



CONFLICT **RESOLUTION** SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016



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Acknowledgment of Traditional Ownership

The Conflict Resolution Service acknowledges that Canberra has been built on the lands of the Ngunnawal people. We pay our respects to their elders and recognize the displacement and disadvantage they have suffered as a result of European settlement. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and their ongoing contribution to the ACT Community.



Our Vision, Mission, Values

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.

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.

Mission

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

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.

Our People

The following individuals were employed, elected or appointed to CRS positions during the 2015-16 reporting period.

The Board of Directors

- Chair:** Leon Larkin
- Deputy Chair:** Hannah Dawes
- Treasurer:** Margaret Vincent
- Secretary:** Margaret Moreton
- Immediate Past Chair:** Rae Lacey
- Member:** John Ramadge
- Member:** Wayne Applebee

Office Staff

- Executive Director:** Shawn van der Linden (from 20 June 2016)
- Executive Officer:** Katrina Spyrides (until March 2016)
- Practice Co-ordinator:** Lyn Walker
- Dispute Assessment Office:** Mary Hinchey, Susan Rockliff, Elizabeth Woods
- Healthy Neighbourhoods Program:** Susan Rockliff
- Family Tree House Program:** Adam Farlow, Eleanor Ross, Jacob Dunne
- Corporate Services:** Tom Sautelle, Karin Moore
- Mediator Supervision Facilitator:** Nigel Biginell, Mike Rowntree
- Mediation Course Trainers:** Mike Rowntree, Katrina Spyrides

Panel of Mediators

- Emilie Adlide
- Nigel Biginell*
- Janine Brissett*
- Jacob Dunne
- Adam Farlow
- Mary Hinchey*
- Haydn Marsh
- Fiona McIlroy*
- Anthony Melican*
- David Purnell*
- Jack Quaid
- Jeff Quirk
- Susan Rockliff
- Eleanor Ross
- Mike Rowntree*
- Tom Sautelle
- Judy Scott*
- Katrina Spyrides*
- Jasmina Svoboda*
- Lyn Walker*
- Terry Watson
- Julie Whitmore
- Elizabeth Woods*

Mediators employed by the Conflict Resolution Service are:

- Accredited under the *National Mediator Accreditation Standards*.
- Registered under the *Mediation Act 1997 (ACT) (Repealed in April 2016)*
- Registered *Family Dispute Resolution Practitioners* with Cth Attorney General’s Department (*Mediators with FDRP Registration)

Message from the Chair

Reflecting on the year 2015/16 is a sobering yet exciting task. It is clear the period has generated challenges and placed CRS at a point in its evolution where it is important to consolidate, and ensure a strong base for moving into the future and continuing to be a community organisation that provides leadership in assisting persons experiencing significant personal distress by implementing alternative dispute resolution practices. While there have been critical issues that have required immediate and careful attention it is exciting to be part of an organisation that is resilient and passionate about its place in the Canberra community.

The particular contribution of CRS as a community based organisation is that it has a long history of working to relieve distress among people who are in conflict. From the first point of contact the staff of CRS aim to coach and assist persons in distress to start to see a way forward. In the majority of cases the level of distress and helplessness is severe with suicide and homelessness being a likely trajectory without significant intervention by CRS.

In this report I want to acknowledge the contribution of Katrina Spyrides over many years. The strong reputation of CRS in the ACT is testament to her skill, leadership and tenacity in promoting mediation and other dispute resolution services. After Katrina's departure CRS was fortunate to secure the appointment of Shawn van der Linden to the position of Executive Director in June 2016. He has worked incredibly hard to consolidate management systems to ensure CRS is compliant within our regulatory

framework and is able to meet the expectations of the ACT Government and realistically compete for other service delivery opportunities. The Board has appreciated Shawn's ability to identify organisational risks and then quickly identify potential solutions and work with the Board to timely resolution.

The demand for CRS services and its output continues to grow and to date we have been able to respond to the increased demand through the undoubted dedication and skill of staff and mediators. The Board is intent on seeking opportunities for material support to enhance the capacity of CRS to continue its mission. We are confident that the government's interest in Canberra becoming a "Restorative Community" provides opportunities for the CRS to bring a vital community perspective to that vision.

On behalf of the CRS Board members I express sincere appreciation for the dedication and work of CRS staff and mediators. Their work makes Canberra a better community and relieves the distress of many of its citizens who find themselves in conflict and crisis. I also acknowledge the commitment of all Board members to supporting and enabling this work. We will be moving to fill current Board vacancies with people whose skills and experience will contribute to the ongoing development of CRS.



Leon Larkin
Chairperson, CRS Board.

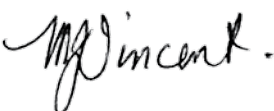
Message from the Treasurer

The overall financial position has changed little since the previous financial year and CRS continues to be in a stable financial position with net assets of \$251,668 supported by cash holdings of \$274,084. These cash holdings are critical to the continuing viability of CRS in these uncertain times of reduced government spending in the community sector.

Governments are asking more of community organisations but do not always support this with extra funding and this is the situation that CRS is facing now. This financial year CRS managed to make a small surplus of \$1,950 which is not much above the break even point. Last year there was a deficit of \$16,230 and there was also a deficit in the year before that. Hence it is clear if CRS is to continue to provide a high level of service

into the future, that income needs to be increased. Expenses are reasonable for the service provided and there is no real scope for any reductions without adversely impacting the quality of the service provided.

The reasonable level of cash holdings allows CRS to continue to operate with confidence that expenses can be paid when they are due whilst at the same time seeking to increase income levels into the future.



Margaret Vincent CA
Treasurer, CRS Board.



Message from the Executive Director

My commencement with CRS took place in the final week of the 2015/6 financial year. While I was not present in this reporting period, it was quickly evident to me that the CRS has continued to achieve what it has done for the past 28 years and provide an invaluable service to the ACT community and economy by delivering the highest quality methods for alternative dispute resolution.

The data from this reporting period demonstrates a huge amount of service delivery, with an overall small drop in activity which was due to the significant time of transition and staffing shortages experienced in the first six months of 2016.

In recent times CRS has operated in a dynamic environment, and in a sector that is experiencing unprecedented change and transformation. In reflecting on the achievements outlined in this report, it is timely also to consider some of the trends in CRS service delivery that have developed over the past ten years.

We know that alternative dispute resolution approaches are a well-tested way of managing conflict and disputes. They are cost effective, and often deliver better outcomes for people who are being supported to resolve conflict. They are now being complemented by restorative approaches. The ACT Legislative Assembly has signalled its intention for Canberra to be declared a 'Restorative City', and restorative practice is increasingly being recognised as way to respond to conflict in challenging social areas including elder abuse, disability, domestic and family violence, and child protection and out-of-home care.

CRS has been delivering high quality services to the community for many years and is unique in that this service is located within the community. Over the last ten years CRS has absorbed a significant increase of demand and complexity in client cases which has significantly outstripped the incremental increases in funding of the organisation.

Over a ten year period, there has been:

