



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Women's Legal Services NQ Inc.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021



The ATSIWLSNQ 2021 artwork

Title: "Responsibility to past, present and future".

Artist: Michelle J Tyhuis (b. 1980)

Meriam Mir, Saisarem Tribe, Erub (Darnley Island), Torres Strait Islands, Queensland.

Acrylic and enamel paints on canvas.

Dimensions: 127cm (w) x 197cm (h)

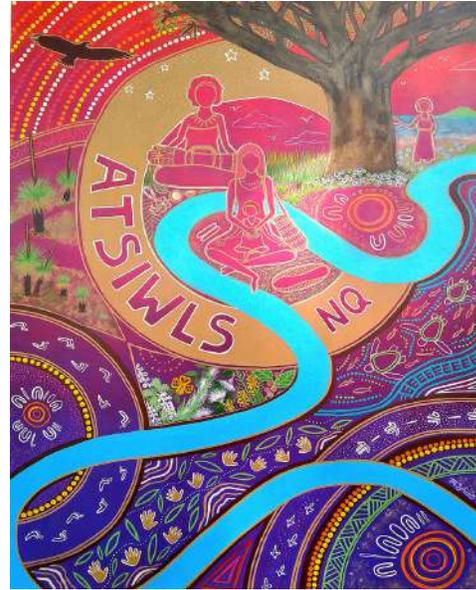
Commission artwork for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Service, North Queensland (ATSIWLSNQ), December 2021.

Artwork Description

Overall this artwork symbolises a continuing connection to culture, country and community and aims to inspire First Nations women to have courage, strength and be active participants in determining their own future. *'Responsibility to past, present and future'* has many layers of meaning and storytelling that relate to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ's history, vision, mission, beliefs and values.

The artist provides insight into aspects of the artwork. "The large raintree and the Elder standing underneath represents the location of ATSIWLSNQ in Townsville and the founding women whose wisdom and knowledge guides the legal service.

"The First Nations women in the centre of the artwork symbolises ATSIWLSNQ clients



- and protecting their right to have safe, secure and happy lives. The cultural artefacts depicted across the artwork recognise our link to the past through the continuation of cultural traditions and practices which are passed down through the generations.

"The yarning circles with people sitting around them acknowledge the practical help provided by ATSIWLSNQ. The flora and fauna represents both healing and survival - they are a reminder of the sacredness of country and the vibrant diversity of our traditional homelands."



*** The graphic design and layout of this Annual Report is also proudly created by Michelle Tyhuis.*



ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER WOMEN'S LEGAL SERVICES NQ INC

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. **ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021**

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Traditional Acknowledgement

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc ("ATSIWLSNQ") acknowledge and pay our respects to the Wulgurukaba, Bindal and Bwngcolman peoples across whose lands we conduct our core business. We pay our respects to all Traditional Owners across whose lands we conduct our business. We pay our sincere respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging.

Who We Are

The ATSIWLSNQ is a not-for-profit, community based, culturally competent women's legal service developed and operated by and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Based in Townsville, we provide free legal services in North Queensland in an area that extends south to Sarina, north to the Torres Strait, west to the Northern Territory border and east to Palm Island.

Our Pledge

- To provide an environment which is culturally safe and culturally competent
- To treat our clients with respect, courtesy and professionalism and to listen to their concerns
- To provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with information about the law and the services we offer
- To respond to our clients' enquiries and requests for information in an accurate and timely manner
- To provide quality legal advice and legal representation to the extent of our resources
- To provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with alternative/assisted legal referral if we are unable to assist them

Our Mission

To empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women by providing legal services and raising awareness through community legal education, advocacy and law reform.



Our Logo

The woman holding the child is the association. The flower represents the beauty of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The vines represent the family and keeping culture alive.



Chairperson's Report

As the 2020-2021 Chairperson of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. ("ATSIWLSNQ"), I am pleased to present the Annual Report for the 2020-2021 financial year.

In 2021, the organisation has reached a milestone of 15 years' operating as a separate Community Legal Centre. In the past 15 years, the service has grown from a small team consisting of three (3) staff members to now operating with over ten (10). The service has assisted over 2400 clients during this time and we look forward to the next 15 years!



Babette Doherty
ATSIWLSNQ
Chairperson 2020-2021

Staff Members

The ATSIWLSNQ Management Committee values the diligence, skill and integrity of the staff at ATSIWLSNQ, in ensuring that services are professionally delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. On behalf of the Management Committee, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Principal Solicitor, Cathy Pereira, and the ATSIWLSNQ staff:

- Florence Onus (Community Engagement Officer/ Cultural Advisor, Townsville)
- Andrea Kyle-Sailor (Community Engagement Officer/ Cultural Advisor, Palm Island)
- Cathy Pereira (Principal Solicitor/ Co-ordinator)
- Cherie McLaughlin (Office Manager)
- Tania Young (Solicitor)
- Paige Ryan (Solicitor)
- Rachael Edwards (Legal Administrator)
- Karen Johnson (Paralegal)
- Erica Kyle (Admin Assistant)
- Jody Martin-Savage (Client Support Officer)

Other staff members who have left over the year:

- Angela Carroll (Locum Solicitor)

Management Committee Members

I would like to acknowledge this year's Management Committee Members who have dedicated their own time to the governance tasks of ATSIWLSNQ. The dedication from these strong and knowledgeable women, is reflected in the service's ongoing success.

Our members for the 2020-2021 period have been Babette Doherty, Tanya Morris, Nina Shibasaki, Topsy Mola, Bernice Hookey and Gail Barry. It has been an insightful year with additional committee members coming on-board to share their knowledge and wisdom for the organisation.

Funding

I would like to acknowledge both the Commonwealth and State Government funders for their support for the valuable work undertaken by ATSIWLSNQ.

Department of Justice and Attorney General

I would like to thank the Department of Justice and Attorney General (QLD) for its continued support of the organisation and administering the state funding. Our organisation acknowledges with gratitude the securing of ongoing funding for 2020-2025.

Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet

I would like to thank the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet ("DPMC") for its continued financial support under the Indigenous Women's Outreach Project ("IWOP"). I would also like to thank the DPMC for providing ongoing funding for 2020-2023.

Community Events/ Activities

ATSIWLSNQ participated in community events during the 2020-2021 period. It is great to see representation of our service at various community events. ATSIWLSNQ participated at the following events:

Youth Crime Crisis Forum

Our Townsville Community Engagement Officer/ Cultural Advisor, Florence Onus spoke at the Townsville Youth Crime Crisis Forum in February 2021. Florence strongly advocated for a holistic approach to this issue by utilising community mentors and elders to be involved in the solution. It is important to acknowledge that grassroots solutions are key to tackling the youth crime issue in our community.

Townsville Women March for Justice

In March 2021, our service participated in the Townsville March4Justice to demand justice and change for gendered harassment and violence in workplaces. Participants of the march delivered a petition to Federal Member for Herbert, Phillip Thompson with a list of demands to present to the Prime Minister to act.

CLCQ State Conference

In November 2020, our Community Engagement Officers, Florence Onus and Andrea Kyle-Sailor presented at the annual CLC QLD State Conference. The topic was "First Nations Showcase: Community Engagement and Knowledge Sharing". Florence and Andrea provided an overview of the diversity in their roles and how they assist clients in the Townsville and Palm Island communities.

Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA)

Our Principal Solicitor Cathy Pereira has been working tirelessly in her advocating work during the 2020-2021 period. I would like to thank her for her engagement with the WLSA in contributing to lobbying the Federal Government for more funding. Cathy provided submissions to the group about our services and the impacts on COVID19.

Thank you again to the Management Committee and staff for all your hard work and let us continue this dedication into 2021-2022.

Treasurer's Report



Nina Shibasaki

*ATSIWLSNQ Treasurer
2020-2021*

Financial Year Summary

This year has seen the continued support of two key funding programs, the Indigenous Women's Program Funding (IWP) as provided by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PMC), and legal and outreach services as provided by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG). Further income has been received in the current year from DJAG for frontline legal assistance services due to COVID-19.

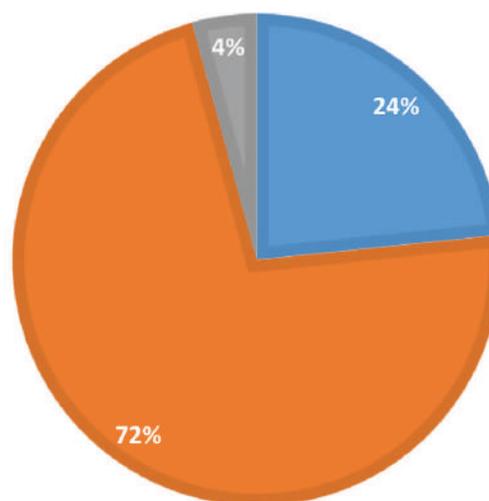
A total of \$221,831 was received from PMC which represents approximately 24% of total revenue received by the service. Funding under this program is confirmed to 30 June 2023.

