizabeth Woods	Lawry Herron
Brian Proctor	Fiona McIlroy	Mary Hinchey
Christina Barbary	Geoffrey Blackert	Nigel Biginell
Christopher Yong	Janine Brissett	Rachel Wynd
Cynthia Shannon	Judy Scott	Russ Whitewood
David Purnell	Julie Whitmore	Shelley McInnis
Delcy Lagones	Justin Toohey	Stephen Young
Elizabeth McKenzie	Katrina Spyrides	Tamara Khosla
		Tim Johnstone

CHAIR'S REPORT



It has once again been my pleasure and honour to work with the Board and with Katrina Spyrides as Executive Officer, CRS (ACT). The Board has demonstrated a positive ethos – sometimes having spirited discussions that appropriately reflect our diverse approaches and thoughts on issues brought before us. Robust and active discussions are in my view a measure of the health of any group and this Board is no exception. I am delighted to report that our discussions have demonstrated our differences, whilst maintaining and reflecting our mutual respect for one another and our commitment to a common goal – to work effectively together to provide strong governance to the CRS and clear support and direction to its Executive Officer. Meetings and discussions have been conducted with an increased focus on our key responsibilities of governance and strategy and with enhanced efficiency.

With the departures noted at the last AGM, in this reporting period we welcomed Peter Biggs, Alison Smith, Geoff Pryor and Rae Lacey to the Board. These board members have all brought energy and commitment to the Board and a range of skills and experiences that have been greatly valued. I refer you to the biographies that have been provided on each Board member. It is with a sense of loss that we now farewell Susan Abbott and Mick Gentleman from the Board. Both are not renewing their membership of the Board for the coming term. Both Susan and Mick will be sincerely missed for their contributions – both are particularly considered in their participation as Board Directors – together they bring a wealth of experience in the community sector and in relation to government and politics. We wish them well in their future endeavours.

Given my 'day job' in the Office for Women in the Federal Government, I cannot help but draw your attention to the current statistics related to gender in our

Boardroom compared to the national average. Approximately 33% of appointments to Government boards and decision making bodies are women (meaning that 67% are men). Approximately 10% of appointments to board of ASX200 companies are women (meaning that 90% are men). 27% of directors appointed to ASX200 companies in 2010 so far have been women, compared to 5% in 2009 and 8% in 2007 and 2008. Perhaps the balance is shifting in relation to gender. These statistics are all available on the Australian Institute of Company Directors website. The outcome we all seek to achieve is strong boards across the public, private and community sectors, utilizing the capabilities and strengths of a diverse group of Board directors (with a mix of genders, cultural backgrounds, physical capabilities and life experiences).

In this reporting period the Board has achieved the following enhancements to our process and the resultant outcomes for the CRS (ACT):

1. We have discussed organizational direction, context and priorities in order to support the Executive Officer as she develops a Business Plan for the CRS (ACT). We have held a special (Business Planning) meeting of the Board and have established working groups as appropriate in relation to marketing and planning, in the first part of 2010. The resulting Business Plan continues to be refined – as part of the role of the Executive Officer with the Board's endorsement.
2. We have approved the CRS budget and regular expenditure reports – to fulfil our obligations for ensuring financial accountability, viability and continuity for the CRS (ACT).
3. We have discussed and noted the Executive Officer reports tabled at every meeting of the board. These contain statistics for how the organization is operating and this year have often contained information about new markets and relationships being monitored and responded to, for example with tenders

being submitted. I would like in this report to acknowledge the work of the Executive Officer in monitoring and responding to opportunities for the CRS (ACT) as they occur in the Canberra environment.

4. The category of 'Honorary Membership' has been established for lifelong members of the CRS (ACT) – those who have been involved with the organization from its establishment. David Purnell, Tim Johnstone, Anthony Melican and Mary Hinchey have been welcomed into Honorary Membership.
5. The CRS (ACT) has commenced the process of joining the ACT Community Sector Multiple Enterprise Agreement. This will contribute to the implementation of the ACT Community Sector Equal Wage case which was ratified in late 2009, the outcome of the Equal Pay Case should be known in April 2011.
6. The Governance policy for the recruitment of Board members was updated.
7. The CRS (ACT) formalized the National Accreditation of mediators, with certificates presented to mediators at the 2009 AGM.
8. The Board agreed to the inclusion of an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of its meetings as a practice to pay respect to the Indigenous people who have had an enduring connection to this land commencing long before white settlement.
9. A Board representative attended a marketing course with the Executive Officer in order to inform our discussions about the Business Plan and the positioning of the CRS (ACT) in the market, and for the benefit of the business.
10. The Board implemented a "Learn the Business" element of Board meetings. Staff members of the CRS (ACT) have attended Board meetings and shared with us their perspective of their role and of the CRS operations. This has been very valuable in informing Board members

11. In May the CRS prepared a bid to host the National Mediation Conference (2011). While for a range of reasons this bid did not proceed to fruition, it did demonstrate the increasing reputation of the CRS (ACT) in a national context.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their support during this year. Mick Gentleman as Deputy Chair, Alison Smith as Secretary, Peter Biggs as Treasurer, and Helen Lang, Geoff Pryor, Rae Lacey, and Susan Abbott as Committee members.

I thank the ACT Departments of Disability Housing and Community Services, and Justice and Community Safety, for their continued financial and other assistance.

On behalf of the Board I want to sincerely acknowledge the ongoing and outstanding contribution to CRS of our Executive Officer, Katrina Spyrides and her outstanding team, who Katrina speaks highly of at every board meeting. They have continued to do a tremendous job.

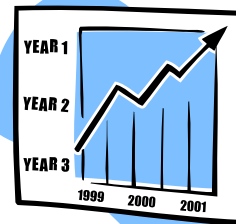
Finally, thank you to our mediators who continue to provide such a high level of service to CRS customers and who ensure the continued high reputation of CRS for quality and professional service in the community sector.

The future will pose its own challenges for the organisation as we continue to strive to attract new business to the organisation, while operating effectively and efficiently and within our resources. I have every confidence that we will continue to work together to ensure that the CRS grows and consolidates, to continue to provide our much needed services to the ACT community.



Margaret Moreton
Chair CRS Board of Directors

TREASURER'S REPORT



I am pleased to submit the audited financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2010.

CRS continued to perform well as reflected in a surplus of \$7724.16 and net assets and equity of CRS have increased to \$132,840.

Income for the year rose by 6%, an amount of \$21,732 reflecting increases in grants and service fees.

Expenses are increased in the year by 13.4%, an amount of \$45,408 largely because of higher salaries and wages and because of increased provision for some matters. These are long service leave provisions that had not been explicitly provided for before, but are now, consistent with the new long service leave law; and

accumulated bad debts from unpaid fees.

To help avoid the problem of unpaid fees, during the year CRS adopted a policy of obtaining deposits in advance for fee-paying clients.

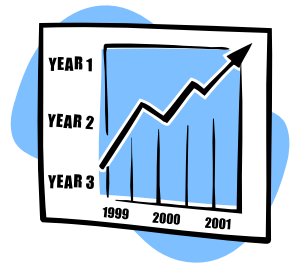
CRS remains in a strong financial position and from that base the Board approved CRS Budget for the 2010 11 year includes funding for new projects to extend services into workplaces and for families in the ACT.

I much appreciate the considerable efforts during the year of The Executive Officer and the staff and would like to record my thanks to them.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Biggs', written over a horizontal line.

Peter Biggs
Treasurer

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



In 2009-10, the Conflict Resolution Service continued to deliver services to the ACT community beyond the confines of its resources, in order to meet the increasing complexity of client needs, the Alternative Dispute Resolution industry and the increase in legislative/regulatory requirements for practicing mediation in Australia.

Dispute Resolution Services

Although enquiries were slightly down on the previous reporting period, the resources required to assist clients has increased. The activity required per case in regards to staff actions and mediation hours have increased per case which indicates the growing level of complexity clients are presenting to CRS.

Even though Family Dispute Resolution cases made up only 24% of CRS caseload, the staffing resources required accounted for 41.6%; indicating the impact of Family Law legislation on the impact of CRS's service delivery model.

With the decrease in cases resulting in mediation has seen the increase in individual coaching CRS is undertaking with clients. Clients are less inclined to accept mediation, however are more welcoming of the opportunity to speak with CRS staff one-to-one to work through their disputes.

Resolution rates from mediation continue to remain high with 83.61% of mediated cases reaching agreement on all or some of the issues.

Overall client satisfaction remains high with CRS receiving an average rating of 4.24 out of 5 (5 being excellent). The ongoing consistency of CRS's high rating can be attributed to the CRS delivering services which suit the needs of the client including, particularly in the area of timeliness, information and most importantly, in a respectful and impartial manner.

Training

Interest in mediation training continues to be strong from all areas of the community. During the period CRS increased the number of competencies it delivers under the Certificate IV in Mediation from 7 to 9 units. CRS's decision to continue to deliver the Certificate IV in Mediation has been supported by the number of participants CRS continues enroll in the course. Under the National Mediator Accreditation Standards (NMAS), mediation training courses need only have duration of 38 hours and cover certain topic areas. CRS's training course runs on average for 75 hours, which not only meets the NMAS but also the requirements of the Certificate IV in Mediation (9 units). As CRS mainly recruits from its own training courses, the quality of mediation training needs to be of this high standard in order to meet the needs of CRS's client group and the overall high standards which CRS sets for all its practitioners.

Practice and Compliance

CRS finalised the National Mediator Accreditation status of all CRS mediators during the period. Part of the process was to prepare and deliver information sessions for mediators in order for them to understand the process of becoming Nationally Accredited and the requirements to maintain accreditation in future. In order for CRS to accredit mediators, the organisation was required to become a Registered Mediator Accreditation Body (RMAB). Primarily, this was to ensure that CRS mediators were able to become nationally accredited in the most fluid and cost effective way possible, as CRS absorb much of the costs and workload to accredit mediators.

CRS has also been able to strengthen its Professional Development and Supervision program for its panel of mediators, exceeding national

benchmarks for this purpose. Where many organisations do not have an adequate supervision program for their mediators and/or are downsizing internal programs, the CRS continues to strive to support mediators in their role. An addition to the suite of opportunities for mediators is the introduction of individual Mediators Review and Appraisal interviews which were conducted in early 2010. This program was very well received by CRS mediators who valued the opportunity to talk through any performance issues and also contribute ideas to the future of the CRS.

Feedback from mediators who work for other organisations in the industry has been unanimous in praising the high quality of professional support the CRS affords its mediators. Additionally, mediation services both in the ACT and interstate have sought the professional consultation services of CRS to advise on how to strengthen and improve support for their mediators also.

Collaborations and Initiatives

Throughout this Annual Report, many CRS initiatives and collaborations are included in more detail. Some of the highlights are listed below, but can be found in more detail along with many other projects, in to proceeding sections.

- ACT Noise Campaign: CRS was directly involved in advising and providing support to the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Energy to develop their campaign which was launched in September 2009.
- Continued liaison with the ACT Magistrates Court Protection Orders Unit including presentations to CRS staff on legislative requirements and court process; and CRS presentations to courts staff on where courts cases may be suitable for referral to mediation including where parties have ongoing relationships and/or are return cases seeking protection orders.
- ACT Policing: CRS presented information sessions to both Woden and Tuggeranong Police Stations over a period of 5 months. Approximately 120 officers were involved in learning more about the

CRS as a resource for police officers in the ACT.