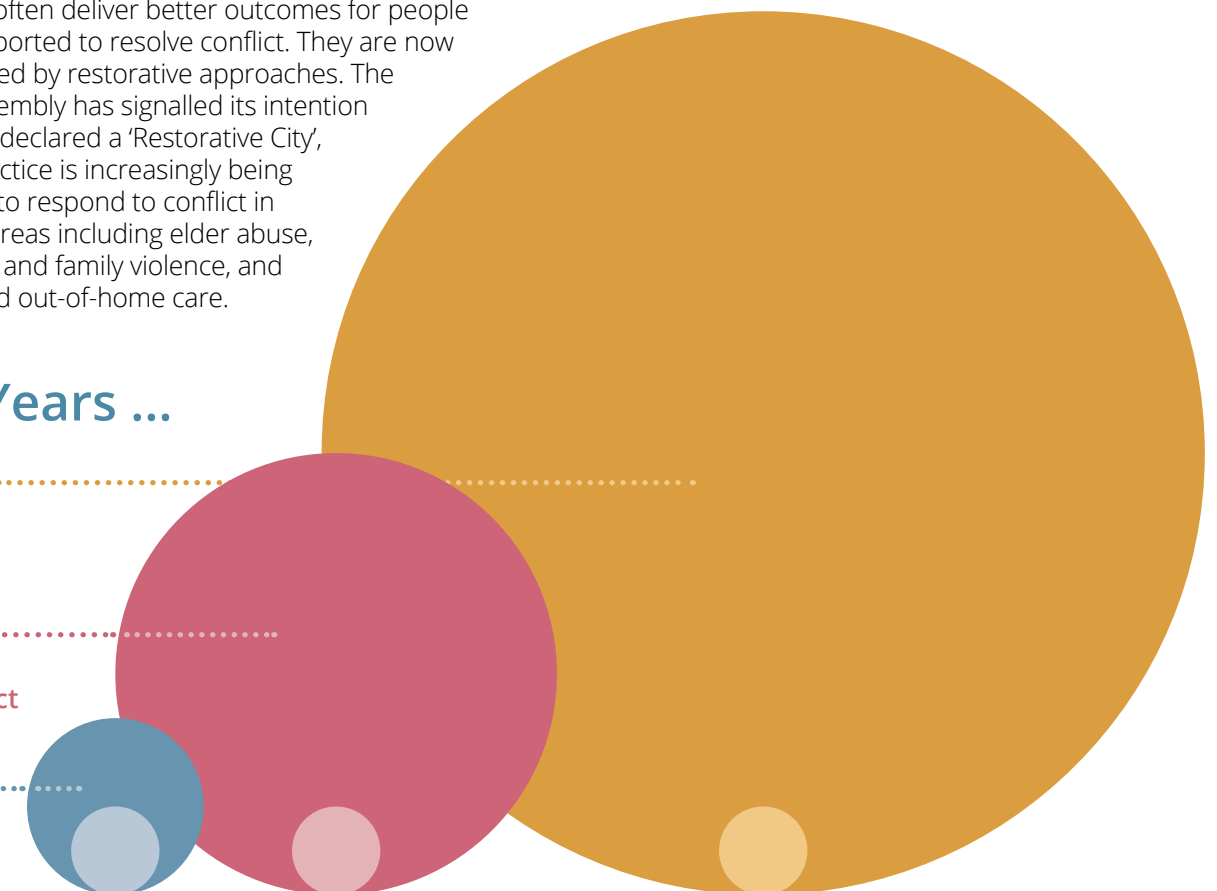
- a doubling of our client numbers;
- an almost fivefold increase in contact with clients; and
- a tenfold increase in the time spent with clients.

Over 10 Years ...

The time spent with clients has increased tenfold

There has been a fivefold increase in contact with clients

CRS has experienced doubling of client numbers





Message from the Executive Director (cont.)

In response, CRS has had no option but to divert resources to front line services, which has eroded organisational infrastructure and capacity, and has threatened the longer-term sustainability of the organisation. CRS requires a better fit-for-purpose premises and enhanced capacity to invest in development activities and engage more extensively in the work around community based restorative practice.

As such, following the 2015/6 financial year the CRS has approached the ACT Government with a proposal for a modest increase in its investment in CRS.

This increase in funding will enable the organisation to:

- Secure a larger and more functional premises for CRS to undertake its core work and activity;
- Invest in additional administrative and operational resources
- Invest resources in business development, to unlock the potential of fee-for-service activities; and
- Invest in CRS' work to develop community led restorative practice in areas of key need.

Importantly an increase in funding will allow CRS to continue to deliver its service outputs at the level it has been for many years. CRS is the only community based service of its kind in Canberra. It is a unique Canberra organisation that provides highly specialised conflict resolution services to vulnerable and distressed Canberrans, including those without the financial means to access this support through private contractors. Unlike various community counselling support services that are accessible through a number of agencies in Canberra, the specific services provided by CRS are not available through any other provider in Canberra.

A reduction in our service outputs would mean that a large number of Canberra's most vulnerable and distressed people will be without any avenue to resolve disputes and find relief for their distress. This will have a negative social impact on the Canberra community. It will also place extra demand on partner agencies and services such as ACT Policing, the Magistrates Court, Child and Youth Protection Services, Domestic violence support services, Legal Aid and a range of youth homelessness support services and schools that refer young people to CRS.

Like many community organisations in the ACT, the CRS faces some significant challenges in the years ahead. However, the future is full of possibilities and opportunities and this is due to incredible work of the CRS staff, mediators and Board members over the past years.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge the patience, flexibility and hard work of the office staff over the past eighteen months who have had to deal with many changes and unexpected challenges, yet have still managed to deliver so much as is outlined in this annual report. Their positive attitude, sense of humor and compassionate outlook are truly inspirational.

Shawn van der Linden
Executive Director

CRS ADR Service Overview

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION ¹
Intake and Assessment <small>This step is also referred to as 'Pre-Conference' or 'Pre-Mediation'</small>	Initial pathway undertaken when parties first engage with the CRS. There are three main processes which occur during the entry stage: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intake: obtaining administrative, historical and contextual information.• Screening: Determining the suitability of the dispute, goals, scope for negotiation and informed choice. Is it a problem, dispute or conflict?• Assessment: Capacity of party to engage in the process by representing their own interests, good faith/goodwill, level of self-awareness and responsibility, ability to be self-determining. Assessment continues throughout the client's engagement with the CRS.
Referrals	Referral to other services which can assist with direct or indirect issues impacting on the dispute. External agencies are useful in providing information and advice about technical aspects of the dispute such as legal and regulatory rights and responsibilities. CRS also makes referrals for parties where they require assistance to support their welfare and wellbeing such as counselling and psychology services.
Conflict Coaching	Process whereby clients are able to work 1-on-1 with CRS to talk through their issues and receive coaching on effective conflict resolution skills and strategies with a view to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishing their goals• Assistance to understand their needs and interests, and those of the other person/s;• Identifying personal or external barriers to the dispute resolution process.• Work-shopping practical communication and negotiation strategies to manage and resolve issues themselves• Preparing parties for mediation;
Mediation	CRS provides neutral third party intervention to assist parties to identify the disputed issues, develop options, consider alternatives and endeavour to reach an agreement. Mediation can be joint session or shuttle in configuration. CRS utilises a co-mediation model in all cases.
Facilitation	CRS provides neutral third party assistance to guide parties through structured discussion about information and ideas relevant to a particular topic or set of issues. Can include strategic and operational considerations as well as interpersonal responsibilities and relationships.
Training	Conflict resolution skills and strategies, communication, mediation training in organisations, workplaces, groups or for individuals.
Professional Accreditation	CRS is a Recognised Mediator Accreditation Body and provides accreditation services for mediators under the <i>National Mediator Accreditation Standards</i> . CRS is an approved agency to register mediators under the <i>Mediation Act 1997</i> (ACT). (Repealed in April 2016)
Professional Development	Continuing professional development for mediators with a focus on clinical supervision of mediator practice; ADR skills sessions and workshops both in-house and through external providers.
Community Education	Free workshops for community organisations and members of the public on the benefits of alternative dispute resolution. Sessions are delivered on the basis of educating for self-advocacy, that is, participants learn basic skills and strategies to prevent, manage and resolve problems and disputes; and also when and how to refer to CRS for third-party assistance.

¹ The descriptions provided are a 'basic' overview and explanation of CRS services



CRS Programs Overview

Program	General	Family	Healthy Neighbourhood	Family Tree House	Workplace	Training & Professional Development	Professional Standards
Scope	All disputes not covered under other areas	Couples Parenting Property Child Inclusive Practice Generational Extended family Guardianship Foster Care Wills/Estates	Living in the Community Neighbourhood Dispute Program	Crisis service for young people aged 15-20 at risk of homelessness due to family conflict.	Workplace Resolution Consultancy (WoRC) Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART – Cth Attorney General's Department)	Nationally Accredited Mediation Training Communication, conflict resolution and workplace effectiveness modules [Standard and In-house]	Recognised Mediator Accreditation Body (RMAB) for National Mediator Accreditation Standards (NAMS) Approved Agency to register mediators under Mediation Act 1997 (ACT) (Repealed in April 2016) Clinical Supervision
Services Provided	Information and Referral Conflict Coaching Mediation, Facilitation & Assisted Settlements Community Education Restorative Justice Conferencing						
Primary Funding	ACT Govt: Community Services Directorate <i>Community Services Program</i>		ACT Govt: Justice & Community Safety Directorate and Community Services Directorate	ACT Govt: Community Services Directorate <i>Social Housing and Homelessness</i>	Fee for Service		

Overview of CRS Achievements

During the 2015-2016 reporting period, CRS achieved the following:

Hours of Mediation



2014-15
653:24
2015-16
734:55

Activity

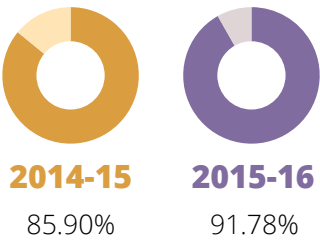
New Enquiries
Mediation Offers Accepted¹
Sessions Organised
Client Coaching Sessions²
Number of Clients
Actions Recorded³

1 Where A, B & Other party accept offer of mediation
2 Figure does not fully include any adhoc coaching such as over the phone session during initial enquiry.
3 This figure only represents the activities entered into the client database and does not include any ad hoc 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, case reviews between staff whether formally or informally.

