

ANNUAL REPORT | 2014 - 2015

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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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How to get to Flat Out by public transport.

Craigieburn line train to Newmarket Station, exit train station and travel through the railway underpass to Pin Oak Crescent.

Flat Out is located at no. 54 Pin Oak Crescent, Flemington.

Tram No. 57 – West Maribyrnong from Elizabeth St, Melbourne and travels along Racecourse Road, Flemington to **Stop Number**

26 – Newmarket Plaza. walk under train bridge, turn left into Pin Oak Crescent.

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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 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.

We accept responsibility for challenging racism, exclusion and oppression in all its forms.



Special thank you

We begin by thanking all the women Flat Out has worked with over the past year. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to work with you. Thank you for sharing your stories, insights, courage, advice and strength.

Thank you to our funders

FEDERAL & STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDING

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH – NGOTGP (Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program)

Louise Cahill, Grant Officer, Regional Services Grants Branch – Vic/Tas, Grant Services Division, Australian Government Department of Health

Josephine Jansen, Program Manager, Drug Treatment, Rural Outreach and Support

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - ADIS

David Wright and Anne-Marie Cupples, Information Analyst, Information, Analysis and Reporting, Mental Health Drugs Regions Division, Department of Health

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES – Specialist Homelessness Services arising from the National Affordable Housing Agreement

Helga Jennings, Area Manager, Brimbank Melton Area, West Division, Department of Health and Human Services

Jane Turner and Lesley Murray, Local Engagement Officers, Local Connections, Brimbank Melton Area, West Division, Department of Health and Human Services

Rod Carracher, Regional Director, Brimbank Melton Area, West Division, Department of Health and Human Services

NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Grassroots fundraising and donations
City of Yarra

Local Matters program,
Grill'd Burgers Melbourne Central
Magistrates' Court of Victoria

The R E Ross Trust

The Reichstein Foundation

Sidney Myer Fund

Street Smart Australia

Street Smart – Café Smart Grant

Street Smart – Dine Smart Grant

W.C.F Thomas Charitable Trust

DONATIONS

Amanda G

Avant Card

Doris J

Eastern Emergency Relief Network

Glen Fairweather, Prison Fellowship and Citycare
Hillsong

Liz S

Samantha Sowerine

Tuân and Phúông Nguyen, Racecourse Syndicate Pty
Ltd Newsagency, Newmarket Plaza

Victorian Women Lawyers



Flat Out would also like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their significant support, advice, assistance and contribution of time, skills and resources to Flat Out and CHRIP; CHRIP has attracted substantial support from partner organisations with contributions including:

- **Speaking at public forums**
- **Training and facilitation inside and outside of prison**
- **Co-writing submissions and responses to inquiries**
- **Co-authoring publications**
- **In-kind donations of time and resources**
- **Co-advocacy with clients and on systemic issues**

Aboriginal Liaison/Koorie Court

Adam Robinson, CEO Street Smart Australia

Amanda George, Flat Out Management Collective

Amanda Storey, Consumer Action Law Centre

Anne-Lise Ah-Fat, Undercurrent Community Education Project

Areej Nur, Women on the Line, Community Radio Network

Annie Nash, former Flat Out Executive Officer

Anthony Kelly, Bec Smith, Sophie Ellis, & the team at Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre

Antoinette Braybrook and the team, Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service

Aunty Diane Kerr, Wurundjeri Elder and Traditional Custodian

Billi Clarke

Bree Carlton, Monash University

Brian Kerr, Consumer Action Law Centre

Charandev Singh, Human Rights and Indigenous Education Advocate, Activist and Community Educator

CHRIP Working Group: Lorena Solin, Emma Russell, Rachel Barrett, Terri Silvertree, Liz Patterson, Jane Black

CHRIP Volunteer Researchers: Cara Gledhill, Ashleigh Trimmer

Claire Waghorne, Samantha Ryan and the programs team at DPFC

Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)

Community Housing Federation Victoria (CHFV)

Craig Minogue, prisoner advocate and educator

Debbie Kilroy and Sisters Inside, QLD

Eastern Emergency Relief Network

Elaine Smith, Wintringham Specialist Aged Care Services

Elly Taylor, Women's Health West Ethical Jobs

Federation of Community Legal Centres

Fofi Christou, Women with Disabilities Victoria

Fitzroy Legal Service

Gemima Gardiner, Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation Cultural Heritage Council

Glen Fairweather and Prison Fellowship Victoria

Gloria Prentice, Flat Out Management Collective

Good Company

Harm Reduction Victoria, Jenny Kelsall and Nadia Gavin

Homeground Services

Hugh De Kretser, HRLC

Inner Melbourne Legal, Zoe Jones, Tanja Golding and Melanie Dye

Inside Access at the Mental Health Legal Centre

Jax Jacki-Brown, disability rights activist, writer and independent producer

Jeanette Large, Women's Property Initiative

Jeff Fiedler, Housing for the Aged Action Group

Jen Hargrave, Women with Disabilities Victoria

Jennifer Kanis, former Member for Melbourne, MP

Jessie Boylan, photo-media artist and photographer

Jill Prior, Flat Out Management Collective

Jillian Williams, Consumer Action Law Centre

Jobs Australia, in particular Caroline Ryan

Jo Smith, Flat Out Management Collective

Joel Orenstein, Lawyer

Justice Connect

Kay Dyson, Flat Out Management Collective

Kayla Ta, Women's Housing Ltd

Laura Vines, Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service

Lauren Caulfield, Domestic Violence Resource Centre

Liz Shield, Flat Out Management Collective

Local Area Service Network (LASN), North & West Metropolitan Region

Malcolm Feiner, Corrections Resource Centre

Maria Hach, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

Mary Keating, Editor, Flemington-Kensington News

Meghan Fitzgerald, Fitzroy Legal Service

Mehran Erfanian, Centrax Computer Services

Michelle McDonnell, Smart Justice, Federation of Community Legal Centres

Michelle McCann, Centre for Adult Education

Nadu Dove, consultant

Prison Network Ministries

Regina Quiazon, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health

Royal District Nursing Service Homeless Persons Program

Sally Goldner, Transgender Victoria

Salvation Army Housing Services, Eastcare

Sam Biondo, Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)

Shani Williams, Inside Access

Sue Leigh, 3CR Monday Breakfast

St Kilda Crisis Centre

Sylvia Daravong, Ethnic Communities Council Victoria

Tess Sellar, Graphic Artist

Trish Hayes, Women's Health West

Verity Shepherdson, Senior Associate, Herbert Smith Freehills

Vickie Roach, prison human rights activist, advocate & consultant

Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service

Victorian Women Lawyers

WhiteDog GreenFrog team, IT consultants

Wise Employment Richmond

Women's Housing Ltd

Yarra Community Housing

3CR Community Radio

Friends of Flat Out

Thank you to all the amazing Flat Out supporters and contributors who have given time, energy and resources.

