



### **OUR VISION**

Justice, opportunity and shared wealth for all South Australians

### **OUR MISSION**

SACOSS does not accept poverty, inequity or injustice.

We will be a powerful and representative voice that leads and supports our community to take actions that achieve our vision.

We will hold to account governments, business, and communities for actions that disadvantage vulnerable South Australians.

### **OUR GOALS**

All social and economic policy in SA ensures all South Australians have their basic human needs met.

South Australia has strong, cohesive community services and health sectors driving social change.

SACOSS is a sustainable, independent organisation equipped to support the community services and health sectors to achieve our vision.

South Australian Council of Social Service 68th Annual Report 2014-15 Published by the South Australian Council of Social Service, October 2015

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# Chair's Report Helen Connolly

The South Australian Council of Social Service is the peak non-government representative body for health and community services in South Australia. Alongside our members and other civil society bodies we are a voice for the interests of low income South Australians. This year we have continued to be a powerful and representative voice that leads and supports our community and sector to build a society that:

- is more equitable
- holds government, community and business to account for actions that disadvantage South Australians
- influences public policy to promote fairer and just access to resources and services

Maintaining clarity of purpose and role within an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous socio-political environment has been a continual challenge. The impacts of the 2014 Federal Budget continued to destabilise the community sector in the past year with service losses and gaps, damaged relationships, inefficient contracting, inadequate funding levels and muffled advocacy voices. The sectors resilience and capacity to advocate for the health and wellbeing of low income people has been tested.

Our members and the sector have however rallied and shown considerable support through their commitment to involvement in the Board, Policy Council, working groups, events representation at conferences and information sessions.

Without the active support of members in information dissemination, advocacy and representation and input into policy submissions our range would not be as far reaching. In particular I would like to highlight our member involvement in the support of our:

- > Annual Hardship and Affordability Conference this year focused on Energy, Water and Telecommunication
- > Post Budget Breakfast with the Treasurer
- > Aboriginal Youth Justice Report launch
- > ACOSS / SACOSS sector briefing

We also continue to work collaboratively with the broader sector and provide practical support to a range of groups and members. Of note this year we:

- > Signed up to the Racism. It Stops With Me campaign
- > Hosted tables at Reconciliation SA and CEDA events
- > Developed collaborative funding bids with Julia Farr, Purple Orange
- > Developed joint submissions with ACOSS, Public Health Association, Southgate Institute, Health Carers Alliance and the Aboriginal Social Justice Coalition

I would also like to take the opportunity to draw attention to the work of the SACOSS Policy Council which continues to be a strong and representative mechanism of bringing broad sector input into our work. You can see the list of Policy Council members on page 15, some of whom have left in 2014-15; I would like to thank them all for their significant time and contribution. This year the new Terms of Reference were endorsed. They now reflect the changed relationship between Board and Policy Council as per the new Constitution and outline the process for maximising involvement through active referral of issues from Board to Policy Council and minimising risk.

Risk management and mitigation continue to be key Board priorities with a standing Finance, Audit, Investment and Risk Sub Committee. This year the Committee has worked on establishing our risk appetite, developing our risk register, looking at our capacity to have a source of independent income and asset management. As part of our continuous improvement in the governance area this year we did a finance compliance check on organisational systems, which although compliant identified some improvements which have been implemented.

The Board work plan for the year has included some preliminary work to look at the interface of our work in sector governance development, workforce support and workplace safety and the role of an industry body for South Australia. This work will continue as the operating landscape changes. Our work in sector development also

continues supported through funding particularly in the public health areas and SafeWork SA.

'Our strong advocacy work in relation to taxation continued this year. With financial support from the state government we have been supported to build on our pre-election tax campaign and contribute to the State Government Tax Review and the work of the federal government in this area. Our expertise in areas like tax, energy and water is continuing to grow and develop and we are ably supported by a strong policy team whose work is increasingly referenced by many people of influence within South Australia. Our role in these areas continues to be focused on supplying the sector to engage in the debate and represent the interests of low income South Australians in areas where our voices are otherwise relatively silent.

