

ANNUAL REPORT | 2010 – 2011



Flat Out INC
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“fighting to protect the human rights of women in prison”

Hours of Operation: Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm except Public Holidays

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Formal acknowledgement of Traditional Ownership

Flat Out acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the first peoples of Australia. We pay our respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Woi Wurrung Language Group both past and present that make up part of the Kulin Nation, as the traditional owners of the land on which Flat Out is housed

We acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the tribes of the Kulin Nation who were the custodians of the land which we occupy. We acknowledge that the land on which we meet was the place of age old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal and that the Kulin Nation people's living culture had and has a unique role in the life of this region.

We recognise the loss and grief held by Indigenous people in Australia caused by alienation from traditional lands, the loss of lives and freedoms, and the forced removal of children.

We defend the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to live according to their own beliefs, values and customs and the importance of their contribution to strengthening and enriching the heritage of all Australians.

We believe that equal partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are integral to addressing the needs of communities.

We believe that that ignorance, apathy, resistance and opposition still exists about reconciliation and the need to overcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disadvantage is great.

We believe that through understanding the spiritual relationship between the land and its first peoples, we share our future and take the steps towards living equally in harmony with dignity and respect.



Special Thank You

To all the women who have been criminalised, thank you for your involvement in Flat Out over the past year. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with you. Thank you for sharing your stories, insights, advice and strength

Thank You To Our Funders

Commonwealth & State Government Funding

Department Of Health and Ageing

NGOTGP (Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program)
NIDS (National Illicit Drug Strategy)

Laurie Morcom, Senior Project Officer Health Strategies Branch and
Kit Burton Senior

Program Co-ordinators – NGOTGP - Eileen Bleakley and Improved Services – Cheryl
Heath

ADIS-Duncan Smart, Project Officer/Information Analyst

Information, Analysis & Reporting Policy, Planning & Strategy, Mental Health & Drugs
Division

Department Of Human Services – SAAP

(Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program)

Homelessness Accommodation & Support, Client Services & Programs
- Jill Macqueen

Senior Program Advisor, Program and Service Advisor, Sector Development
Initiatives, Community Programs Unit, North & West Metropolitan Region
- Sarah Langmore

Administrative Program - Alison Modica

Department Of Human Services – ICMI (Intensive Case Management Initiative)

WISP (Women's Integrated Support Program)

Non-Government Funding

R E Ross Trust, Reichstein Foundation, Helen Macpherson Smith Trust, City of
Melbourne, Victorian Law Foundation & Grassroots Fundraising,
Street Smart Australia

Donations

Doris Jarvies & Amanda George / Nancy Whan / Sarah Langmore / Pauline Spencer

FOFO supporters

Flat Out would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations who have been generous in their support advice and assistance to Flat Out

- Aboriginal Liaison/Koorie Court
- ARBIAS
- Blake Dawson
- Caesars Mirror
- Charandev Singh
- CHRIP Volunteers
- Common Equity Housing Ltd (CEHL)
- Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)
- Community Housing Federation Victoria (CHFV)
- Eastern Emergency Relief Network
- Erin Pimm - photographer
- Family Violence Prevention Legal Services
- Federation of Community Legal Centres
- First Step Clinic
- Fitzroy Community Legal Service
- Fitted for Work – women’s health diaries
- Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre Inc.
- Foodbank Victoria
- Forensicare
- Freehills
- Good Company
- Greg Thomas – Solicitor
- Grill’d Healthy Burgers – Local Matters Program
- Hanover Cheltenham Housing Services
- Harm Reduction Victoria
- Hip Sista Hop, 3CR, DJs
- Homeground Services
- Inside Access
- LASN – Northern & Western
- Liaise Southern Health
- Lort Smith Animal Hospital
- Nadu Dove, Consultant
- Maggie Hollins – Pro bono IT assistance
- Mari Kundalini, DJ
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- Meghan Fitzgerald
- Mehran Erfanian, Centrax Computer Services
- Minter Ellison Lawyers
- Newton Daddow, Newmarket Baptist Church, Flemington
- Novacom
- Public Interest Law Clearing House (Vic) Inc. (PILCH)
- PILCH Homeless Person’s Legal Clinic (HPLC)
- PILCH CONNECT
- Prison Ministries Network
- QICSA team
- Rotary Lions Club, Flemington
- Royal District Nursing Service Homeless Person’s Program
- Sally Goldner, Transgender Victoria
- Salvation Army Housing Services – Eastcare
- Salvation Army - SASHS
- Sista Zai, DJ
- Sisters Inside QLD
- Somebody’s Daughter Theatre Company
- Soon Maternity-Jane Gonzales & Jenni O’Callaghan – clothing donation
- St Kilda Crisis Centre
- Tamar Hopkins
- Vincentcare Community Housing - Glenroy
- Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO)
- Yarra Community Housing
- Women’s Housing Limited

The following people and organisations contributed their time, skills and resources to the CHRIP project:

- Amanda George** – Flat Out Management Collective
- Anthony Kelly** – Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Aunty Diane Kerr** – Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation Cultural Heritage Council
- Bonnie Renou** – paralegal - advocate and community member
- Bree Carlton** – Monash University
- Cam Nguyen** – Australian Vietnamese Women’s Association
- Cassandra Shaylor** – Critical Resistance, USA
- Chalk Creative** – graphic design
- Charandev Singh** – human rights advocate, activist and educator
- CHRIP Working Group:** Lorena Solin, Emma Russell, Rachel Barrett, Terri Silvertree, Liz Patterson
- Debbie Kilroy** – Sisters Inside - QLD
- Donna Williamson and Cameron Shilton** – Darebin Community Legal Centre
- Erika Zammit** – graphic designer
- Federation of Community Legal Centres** – VIC
- Federation Press**
- Flat Out employees and Management Collective**
- Gateways Jesuit Social Services**
- Helen Yandell** – Springvale Monash Legal Service
- Inside Access at the Mental Health Legal Centre**
- Jessie Boylan** – photo-media artist
- Jill Prior and Louise Hicks** – Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
- John Walsh** – Bridge of Hope Foundation
- Just Seeds Artists’ Collective** – USA
- Kat Armstrong** – Women in Prison Advocacy Network - NSW
- Kaz Gurney** – Fitzroy Legal Service/Neighbourhood Justice Centre
- Lola Tsiaras** – Insight Clinical and Forensic Psychological Services
- Meghan Fitzgerald** – Fitzroy Legal Service
- Nadia Gavin** – Harm Reduction Victoria
- Nando’s**
- Rachel Ball** – Human Rights Law Resource Centre
- Rebecca Smith** – Visioning Justice Project–Springvale Monash Legal Service
- Tamar Hopkins** – Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre
- The Den**
- Urban Seeds**
- Youth Worx Media**
- Zoe Jones** – former student–Springvale Monash Legal Service
- 3CR Community Radio**

In Kind Support

A number of organisations and individuals have provided us with advice and support. We apologise if we have neglected to include you in the above list.

