



Family Violence Legal Service  
Aboriginal Corporation (SA)

# ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22



## Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (SA)



Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (SA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. FVLSAC is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the longest continuing cultures on Earth, in our work.



FVLSAC acknowledges those who have survived family violence. Our work is inspired by the courage, strength and resilience shown through their shared experiences.

We also acknowledge the practitioners, services and organisations who walk alongside survivors on their journey to safety and recovery, and those whose work is to prevent violence before it occurs.



We would also like to express our appreciation for the continued support provided through 2021-22

- The National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Attorney General's Department South Australia • eSafety Commissioner
- Corporation Members • Board Members (past & present) • Staff



# Contents

Reconciliation Statement & Our Vision	4
About Our Service	5
FVLSAC Directors	6
Chairperson's Report	7
Chief Executive Officer's Report	8
Service Delivery Report	9
Legal Assistance and Client Support Services	10
Legal Matters	12
Financial Reports	13
2021 - 2022 Highlights	14



## PORT AUGUSTA

26 Jervois Street (PO Box 2087)  
PORT AUGUSTA SA 5700  
**P** (08) 8641 2195  
**F** (08) 8641 2348  
**FREE CALL** 1800 111 052  
portaugusta@fvlsac.org.au

## PORT LINCOLN

89 Liverpool Street (PO Box 750)  
PORT LINCOLN SA 5606  
**P** (08) 8683 1896  
**F** (08) 8682 4825  
**FREE CALL** 1800 309 912  
portlincoln@fvlsac.org.au

## CEDUNA

17 McKenzie Street (PO Box 319)  
CEDUNA SA 5690  
**P** (08) 8625 3800  
**F** (08) 8625 3200  
**FREE CALL** 1800 839 059  
ceduna@fvlsac.org.au

ABN 56 370 326 897 • ICN 7499

Incorporated under the Corporation (Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006

# Reconciliation Statement

Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (SA) acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly acknowledges the traditional owners in Port Augusta, Port Lincoln and Ceduna, the lands on which our offices are situated. We pay our deep respects to Elders, past, present and future.

Our vision for Reconciliation is an Australia where all Australians recognise, respect and advance the intrinsic rights, cultures and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

The Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation joins with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the broader Australian community on the journey towards Reconciliation. We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of this land and encourage all Australians to be proud of our unique connection to the world's oldest living culture. We recognise the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our governance, management, planning, service delivery and the relationships we build.

We commit to continue to strengthen our service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are victim-survivors of family violence and/or sexual assault and to provide social and cultural support to assist our clients to obtain equitable access to the legal system.

We strongly believe Reconciliation is everybody's business and all Australians should walk the Reconciliation journey together.

Reconciliation is a shared journey which sees Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples working together with all other Australians to make communities safer so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples enjoy the same level of physical, emotional and social well-being as all other Australians.

We will ensure Reconciliation is alive within the Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (FVLSAC) by:

- Continually increasing our understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures;
- Providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to work for and contribute to our organisation;
- Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander victim-survivors of family violence and sexual assault to realise their legal rights;
- Continually reflecting on our progress.

We acknowledge we will only succeed if we are guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.

## Our Vision

Our Vision is to create an equitable and safe society for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

## Our Purpose

Our Purpose is to eliminate family and sexual violence through quality holistic legal services, education and community partnerships.

## Our Core Values

We acknowledge and respect those who fought for the establishment of family violence prevention legal services to support our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and we continue to build upon their work and dedication.

We recognise the lasting effects of intergenerational trauma and violence and pay respect to the resilience and strength of our communities.

We work in partnership with the community because we respect that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people own their futures.

We believe that client safety and trust is created when we keep confidentiality at the centre of everything we do.

# About Our Service

Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation (FVLSAC) is an Aboriginal controlled organisation whose predecessors have been established in our communities for a number of years. Those services were regionalised in 2011 to form FVLSAC.

The service is funded to provide legal advice, legal representation, client support, community education and assistance to Aboriginal victim-survivors of family violence and sexual assault.

An essential component of FVLSAC's service delivery model is the provision of a holistic legal service that encompasses client support, legal services and community education. The holistic service delivery model differentiates the service from much of the domestic violence and legal service sector. The focus on providing assistance to victim-survivors also separates FVLSAC from others in the sector that provide gender-based or perpetrator focused services.

