

ANNUAL REPORT | 2009 – 2010



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

Design by **chalk creative**: chalkcreative.com.au

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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 based.

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.





NOTES OF APPRECIATION

To all the women involved in Flat Out over the past year. Thank you for sharing with us 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)

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – SAAP

(Supported Accommodation and Assistance Program)

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES – ICMI

(Intensive Case Management Initiative pilot)

WISP (WOMEN'S INTEGRATED SUPPORT PROGRAM)

partnership between Melbourne City Mission (MCM), Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO) and Jesuit Social Services (The Brosnan Centre).

NON GOVERNMENT FUNDING

R.E Ross Trust
Reichstein Foundation
Victoria Law Foundation
City of Melbourne
Helen MacPherson Smith Trust
CHRIP (Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People)
Minter Ellison Lawyers
Streetsmart

OTHER DONATIONS

Lindsay Tanner MP for Melbourne
Doris Jarvies & Amanda George

Flat Out would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations

**DHS – Peter Lake, Janelle Cribb, Jake Argyll
and Mary Marshall**

**DHS Program And Service Advisor
– Sarah Langmore**

**Department Of Health & Ageing
– Laurie Morcom, Senior Project Officer Health
Strategies Branch**

**DHS – ADIS – Duncan Smart, Project Officer/
Information Analyst Information, Analysis &
Reporting Policy, Planning & Strategy, Mental Health
& Drugs Division**

**Melbourne City Mission – Women’s Integrated
Support Program (WISP)**

Aboriginal Hostels Ltd

Aboriginal Liaison/Koorie Court

ACSO

ARBIAS

ASU

Aunty Lynn Killeen

Charandev Singh

Council To Homeless Persons (CHP)

Common Equity Housing Limited

Community Housing Federation Victoria (CHFV)

Deb Tsorbaris

Dowling & Macgregor Solicitors

Eastern Emergency Relief Network

Family Violence Prevention Legal Service

Federation Of Community Legal Centres

First Step Clinic

**Flemington Kensington Community Legal
Centre Inc.**

Forensicare

Greg Thomas – Solicitor

Hanover Cheltenham Housing Services

Homeground Services

Jean Roberts, – Consultant

Kathy Desmond – Consultant

Nadu Dove – Consultant

Jill Prior – Solicitor

**Public Interest Law Clearing House
(VIC) INC. (PILCH)**

Pilch Homeless Person’s Legal Clinic (HPLC)

QICSA Team

Regina Coeli

**Royal District Nursing Service Homeless
Person’s Program**

Salvation Army Housing Services – Eastcare

Sandy Milne

Somebody’s Daughter Theatre Company

St Kilda Crisis Centre

**St Vincent De Paul Housing Services –
Glenroy**

The Queen’s Trust

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

**Victorian Association For The Care And
Resettlement Of Offenders (VACRO)**

VicRelief Foodbank

Yarra Community Housing

WISHIN

Women’s Housing Limited

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. We also wish to thank everyone and organisations, who have given donations for women and their children that Flat Out supports. We also wish to thank those who have been generous with their time and have assisted us to provide women with a better service.

FLAT OUT MANAGEMENT COLLECTIVE

(Unpaid) **Amanda George, Koni Tsakonas, Bree Carlton, Karren Walker, Liz Shield, Marisa Sposaro**

FLAT OUT EMPLOYEES

Annie Nash – Current
Manager

Michele Old – Current
Duty/Resource Worker
Administrative Resource Worker

Sharon Villanueva – Current
Intensive Case Management Worker

Elise Pointer – Current
Outreach Support Worker

Phoebe Barton – Current
*Centre for the Human Rights of
Imprisoned People Project Worker*

Alyssha Fooks – Current
*Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned
People Story Telling Project Worker*

Maggie Barford
Finance Worker

Brook Shearer
Manager

Amy Mallett
Support Worker

Nadia Warren
Administrative Worker

Cat O'Connor
Support Worker

Bronwen Brook
Outreach Support 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





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 staff 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 21 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.

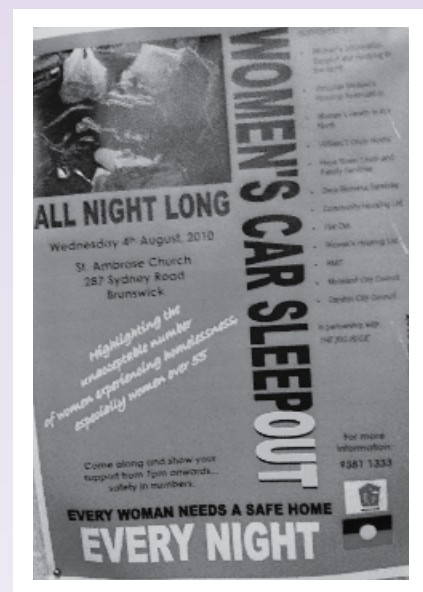
INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN'S LIVED EXPERIENCE

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 21 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.