FLAT OUT COLLECTIVE MEMBERS July 2010 – June 2011

Amanda George, Karren Walker, Liz Shield, Kay Dyson, Jo Smith and Adona El-Murr

RESIGNED MEMBERS

Bree Carlton and Koni Tsakonas

FLAT OUT EMPLOYEES

July 2010 – June 2011 – Current

Annie Nash

Manager

Michele Old

Administrative Resource Worker

Sharon Villanueva

Intensive Case Management Worker

Elise Pointer

Outreach Support Worker

Phoebe Barton

*Centre for the Human Rights of
Imprisoned People Project Worker*

Tanja Hoger

Finance Worker

Jennifer Eva

Outreach Support Worker

PREVIOUS EMPLOYEES

July 2010 – June 2011

Maggie Barford

Finance Worker

Alyssa Fooks

*Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned
People Story Telling Project Worker*



Flat Out



The Origin Of Flat Out

“Flat Out’s name came about for a number of reasons and after numerous long meetings at bars, spas, lounge room floors, offices and weekends away. At first (in 1988) we envisaged that we would get flats for women when they got out. We also thought women might be working flat out on their back paying the rent and that perhaps we would find women flat out on the floor overdosed. We were certain that our workers would be flat out meeting the demand”.

Amanda George – Inaugural and current Management Collective member

Service Overview

Flat Out is a state wide advocacy and support service for women who have had contact with the criminal justice and/or prison system in Victoria. Flat Out receives government funding through the Department of Human Services, the Department of Health and Ageing and occasional project funds from various sources to enhance its capacity to provide innovative and effective services and advocacy.

Flat Out is a community based organisation that is anti-hierarchical; in keeping with its feminist philosophy and principles. The Flat Out Collective embraces fairness and equality through the essential roles of governance, management and leadership that are underpinned by a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and delegated authority.

Flat Out leads and participates in research and community education, seeking to inform the community and other service providers about the issues that occur for women in the prison system. Flat Out advocates for women who have experienced incarceration, and works towards improving the rights and conditions of women in prison. Flat Out works towards preventing women from going to prison, and keeping them out of prison once they are released.

Through community involvement and education, advocacy and research, Flat Out works towards having a strong voice in the prison abolition movement in Australia, in the hope that eventually prisons will not be seen as a legitimate arm of the justice system, but will be viewed as an antiquated, cruel and ultimately ineffective institution.

Primary Task

- To support women who are exiting prison or who are at risk of being imprisoned, by providing access and referrals to appropriate and affordable transitional, supported, private, public or community housing
- To provide and link women to appropriate support, education and information to re-establish them in the community post-release
- To work with women to prevent their re-incarceration

Our Vision

- Women are not imprisoned
- Women's rights are understood and upheld
- There is a compassionate response to personal and social trauma



Flat Out

Working to Protect
Human Rights
of Women in Prison



Core Work

The Flat Out approach to organisational and program development is underpinned by a commitment to feminist philosophy, continuous quality improvement and best practice.

Flat Out's current Strategic Plan 2010 – 2013, comprises of seven Key Result Areas:

- **Direct Support Services**
- **Organisational Development**
- **Partnerships and Projects**
- **Innovation and Service Development**
- **Financial Sustainability**
- **Involvement of Women's Lived Experience**
- **Public Profile and Systemic Advocacy**

DIRECT SUPPORT SERVICES

Flat Out's direct service activities to women who have had contact with the criminal justice and/or prison system in Victoria comprises a range of support and case planning services including: information and referral, outreach and intensive case management support for women with high and complex needs.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As a small community organisation, Flat Out operates on a limited pool of dedicated employees and collective members to achieve the organisation's vision and purpose. The new mandatory requirement to achieve accreditation as part of Department of Human Services Victoria funding, now means there is an added dimension to all operational aspects including the identification of internal system gaps and the development of new and improved systems for organisational business and service operations. As part of this process Flat Out has identified the need to further refine its organisational structure, role and purpose, and further strengthen systems for effective management of its financial and human resources.

PARTNERSHIPS AND PROJECTS

Partnership development is seen as an important aspect of maintaining a strong, healthy and sustainable organisation. Partnerships will frequently translate into improved access to resources and services for the women Flat Out seeks to support, as well as a heightened ability of the organisation to contribute to innovation, best practice and systemic advocacy.

INNOVATION AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT

Flat Out has more than 23 years experience in delivering support services to women at risk of incarceration or who are exiting the prison system. Over this time the organisation has built a solid reputation for service quality and professionalism as well as an ability to effectively engage with women within a strengths-based practice framework. Innovation and a commitment to on-going service development are seen as core components to maintaining a relevant and unique service.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

While Flat Out receives recurrent government funding as well as funding and grants from non-government sources for specific initiatives, the organisation is not adequately funded for service development, administration or infrastructure costs. Although Flat Out has continued to grow, dedicating resources to organisational development and improved services, further work needs to be achieved to generate diverse income sources in order to achieve the future directions of the organisation.

INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN'S LIVED EXPERIENCE

Flat Out is committed to ensuring that the voices of women with a lived experience of the criminal justice system are both heard and valued. This has been evident in a number of past Flat Out publications including 'Flat Out – A Brief Herstory' and 'Call Me By My First Name'. Flat Out believes that women's lived experience also needs to be incorporated into the way the organisation reviews and develops programs and services, as well as to educate and harness the support of the broader community.

PUBLIC PROFILE AND SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

Over its 23 years of operation Flat Out has achieved a unique and respected position within the sector as a systemic advocate for and on behalf of women at risk of incarceration and women who are exiting prison. This role is an important part of Flat Out's commitment to the abolition of the prison system and to the human rights of all women involved in the criminal justice system.

Programs

SAAP (SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM)

SAAP (Supported Accommodation Assistance Program)

Flat Out has been funded by SAAP since establishment in 1988.

SAAP is a joint Commonwealth and State Government Initiative. SAAP is governed by the Commonwealth Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1994. In Victoria, SAAP forms a key part of the Homelessness Service system, which also includes the Transitional Housing Management (THM) Program. The overall aim of SAAP is to provide transitional supported accommodation and a range of related support services, in order to help people who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, to achieve the maximum possible degree of self reliance and independence.

Within this aim, the goals are to:

- **resolve crisis**
- **re-establish family links where appropriate; and**
- **re-establish the capacity of clients to live independently of SAAP**

Flat Out supports women of all ages; however the trend for 2010/11 were the majority of women in the age bracket of 25-39 years.

Flat Out receives referrals from various sources; however the most common source of referral for 2010/11 were women self-referring, followed by referrals from support workers at prison and also other non-government organisations.

Women presented to Flat Out with a wide range of complex and high needs with the most common reason for seeking assistance being homeless after recently leaving prison, followed by financial difficulties/hardship. Other presenting reasons for seeking assistance included eviction from accommodation, excessive rent and problematic substance use.

Flat Out also works extensively with women in reunifying them with children and other family members and community connections and supports.


Flat Out works from the three tiers of homelessness: primary, secondary and tertiary, in acknowledgment of women who are in varying stages of life experience. Homelessness can also be directly related to incarceration; generally a woman who has a history of recurring imprisonment also has a long history recurring homelessness coupled with other factors including family and other forms of violence and abuse.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION TREATMENT GRANTS PROGRAM (NGOTGP)

NGOTGP (NIDS – National Illicit Drug Strategy) is a funded Commonwealth Government Initiative. Flat Out has received NGOTGP funding since 2003.