FVLSAC staff live and work in the communities that we service. This allows for increased engagement with our communities as well as other local stakeholders and service providers. Being local assists us to build trust within our communities.

FVLSAC provides a free service to Aboriginal victim-survivors of family violence and sexual abuse requiring assistance in the areas of:

- Family violence
- Child protection
- Intervention orders
- Family law
- Victims of crime compensation
- Other minor civil assistance.

We also provide support to our clients should they need to engage with other services such as counselling, drug and alcohol services, housing and family support services.

FVLSAC services regional South Australia with three offices based in Port Augusta, Port Lincoln and Ceduna. Our three offices service the following communities:

- Port Augusta, Davenport Community, Leigh Creek, Nepabunna Community, Umoona Community (Coober Pedy), Dunjiba Community (Oodnadatta), Whyalla;
- Port Lincoln;
- Ceduna, Koonibba Community, Yalata Community, Maralinga Tjarutja (Oak Valley) Community, Scotdesco Community.

FVLSAC offices are open Monday to Friday from 9.00am until 5.00pm. The offices can be contacted on the following free call numbers:

- Port Augusta ~ 1800 111 052
- Port Lincoln ~ 1800 309 912
- Ceduna ~ 1800 839 059

# FVLSAC Directors

## Current Directors

### Lahn Mickan

Chairperson

*(appointed September 2019)*

### Katryne Miller

*(appointed November 2019)*

### Joy Reid

*(appointed 5 May 2021)*

## Board Appointed Directors

### Angela Johanna Boylan

*(appointed September 2014*

*and reappointed)*

### Natasha Budimski

*(appointed November 2018*

*and reappointed)*

### Ben Watson

*(appointed February 2022)*

# Chairperson's Report

**The 2021- 22 period was a significant milestone for the Family Violence Legal Service Aboriginal Corporation marking 10 years of service across the region.**

From humble beginnings, regionalisation of 3 services into one has provided a number of benefits to the delivery of our service including a higher standard of support to our clients.

Over 1000 clients have received legal service from FVLSAC Solicitors. Each client is then supported by a number of additional services offered by our support staff who have knowledge, understanding and networks in the local area. Each client averaging an additional 3 support services from the service.

Over 3300 referrals out of the service have been provided in this time, and these are many and varied depending on the type of matter, or if the client is ineligible to receive a service from the Family Violence Legal Service

Keeping abreast of changes in service delivery, meeting the challenges of a global pandemic and a changeover in staff has kept both the FVLSAC Board and staff busy.

The FVLSAC Board and staff were able to develop a Strategic Plan to guide the work until 2024.

Four key areas of strategic focus were identified:

- Our People
- Our Service Delivery
- Our Organisation
- Our Advocacy

This has allowed the organisation to focus on these areas and target the effort that staff are working towards.

I would like to thank Joy Reid, Katryne Miller, Johanna Boylan, Natasha Budimski for their continued support as Directors. The Board welcomed Ben Watson in February 2022 bringing a strong financial presence to the Board.

As always, organisations such as FVLSAC would not be able to operate without the support and assistance of a number of other organisations. In particular I wish to acknowledge the National Indigenous Australians Agency who fund FVLSAC activities and provided additional expansion funds. The Attorney General's Department SA provided continued funding to support service delivery in Whyalla and the eSafety Commissioner provided funding to support a project related to Technology-Facilitated Abuse.

I wish to thank the staff of FVLSAC for their tireless work during the 2021-22 financial year and their enduring commitment to preventing and responding to violence. There has been a significant change over in senior personnel, including Janet Wright, Carissa Miller and Lesley Kirkwood. We thank these staff and others that have left the organisation for their continued effort and contribution and acknowledge that change is inevitable.

**Lahn Mickan**  
**Chairperson FVLSAC**



# Chief Executive Officer's Report

**The 2021-22 period has been a year of contrasts. The impact of COVID 19 on our community has had far reaching impacts.**

Service delivery as we once knew it has changed significantly and this is evidenced by staff developing high levels of resilience and adaptability. Lockdowns, public health restrictions and the impact of COVID 19 itself has had a lasting effect on how and where FVLSAC delivers services.

Despite the challenges of service delivery during a pandemic FVLSAC delivered against the targets set by funders. Review of data shows that there is no consistent pattern to the delivery of the service areas.