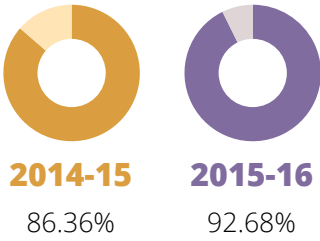
Dispute Types

379	Neighbourhood	35	Business/Consumer	9	Not Stated
377	Separated Couple	31	Workplace	7	Not Applicable (not dispute)
225	Family Tree House	20	Tenant/Landlord/Body Corporate	4	Organisation
130	Living in the Community	18	Social (Friend/Community)	3	Youth (not Family)
106	Family	16	FDR/CIP	3	Complaint
50	Couple – relationship	9	Small Civil Claim	1	Other

Activity Resolution Rate/Dispute



Activity Resolution Rate/Session





Mediation Offers and Acceptances

Client participation in mediation is not an automatic process. There are 2 components which will determine if mediation occurs:

- i. CRS assesses as suitable
- ii. All parties agree

267	Cases where mediation was offered
99	Offer accepted by the other party
101	At least one session arranged
88	No response from other party
27	Mediation declined by party
24	Pre-resolved before mediation
31	One or other party withdraws
53	CRS withdraws*

Mediation Withdraws

CRS conducts an ongoing screening and assessment throughout the course of the client engagement with the service. CRS's ongoing analysis can result in CRS withdrawing its services.

CRS withdraws from matters primarily in accordance with regulations and standards:

- *National Mediator Accreditation Standards*
- *Mediation Act 1997 (ACT)* Repealed in 2016
- *Family Law Act (Cth)*

During the reporting period, CRS withdrew services prior to mediation commencing in 53 cases*. The most frequent reasons for CRS withdrawing or temporarily suspending services included:

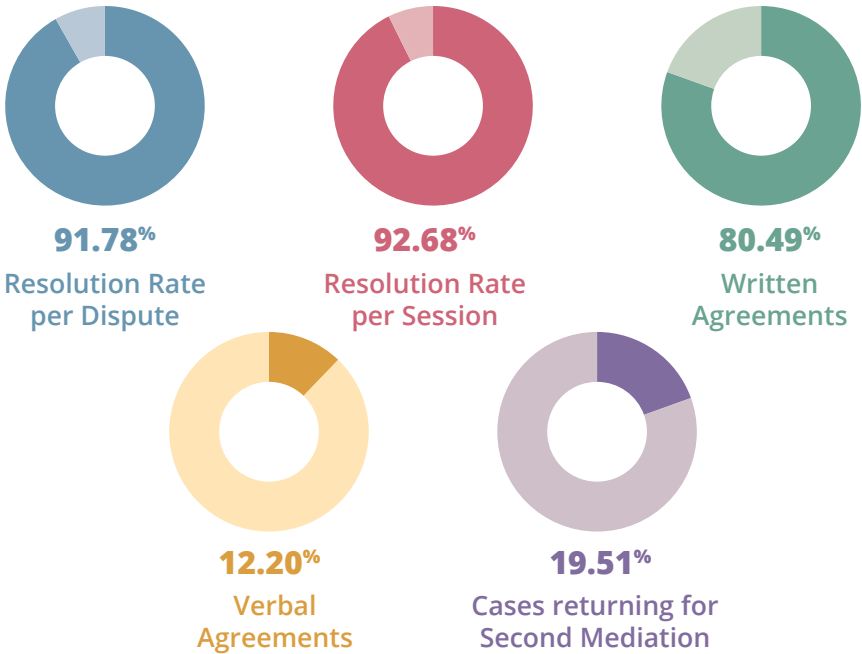
- Significant drug and/or alcohol abuse;
- Child protection concerns;
- Counselling being viewed as a more appropriate pathway;
- Family and domestic violence;
- Lack of good faith and/or good will to solve the difficulty, resulting in very entrenched and positional beliefs regarding their own particular point of view;
- Legal impediment;
- Unresolved paternity question.

In the listed instances, the CRS refers one or both parties to more appropriate services or pathways where possible e.g. counselling, Legal Aid, ACAT, etc.

Note: In cases where CRS has considered mediation face-to-face in the same room to be inappropriate, the Service is now offering some of these parties the much slower Assisted Settlement pathway. Assisted Settlement is suited to the group of parties where they are reluctant to enter into discussions directly with each other, usually due to hurts and events from the past that cause high emotions. The Assisted Settlement process involves email or telephone contact with both parties, taking proposals from one to the other. This allows time for parties to consider what the other is putting forward and because information is being communicated by the CRS employee, emotions can be managed. There is also the opportunity for conflict coaching at the same time.

Outcome of Mediation

The final stage of mediation session is called the Outcome Stage and can include full, substantial and partial agreements. Agreements can be in writing, which is the preferred CRS mode as it is a tangible record for parties; or verbal agreements between the parties to a mediation.



Profile of Clients accessing the Service

During the period 2556 people accessed CRS services. Demographic information is obtained where possible.

Disability

- 64 parties identified they had disabilities including physical, mental and intellectual disabilities.
- No case nor any parties were unable to participate in mediation due to disability. CRS offers the opportunity for all parties to utilise support people who can either be personal family/friends or professional acquaintances from specialised services.

Gender

More women than men had contact with the service with a ratio of **57%** to **43%**.

Age

Of those that did provide their age (# of people):

0-14	38 people
15-20	142 people
21-30	124 people
31-40	199 people
41-50	189 people
51-60	78 people
61-70	43 people
>71	24 people

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander

Cultural & Linguistic Diversity

- 27 people identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
- Interpreters were used during Intake and/or mediation for 5 clients.
- 57 clients identified they spoke another language other than English at home.
- 159 clients identified their country of birth other than Australia.