It's your assistance and support that makes Flat Out a unique strong organisation.

We apologise if we have neglected to include you in the above list. We would be happy to honour your contribution in our next annual report.

FLAT OUT MANAGEMENT COLLECTIVE MEMBERS JULY 2014 – JUNE 2015

Amanda George, Crystal McKinnon, Gloria Prentice, Jill Prior, Jo Smith, Kay Dyson and Liz Shield

FLAT OUT EMPLOYEES JULY 2014 – JUNE 2015

Jake Argyll

Executive Officer – July 2015

Serap Ozdemir

Executive Officer February - June 2015

Annie Nash

Executive Officer – July 2014 - February 2015

Colette Leber

Outreach Support and Advocacy

Elaine Cruse

Outreach Support and Advocacy

Emma Russell

Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned

People Project Co-coordinator

Michelle Montague

Finance Manager

Michele Old

Administration Resource Coordinator

Phoebe Barton

Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned

People Project Co-coordinator

Sarah Jones

Outreach Support and Advocacy

– July 2014 - March 2015

Sharon Villanueva

Outreach Support and Advocacy & Intensive

Case Management Initiative – July-November 2014

and locum Outreach Support and Advocacy

– June – July 2015

Wendy Hedges

Outreach Support and Advocacy





Organisation Overview

Flat Out is an independent, not for profit, community based organisation that is managed by and for women.

The Flat Out Management Collective (Board) embraces fairness and equality through the essential roles of governance, management and leadership that are underpinned by a comprehensive set of values, policies and procedures and delegated authority.

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 Health and Human Services (Victoria), the Department of Health (Federal), and project funds from various sources to increase our capacity to deliver innovative and effective services, advocacy and social change. Government funding is for the purpose of providing individualised support and advocacy for women (with or without children) to address homelessness, drug and alcohol treatment and a range of other support and advocacy to address the underlying causes of criminalisation.

Independent funding

Independent funding is raised through donations, grants and grassroots fundraising for the purposes of Flat Out's social change and systemic advocacy work.

Flat Out leads and participates in research and community education, seeking to inform the wider community about the harms that occur for women in the criminal justice system. Flat Out works directly with women who have experienced criminalisation and/or incarceration and to improve the rights and conditions of women in prison. Flat Out works to prevent women from going to prison, and keeping women out of prison once they are released.

The theories and values that underpin Flat Out's work have remained constant since Flat Out's inception (1988). Through community involvement, education and research, Flat Out works toward having a strong voice in the prison abolition movement in Australia and internationally. Our vision is that eventually prisons will be viewed as antiquated, cruel and ineffective institutions. Not unlike the movements to abolish slavery; movements to end racism; the women's liberation movement, and the movement to end homelessness. Flat Out seeks to work alongside diverse communities to end all forms of inequality and unfairness. We see all these movements as interconnected.

Flat Out Strategic Plan 2014-2016

Flat Out Values

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's as the first peoples of Australia
 - Our organisation being run by and for women
- Working with women (and their children) who are criminalised
 - Providing high quality support services and advocacy
 - Freedom, equality and self-determination
 - Social justice and economic opportunities for all
 - Everyone has the right to lead safe, violence-free lives
- Being part of a movement to end criminalisation and imprisonment
 - Working with the wider community toward our vision

Our Vision

- Women are not criminalised or imprisoned

How we will get there

- We will maintain Flat Out as an independent, not for profit organisation
- We will remain focussed on working with women who are criminalised
 - We will provide high quality woman centred support and advocacy
 - We will support women to obtain appropriate and affordable housing
 - We will support women in their journeys to good health and wellbeing
 - We will support women to reconnect with family and community
- We will actively promote effective alternatives to criminalisation and imprisonment
 - We will lead and contribute to effective social and systemic change
 - We will work with the wider community towards our vision

Key challenges for this plan

- Achieving Flat Out's vision and plan in a period of heightened focus on law and order, changes to sentencing practices and unprecedented prison expansion
- Securing Flat Out's substantive funding (government and philanthropic) beyond June 2015
 - Returning our organisational deficit to surplus whilst maintaining quality improvements
 - Retaining our skilled and committed management collective, employees and volunteers

Key Result Areas

Key Result Area 1:

Led by Women's Lived Experience

All platforms of Flat Out's activity are driven by women's lived experience.

Key Result Area 2:

Exemplary Outreach Support and Advocacy

Flat Out's direct support service activities are for women who have had contact with the criminal justice and/or prison system in Victoria; with a focus on women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and for women seeking support to access drug and alcohol treatment and other therapeutic services.

Key Result Area 3:

Effective Systemic Advocacy and Social Change

Over its 27 years of operation Flat Out has achieved a unique and respected position in the wider community as an advocate for systemic and social change. This role is an integral part of Flat Out's commitment to the rights of all women involved in the criminal justice system and the long term vision of abolishing the prisons.

Key Result Area 4:

Strategic Organisational Development

Flat Out has dedicated management collective members, employees and volunteer activists that implement our vision and plans. Stakeholders and partners are also crucial to Flat Out's strength and viability. Flat Out is continually improving and strengthening its work through regular review, reflection and change. We are a learning and adaptive organisation.