Intervention Orders and Family Law are the main areas of focus and have consistently been when looking at trends in service delivery.

Given all of this FVLSAC was able to deliver one on one services, deliver programs, support some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and abide by ever changing work situations.

FVLSAC continued the partnerships and collaborations to make our services happen. This could not be undertaken without the support of organisations such as Yarredi, Gabmididi Manoo Children and Family Centre, Stepping Stones, Salvation Army, AFS and other community groups.

The work of FVLSAC is often very hard to determine where it starts and stops and therefore working in conjunction with partners is critical.

Highlights for the year included participating in the Womens Safety Hub in Port Lincoln, continuing programs across the region including participation in Ochre Ribbon and NAIDOC week.

Funding from the eSafety Commissioner allowed FVLSAC to develop resources related to the Technology-Facilitated Abuse. The resources from this project will be used to inform community members across the region about issues related to the use of technology. Input from community members and artwork by local artists contributed to the development of educational resources.

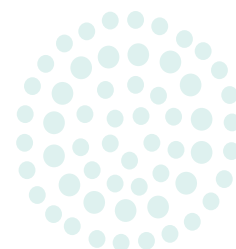
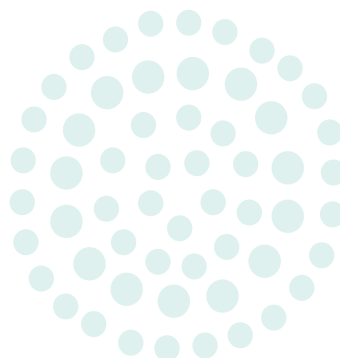
FVLSAC continues to develop partnerships and networks at a national, state, regional and local level. Participation with the National Family Violence Prevention Services Forum, SNAICC the National Voice for our Children, South Australian Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation Network (SAACCON) for Closing the Gap, and Community Legal Centers Australia.

The operations of FVLSAC come under scrutiny through the Community Legal Centre's Australia Accreditation process. FVLSAC complied with Phase 3 of this process in 2021 and again reached accreditation for a further 3 year period.

As with any organisations there are periods of great change. This year has seen that in the staffing group a number of familiar faces have left the organisations to pursue new challenges. Amongst there were Carissa Miller (Principal Legal Officer), Lesley Kirkwood (Solicitor), Brittany Carmody (Solicitor), Megan Devenport (Solicitor) and Janet Wright (CEO).

I would also like to extend my gratitude to FVLSAC's Board, and the Senior staff team of Atheana Bitmead, Tosha Sambo, Lisa Abinett, Julie Detchon and Jackie Footner for the continued effort and commitment to the organisations. In addition, the staff in Port August and Ceduna for continuing to play an important part in maintaining the local presence for FVLSAC throughout the year.

**Janet Wright**  
*Chief Executive Officer*



# Service Delivery Report

**To briefly introduce myself, my name is Julie Detchon and I commenced in November 2021 as the Principal Legal Officer at FVLSAC. Before that, I worked with the Legal Services Commission for nearly 12 years, where I practiced law in a range of areas including family law, child support and care and protection matters.**

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to further the work of FVLSAC in assisting our clients, and also to be involved in program delivery including early intervention and community legal education programs.

I am not the only new face at FVLSAC, with some staff leaving and others starting. I acknowledge the contribution that both former and current staff have made to the work of FVLSAC. I particularly acknowledge the work of my predecessor Carissa Miller, who was the Principal Legal Officer here for many years.

In recent times service delivery has not been without its challenges as we, alongside the rest of the country, have been asked to adapt to living with COVID 19. With the easing of restrictions has come a new set of responsibilities. How do we safely and respectfully reach the communities we service? What are the considerations around our ways of doing and being as an organisation?

Some of us have heard over the last few years that we are “all in this together”, or maybe sometimes even “well, we are all in the same boat.” We respectfully know that is not the case. We maybe be in the same storm, but not in the same boat. It’s important to acknowledge the unique and complex challenges our client face.

Connection and relationship building are at the core of our service delivery model across programs and delivery of legal and non-legal services. Some communities have experienced, or may still be experiencing, extended periods of closure as pandemic control measures moved to a more localised approach.

This, combined with the increased risks posed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in general by COVID 19, means that we are required to continually rethink, review and renew on an increasingly regular basis.