Pathway to the CRS

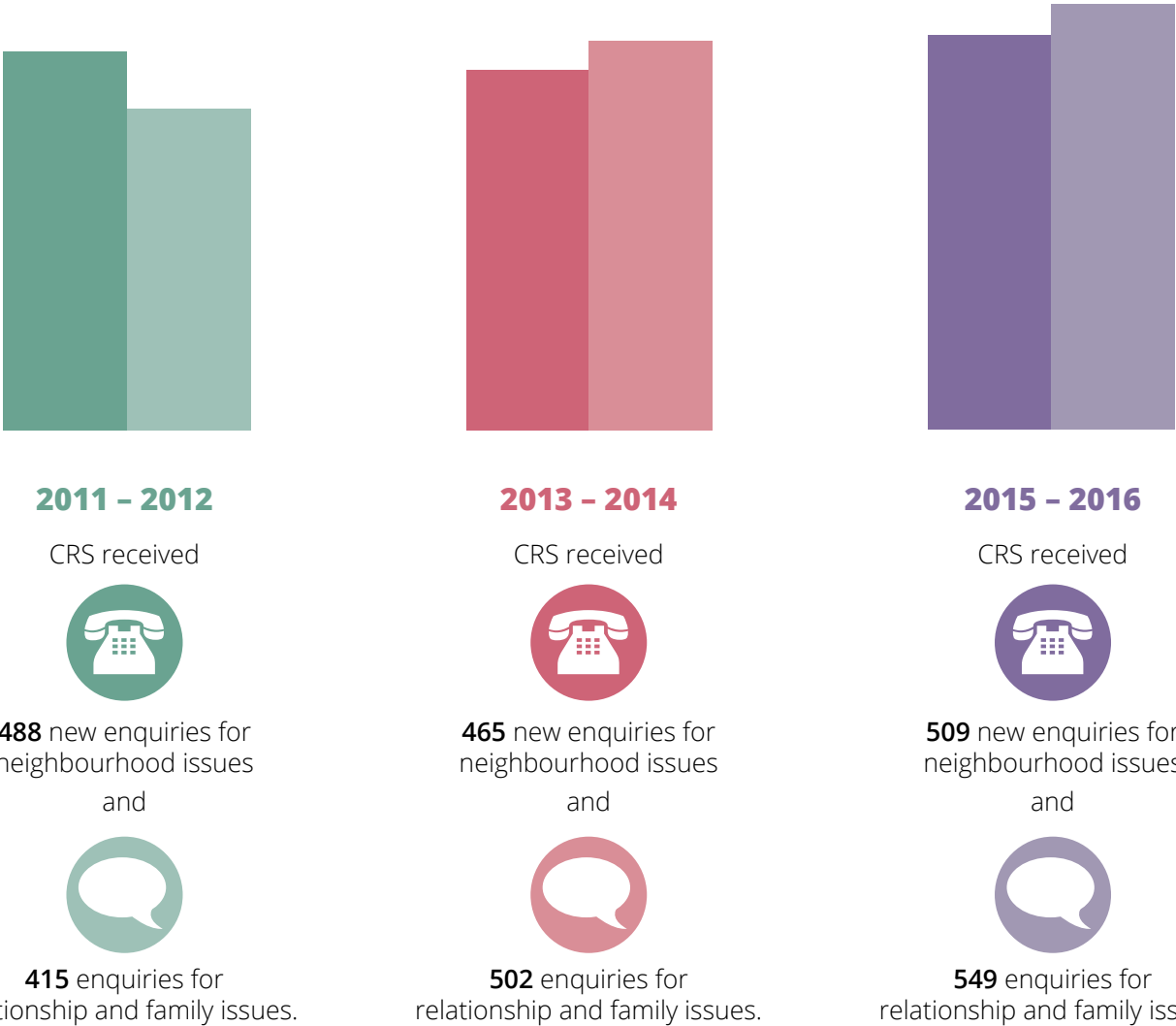
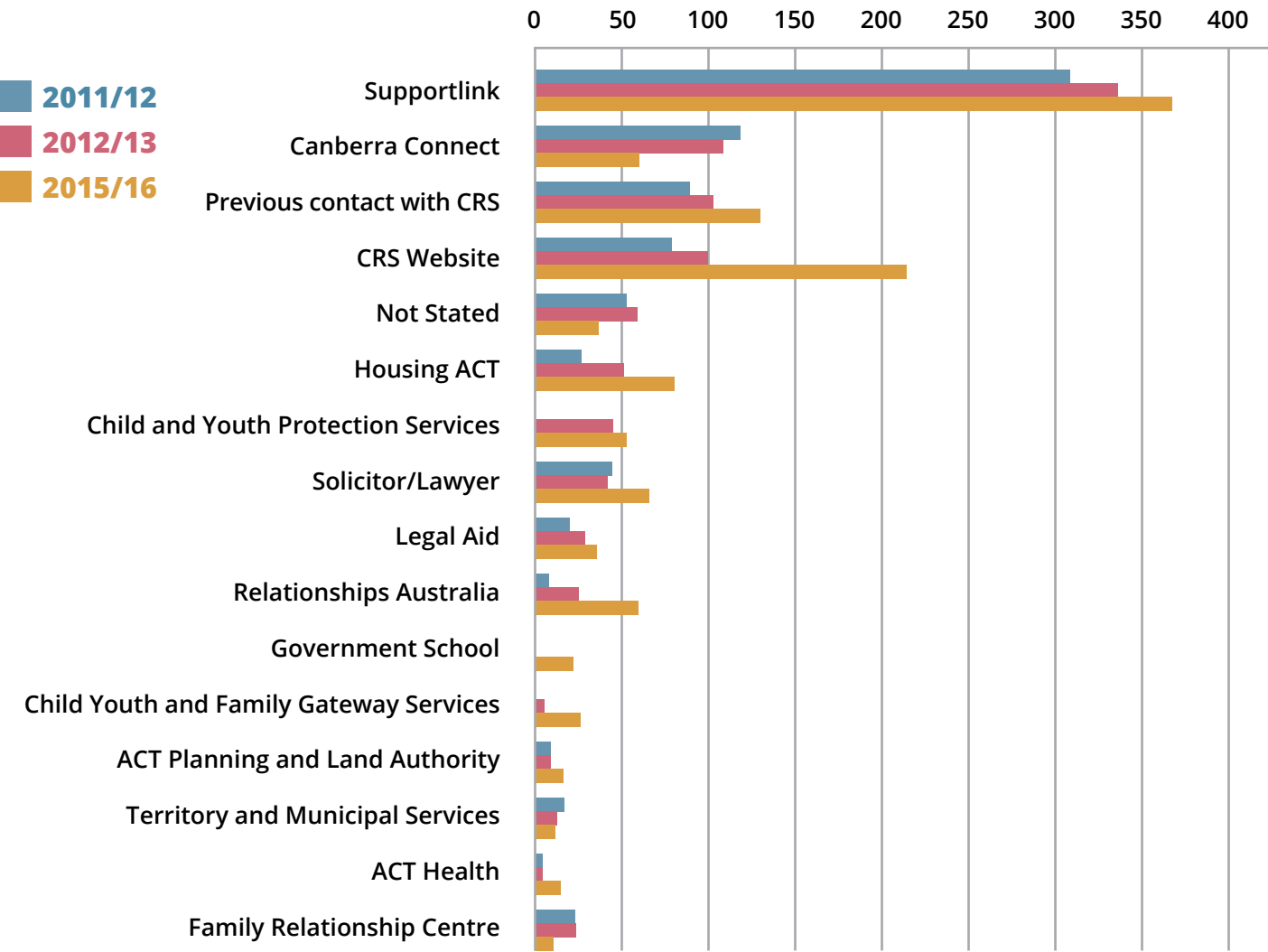
It is unsurprising that the nature of conflicts and disputes will change over time. Like the rest of the community services sector, there is evidence emerging around increasing complexity in issues and cases. While CRS is not a therapeutic service, it is important that we work closely with other agencies to put in place supports that enable parties to work to resolve disputes. CRS endeavours to establish links with other agencies to achieve lasting outcomes for clients. This joined-up approach while critical is part of the complexity we experience as referred to above.

The chart below provides information regarding where the majority of referrals come from, over the selected periods 2011/2012, 2012/2013 and 2015/2016. While referrals from Supportlink (ACT Policing) continues to provide the most referrals, other referral pathways have shifted quite significantly. Electronic referrals through the website are now a primary channel for initial engagement with the service. In addition, while some government agencies such as Canberra Connect (Access Canberra), Housing ACT, Child and Youth Protection Services and the Children, Youth and Family Gateway are emerging as key referral agencies, there is a reduction in other agencies such as ACT Planning and Land Authority and municipal services areas.

This suggests complexity in that there is a shift away from more straightforward issues such as neighbourhood disputes to more complex relationship and family issues as demonstrated in the key statistics below.

Therefore, the numbers reflect that over the last five years there has been a significant move from neighbourhood dispute enquiries to family and relationship issues which have a tendency to be more complex and more time consuming in terms of time spent with clients. CRS expects that this trend will continue.