- As Neighbourhood Watch continues its resurgence in the ACT, so to has CRS been working with the organisation to promote healthier neighbourhoods. During the period NHW distributed approximately 5000 CRS brochures and included CRS articles in their newsletters
- ACT Family Law Pathways Network: CRS continues to have a strong presence in this network with a role on the steering committee. During the reporting period CRS was involved in many projects with the network including the Family and Domestic Violence Conference held in May 2010. In addition to assisting with organising the event, CRS provided sponsorship by purchasing the delegate tote bags from the Alannah and Madeline Foundation which are sold through Target stores nationally. The Foundation raises funds to keep children safe from violence which CRS deemed as a worthwhile cause in line with the objectives of the conference.
- CRS continues to provide Housing ACT with more flexible opportunities for utilising CRS. This included improved referral processes, presentations to Joint Champions Group, relevant topic areas covered at Healthy Neighbourhood Forums such as practical demonstration of CRS services.
- One of CRS's major referrers, Supportlink, utilised CRS to pilot an auto-routing referral system which linked ACT Policing referrals more directly with CRS, thus eliminating the need for clients to be assessed for suitability more than what was required. The pilot process has been a success with CRS able to act more quickly to assist clients with their disputes.
- CRS commenced the process to start working more closely with Corrections ACT, particularly within corrections facilities. CRS held several meetings with key Corrections departments to establish scope for developing protocols and

- models specific to the needs of this client group.
- CRS made a submission to ACT Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander Justice Publication, whereby services outlined in plain English, the services they could offer to Indigenous people in the ACT. The publication is due for release in late 2010.
- CRS made a submission to the Investigation into Tree Management Practices in the ACT; whilst much of the terms of reference was not within CRS service mandate, CRS raised many concerns that some ACT regulations were inadvertently contributing to disputes between neighbours due to inappropriate tree management protocols. As a result, CRS also submitted many recommendations for the Commissioner to consider on how these could be overcome.
- CRS continued to be involved in the National Mediator Accreditation Standards working group for Practice and Compliance issues.

Publicity and Promotion

CRS continued to undertake extensive promotional activities beyond the scope of funding requirements and staff resources. During the reporting period CRS:

- delivered 60 community education sessions to over 1000 participants
- distributed over 11,000 brochures
- wrote articles for various newsletters
- provided interviews for Today Tonight, ABC radio 666, Australian Property Magazine and the Canberra Times.

Resources and Infrastructure

Like many services within the sector, CRS continued to be under resourced in all areas of its operation. Nevertheless, CRS once again was able to deliver on all its ACT government contracts and other obligations from its client base.

Some of the key areas CRS was able to improve included:

- Client Database upgrade
- Joining the Community Sector Multiple Enterprise Agreement
- Employment of new mediators
- Ongoing increase in mediator wages above the award rate.
- Establishment of new positions of *Mediation Co-ordinator* and *Practice & Compliance Officer*; adding an additional 22.5 staffing hours per week.
- Annual Staff Planning 2-day workshop

Primarily, CRS commenced development of its Business Plan, the first of its kind in CRS history. During the period consultations have been held extensively with staff and the board to establish a framework of reference for the development of the document which will be completed in the 2010-11 reporting period.

Acknowledgements

● Farewell

During the period CRS farewelled many people who have made valuable contributions to the CRS during 2009-10. CRS was sad to lose several mediators from the CRS panel who have contributed many years of service to the organisation (these people are listed on page 31. CRS also bid farewell to Fiona McIlroy from her role as the Healthy Neighbourhoods Project Officer, a position she held from April 2006 to December 2009. CRS thanks Fiona for her outstanding contributions to this role during this period; Fiona remains a mediator on the CRS panel. CRS also played host to an American student, Shae Miller, who was part of a program which allowed university students to offer volunteer services abroad. In Shae's case she came to Australia and also CRS. Shae became a valuable team member, assisting CRS with administrative issues and other support services. On her return to the US, Shae was able to apply the experiences and leanings she gained at CRS in her studies and work at the Center for Justice and Peacebuilding.

- *CRS Board of Directors*

I am always amazed at how fortunate CRS has been over the last several years to have had such a dedicated, personable, supportive and patient group of people to oversee the CRS; 2009-10 has been no different to this trend. I extend my personal thanks to each and every board member not only on behalf of myself, but also on behalf of the CRS for their commitment and enthusiasm of the work CRS undertakes. I would also like to acknowledge the CRS Chair, Margaret Moreton for her never ending support and mentoring she has extended to me over the last year. Margaret could really be considered the standard for how all Board Chair's conduct themselves in the role, and the CRS and myself are fortunate that she will be continuing in this role for 2010-11.

- *Mediators*

During the reporting period, CRS has asked much of its mediators due to the changing nature of legislative and regulatory requirements being imposed on those who deliver mediation services within Australia. CRS greatly appreciates the patience and dedication of its mediators who have undertaken further studies to become registered as Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners and also completed reams of applications to achieve status as a Nationally Accredited Mediator. Client feedback continues to show that the work of CRS mediators is greatly valued and appreciated by those who utilise the service. Additionally, mediator responses to their Annual Review and Appraisal interviews have

shown that mediators are very happy with the way they are managed and supported within the CRS. Everyone at CRS has worked hard to achieve and maintain this positive balance, which is to be congratulated.

- *Staff*

And finally, to an outstanding group of people I have had the privilege of not only managing but also working alongside.

It is rare to find a core team of office staff where:

- nothing is a problem when asked and,
- respectful relationships come naturally and,
- the concept of a 9-5 job comes secondary to the dedication to their role and,
- professionalism is the standard mantra, and
- humour is the oil that keeps the machine running.

My sincerest thanks and gratitude to Mary, Mike, Rachel and Susan for making my job a little easier and the outstanding contributions you make every day to the CRS.



Katrina Spyrides
Executive Officer

Mediation's greatest value lies in its potential not only to find solutions to people's problems, but to change people themselves for the better, in the very midst of conflict. (Bush and Folger 1994)

DISPUTE ASSESSMENT OFFICE



Overview

858 new enquiries (910)
246 mediation offers where parties accepted (223)
63 disputes mediated (77)
105 mediation sessions organised (111)
513:40 hours of mediation (451:95)
6069 actions recorded for active disputes (5859)

Of those disputes which reached mediation 83.61% (88.24%) reached a resolution

Figures in brackets are for 2008-09

Quality Improvement Framework

Various modifications were made to intake processes during the year in response to client feedback, legislative/regulatory requirements and CRS policy revision.

- **Family Dispute Resolution Screening and Assessment**

A more comprehensive screening tool was developed during the year to ensure that CRS complied with the Family Law Act and regulations about Family Dispute Resolution. This screening tool/form has expanded to 13 A4 pages. This takes at least one hour, usually 1.5 hours, to go through thoroughly with clients during face to face interviews. The form also contains information which must be provided to clients.

The FDR Consent Form was also expanded to include information relevant to Family Court processes.

- **Increased emphasis on dispute counselling/coaching**

Increasingly, CRS has identified a growing need to work one-to-one with parties in dispute. Part of this identification comes from the downturn in parties accepting attendance at mediation. CRS has found a growing lack of confidence and lacking sense of community relationships as the main reasons for this. As such CRS commenced progressing a model to spend longer with clients during the intake stage of CRS/client engagement. New processes have included increasing face to face interviews for any type of dispute, providing mini coaching sessions prior to party determining whether mediation is suitable etc

Some of the aims of the coaching process include:

- Assisting the parties to explore avenues for self-resolution that they have not been able to access or discuss previously.
- Extend the knowledge and information gained from the dispute as a starting point for moving parties towards a framework of resolution.
- Education on skills and strategies such as assertiveness, managing emotions, negotiating skills, effective communication, understanding what are their emotional triggers and possible emotional triggers of the other person, use of power in relationships and disputes, understanding the dynamics of conflict.

Neighbours are often particularly reluctant to come to mediation. In an attempt to assist neighbours who don't accept mediation, more time has been spent by intake staff talking with clients about their disputes, what they have already done to try to resolve the dispute, what the response has been, and other information or services that may be

useful. Sometimes clients are able to resolve disputes themselves, given this opportunity to think through strategies and discuss options with an independent person.

- **Prepayment for mediations**

CRS introduced fees for clients who had the financial capacity to pay for CRS services. Fees are only incurred for the time clients spend in mediation and not for any preliminary or post work CRS may undertake on their behalf.

As part of CRS's financial management process, a pre-payment system was also introduced to minimise the occurrence of client non-payment which was on the increase from previous years. Clients for FDR and couple mediations are now required to make individual prepayments for mediation, calculated according to their gross incomes. It was established that a pre-payment of 4 hours was requested, the 4-hours being determined by the average length of mediation.

The fee structure was also re-designed, so that clients earning above \$35,000 per annum are required to make a financial contribution to the cost of mediation. The fee scale includes \$5,000 increments. [Previously, clients earning up to \$54,999 were not required to pay fees, and no evidence of income was or is required.]. The reason for the decrease in the threshold was due some paying clients feeling the non-paying party would value the service and process more if they made a nominal contribution to the cost, no matter how small the contribution

- **Changing nature of CRS client health status**

Given the heightened public awareness of the prevalence of mental illness in the community, it was decided to add "alleged mental illness" on the substantive issue list in the database. CRS does not exclude clients with mental illness; rather we work with clients who disclose mental health issues to enable them to participate in conflict resolution processes. The assessment of suitability for mediation involves drawing out the client's view of the world, and way of relating to others.

Additionally, another substantive issue CRS has started collecting data about is 'substance use/abuse', this could be in relation to drug and alcohol use. Anecdotal evidence suggest that these issues are being identified more by CRS clients and as such CRS is endeavouring to ensure flexibility of services to be able to assist with any particular needs of these client groups. To support CRS's responsiveness, an intake officers participated in Mental Health First Aid Training in May 2010.

- **Client Information Package for Mediation**

CRS introduced an information package for clients "Helpful Information to Prepare for Your Upcoming Mediation". This was in response to feedback over the years where clients have felt they were not fully prepared and/or understood the mediation process, mainly due to information overload during the screening and assessment process and inability to retain all the information. As a result a comprehensive package was developed which included information about the step-by-step mediation process, CRS Service Charter and CRS Consent Form. However, of most use is the addition of the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section which answers anything from 'what parties should consider to prepare for discussion' to 'how often can they take breaks'. This form has been progressively updated since its initial development to reflect the questions of clients which may be shared by many.

Dispute Counselling

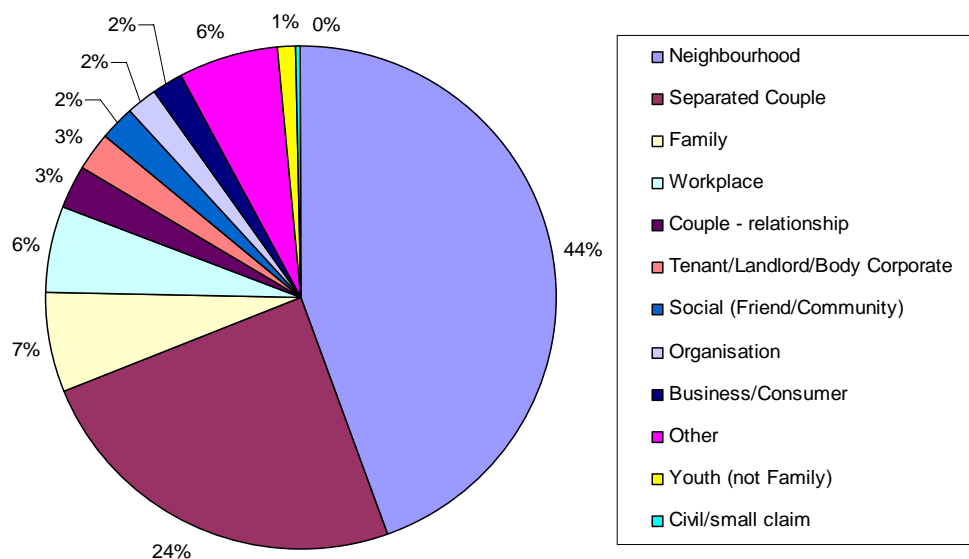
Information and referral continues to be an important part of the Conflict Resolution Service.