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 Services 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 2009/10 were the majority of women in the age bracket of 30-39 years, followed closely by 40-54 years, 25-29 years and a small number of women between 20-24 years.

Flat Out receives a number of referrals from various sources however the most common source of referral for 2009/10 were women self-referring, followed by referrals from support workers at prison and 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 recently leaving an institution, followed by financial difficulties/hardship. Other presenting reasons for seeking assistance included eviction from accommodation, excessive rental costs and problematic substance use.

Flat Out works with women from all three tiers of homelessness: primary, secondary and tertiary. Homelessness can be directly related to incarceration - a woman who has a long history of recurring imprisonment often has a long history recurring homelessness.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATION TREATMENT GRANTS PROGRAM (NGOTGP)

NGOTGP (previously 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.

During the period July 1st 2009-June 30th 2010 there were a total of 39 'Episodes of Care' (EOC). 17 were reported in the first six months of the reporting period. 13 were reported through ADIS for the period January 1st - June 30th 2010.

A recent full file review identified there were 9 EOC not reported to ADIS during the final six months of the reporting period. These related to 4 women; and the nature of the service included information and referral, assistance with pharmacotherapy payments, advocacy and support for women to link them with pharmacotherapy programs, referrals and support for attendance to drug and alcohol dependency programs and rehabilitation and detox 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; because women will regularly be without finances for transport and phone to independently get to the service.

Many of the women we support are used to being 'dumped' by services that will ascribe notions of 'non engagement' to the 'client'.

Flat Out has had very successful engagement with women through meeting them on their turf.

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 knowledge of other services and supports.

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

Clients respect Flat Out as a service – Flat Out has integrity in the community.

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

Clients 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)

Flat Out works collaboratively with WISP to provide support to women and respond to their needs. Flat Out also works closely with WISP to ensure that women's rights are upheld in prison and in the community.

ICMI (INTENSIVE CASE MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE)

Hanover is the statewide provider of the Intensive Case Management Initiative (ICMI) which has been funded until 2009-2010 with the Victorian Department of Human Services. ICMI is a developmental project that provides support and brokerage funds for creative approaches to support clients who have high and complex needs. Flat Out has received funding from ICMI since September 2008, which will continue for two years.

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**



“Flat Out has been successful in gaining funding for an Art Therapy Program scheduled to begin in late October”

Flat Out is now an accredited SAAP agency. This has been the highlight of the annual reporting year. Past and present employees and Management Collective members have worked diligently to ensure that Flat Out continues to provide high quality services to women who have had contact with the criminal justice system - in particular supporting women who are exiting the Victorian prison system. Alongside this work, Flat Out has demonstrated to QICSA (and our stakeholders), that we are a unique and professional organisation that operates effectively within a Management Collective that is underpinned by a sophisticated framework of policies and procedures and delegated authority.

Flat Out is a small community organisation - the accreditation process therefore challenged the resources of all its members, as it required the organisation to review and refine its overall operations, policies, procedures and governance model. The process assisted Flat Out to hone in on areas for development, including the need for larger premises and increased overall capacity.

Flat Out is currently considering opportunities for future development, and we will continue to review the structure and operations through the Quality Work Plan, and the Flat Out Strategic Plan, 2010 - 2013.

Operating as a Management Collective enables Flat Out to develop and advocate for better outcomes for women. The Management Collective model harnesses and nurtures a broad range of knowledge and expertise. The Management Collective is very proud to be functioning as a Collective. Our model enables all our members to have the opportunity to contribute to the decision making and development of Flat Out as a model organisation.

Flat Out continues to link its service delivery to opportunities for systemic advocacy.

One opportunity has been Flat Out's auspice of the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned

“Flat Out has now reached its 22nd year – we will continue to provide high quality services and advocacy, with the highest level of commitment and enthusiasm.”

People (CHRIP). CHRIP's work, including the Digital Story Telling Project, has enabled Flat Out to maintain a focus on working alongside women toward systemic change and alternatives to prison. We see systemic advocacy as a critical component of our work, and we will continue to review opportunities for extending this work.