Changing Nature of Referrals to CRS



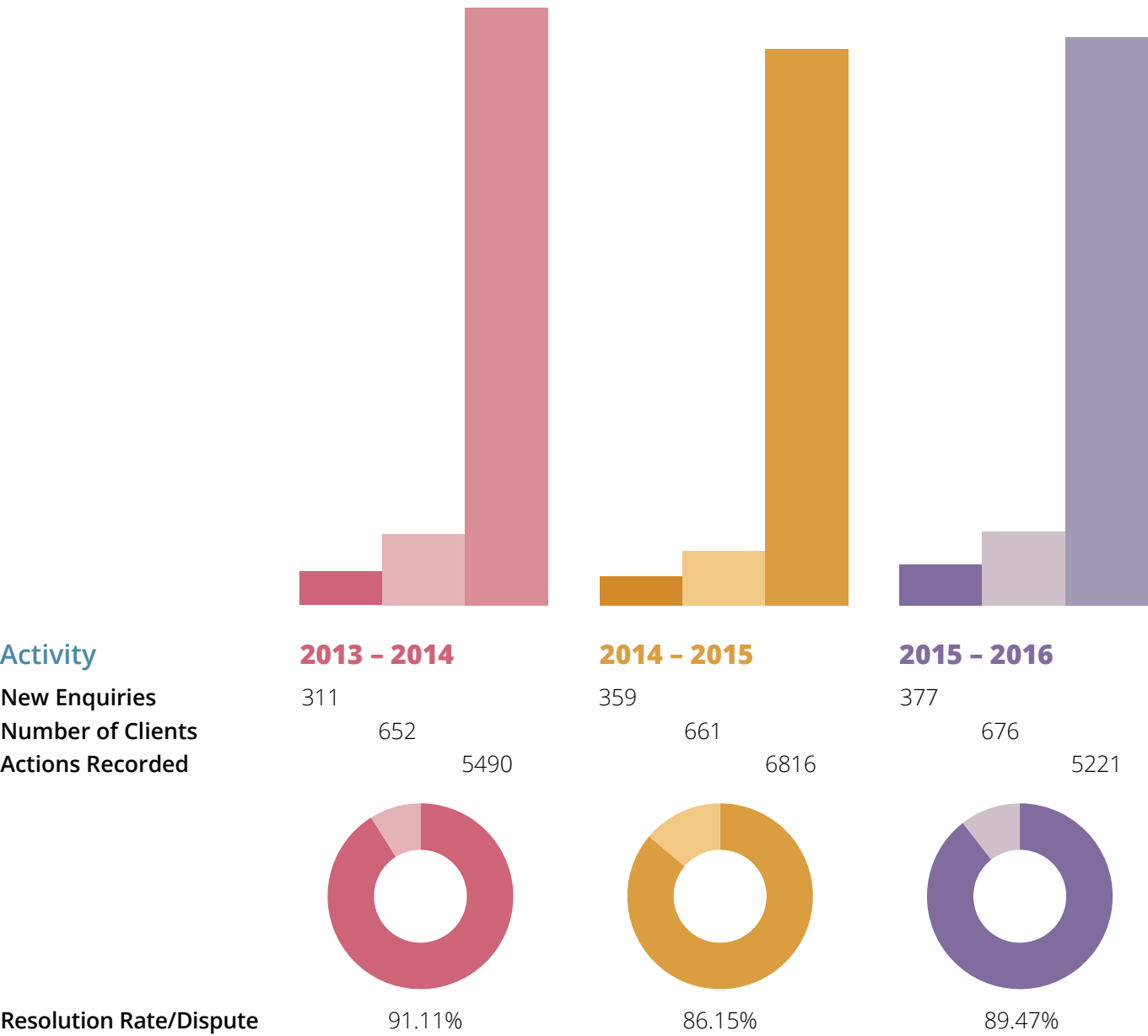
“The service gives me the ability to air my views and opinions.”

Family Dispute Resolution

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) is a practical, less stressful and costly way for separating families to sort out parenting arrangements with help from a FDR practitioner, such as the CRS, who can assist parents to discuss issues, look at options and work out how best to reach agreement.

FDR Achievements

FDR disputes accounted for 26% of total disputes for the reporting period.



Parenting issues accounted for **84.1%** of FDR cases, with **15.9%** of these involving property settlements.

“Excellent unbiased helpful guidance towards resolution.”





Journeying towards co-parenting

Case Scenario

Note: these case scenarios are a based upon a compilation of actual case studies and also include other changes to ensure no identifying information.

CRS Community Mediation Services

Sean and Myer had lived together for 3 years and had become parents of a little boy, Michael, who was 18 months old when they separated. Myer was from a large close-knit family so she moved into the street where her parents and her sister and her family all lived. Sean worked shift-work and his roster was always changing so it was very difficult to have a routine of Michael's time with his father. Sean contacted CRS to request mediation with Myer in the hope that they could find a civil way of communicating regarding his time with his son.

Myer found Sean to be very aggressive when he approached her requesting to see Michael. This in turn had the result of avoiding his calls and face-to-face contact. This avoidance had then resulted in Sean becoming more frustrated and he was finding it increasingly difficult to manage his emotional responses. Sean called the Intake team on several occasions seeking coaching on how to respond to a particular situation with Myer.

Following their Intake interviews, Sean and Myer came together for their mediation. They were able to agree that they would work together in the best interests of Michael and that they would each support the relationship of the other parent with him. They made a commitment to communicate respectfully and the details of how it would occur were agreed upon and written up. They also agreed to both see a child psychologist regarding appropriate care of such a young child.

Living in the Community Program

The Living in the Community Program is a joint partnership between Housing ACT and the Conflict Resolution Service (CRS) to support individuals and communities experiencing the effects of anti-social behaviour within public housing. Interventions aim to assist in the management and resolution of conflicts in neighbourhoods.

The main beneficiaries of the program are:

- Individuals whose tenancies are at risk due to antisocial behaviour
- Neighbours/communities who are affected by the antisocial behaviour
- Housing ACT officers who are working with the above

The CRS's Living in the Community Program (LitC) has a presence at Housing ACT 1.5 days per week, and is located in the Central Access Point (CAP) with similar services whose aims are to support public housing tenants to sustain their tenancies.

Information about the program is provided to all Housing Managers through the Regional meetings, Housing Initiatives Meeting and email communiques.

The LitC program operates 11.25 hours per week.

Achievements during the reporting period.

- Assisted **140** Tenants and Housing Managers
- Providing **121** instances of contact with conflict coaching sessions

Healthy Neighbourhood Program

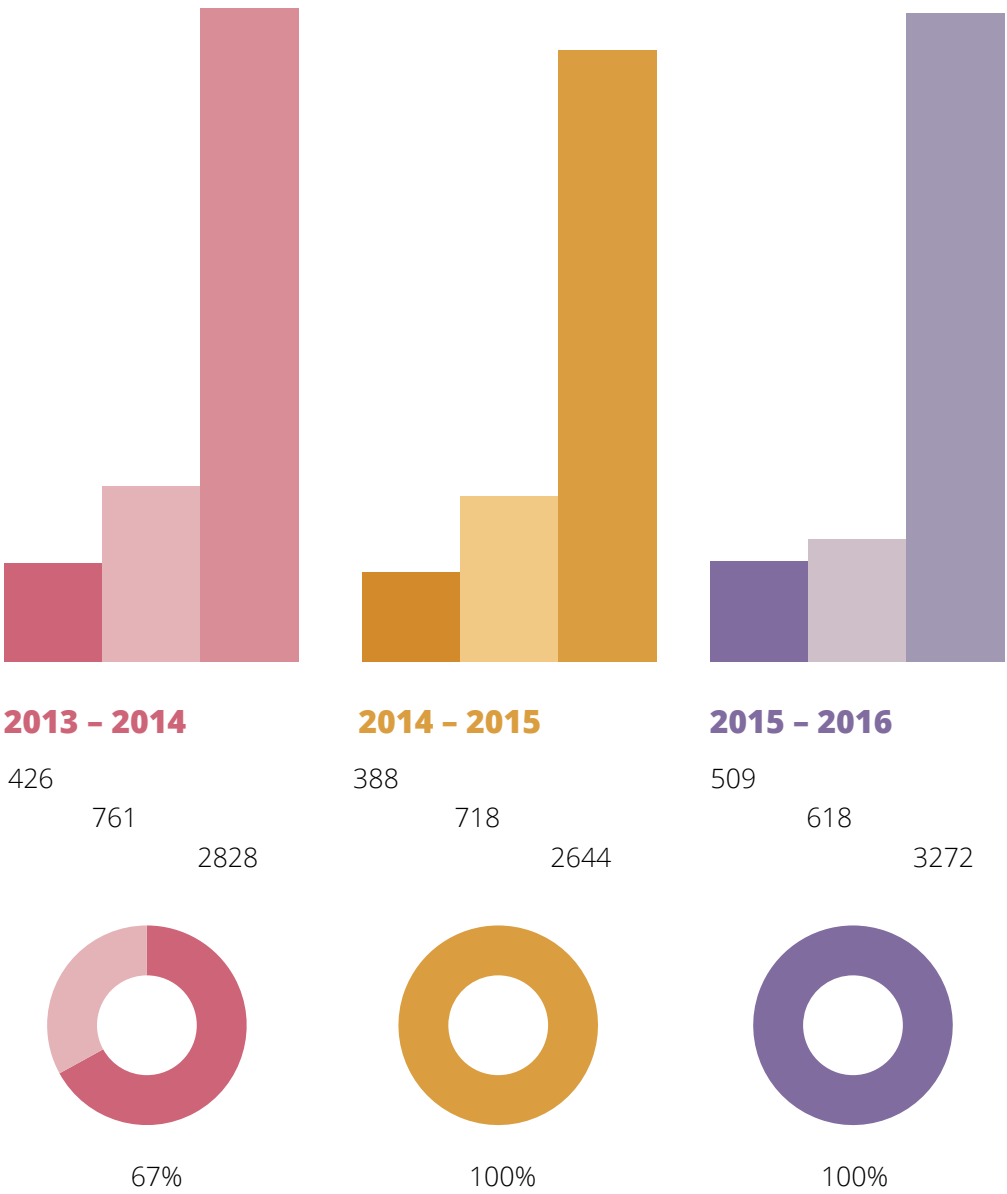
Programs

- Neighbourhood Dispute Program
- Living in the Community Program

Neighbourhood disputes accounted for **27%** of total disputes.