Parties often seek information on how to handle the conflict themselves rather than requesting mediation. The service encourages parties to resolve disputes themselves by assisting them to clarify the issues that are most important and consider possible solutions that parties can apply themselves.

For the 858 disputes which were active during the period a total of 6069 activities were conducted. Activities include actions such as phone calls, letters, organising mediators, and contacts with referrers etc

This figure only represents the activities entered into the client database and does not include any adhoc contacts such as people who may walk in off the street requesting brochures, or in some instances additional calls made to/from existing clients to 'quickly' clarify information.

Dispute Types



Presenting Problems

The tables below outline the range of issues for which assistance was provided, based on parties' comments at the time of dispute assessment. Parties may have identified more than one issue.

Substantive Issues

Separated couple - parenting	139
Separated couple - property	82
Fence	81
Trees/shrubs/plants	61
Relationship breakdown	42
Noise (not dog barking)	31
Workplace related complaints	30
Money/debt	27
Lifestyle/environmental	26
Invasion of privacy	26
Dog	21
Child/teenager's behaviour	20
Other (substantive)	18
Parenting (not separated couple)	8
Mental Illness (alleged)	8
Unsatisfactory service	7
Substance use/abuse	6
Inability to communicate	1
Animal (not Dog)	1

Behavioural Issues

Inability to communicate	125
Refusal or failure to act on complaints	48
Agreement Breakdown	47
Lack of trust	45
Bullying	40
High intensity verbal abuse/swearing	37
Complaints	32
Low intensity verbal abuse/swearing	16
Threats of violence or things thrown (missed)	13
Gossip and rumours	11
Theft/damage	9
Other (behavioural)	7
Assault	7
Unsatisfactory service	1

Offers and Acceptances

Mediation is not offered in all cases. Staff speak with the first party and assess whether a dispute may be suitable for mediation. If mediation appears to be suitable and the first party agrees, a file is opened and an offer of mediation is made to the other party involved. Mediation is voluntary and both parties must agree for mediation to proceed. Even when both parties agree to mediation, parties sometimes resolve matters themselves prior to mediation occurring. After both parties agree to mediation, one or other party may change their mind or the service may find that a dispute is not suitable for mediation due to factors that were not apparent in the initial assessment.

Cases where mediation was offered	246	Mediation declined by other party	40
At least one session arranged	105	Pre-resolved before mediation	12
Offer accepted by the other party	68	One or other party withdraws	16
No response from other party	71	CRS withdraws	9

The number of cases suitable for mediation and the rate of acceptance of offers of mediation vary by dispute type. For example, Neighbourhood disputes are frequently resolved through effective dispute counselling and providing information to parties. Also, the second party is often more likely to accept mediation in a separated couple dispute than in a neighbourhood dispute.

Outcomes of Mediation

64 sessions reached written agreements, 16 sessions reached verbal agreement, 15 sessions reached no agreement. 26 sessions, parties agreed to continue at a later session.

- **Format of Mediation and Outcomes**

	Face-to-face	Shuttle
Written	54	3
None	14	1
Verbal	7	

Profile of Clients accessing the Service

During the period 11354 people accessed CRS services (not counting large groups, training and facilitations).

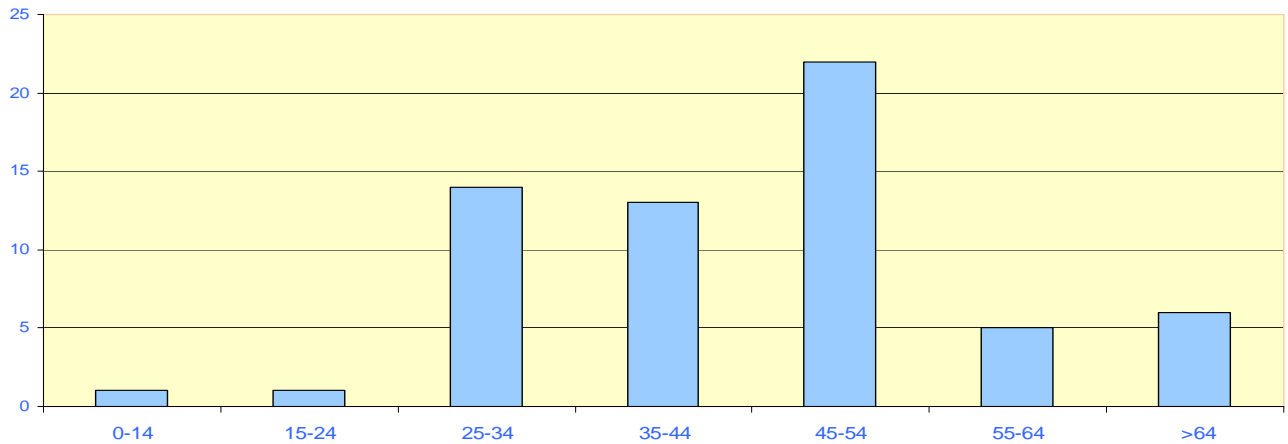
- **Gender**

More women than men contacted the service first (52.2%:47.8%)

- **Disability**

31 parties identified disabilities including physical, mental and intellectual disabilities. No case was refused and no parties were unable to participate in mediation due to disability.

● **Age Range**



(Nb 243 unknown age)

Cultural & Linguistic Diversity

- 5 people identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander.
- Interpreters were used during Intake and/or mediation for 6 clients.

23 clients identified they spoke another language other than English at home; these included Russian, Arabic, Spanish, Serbian, Italian, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Thai, Mandarin, Japanese, Indonesian, German, Chinese, Chichawa, Bengali

Country of Origin

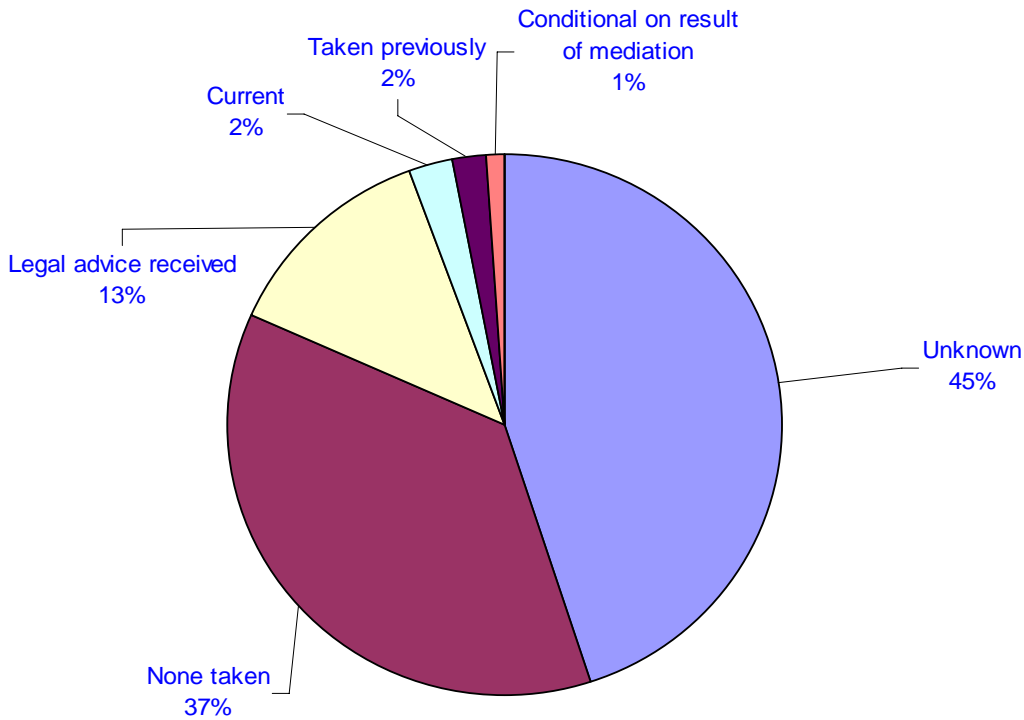
Not Stated	274
Australia	256
England	12
United Kingdom	11
United States of America	7
New Zealand	6
Serbia	4
Russia	3
Poland	3
Italy	3
Germany	3
Egypt	3
China	3
Argentina	3
Vietnam	2
Thailand	2

Netherlands	2
India	2
Chile	2
Canada	2
Zimbabwe	1
Yugoslavia	1
Yemen	1
Uganda	1
Sri Lanka	1
South Africa	1
Scotland	1
Romania	1
Philippines	1
Peru	1
Papua New Guinea	1
Mexico	1

Mauritius	1
Malawi	1
Lebanon	1
Kenya	1
Israel	1
Ireland	1
Indonesia	1
Hong Kong	1
Greece	1
France	1
El Salvador	1
Croatia	1
Brazil	1
Belgium	1
Bangladesh	1
Austria	1

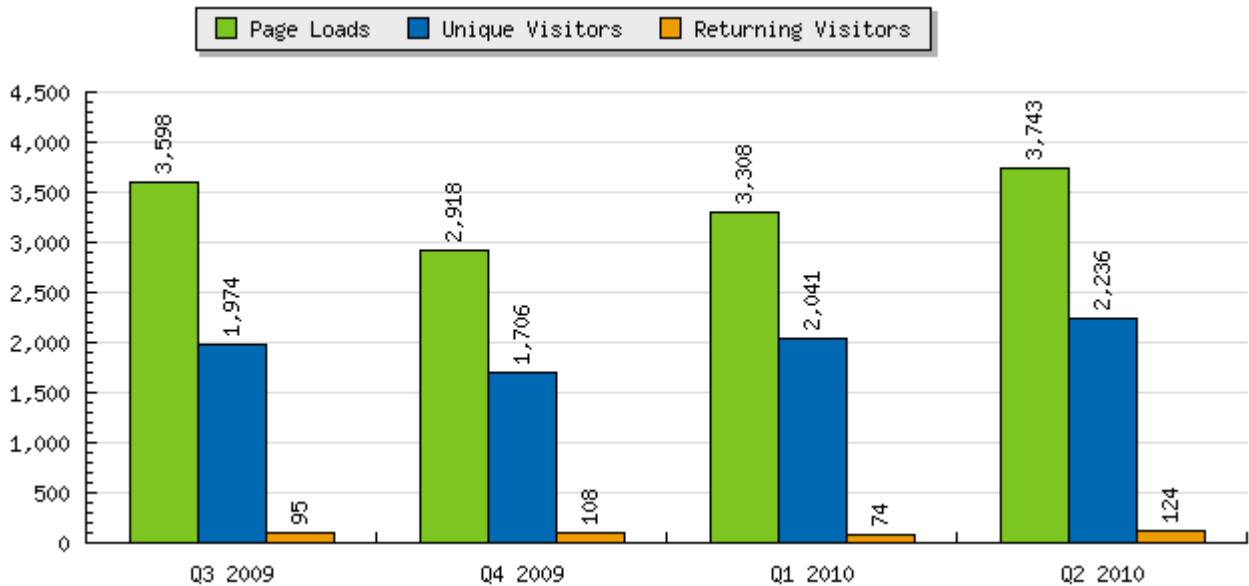
Legal Action

As part of CRS’s understanding of the history and future of the dispute, ascertaining any previous and potential legal action is canvassed. For the period, parties identified the following status of legal action considerations.