The Management Collective wishes to express warm thanks and appreciation to past and present employees. They are duly commended for their commitment and dedication, and for maintaining high quality services and advocacy for women.

During 2009-2010 we bid farewell to Collective member Marissa Sposaro, and welcomed Liz Shield and Karren Walker. Employees who left in 2009 -2010 were Amy Mallet, Brook Shearer, Nadia Warren and Cat O'Connor. We wish them all the best in their future endeavours. We welcomed two new outreach workers, Elise Pointer and Bronwen Brook, and the Manager Annie Nash.

Flat Out has now reached its 22nd year – we will continue to provide high quality services and advocacy, with the highest level of commitment and enthusiasm.



**Koni Tsakonas – Member
Flat Out Management Collective**

Manager's Report

Flat Out continues to be an exemplary support and advocacy service.

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.

Flat Out has recently been externally reviewed through the mandated DHS QICSA review process. We are pleased to report that Flat Out has been recommended for Accreditation.

Flat Out and QICSA identified future quality improvements, and many of these have already been implemented or are in progress, (some of the achievements are included as part of this annual report).

Flat Out will submit a Quality Work Plan to QICSA in December 2010.

Key points from the review report from QICSA included:

Flat Out produced a well written Quality Journal which included relevant and achievable recommendations.

The agency demonstrated a number of key strengths during the review including:



Annie and Princess at Moreland Tent City to highlight homelessness— 2010

- Culturally aware and accepting service.
- Focus on clients in general with documentation for clients written in a clear and easily understandable manner.
- Commitment, knowledge and skills of the Management Collective and dedication of unpaid Collective members.
- Array of policy and procedures and clear practice documents which are used effectively to guide good practice.
- Good financial systems in place supported by expertise.
- Glowing feedback from clients in relation to having their needs heard and action orientation case management to avoid re-offending.
- Stakeholders' feedback indicated that Flat Out is recognised as providing a unique, prompt and responsive service.

Flat Out has embraced the accreditation process as a framework for continuous quality improvement.

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

Where Flat Out is unable to provide relevant housing or support through its own capacity and nomination rights, partnerships and protocols, Flat Out will support women to locate and attain appropriate housing and support.

Flat Out currently has 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.

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 6 months we have secured nomination rights to three additional transitional housing properties. We have also been working on the development of a partnership proposal with Common Equity Housing Limited. The proposal seeks to '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 looking at 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.
- 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.

Flat Out has been successful in gaining funding for an Art Therapy program scheduled to begin in late October.

We recently installed INFOCOM, an extensive Community Information Management System. This extensive data base includes information about services across the community, government and non government support and service systems in Victoria.

Through our membership to Community Housing Federation Victoria, Flat Out now has access to around the clock counselling and debriefing services as part of an Employment Assistance Program.

The Flat Out website is currently being redeveloped with pro bono assistance obtained through the services of GOOD COMPANY.

Flat Out has joined Jobs Australia which gives us access to an industrial advisor to obtain quality employment and industrial advice, and industrial relations updates.

Flat Out & the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP) developed a submission to the Parliamentary Drugs and Crime Prevention Committee,

Flat Out and CHRIP, alongside women we support, gave in camera evidence to the Inquiry.

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.

The focus for the coming year will be on implementing and consolidating extensive quality improvements and partnerships, alongside our strategic plan.

Congratulations and warm appreciation to everyone who has contributed to Flat Out 2009-2010.

We look forward to working with you in the coming year



Annie Nash – Manager

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: 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 workers with varied strengths, diverse backgrounds and experience. We are flexible, sensitive and non-judgemental in our approach and acknowledge that the women best determine their lives. We strive to empower women by informing them of their rights, listening to their individual needs and advocating for better outcomes and opportunities for women. 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 ineffective. The team is challenged by the high number of women incarcerated and seeking support post release from prison, however the intensive outreach support work that we engage in is invaluable in contributing to a positive impact on the womens 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. Flat Out draws upon the premise 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 and their voices will be heard to ensure that as a community we address social issues rather than hiding them behind concrete walls and barbed wire.

Flat Out would like to acknowledge the women both past and present who inspire us and allow us to learn how best to continue our work.

“We understand that the women’s experiences are unique therefore employ an ‘outside of the square’ framework of support.”

Projects

STREETSMART

Flat Out is grateful to be the recipient of funding by StreetSmart to provide recreational, socially inclusive and meaningful activities to women. Flat Out is developing an Art Therapy Program to compliment the support and other therapies that women are receiving with the aim that Art Therapy may assist women with the healing process post prison.