The service received a total of \$653,160 in core funding this year from DJAG, with a further \$171,046 received to support COVID-19 assistance. \$73,263 of carried forward funding from 2019/20 was also injected into the 2020/21 service program. This funding has enabled the service to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with the means for early intervention, reducing the level of personal and family conflict as well as providing access to quality dispute resolution, rather than costly litigation. DJAG funding represents 72% of the services revenue. Of the total funding received, a total of \$172,824, plus a further \$39,070 relating to COVID-19 funding, had not been spent within the 2020/21 financial year and has been carried forward for use in 2021/22.

Other revenue of \$40,587 was also received during the year. Other revenue mostly comprises the Cash Flow Boost subsidy received from the Commonwealth Government in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2021 REVENUE OVERVIEW

■ PMC ■ Department of Justice ■ Other Revenue



Key Financial Information

Actual revenue (not including carried forward funding and unspent funding) has increased by approximately 27% from 2019/20 which is mostly attributable to the additional income received for COVID-19 legal assistance.

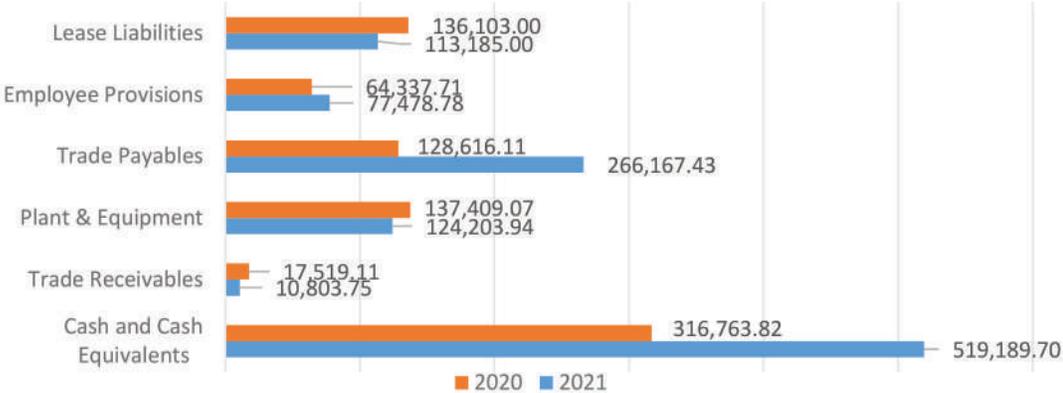
A total of \$519,190 is currently held in cash and cash equivalents (including term deposits). This has increased by 64% from the prior year. This is mostly attributed to increase grant funding received this financial year.

At 30 June 2021, ATSIWLSNQ has a current position of 1.51 (2020: 1.56), which means that the service has sufficient current assets to be able to pay current liabilities as and when they fall due. The current position has somewhat decreased from 2020 due to the increase in Unexpended Grants.

The total provision for employee benefits (annual leave and long service leave) has remained relatively consistent year on year.

The auditor, Coutts Redington Chartered Accountants, has issued an unmodified audit opinion on 22 November 2021.

Balance Sheet Comparison



Looking to the Future

The service has successfully secured the following funding:

- PMC – confirmed to 30 June 2023, total of \$408,905
- DJAG (core funding) – confirmed to 30 June 2025, total of \$2,724,978
- Additional funding from the federal government to be confirmed in the 2021-2022 period.
- \$211,894 of unspent funds have been carried forward for use in the 2021/22 financial year.

In addition to the continued delivery of core services, management are working to implement new positions and other administration functions in anticipation of additional funding in the next financial year.



Principal Solicitor's Report



Cathy Pereira

ATSIWLSNQ Principal
Solicitor / Coordinator

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the Wulgurukaba, Bindal and Bwgcolman peoples across whose lands we conduct our core business. I pay my respects to the Traditional Owners and Elders, past present and emerging, across whose lands we conduct our business.

Overview 2020-21

The 2020-21 financial year was a hard-working one for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ ("ATSIWLSNQ").

ATSIWLSNQ provides a core service that consists of legal case work, legal advice and representation, community legal education and legal outreach clinics to improve accessibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in remote areas, those seeking domestic violence services and women in prison. ATSIWLSNQ is based in Townsville but extends its services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland and provides a domestic violence duty lawyer and legal casework service on Palm Island.

ATSIWLSNQ has met and exceeded most of its legal targets during the year. We acknowledge that there remains a substantial level of unmet need among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland. To this end, ATSIWLSNQ expresses our gratitude to the Federal government and the Queensland Attorney-General for passing on a significant increase in funding for vulnerable women allocated in the 2021 federal budget. The changes in delivery of services will be reflected in the 2021-22 financial year, when the funding becomes effective.

In addition to core legal business, ATSIWLSNQ has made contributions to law reform, has engaged in community work and community legal education aimed at raising awareness of the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland. We also participate in legal and community networks to share information and to work towards the improvement of services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland and we have provided input into legal enquiries during this financial year.

ATSIWLSNQ strives for "continuous improvement" in its delivery of services, seeking to better tailor its legal services and improve accessibility through culturally competent services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland. ATSIWLSNQ has engaged in the "demand management" project provided through CLCQld, which aims to streamline legal services through triage and demand.

ATSIWLSNQ's two community development workers/cultural advisers, Andrea Kyle-Sailor on Palm Island and Florence Onus in Townsville, connect women with services, contribute to community issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children and promote cultural awareness in the community.

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In the latter part of 2020, coming out of the Qld Health Directive COVID 19 lockdowns, an increasing number of women who were or had been experiencing domestic and family violence (“DFV”) sought legal services. ATSIWLSNQ has responded to this by providing regular legal visits to the Women’s Shelters, Flora House and Elsie House. This has provided access to legal services for women fleeing domestic violence locally and from remote areas and the Torres Strait.

In 2020, ATSIWLSNQ also developed a new position for a client support officer, a position held by Jody Martin-Savage, to provide culturally competent practical support to women engaged in legal proceedings. This was in response to the observation that many women become personally exhausted or discouraged by legal processes that appeared remote from their own personal experiences. The client support officer has extensive experience working with First Nations people through the court system and is able to help build personal resilience and assist women to regain a sense of empowerment by advising and assisting women to take practical steps to succeed with their legal process.

During the 2020-21 year, ATSIWLSNQ has participated in a range of law reform issues and enquiries, including the Disability Royal Commission, the Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce, Youth Justice issues and child protection issues, among others. ATSIWLSNQ supported the work of Bottoms English lawyers by facilitating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the class action on stolen wages.

The community development workers/cultural advisers have provided cultural training, advocated for services for youth, participated in an enquiry into a community Blue Card, participated in the Elders for Change at the prison and elsewhere and contributed to the enquiry into the criminalisation of coercive control in Queensland.

ATSIWLSNQ has also contributed to and participated in a range of networks locally, state-wide and nationally, including the Women’s Legal Services Australia network, Elders for Change, NQ Legal Assistance Forum (NQLAF) and the Family Law Pathways Network, among others.

Legal Advice and Casework Services

ATSIWLSNQ’s core areas of legal practice are those in greatest demand by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in North Queensland, namely Family/ Domestic Violence, Family Law and Child Protection and in civil matters such as anti-discrimination/ human rights, the Victim Assist Queensland compensation scheme and Blue Card applications and reviews.

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Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic violence was, in many cases, in 2020 exacerbated by the COVID lockdowns. It is common knowledge that women experienced increased domestic violence where they were in relationships characterised by domestic violence and/or coercive control during lockdown periods. The lockdowns reduced access to DFV services and limited women's access to support networks. Stress caused by loss of work or forced unemployment and children being home from school also contributed to family violence indirectly where coping mechanisms failed. Women with children in out of home care were in some cases denied access to their children during lockdowns and in some cases this led to feelings of despair and harmful or self-destructive behaviours.

Legal assistance and representation services in relation to domestic and family violence constituted 38% of legal cases opened in 2020-21. We provided 496 legal advices and tasks (in which a legal case was not opened), amounting to 36% of our total legal advice and tasks.