Key Result Area 5:

Innovative Financial Sustainability and Capacity Building

Flat Out receives recurrent government funding as well as funding and grants from non-government and independent sources for specific initiatives including Flat Out's systemic advocacy and social change work. Flat Out has continued to grow, dedicating significant resources to organisational development and improved services. This plan acknowledges Flat Out's sustained focus on continuous quality improvement. To achieve this Flat Out will maintain its commitment to generating income from diverse sources to achieve the future directions of the organisation.

It is quite a pleasure to reflect on the previous year as members of the Management Collective of Flat Out. There are plenty of “Oh Yes!” moments as the rewards and achievements of the past 12 months are revisited.

Our 27th year of operation has been marked by some big changes - significantly, we farewelled our much-loved and valued Executive Officer, Annie Nash, after 5 years at the helm of the organisation. After rigorous searching, we are excited to have Jake Argyll join us to steer us into a new chapter in Flat Out's story. Jake brings with her many years working within the community sector, along with her leadership skills, wisdom and commitment to improving women's lives.

Another significant ending occurred in Flat Out with The Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People, better known as 'CHRIP' ceasing operation. Although this project ended, there are plans for its re-imagining in the pipeline. With the ceasing of CHRIP, long-time employee Phoebe Barton and new employee and long-time volunteer Emma Russell have also moved on to other pursuits. We wish them all the best in the next chapter of their lives.

Throughout these changes, we have continued to provide high quality support services for women, along with seeing key systemic advocacy projects come to fruition. The Management Collective of Flat Out are privileged and honoured to have a dedicated, skilled, hard-working and committed team of employees who are crucial to the organisation's continued successful operation.

Flat Out/CHRIP once again excelled at organising public events that promoted abolition, meaning that over the past year there were a number of important and exciting projects and events in our systemic advocacy work that are worth mentioning here in the Management Collective Report. In October 2014 we were honoured to have hosted a public forum by Dr Erica Meiners, Professor of Gender and Women's Studies and Education at Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, called 'Gender Trouble: Rethinking Feminist Safety in a Prison Nation.'

Dr Meiners spoke to a full room at Trades Hall about the role of punishment in campaigns to end violence against women, the problems with sex offender registries, the control and regulation of people released from prison, justice for transgendered communities and building abolition futures.

Another exciting project that came to fruition this past year was a new Flat Out poster. It is a creative resource advocating for gender, racial and economic justice and prison abolition. It is the result of almost a year's work collaborating with activists, artists and women impacted by criminalisation and imprisonment, and was sponsored by the City of Yarra.

The poster was launched on 12 February 2015 by the incredible advocate Vickie Roach, who spoke about the violence and injustice of prisons, the importance of resisting, and the need for prison abolition. Jemima Gardiner delivered a wonderful Welcome to Country and Amanda George honoured the work of Annie Nash as Executive Officer of Flat Out over the past five years. Flat Out is grateful for the support of many staff, women, MC members and supporters in making this resource and the event such a success. The poster is available for purchase from Flat Out and we were fortunate to gain sponsorship from Avant Card who re-produced the poster as a free Avant Card distributing 23,000 postcards nationally from July 2015.

As well as raising much needed revenue to support criminalised women, fundraising events help raise the public profile of Flat Out. MC members were involved in organising a fundraising garage sale as part of the annual "Garage Sale Trail" which raised over \$200. An MC member also accepted a cheque from the Local Matters Program run by Grill'd as the winner of their in-store fundraiser where customers could "vote" using a token received with burger purchase, for a cause to donate money to. It is heartening to see that members of the public overwhelmingly chose to support criminalised women with their post-release support.

We would like to spend a little time in this report to say farewell to Annie Nash. Throughout her 5 years as Executive Officer, Annie demonstrated unwavering leadership, drive and enthusiasm for Flat Out. Her skills as an Executive Officer saw Flat Out achieve Quality Accreditation and attract philanthropic and additional grant monies. Annie was a powerful orator and spoke passionately as an advocate of abolition and support of criminalised women. She spoke at a number of events, including in July 2014 at the Melbourne Campaigner's Network event "Anti-Poverty Organising in Australia". Annie described the creative, fun and radical nature of 1980s protest, with frequent rallies on a wide number of issues. She described a large action outside the Melbourne Regent Hotel in 1987, which was protesting the Accord and many aspects of the Hawke government's budget including attacks on the under-18 dole. Annie also showed her long-standing commitment to prison abolition when she spoke about the differences between protesting then and protesting now. She described how MC member Amanda George was able to talk to those in the lock-up via a megaphone from the solidarity protest outside in the 1980s, in a way that couldn't happen today. She also emphasised the impact of criminal records on

“It is heartening to see that members of the public overwhelmingly chose to support criminalised women with their post-release support.”

people's lives, including employment discrimination. Annie spoke about the unashamed activism of many community sector agencies in the '80s in contrast with funding contracts which limit or forbid advocacy today. Annie argued that not-for-profits can segment their funds to provide systemic advocacy through donations and philanthropic support. We have spoken about this talk at length, because we believe that this highlights many of the key aspects of Annie's strengths as a leader.

In the past year there have also been a number of staff changes. We farewelled Sarah Jones, who was a skilled Outreach Support Worker. Also in the past year, long-time Outreach and Support Worker and a valued member of Flat Out, Sharon Villanueva welcomed her son, Cooper. Wendy Hedges, Colette Leber and Elaine Cruse make up the current Outreach Support team and bring with them extensive experience in the community sector, including working with women experiencing homelessness, AOD issues, Family Violence, court advocacy and legal issues. All of these women have been quick to establish good relationships with the women we work with, key organisations and other Flat Out staff.

Lastly, we would like to thank all of the individuals and organisations that have supported the work of Flat Out this past year. We look forward to your ongoing support and involvement over the next year. We are in a strong position and look forward to another great year with Jake Argyll as our new Executive Officer. We know that this coming year will have many more excellent achievements in the fight to end inequality and discrimination.