NGOTGP key service requirements are:

- **To provide short-term supported accommodation to clients affected by alcohol and drug issues who have undergone a drug withdrawal program or require assistance in controlling their drug and alcohol use**
- **To provide support and assistance to enhance the woman's capacity for non-drug abusive community living, through skill acquisition, counselling, personal care activities and relapse prevention**
- **To facilitate client access to other services appropriate to their health and welfare needs**
- **To negotiate an "individual treatment plan" with the woman**
- **To support the woman in safe, secure and affordable housing**
- **To provide services for carers and families of those affected by alcohol and drug use**



Flat Out has exceeded the number of women it aimed to support during the twelve month period.

There were a total of 64 'Episodes of Care' (EOC), compared with 39 for the previous year.

All the women we supported involved engagement with appropriate health services.

There are often long wait lists for suitable therapeutic programs. Women are forced to stay in situations of drug dependency until services are available. This is very frustrating for women, (and Flat Out), and makes it very difficult to meet the support needs of women.

The assertive outreach model is extremely successful in working with women with drug dependency. The outreach support team will make every endeavour to locate women if they are difficult to contact by phone or through visits. This is vital to the success of the service as women will regularly be without finances for transport and phone to independently get to the service. Many of the women we support have experienced being 'dumped' or 'exited' by services that will ascribe notions of 'non engagement'.

Flat Out has had very successful engagement with women through meeting on their turf at times and places convenient to them.

The periods of support that we offer are also critical to our success. Most of the women we support are supported for long periods (more than one year).

All outreach support staff are well trained and experienced and have a good working knowledge of other services and supports.

Flat Out has a multidisciplinary approach and is skilled in 'case planning' and coordination.

Flat Out has a strong reputation for working with women with high and complex needs.

Women trust that Flat Out will advocate for them as individuals, and for the systems to be improved.

Flat Out regularly supports women in court through court reports and attendance at court – this direct support and advocacy with women will often result in a non-custodial outcome.

WISP (WOMEN'S INTEGRATED SUPPORT PROGRAM)

The WISP partnership between Melbourne Citymission (MCM), the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) and Jesuit Social Services (The Brosnan Centre), had a contract with Corrections Victoria to provide an intensive pre and post release program offering 'case management' to women exiting Victorian prisons.

Flat Out has worked collaboratively with WISP to provide high quality and appropriate support to women. Flat Out has also worked closely with WISP to ensure that women's rights are upheld in prison and in the community. The protocol with WISP expired September 2011 due to new tender arrangements. Flat Out has enjoyed a good working relationship with MCM and the other partners, and wishes MCM WISP employees all the very best with future endeavours.

Flat Out is seeking to enter into negotiations with the new contract provider with the view to a revitalised agreement that enhances opportunities for women to receive the high quality innovative services and support pre and post release prison.

ICMI (INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE)

ICMI is a developmental project where services provide support and brokerage funds for creative approaches to work with people who have high and complex needs. Flat Out has received funding through the ICMI program since September 2008.

Hanover has been the lead agency of the ICMI pilot project, (with funding and support from the Department of Human Services, Victoria). This funding was recently extended through until June 2012 and is now directly managed through the Department of Human Services.

Flat Out wishes to extend its gratitude to Hanover for the support and guidance it has provided to Flat Out.

The goals of ICMI are:

- **To provide assistance to clients who have high and complex needs to stabilise their personal circumstances and assist them out of homelessness**
- **To provide a creative and flexible service response**
- **To contribute to the development of a model that promotes planning, coordination and sustainable assistance to high and complex needs clients**
- **Promotes planning, coordination and sustainable assistance to high and complex needs clients**

Flat Out has now reached its 23rd year of operation. Throughout this annual reporting period we have continued to provide high quality individualised support services and systemic advocacy, with the uppermost level of commitment and enthusiasm.

The Management Collective of Flat Out are privileged to have an extraordinarily hard working, innovative and committed team of employees to undertake the demanding and various daily work of the organisation.

The new management structure that has evolved over the last 2 years has shown itself to be appropriate, flexible and effective. Over the past year the Management Collective has met regularly to ensure it meets its core responsibilities:

- ensuring that the legal and financial requirements of the organisation are met
- setting the overall direction of the organisation
- accountability for organisational activities and decisions
- ensuring that employment conditions comply with relevant legislation and awards
- ensuring that employees perform to job descriptions and organisational policies and procedures
- active participation in relevant Management Collective working groups.

One of the highest priorities for the Management Collective has been to ensure that the health and safety of employees is honored at all levels of the organisation.

During 2010-2011 we bid farewell to Management Collective members Koni Tsakonas and Bree Carlton and welcomed Kay Dyson, Jo Smith and Adona El-Murr. An effective Management Collective recruitment process has further ensured that the Management Collective has a strong complement of skills required for the effective governance of the organisation.

Employees and project workers who left the organisation were Bronwen Brook, Maggie Barford and Alyssa Fooks. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours and thank them for their enormous contribution to Flat Out. We welcomed a new Outreach Support Worker, Jennifer Eva and a new Finance Worker, Tanja Hoger.

The Flat Out Management Collective members have furthermore supported the work of Flat Out through participation in a range of activities relating to the organisation's mission of ending women's criminalisation and imprisonment, as well as being active in community and sector development opportunities including:

- ASU Fair Pay Case rallies
- WISHIN Women's Car Sleep-Out for National Homelessness Week
- Victorian Decarceration Network action at Parliament House protesting the new Government's proposed prison and police expansion
- Sisters Inside 'Is Prison Obsolete?' International Conference held in Sydney
- CHRIP activities including advocacy and activism trainings and the excellent well attended forum on 6 May - 'Gender, Drug Offences and Criminalisation' at the Victorian Multicultural Hub
- The Management Collective and CHRIP Volunteers were active in organising and running FOFO: Friends of Flat Out women's dance parties at the Czech Club which were a fundraising event and also an opportunity to have fun and showcase the talents of the CHRIP Project Worker Phoebe on the DJ decks
- Flat Out Management Collective representative Amanda George made a presentation to the Judicial College of Victoria (JCV) at a session on Women in the Justice System. The JCV is a program of continuing professional development and legal education for members of the judiciary
- Various other public speaking engagements and community activities and actions as representatives of Flat Out

The year has also seen Flat Out move into new territory both physically and in cyberspace - with a new leased premises next door at 52 Pin Oak Crescent to provide a private confidential meeting space for employee supervision and women supported by Flat Out. The new premises also has a meeting and training room for use by Flat Out and community groups. Flat Out has recently upgraded its IT system to a full server, and has begun using social networking tools to reach out to a broader audience. We are very grateful to our funders for supporting these important improvements.

With a new government and proposed expansion of police and prisons in Victoria, the challenges for Flat Out continue. A priority for the coming year will be extension of existing funding and services agreements, increased funding for expansion of our premises and growing the outreach support team, and sustainable funding for the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People so that we can continue to do our vital systemic advocacy work.

In particular we need to focus resources on reversing law and order campaigning and the trend toward more police and prisons as a solution to creating safer communities.

The Management Collective and employees are to be commended for their commitment and enthusiasm in continuing to support the individual and systemic advocacy needs of criminalised women and women exiting prison.

Thank you to all the individuals and organisations that have supported the work of Flat Out over the past year. We look forward to your ongoing support and involvement over the coming year.

Amanda George and **Liz Shield**, on behalf of the Management Collective

“With a new government and proposed expansion of police and prisons in Victoria, the challenges for Flat Out continue”



Flat Out is an exemplary support and advocacy service. I am very proud to be part of an organisation that strives to provide high quality support services, while at the same time grapples with the significance of doing effective community education, social change and systemic advocacy work.