I am extremely privileged to work on the Board with a group of competent and committed senior leaders in their fields. They spend many hours of voluntary endeavour on behalf of SACOSS. This year we farewelled Nicole Chaplin who was a valuable contributor to the board, and our Treasurer Monique Palmer who provided regular and valued finance support and oversight for staff. We thank them both for their service.

Finally on behalf of the Board I convey our appreciation and high regard for the whole staff team of SACOSS who ably and professionally represent the organisation in all that they do. In particular the Board thanks Libby Connell for her work in supporting the Board, and Ross Womersley for his excellent leadership of the organisation and the sector.

### **BOARD MEMBERS 2014-15**

Helen Connolly Chair

Emma-Louise Crosby Treasurer

Michael Dawson

Patsy Kellett

**Peter Sandeman** 

Paul Scully

**Matthew Woodward** 

Ross Womersley - ex-officio

(Left SACOSS Board in November 2014):

Monique Palmer Treasurer

Nicole Chaplin



# Executive Director's Report Ross Womersley

No year at a small, poorly resourced peak body is ever likely to be a slow one, but this one seems to have flown by, with countless issues demanding our attention and response. And of course that itself is a problem. We get caught reacting to all the issues that arise and that others are seeking responses to, and as a result our eyes and efforts directed at longer term change get to put to the side.

And this financial year has thrown up no end of other issues that we have had to respond to. Many of these are on display throughout this report but I wanted to highlight a few of the issues that have framed our advocacy over the last year.

On a local front we continued to see the consequences and impacts of South Australia's changing economic context. Growth is at significantly lower levels than ever hoped, mining activities have slowed, and our advanced manufacturing sector continues to shrink while unemployment, and more particularly underemployment, continues to rise.

The state government was being challenged by real and projected reductions in Commonwealth funding across health and education portfolios, but at the same time found itself welcoming an unexpected increase in GST distributions. Its response in this year's State Budget was to make very significant tax cuts to business, hoping that this would build confidence and encourage both immediate and longer term new investment activity.

The state government also commenced a series of reform processes focused on health, disability justice, taxation, planning, child protection, and justice. The federal government has had its own reform agenda with a major focus on the federation, competition policy and taxation, and of course was engaged in reconstructing the delivery of social services while imposing huge cuts on the funding available.

Funding for a number of national peak bodies had been removed, and despite some new and helpful measures introduced in Budget 2015 (including more tax cuts for small business), the long shadow of many harsh savings measures introduced in Budget 2014 – including those that would result in unemployed young people being denied access to income support for up to 6 months – continued to hang over everything.

This for me illustrated our great advocacy dilemma. We know we have a growing issue with unemployment - especially amongst young people in SA - which results from major structural issues in our economy. More importantly, there is already widespread agreement that the current level of Newstart allowance must urgently be increased by at least \$50 per week in order to become barely liveable. And yet, our federal government suggested that any of young people up to the age of 30 who couldn't find employment should simply go without any income support for 6 months at a time. All in the name of achieving budget savings.

Clearly there are so many other places we could go to find the savings that won't have the direct and diabolical impact measures such as this are likely to have. The Council of Social Service (COSS) network actively supported our national cousin ACOSS in identifying where the alternative revenue might be available – why not rescind generous tax concessions given to high earning superannuants or capital gains tax concessions?

Needless to say the thing that has been most disappointing about this whole situation is that despite strong public concern, countless well supported arguments and clear political opposition in the Senate, the best the federal government was prepared to concede was to limit the proposed Newstart waiting period to four weeks. Fortunately, since the end of the financial year the Labor Party, Australian Greens, and Senators Ricky Muir, Nick Xenophon, Jacqui Lambie, Dio Wang, and Glenn Lazarus listened to widespread community concerns and joined together in the Senate to defeat the bill.