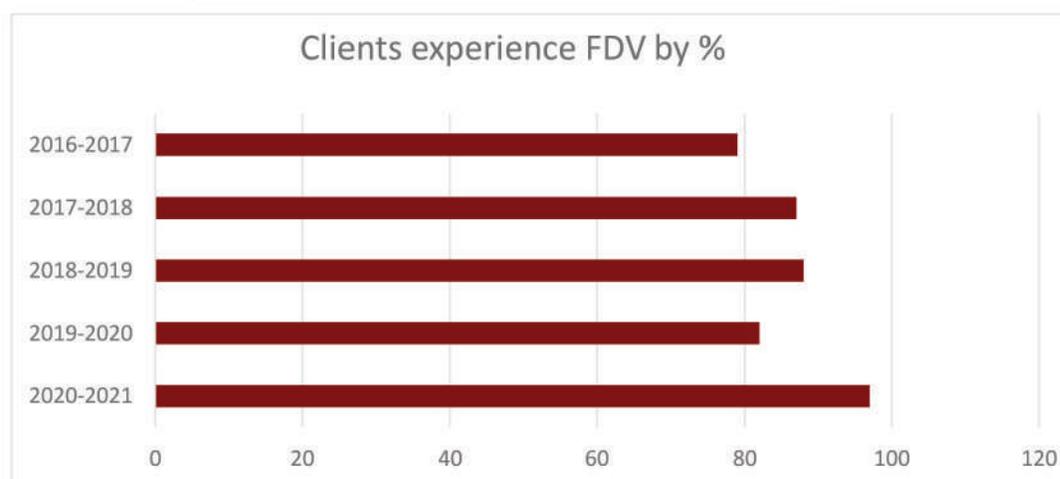
Perhaps the more disturbing figure is that 97% of the women we assisted during the 2020-21 year were experiencing domestic violence. This means that, while the advice or assistance provided was not necessarily in relation to a domestic violence matter, the women were experiencing domestic violence in addition to other legal issues for which they were seeking assistance.

The increase in family and domestic violence experienced by women during the 2020-21 year as compared with previous years is reflected in the following table and graph:

Table 1

Clients experiencing Family/Domestic Violence over the past 5 years

Year	No. Of Clients	Clients Experiencing Dv	%
2020-2021	375	364	97%
2019-2020	358	296	82%
2018-2019	376	329	88%
2017-2018	310	271	87%
2016-2017	335	266	79%



Domestic violence Duty Lawyer service on Palm Island

ATSIWLSNQ has provided a domestic violence duty lawyer service on Palm Island since 2016. DFV court is held fortnightly. ATSIWLSNQ's community development worker/ cultural adviser, Andrea Kyle-Sailor, provides an ongoing service to women on Palm Island in between court dates. Solicitor, Tania Young, has attended court each fortnight for the circuit court and has provided 116 DFV duty lawyer services on Palm Island during 2020-21.

Numbers of domestic violence cases on Palm Island continue to be high in both criminal proceedings and separate civil actions under the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012. ATSIWLSNQ recognises that a duty lawyer service alone is insufficient and we provide ongoing casework assistance where appropriate and this may include legal representation and court appearances, submissions to court and police in relation to the order sought and advice. Although matters rarely progress to trial, they more frequently involve trial preparation. In addition, ATSIWLSNQ provides information and works with other services on Palm Island to deliver support to women on Palm Island experiencing domestic and family violence.

Women experiencing DFV may also be eligible for the Victim Assist Queensland scheme and ATSIWLSNQ assists women with these applications.

Family law

ATSIWLSNQ has focused its resources on assisting family law parenting matters and a small number of disputed paternity cases. Family law cases constituted nearly one quarter (23%) of legal cases opened during the 2020-21 financial year. The parenting matters that progress to legal proceedings are often complex and involve domestic violence and/or coercive control. The majority of these matters resolve without progressing to trial. Early resolution is more likely to occur in cases where both parties are legally represented. The most toxic cases, which are also the least likely to resolve, involve cases where coercive control has been prevalent.

Case 1

ATSIWLSNQ assisted a mother who had been in a relationship characterised by coercive control. Parenting arrangements were inconsistent due to the withholding of the children by the father and ongoing parental alienation and intimidation by the father. The mother had sought a domestic violence protection order against the father in the Magistrates Court but the matter had not proceeded to trial. When the mother commenced legal proceedings in the Federal Circuit Court, the father persisted in refusing to seek legal representation even when Legal Aid was available to him. The father was directed by the court, but refused, to seek legal representation. The father's actions, which were obstructive and not focused on the best interests of the children resulted in legal proceedings becoming protracted. With the assistance of an Independent Children's Lawyer for the children, the matter was eventually resolved.

Case 2

ATSIWLSNQ assisted a mother who had been in a matter in which the father had demonstrated little interest in the child and a paternal family member wished to assume sole parental responsibility for the child on the basis that the child had spent some weekends and holidays with the family member. The matter therefore involved 3 parties. All indications tended to show that it was in the best interests of the child to continue to live with her mother. After an interim hearing in which orders were made for the child to live with the mother, the parties agreed to settle on terms sought by our client.

Case 3

In a complex matter involving in-family placement of a child, multiple parties to the proceedings had specific and divergent views about what parenting arrangements were appropriate for a child after a family placement broke down, leaving the child traumatised. ATSIWLSNQ provided legal representation for the child's primary caregiver. The matter proceeded to a Child Inclusive Conference and was eventually finalised at a court ordered conference on terms that the child live with her primary caregiver, who also had sole parental responsibility. The parenting arrangements protected the child, while providing for her contact with people who were meaningful to her.

Child Protection

In the 2020-21 year, at nearly one fifth of legal advice and legal casework, Child Protection remains a significant portion of the legal work undertaken by ATSIWLSNQ. Legal representation is offered by ATSIWLSNQ at all stages from early intervention, to administrative processes, initial court applications by the Department of Child Safety Youth Justice and Multi-Cultural Affairs ("Child Safety") and applications for Child Protection Orders by the Director of Child Protection Litigation.

In addition to the legal representation, the client support officer provides invaluable support and guidance as well as practical solutions for parents whose children have been removed. She participates in family group meetings which discuss steps that each party will take to meet the child's needs and reduce risk to the child and calls on families where there is a failure to participate or address risk by the parent. She assists women to access services, including housing.



Case 4

ATSIWLSNQ assisted "Suzie" who was struggling with a large family of children after separation. One child had special needs and required intensive support 24/7. Four of the children had been removed by Child Safety. Suzie secured the return of the children and the client support officer checked on her regularly to ensure that the children's needs were being met, help with finding more appropriate housing and ensure that any Child Safety requirements were met. The client support officer continued to check on Suzie after the children were returned to ensure that she was supported during this period. *Not her real name*

Legal Outreach Services

In addition to the Palm Island outreach and DFV duty lawyer service, during 2020-21, ATSIWLSNQ solicitors provided legal outreach services in Charters Towers, Ingham, the North Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service (NQDVRS), the Women's Centre, the Women's Shelter and the Townsville Correctional Centre.

Outreach legal clinics and community engagement were provided regularly and in some cases on an "as needs" basis at the following places:

- Charters Towers (Prospect Community Centre; Warringnu Community Centre)
- The Women's Centre, Aitkenvale, Townsville
- NQDVRS in Townsville
- Hinchinbrook Community Hub in Ingham
- Flora House and Elsie House women's shelters
- Townsville Correctional Centre, Women's Unit.

Walk-in and on-demand services and referrals

As part of its commitment to the principle of accessibility, ATSIWLSNQ is as responsive as it can be to requests for advice, legal information and/or legal representation. In addition to providing advice and assistance by appointment, solicitors provide phone advice on demand and assist women with urgent needs including "walk-in" services whenever possible to ensure early access to legal advice for women in crisis.

ATSIWLSNQ receives referrals from the Qld Police Service (QPS) via the online referral system, for women who require assistance in areas of domestic violence, other civil or family law. Referrals usually arise from police attending callouts for domestic violence assistance.

Casework and working collaboratively and holistically

ATSIWLSNQ undertakes both simple advice and complex casework involving multiple issues and intense support. A substantial amount of casework undertaken by ATSIWLSNQ includes court representation, which is subject to assessment under casework guidelines. ATSIWLSNQ case guidelines take into consideration a woman's need, her capacity, case merit and the service's capacity.

The women we assist with complex casework are often experiencing multiple disadvantage, such as domestic/ family violence, financial disadvantage, homelessness, unemployment, mental health (including, for example, depression) and child protection issues. Women experiencing coercive control from a partner or recent ex-partner often feel particularly disempowered in dealing with the multiplicity of issues.