Despite unprecedented prison expansion and the unacceptable impacts of this barbarism - the team at Flat Out has maintained extraordinary energy and focus on innovative ways to curb the impacts of misguided law and order campaigning. There is an extraordinary team spirit and commitment, and an unfailing focus on engaging the broader community in and behind our work. The long list of acknowledgments at the beginning of this report is indicative of this work.

The Management Collective, made up of Flat Out employees and unpaid Management Collective members, meet regularly to review and further develop the organisation and its services. The complement of highly skilled, committed and passionate women is the driving force of the organisation - led by the spirit and aspirations of the women we support.

Early in 2011 Flat Out was formally accredited by QICSA. As part of this process the reviewers identified future quality improvements; we are pleased to report that the key recommendations for this report have been implemented.

A key highlight has been the expansion of our premises for:

- Maintaining privacy and confidentiality when meeting with women we support
- Maintaining privacy and confidentiality for employee supervision
- A creative hanging space for Flat Out/CHRIP art works
- A small meeting room for our trainings and networking events
- This space is also available for hire at reasonable rates for community and self-advocacy groups which complements other fundraising activities.

We thank the Department of Human Services for providing a small grant toward the fit out of this space.

We also thank Freehills law firm for important assistance with drafting and negotiating our new lease agreement.

A further review recommendation was to upgrade the electronic client management system and our IT system to a full server. This was implemented within this annual reporting period with all relevant employees trained in use of the new systems. We now have better capability for generating more regular, comprehensive and accurate data which supports our interest in maintaining strong relationships with funders and provides an accurate evidence base for our important systemic advocacy and social change work.

We recently conducted annual planning and reviewed our forthcoming annual plan.

We have also proposed changes to our constitution at this year's annual general meeting. Thank you to Blake Dawson for providing legal assistance in drafting these changes.

Other improvements include the purchasing of new ergonomic office equipment, stronger frameworks for supporting employees, membership to a number of external organisations (including Jobs Australia and an Employee Assistance Program), attendance and involvement in the biennial International Sisters Inside Conference; and a strong focus on creating a learning environment by encouraging employees to participate in a myriad of training and professional development opportunities.

The Flat Out website is currently being redeveloped with pro bono and professional service assistance obtained through the services of GOOD COMPANY and White Dog Green Frog, (our website host).

Throughout the annual reporting period, Flat Out has met its reporting and compliance requirements, and has exceeded its funding and service contracts and commitments as a quality service provider.

Where Flat Out is unable to provide relevant housing or support through internal capacity, Flat Out has supported women to locate appropriate housing and support.

Flat Out currently has 17 partnerships, protocols and MOU's with a range of organisations. We have protocols with 7 housing agencies and a total of 15 nomination rights to transitional housing properties. As Flat Out does not provide 7 day, 24 hour support, we have a support protocol with the 24 hour St Kilda Crisis Centre. All women are given information and contacts for the state-wide Opening Doors Access Points, Women's DV Crisis Service Victoria, Direct Line, Mental Health Advice Line and Psychiatric Triage. We have protocols with community legal centres for front door access to appropriate legal advice and assistance - alongside strong working relationships with a number of individual private lawyers, barristers and firms.

Flat Out will continue to work on developing links to a range of services to ensure that women are adequately supported in all areas of their development.

Flat Out is working to increase opportunities for women to access transitional and long term housing. In the past year we have secured additional nomination rights, and we are currently positioned to sign an agreement for an innovative approach to securing short term accommodation for women with children seeking to avoid a custodial sentence. Over the past year we have continued to work on our partnership with Common Equity Housing Limited, (with one woman successfully housed through this model), and a number of other women have applications afoot. The proposal seeks to further 'open up' common equity rental housing co-ops to the women we support. This includes co-operative housing for single women and women seeking to reunite with their children.

We are supporting the further development of two models; an intentional community or newly established co-op for approximately 15 women with opportunities to access a range of housing types/stock throughout Victoria, and the second model seeks to open access for women to vacancies in existing housing cooperatives.

We are also investigating other social and community housing opportunities through the establishment of stronger links with community housing organisations. We are active members of Community Housing Federation Victoria and Council to Homeless Persons. We also attend the North and West Local Area Service Networks on a regular basis.

A further highlight of the past year has been the formal adoption of the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People, CHRIP, (originally an auspiced project of Flat Out). This work intrinsically links the direct service delivery of Flat Out with the systemic advocacy work of CHRIP, and is a powerful and tangible example of the strength of the partnership which has led to a full integration of this work. Throughout this report there are many examples of the collaborative nature and importance of this work.

The coming year will bring a much stronger attention and commitment on developing an independent and sustainable funding model for CHRIP. Thank you to all the funders to have supported CHRIP over the past year.

(Please see acknowledgments at the beginning of this report). We look forward to your ongoing support and commitment to this vital work.

As part of this work we launched a new social enterprise; FOFO women's dance parties which are an opportunity to raise funds and give women who are friends of Flat Out the opportunity to dance toward our vision. These events have been enormously successful with more than 80 women attending each event.

With our key funding and services agreement due for renewal June 2012, the focus for the coming year will be on further implementing and consolidating extensive quality improvements and partnerships, in line with our strategic plan. We will also be seeking to expand services and advocacy across our organisation.

We are keen to work with any organisation that concurs with our values and mission, and supports our mission to keep women out of prison.

Congratulations and warm appreciation to everyone who has contributed to Flat Out and CHRIP 2010 -2011.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year,



Annie Nash – Manager

“A further highlight of the past year has been the formal adoption of the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People, CHRIP, (originally an auspiced project of Flat Out)”



Direct Support Services - Outreach Support Team Report

“Flat Out assists in developing women’s skills to enable them to re-establish an independent life in the community, to regain self esteem and to attain some degree of financial security to break the cycle of poverty, crime and punishment” – Flat Out Inc: A Brief Herstory by Mary Cotter

Flat Out is a support, advocacy and research organisation that works alongside women with lived experience of imprisonment. We are a small team of dedicated and passionate employees with varied strengths, and diverse backgrounds and experience. We are flexible, sensitive and non-judgemental in our approach.

We strive to empower women by informing them of their rights, listening to their individual needs and advocating for better outcomes and opportunities. We understand that the women’s experiences are unique; therefore employ an ‘outside of the square’ framework of support as the ‘one size fits all’ model is proven to be ineffective. The team is challenged by the high number of women incarcerated and seeking support post release from prison. With more resources we could do more. The intensive outreach support and advocacy model is invaluable in contributing to a positive impact on the women lives, their families and the community.

“The women demonstrate an incredible strength, resilience and courage in the face of adversity and tragic circumstances. Their lives and that of their families are disrupted when women are imprisoned and the rebuilding of life is often a painstaking process.”

The women demonstrate an incredible strength, resilience and courage in the face of adversity and tragic circumstances. Their lives and that of their families are disrupted when women are imprisoned and the rebuilding of life is often a painstaking process. Flat Out draws on the proposition of decarceration as a critical foundation of our work and strongly opposes imprisonment as the solution to women; who are often victims of social injustices. A vast majority of women we support are combating social issues such as homelessness, poverty, domestic violence, childhood abuse, sexual assault and discrimination. The culmination of the multiple traumas’ can sadly lead women into the cycle of incarceration and recidivism as the community fails to address these issues. Flat Out understands that there is no simple solution to these issues; however it is very clear that prison expansion by way of ‘adding more beds in prison’ is not the answer. Rehabilitation in the community, resources focused on prevention and community education are just a few examples of ways to better respond to women who are often marginalised, oppressed and socially isolated.