Liz Shield and Crystal McKinnon

On behalf of the Flat Out Management Collective



Members of the Flat Out Management Collective, Staff, Volunteers and Friends of Flat Out acknowledge and remember Joan Kirner, former Premier of Victoria for her valued knowledge, insight, passion and contribution for the benefit of women, children and the community of Victoria. Joan's support for Flat Out and the women we support will be greatly missed; her kindness and compassion will live in our hearts forever. Vale Joan.

Another wonderful, busy year has passed at Flat Out.

After five years of inspiring leadership at Flat Out, we said goodbye to Annie Nash as Executive Officer in February 2015. Annie's warmth, enthusiasm, and savviness undoubtedly helped Flat Out grow and thrive over these years. Annie is dearly missed and is continuing her social justice work elsewhere. We welcome Jake Argyll to take on the position of Executive Officer into the next financial year.

This year we welcomed the extensive experience and expertise of Elaine Cruse, Wendy Hedges and Colette Leber to the Outreach Support team, and Emma Russell came on board as Co-coordinator of the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP). We also bid farewell to Sarah Jones and Sharon Villanueva. Flat Out honours the incredible work of both Sharon and Sarah over the years. Sharon left on parental leave and welcomed beautiful baby Cooper in December 2014. In February 2015, Management Collective member Jill Prior and her partner Tallace also welcomed delightful baby Leonard.

At the end of the financial year Flat Out closed the CHRIP Project and Co-coordinators Phoebe Barton and Emma Russell departed from this role. CHRIP had many achievements over the years and it enriched Flat Out's social change work in many ways. Despite CHRIP ending, Flat Out will of course continue its activist and community education activities, as it always has.

This year Flat Out has continued to enrich the connections between service delivery and social change work that makes our organisation unique. This approach continues to draw in support from various organisations and individuals who share our passion for holistic outreach models in combination with a broader vision of social justice. As part of our strategic planning this year Flat Out affirmed its values and we remain steadfast in opposing the criminalisation and imprisonment of women. Our aim is to keep women out of prison. Prison is a violent response to the myriad of harms and inequalities that criminalised women face. Flat Out strives to build community awareness of the multiple barriers that women encounter when seeking freedom and equality, so that there may be more compassionate responses to women caught up in the criminal justice system.

In this continuing climate of unprecedented prison expansion and heightened 'law and order' policies, it remains critical for all community organisations to assess and build their capacity to provide advocacy and support that enables people to stay out of prison, or not return to prison.

Flat Out emphasises women's self-defined goals and women's conceptions of the support they require in order to achieve them. We dedicate resources to the provision of information and education within and beyond the prison walls. Flat Out routinely draws on the knowledge and expertise of the women we support, valuing all forms of input and feedback, both formal and informal. We consult with women both in and out of the prison to devise and develop the information sessions Flat Out delivers in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) the maximum-security women's prison in Victoria, as well as evaluating each session upon delivery. We highlight and encourage women's self-advocacy and self-determination in order to chip away at the hierarchies of knowledge, power and resources that are instilled and extended in the prison system.

The overwhelming majority of women we support experience homelessness, poverty, family violence, various forms of discrimination and violence from police, prisons, and other forms of systemic abuse and neglect. Many women carry trauma from childhood experiences of abuse, including out of home care and institutionalisation. Many of the women we support also grapple with poor physical and mental health, and addiction. The cumulative impact of multiple traumas on women's lives, without adequate supports and understanding, feeds cycles of criminalisation, incarceration and re-incarceration that have wide-ranging impacts on women, their families and the wider community.

Flat Out is funded through state and federal government grants to provide a support service to criminalised women experiencing homelessness and drug and alcohol use. This year Flat Out has exceeded funding and service contract targets across the board. We supported more than a hundred women in their journeys. We also responded to significant numbers of requests for secondary consultation and provided an integrated education and support service. The Flat Out Outreach Support team have done incredible work alongside women. Women supported by Flat Out must be commended for their extraordinary hard work and determination. They have strived to counter homelessness, get kids back into their lives, address poor physical and mental health, turn houses into homes, and get police, prisons, parole board and child protection off their backs. All of this takes significant time and courage and it is an honour to work with such strong women.

Flat Out has maintained and expanded its partnerships, protocols and MOUs with a range of organisations in the community. We have protocols with a number of housing agencies and access to transitional housing properties that we combine with appropriate support in the community. Whilst Flat Out is not funded to provide 7-day, 24-hour support, we have strong support protocols with 24-hour emergency services

including the St Kilda Crisis Centre. We also 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, and a protocol with the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre for our Women's Leadership Program. Flat Out is continually working to increase opportunities for women to access transitional and long term housing. We also work very closely with a number of drug and alcohol treatment services, many of whom we have thanked at the beginning of this report.

This year Flat Out focused significantly on the interconnections between family violence and women's criminalisation and imprisonment. We coordinated and produced a highly regarded submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The submission achieved endorsements from sixteen community/legal organisations and an additional sixteen expert individuals in the areas of criminology and law, as well as print and radio media including ABC News. We are pleased to report new and strengthened relationships in this area and commend all contributing organisations for their insights and invaluable work to address family violence and the systemic violence that often proliferates alongside it.

Another highlight of the past year has been the broadening and strengthening of our social change work. Flat Out's new poster attracted both new and old supporters to the launch and the development of the poster imagery into other mediums, including t-shirts and postcards is a testament to its success and wide appeal. We appreciate the extraordinary support that we continue to receive for our community education and social change work and we look forward to building on this vital work in the future.

The Flat Out Management Collective (Board) must be acknowledged for their dedication, incredible guidance and their support and contributions to Flat Out working groups and events. Additionally Flat Out employees demonstrate consistent commitment to the organisation and its goals, bringing wonderful energy to the office.

Congratulations and warm appreciation to everyone externally who has contributed to Flat Out and CHRIP over the past year. It has been a fantastic year notwithstanding the challenges.