What it illustrates though, is the challenge we sometimes face as we seek to protect the interests of some of our most vulnerable citizens. I am proud of the work done by the national COSS network and led by ACOSS, which ultimately resulted in this measure being defeated.

I am also extremely proud of our work on other fronts. We are leading thinking about the role taxation plays in ensuring the long term availability of vital community services. We have demonstrated the capacity for workplaces across our sector to become a focus for the health of our workforce. We demonstrated the unacceptable overrepresentation of young Aboriginal people in our detention system. We led regulatory processes that resulted in the average household getting a \$200 per year discount on their electricity bill. We have challenged the way in which the sector relates to government at both state and federal levels. We have helped shape a public discussion about the place of recognition. We have hosted a series of very successful events that have brought together stakeholders from business, academe, our sector and the community more broadly to consider and address justice, poverty and how we might better share our wealth.

We have every right to feel proud of our efforts. We have worked hard to strengthen our relationships with government at a political and bureaucratic level, and to build our relationships with stakeholders from other sectors. While undoubtedly still modest, and despite my lament we don't have access to funding for specialist policy resources in justice and in health, we have benefited enormously from access to funding and resources from a wide range of sources, including core peak body funding from the Department of Communities & Social Inclusion (DCSI).

Every day I enjoy the support of a talented secretariat team, a helpful and collaborative Policy Council, and a thoughtful constructive Board prepared to take important risks if it means we make progress on our ambition to do away with poverty and disadvantage.

I am extremely grateful to all of you who support us on this journey because in the end it is only this support that has enabled us to do so many of those things suggested above.

In thanks and solidarity, Ross



# 2014-15 in Numbers





consumers surveyed to continue to build the evidence base for our energy campaigns





major Hardship & Affordability conference

big SACOSS branded events and conferences

And dozens of events to support the development of our sector



editions of SACOSS' radio shows **Small Change and Conversations About Recognition** 

200 (ish)

**Small Change and Conversations About Recognition podcasts** 



# **Over 50**

Reports/Submissions/Fact Sheets produced

# **Countless**

conference and workshop presentations



18 000

SACOSS website visitors

70 000

SACOSS website page views

# At least 20

thrilling overs of Marjorie Black House hallway cricket



# And 2 runs made

before one SACOSS staff member was dismissed just 98 runs short of their century...Marvellous.

# **FULFILLING OUR ROLE AS A** PEAK BODY

SACOSS is the independent peak body for the non-government health and community services sector in South Australia.

We have a number of key roles, including:

- > To represent the sector and advocate on behalf of disadvantaged South Australians
- > Research, policy development and advice to government on issues affecting disadvantaged South Australians and the sector that serves them
- > To disseminate important information from the community sector from the community sector, government, and other sources to our members and the broader community
- > To consult with, and coordinate the sector to ensure unity and collaboration
- > To build the capacity of the health and community services

SACOSS' purpose is to influence public policy in a way that promotes fair and just access to the goods and services required to live a decent life.

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Representation

**MEMBERSHIP** 

**EXTERNAL COMMITTEES** 

# Membership

# **SACOSS Organisational Members 2014-15**

### (organisations financial between July 2014-June 2015)

Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement Inc

AC Care

Adelaide City Council - City Community Program

Adelaide Day Centre for Homeless Persons

Aged and Community Services SA and NT Inc

Aged Rights Advocacy Service Inc

Anglicare SA

Australian Association of Social Workers Ltd (SA)

Australian Education Union (SA Branch)

Australian Health Promotion Association SA

Australian Refugee Association Inc

Australian Services Union

Baptist Care (SA) Inc

Barkuma Inc

Better Hearing Australia (Adelaide) Birthline Pregnancy Support Inc Brain Injury Network of South Australia Inc

Camden Community Centre Inc

CARA Inc

Carers SA Inc

CBB the not4profit people

Centacare Catholic Family

Services

Centacare Catholic Family

Services CDPP

Child and Family Welfare

Association of Australia Inc (SA)

Chinese Welfare Services of SA Inc.