We are learning to navigate our route in the storm, alongside our clients and communities. Our goal is to continue to do so with respect, empathy and responsibility. We must go together.

# Community Legal Education and Early Intervention Activities

## **eSafety Commissioner and Technology-Facilitated Abuse**

This year we have been working with the Office of the eSafety Commissioner under additional grant monies to develop culturally appropriate materials to increase awareness around Technology-Facilitated Abuse. This is a rather timely piece of work for the organisation given the increase in reliance on our technology during the pandemic to maintain connections with both organisations and families.

Technology-Facilitated Abuse is when technology such as mobile phones, computers and tracking devices are used by one person to control and abuse another person, usually in the context of a relationship or after a relationship. The abuse may involve sharing of intimate images without consent, or infiltrating social media accounts.

Throughout the year a number of sessions were held with community to consult and trial some of the materials. Our staff visited Scotdesco and Ceduna in the second half of 2021 and had lively discussions up there. We also consulted as the resource was developed with community members from Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Lincoln.

The result of this work is a set of Yarning Cards featuring the work of two Aboriginal artists from Port Lincoln, Susan Betts and Delise Sampson, which will be used to facilitate discussions about Technology-Facilitated Abuse.

This work is being woven into our regular programs such as Sista 2 Sista and Healthy Relationships. We look to continue to bring these issues into focus into the new year's programs plan.

## **Healthy Relationships**

The solicitor team has had a bumper year visiting schools in Port Lincoln in conjunction with staff from Yarredi Services to deliver education about sex and consent, safety in relationships and laws around Technology-Facilitated Abuse. It's important for our kids to know that when using technology, there are risks involved and that there are laws around using and sharing images of people.

Our solicitors and the Yarredi workers staff much time ensuring the program meets the needs of the audiences we work with, who are a very cluey bunch!

## **Legal Presentation**

Two of our solicitors spoke to Yr 12 students from St Joseph's College as part of their legal studies class. The students were required to write an essay on the topic 'To what extent have the institutions of government adequately protected the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders?' Our solicitors spoke to the students about some of the historical and current issues that the students should be aware of when thinking about this question.

## **Mini Sista 2 Sista Day**

Staff from our Ceduna and Port Lincoln offices had a fantastic day engaging with a group of young Aboriginal women who attend the Crossways Lutheran School in Ceduna. We provided an experience designed to be fun, but with a serious message on some important topics such as consent, and Technology-Facilitated Abuse. The young women were smart and engaged and it was fantastic to be able to partner with the school to deliver this program.

## **Sista 2 Sista Day**

Our much loved Sista 2 Sista Days made a reappearance this year in Port Lincoln. These events have been sorely missed during our various periods of lockdowns or restrictions. Unfortunately, we had plans to deliver more than one but COVID 19 had other plans causing some of our larger events such as S2S to be delayed. 22 women gathered at our Port Lincoln event and they gained valuable information about the eSafety Commissioner.

### **Social Media Campaigns**

This year we have focussed on social media as a platform to reach our communities in a time where it can be difficult to meet face to face. Whilst we uphold the personal approach to our service delivery, social media is undoubtedly a useful tool in reaching a variety of people who may for a number of reasons feel unable to reach out, or attend an event in person.

For Ochre Ribbon Week (February 2022) and the 16 Days of Activism against Gendered Violence (Nov/Dec 2021) our team maintained a focussed presence on our Facebook page sharing key practical information including how to help someone experiencing domestic and family violence, and key data around how violence affects our communities and services available for support.

### **Whyalla Healing Art and Legal Education Day**

A healing art day for women was held in Whyalla in April 2022 in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the 'Bringing Them Home' report. The activity involved a number of women from a yarnning group joining with us for a day of art and a presentation on a legal topic and this was met with enthusiasm and great discussion. It was an amazing day, and resulted in some fantastic artwork.