MINTER ELLISON LAWYERS

Flat Out is always striving to improve our services and is grateful for funding by Minter Ellison Lawyers which will be utilised to run Consumer Participation Focus groups.

In November 2009 Flat Out was successful in its application for funding from law firm Minter Ellison, for the sum of \$5,000. This money will be used for the initial phases of developing a Consumer Participation Strategy for the agency. It will enable 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 clients, past and present, about their experiences of the service and how it can improve, as well as how to get consumers more involved.

The money is also intended to be used for the production of a publication, written by and for consumers and services, talking about the issues women experience pre and post-release from prison. It will also assist in making our Welcome Home Kit, given to women upon their entry to the service, as useful and relevant as possible.



Staggering statistics on the criminalisation of women

“87% of women prisoners were victims of sexual, physical or emotional abuse, with the majority being victims of multiple forms of abuse”. 68% report emotional abuse and 44% report sexual abuse as children. 30% of young women and 17% of older women were physically hurt by their partner and 10% had been raped by their partner in the 12 months prior to imprisonment;

66% of people in prison have a substance abuse disorder (as against 18% for the general community); and “...60% of sentenced female prisoners reported that they had committed their offence(s) under the influence of drugs and/or to support a drug habit”;

Indigenous women are imprisoned at a rate 18 times higher than non-Indigenous women. Indigenous Australian women are more likely to suffer homelessness, unemployment, illiteracy, poor mental and physical health and alcohol or other drug problems, and to be incarcerated for ‘crimes’ of disturbing the ‘good order,’ i.e.: offensive behaviour, sleeping in public places, failure to pay fines resulting from dog-control or parking infringements, or drinking in public places;

A very high number of women who have been imprisoned have an acquired brain injury (ABI) or suspected ABI, and there are an increasing number of women being incarcerated who have an intellectual disability. According to Corrections Victoria in March 2010, “...the number of prisoners with an intellectual disability had increased by some 40% over the last 18 months”.

Depression, anxiety, loneliness and low-self esteem are suffered by many women pre, during and post-imprisonment; with 84% of women in prison having a mental illness, compared with 19.1% of women in the community.

There are currently 316 females in prison in Victoria which equates to 6.9 % of the prison population. The imprisonment rate for women increased to 13.2 per 100,000 female adults at 30 June 2009 from 11.4 the previous year.

Victoria’s prison population is increasing significantly and in the 2010/11 Victorian State Budget, the Victorian Government has allocated \$126 million to build an additional 244 prison beds, the cost of which is over \$500,000 per prison bed. According to figures from the Council of Australian Government, the average expenditure per prisoner per day in 2008-09 was \$242.65; this is almost \$90,000 per year. Annual spending on prisons by the Victorian Government has increased in the past decade by 186% to \$640 million in 2010/11.

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Malcolm Feiner, Research and Evaluation, Corrections Victoria

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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 legal capacity building, education, and systemic advocacy. CHRIP employs Phoebe Barton as the Project Worker, and Alyssha Fooks as the Research Project Worker. 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.

Since its inception in 2007, CHRIP has:

- Written an extensive report on the need for a Prisoners Legal Service in Victoria;
- Worked with the Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre to establish a Pilot Victorian Prisoners Legal Service, seeing men and women imprisoned at Port Phillip and Dame Phyllis Frost prisons;
- Supported the Mental Health Legal Centre to establish 'Inside Access,' a pilot project providing legal services to people in prison with cognitive impairment;
- Written a Victorian Prisoners Legal Service Partnership Agreement, and is working with community legal centres who are signatories in Victoria's West, North and East to establish locally appropriate prison legal/advocacy projects;
- Created and sustained the Victorian Decarceration Network, with 250 organisations and individuals working on imprisonment and associated issues sharing information and resources;
- Organised community events such as the Imprisoned People and Social Justice Forum at the Koori Heritage Trust, the Victorian Legal Assistance Forum (VLAF) Prison Law Dialogue, and the Prisons, Strategies for Justice and Decarceration Forum at the Victorian Federation of Community Legal Centres Conference;
- Become a central point for cross-sector collaboration on prison issues, and regular author or contributor to reports, submissions, policy work, media, etc;
- Resourced and trained over 40 lawyers in effective legal advocacy with imprisoned people;
- Strengthened links between imprisoned and formerly imprisoned people and their advocates;
- Contributed to parliamentary inquiries; and
- Run a dedicated 6-month training program in effective advocacy skills, for 15 women from the community including student activists, community sector lawyers and advocates, women who have been impacted by the criminal justice system, and family members of imprisoned people.