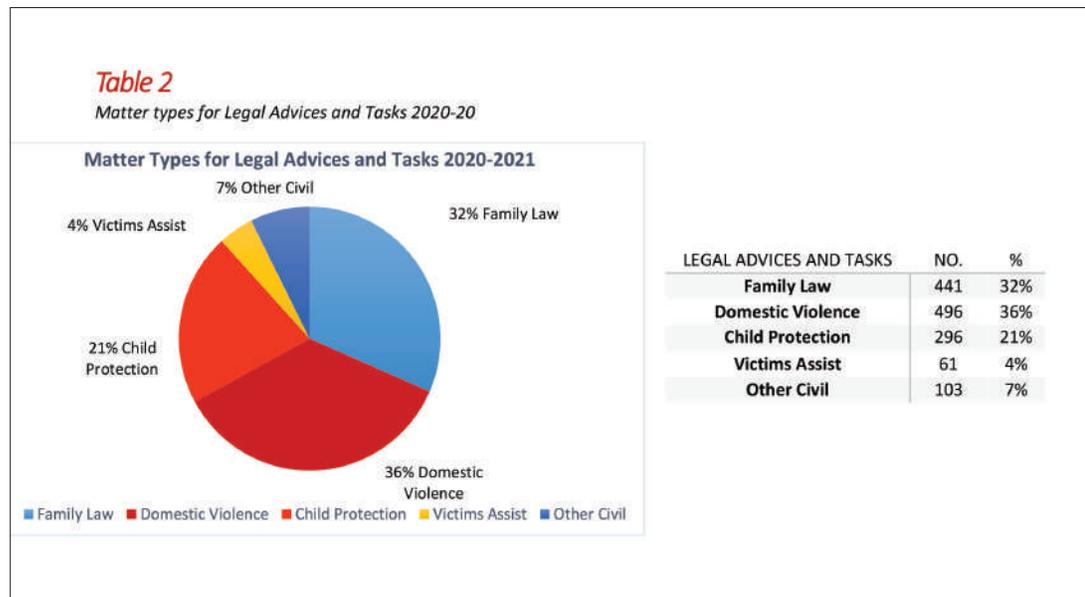
ATSIWLSNQ works in collaboration with a range of legal and non-legal support services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. We cross-refer to legal services such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service ("ATSILS"), Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Service ("QIFVLS"), North Queensland Women's Legal Service, Legal Aid Qld and private law firms and other specialist community legal centres where ATSIWLSNQ does not have the capacity to assist, or there is a conflict of interest, or another legal service provides a specialist service which we do not provide.

Non-legal services that we cross-refer to include the Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service ("TAIHS"), North Qld Domestic Violence Resource Service ("NQDVRS"), the Women's Centre, the Sexual Assault Response Team ("SART"), Victim Assist Queensland, rehabilitation services and the Community Justice Groups in Townsville and on Palm Island.

The client support officer is particularly valuable in complex situations requiring holistic support. She is able to assist in a culturally competent way to connect women with services quickly. For example, the client support officer has provided support to women by assisting them to make housing applications, attend drug screens (failure to provide a drug screen when required in legal proceedings may be deemed a positive result although the reason for non-compliance may be transport or confusion or having other urgent commitments involving children), connecting women with TAIHS or with Social and Emotional Wellbeing services and negotiating early entry into rehabilitation services, among others. Case 4 refers to a case involving the client support officer.

Legal Advices and Tasks

These are matters for which advice or minor support is provided in a range of matter types. These are matters which are less complex and do not require a legal representation file to be opened.



Representation files

Domestic/ family violence legal matters have remained a large part of our legal representation files, at 38% constituting more than one-third of our legal casework files.

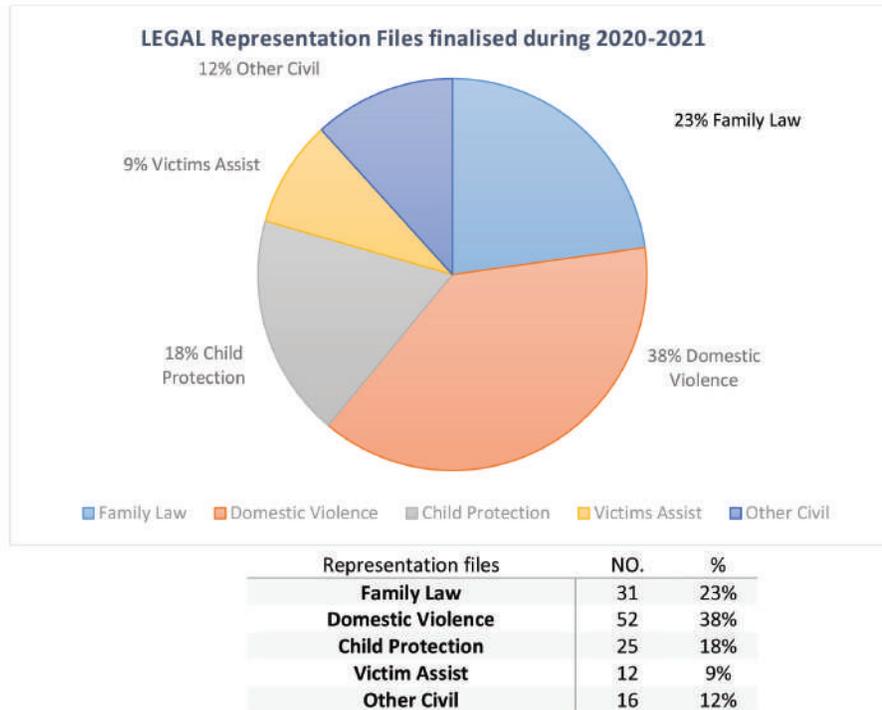
Since 2018, the percentage of Victim Assist files has increased markedly. A contributing factor has been increased awareness of rights, particularly of women who have experienced injuries arising from family violence and the large proportion of women who have experienced DFV.

The percentage of child protection matters have remained more or less consistent over a three-year period. Many women whose children are in the child protection system are experiencing inter-generational trauma as a result of past policies of child removal affecting their parents and grandparents.

Child protection files are usually complex, requiring a significant investment of time due to the volume of material and the level of collaborative work needed to support women to have their children reunified with them. ATSIWLSNQ strives to support women to safely reunify their children with them.

Although there have been fewer Family Law files, those matters which we have opened files for have included complex matters requiring considerable support and legal work.

Table 3
Legal Representation Files finalised during 2020-21



Court Attendances and involvement with DFV specialist Court and other Courts

In response to high numbers of domestic violence and by way of acknowledging the impacts on women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in particular, in 2017 the Queensland Government established DFV specialist courts in a number of sites throughout the State. DFV specialist courts were established in Townsville and Palm Island, among other places.

ATSIWLSNQ has been one of the stakeholders in the operational working group which oversaw the establishment and running of the DFV courts. ATSIWLSNQ continues to provide court representation in both the Townsville and Palm Island courts and ATSIWLSNQ solicitors also appear in a number of courts in person and remotely where in-person appearance is not feasible and the court has granted leave for remote appearances.

During the 2020-21 financial year we provided representation in the following courts and tribunals:

- The Federal Circuit Court of Australia, Townsville (family law matters)
- The Family Court of Australia, Townsville (Magellan matter)
- Specialist DFV courts in Townsville and Palm Island
- Magistrates Court, Children’s Court and QCAT in Townsville
- Ayr and Charters Towers Magistrates Courts (remotely)
- Ingham Magistrates court by remote appearance

Cultural Competency

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing in-house cultural competency training provided by Florence Onus during the 2020-21 year. Florence also took the initiative to provide a full day of cultural competency training for ATSIWLSNQ staff and staff from other community legal centres in Townsville in the second half of the 2021 year.

Thanks also to Andrea Kyle-Sailor who provides cultural competency guidance for solicitors working on Palm Island and cultural support when interacting with clients and community organisations.

As an identified service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, cultural competence is key to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women being able to access legal services. ATSIWLSNQ is managed by a committee of dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and maintains identified indigenous positions within the organisation.

ATSIWLSNQ actively encourages the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women for positions within the organisation and currently has 50% First Nations staff members. All staff undertake cultural competency training on at least a biennial basis.