Flat Out continues to challenge the systems that are patriarchal in structure and punitive in response. Our vision is that women will no longer be invisible; their voices will be heard; and we will walk with them to ensure that as a community we address the underlying social issues that underpin women’s criminalisation and imprisonment. There is no compelling argument for putting women behind concrete walls and barbed wire.



A Women's Information, Leadership and Self Advocacy Program at Dame Phyllis Frost Prison

Unprecedented prison expansion has enormous ripple effects into the community; not just in terms of numbers of women going to prison, it impacts on all levels of support and services available to women in and beyond the prison system. Flat Out is under immense pressure to be able to provide services to meet the needs of all women seeking our support.

We visit the prison regularly, and whilst we are well placed to work with women on developing their understanding of a whole range of services and support available in the community, we have not been able to meet all the individual requests for information, services and support.

In 2010 we developed an idea for a program in the DPFC prison where we would have the opportunity to meet with up to 15 women in a workshop environment to empower them with information, prior to release, to maximise their opportunities to exercise choice in finding and selecting services and support.

Information and educational opportunities are crucial to women's capacity as leaders and self-advocates.

We also saw this model as an opportunity to get input from women about the types of services and support they are seeking; an innovative model for seeking feedback and direction from women.

At the end of 2010 we developed the proposal, sought input from women in the prison about topics for the program, and with the support and assistance of program staff at DPFC, we signed a protocol with the prison in early 2011. The Women's Information, Leadership and Self Advocacy Program at DPFC has now been successfully running for 6 months.

This program allows Flat Out to reach out to a wider range of women and is a grass roots approach to education and advocacy by involving the women in directing the content of the program. This program runs monthly with community 'specialist' guest speakers on a wide variety of women's concerns.

Topics include:

- changes to suspended sentences
- criminal records discrimination (with a focus on employment)
- housing and homelessness – navigating the system
- artistic and musical development-what's in the community?
- GLBTI services and support

A number of individuals and community organisations have assisted Flat Out in providing information sessions to women in prison. We thank you for your involvement.

Flat Out would particularly like to acknowledge the women who have participated in this project.

Projects

MINTER ELLISON LAWYERS

Flat Out is always striving to improve our services by seeking direction from women about how we can improve our services. We are grateful for funding by Minter Ellison Lawyers which is being utilised to run focus groups with women.

This funding has been used for the initial phases of developing a Consumer Participation Strategy. It will cover the running of a number of focus groups and telephone interviews by facilitators from the Council to Homeless Persons Peer Education Support Program (PESP). These are trained facilitators, who have experience of homelessness, and they will talk to Flat Out women, past and present, about their experiences of the service and how it can improve, as well as how to involve women more meaningfully.

STREETSMART

Flat Out is very grateful to StreetSmart for funding to support women coming out of prison.

The primary purpose of this project is to optimize opportunities for women to be successfully resettled and reintegrated into the community post release from prison.

The particular aims of this project are:

1. To have necessary funds available for the purchase of essential personal items for women upon release, with the view to reducing recidivism and revisitation to prison, by reducing the likelihood that women will be criminalised in pursuit of necessary items and care.
2. To develop a written resource (to be shared with other community organisations) that identifies the range of brokerage services/funds available to purchase or procure personal effects for women post release.

Essential personal items may include, but not be limited to:

- Underwear
- Toiletries
- Proof of identification documents
- Mobile phones and phone cards (we work on an assertive outreach model, phone contact is essential to this model)
- Met tickets
- Emergency food where Vic food bank and other sources aren't available
- Pharmacotherapy and other prescription medication
- Manchester: sheets/doona/pillows
- Diaries (in particular for women with memory loss associated with ABI)
- Warm clothing and footwear
- Carry bag for departure from prison (women currently leave prison with corrections issue plastic bag)
- Sport and recreation equipment (we are currently supporting a woman who has been selected for the state squad Street Soccer), she was only recently released and is in need of personal soccer gear

The second objective of the project is the development of a quick guide for community workers and advocates seeking to obtain funds for the purpose of procuring or purchasing personal items for women post-release.



AN END TO PRISONS

IMPRISONMENT IN VICTORIA

As of March 2011, there were on average 4,574 people in prison in Victoria on any given day¹. **The majority of people in prison are from structurally disadvantaged communities, and prisons can worsen the conditions of poor mental and physical health, drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness, violence, and poverty**

that lead to criminalisation. These are systemic issues that require change at a broad level in the community. Prisons are also expensive, diverting resources from necessary social services and impacting not just those who are imprisoned, but their families and the wider community.

Furthermore, at least half of people imprisoned in Victoria have been in prison before², and research shows that rather than deterring crime or providing rehabilitation, prisons may increase the chances of a person committing an offence after they are released³.

WHAT IS DECARCERATION?

Decarceration refers to reducing the numbers of people going to and returning to prison. This means investing in both communities and individuals to ensure that everyone has equal access to housing, healthcare, education,

employment, and support. Decarceration strategies also require government policy and legislative change, including an end to prison expansion and ensuring alternative sentencing options like

community-based orders and suspended sentences. Community organisations have a vital role to play in building the movement for decarceration and advocating for progressive social change.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DECARCERATION

The overall rate of imprisonment in Victoria has risen by more than 40% over the past decade⁴, with the rate of women's imprisonment growing faster than that of men⁵. According to the Victorian Ombudsman and the Sentencing Advisory

Council, these alarming numbers can be attributed to changes in sentencing practice and a generally more punitive approach to law and order.⁶

Imprisonment disproportionately affects communities that experience systemic

racism, as reflected by overrepresentation in prisons. In Australia, Indigenous people are 14 times more likely than non-Indigenous people to be in prison.⁷ In Victoria, women born in Vietnam represent 13.8% of the women prisoner

population,⁸ though only 1.2% of the total female population in Victoria were born in Vietnam.⁹ As rates of imprisonment continue to rise, we must recognise that a punitive approach to law and order is doing little to make our communities safer.

PRISONS ARE A COST TO THE COMMUNITY

Imprisonment is harmful and disruptive for those imprisoned, their families, and their communities. Even short sentences mean separation from family and community, loss of income, inability to meet caring responsibilities and potential loss of housing. This has a far reaching, intergenerational impact on children.

At any one time there are at least 3000 kids in Victoria who have a primary caregiver in prison¹⁰, causing immense anxiety for imprisoned parents, and often impacting children's housing, education, health and supports in the community. In the coming years there are plans for Victoria's prison beds to grow by the

hundreds, at a huge expense. Annual state spending on Victorian prisons has increased by 186% over the past decade to \$640 million in 2010/2011¹¹. It costs, on average, \$240.66 per day to hold someone in prison; while the average amount spent per day on a Community Corrections order is only \$18.50.¹²

The money currently spent on keeping people in prison could go a lot further towards creating community safety if it were diverted to community-based programs and initiatives that challenge structural disadvantage. This would begin to address the causes of crime and curb prison expansion.