Visits to CRS Website

Total visitors to CRS website for 2009-10 was 13,567



Returning Visitors - Based purely on a cookie, this person is returned to CRS website for another visit an hour or more later

First Time Visitors - Based purely on a cookie, if this person visited CRS website for the first time.

Unique Visitor - Based purely on a cookie, this is the total of the returning visitors and first time visitors

Page Load - The number of times CRS website has been visited.

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR)

208 active disputes
 78 mediation offers
 65 mediation sessions organised
 343 hours of mediation
 2527 actions recorded for active disputes

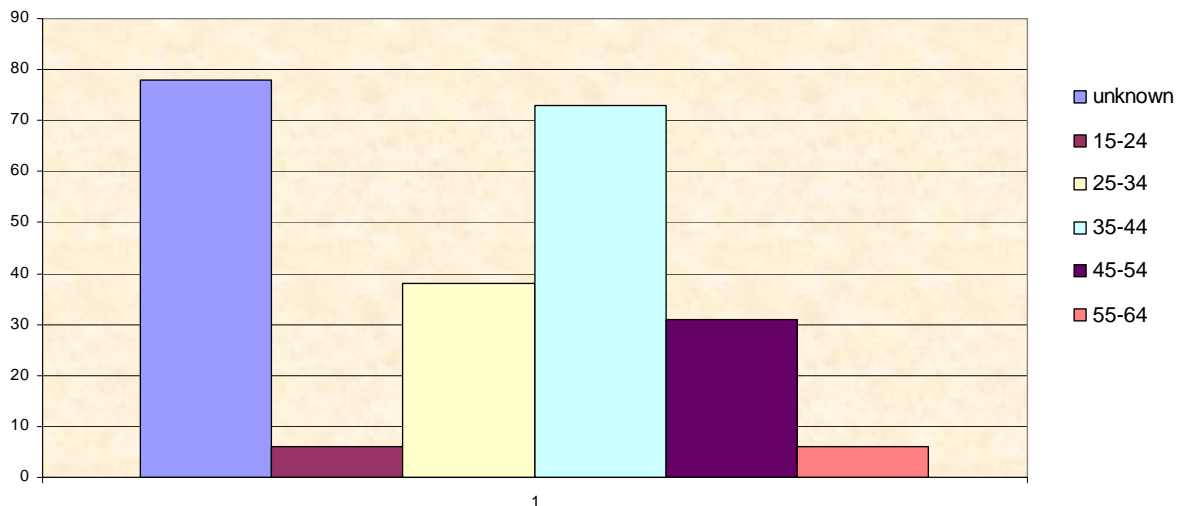
Of those disputes which reached mediation 86.84% reached a resolution

CRS has seen a decrease in the call for Family Dispute Resolution during the reporting period. The decrease in enquiries for FDR is in stark contrast to high levels which were seen when the amendments to the Family Law Act were introduced in 2006 which made it compulsory for people to attempt FDR (mediation) before making application to have their parenting matter heard in court.

Although not the highest dispute type for the 2009-10 period, FDR continues to be the most resource intense dispute type for CRS. Time spent by staff assisting clients and time spent in mediations is evident in the following comparisons:

Dispute Type	Total Enquiries	Mediations	Mediation Hours (inc debriefing)			Log Records		
			Total	% of total hours	Avg Hours/ Mediation	Total	% of total logs	Avg log records/ file
FDR	208	52	343:00	66.8	6.6	2527	41.6	12.1
Neighbour	343	3	14:15	0.3	4.7	1709	28.2	4.9
Other	307	24	156:25	30.5	6.5	1833	30.2	5.9
TOTAL	858	79	513:40			6069		

Average Age of Disputants According to Dispute Type



As can be seen by the above graph, the 35-44 age group was the largest client base seeking assistance with family law matters, which generally correlates with the average age for divorce in Australia. This is in comparison to the average age of all CRS clients being 45-54.

Healthy Neighbourhood Project



The Healthy Neighbourhood Project aims to assist the community in the prevention and resolution of neighbourhood disputes by:

- providing a free mediation service for neighbourhood disputes.
- increasing the community's knowledge of conflict resolution techniques and their rights and responsibilities as neighbours.
- facilitating improved agency collaboration, efficiency and effectiveness in preventing, managing and resolving neighbourhood disputes.

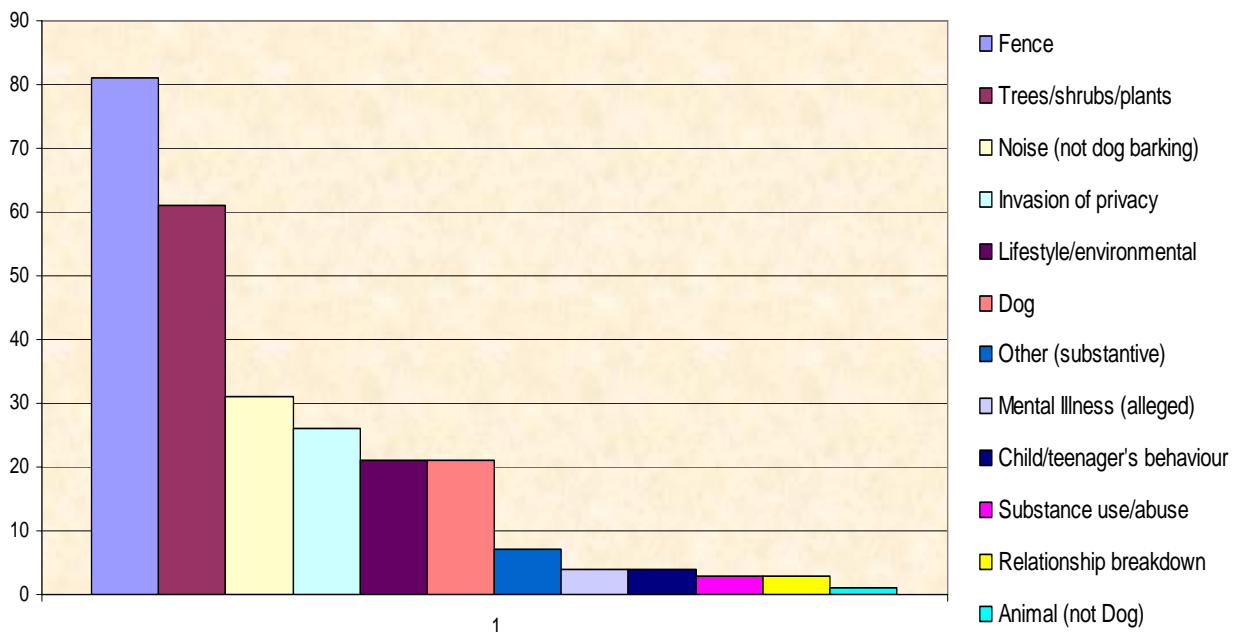
Overview

Neighbourhood disputes accounted for 49% (39%) of total disputes

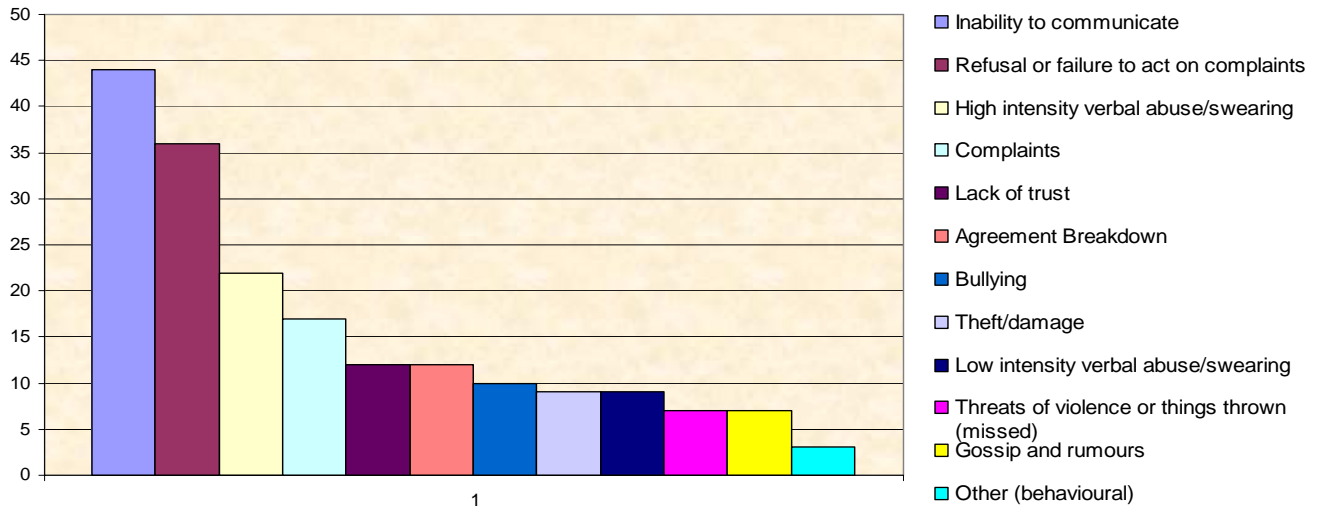
574 Clients
 343 New enquiries
 382 Active disputes
 49 Mediation offers
 5 Disputes mediated
 574 Actions recorded for active disputes
 66.67% Resolution Rate

The major presenting problems are shown below:

• Substantive Issues

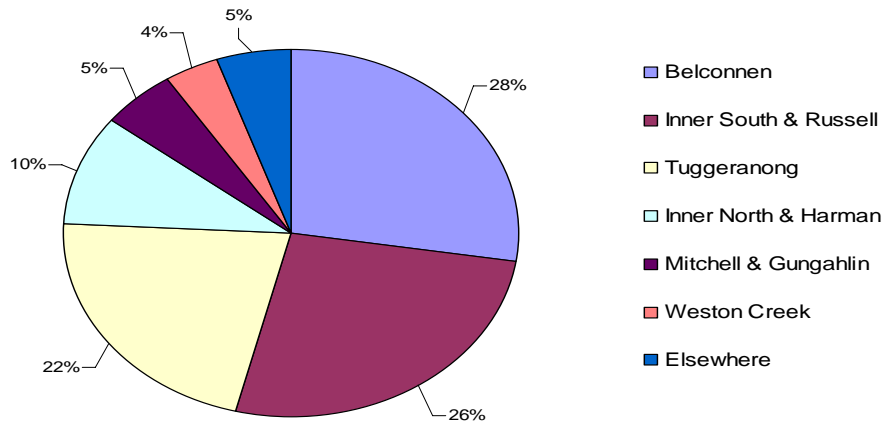


● Behavioural Issues

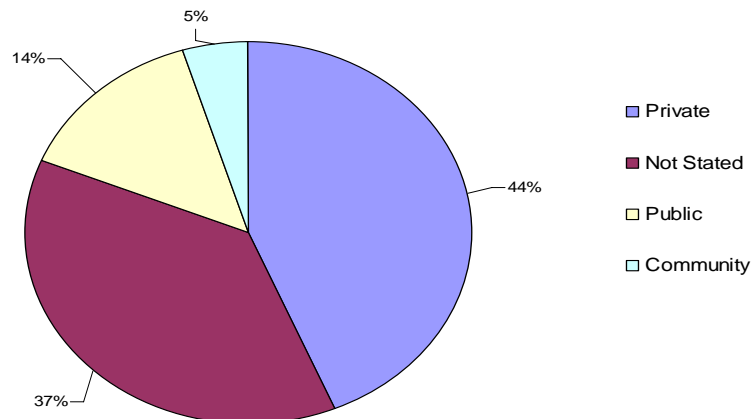


● Profile of Neighbourhood Enquires

By Postcode



By Housing Type



Projects and Initiatives

C.H.A.T.