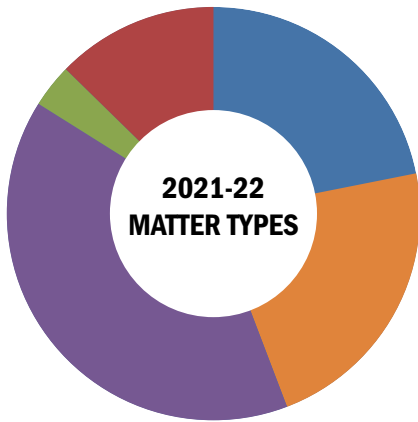
### **Other Community Event Participation**

Our staff were involved in a number of other community events during the year. We appreciate the opportunity to get out and collaborate with other agencies to celebrate the strength and achievement of the communities we service. These activities included:

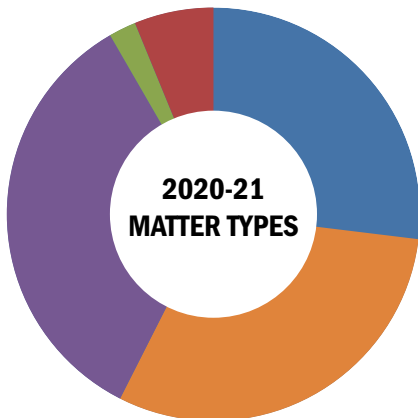
- White Ribbon - Community BBQ in Ceduna, and Community Breakfast in Port Augusta
- Colour Fun Run - We were proud to support this event in Port Lincoln
- NAIDOC - With limited NAIDOC activities able to be run for 2021 NAIDOC our Ceduna team ran a
- Recycled Art Competition with the Ceduna Area School

FVLSAC is looking forward to being able to re-engage with our communities in the 2022/23 period after the impact of COVID for the past 2 years.

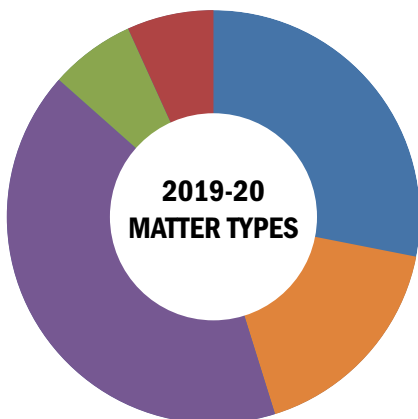
# Legal Matters



FAMILY OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & INTERVENTION ORDER	22%
CHILD PROTECTION	22%
FAMILY LAW	40%
OTHER	3%
INJURIES COMPENSATION	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>



FAMILY OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & INTERVENTION ORDER	27%
CHILD PROTECTION	30%
FAMILY LAW	35%
OTHER	2%
INJURIES COMPENSATION	6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>



FAMILY OR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & INTERVENTION ORDER	28%
CHILD PROTECTION	17%
FAMILY LAW	42%
OTHER	6%
INJURIES COMPENSATION	7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Financial Reports

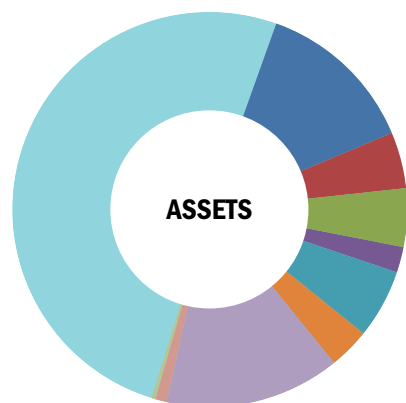
as at 30th June 2022



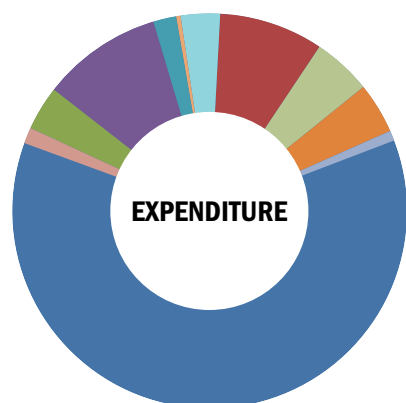
**Marnie Smith**  
*Client Business Support  
 Services - Manager  
 Rowe Partners*



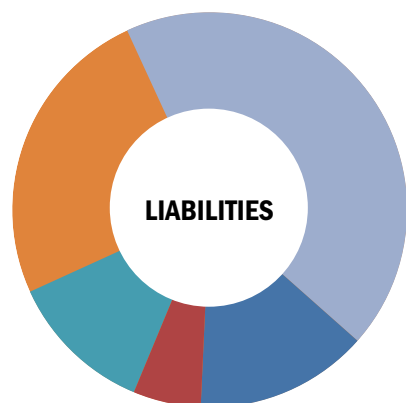
**GOVERNMENT GRANTS - \$2,478,717**  
**SUNDRY INCOME - \$24,817**  
**INTEREST - \$247**  
**PROCEEDS ON SALE OF ASSETS - \$278**