ATSIWLSNQ staff actively participate in community events and law reform activities which promote the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Community Engagement

Cultural advisers / community development workers, Andrea Kyle-Sailor and Florence Onus have made significant contributions to community engagement, some of which includes the following:

- Active participation in Elders for Change and attendance at the Townsville Correctional Centre Women's Unit for community legal education and support for women in prison
- Tiddas Yarning Circle for women experiencing family violence co-chaired weekly by Florence Onus
- Attendance at Cleveland Youth Detention Centre to offer support for detained youth
- Andrea meeting with Bravehearts on Palm Island in relation to the needs of women on Palm Island
- Andrea's engagement with the enquiry into Working with Children Community Cards
- Extensive and ongoing support for women experiencing trauma, women seeking assistance with domestic violence, housing, mental health and other issues
- Meeting with Sisters for Change at the Townsville Correctional Centre Women's Unit
- Collaboration with Shield of HERS, a peer mentoring program for First Nations women
- Engagement with the Royal Commission into abuse, neglect and exploitation of people with a disability
- Engagement with PICC Women's Healing program
- Membership of the Stolen Generations Reference Committee



- Cultural advice to Hermit Park State School
- Participation in the Stolen Generations Suicide Prevention Roundtable
- Presentation to CLCQld on cultural safety
- Attendance at Ingham DFV Stakeholder engagement and networking
- Networking with First Nations services on Palm Island and at Warringnu Women's corporation, Charters Towers
- Attendance at stakeholder meetings
- Presentation at the Women's Centre, Aitkenvale

The community engagement by Florence Onus and Andrea Kyle Sailor has been extensive and the above list represents only a small portion of the work undertaken by them in the 12 months to June 2021.

Florence Onus has been a hardworking advocate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, both prior to and during her employment with ATSIWLSNQ. Florence leads the TIDDAS healing and mentoring group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women recovering from domestic and family violence, which meets weekly. Florence has also been involved in a collaborative project with PICC, providing support to women in prison on their own healing journey from domestic violence and other trauma. Florence has also provided cultural competency presentations at schools, at the JCU students' clinical education sessions and by way of in-house training for staff.

Andrea Kyle-Sailor has a long history of supporting women experiencing domestic violence on Palm Island and has been involved in a range of local and State-wide issues. Andrea was on the reference group for the development of the Magistrates Court's Reconciliation Action Plan and Andrea has also been elected to the Palm Island council and is a member of the Community Justice Group. In her work with ATSIWLSNQ, Andrea collaborates with community organisations and community networks on Palm Island and facilitates women accessing legal advice and representation. Andrea provides information to women on Palm Island in relation to legal issues such as domestic violence and a range of other civil issues. Andrea's work includes assisting women who have experienced domestic violence to access victim assistance. Andrea continues to provide "in person" support for women on Palm Island, which includes court support and home visits when appropriate and necessary. Andrea provides court support and legal referrals at the Palm Island Magistrates Court for women listed in domestic and family violence matters.

Because of their connections to community, both Florence and Andrea frequently receive out-of-work-hours calls from women needing assistance with domestic violence.

Law Reform and Advocacy

During the 2020-21 year, ATSIWLSNQ made the following contributions to law reform issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women:

- 03/08/2020 - Submission to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in relation to the Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.
- 2020 – Support to BE Law in relation to Stolen Wages.
- 12/11/2020 - Statement to Disability Royal Commission in relation to parents with disability in the child protection system.
- 25/11/2020 - Oral Evidence to DRC enquiry.
- 12/01/2021 - Joint letter of support for pilot project on criminal law at CAWLS and KWILS.
- 18/01/2021 - Submission to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in relation to the Child Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2020.
- 19/03/2021 - Submission to Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee in relation to the Youth Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021.
- May-June 2021 - Contribution to WLSA submission in relation to the ban on direct cross examination under the Family Law Act 1975.
- May 2021 - Contribution to advocacy on coercive control.
- 22/06/2021 - Evidence to Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce in relation to the criminalization of coercive control.

Accountability

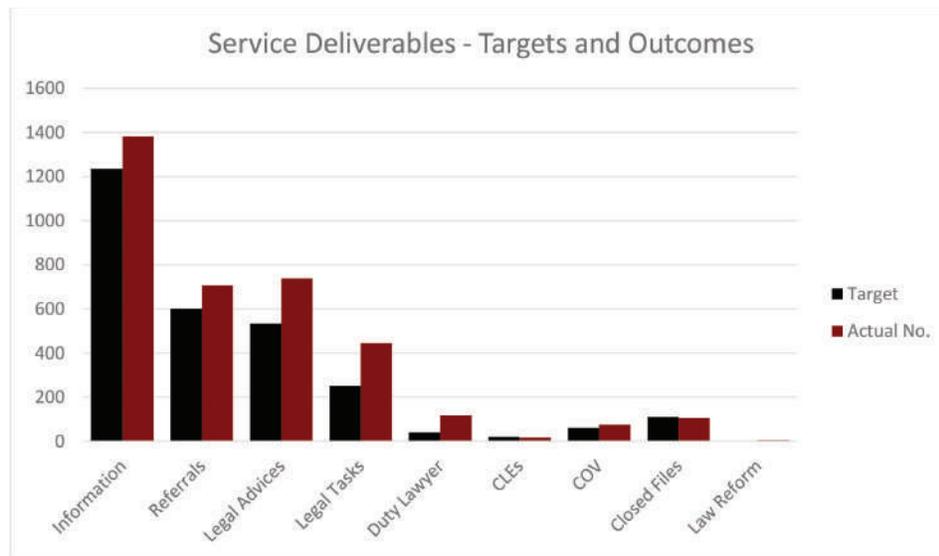
During the 2020-21 ATSIWLSNQ received funding through 2 main funding streams:

1. the Qld Department of Justice and Attorney-General both for generalist services and also COVID funding to offset demand arising from the lockdowns; and
2. Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet managed through the National Indigenous Australians Agency.

ATSIWLSNQ has met and exceeded most 2020-21 annual targets. Our combined compliance under both funding streams is contained in the following table:

Table 4
Targets and Compliance

Service Deliverables		Target	Actual No.
Information		1235	1383
Referrals		600	706
Legal Advices		533	737
Legal Tasks		250	445
Duty Lawyer		40	116
CLE Resources		4	1
CLE Activities		15	16
Dispute Resolution	Opened	-	
	Closed	8	11
Court/ Other Representation	Opened	30	30
	Closed	110	107
Community Outreach Visits		60	75
Law Reform		2	5



Community Legal Education

ATSIWLSNQ has provided the following CLE activities during the 2020-21 year:

Table 6 Summary of CLE activities 2020-21 year

<i>Area of law/ Issue</i>	<i>Resources/activities</i>
Domestic violence	Presentation to the staff at Yumba Meta about DFV and on the organisation and delivery model to staff. Radio presentation with 4K1G. Power point and Webinar on Domestic and Family Violence in conjunction with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Alliance.
Child Protection	Presentation to BE Law on Child Protection and the impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the Townsville and Palm Island communities.
Family law	Power point presentations to women in the Townsville Correctional Centre; CREST; TAIHS; Palm Island Community Company; Garbutt community centre; Townsville Drop-In Centre; James Cook University Clinical induction program.
Accessing legal help	CLE on Demand Management Project regarding options for services to better manage legal demand in their centres. Presentation to the NQ Land Council on an overview of the service. Online presentation on the organisation and services provided.
Cultural competency	Power point presentation and talk to JCU social work students on the impact of past policy and practice on First Nations Australians. Cultural Safety Workshop delivered to the Women's Centre. Cultural Safety Induction delivered to JCU Clinical Students. Online Webinar of Cultural Safety and assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women at court.
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues	ATSIWLSNQ participated in the hosting of Tiddas International Women's Day event to showcase and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women for their contribution to social justice, human rights and education. ATSIWLSNQ provided cultural advice on youth crime and the role that traditional owner group and elders need to play. Presentation at NAIDOC Morning Tea. Presentation at CLC QLD State Conference First Nations Panel.

Demand Management Project

In March 2021, ATSIWLSNQ commenced a project with Community Legal Centres Queensland (CLCQ) on managing demand. The project was facilitated by an outsourced consultancy firm and ATSIWLSNQ's part in the project has been led by office manager, Cherie McLaughlin. ATSIWLSNQ was one (1) of four (4) trial sites to undertake this project and we were the only specialised service. The project extended over a six (6) month period and the service is still currently collecting data for CLCQ for the next phase of the project.

The purpose of the project was to review existing intake and triage systems across the four (4) centres and collaboratively work together to implement or improve in these areas. As part of its streamlining and continuous improvement principles, is developing an online, easily accessible system, rather than a paper-based service. The service also wanted to establish procedures for front line intake workers to better identify the legal needs of clients to assist with a quicker response time frame from the solicitors.