Citizens Helping And Talking (C.H.A.T.) was intended to provide support to neighbours who offered mediation to their neighbours, but it was declined. Although CRS intake officers routinely discuss other options with Party As after Party B declines mediation, there was the question of what do these people do next? And so after CRS discussions and client feedback, CHAT was developed to give people an opportunity to talk over their issues (anonymously) in a group. The aims of the CHAT group were as follows:

- encourage people to think of themselves as "citizens", with some responsibility for helping fellow citizens to work through neighbourhood problems in a constructive way;
- The participants would see their particular problems in a wider context, and may be relieved to know that they are not the only people with problems and/or, that their problems are minor in comparison with some;
- By facilitating the sharing of neighbourhood issues in this way, CRS would also have the opportunity to provide some community education on effective communication.

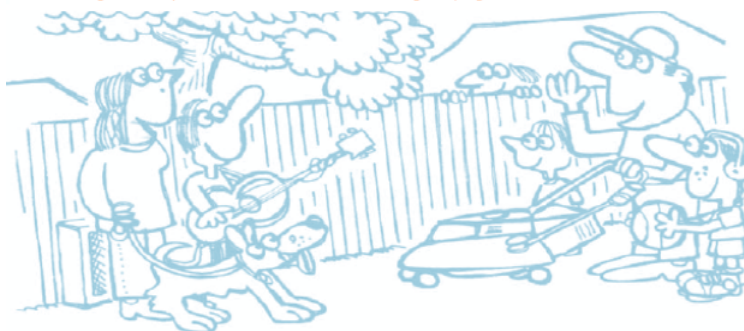
As an initial step, Party A's were individually invited by letter to an evening meeting at Tuggeranong Communities at Work, and one person attended. Publicity was provided by a radio interview on ABC 666. Party As were invited to an evening meeting at Belconnen Community Centre, and unfortunately there was minimal attendance despite people indicating that they would attend.

It was then decided to open up the invitation to anyone with a neighbourhood problem. Two further lunchtime meetings were offered at Woden Public Library and Belconnen Public Library.

CRS reviewed the initiative and decided that it was not an effective use of resources. CRS may have underestimated people's difficulty in acknowledging that they have a problem with neighbours. Individuals have no difficulty in talking to CRS about their neighbourhood problems, but there seems to be resistance to open discussion about neighbourhood disputes due to the stigma attached that neighbourhood disputes are considered frivolous and people are embarrassed to talk openly about their disputes.

If you've ever had a problem with a neighbour, you will know how it can dominate your life. Every time you go into the backyard, or wheel out your bins, there they are! CRS talks to hundreds of people every year about their neighbourhood disputes and helps people work out how to resolve or manage their dispute.

CHAT gives you the chance to talk about your dispute with the assistance of qualified mediators to come up with strategies to resolve or manage the situation. If you are caught up in a neighbourhood dispute about trees, barking dogs, fences, noise, building works, parties, antisocial behaviour, gossip, give CRS a call for a CHAT.



C.H.A.T. Citizens Helping And Talking

For information on the next CHAT group in your local area
Ph: 6162 4050

A program funded by ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety

healthy neighbourhoods

When and where: Monday 7 June, 1.00 – 3.00 pm
Meeting Room, Woden Public Library

Monday 5 July, 1.00 – 3.00 pm
Meeting Room, Belconnen Public Library

RSVP essential: Susan Rockliff, Healthy Neighbourhood Project Officer
Ph: 6162 4050 or Email: projects@crs.org.au

Conflict Resolution Service

Healthy Neighbourhood Network Meetings

This network promotes ways to improve service provision and delivery between agencies and CRS. The HNN endeavours to enhance the understanding of alternate ways to resolve client disputes and broaden the scope of our programs. The forum provided an opportunity for agencies to announce new initiatives and meet any shortfalls. Participants can ask questions and clarify how agencies work and how they relate to each other. Any gaps or improvements in services can be identified and creative ways introduced to address them. Overall the aim is to work together to streamline matters where early intervention has produced positive results in the prevention, management and resolution of neighbourhood disputes. Meetings are held every 2 months.

During the reporting period 6 meetings were held with an attendance of approximately 70 people; the meetings and general content were as follows:

- August: Domestic Animal Services spoke of issues surrounding animal complaints in the ACT; some of the issues raised included reluctance of neighbours to approach their neighbour if their animal is the problem, lack of exercise of animals which increases the likelihood of it becoming a nuisance to neighbours, also of interest were the number of serial complainants which are resource intensive for the department.
- October: A representative from the Joint Champions Group gave an overview of the work the group is doing in collaboration with Housing ACT (HACT). The HACT initiative is aimed at Housing and tenants working in collaboration to improve issues within public housing including 'Developing Neighbourhoods' and 'Supporting Older People'
- December: information was shared in regards to what services are available over the Christmas/New Year period to assist the community with neighbourhood issues and other services which may be required under 'crisis' circumstances.
- February: CRS held a practical demonstration of how CRS goes about its work, including role plays of intake and a shortened version of the mediation process.
- April: This meeting was mostly about the C.H.A.T. initiative, and although two Neighbourhood Watch groups asked for a presentation on this, fewer people attended the meeting.
- June: the network meeting was devoted to learning about how complaints are handled by Housing ACT and CHC Community Housing.

Collaborations

- Public Forum on Investigation into the Government's Tree Management Practices and the Management of the Urban Forest in the ACT; This led to a submission to the Investigation, which included about a dozen case studies from the previous 12 months relating to neighbourhood disputes involving trees on privately leased property.
- Multicultural Matters Meetings: These bi-monthly meetings are hosted by the Migrant and Refugee Resettlement Services ACT. They provide a forum for representatives from various community and government organizations to discuss matters relating to the health and wellbeing of migrant and refugee communities.
 - CRS provided input into a discussion into the use of interpreters, based on experience gained from neighbourhood mediation.
 - Advice was provided about a strategy to provide assistance to an elderly CALD person with mental illness involved in a neighbourhood dispute.
- Migrant & Refugee Resettlement Service planned to hold a conference of Sudanese women that was being organized by a volunteer from the community. CRS agreed to

present a workshop on resolving conflict at the conference, with staff developing a workshop to on the basics of communication and conflict resolution. Due to the lack of a Sudanese interpreter, the event was unable to go ahead.

- Reclink Gatherings: These meetings are held at the Boomerang Room at the Currong Flats in Reid, and are hosted by Reclink. The meetings attract representatives from various groups such as Red Cross, the Salvation Army, ACT Health, HousingACT, The Breakfast Program, Centrelink, St. Vincent de Paul. CRS presented information about how the service operates and can assist people experiencing neighbourhood disputes.
- Community Information Hub at the Boomerang Centre: This is a meeting hosted by YWCA. People in the local area go to the Hub as a social activity and for free lunch. Various services are represented and can be consulted by the clients. The other services include The Big Issue, CARE Financial Services, Centrelink, Legal Aid ACT, and St. Vincent de Paul.
- Neighbourhood Watch ACT: Charnwood/Dunlop Neighbourhood Watch groups meet at Charnwood, and requested a speaker who would address neighbourhood disputes. This occurred in June 2010 during the time that C.H.A.T. was being piloted, and the group expressed interest in the initiative. Neighbourhood Watch is regularly represented at Healthy Neighbourhood Network meetings.
- Environment ACT Anti-Noise Campaign: CRS worked closely with departmental officers to from the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Energy to develop and anti-noise campaign for the ACT. The campaign was launched in September at the Dendy Cinema with the screening of an advertisement along with promotional cards 'Your Noise is Not Their Choice'.

Evaluation of Healthy Neighbourhood Program

At the request of the ACT Department of Justice and Community Safety, CRS commenced an evaluation of the Healthy Neighbourhood Program which would canvass the periods July 2004 to June 2007 and July 2007 to June 2010.

The focus of the evaluation being threefold:

Part A: Past

- Discussion of the successes, failures and pitfalls of the program outcomes
- Perspective of referring agencies such as Housing ACT, ACT Policing and ACAT and other stakeholders

Part B: Models of Addressing Neighbourhood Disputes

- Research on how other jurisdictions address neighbourhood disputes
 - o within Australia
 - o other countries (eg UK, USA, Canada, NZ ie like minded societies)

Part C: The Way Ahead

CRS Recommendations for potential new contract including:

- efficient model for addressing neighbourhood disputes
- protocols for working with referring ACT Government agencies
- modification of outputs reflective of changing community requirements
- funding required for the above

The Methodology CRS will be employing will be as follows:

- a. Review of previous Outputs and Outcomes against contract

- b. Case Study analysis
- c. Research other Models
- d. Consultation Forums with HNN Program Stakeholders
- e. CRS internal consultation with staff and mediators

It is expected the evaluation will be completed early 2011, with outcomes included in the CRS Annual Report 2010-11.



Healthy Neighbourhood Network Forum



Mock Mediation Demonstration

CASE STUDIES

Family

A and B are married and immigrated to Australia from overseas. They have an infant son. Party B also has a teenage son from a previous relationship and had decided to move in with them which caused tensions between A & B. B was not able to say "No!" to the son wanting to live with them and A is now fighting constantly with him. A is worried about the stepson's disturbing behaviours and was concerned that B seemed to just accept these behaviours. A is also worried about the stepson's influence on their young child. A and B agreed to attend mediation and were able to agree on changes to the way they communicate with each other, as well as agreeing to attend a parenting course. In A's feedback to CRS, she said that she appreciated the opportunity to express her views, and gained a better understanding of her own communication style.

Family Dispute Resolution - Parenting and Property issues

This dispute involved a recently separated couple with several children. B works overseas, whilst A had returned to Canberra after living with B overseas for some time before separating. They were in disagreement about parenting issues to do with living arrangements, B's contact with the children, and their schooling. Their financial disagreements involved child support payments and the use of joint monies before a final property settlement was agreed. A was concerned about what B was saying to the children about the separation and B was concerned about grandparents not being able to have contact with the children. Infidelity and substance abuse were also issues between A & B. A & B attended 2 mediation sessions, which CRS agreed to facilitate during B's brief visit to Canberra. In the first mediation session they were able to reach agreement on the Property Settlement which included agreements about all the properties, other assets, superannuation and debts. In the second mediation they were able to reach agreements concerning the living arrangements for the children, contact with the children for the parent living overseas, and communication between A & B regarding the children. They also came to agreement about child support issues including school fees and the use of joint monies, prior to the Property Settlement being finalised.