THE VIOLENCE OF PRISONS

Prisons themselves cause harm to those imprisoned, including exacerbating mental health issues, and inadequately treating issues of trauma or drug and alcohol addiction. Human rights advocates have documented the abuses people in prison are subject to. For example, the

overwhelming majority of women in prison have previously experienced sexual, physical or emotional abuse. Despite the ubiquity of such trauma, women face regular strip searches in prison, as do men, though negligible contraband is ever found¹³. Far from being a harmless security measure,

these searches have been described by women and their advocates as a form of violent assault¹⁴. Prisons also contribute to poor physical health. At least 41% of people in prison test positive for Hepatitis C, compared with

1% of the general population¹⁵, yet men and women in prison are denied access to Medicare as well as harm-reduction facilities including Needle and Syringe Programs. There continues to be a high rate of deaths in custody, particularly Indigenous deaths, even 20 years after

the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Research shows that people who have been in prison in Australia have a much higher chance of dying from unnatural causes than people who have never been to prison¹⁶.

PRISONS DON'T CREATE COMMUNITY SAFETY

Real community safety (everyone having access to housing, food, employment, education and freedom from violence) is not created by increasing prison numbers. We need to consider transformative changes, and investing

resources in communities, not prisons. There is no evidence that prisons reduce violent behaviour; in fact the violent prison environment actively works against any efforts to end violence in the community. Prison normalises violence rather than

challenging it. Additionally, people who have been in prison can find that the systemic issues they faced before criminalisation are exacerbated post-release, and be compounded by new issues such as criminal record discrimination.

Community organisations are often overstretched and underfunded, and there are increasing numbers of people going in and out of prison that urgently need support from a wide range of services.

There is a growing movement against prison expansion in Victoria. We can all help to build communities based on gender, racial, and economic justice and work towards decarceration and the long-term abolition of prisons.

DECARCERATION STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

• **Actively work towards decarceration in your organisation by prioritising resources to support and advocate for people at risk of going to prison, who are inside prison, or who risk returning to prison;**

• **Recognise the interconnectedness of social issues such as housing, mental health care, and drug and alcohol support, and the negative impact imprisonment can have. This includes ensuring prisons are not positioned as a solution to complex social problems;**

• **Ensure your organisation (and/or organisations you work with and make referrals to) do not pose any barriers or discrimination to people who have been imprisoned, or people who are at risk of imprisonment;**

• **Work alongside people who have been imprisoned, valuing the knowledge and expertise that people with the lived experience of imprisonment or criminalisation bring to your organisation;**

• **Use your organisational voice, knowledge and resources to educate and advocate for decarceration and social change. Community organisations can publicly challenge proposals for prison expansion and raise awareness about the harmful effects of punitive law and order policies;**

• **Focus on supporting people in prison, not on strengthening or expanding the prison system, with a goal of building long-term alternatives to prisons.**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People: www.chrip.org.au

Flat Out: www.flatout.org.au

Sisters Inside: www.sistersinside.com.au

Smart Justice: www.smartjustice.org.au

Human Rights Commission: www.humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/prisoners/index.html

Community Legal Centres Victoria: www.communitylaw.org.au

3CR Done by Law, Beyond the Bars NAIDOC broadcasts and DoIn'Time show: www.3cr.org.au

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service: www.vals.org.au

Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service: www.fvpls.org

Victorian Aboriginal Health Service: www.vahs.org.au

This poster was made by the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP) Working Group in September 2011

1. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2011) Corrective Services, March Quarter 2011, 4512.0, p.12

2. Correctives Victoria (2008) Statistical Profile of the Victorian Prison System 2004/2005-2008/2009, Department of Justice Victoria, p.21

3. Smart Justice Fact Sheet (2011) More prisons are not the answer to reducing crime, Federation of Community Legal Centres

4. Correctives Victoria (2008) Statistical Profile of the Victorian Prison System 2004/2005-2008/2009, Department of Justice Victoria, p.15

5. Ibid

6. Smart Justice (2011) More prisons are not the answer to reducing crime

7. ABS (2011), pp. 13, 24

8. Correctives Victoria (2009) p.13

9. In 2006 Census, 31,227 females born in Vietnam living in Victoria, of a total 2,512,006 females in Victoria. Source: ABS (2007)

10. Harman (2006) Children: Unlimited Victims of Legal Process, Victorian Association for the Care and Reformation of Offenders.

11. Smart Justice (2011) More prisons are not the answer to reducing crime

12. Department of Justice Victoria (2010) Corrections Statistics FAQs, Last updated: 14/02/2011. <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au>

13. McCulloch and George (2009) Naked Power: Strip Searching in Women's Prisons, in McCulloch and Scroten (eds) The Violence of Incarceration, p. 118

14. McCulloch and George (2009) p. 113

15. Victorian Ombudsman (2011) Investigation into prisoner access to health care.

16. Gidycz (2003) 'Post prison mortality', The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology 36(1) p.94; Sagvay and Carlton (2010) p. 288; Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2009) The Health of Australia's Prisoners, Canberra: Harman et al. (2007)

'Factors Associated with Mortality in a Cohort of Australian Prisoners', European Journal of Epidemiology 22(7) p.417-28



The Centre For The Human Rights Of Imprisoned People.

The Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP) is a project of Flat Out promoting human rights for people in Victorian prisons through community capacity building, education, and systemic advocacy. CHRIP is fundamentally informed by a decarceration and social justice framework, and is committed to the involvement of people with the lived experience of imprisonment.

CHRIP's work as a project of Flat Out falls into four main categories:

- **Community Capacity Building and Education**
- **Public Opinion and Systemic Advocacy (Research, Submissions, Inquiries, Communication)**
- **Organisational development**

Background to CHRIP:

The CHRIP project has grown out of prison law and human rights work done by community legal centres, advocates, and activists since the 80s. Since that time, people have been working on diverse issues including discrimination against women in prison, deaths in custody or post-release, prison privatisation and systemic violence, accountability and transparency of prisons through freedom of information and litigation, and direct support around issues of housing, children, education and employment.

In 2007, CHRIP received seed funding from the Reichstein Foundation through the Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre to employ a part-time Project Worker for 6 months. In 2008, CHRIP moved to become an auspiced project of Flat Out, and in 2010 CHRIP transitioned to an ongoing project of Flat Out. This model draws on the intrinsic connections between service delivery/casework, and systemic social change work, ensuring Flat Out and CHRIP in partnership are meeting the individual needs of women, whilst addressing broader underlying issues.

Whilst CHRIP's early work had a strong focus on legal capacity building, including working with the Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre to establish a Pilot Prisoners' Legal Service; supporting the Mental Health Legal Centre to develop 'Inside Access'; writing the Victorian Prisoners Legal Service Partnership Agreement; convening the Victorian Legal Assistance Forum Prison Law Dialogue; convening the Corrections Working Group,

etc. CHRIP now has a stronger focus on community capacity building, education, and systemic advocacy.