We look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Executive Officer

www.flatout.org.au

Flat Out's outreach support team works alongside women with experience of criminalisation and imprisonment. We are a small team of dedicated and passionate women with a wide variety of strengths and experience. We aim to be 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 women's experiences are unique and we are constantly learning and being guided through the experience of women. The team is challenged by the high number of women incarcerated. With more resources, we could do more. It's disheartening to see millions of dollars of taxpayers money invested in prison expansion - when so much more could be done to support women to realise their potential as community members, and keep them out of jail. Flat Out's intensive outreach support and advocacy model is invaluable in contributing to positive change in women's lives. Criminalisation not only affects the women themselves-it affects their children and other members of their families, and ripples back through all sections of the community.

The women we work with demonstrate incredible strength, resilience and courage in the face of extreme adversity and often 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 decarceration strategies as a critical foundation of our work, and strongly opposes imprisonment of women as a solution to their personal crises.

The vast majority of women we support are homeless, experiencing poverty, domestic violence, childhood trauma, sexual assault and discrimination. These traumas' can sadly lead women into cycles of criminalisation and incarceration as the community fails to address these issues. Flat Out understands that there is no simple solution; however it is very clear that prison expansion, locking more women up, is not the answer.

In particular we remain concerned about the rising number of women with disabilities being criminalised and sent to prison. Many of these women do not have the capacity to fully understand the implications of their actions or the actions of the court, and the vast majority of these people are not being supported to live independently and free from harm.

They are extremely vulnerable members of our community. It's heart breaking to see these women targeted by police

and prisons. It's our vision 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 their criminalisation and imprisonment.

Flat Out receives funding from various sources. The majority of our funding for women's support and advocacy comes through the Department of Health, Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program, (NGOTGP), and Homelessness Service funding arising from the National Affordable Housing Agreement. The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) administers this funding. We are also funded .8EFT through the Intensive Case Management Initiative (ICMI) administered by DHHS. The combination of funding enables Flat Out to work intensively and flexibly in terms of the type and timeframe of support provided.

FLAT OUT'S HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT SERVICES ARISING FROM THE NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING AGREEMENT: OUTREACH SUPPORT FOR WOMEN.

Flat Out fully utilised the SHIP case management system as part of our Specialist Homelessness Data Collection (SHIP) system. The Flat Out team has been trained in all aspects of the system which has improved the quality of our 'case management'; it is an extremely user friendly system that enables the team to systematically track the work and achievements against agreed plans with women. The reports generated from this system have given us a deeper understanding of our day to day work and outcomes.

During the period of 2014-2015, Flat Out has provided support to a total of 114 criminalised women (and their children) of all ages; however almost 50% of the women were aged between 21-35 years, followed by age brackets 36-45 years, then 46-55 years and 66-85 years of age. They have come to Flat Out from a diverse range of social & cultural backgrounds and contexts.

We continue to see an increase in referrals from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women. This has aligned with our aim to ensure equal access of support to women who are over-represented in the criminal justice system, particularly Vietnamese women.

Referrals continue to be received from various sources

including workers at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, Office of Corrections and other community organisations. However the overwhelming majority of referrals are self-referrals. Anecdotally, women report that they have heard about Flat Out services from other women in prison and in the community.

Flat Out continue to engage with marginalised women who have a wide range of complex support needs. Women seeking assistance present with a wide and varying range of ongoing needs which include; transition from custody, homelessness, financial difficulties/hardship, housing crisis, drug and alcohol treatment, with the majority of the women, having little or no family or community support. The women accessing this service are some of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and criminalised members of our community; they often have intellectual disabilities, mental health issues and acquired brain injuries. Many of the women have fled from significant family violence which has resulted in them becoming homeless and criminalised which then is a major contributing factor for children being placed in out of home care by the DHHS Child Protection Unit. In 2014-2015 a number of the women that Flat Out supported had their children returned to their care through Flat Out's advocacy and support. Other common reasons for seeking assistance included eviction from accommodation and excessive rent and problematic substance use.

NGOTGP FUNDED OUTREACH SUPPORT SERVICE FOR CRIMINALISED WOMEN

Non-Government Organisation Treatment Grants Program (NGOTGP) is a Federal Government Initiative administered through the Department of Health (DOH). Flat Out has received NGOTGP funding since 2003. This year Flat Out has exceeded the number of women it aimed to support during the twelve month period. Flat Out as a whole of service worked with 114 distinct clients over the past 12 months, 112 female (and their children), 2 male. More than 85% of these clients presented with past or current drug and alcohol misuse. Flat Out is contracted by DOH to provide 32 Episodes of Care (EOC) annually; in this past year 45 were closed.

Flat Out's ability to provide an outreach service to women continues to strengthen the successful outcomes and reduces harm to women with substance abuse issues and their children. Each episode of care developed between Flat Out and women requiring support reflects a treatment plan tailored to individuals needs and modelled on a non-judgemental and harms reduction approach. Flat Out has

The women we work with demonstrate incredible strength, resilience and courage in the face of extreme adversity and often tragic circumstances.

a strong role in individual support and advocacy to ensure that the implementation of these plans is in partnership with appropriate specialist services, other drug and alcohol services, health services, housing services, recreation, social inclusion services and alternative therapies. The focus is on agreed plans that resolve the underlying causes of drug and alcohol misuse and criminalisation.

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. This funding has since been made recurrent alongside our homelessness service funding.

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.

The Flat Out Model: What works?

The assertive outreach model is successful in working with women dealing with drug dependency who often have busy 'justice' schedules. We see women's engagement with Flat Out as a mutual responsibility. This is vital to the success of the service, because women will regularly be without finances for transport and phone. Flat Out has had very successful engagement with clients-women rarely miss appointments-this is enhanced through meeting women on their turf, in their time.

The periods of support that we offer are critical to our success. Many of the women we have supported for longer periods. Flat Out continues to focus on ensuring that where women had previously been supported and required new periods of support that they were able to re-access our service. Many services disengage after twelve months; this can be detrimental to women seeking to address a myriad of long term underlying issues associated with homelessness and criminalisation.

All outreach support employees are well trained and experienced and they have a good working knowledge of other services and supports. Flat Out strives to be a learning organisation that encourages employees to undertake a range of professional development and training opportunities alongside their work.