Parent/Child

Party A contacted CRS because she wanted to repair her relationship with her eldest son who was 12 yo. There had been an incident where the boy accused A of punching him, and he asked his grandparents to collect him. At the time A contacted CRS she had not been able to see her son for a week or so, and was concerned that as the mother she had no "say" in this. 'A' was particularly resentful of her parents, who had reported the incident to ACT Care & Protection. 'A' also has two younger children. A's parents have a troubled relationship with 'A', in which they claim to have tried to help her over the years since she left home at 16. They attribute this partly to A's alleged drug use. Both A and her parents wanted mediation to improve things for the eldest child. Both A and Bs were less concerned about improving their relationship, which they regard as too problematic.

The mediation resulted in a detailed outcome statement, whereby the son would continue to reside mostly with his grandparents and stay overnight with A and his siblings at pre-arranged times, and if he felt comfortable to do so. Feedback from grandparents after the mediation was: "I was very surprised at the agreement reached. The resulting agreement would not have been achieved without the CRS staff."

Workplace

A large government department sought CRS assistance with a workplace dispute involving a male supervisor (B) and a female casual employee (A). 'A' had been on stress leave for some months, but wanted to return to work. 'B' was a retired senior officer who believed that A's complaints were entirely unjustified, and that her work ethic was questionable. Initially, B was very reluctant to engage with CRS. This dispute involved two mediations. Firstly, 'A' had mediation with a senior manager who had responsibility for the overall program, but who had not had any conflict with A. This mediation was successful, in that A felt she had been "heard" by a senior manager who may have previously been very influenced by B. They also agreed that a mediation between A and B was necessary, and the manager required B to attend. The second mediation enabled A and B to exchange information about work practices, and clear up misunderstandings. It also included agreement about what other work colleagues would be told about the mediation, and a process to be followed if other problems arose in the workplace. The feedback from A included the information that the situation was resolved, and that she was returning to work when her doctor finalized his report. A was "delighted" with what CRS does and is glad that the service exists.

Community Group

CRS provided facilitation services to an agency that runs a support group of about 20 to 30 members. The support group was beginning to "implode". Some of the issues that were emerging in the group included: subgroups were starting to develop, there were power brokers in the group, group politics, and group members were trying to recruit others to the 'lobbying' cause.

The facilitation provided the group to undertake: individual reflection, group discussion to enable group to focus on what they valued about their group, what the group needed to do differently and how the group might achieve these things. The outcome was that the group created an essential content for their plan of action. This plan of action included acknowledging the need to address various points of conflict within the group.

Feedback from the participants and the auspicing service was positive and conveyed thanks for refocussing the group on the original aim of why the group was formed, but also how to handle conflict in the future.

COMMUNITY EDUCATION



CRS receives requests for assistance from community groups, private firms and government agencies. Sessions lasting from one hour to several days are arranged as needed to meet these enquiries. Content of sessions range from education on the services CRS delivers to more technical skills development on communication and dispute resolution.

The following is a list of events and organisations where CRS has had the opportunity to educate on the benefits of alternative dispute resolution.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ACAT | NCS Youth program |
| ACT Magistrates Court | Neighbourhood Watch |
| ACT Policing | Northside Community Services |
| Ainslie Village | YWCS |
| Belconnen Interagency | Office of Registrar of Indigenous Corporations |
| Centacare | Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, |
| ANU | Private Solicitors |
| Canberra University | Protection Orders Unit |
| Care Financial Services | RecLink |
| Charnwood Neighbourhood Watch | Restorative Justice Unit |
| CHC Affordable Housing | School Principals |
| CIT Open Day | SES |
| Consultation Mental Health Review | Social Inclusion – CMO |
| Corrections ACT | STEPS YWCA young mums |
| Defence | Sudanese Women’s Group |
| Domestic and Family Violence Conference | Supportlink |
| Environment ACT | Tuggeranong Interagency |
| FaHCSIA | WCS Multicultural group |
| Family Pathways Network | Weston Creek Network Meeting |
| Lanyon Hub | WIRRED Womens Relapse Prevention group |
| Learning Options | Woden Community Services |
| Legal Aid | Woden Multicultural Group |
| MARSS (Migrant & Refugee Services) | Youth Adviser Council |
| Mental Health and Housing | YWCA |
| Multicultural Group: English Conversation | |
| MuMaMee Multicultural network | |

CRS PRACTICE AND COMPLIANCE



- **CRS Panel of Mediators**

The CRS continues to strongly support the model of maintaining a panel of casual mediators to provide mediation services in preference to employing mediators as full time employees. Predominantly, this is to ensure a wider availability and diversity of mediator age, gender, interests and expertise to provide a better alignment with our client's needs. However, deciding how many mediators we should have on the panel is quite a delicate juggling act. The prime consideration is of course to be able to meet the peak demand periods to hold mediations at times that are suitable for CRS's clients. Other considerations include being able to offer panel mediators with sufficient mediations to meet their employment expectations and also ensure that mediators participate in sufficient mediations to maintain an adequate professional skills base. To enable greater certainty both for CRS and for panel mediators, a minimum annual commitment of five mediations has been included as an essential Practice and Professional Development Standard for panel mediators to satisfy to meet their annual accreditation requirements.

CRS continues to maintain a strong, professional and diverse panel of mediators with some mediators leaving and some new mediators joining the panel over the past year. Sadly, and for a number of reasons, Christina Barbary, Elizabeth McKenzie, Rene Charles, Mino Hatami, Lawry Herron, Shelley McInnis, Elizabeth McKenzie, Brian Proctor, Cynthia Shannon, Branka Vlaicevic, Tony Wallace and Russ Whitewood left the CRS panel, with a number of them keen to rejoin the panel in the future when work and life commitments may allow them to. The CRS has been very fortunate to have had these mediators as panel members and is very thankful for the professionalism and dedication that they have provided to the Service, some of them over a large number of years.

To ensure the ongoing viability and diversity of the panel, a number of new mediators have been appointed over the past year, from a large and very strong pool of candidates who have applied to join the CRS panel of mediators. We are very pleased to welcome Tamara Khosla, Delcy Lagones de Anglim, Susan Rockliff, Mike Rowntree, Justin Toohey, Julie Whitmore and Elizabeth Woods to the panel and look forward to working with these new members in continuing to provide the highest level of professional mediation services to the ACT community.

- **Accreditation and Compliance**

The continuing professionalisation of the mediation industry over the past few years has imposed a number of accreditation requirements on panel mediators that are now being more actively scrutinised for compliance. The long-standing registration under the *ACT Mediation Act 1997* has been added to, with mediators now also requiring accreditation under the National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS) and for those qualified, accreditation by the Commonwealth Government as a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner (FDRP). All of these registrations and accreditations have a number of annual or bi-ennial requirements that each panel mediator is required to meet.

To assist panel mediators to understand and comply with these complex standards CRS has consolidated the requirements into a single annual requirement and has employed a part-time Practice and Compliance Officer to inform, assist and cajole panel mediators to meet the requirements. To maintain necessary registration and accreditations, Panel Mediators are now required to meet the following annual requirements:

- Be a Member of CRS or have 'Permanent Status' in a staff position;
- Satisfying the requirements for continuing registration or re-registration under the ACT Mediation Act 1997;
- Meeting the continuing accreditation requirements of the NMAS;
- Maintain continued inclusion on the FDRP Register (where applicable);
- Participate in a minimum of five mediations with the CRS or a minimum of three mediations with the CRS if a permanent CRS staff member;
- Undertake a minimum of 12 hours of professional development;
- Attend a minimum of three Supervision Sessions; and
- Maintain availability to conduct mediations on behalf of CRS.

The Practice and Compliance Officer is also maintaining and managing detailed records on behalf of panel mediators that can be used at any time to validate registration and accreditation compliance. As of July 2010, all 22 CRS panel mediators are registered under the *ACT Mediation Act 1997* and are accredited under the NMAS. 82% of panel mediators are accredited under the NMAS using CRS as their Recognised Mediator Accreditation Body (RMAB). At this stage CRS, as an RMAB under the system, has not provided accreditation to any mediators outside of the panel; although this may be a future consideration. 77% of panel mediators are accredited as FDRPs.

• Annual Review

To introduce the more detailed system of registration and accreditation compliance and to align with employer/employee best practice, following joint presentations on the new system of oversight and compliance, the 2009/10 Annual Review included a comprehensive interview between each panel mediator and the Executive Officer and Practice & Compliance Officer. The interview canvassed such things as the panel mediator's view of CRS as an employer and ways in which the relationship or working environment could be enhanced and communications between CRS staff and panel mediators and between panel mediators. The interviews were also an opportunity to discuss individual performance, update panel mediator's administrative details, qualifications and availability, for mediators to set individual aspirational goals and to canvass ideas for CRS-sponsored professional development activities. Some of the comments received from panel mediators in response to the some of the questions posed during this process are shown below.

What do you like about working for CRS?

- Surrounded with a good mix of mediators, able to bounce ideas about practices
- Community mediation service which is available (philosophy)
- EO is approachable, never feel like an imposition and able to bounce ideas
- Able to use the experience and learning gained at CRS in other areas of employment
- Work with different mediators, hone capacity to co-mediate
- Working in co-mediation model and learning from other mediators
- Good that all mediators go through the same CRS training or are up to speed on CRS process
- Security and coherency of process
- Like mixing with like-minded people with the same values and commitment to make CRS work
- Philosophy of empowering people
- First time I've worked in a service where its not just lip service
- Breadth of CRS services available to the community
- Working with parties gives satisfaction; 'empathic helper, not rescuer'
- The staff and panel mediators, their professionalism, knowledge and diversity of skills and life experience

- The chance to experience a different employer who takes a robust interest in the professionalisation of mediation and development of the profession. I have found the opportunity to facilitate group mediation and workplace issues teaming with a co-mediator deeply gratifying
- I can contribute to Canberra and assist people in dispute to resolve issues through negotiation
- Obtain great support from CRS staff
- Good atmosphere, leadership and back-up

What have you viewed as the challenges/barriers to working effectively as a CRS mediator in 2009?

- Being able to attend professional development sessions
- Mediators different styles and implementation of the process i.e. uniformity
- Availability due to time constraints
- Mediators pay rate – hourly rate can be improved, which in turn can increase motivation and number of mediators available
- It could be more profitable to work for CRS. I can earn more working at other jobs so it comes down to a decision about where time is spent according to who pays more
- Consistency of receiving predictable work, it would be much easier to be loyal to be available for CRS.
- The length of CRS mediations (ie that they are open ended) means that I need to make a whole day commitment to CRS even if the mediation doesn't end up taking all day.
- Ongoing anxiety about getting mediations

What are your thoughts on how CRS is operating as a service?

- Encouraged to see the way transformation has been made e.g. Family law mediation. The way it has been handled in light of it being a titanic process to manoeuvre CRS through over the last couple of years
- Openness to keep an open conversation with mediators
- Can refer to CRS knowing that it has credibility and status
- More staff is good
- Diversity of panel
- CRS operates more effectively than any other services I've worked for
- Great consistent, good leadership
- Well structured 'sound'
- Bid system to get mediations is good
- Pretty good under the given circumstances and limited resources and funding.
- Efficient, comforting, reassuring, professional stance and operation
- CRS has been transformed from a volunteer based community organisation to a semi-commercial organisation
- According to the statistics, CRS's workload has increased every year; has managed to operated within the allocated budget, could do better if their was FDR funding
- CRS has evolved to become a leading training provider on mediation and professional development
- Excellent support for mediators and the Canberra community

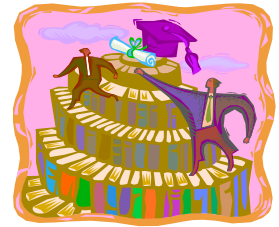
- **Continuous Quality Improvement**

The strong responses from panel mediators during the Annual Review clearly showed a commitment to a process to continually improve the quality of the mediation services provided by CRS. To assist mediators in this area, CRS has a closed loop system of feedback and assessment, which may be unique to this Service.