ATSIWLSNQ is developing new intake and triage systems and also established an evaluation framework to collect data to measure the impact of the system. The result of the program was the establishment of an electronic intake and triage system through our database, and it has resulted in faster intake processes and has enabled the service to become more responsive through faster call backs. The project is ongoing and staff are still having training in the processes.

Community Partners

ATSIWLSNQ works collaboratively with the community legal sector, other legal providers and community support services. Community partnerships have helped to build strength in promoting the safety of women and their children by improving awareness among other community organisations and increasing collaborative planning and engagement. Collaboration addresses cost efficiency in the community legal sector by sharing resources and avoiding duplication of services. Where there is a specialist or complementary service, clients have the benefit of the best service available.

On behalf of ATSIWLSNQ, I would to acknowledge and thank our community partners during the 2020-21 year, in particular:

- Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service ("TAIHS") (referral pathways, numerous referrals for support for vulnerable women)
- Townsville Community Justice Group
- Palm Island Community Corporation
- Palm Island Community Justice Group (referral pathways)
- The Women's Shelter, Palm Island
- North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service ("NQDVRS")
- Women's Centre Aitkenvale (monthly legal clinic)
- Yumba Meta Housing and Flora House and Elsie House Women's Shelters

- Victim Assist Queensland
 - Qld Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP)
 - North Queensland Women's Legal Service (cross-referrals)
 - Townsville Community Law CLC ("TCL"), Legal Aid Queensland ("LAQ"), and Qld Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service ("QIFVLS") (cross referrals and collaboration through the North Queensland Legal Assistance Forum ("NQLAF"))
 - James Cook University's student placement program (2 students placed under Clinical Studies programs during 2020-21)
 - Community Gro Community Centre and Shield of HERS
 - The Operational Working Group for the specialist DV courts on Palm Island and in Townsville
 - Warringnu Women's Corporation, Charters Towers
 - Sexual Assault Response Team
 - QPS Police Referral system
-

NQLAF

ATSIWLSNQ has consistently attended and participated in the North Queensland Legal Assistance Forum (NQLAF) meetings during the 2019-20 year.

Student Placements

ATSIWLSNQ thanks Michael Murray and Townsville Community Law for providing leadership, collaboration and CLC engagement in forums for student and CLC engagement for Clinical Placement students on issues of Human Rights.

Other Acknowledgements

ATSIWLSNQ thanks staff at CLCQld for their dedication and proactive support for CLC's in Queensland, for providing forums for leadership and collaboration and support for accreditation and best practice within CLC's in Queensland. Particular thanks to Rosslyn Munro and Penny Sullivan who have provided extensive support for ATSIWLSNQ in various capacities including accreditation upgrades and site visits.

Funders and Donors

On behalf of ATSIWLSNQ I thank our funding bodies for their ongoing support for the service. In particular I would like to thank the following.

We thank the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney General (DJAG) for its ongoing provision of funding to our service and for funding and recognising the need for our Palm Island services.

Special thanks also to DJAG for the additional support provided under the COVID funding stream to manage increased demand after the lockdowns lifted.

We thank the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet for its funding under the Indigenous Women's Outreach Project.

Special thanks to the Queensland Attorney General and her department for passing on the federal funding for Vulnerable Women, designated under the Federal budget for Women's Legal Services. [This funding will appear in the 2021-22 financial report].

We thank the CLSP team, in particular Kate Volk and Sarah Hellen, for management of the community legal service program.

Management Committee

Many thanks as always to the members of the management committee who have given their time freely, their expertise and guidance to ATSIWLSNQ during the 2020-21 year. I speak for all staff in expressing our appreciation and gratitude for their dedication and guidance to the service throughout the year.

Staff and Volunteers

Thanks are due to all staff of ATSIWLSNQ who have worked extremely hard throughout the 2020-21 year. Special acknowledgement and congratulations for the following staff achievements:

Florence Onus for her delivery of the cultural competence training to community legal centres in Townsville.

Andrea Kyle-Sailor and Erica Kyle who became registered as Justices of the Peace. Andrea, as a Bwgcolman woman is able to provide Justice of the Peace services on Palm Island. Erica holds the position of receptionist and is able to provide JP services and witness documents within the Townsville office.

Tania Young and Paige Ryan who achieved unrestricted status as solicitors.

Thanks and acknowledgement to the following staff and student placements from the 2020-21 year who have demonstrated a high level of commitment, dedication and skill to ATSIWLSNQ:

Erica Kyle – reception, administrative duties, data entry.

Erica has continued to provide a culturally safe environment where clients feel welcome and supported. Erica shares responsibility for maintaining the database and has continued to grow through professional development and skilful application to tasks.

Florence Onus – cultural advisor/ community development worker.

Florence has been a dynamic force in the organisation, providing leadership on cultural issues, community engagement and advocacy in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and issues.



Andrea Kyle-Sailor - cultural advisor/ community development worker on Palm Island. Andrea has given years of dedication to the women of Palm Island and to the work of ATSIWSNQ and has been an outspoken advocate on community issues. Andrea's support for women experiencing DFV and attending court on Palm Island and providing guidance to the solicitors is much valued.

Cherie McLaughlin – office manager. Cherie has provided diligent and skilful support for the service, including assistance with all financial reports and has taken leadership of the Demand Management project to guide the service to a paperless, streamlined and responsive office.

Tania Young – solicitor. Tania has been an invaluable asset to the service, providing high quality work. In 2020-21 Tania has undertaken challenging and complex family law matters while continuing to provide duty lawyer and casework services on Palm Island.

Angela Carroll – solicitor. Angela is a previous employee of ATSIWLSNQ and kindly agreed to undertake a 6-week locum with ATSIWLSNQ in March and April 2021.

Paige Ryan – solicitor under the COVID funding stream, undertook a range of family law, child protection and domestic violence matters including matters of cultural significance.

Karen Johnson – paralegal. Karen brought a fresh lens as an Aboriginal law graduate undertaking her practical legal training. Karen participated in the CLELAF meetings to bring a cultural perspective to the planning of CLE's. Karen left us to take a position at the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia as associate to the Senior Registrar and Indigenous Liaison Officer. We wish her well in her new role.

Jody Martin-Savage – client support officer. Jody brings her considerable experience of working with First Nations people in the court system through the community justice group and previously with the Recognised Entity.

Rachael Edwards – legal administrator / paralegal has been a great support to the legal staff arising from her work as a student placement and volunteer with the service prior to being offered the position.

CPD, PII and Cross Check

CPD, PII training and Cross Check requirements were met during the year. ATSIWLSNQ successfully completed its cross check of the 2020-21 legal files on November 2021.

Accreditation

ATSIWLSNQ is an accredited community legal centre and during the 2019-20 year undertook a substantial review of its policies, procedures and delegations. ATSIWLSNQ holds a current certificate of accreditation, current to 2021-2023.

ATSIWLSNQ Management Committee



Babette Doherty
Chairperson, 2020-2021

Babette is an Aboriginal woman from the Birri Gubba Nation and has been an active member of the ATSIWLSNQ since 2013. Babette is passionate about social justice. Currently, Babette is the Regional Coordinator for Victim Assist Queensland ensuring people know about and have access to assistance to recover from violence crimes.



Tanya Morris
Vice Chairperson, 2020-2021

Tanya is an Aboriginal woman from the Bar-Barrum people, West and South-West of Herberton in Far North Queensland. Tanya has been an active member of the ATSIWLSNQ since 2014 in a variety of roles. Tanya currently works as the Outreach Regional Coordinator (North West and Central West Queensland) with CheckUp Australia.



Topsy Mola (Tapim)
Secretary, 2020-2021

Topsy is a proud Daureb and Waggadagam woman with ties to the Murray Island on her father's side, and the Mabuiaig Island on her mother's side/ Topsy has been an active member of the ATSIWLSNQ since 2017. Topsy works as the Community Connect Worker at the Upper Ross Community Centre (Community Gro), providing assistance as a cultural advisor, mentor and facilitator.



Nina Shibasaki
Treasurer, 2020-2021

Nina is a proud Dauareb woman from Murray Island that is located in the Eastern Islands of Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait). Nina joined the ATSIWLSNQ Management Committee in February 2020 as our Treasurer. Nina has extensive community experience, having previously work at Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Services (TAIHS) for 14 years as a CPAC worker and Recognised Entity Advisor/ FGM facilitator. Nina currently works as an Anti-Violence Advisor with Sisters Inside.





Bernice Hookey

Committee Member, 2020-2021

Bernice a proud descendent of the Waanyi People in the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria, Queensland, cycle-breaker mum, influential changemaker, an accomplished speaker, author, mentor and leader.