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

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

Flat Out regularly supports women in court by writing court reports and attending court. Attending court with a woman will often result in a non-custodial sentence where we are able to confirm with the magistrate that there is an alternative to prison. Our success however is being impeded through new and tougher sentencing regimes where more women are being sent to jail. Flat Out has extensive relationships, partnerships and protocols with organisations as a means of addressing the broad ranging needs of women; this approach also enhances our overall capacity.

Flat Out has sourced independent funding to assist women with meeting their basic needs of food, shelter, medication and maintaining pharmacotherapy. This fund has been particularly important in situations where women are primary care providers where they will often put the financial needs of their children ahead of their health and therapeutic treatment.

Flat Out has continued to maintain a focus on working with Aboriginal and Vietnamese women: both groups are severely over-represented in the criminal justice system.

Challenges, what can be improved

- There needs to be more affordable housing to address the long housing waiting lists.
- Women who are criminalised and have criminal histories are discriminated against throughout the community and also through many publicly and privately funded service systems. We need robust laws and policies and procedures to end criminal records discrimination-we need a spent convictions scheme.
- There is a continued high need for more community based alcohol and drug treatment services across all regional areas.

Feedback from women supported by Flat Out

"You made me realise that I was letting fear rule my decision making. Thank you and thanks to Flat Out for supporting me"

"Thank you to everyone at Flat Out for all the support and care-much appreciated."

"They understand my situation; they made me felt comfortable to speak out. They did help me from bottom of their heart not because it's their role."

"All the workers are wonderful and supportive through my whole journey with them."

"I have never felt judged, even when I first encountered Flat Out I was very unwell mentally. They stuck with me even after I accidentally spoke rudely. Now I'm well."

"I have always felt very support, cared about always felt workers genuinely were concerned about me and my issues"

"Thank goodness for Flat Out! I am very grateful for all the support I've had!"

"The lady that saw me was one of the most professional people I have dealt with in years", she is a credit to Flat Out."

"The contact has made me feel human again. Not a number. People need more of this particular service."



Women's Information, Leadership and Self-Advocacy Program at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC), (Victoria's maximum security women's prison)

In 2010, an idea for a Flat Out/CHRIP 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. The purpose has been to maximise women's opportunities to exercise choice in finding and selecting services and support beyond the prison.

Now in our fifth year we continue to seek guidance from women on the content of the program, and there is strong and positive feedback but we are continually frustrated by the challenges of doing this work in a largely punitive and restrictive environment.

We use an extraordinary amount of time and resources in running this program (with no financial assistance from the prison) yet we are constantly frustrated with access and programming. Good order and security are regularly quoted as reasons for impeding and restricting access, challenging content, and circulating information so women know about the program.

Information and educational opportunities are crucial to women's capacity to grow, lead and self-advocate. We also see 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 about what needs to be available to them post-release prison.

This program runs monthly with community 'specialist' guest speakers on a wide variety of women's concerns.

Topics for this year included:

- **Credit and Debt Issues**
- **Employment Pathways**
- **How Community Corrections Orders and other sentences work**
- **Have Your Say', a workshop session developing the program for 2016**

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. Most importantly, Flat Out would like to acknowledge the women imprisoned at DPFC who have participated in this project over the past 5 years.

The Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP)

CHRIP History: An 8 year retrospective.

Between 2008 and 2015, the Centre for the Human Rights of Imprisoned People (CHRIP) was a project of Flat Out focusing on education, community capacity building, and systemic advocacy. The work of Flat Out and CHRIP built on the intrinsic connections between service delivery and systemic social change work that has been present since Flat Out's inception. This model ensured that the individual needs of women who are criminalised, imprisoned or recently released from prison were met alongside work to address broader structural issues such as poverty, institutional racism and violence against women.

The CHRIP project was initiated in the community legal sector in 2007, originally auspiced by the Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre (BMCLC). The project began with a strong focus on legal capacity building in recognition of the need for a dedicated Prisoners Legal Service in Victoria. This arose after a 25 year history from community legal centres of anti-prison and deaths in custody work, and support and advocacy for imprisoned people and their families.

In 2008, CHRIP became an auspiced project of Flat Out and two years later transitioned to an ongoing project of the organisation. With increased prison legal work being undertaken across the sector, CHRIP's focus shifted to the following broad categories:

- **Community education and capacity building;**
- **Public profile and systemic advocacy.**

In June 2015, after 8 consecutive years, the CHRIP project ended due to funding constraints and critical reflection on the evolution of the project. The project was no longer focused around individual prisoner legal advocacy as its title implied - this integral work continues to be undertaken in the community legal sector – and CHRIP's resources were primarily being dedicated to challenging women's criminalisation and imprisonment.

Some of the CHRIP project's highlights over this time included:

- **14 public forums, with upwards of 1000 attendees.**

These community forums brought critical analysis and information to attendees about rising rates of imprisonment in Victoria, the gendered and racialised harms of imprisonment, intersecting issues of poverty, drug and alcohol use, inter-personal and state violence, and the importance of campaigns for decarceration and prison abolition. Community forums featured activists, advocates and educators from Australia, Canada, Ireland and USA.

Alongside organising forums, CHRIP has done extensive public speaking, including presenting at TAFEs, universities, and state and national conferences such as the Sisters Inside 'Is Prison Obsolete?' conference.

- **Annual Effective Advocacy Training Program, with up to 8 sessions per year, and approximately 800 participants.**

Between 2008 and 2015 CHRIP ran an annual Effective Advocacy Training Program that began with a focus on prison law and advocacy capacity building, and later broadened to include topics that intersect with issues of criminalisation and imprisonment. The trainings were attended by diverse participants, including community sector workers (social workers, community lawyers, housing advocates) community health workers (mental health, health outreach, nurses), formerly imprisoned people and their family members, students and academic lecturers and researchers, etc.