The 'system' consists of the following component parts:

- A comprehensive, recorded, reflective debriefing between co-mediators immediately following each mediation.
- A comprehensive review of each mediation by the Mediator Coordinator, and the Executive Officer if necessary.
- Feedback provided to each mediator following the review of the mediation by the Mediator Coordinator.
- The conduct of monthly Supervision Sessions to allow mediators to discuss any issues or problems arising from mediations with their peers.
- Face to face interviews with mediators by the Mediator Coordinator and/or Executive Officer if requested by mediators or if the debrief from a mediation suggests that it is warranted.
- Actively canvassing client feedback following mediation and acting on the feedback if any improvement is indicated.
- An active follow up with all clients in response to any client concerns about the service provided.
- Comprehensive quarterly, six monthly and annual statistical analysis of mediation outcomes and client feedback to obtain or monitor trends.
- Immediate actions to counter any negative trends where possible, such as the timely conduct of professional development activities.
- Further feedback to individual mediators following the receipt of client feedback when obtained and where it is warranted.
- An annual review of mediator performance with analysis of the consolidated feedback and client responses.
- The conduct of targeted professional development activities aimed to improve specific areas of service.

MEDIATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Supervision

As part of the CRS continuous quality improvement system and to ensure mediator health, nine supervision sessions were held over the 12 month period. The supervision sessions involved inherently spirited discussions, where a wealth of diverse, professional knowledge was shared and debated. Notes were taken at each session, which were subsequently written up and distributed to all panel mediators, whether they attended that session or not. Topics discussed during these sessions included the following:

- Confidentiality
- The Endurance of Mediated Outcomes
- Outcome Statements and they Should be Signed
- The Optimum Length of Mediations
- Wills and Probate
- Dealing with Deadlocks in Mediation
- Dealing with "the Big Lie" in Workplace Disputes
- Power Differentials in Neighbourhood and Workplace Disputes
- Coaching in Mediation
- Child Inclusive Practice
- Two Part Mediation Process
- Mediating Dangerously
- Mediator Style and Personality
- Crossing the Line – Abandoning a Mediation
- The Role of a Support Person
- Managing the Emotional Responses of Parties
- The Nature of Questioning
- Managing Oneself Following Client Complaint
- Safeguarding Privacy in a Mediation
- Dealing with the Elephant in the Room
- Apologies During Mediation
- Group Mediations
- Good Faith Negotiation
- The Role of a Sole Mediator
- Fair Fighting
- Dealing with Conflicting Legal Advice
- Negotiating in Bad Faith
- Obtaining Professional Advice During Mediation
- When to Raise Financial Matters
- Capacity to Mediate
- Clients Who Arrive Unprepared
- Surprise Concessions
- Power Issues – Gender
- Managing Multi-Party Disputes
- The Use of Silence

Workshops

Responding to panel mediator requests and providing targeted activities aimed to improve specific areas of CRS services resulted in the following professional development workshops and seminars to be held over the twelve month period:

- Overview of Court Processes and Programs
- Dealing with Difficult Clients & Your Own Emotions
- Focus on the Children
- Thinking Beyond the Mediation: The Importance of Outcome Statements
- How to Draw the Line between Counselling and Mediation
- Mediator Impartiality: How to Stop Becoming Another Party in the Dispute
- Passing the Impasse
- Annual Review
- Engaging Men
- Reflective Practice
- Workshop - Review of the Family Law Act & Mediator's Obligations Under the Act
- Multi-Party Mediations
- Adult Attachment Index & Neurobiology

TRAINING



Two mediation training courses were delivered by CRS during the reporting period. Twenty people commenced and/or completed CRS's Mediation Training Course during this period.

The CRS Mediation Training Course complies with the following:

- National Mediation Accreditation System
- Mediation Act 1997 (ACT)
- Family Dispute Resolution Accreditation
- Certificate IV in Mediation

The Mediation Training Course delivers the seven mediation competency units from the Certificate IV in Mediation. These units cover all stages of the mediation process as well as dispute assessment.

The course was expanded in 2010 to include two further competency units: communication and legal and ethical framework. The content of these units was already primarily covered in the course.

The training course is structured to provide both theory and practice at mediating. The course delivers over 75 hours of training, with over 45 hours of theory and just under 30 hours of role plays (excluding assessed role play hours).

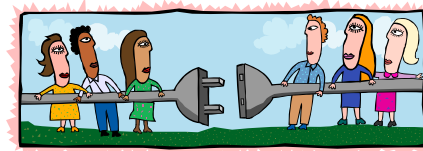
Thank you to all the coaches, role players and assessors who have assisted with the courses...feedback from course attendees has overwhelmingly stated that they most value the insights and suggestions from experienced mediators.

CRS also provided general training programs with programs delivered to ACT Government departments, as well as some community organisations.

Some of the feedback received from CRS's training courses include:

- *Overall it was a great course, probably the best Certificate IV level course I have ever taken part in.*
- *A very well developed and run course. I found it to be both informative and stimulating, not to mention challenging*
- *I was favourably impressed by the skills of the facilitators...(they) were very professional, able, pleasant, effective and skilled at guiding discussion to fruitful outcomes*
- *Presentation professional and engaging, with a great mix of theory, room for us to talk and practice our skills*
- *Thanks for being so organised, encouraging and keeping us all on track*
- *Interactive nature of training, rather than death by power point*
- *The coaches that were available and could guide us through the process – it also gave us a chance to see/experience some of the range of people who do this sort of work – their different backgrounds, styles and so on*
- *Opportunities to learn from and with other participants*
- *Well presented by qualified presenters who knew the material and could supplement it with personal and professional experience*
- *I found the course improved my understanding of conflict and fundamentally changed the way I approach conflict situations in my own life*
- *I liked the fact that the different coaches had slightly different approaches while following the process itself*
- *The course structure is brilliant and the group discussions enlightening*

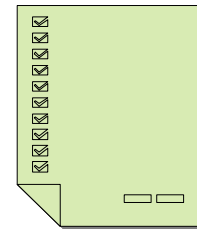
AGENCY COLLABORATION



CRS has worked with the following agencies during the reporting period (referrals were made to or from):

Aboriginal Justice Centre	Fencing Contractor
ACT Administrative and Civil Appeals Tribunal	Gungahlin Regional Community Centre
ACT Care and Protection	Headspace ACT
ACT Health	High Court
ACT Magistrates Court	Home Help Service
ACT Office of Fair Trading	Housing ACT
ACT Ombudsman	HUB at Boomerang Room
ACT Planning and Land Authority	Innanna
ACT Writer's Society	Justice and Community Safety - JACS
ACTEWAGL	Koomari
ADACAS	Law Society
Advocacy for Inclusion	Legal Aid
ANU Psychology Clinic	Marymead
Attorney General's Department	Mensline
Australian Services Union	Mental Health Consumers Network.
Bark Busters	Migrant and Refugee Resettlement Service
Canberra Connect	Northside Community Services
Canberra Mens Centre	Office of Regulatory Services
CARE Financial Counselling Service	Office of Regulatory Services
Carer's ACT	P&C Council
Catholic Church	ParentLine
Centacare	ParentLink
Centrelink	Police
CHC Affordable Housing	Real Estate Institute of Australia
Child Support Agency	Relationships Australia
Citizens Advice Bureau	RSPCA
Commonwealth Ombudsman	Schools
Communities @ Work	Seniors Advice Line
Community Housing Canberra	SHFP
Community Justice Centres	Solicitor/Lawyers
Consumer Affairs	Southside Community Services
Consumer Law Centre	Supportlink
COTA	TANDEM
Department of Ageing	TAS Housing
Department of Innovation	Tenants Advice Service
Directions ACT	Tenants' Union
Disability, Housing and Community Services - DHCS	Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS)
Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria	University of Canberra Psychology Clinic
Domestic Animal Services	Victim Support ACT
Domestic Violence Crisis Service	VOCAL
Education and Training - DET	Welfare Rights and legal centre
Environment ACT	Winnunga
Fair Work Ombudsman	Woden Community Services
Family Court of Australia	Women's Information and Referral Centre
Family Relationship Advice Line	Women's Legal Centre
Family Relationship Centre	Workcover ACT
Federal Magistrates Court	Youth Law Centre
	YWCA

CLIENT FEEDBACK



Feedback is sought from all clients post their mediation. A range of questions are canvassed with clients to assess how well CRS met their needs and/or if there are areas of CRS service delivery which need improvement.

30 clients returned questionnaires and provided feedback on their mediations, representing a response rate of 20%.

Below is an average of all responses. 1 means poor and 5 means excellent.

Service delivery:

Contact with office staff	4.22
Venue and facilities	4.22
Brochures and Referrals	4.04
Waiting time in comparison to other services	4.11
CRS assistance during waiting time	4.11
Written information	4.03

Mediators:

Were biased/very impartial	4.49
Confused things/made things clearer	4.18
Hindered/helped discussion	4.26
Assisted with Resolution	4.24
Listened	4.53

If agreement was reached it was considered to be:

Unfair/very fair	3.8
Outcome was workable	3.7
Outcome met client needs	3.6

If agreement was not reached during mediation, a later agreement was:

Not at all likely/certain, already made	3.2
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The respondents felt that mediation

Make things worse/great improvement	3.7
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Overall satisfaction with the Service:

CRS helped me to resolve all or part of my dispute	4.00
CRS delivers on what it claims	4.02
I would recommend CRS	4.24

CRS as Educator and Modeller of Conflict Resolution processes

One of CRS's aims is to provide an educative role within the ACT community. As such during the reporting period CRS amended its Client feedback form to include specific questions on whether clients were able to attain or further expand their conflict resolution skills and knowledge through their contact with the CRS. The questions asked are as follows – during the reporting period 200 instances were identified by clients:

Resolving differences in the future	9
People have the right to express their opinions, which differ to my own and I can respect their right to do so	6
Not all disputes can be resolved but they can be managed	17
My knowledge of dispute resolution techniques has increased/broadened	12
It's OK to disagree	11
How to work towards a win/win situation	12
How to understand other people's perspectives	9
How to talk about differences positively	11
How to speak up for myself	9
How to show respect for other people's views	10
How to put my views forward	16
How to listen	8
How to compromise without giving in	12
How to communicate with my neighbour/ex-partner/kids/co-worker/boss	5
Different ways of communicating	8
Different ideas are OK	14
Better negotiation skills	7
Awareness about how my communication style affects others	15

What some people said they liked most about the Service: (selection only)

- *It strongly encouraged both parties to listen to the other without walking away or arguing.*
- *I like that I was treated with respect and my concerns and issues were taken seriously.*
- *I like that there were two mediators and that they took the time to explain things carefully.*
- *The style, method and approach*
- *I liked how sensitively I was approached with my issues even though the other party was not willing to negotiate*
- *Speed of services, opportunity to cover all issues, respectful*
- *The mediation went beautifully...delighted with what CRS does and is glad there is a service like CRS around*
- *Very professional but also kind, the staff and the mediators seem to like what they do and feel its important and this shows through referral and preliminary process and mediation*
- *Immediacy of services, clarity of outcome, space to say everything and focus on solution*
- *Brilliant intake support and reassurance. Very friendly mediators*
- *I feel much more comfortable with my current situation thanks to the quality of the parenting agreement that CRS helped us to come up with. I'm certain we covered all my concerns in the agreement and it could not be fairer.*
- *The way the process was undertaken. I was very surprised at the agreement reached. The resulting agreement would not have been achieved without the CRS staff.*
- *This was an agreement without a dispute to settle. Although outside their normal procedure, the staff were well prepared and took a very positive attitude toward the development of the agreement. We were please with the outcome which now will be tested in practice*
- *It was amazing to be guided through the negotiation process so professionally*
- *The impartiality and objective 3rd party enabled both parties to focus on reaching a reasonable outcome*
- *Created a friendly environment to put my views forward, listen to my voice in front of others, understand shortcomings and weaknesses in my arguments and listen to others as a means of feedback to check the validity of my views*
- *A most professional organisation and all the staff are very friendly and concerned to de-stress stressful situations as much as possible.*

1. Dispute Resolution Services

Taking account of legislative developments and changing community needs and expectations, CRS will increase its capacity to offer and provide, a greater number of mediations covering a wider range of disputes without compromising the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of its services.