She has held roles in senior management directly reporting to General Managers, CEO's and successful family business operations, and founder of MZB Empowerment. Bernice serves on a number of boards in her community, and national level to provide advice to and contribute to organisational decision-making in cultural expertise.

Bernice provides a unique, culturally safe environment, accountability, tailored design and the mentorship you envision to achieve change and transform into the cross-cultural exchange and at the same time respectful boundaries. She's like the transformation scout challenging community innovation.

Bernice is a survivor of disempowerment, feeling of unworthiness, well-being depreciation and has overcome little or limited opportunity in any prevention into the culture of the right to speak up. Bernice has lived it and experienced it, that's



Gail Barry

Committee Member, 2020-2021

Gail is a First Nation's Woman and a descendant of her mother's Traditional Owner clan Kuku Nyungkal within the Eastern Kuku Yalanji Nation, Cape York, Far North Queensland. She is a descendant of her father's Traditional Owners, the Waanyi Nation from North West Queensland. She also identifies as a proud Bwgcolman from Palm Island.

Gail was elected to the ATSIWLSNQ Management Committee in 2020 and is very proud to be a part of a proactive and hardworking organisation. Currently, Gail is a member of Elders for Change, a Red Cross initiative to support our most vulnerable and disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within Townsville region.

In 2015, Gail graduated from James Cook University with a Bachelor of Business degree, then in 2017, graduated with a Master of Business Administration. She is a role model for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to consider education as a tool to build a good life.

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Womens Legal Services NQ Inc.**

ABN 42 109 450 951

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

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for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

**Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2019 \$
Revenue			
Grants		907,406	780,358
Interest - investment		1,227	2,568
ATO Cash Flow Boost		37,500	62,500
Other income		1,860	14,591
		<u>947,993</u>	<u>860,017</u>
Expenditure			
Employee benefits expense		(718,233)	(629,712)
Depreciation		(31,638)	(31,759)
Accounting fees		(19,680)	(20,040)
Auditors remuneration		(52)	(1,651)
Client support services		(12,943)	(8,286)
Insurance		(9,133)	(4,285)
Printing and stationery		(8,502)	(7,130)
Lease interest		(10,882)	(12,658)
Rent		(3,363)	(2,253)
Telephone and fax		(10,548)	(6,903)
Travelling expenses		(9,904)	(10,329)
Other expenses	3	(58,384)	(56,990)
		<u>(893,262)</u>	<u>(791,996)</u>
Surplus before income tax expense		54,731	68,021
Income tax expense		-	-
Surplus after income tax expense		54,731	68,021
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		54,731	68,021

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Statement of Financial Position

As At 30 June 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2019 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	388,527	187,654
Trade and other receivables	5	10,804	17,519
Other financial assets	6	130,663	129,110
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		529,994	334,283
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	124,204	137,409
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		124,204	137,409
TOTAL ASSETS		654,198	471,692
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	8	266,167	128,616
Employee benefits	9	68,363	59,552
Lease liability		15,806	24,074
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		350,336	212,242
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Employee benefits	9	9,116	4,786
Lease liability		97,380	112,029
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		106,496	116,815
TOTAL LIABILITIES		456,832	329,057
NET ASSETS		197,366	142,635
EQUITY			
Retained surplus/(deficit)		197,366	142,635
TOTAL EQUITY		197,366	142,635

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2021

	Retained Surplus	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2020	142,635	142,635
Surplus for the year	54,731	54,731
Balance at 30 June 2021	197,366	197,366

2020

	Retained Surplus	Total
	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2019	84,323	84,323
Adjustment on initial application of AASB 16	(9,709)	(9,709)
Restated balance at 1 July 2019	74,614	74,614
Surplus for the year	68,021	68,021
Balance at 30 June 2020	142,635	142,635

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

**Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2021**

	2021	2020
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from customers	1,102,115	839,683
Payments to suppliers and employees	(848,683)	(743,086)
Interest received	1,227	2,568
Finance costs	(10,882)	(12,658)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	10(b) <u>243,777</u>	<u>86,507</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(17,229)	(6,423)
Reduction of lease liability	(24,122)	(21,794)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	<u>(41,351)</u>	<u>(28,217)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	202,426	58,290
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	316,764	258,474
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	10(a) <u>519,190</u>	<u>316,764</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

The financial report covers Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc as an individual entity. Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc is a not-for-profit Association, registered and domiciled in Australia.

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2021 were to provide legal advice and representation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women in North Queensland.

The functional and presentation currency of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

1 Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The preparation of financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the Association's accounting policies.

2 Significant Accounting Policies**(a) Income Tax**

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(b) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2 Significant Accounting Policies**(c) Revenue and other income**

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Grant revenue

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income when the Association satisfies the performance obligations stated within the funding agreements.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the Association is eligible to retain the contribution, the grant will be recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until those conditions are satisfied.

Interest revenue

Interest is recognised using the effective interest rate method.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

(d) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value. Deposits with maturity dates greater than three months are considered financial assets.

On initial recognition, financial assets are measured at fair value plus transaction costs and subsequently measured at amortised cost in accordance with *AASB 9 Financial Instruments*.

(e) Leases*Right-of-use asset*

At the lease commencement, the Association recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Association believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises of the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

2 Significant Accounting Policies**(e) Leases***Lease liability*

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Association's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Association's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

(f) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, is depreciated on a straight-line and diminishing value basis over the assets useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Plant and Equipment	20-50%
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	10-25%
Motor Vehicles	25-33%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

(g) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Cashflows are discounted using market yields on high quality corporate bond rates incorporating bonds rated AAA or AA by credit agencies, with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

3 Other expenses

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Computer expenses	13,108	16,013
Fees & permits	94	749
Meeting expenses	264	198
Membership fees	10,415	5,838
Motor vehicle expenses	4,409	4,050
Operating expenses	14,289	12,055
Publication & infor resources	990	19
Relocation expenses	533	-
Security expenses	740	-
Training & development (staff)	3,153	5,397
Uniforms	880	780
Utilities	9,509	11,891
Total other expenses	58,384	56,990

4 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Cash at bank	388,527	187,654
Total cash and cash equivalents	388,527	187,654

5 Other Assets

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Prepayments	10,634	4,083
Accrued income	170	13,436
Total other assets	10,804	17,519

6 Other Financial Assets

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Financial assets at amortised cost	130,663	129,110
Total current other financial assets	130,663	129,110

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

7 Property, plant and equipment

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
<i>Right-of-use asset - building</i>		
At cost	240,076	238,872
Accumulated depreciation	(143,870)	(117,224)
Total right-of-use asset - building	<u>96,206</u>	<u>121,648</u>
PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
<i>Furniture, fixtures and fittings</i>		
At cost	9,144	9,144
Accumulated depreciation	(7,563)	(7,387)
Total furniture, fixtures and fittings	<u>1,581</u>	<u>1,757</u>
<i>Motor vehicles</i>		
At cost	23,023	23,023
Accumulated depreciation	(19,034)	(17,729)
Total motor vehicles	<u>3,989</u>	<u>5,294</u>
<i>Plant and equipment</i>		
At cost	51,442	45,823
Accumulated depreciation	(29,014)	(37,113)
Total plant and equipment	<u>22,428</u>	<u>8,710</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>124,204</u>	<u>137,409</u>

(a) Movements in Carrying Amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Right-of-use asset - building	Plant and Equipment	Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	Motor Vehicles	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Year ended 30 June 2021					
Balance at the beginning of year	121,648	8,710	1,757	5,294	137,409
Additions	1,204	17,229	-	-	18,433
Depreciation expense	(26,646)	(3,511)	(176)	(1,305)	(31,638)
Balance at the end of the year	<u>96,206</u>	<u>22,428</u>	<u>1,581</u>	<u>3,989</u>	<u>124,204</u>

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

8 Trade and Other Payables

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	4,727	3,319
GST payable	12,361	9,897
Accrued expenses	-	19,745
PAYG payable	17,724	10,442
Superannuation payable	19,461	11,951
Unexpended grants	211,894	73,263
Total current trade and other payables	266,167	128,617

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

9 Employee Benefits

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Annual leave	43,624	37,516
Long service leave	24,739	22,036
Total current employee benefits	68,363	59,552
NON-CURRENT		
Long service leave	9,116	4,786
Total non-current employee benefits	9,116	4,786

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

10 Cash Flow Information**(a) Reconciliation of cash**

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
<i>Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to items in the statement of financial position as follows:</i>		
Cash and cash equivalents	4 388,527	187,654
Other financial assets	6 130,663	129,110
Total cash per statement of cash flows	519,190	316,764

(b) Reconciliation of surplus for the year to cashflows from operating activities

Reconciliation of net surplus to net cash provided by operating activities:

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	54,731	68,021
Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities		
Non-cash flows in profit:		
- depreciation	31,638	31,759
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	6,716	(12,145)
- (increase)/decrease in prepayments	-	35
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	137,551	(8,073)
- increase/(decrease) in employee benefits	13,141	6,910
Cashflows from operations	243,777	86,507

11 Key Management Personnel Remuneration

The total remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Association is \$ 119,920 (2020: \$ 113,650).