- **CHRIP Working Group volunteers.**

The CHRIP project has attracted and worked alongside a number of skilled and dedicated volunteers. A key component of our volunteer engagement has been the CHRIP Working Group. These 9 volunteers committed to working with the project over a number of years, on activities including organising grassroots fundraising events, working closely with CHRIP Project Coordinators to write and publish creative resources, co-organising community forums, researching and co-authoring journal articles, engaging in community campaigns etc.

- **Systemic advocacy and media.**

Systemic advocacy work from the CHRIP project has included submissions to parliamentary and other official inquiries,

engaging in grassroots community campaigns, and augmenting critical prison issues in community and mainstream media.

- **Publications and resource development.**

CHRIP has written and published a number of resources aimed at the community sector. These have ranged from creative education posters, magazine articles, a book chapter, to in-depth research reports with key policy-change recommendations.

- **Involvement of women with the lived-experience of imprisonment.**

Women with the lived experience of criminalisation and/or imprisonment have been involved in the CHRIP project as consultants and co-authors on submissions and publications, speakers at public forums and advocacy trainings, media engagement, and creative projects. For example, in 2010 CHRIP facilitated a series of storytelling workshops for women who had been subject to youth detention, policing, surveillance, community-based orders and prison. We collaborated with a group of 12 women through a series of full-day digital arts workshops, where women developed their own stories through creative mediums such as poetry, song, creative writing and short films about issues affecting their lives.

- **Women's Information, and Self-Advocacy at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC)**

This program (run between 2011 and 2015) was developed by Flat Out in recognition of the increasing numbers of women in prison in Victoria, high rates of return to prison and inadequate support systems for women in the community. Imprisoned women have limited access to information that would enable them to self-advocate for their needs and access key resources in the community post-release. The program consists of bi-monthly sessions that are facilitated by Flat Out and CHRIP in conjunction with community organisations that hold expertise in the topic areas nominated by the women attending. The aim of the program is to increase access to community services information and resources for imprisoned women and to support and build upon women's skills in advocacy.

CHRIP's Achievements 2014 -2015

- **Running the annual Effective Advocacy Training Program, with over 100 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:

- Women's Health in the Community
- Trans and Gender Diverse: 2014 and Beyond
- Cultural Literacy Training – Working with Immigrant and Refugee Women
- Advocacy with Older People
- Gender Violence and Community Accountability
- Promoting Healthy Relationships and Prison Abolition in Schools
- "We were never meant to survive" (Audre Lorde) – Gendered and Racialised State Violence and Impunity: Through and Beyond Official Inquiries and Coronial Inquests
- Disability Rights, Feminism and Self Advocacy

- **Sustaining the Victorian Decarceration Network, including**

monthly e-bulletins with almost 400 subscribers, as a platform for sharing information and resources.

- **Involvement in co-organising Flat Out's Women's Information, Self-Advocacy and Leadership Program at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre. The bi-monthly sessions continued to focus on increasing the information available to imprisoned women to strengthen their self-advocacy skills whilst incarcerated and when they return to the community. Program topics are chosen by women inside and run with support from community organisations with expertise in areas nominated by the women.**

- **Working with a number of skilled volunteers to undertake research and develop pieces of writing for internal use and publishing.**

- **In February 2015, CHRIP launched its creative End to Prisons poster. The poster is an art-based resource advocating for gender, racial and economic justice and prison abolition.**

The poster was developed collaboratively with activists,

artists and women impacted by criminalisation and imprisonment. The poster was launched at a community event by Vickie Roach, women's prisoner rights advocate and member of the Yuin Aboriginal Nation.

- **Participating in government lobbying and producing submissions into official inquiries, including the Victorian Ombudsman's Investigation into the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Victoria's Prisoners and an extensive and high-impact submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence, which attracted media on ABC News and ABC Radio National, as well as endorsements from 16 community organisations and 16 expert individuals in the fields of law, criminal justice and more (see the Executive Summary below).**

- **Engaging with grassroots and mainstream media on issues affecting criminalised and imprisoned women and Flat Out's prison abolition advocacy and stance**

Executive Summary - Submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

The submission to the Royal Commission into Family Violence prepared by Flat Out and CHRIP focuses on the systemic biases and barriers experienced by criminalised women seeking to access police and/or service responses to family violence. The case studies contained herein suggest that criminalised women experience discrimination from police, government-funded services such as Child Protection, and family violence services. As a result, criminalised women experiencing family violence have restricted access to support systems and may find themselves in a position whereby seeking a police response to family violence worsens their overall situation.

The submission further highlights the overwhelming over-representation of family violence victim/survivors in women's prisons in Victoria. We point out that imprisonment and practices such

as routine strip-searching in prison have significant re-traumatising effects for women. Imprisonment further disrupts the lives of women and their children who have experienced family violence.

The thirteen case studies we collected for this submission focused on criminalised women's family violence-related experiences. The case studies revealed:

- **Police bias, misconduct and inaction in responding or failing to respond to criminalised women's reports of family violence;**
- **Criminalised women's exclusion from family violence services;**
- **The links between family violence and women's imprisonment.**

Based on the systemic issues highlighted and the findings garnered from case studies, the submission strongly

recommends that reducing by half the numbers of women in prison in Victoria be incorporated into the stated goals of the Royal Commission into Family Violence.

In order to begin working towards this goal, we call for:

- **The State Government to curb women's prison growth and reduce the harm of imprisonment;**
- **State and Federal Government to fund and expand specialist services in the community;**
- **Increasing and extending independent system oversight and accountability mechanisms;**
- **Strengthening wider prevention initiatives that address the roots of the problem.**

StreetSmart Grant

- **Avoiding Homelessness Project: emergency support and assistance for women pre and post release.**

- **Effective Advocacy**

Flat Out is very grateful to Street Smart for funds we used to support women coming out of prison. The primary purpose of this grant was to optimise opportunities for homeless women post release prison.

The main outcome of this project has been to have necessary funds available for the purchase of essential personal items which directly connect to women's capacity to obtain and maintain housing and avoid re-criminalisation.