Activity

New Enquiries
Number of Clients
Actions Recorded





Family Tree House Program



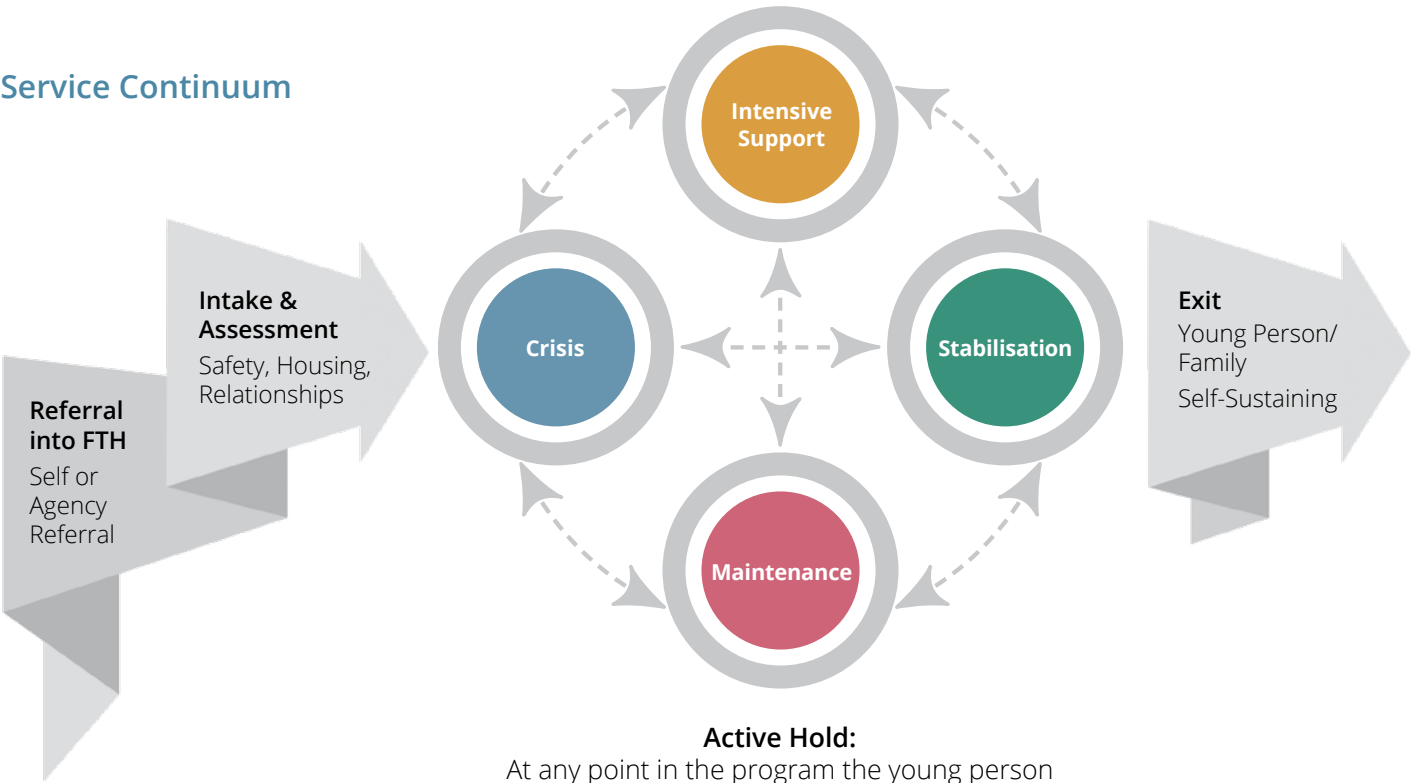
Funding:
National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA), and National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, which are jointly funded by the ACT and Australian Governments.

The Family Tree House (FTH) program supports young people aged between 15 – 20 years of age who are homeless or at risk of homelessness due to family conflict. The FTH takes a holistic approach to working with the entire family, not just the young person; that is supporting parents, siblings, extended family and natural supports.

The Family Tree House program has two main aims:

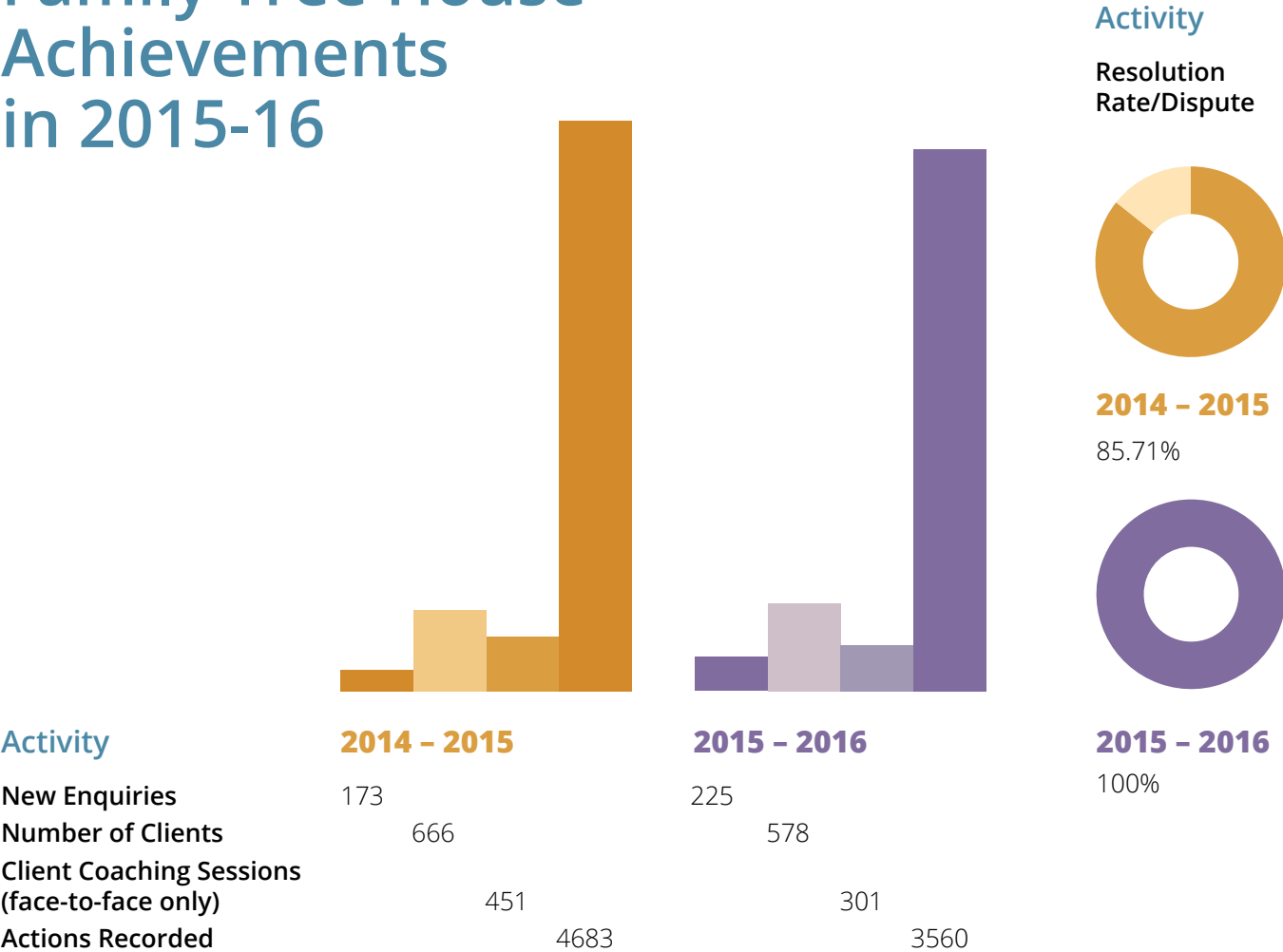
- 1. Crisis Intervention**
 - Work with young people and their families intensively, at the point of crisis, with a focus of ensuring safety and security of accommodation
 - Support the young person to access emergency accommodation as a last resort
 - Facilitate communication & negotiations between family members to support short term goals
- 2. Intensive Support Program**
 - Support and work with young person, their families &/or significant others – from the initial time of crisis onwards – to rebuild sustainable and positive relationships within the family unit.
 - Strategic and intensive interventions will be utilised to ensure the family members are supported to work through the issues within the family for management and resolution of current and future conflict.