CHRIP's work over the past year has included the following highlights:

- Publishing the report, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women in Victorian Prisons: Update on developments since the 2005 Request for Systemic Review of Discrimination against women in Victorian Prisons in October 2010;
- Launching the 12-month multimedia Story-Telling Project for women who had been subject to youth detention, policing, surveillance, community-based orders and/or prison. The project included storytelling workshops and full-day digital arts workshops for 11 women, resulting in poetry, creative writing, song and short films about issues affecting participants lives. These films were screened to over 100 people in September 2010, and the transcripts of the stories have been published and broadly distributed as a resource for ongoing policy and advocacy work;
- Presenting on the panel Does Community Policing Stop Racism and Police Violence? at the National Association of Community Legal Centres Conference in October 2010, Breaking Ground, in October 2010;
- In collaboration with Flat Out, writing a submission and presenting at public hearings for the Victorian Government Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee Inquiry into Drug-Related Offending on Female Prisoner Numbers in July 2010;
- Organising the community forum, Gender, Drug-Offences and Criminalisation, held 6 May 2011 at the Melbourne Multi-Cultural Hub. The forum coincided with the Victorian Government's response to the Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee's 2010 Parliamentary Inquiry into Drug-Related Offending on Female Prisoner Numbers. Panel topics at the forum included: Criminalisation, Health Impacts and Needs for Women and Children, and Legal Discrimination, Law Reform, Community Legal Education, and the forum was attended by 40-50 people;

- Initiating and co-organising with Flat Out, Inside Access, Smart Justice and the Federation of Community Legal Centres the free public forum: Why more prisons are not the answer to reducing crime and disadvantage: the argument for a prison moratorium in Victoria. The forum was held on 23 September 2011, and attended by over 100 people;
- Establishing and supporting a CHRIP volunteer Working Group, and collaboratively developing an educational poster around imprisonment in Victoria, and decarceration strategies for community organisations;
- Running dedicated Effective Advocacy Training Programs in 2010 and 2011 with participants including students, community sector lawyers and advocates, women who have been impacted by the criminal justice system, and family members of imprisoned people. Topics included Introduction to Imprisonment in Victoria, Sustaining Yourself and Others, Media and Public Speaking, Law for Non-Lawyers, Housing Advocacy, Drug & Alcohol and Mental Health Advocacy, etc;
- Sustaining the Victorian Decarceration Network, with 250+ organisations and individuals working on imprisonment and associated issues sharing information and resources.

Inside the CHRIP Story Telling Project

Over the past 12 months CHRIP has also worked on a multimedia Story Telling Project with women who had been subject to youth detention, policing, surveillance, community-based orders and/or prison.

CHRIP facilitated a series of storytelling workshops for women over a period of six weeks from June to July 2010 through a series of full-day digital arts workshops, where 11 women created their own stories through mediums such as poetry, creative writing, song and short films about issues affecting their lives.

These films were screened to over 100 people and the stories will become a resource for ongoing policy and advocacy work.

The Story Telling Project came about in the context of a dramatic increase in the number of women in the prison system in Victoria over recent years. It confronted this increase in imprisonment, policing and surveillance, by giving women the opportunity to tell their stories in their own words; challenging

stereotypes and highlighting examples of discrimination and injustice.

The Story Telling Project invited viewers to prioritise women's voices, and their stories of survival and resistance. We hoped to change the way women are viewed by challenging mainstream ideas about criminalisation. We believe in a world where women are not criminalised or incarcerated. Words from one of the participants: "I'm hoping that people...will gain an insight into the pain experienced by criminalised women, and wherever possible will treat them with dignity and assist them to rebuild their lives by showing compassion that all of us rightly deserve."

CHRIP working group

2011 saw the establishment of the CHRIP working group after a number of attendees of CHRIP training sessions expressed an interest in assisting with the goals of CHRIP. Some also attended the Sisters Inside: Are Prisons Obsolete Conference, are studying or working in fields related to decarceration or are otherwise looking to become long-term activists for decarceration.

The main project undertaken by the group this year was the production of the "An End To Prisons" poster. The aim of this poster was to disseminate decarcerative politics in the general community, with a particular focus on community organisations in Victoria. In consultation with CHRIP, Flat Out and the broader community of those concerned with the human rights of imprisoned people, the CHRIP working group researched, wrote, designed, and fundraised for a large poster with a thorough summary of the issues around imprisonment in Victoria and a number of arguments for decarceration. So far the poster has proved popular, being displayed in a number of community spaces and sold through the New International Bookshop in Trades Hall.

The working group also organised the catering for the Friends of Flat Out Women's Dance Party in September, providing a wide range of sweets and savouries, with a focus on allergy-friendly foodstuffs.

In 2012, the group hopes to continue working under the direction of CHRIP and Flat Out in a variety of capacities to help these organisations achieve their strategic goals. In particular, they aim to produce further promotional material for decarcerative politics, in the form of posters, stickers, and other items with broad appeal.

Flat Out Protocols & Nomination Rights

FLAT OUT HAS PROTOCOLS WITH THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:

- Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP), (now an integral part of Flat Out following a Management Collective decision in December)
- Common Equity Housing Ltd (CEHL)
- Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) Women's Leadership Program
- Flemington Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Hanover Cheltenham
- Hanover ICMI program
- Homeground
- Local Area Service Network (LASN) Northern & Western
- Newmarket Baptist Church, Flemington
- Melbourne City Mission-WISP Program
- Programs DPFC & Tarrengower
- St Vincent de Paul Housing Services Glenroy (now known as Vincentcare Community Housing)
- Salvation Army EastCare
- St Kilda Crisis Centre
- Women's Housing Limited
- Women's Housing Limited Private Rental Brokerage Program
- Yarra Community Housing MetroWest

FLAT OUT HAS NOMINATION RIGHTS TO TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROPERTIES WITH THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:

- Homeground
- Salvation Army SASHS Western
- Salvation Army EastCare Housing Services
- St Vincent de Paul Housing Services Glenroy (now known as Vincentcare Community Housing)
- Women's Housing Limited
- Hanover Cheltenham

Training undertaken by Management Collective members

TRAINING ON A RANGE OF TOPICS WAS PROVIDED TO FLAT OUT BY A DIVERSE RANGE OF SERVICES:

- Common Equity Housing Ltd (CEHL)-CERCs & Community Managed Co-ops
- Council for Homeless Persons (CHP)
- PILCH Connect
- AHURI-Australian Housing & Urban Research Institute-Using Research to build your case
- Bendigo Regional Institute TAFE- Homelessness Assistance and Community Housing Program (BRIT HACH) Suicide Risk Assessment
- CEO Learning Circle
- CHRIP Effective Advocacy Training Program
 - Corrections Resource Centre
 - Fearless Individual and Systemic Advocacy
 - Fundraising-Grassroots and Grants
 - Getting & Using Information: Activist Research Skills
 - Introduction to Advocacy and Campaigning in Victoria
 - Introduction to Imprisonment in Victoria
 - Law for Non-Lawyers: An Introduction to the Law and the Legal System
 - Media and Public Speaking
 - Planning Campaigns
 - Sustaining Yourself and Others
 - Systemic and Fearless Advocacy
- DHS – iTaNGO
- DHS Service Agreement module presentation
- DHS SHSC Content
- DHS SHSC SHIP CMS
- DHS SHSC SHOR Web Portal
- DHS-Working with people who have hoarding behaviours
- DVRC Family Violence & Risk Assessment
- Hep C Victoria-Broadening the Straight and Narrow from Prison and Community
- Infocom
- North & West Homelessness Network Opening Doors session
- Prisoners & Human Rights-A practical guide for Community Lawyers & Other Advocates on the Charter of Human Rights & Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- QICSA Quality Workplan
- Sisters Inside 'Is Prison Obsolete' Conference
- Spectrum-Working with people with anger
- Transgender Cultural Awareness
- Victorian Legal Assistance Forum-CALD forum: Early intervention is the way to go
- Working with Government-Queen Vic Women's Centre
- Worksafe-Are you officewise? Health & Safety in the Office