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.

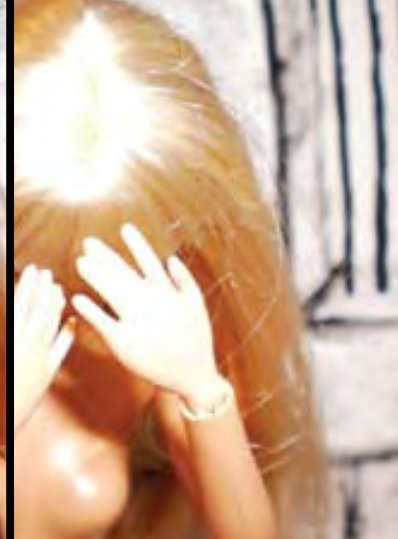
CHRIP facilitated a series of storytelling workshops for women over a period of six weeks from June to July 2010 through a series of full-day digital arts workshops, where 11 women created their own stories through mediums such as poetry, creative writing, song and short films about issues affecting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

These films will be 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 Storytelling 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."

The following images were created by Marie Taylor a participant of the CHRIP Story Telling Project depicting the violence, degradation and humiliation of the strip searches experienced by women incarcerated. © Marie Taylor



Flat Out Protocols & Nomination Rights

FLAT OUT HAS PROTOCOLS WITH THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:

- Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP)
- Women's Housing Limited
- St Kilda Crisis Centre
- Homeground
- Salvation Army EastCare
- MetroWest (now known as Yarra Community Housing MetroWest)
- Hanover ICMI program

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
- Women's Housing Limited

TRAINING UNDERTAKEN BY MANAGEMENT COLLECTIVE MEMBERS

Training was provided to Flat Out by a diverse range of services and individuals including:

- Bendigo Regional Institute Tafe-Homelessness Assistance and Community Housing Program (BRIT HACH)
- Victorian Association For The Care & Resettlement of Offenders (VACRO)
- PILCH Connect
- Council for Homeless Persons (CHP)
- Jean Roberts, Consultant
- DV Victoria
- Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC)

Training and Professional Development included

- Case Note Writing
- Case Management-Advanced
- Community Corrections
- Consumer Participation
- Crisis Management, Document Control
- Drug Court
- Family Violence
- Family Violence & Risk Assessment
- Governance & Boards
- Housing & Homelessness, Intro To Social Housing & Homelessness
- Mental Health First Aid
- Mental Health-Navigating The System
- Narrative Therapy
- Red Pass
- Risk Management-Roles & Responsibilities For Non Profit Organisations
- Self Care
- Strategic Planning
- Stories Of Social & Psychological Resistance
- Supervision-Managers Perspective
- Transitioning From Prison
- Collaborative Management
- CEO Learning Circle



Statement of Cash Flows

(For the period ending 30th June 2010)

Cash Flow from Operating Activities	2010	2009
Receipts from grants etc.	505,767	453,392
Receipts from interest	11,165	13,993
Payments to suppliers and employees	(462,128)	(459,270)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (Note 2)	54,804	8,115
Cash flow from Investing Activities		
Proceeds from (payment for) property, plant and equipment, and motor vehicles	(13,474)	(23,910)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(13,474)	(23,910)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	41,330	(15,795)
Cash at beginning of year	274,722	290,517
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Cash at end of reporting period (Note 1)	316,052	274,722

Notes to the statement of Cash Flows

NOTE 1. Reconciliation of cash

For the purposes of the statement of the cash flows, cash included 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:

	2010	2009
Cash at Bank	315,527	274,422
Cash on Hand	525	300
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	316,052	274,722

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

	2010	2009
Operating Profit (Loss)	21,705	26,387
Depreciation/Amortisation	23,316	21,180
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	74,983	(76,030)
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	1,122	1,137
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	1,546	9,468
Increase/(decrease) in reserves	-	(6,475)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	4,861	(30,446)
Increase/(decrease) in income in advance	(71,768)	61,476
Assets change-over	(961)	1,418
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	54,804	8,115