Service Continuum



Active Hold:
 At any point in the program the young person &/or their family may disengage for periods of time; the FTH program keeps in contact with all parties to ensure the program is available when parties are ready to re-engage.

Family Tree House Achievements in 2015-16



From family crisis to family resilience

Case Study **Note:** these case scenarios are a based upon a compilation of actual case studies and also include other changes to ensure no identifying information.

Youth Crisis Mediation Service (FTH)

15 year old Jane was from a culturally and linguistically diverse family and was representative of a number of Family Tree House CALD clients who became participants in this program over the last year. Jane's mother contacted the FTH in the first instance as Jane had run away twice in the previous two weeks. Even though Jane had returned home, her anger was upsetting the whole household. Jane had become violent in the house and had destroyed property. In response, the parents had confiscated all electronic devices and they had refused permission for her to participate in the out-of-school activities that she obviously enjoyed. The parents believed that if Jane did not get what she wanted, she would throw a temper tantrum. They were worried that Jane might have a mental illness.

Both the parents and Jane attended their initial Intake interviews and proceeded to receive conflict coaching over 6 sessions each during the next couple of months. During this time, Jane revealed that her parents were extremely authoritarian and had very high expectations of her personal behaviour and her school results. She was a very bright girl and expressed deep interest in history, literature and dance. She was prepared to live out of home if necessary to escape what she saw as her parents' suffocating authority.

The parents, through coaching, were able to modify some of their communication with Jane to the extent that Jane recognised that they were making huge efforts. The three family members participated in a family meeting and were able to make some agreements about expectations. They continue to be in contact with the FTH for ongoing support.



Referrals and Collaboration

CRS has worked with the following agencies during the reporting period (referrals were made TO or FROM these services):

ACT Administrative & Civil Appeals Tribunal	Dept of Education and Training	Queanbeyan Youth Refuge
ACT Health	Dept of Justice and Community Safety	Reconnect ACT (CatholicCare)
ACT Law Society	Directions ACT	Relationships Australia
ACT Magistrates Court	Domestic Animal Services	Salvation Army
ACT Office of Fair Trading	Domestic Violence Crisis Service	Sexual Health & Family Planning ACT
ACT Planning and Land Authority	DUO	Soldier On
ACT Policing	Elder Abuse Prevention and Assistance	Southern NSW Family Referral Service (McKillop Family Services)
Advocacy for Inclusion	Environment ACT	Southside Community Services
Anglicare Youth Education Program	Fair Work Commission	St Vincent De Paul
Asthma Foundation	Family Court of Australia	Suicide Call Back Service
Attorney General's Department	Family Law Courts Info Line	Support Asian Women's Friendship Association (SAWS)
Barnardos	Family Relationship Advice Line	Supportlink
Belconnen Community Services	Family Relationship Centre	Take Hold
Canberra Connect	Federal Magistrates Court	Ted Noffs Foundation ACT
Canberra Fathers and Children Services	FirstPoint	Tenants' Advice Service
Canberra Mens Centre (EveryMan)	Gateway Services	Tenants' Union ACT
Canberra Youth Refuge	GROW Canberra	Territory and Municipal Services (TAMS)
CARE Financial Counselling Service	Headspace	The Junction Youth Health Service
Carers ACT	Healthdirect Helpline	Time Out Learning Centre
CatholicCare (CentreCare)	High Conflict Institute	Turnaround
Centrelink	Housing ACT	Victims of Crime Assistance League (ACT)
CHC Affordable Housing	Human Rights Commission	Volunteering ACT
Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAHMS)	Karinya House	Welfare Rights and Legal Centre
Child and Youth Protection Services	Kippax UnitingCare	Woden Community Services
Child Support Agency	Legal Aid ACT	Women's Information and Referral Centre (WIRE)
Child, Youth and Family Gateway	Lifeline	Women's Legal Centre
Citizens Advice Bureau	Marymead	Workplace Information Line (Fair Work ACT)
City Rangers	MensLine	Youth Connections
Commonwealth Ombudsman	Mental Health Foundation	Youth Justice
Communities @ Work	Northside Community Services	Youth Justice (Restorative Justice Unit)
Community Justice Centres (NSW)	Office of Regulatory Services	Youth Law Centre ACT
Community Services Directorate	Our Place (Barnardos and Anglicare)	YWCA Canberra Circles of Support Program
Companion House	Parentline ACT	
Crisis and Assessment Treatment Team	Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC)	
	Queanbeyan Community Health Centre	

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

Below is an average of all responses.
1 = Poor and 5 = Excellent.

Service delivery:

4.61	Contact with office staff
4.47	Venue and facilities
4.20	Brochures and Referrals
4.18	Waiting time in comparison to other services
4.27	CRS assistance during waiting time

If agreement was reached it was considered to be:

4.43	Fair/balanced
4.29	Workable
3.97	Met client needs

Mediators:

4.75	Were impartial
4.45	Made things clearer
4.54	Helped discussion
4.57	Assisted with Resolution
4.60	Listened

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

3.25	Likely at a later time
------	------------------------

Overall satisfaction with the Service:

4.19	CRS helped me to resolve all or part of my dispute
4.27	CRS delivers on what it claims

The respondents felt that mediation:

3.80	Improved situation
------	--------------------

Other:

4.27	I would recommend CRS
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“The mediators gave me space to express my needs.”



CRS as Educator and Modeler of Conflict Resolution processes

One of CRS's aims is to play an educative role within the ACT community and seeks feedback about whether clients were able to attain or further expand their conflict resolution skills and knowledge through their contact with the CRS.

During the reporting period, parties who responded to the questionnaire identified a total of 269 areas of learning or an improvement in their interpersonal skills and knowledge.
The skills surveyed as follows:

17	Resolving differences in the future
15	It's OK to disagree
17	How to work towards a win/win situation
11	Better negotiation skills
16	How to talk about differences positively
8	How to speak up for myself
12	How to understand other people's perspectives
19	People have the right to express their opinions, which differ to my own and I can respect their right to do so
26	Not all disputes can be resolved but they can be managed

10	How to show respect for other people's views
17	How to put my views forward
14	How to listen
13	How to compromise without giving in
14	Different ways of communicating
13	Different ideas are OK
14	My knowledge of dispute resolution techniques has increased/broadened
17	How to communicate with my neighbour/ex-partner/kids/co-worker/manager
16	Awareness about how my communication style affects others

“Reassurance that being emotional is normal.
Genuine care and concern of Mediators to all involved.
I think you do a fantastic job.”



What clients said they liked most about the Service:

“(Having) two mediators, one male and one female combination, is very good as it allows both mother and father to discuss the issues from a gender point of view.”

“Provided the framework and structured setting to communicate. Opportunity to rectify the issue outside of legal setting such as court or tribunal.”

“Service was good and fair.”

“The people who had lead the resolution were able to remember and reflect the issues. In the first session the time got out of control – the session went from 4-10pm. The second session was a different story – 4-9pm. The facilitators took on board the feelings of the group.”

“Listened to previous experience not being suitable and adapted session accordingly to achieve outcome wanted by both parties.”

“The easy-going nature of the two ‘facilitators’ in helping the conversation to be non-judgmental yet impartial.”

“I was happy with the listening and understanding from the mediators...”

“The mediators were skilled in stopping discussions that were irrelevant and unhelpful.”

“The service gives me the ability to air my views and opinions.”