Homelessness continues to be a common feature in the underlying circumstances for why women go to prison. The result of a tough on crime environment is that more homeless people will be targeted and imprisoned unless we can provide a timely, targeted and practical crisis response. Our emergency fund has been crucial.

Thank you to Adam Robinson & StreetSmart

Emergency and essential items included

- Baby bottles, nappies, baby wear, comforters for baby
- Cooking equipment and kitchenware
- Diaries
- Emergency accommodation expenses (where other funds are not available)
- Emergency food where Foodbank Victoria and other sources aren't available
- Manchester: sheets/doona/pillows
- Mobile phones and phone cards - we work on an assertive outreach model, phone contact is essential
- MYKI tickets and travel costs associated with family reunification
- Pharmacotherapy and other prescription medication
- Proof of identification documents
- Refurbished computers/IT hardware for women seeking education and employment
- Specialist psychological and other medical reports
- Sport and recreation memberships and/or equipment
- Toiletries including sanitary supplies
- Warm clothing and footwear
- Women's underwear and other essential clothing

Flat Out Protocols & Partnerships

FLAT OUT HAS PROTOCOLS WITH THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:

- Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (DPFC) Women's Information, Leadership and Self-Advocacy Program
- Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre
- Homeground Services, now known as Launch Housing
- Local Area Service Network (LASN), North West Metropolitan Region
- Salvation Army, EastCare Housing Services
- Smart Justice
- St Kilda Crisis Centre
- Women's Housing Limited
- Yarra Community Housing

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

- Launch Housing -(formerly Homeground Services and Hanover)
- Salvation Army EastCare Housing Services
- Women's Housing Limited
- Yarra Community Housing

Training and professional development undertaken by Flat Out

- ABC Radio 774 – Family Violence forum
- Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL) -Treatment as prevention-what does the future hold for injecting users webinar
- Australia Wide First Aid & CPR – 1 day
- Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission-ask ACNC Melbourne
- CAE-Structural Editing and Copy Editing – 2 days
- CHFV Excel 2007/2010/2013 Essentials
- CHFV – Marketing Planning for Non Marketing People
- CHRIP Effective Advocacy & Activism training sessions
 - Advocacy with Older People
 - Cultural Literacy-Working with Immigrant & Refugee Women
 - Disability Rights, Feminism & Self Advocacy
 - Gender Violence and Community Accountability
 - Promoting healthy relationships & prison abolition in schools in Melbourne
 - Trans and Gender Diverse, 2014 and Beyond
 - Women's Health in the Community
- Connecting Up-webinar-MS Office 365 to empower your not-for-profit
- Copyright Agency, Melbourne campaign-Why Copyright Matters
- DHHS SHSC SHIP 1 day training
- DHHS SHSC Advanced SHIP 1 day training
- DPFC-Orientation Induction
- Dr Erica Meiners presentation – Gender Trouble: Rethinking Feminist Safety in a Prison Nation
- Dulwich Centre-Level Two: Extending Narrative Therapy – 5 days
- Ethical Jobs – Not-For-Profit People conference – 2 days
- Flat Out Poster launch
- Flat Out's Women's Information, Leadership and Self-Advocacy Program sessions at DPFC
 - Alcohol and Drug Services and Supports in the Community (Post-Release)
 - Family Violence
 - Have Your Say
 - How Community Corrections Orders and Other Sentences Work
 - WISE Employment Pathways
 - Credit and Debt Issues
- Hepatitis Victoria Inc – Bloody Serious Facts
- Lesbian, Bi-Sexual & Queer Women's Health Conference
- Monash University – Beyond Imprisonment: Innovation & reform opportunities for Victoria
- Melbourne Campaigning Network-Anti Poverty Campaigning
- North and West Homelessness Network & Agenda 2001 – Working with Young People, Self-Harm and Self Injuries behaviours
- Sisters Inside 'Is Prison Obsolete' conference -3 days
- Smart Justice-Tackling crime the smart way
- Soroptimist presentation
- Turning Point-work effectively in the alcohol and other drugs sector competency based training – 4 days
- Yarra Drug & Health Forum oration-Jeff Kennett-Beyond Blue-My axis of evil drugs, alcohol & depression



Directors

Lionel R. Arnold CA B.Bus
Raelene Cheng CPA B.Com

**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 2015, and the income statement, statement of changes in equity and cash flow statement for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the Committee declaration.

The Responsibility of Committee for the Financial Report

Committee of the association 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 financial reporting requirements of the entity and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Committee responsibility also includes establishing 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 judgment, 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 association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by Committee, 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 Committee financial reporting under the Constitution. 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.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional accounting bodies.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, of the financial position of FLAT OUT INC. as of 30th June 2015 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

J. L. Collyer & Partners

Lionel R. Arnold



Accountants

Partner

Dated in Glen Waverley on 26th August 2015



**NO JUSTICE IN
PRISON FOR
ABORIGINAL
WOMEN**

FLAT OUT WELCOMES YOUR SUPPORT & INVOLVEMENT

YOU CAN ATTEND OUR PUBLIC FORUMS AND EVENTS

YOU CAN BECOME A MEMBER OR ASSOCIATE MEMBER OF FLAT OUT

SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY EDUCATION WORK BY DISTRIBUTING OUR PUBLISHED MATERIALS

PARTICIPATE AND OR PRESENT IN OUR EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY TRAININGS

STAY INFORMED THROUGH OUR WEBSITE AND FACE BOOK WWW.FLATOUT.ORG.AU

If you haven't done so already, please consider our monthly giving program to support our important social change and systemic advocacy work. We would be very happy if you would consider donating the price of one coffee a day.

Your contribution, however big or small, supports our work and empowers us to advocate with and for criminalised and imprisoned women in victoria.

All contributions are tax-deductible and honoured through our annual report.
You can make a tax deductible donation at: www.givenow.com.au/flatout

**FOR A COPY OF FLAT OUT'S FINANCIAL STATEMENTS PLEASE
CONTACT FLAT OUT EXECUTIVE OFFICER ON ☎ 372 6155**



**SCHOOLS
NOT JAILS**

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COMMUNITIES
NOT PRISONS**



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