1. Flat Out Balance Sheet

As at 30 June 2010

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Equity		
Committed Funds	206,992	185,247
Total Equity	206,992	185,247
Represented by:		
Current Assets		
Cash on Hand	300	300
Term Deposits	-	245,186
Bond - Cabcharge	500	500
Bendigo Cheque A/C	12,918	1,484
Bendigo Cash Mngt A/C	44,067	27,467
Electronic Clearing A/C	(149)	-
HEF A/C	741	286
ANZ Term Deposit	250,000	-
ANZ Cheque A/C	7,950	-
Outreach Workers Floats	225	-
Sundry Debtors	-	30
Trade Debtors	959	76,000
Other Debtors	4,477	4,389
	321,988	355,641
Non-Current Assets		
Motor Vehicles	60,731	70,007
Less Accumulated Depreciation	13,848	22,739
	46,883	47,268
Office Furniture & Equipment	21,824	19,869
Less Accumulated Depreciation	19,411	7,879
	2,413	11,990
	49,296	59,258
TOTAL ASSETS	371,284	414,899
Current Liabilities		
Sundry Creditors	11,238	7,592
Trade Creditors	5,962	4,354
Provision for Annual Leave	19,176	17,031
Provision for Long Service Leave	6,208	4,803
Provision for Sick Leave	7,008	5,696
Provision for GST	1,351	5,612
Accrued Charges	7,158	6,605
Income in Advance	106,190	177,958
	164,292	229,652
Total Liabilities	164,292	229,652
Net Assets	206,992	185,247

2. Flat Out Income Statement

For the Year ended 30 June 2010

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Income		
Auspice/Management Fees	7,850	4,860
Trust Income	6,134	6,607
Donations Income	1,888	862
Interest Received	11,165	13,994
Sundry Income	4,541	4,210
Dept of Health & Ageing Grants	185,890	154,901
Dept of Human Services Grants	157,675	146,888
HEF Grants	11,660	12,373
Andy Inc Grants	-	24,730
Hanover Grants (ICM)	47,510	45,000
Reichstein Foundation Grants	7,500	22,500
R E Ross Trust	30,015	14,985
Melb City Mission - WISP	13,402	17,557
City of Melbourne Grant	10,000	-
Other Grants	17,149	12,417
Profit on Sale of Non-current Assets	1,339	-
Loss on Sale of Non-current Assets	(378)	(1,418)
	513,340	480,466
Expenditure		
Advertising	-	2,234
Auditor fee	1,737	1,860
Auspice/Management fees	7,850	4,860
Bank Charges	353	313
CHRIP	16,106	-
Cleaning	2,174	1,245
Client Expenses	1,972	4,134
Collective Expenses	2,874	630
Consultancy Fees	17,934	33,460
Conferences	3,541	1,568
Computer Expenses	2,355	1,322
Depreciation	24,397	8,342
HEF Expenses	12,346	5,164
Holiday Pay	2,145	(785)
Insurance	720	1,168
Light & Power	1,969	1,954
Long Service Leave	1,406	(189)
Meeting Expenses	194	1,076
Motor Vehicle Expenses	14,512	27,104
Office Equipments	529	946
O H & S Expenses	111	440
Postage	390	660
Printing & Stationery	3,994	5,126
Recreation	-	1,186
Relief Staff	-	8,921
Resources	251	330

Flat Out Income Statement

For the Year ended 30 June 2010

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Rent	28,358	27,174
Repairs & Maintenance	635	-
Salaries	276,558	272,928
Security Costs	364	455
Sick Leave	1,312	(29,473)
Supervision	1,400	841
Staff Expenses	-	1,812
Staff Amenities & Welfare	272	1,284
Staff Training	4,376	7,380
Staff Recruitment	1,415	405
Sundry Expenses	130	2,552
Subscriptions & Memberships	3,354	354
Superannuation Contributions	23,330	21,729
Telephone	13,325	15,691
Trust Payment	6,128	4,513
Travelling Expenses	4,664	6,648
Workcover	6,152	6,714
	491,635	454,079
OPERATING PROFIT	21,705	26,387

3. Flat Out Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year ended 30 June 2010

	2010	2009
	\$	\$
Committed Funds at the beginning of the financial year	185,247	141,035
Transfer from Reserve	-	24,000
Prior Year Adjustments	40	(6,175)
Profit (Loss) Attributable to Members	21,705	26,387
COMMITTED FUNDS AT 30 JUNE 2010	206,992	185,247

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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Fax: 03 9561 5497
Email: jan@collyerpartners.com.au

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 2010, 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
RAEENEAL CPA R.COM



Chartered Accountants

LIABILITY LIMITED BY A SCHEME APPROVED
UNDER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS LEGISLATION

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 2010 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.


.....
Janet Collyer
J L COLLYER & PARTNERS

22nd September 2010



FLAT  OUT

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