“Reassurance that being emotional is normal. Genuine care and concern of Mediators to all involved. I think you do a fantastic job.”

“Having an independent third party listen to irrational and unreasonable views meant the conversation could proceed to an outcome.”

“They kept us on topic so we can get through all the things we wanted to. Big thanks.”

“Both facilitators demonstrated great patience and guided me towards improving my communication style and I felt that a mutually beneficial outcome was achieved.”

“Thank you for reducing my costs. It made me be able to participate.”

“Mediators did their best to accommodate both parties’ needs and were good at recognising blocks and barriers for the future.”

“I was impressed with the mediators’ calm and the way they eased my nerves which were significant. I really liked the straight forward approach as I have done hours and hours of counselling and psychotherapy on both sides. It was actually great not to know about the process. We went to marriage counselling where I think I learned how to listen more. In practice at home we fall in to very negative patterns.”

“Excellent unbiased helpful guidance towards resolution.”

“Impartiality; Patience; Good ideas; Direction; Encouraging. The two CRS members were very well-balanced in execution of the mediation process.”

“The mediators gave me space to express my needs.”

Training & Community Education

CRS delivers many training courses throughout any reporting period to government, private and community sector organisations.

The majority of courses which CRS delivers are tailored to the needs of the client group to ensure that course content is familiar and has practical applications when they transfer their learnings back into their workplace, families and other relationships and situations.

The types of courses CRS delivers, and can build upon, include but are not limited to:

Introduction to Conflict	Communication Skills	Building Respectful Relationships
Advanced Conflict Resolution	Ethics & Professionalism	Workplace Effectiveness
Perspective, Objectivity & Impartiality	Giving & Receiving Feedback	Negotiation Skills
Facilitation Skills	Effective Customer Service	Developing Effective Teamwork
Managing Emotions	Dealing with Difficult Behaviours/Situations	Dealing with Aggressive Behaviours
Introduction to Mediation (3hrs)	Basic Mediation Training (22.5hrs)	Mediation Training – Accredited (60-70hr program)

Nationally Accredited Mediation Training

CRS’s Mediation Training course meets and exceeds the Training and Education Requirements of the Australian National Mediator Standards Approval Standards and the *Mediation Act 1997* (ACT), since repealed.

One Mediation Training Course was delivered during the reporting period.

Course participants ranged from private self-funded individuals to commercial organisations and government departments, including:

- ACT Magistrates Court
 - ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal
 - Department of Defence
 - Community Organisations
 - Community Services Directorate
 - Justice and Community Safety
- Solicitors
 - Magistrates
 - Workplace Investigators
 - Senior Executives

“Mediators did their best to accommodate both parties’ needs and were good at recognising blocks and barriers for the future.”



Audited Accounts

CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED – FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Your committee members submit the financial report of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated for the financial year ended 30 June 2016.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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

Chair:	Leon Larkin
Deputy Chair:	Hannah Dawes
Treasurer:	Margaret Vincent
Secretary:	Margaret Moreton
Immediate Past Chair:	Rae Lacey
Member:	John Ramadge
Member:	Wayne Applebee

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the Association during the year were to relieve distress and anxiety that was being suffered by people in any form of conflict including domestic violence. CRS assists a broad range of people many of whom are at risk of suicide, self-harm, homelessness or imposing physical or psychological injury on another person. CRS's outcomes are to avoid such circumstances and enable individuals to better deal with conflict and ideally resolve the conflict in their lives.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

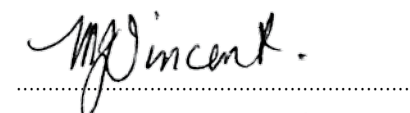
No significant changes in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

OPERATING RESULT

The net operating Profit of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2016 was \$1,950 (2015: Loss \$16,230).

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





Dated: 23 day of January 2017

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenues	2	697,698	720,410
Expenses			
Employment Costs	3	(553,876)	(601,891)
Depreciation Charges		(1,964)	(2,518)
Other expenses		(139,908)	(132,231)
Surplus (Loss) before income tax expense		1,950	(16,230)
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus (Loss) after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated		1,950	(16,230)
Other Comprehensive Income for the Year, net of tax		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year, attributable to the members of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated		1,950	(16,230)
Retained surplus at the beginning of the financial year		249,718	265,94
Retained surplus at the end of the financial year		251,668	249,718

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION – YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	4	274,084	309,568
Receivables	5	13,178	5,941
Prepayments		3,296	1,786
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		290,558	317,295
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Plant and Equipment	6	6,965	8,929
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		6,965	8,929
TOTAL ASSETS		297,523	326,224
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other Payables	7	13,749	323
Income in Advance		2,825	2,825
Provision for Staff Leave Entitlements	8	13,727	51,978
Provision for GST		12,049	14,610
Payroll Liabilities	9	3,598	6,793
Business MasterCard		(93)	(23)
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		45,855	76,506
TOTAL LIABILITIES		45,855	76,506
NET ASSETS		251,668	249,718
MEMBERS FUNDS			
Retained Surplus		251,668	249,718
TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS		251,668	249,718

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporations Act 1991 (ACT). The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

a. Cash and Cash Equivalents

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

b. Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

c. Property, Plant and Equipment

Leasehold improvements and office equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciation amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

d. Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is measured at the value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

Interest revenue is recognised using effective interest rate method, which, for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. Dividend revenue is recognised when the right to receive a dividend has been established.

Revenue from the provision of membership subscriptions is recognised on a straight line basis over the financial year.

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

e. Goods and Service Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. 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 Balance Sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

f. Impairment of Assets

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

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

	2016 \$	2015 \$
2 Revenue		
Service Fees: Mediation & Training	59,979	105,021
Grant Income	624,466	603,315
Interest	4,498	6,772
Membership	1,068	1,647
Sundry	7,687	3,655
	697,698	720,410
3 Employment Costs		
Salaries & Wages – Office	528,431	546,318
Provision for Staff Leave Entitlements	(19,761)	8,255
Superannuation	45,206	47,318
	553,876	601,891
4 Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash at Bank and On Hand	274,084	309,568
	274,084	309,568
5 Receivables		
Trade Debtors	18,624	11,387
Provision for Doubtful Debts	(5,446)	(5,446)
	13,178	5,941
6 Plant and Equipment		
Furniture & Fixtures	55,548	55,548
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(50,126)	(48,597)
	5,422	6,951
Office Equipment	8,054	8,054
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(6,511)	(6,076)
	1,543	1,978
Total Plant & Equipment	6,965	8,929
7 Trade and Other Payables		
Trade Creditors	13,586	150
Deposits Keys	90	100
Other	73	73
	13,749	323
8 Provision for Staff Leave Entitlements		
Provision for Annual Leave	13,727	41,434
Provision for Long Service Leave	-	10,544
	13,727	51,978
9 Payroll Liabilities		
PAYG Withholding Payable	4,114	6,793
Superannuation Payable	(16)	-
Other	(500)	-
	3,598	6,793

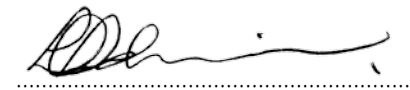
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

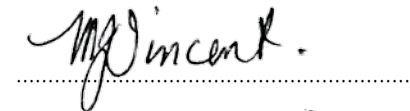
The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee, the financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated as at 30 June 2016 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
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 committee and is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:





Dated: 23 day of January 2017

Canberra ACT

“Impartiality; Patience;
Good ideas; Direction;
Encouraging. The two
CRS members were
very well-balanced
in execution of the
mediation process.”

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
CONFLICT RESOLUTION SERVICE INCORPORATED
YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**



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ABN: 87 955 412 345

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated (the association), which comprises the Committee's Report, the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2016, the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the committee.

**Committee's Responsibility
for the Financial Report**

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibilities also include such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated as at 30 June 2016 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT).

**Basis of Accounting and
Restriction on Distribution**

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Conflict Resolution Service Incorporated to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Bandle McAneney & Co

**Anthony J Bandle
Partner**

Canberra:

Dated this 23rd day of January 2017



**"(Having) two mediators,
one male and one female ...
allows both mother and father
to discuss the issues from a
gender point of view."**

CRS is fiercely committed to the fundamental belief that disputes are not the end of the story, and that they can in fact be a powerful opportunity for personal growth, community development and workplace productivity.

WWW.CRS.ORG.AU