Churches of Christ CareWorks

Citizen Advocacy South Australia

City of Onkaparinga

Clubhouse SA Inc

Community Centres SA

Community Housing Council of

SA Inc

Community Living Project Inc Connecting Foster Carers SA Inc COTA SA

Darwin Health Library

Diompillor Kissia SA Inc

DOME Association Inc.

Drug Arm Australasia

Endeavour Foundation

Goodwood Community Services

Grandparents for Grandchildren

SA Inc

Health Consumers Alliance of SA

Inc

Hepatitis SA Inc

Hills Community Options Inc

Hutt Street Centre Ltd

Inclusive Sport SA Inc

Indigenous Community Volunteers

Individual Supported

Accommodation Service Inc

Influences Care

Interchange Incorporated

Julia Farr Group

Junction Australia Ltd

JusticeNet SA

Legacy Club of Adelaide Inc

Legal Services Commission of SA

Life Without Barriers SA

Lutheran Community Care

Marion Life Community Services

Mental Health Coalition of SA Inc

Mental Illness Fellowship of South Australia Inc

Migrant Resource Centre of SA

Membership of SACOSS leads to positive social change in South Australia by supporting SACOSS to campaign for social justice.

SACOSS welcomes and encourages member participation in a variety of activities that enhance the voice of the community on behalf of vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians. Membership of SACOSS supports our vital and successful campaigning for social justice.

www.sacoss.org.au/membership

# 2014-15

Milang & District Community Association Inc

Mission Australia - SA Region

Multicultural Aged Care Inc

Multicultural Communities Council

of SA Inc

Neami National

Network SA

Northern Community Legal

Service

Northern Suburbs Housing

Community Inc

Northern Volunteering SA Inc

**OARS Community Transitions** 

Office of the Guardian for Children

and Young People

Pangula Mannamurna

Parkinson's South Australia Inc

Positive Life SA

Quality Innovation Performance

Reconciliation South Australia Inc

Relationships Australia SA Inc

Riding for the Disabled Association SA Inc SA Country Carers

SA Unions

Safer Communities Australia Inc

Seniors Information Service Inc

Service to Youth Council

SHine SA Inc

Social Policy Research Group -

University of South Australia

South Australian Financial

Counsellors Association Inc

South Australian Network of Drug

and

Alcohol Services

South Australian Salaried Medical

Officers Association

SPARK Resource Centre Inc

St John's Youth Services Inc

St Vincent de Paul Society SA Inc

Stable Help Inc

Statewide Superannuation

STTARS - Survivors of Torture

&Trauma

The Broughton Art Society Inc

The Salvation Army

The Smith Family

The Wyatt Benevolent Institution

Inc

Time for Kids

**Uniting Communities** 

UnitingCare SA

UnitingCare Wesley Bowden Inc

UnitingCare Wesley Country SA

Incorporated

UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide

Inc

Unity Housing Company Ltd

Victim Support Service Inc

Vietnamese Women's Association

SA Inc

Welfare Rights Centre SA

West Coast Youth & Community

Support Inc

Working Women's Centre SA Inc

Youth Affairs Council of SA Inc.

YWCA of Adelaide

### **Lifetime Members**

Phillip Beddall

Grethe Brown

Harvey Brown

Brian Butler

Ed Carson

Kym Davey

Michael Dawson

Marj Ellis

Colleen Fitzpatrick

Gael Fraser

Leigh Garrett

Daphne Gum

Peter Hall

Sheila Hall

Christine Halsey

Mark Henley

Simon Kneebone

Wendy Malycha

Margaret McKenzie

Joy Noble

Louise Portway

Lange Powell

Ruth Prescott

Judith Roberts

Simon Schrapel

Pam Simmons

Brian Ward

Mark Waters

Andrew B Wilson

Ian Yates AM

# **External Committees**

Representatives and nominees of SACOSS sat on the following boards and committees in 2014-15. SACOSS thanks them all for their time and commitment.