**BUILDINGS WDV - \$284,980**  
**PLANT AND EQUIPMENT WDV - \$99,259**  
**MOTOR VEHICLES WDV - \$99,937**  
**OFFICE EQUIPMENT WDV - \$46,566**  
**LAND - \$120,000**  
**LEASEHOLD IMPROVEMENTS - \$70,368**  
**RIGHT-OF-USE ASSET - \$307,242**  
**PRE-PAYMENTS - \$19,976**  
**OTHER DEBTORS - \$5,098**  
**CASH AT BANK - \$1,090,600**

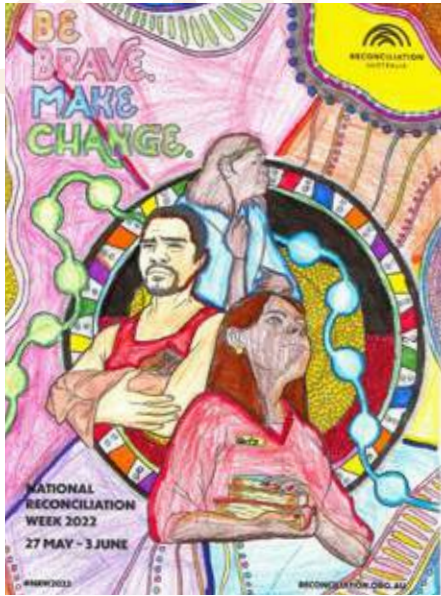


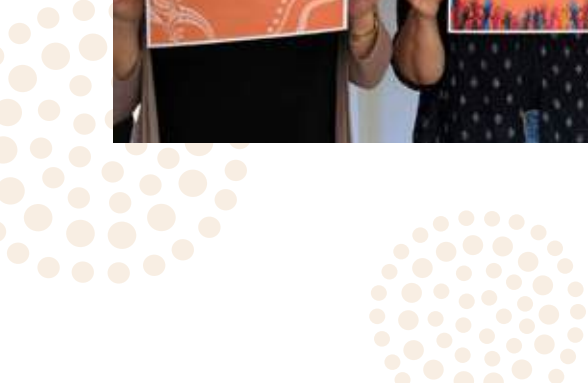
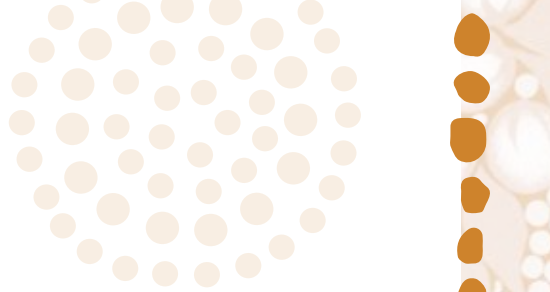
**SALARIES AND WAGES - \$1,522,386**  
**REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE AND REPLACEMENTS - \$31,164**  
**ADMINISTRATION - \$89,659**  
**OPERATIONAL EXPENSES - \$250,772**  
**COMMUNITY PROJECTS/SUNDRY - \$48,275**  
**LEGAL EXPENSES - \$8,680**  
**DEPRECIATION - \$80,928**  
**PROVISION FOR GRANT FUNDING SURPLUS - \$218,243**  
**STAFF RELATED COSTS/CONFERENCES - \$122,813**  
**AMORTISATION EXPENSE - \$105,556**  
**MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES - \$20,053**



**LEASE LIABILITIES - \$319,179**  
**CONTRACT LIABILITY - \$616,104**  
**CREDITORS AND PAYG - \$101,739**  
**ACCRUED EXPENSES - \$37,943**  
**GST OBLIGATIONS - \$0**  
**PROVISION FOR ANNUAL LEAVE AND LSL - \$91,487**

# 2021 - 2022 Highlights!







Designed and Printed by Multi Print SA, 52 Victoria Parade, Port Augusta SA 5700 ~ Telephone: 8641 0900

Artist ~ Katrina Williams