2. Training and Community Education

CRS will increase its provision of high quality training and community education through

- Raising awareness of the benefits for individuals to develop alternative dispute resolution skills as a relevant, useful and desirable discipline to achieve and practice.
- Flexible CRS training programs to meet the requirements of various industries and workplaces.

3. Enabling

CRS will

- Improve its governance processes, particularly in the areas of succession, board education and financial management;
- Expand and diversify sources of funding to ensure its financial sustainability;
- Attract and retain skilled and competent staff, trainers and mediators; and
- Ensure its infrastructure is adequate to achieve its mission.

Future Challenges

- Resources to adapt to the changes within the ADR industry in order to remain current and provide best practice.
- Sustainability of government funding
- Attracting, recruiting and effectively remunerating staff and mediators
- Attracting motivated and skilled Board Members
- Increasing acceptance and usage of alternative dispute resolution

AUDITED ACCOUNTS

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Your Committee Members submit the financial report of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2010.

BOARD MEMBERS

The names of the Committee Members of the Association as at the date of this report are:

Margaret Moreton	Chair
Mick Gentleman	Deputy Chair
Arthur Peter Biggs	Treasurer
Alison Smith	Secretary
Katrina Spyrides	Executive Officer '(ex-officio)'
Geoff Pryor	Member
Helen Lang	Member
Rae Lacey	Member
Susan Abbott	Member

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the Association during the year was to promote harmony in the community, by providing a skilled and accessible dispute resolution service, that empowers individuals to understand their differences and resolve conflicts peacefully.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

OPERATING RESULT

The net Surplus/(Loss) for the year ended 30th June, 2010 was **\$ 7,724**
(2009: Surplus \$31,400) .

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

Dated this 8TH day of DECEMBER 2010



Committee Member

MARGARET MORETON
Name



Committee Member

PETER BIGGS
Name

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Board declare that:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated as at 30 June 2010 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative announcements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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



Board Member



Board Member

Dated: 8/12/10

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

2009 \$		NOTES	2010 \$
	INCOME		
<u>370,133</u>	Revenues from Ordinary Activities	2	<u>391,865</u>
	EXPENSES	3	
234,460	Employee Expenses		293,805
10,285	Depreciation Charges		6,984
<u>93,987</u>	Other Expenses from Ordinary Activities		<u>83,352</u>
<u>338,733</u>	TOTAL EXPENSES		<u>384,141</u>
<u>31,400</u>	NET SURPLUS (LOSS) FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES		<u>7,724</u>
<u><u>31,400</u></u>	TOTAL CHANGES IN EQUITY OF THE ASSOCIATION		<u><u>7,724</u></u>

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

	Accumulated Funds \$
Balance at 1st July 2007	31,635
Surplus (Loss) - 2008	<u>62,080</u>
Balance at 30th June 2008	93,715
Surplus (Loss) - 2009	<u>31,400</u>
Balance at 30 June 2009	<u>125,115</u>
Surplus (Loss) - 2010	<u>7,724</u>
Balance at 30 June 2010	<u><u>132,840</u></u>

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2010**

2009 \$		NOTES	2010 \$
	CURRENT ASSETS		
100,453	Cash Assets	7	123,257
44,877	Receivables		32,536
(2,550)	Less Provision for Doubtful Debts		(7,230)
2,423	Other/Prepayments		2,618
<u>145,204</u>	TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>151,182</u>
	NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
32,214	Plant & Equipment	4	25,230
<u>32,214</u>	TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>25,230</u>
<u>177,418</u>	TOTAL ASSETS		<u>176,412</u>
	CURRENT LIABILITIES		
25,257	Payables	5	11,500
17,545	Provisions	6	31,162
4,000	Income in Advance		-
4,500	HP Loan		911
<u>51,302</u>	TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>43,572</u>
	NON -CURRENT LIABILITIES		
1,001	HP Loan		-
<u>1,001</u>	TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>-</u>
52,303	TOTAL LIABILITIES		43,572
<u>125,115</u>	NET ASSETS		<u>132,839</u>
	EQUITY		
125,115	Retained Funds		125,115
	Current Earnings		7,724
<u>125,115</u>	TOTAL EQUITY		<u>132,839</u>

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED

**CASH FLOW STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

2009		NOTES	2010
\$			\$
	Cash Flow from Operating Activities		
266,828	Grant income received		294,559
83,839	Receipts from customers		105,922
3,806	Interest received		2,702
(321,784)	Payments to suppliers and employees		(374,913)
(785)	Interest paid		(875)
<u>31,904</u>	Total Cash Flow from Operating Activities	7(b)	<u>27,394</u>
	Cash Flows from Investing Activities		
(7,165)	Payments for property, plant & equipment		-
(4,646)	Borrowings		(4,590)
<u>(11,811)</u>	Total Cash Flows From Investing Activities		<u>(4,590)</u>
20,093	Net movement in cash held		22,804
<u>80,360</u>	Cash at the beginning of the year		<u>100,453</u>
<u><u>100,453</u></u>	Cash at the end of the year	7(a)	<u><u>123,257</u></u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations and the Associations Incorporations Act (ACT) 1991.

The financial report covers Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated as an individual entity. Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated is an Association incorporated in Australian Capital Territory under Associations Incorporation Act (ACT) 1991.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the Association in the preparation of the financial report.

Basis of preparation

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. Cost is based on the fair values of the consideration given in exchange for assets. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(a) Income Tax

The Association is considered to be a community service association and is therefore exempt from tax under section 50-10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(b) Property, Plant and Equipment

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

Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment is measured on the cost basis.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the Association to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows which will be received from the assets' employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have not been discounted to present values in determining recoverable amounts.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (cont)

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The depreciation rates for Furniture, Plant and Equipment range from 13-40%.

(c) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits expected to be settled within one year together with benefits arising from wages and salaries, annual leave, long service leave and sick leave which will be settled after one year, have been measured at their nominal amount.

Contributions are made by the Association to employee superannuation funds and are charged as expenses when incurred.

(d) Revenue

Revenue from the provision of services is recognised when the service has been provided to the clients. Grant income is recognised in the period for which it relates. Annual membership is accounted for as income at the time of receipt.

(e) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

(f) Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, and financial instruments cash includes cash on hand, cash at bank and cash on deposit, net of any outstanding bank overdraft.

(g) Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, the Association reviews the carrying value of its tangible and intangible assets to determine if there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the assets fair value less costs to sell and the value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

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

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

NOTE 2: REVENUE

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Operating activities		
Grant income	294,559	286,688
Service & Training Income	90,601	73,065
Membership dues	1,283	961
Interest	2,702	3,806
Other	2,721	5,613
	<u>391,865</u>	<u>370,133</u>

NOTE 3: SURPLUS FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES

Surplus from ordinary activities has been determined after

(a) Expenses

Depreciation		
- Office Furniture & equipment	<u>6,984</u>	<u>10,285</u>
Remuneration of the auditor for:		
- auditing the financial statements	2,900	2,600
- other services	-	-
	<u>2,900</u>	<u>2,600</u>

NOTE 4: PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Office furniture & equipment - at cost	61,213	61,213
Less: accumulated depreciation	<u>(35,983)</u>	<u>(28,999)</u>
Total plant & equipment	<u>25,230</u>	<u>32,214</u>

Movements in carrying amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year.

	Office Furniture & Equipment	Office Furniture & Equipment
Balance at the beginning of the year	32,214	35,334
Additions	-	7,165
Depreciation	(6,984)	(10,285)
Carrying amount at the end of the year	<u>25,230</u>	<u>32,214</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

NOTE 5: PAYABLES	2010	2009
	\$	\$
GST payable	4,126	7,547
PAYG withholding tax	4,930	7,598
Sundry creditors	2,305	2,110
Superannuation payable	139	8,002
	<u>11,500</u>	<u>25,257</u>

NOTE 6: PROVISIONS

Provision for employee benefits	<u>31,162</u>	<u>17,545</u>
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NOTE 7: CASH FLOW

(a) Reconciliation of Cash

Cash on Deposit	103,925	71,114
Cash at bank	<u>19,333</u>	<u>29,340</u>
	<u>123,257</u>	<u>100,453</u>

(b) Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to loss from ordinary activities

Surplus (loss) from ordinary activities	7,724	31,400
Non-cash flow in loss from ordinary activities:		
Movement in leave entitlements	13,617	3,655
Depreciation	6,984	10,285
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	12,341	8,051
(Increase)/decrease in other current assets	(195)	144
Increase/(decrease) in Income in Advance	(4,000)	(15,860)
Increase/(decrease) in payables	<u>(13,757)</u>	<u>(5,771)</u>
Net Cash from Operating Activities	<u>22,714</u>	<u>31,904</u>

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2010**

NOTE 8: FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

(a) Interest Rate Risk

The Association's exposure to interest rate risk, which is the risk that a financial instrument's value will fluctuate as a result of changes in market interest rates and the effective weighted average interest rates on those financial assets and financial liabilities, is as follows:

	Weighted average effective interest rate	Current Account- Floating interest rate	Investment Account- Floating interest rate.	Non- interest Bearing	Total
	%	\$	\$	\$	\$
2009					
Financial Assets					
Cash at bank	2.5	29,340	71,114		100,453
Receivables				45,077	45,077
		<u>29,340</u>	<u>71,114</u>	<u>45,077</u>	<u>145,530</u>
2010					
Financial Assets					
Cash at bank	3	19,333	103,925		123,257
Receivables				32,536	32,536
		<u>19,333</u>	<u>103,925</u>	<u>32,536</u>	<u>155,794</u>

(b) Credit risk

The maximum exposure to credit risk, excluding the value of any collateral or other security, at balance date to recognised financial assets is the carrying amount, net of any provisions for doubtful debts, as disclosed in the statement of financial position and notes to the financial statements.

The Association does not have any material credit risk exposure to any single debtor or group of debtors under financial instruments entered into by the Association.

(c) Net fair values

Methods and assumptions used in determining net fair value.

The net fair values of listed investments have been valued at the quoted market bid price at balance date adjusted for transaction costs expected to be incurred. For other assets and other liabilities the net fair value approximates their carrying value. No financial assets and financial liabilities are readily traded on organised markets in standardised form other listed investments. Financial assets where the carrying amount exceeds net fair values have not been written down as the economic entity intends to hold these assets to maturity.

The aggregate net fair values and carrying amounts of financial assets and financial liabilities are disclosed in the statement of financial position and in the notes to the financial statements.

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