12 Related Parties

Key management personnel - refer to Note 11.

There were no transactions with related parties during the current and previous financial year.

13 Contingencies & Commitments

In the opinion of those charged with governance, the Association did not have any contingencies or commitments at 30 June 2021 (30 June 2020: None).

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Notes to the Financial Statements**For the Year Ended 30 June 2021****14 Events after the end of the Reporting Period**

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

15 Economic Dependency

The Association is dependent upon grant funding from the various government funding bodies to continue its current level of activities. Grant revenue represents 93% of total revenue and is received from Legal Aid Queensland and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. Legal Aid Queensland have confirmed that funding will continue to the Association until 30 June 2023 and the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet have confirmed that funding will continue until 30 June 2025.

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Womens Legal Service NQ Inc

ABN 42 109 450 961

Responsible Person's Declaration

The responsible persons declare that in the responsible persons' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.

Responsible person  Responsible person 

Dated 29/11/2021



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc.

Independent Auditor's Report to the Board of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc.

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. (the association), which comprises the committee's report, statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021 and the statement of profit or loss for the period then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. as at 30 June 2021 and of its financial performance for the period then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 Queensland*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 Queensland*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report

The committee of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc. is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981 Queensland* and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free of material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibility for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

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Kirwan QLD 4817

Coutts Redington Pty Ltd

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for Year Ended 30 June 2021

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Coutts Redington
ATS001:GR:AT:VG

22 November 2021

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Coutts Redington
Chartered Accountants
278 Ross River Road
Aitkenvale, Qld, 4814



Director: Greg Redington

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc

ABN: 42 109 450 961

Statement of Income & Expenditure

Commonwealth - Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (4-BBOSKAV)

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Operating grants	221,831	221,831
Unexpended grants (B/F)	-	-
Other income	925	998
	<u>222,757</u>	<u>222,830</u>
Expenditure		
Accounting Fees	5,904	6,670
Advertising & Promotion	1,210	877
Audit Fees	16	550
Bank charges	-	45
Bank guarantees	153	126
Cleaning	877	891
Client support	3,868	3,696
Computer expenses	3,932	4,096
Consultancy fees	-	-
Depreciation expense	-	9,526
Equipment hire	171	162
Equipment purchases <\$1000	392	-
Fees & Permits	28	249
Insurance	3,040	1,426
Lease interest expense	3,264	4,214
Meeting expenses	79	66
Membership fees paid	3,124	0
Motor vehicle expenses	1,323	1,330
Postage, freight & courier	381	314
Printing & stationery	2,551	2,373
Program resources	-	35
Publications, memberships & subscriptions	297	2,057
Relocation expenses	160	794
Rent	1,009	0
Repairs & maintenance	176	258
Employee benefits expense	180,057	170,180
Security	222	0
Staff amenities	519	495
Sundry expenses	359	764
Telephone & fax	2,609	2,169
Training & development (Staff)	946	1,819
Travel & accommodation	2,972	3,438
Uniforms	264	260
Utilities	2,853	3,949
	<u>222,757</u>	<u>222,830</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc

ABN: 42 109 450 961

Statement of Income & Expenditure

State - Department of Justice & Attorney-General (LASF001-2020-25)

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
Commonwealth Funding (AG)	653,160	543,583
Digital upgrade grant - State	-	9,288
Grants brought forward	73,263	78,918
ATO Cash Flow Boost	37,500	62,500
Other income	2,162	16,161
	<u>766,084</u>	<u>710,450</u>
Expenditure		
Accounting Fees	13,776	13,370
Advertising & Promotion	2,823	1,740
Audit Fees	37	1,102
Bank charges	-	91
Bank guarantees	358	252
Cleaning	1,942	1,786
Client support	9,129	4,718
Computer expenses	9,176	11,818
Consultancy fees	-	-
Depreciation expense	31,638	22,233
Equipment hire	400	325
Equipment purchases <\$1000	914	-
Fees & Permits	66	500
Insurance	6,093	2,859
Lease interest expense	7,618	8,445
Meeting expenses	185	132
Membership fees paid	7,290	0
Motor vehicle expenses	3,086	2,720
Postage, freight & courier	890	630
Printing & stationery	5,953	4,757
Program resources	-	71
Publications, memberships & subscriptions	693	3,800
Relocation expenses	373	0
Rent	2,354	1,459
Repairs & maintenance	403	517
Employee benefits expense	416,404	459,532
Security expenses	518	0
Staff amenities	1,211	1,081
Sundry expenses	840	1,531
Telephone & fax	6,087	4,734
Training & development (Staff)	2,207	3,578
Travel & accommodation	6,932	6,892
Uniforms	616	520
Utilities	6,656	7,916
	<u>546,666</u>	<u>569,107</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>219,418</u>	<u>141,343</u>
<i>Less: Cash Flow Boost income used to offset GST and PAYG</i>	(37,500)	(62,500)
<i>Less: Capital expenditure</i>	(13,941)	(5,424)
<i>Less: Digital upgrade grant not carried forward</i>	-	(156)
Unexpended grants	<u>167,977</u>	<u>73,263</u>

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc

ABN: 42 109 450 961

Statement of Income & Expenditure

State - Department of Justice & Attorney-General (RL02C2911200)

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
COVID ICT Funding - Commonwealth	10,204	-
	<u>10,204</u>	<u>-</u>
Expenditure		
Communications	1,852	-
Office Overheads (Purchase of laptops)	3,496	-
	<u>5,348</u>	<u>-</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>4,857</u>	<u>-</u>
Unexpended grants	<u>4,857</u>	<u>-</u>

for Year Ended 30 June 2021

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services NQ Inc

ABN: 42 109 450 961

Statement of Income & Expenditure

State - Department of Justice & Attorney-General (LASF001-2020-25)

For the year ended 30 June 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
COVID Service delivery funding - Commonwealth	160,842	522
	<u>160,842</u>	<u>522</u>
Expenditure		
Salaries	111,305	-
Superannuation	10,467	-
	<u>121,772</u>	<u>-</u>
Excess of Income over Expenditure	<u>39,070</u>	<u>522</u>
Unexpended grants	<u>39,070</u>	<u>-</u>

Stakeholders

- Community Legal Centres Queensland
- Legal Aid Queensland
- Townsville Community Law Inc.
- North Queensland Women's Legal Service (NQWLS)
- Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Legal Service (QIFVLS)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS)
- Relationships Australia
- Victim Assist
- Police Support Link
- The Women's Centre, Aitkenvale
- The Court Network
- North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service
- TAIHS
- Townsville Community Hub
- Garbutt Community Hub
- Upper Ross Community Centre (Community Gro)
- North of Townsville Community Hub
- Prospect Community Centre
- Palm Island Community Company
- The Women's Centre, Palm Island
- Burdekin Community Centre
- Malanbarra Community Hub
- Yumba Meta Flora House
- Red Cross
- Anglicare
- Yumba Meta Dale Parker
- Palm Island Community Council
- James Cook University
- Big Eye Theatre

Current Staff

- Florence Onus, *pictured below left*, (Community Engagement Officer/Cultural Advisor, Townsville)
- Andrea Kyle-Sailor (Community Engagement Officer/Cultural Advisor, Palm Island)
- Cathy Pereira (Principal Solicitor/ Co-ordinator)
- Cherie McLaughlin (Office Manager)
- Erica Kyle, *pictured below centre*, (Admin Assistant)
- Tania Young (Solicitor)
- Rachael Edwards (Legal Administrator/ Paralegal)
- Jody Martin-Savage, *pictured below right*, (Client Support Officer)
- Paige Ryan (Solicitor)
- Karen Johnson (Paralegal)



Former Staff

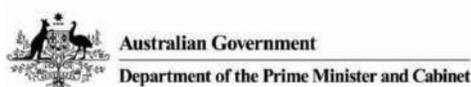
Angela Carroll (Locum Solicitor)

Volunteers

Rachael Edwards (JCU Clinical Student)

Acknowledgements

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services
NQ Inc. Funding Bodies:





Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Women's Legal Services NQ Inc.

ABN 42 109 450 961