Statement of Cash Flows

(For the period ending 30th June 2011)

Cash Flow from Operating Activities	2011	2010
Receipts from grants etc.	543,273	505,767
Receipts from interest	15,088	11,165
Payments to suppliers and employees	(457,375)	(462,128)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (Note 2)	100,986	54,804
Cash flow from Investing Activities		
Proceeds from (payment for) property, plant and equipment, and motor vehicles	(6,406)	(13,474)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(6,406)	(13,474)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	94,580	41,330
Cash at beginning of year	316,052	274,722
Cash at end of reporting period (Note 1)	410,632	316,052

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows

NOTE 1. Reconciliation of cash

For the purposes of the statement of the cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in at call deposits with banks or financial institutions, investments in money market instruments maturing within less than two months, net of bank overdrafts

(a) Reconciliation of Cash

Cash at the end of the reporting period as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

	2011	2010
Cash at Bank	410,122	315,527
Cash on Hand	510	525
	410,632	316,052

NOTE 2. Reconciliation of net cash provided by operating activities to operating profit

	2011	2010
Operating Profit (Loss)	23,580	21,705
Depreciation/Amortisation	11,614	23,316
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	4	74,983
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	-	1,122
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	(6,534)	1,546
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	12,935	4,861
Increase/(decrease) in income in advance	59,387	(71,768)
Assets change-over	-	(961)
	100,986	54,804

Flat Out Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
Equity		
Committed Funds	230,573	206,992
Total Equity	<u>230,573</u>	<u>206,992</u>
Represented by:		
Current Assets		
Cash on Hand	285	300
Bond - Cabcharge	500	500
Bendigo Cheque A/C	31	12,918
Bendigo Cash Mngt A/C	-	44,067
Electronic Clearing A/C	-	(149)
HEF A/C	618	741
ANZ Online Saver	241,902	-
ANZ Term Deposit	161,834	250,000
ANZ Cheque A/C	5,737	7,950
Outreach Workers Floats	225	225
Trade Debtors	955	959
Other Debtors	4,477	4,477
	<u>416,564</u>	<u>321,988</u>
Non-Current Assets		
Motor Vehicles	60,731	60,731
Less Accumulated Depreciation	24,408	13,848
	<u>36,323</u>	<u>46,883</u>
Office Furniture & Equipment	28,230	21,824
Less Accumulated Depreciation	20,465	19,411
	<u>7,765</u>	<u>2,413</u>
	<u>44,088</u>	<u>49,296</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	460,652	371,284
Current Liabilities		
Sundry Creditors	172	11,238
Trade Creditors	2,230	5,962
Provision for Annual Leave	21,979	19,176
Provision for Long Service Leave	11,996	6,208
Provision for Sick Leave	11,352	7,008
Provision for GST	10,897	1,351
Accrued Charges	5,877	7,158
Income in Advance	165,578	106,190
	<u>230,080</u>	<u>164,292</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>230,080</u>	<u>164,292</u>
Net Assets	<u>230,573</u>	<u>206,992</u>

Flat Out Income Statement

For the Year ended 30 June 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
Income		
Auspice/Management Fees	7,950	7,850
Trust Income	3,314	6,134
Donations Income	7,693	1,888
Interest Received	15,088	11,165
Other Revenue	2,552	4,541
Dept of Health & Ageing Grants	152,705	185,890
Dept of Human Services Grants	151,153	157,675
HEF Grants	6,393	11,660
Hanover Grants (ICM)	90,270	47,510
Reichstein Foundation Grants	10,000	7,500
R E Ross Trust	42,955	30,015
Melb City Mission - WISP	9,990	13,402
City of Melbourne Grant	-	10,000
Other Grants	(1,093)	17,149
Profit on Sale of Non-current Assets	-	1,339
Loss on Sale of Non-current Assets	-	(378)
	<u>498,970</u>	<u>513,340</u>
Expenditure		
Auditor fee	1,751	1,737
Auspice/Management fees	7,950	7,850
Bank Charges	268	353
CHRIP	9,060	16,106
Cleaning	2,023	2,174
Client Expenses	3,037	1,972
Collective Expenses	3,409	2,874
Consultancy Fees	2,637	17,934
Conferences	1,818	3,541
Computer Expenses	765	2,355
Depreciation	11,614	24,397
FOFO Expenses	920	-
HEF Expenses	6,362	12,346
Holiday Pay	2,803	2,145
Insurance	944	720
Light & Power	3,238	1,969
Long Service Leave	6,214	1,406
Meeting Expenses	327	194
Motor Vehicle Expenses	15,021	14,512
Office Equipments	966	529
OH & S Expenses	164	111
Postage	835	390
Printing & Stationery	4,718	3,994

Resources	23	251
Rent	35,943	28,358
Repairs & Maintenance	356	635
Salaries	293,800	276,558
Security Costs	1,409	364
Sick Leave	4,344	1,312
Supervision	-	1,400
Staff Amenities & Welfare	2,365	272
Staff Training	631	4,376
Staff Recruitment	259	1,415
Sundry expenses	577	130
Subscriptions & Memberships	1,689	3,354
Superannuation Contributions	24,677	23,330
Telephone	9,793	13,325
Trust Payment	1,144	6,128
Travelling Expenses	4,531	4,664
Workcover	7,005	6,152
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	475,390	491,635
OPERATING PROFIT	23,580	21,705

Flat Out Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year ended 30 June 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
Committed Funds at the beginning of the financial year	206,992	185,247
Prior Year Adjustments	-	40
Profit (Loss) Attributable to Members	23,580	21,705
COMMITTED FUNDS AT 30 JUNE 2011	230,573	206,992

NOTE 1 – STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.

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.

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

FIXED ASSETS

Each Class of fixed assets is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated using the prime cost method or the diminishing value method over their useful lives to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements expected to be settled within one year together with entitlements arising from wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave which will be settled after one year, have been measured at their minimal amount. Other employee entitlements payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those entitlements.

Contributions are made by the association to employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognized net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of the GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognized as part of the cost of the 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.



J L COLLYER & PARTNERS
ACCOUNTANTS & AUDITORS

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the members of FLAT OUT INC.

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of **FLAT OUT INC** which comprises the balance sheet as at 30th June 2011, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The management of are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The management's responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. 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 and fair presentation of the financial report on 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 directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the Management's financial reporting requirement. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

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

DIRECTORS
JANET L. COLLYER FCPA
LIONEL R. ARNOLD CA B.BUS



Chartered Accountants

LIABILITY LIMITED BY A SCHEME APPROVED

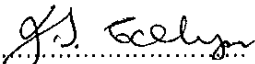
Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the relevant independence requirements.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion the financial report of **FLAT OUT INC.**

- (a) gives a true and fair view of **FLAT OUT INC's** financial position as at 30th June 2011 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.


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Janet Collyer
J L COLLYER & PARTNERS

29th August 2011



Flat Out welcomes your support and involvement

- You can attend our public forums and events
 - Participate in our advocacy trainings
- Support our community education work by distributing our published materials
- If you would like to make a financial contribution you can make a tax deductible donation at:

www.givenow.com.au/flatout



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