**ACOSS Board of Governors** 

Helen Connolly

Courts Administration Authority Community Relations Committee

Susan Errington

Dame Roma Mitchel Trust Fund for Children and Young People

Colleen Fitzpatrick

**Energy Consumers' Council** 

Rosalyn Williams

Essential Services Commision of SA (ESCOSA)

**Consumer Advisory Committee** 

Mark Henley, Ross Womersley

**Legal Services Commission Board** 

Michael Dawson

Planning and Reform Reference Group

Ross Womersley

SA Dental Service Consumer Advisory Panel

Libby Craft

**SA Water Residential Customer Council** 

Ross Womersley

UniSA Communications & Media Advisory Panel

Marnie Round

UniSA School of Psychology and Social Work Advisory

Committee

Ross Womersley

SA National Framework for Child Protection

Partnership Group

Simon Schrapel

Schools as Community Hubs

Ross Womersley



Research, Policy Development, Advice

**RESEARCH** 

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

**ADVICE** 

**ADVOCACY** 

# Research

# **REPORTS**

SACOSS has published a number of significant research reports in recent years on issues affecting the community and social services sector, or which impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

Unlike submissions, which can be a response to formal government processes, research reports usually arise from issues identified as important by the sector. In some cases the research might be specifically funded by government, while in other cases (e.g. Cost of Living and Anti-Poverty Week reports) we have developed the research from our own resources.

### June 2015

> Independence in the Not-for-Profit Sector (joint SACOSS/ACTOSS report)

### May 2015

- > State of the South Australia Energy Market 2014
- > Cost of Living Update No. 22 Telecommunications

### April 2015

- > Smart Meters Masterclass Final Report
- > The Death Spiral Supporting 'On Grid' Consumers

### March 2015

> Justice or an Unjust System? Aboriginal Overrepresentation in South Australia's Juvenile Justice System

### December 2014

> National Disability Insurance Scheme: Towards a Paradigm Shift for Disability Services?

### November 2014

> Better Practice Guideline for Energy Retailers: A Collaborative Approach for Preventing Hardship Amongst Energy Consumers

### October 2014

> Single Concession Payment Concept

### August 2014

> South Australian Disconnection Project

### July 2014

> Finding a Better Deal: SACOSS Energy Market Report

# **Policy Development**

# POLICY COUNCIL 2014-15

The SACOSS Policy Council, drawn from the SACOSS membership, develops policies relevant to the sector and helps to plan and develop key areas of social policy development work. Policy Council members hold office for two year terms and are elected in different categories set out in the SACOSS Constitution.

Category Description	Person Elected /Organisation		
Chair	Helen Connolly		
Board Reps	Nicole Chaplin (until November 2014) Patsy Kellet		
Peak Org Reps	Andris Banders Anne Bainbridge Albert Barelds Michael Cousins Geoff Harris Vivien Hope Gill McFadyen Michael White	SANDAS (until April 2015) YACSA CAFWA (from December 2014) Health Consumers Alliance (from February 2015) Mental Health Coalition SA MCCSA (December 2014-January 2015) Community Centres SA SANDAS (from May 2015)	
Reps of NGOs	Kathy Binks Jessie Byrne Professor Ed Carson Nicole Chaplin Nahtanha Davey Susan Errington Leanne Gassner Louise Kelly Jane Longbottom Helen Lockwood Mariann McNamara Italia Mignone Jane Mussared Meredith Perry Holly Skene Mark Waters	Uniting Communities COTA SA (until April 2015) SPRG UniSA (until November 2014) St Johns Youth Service (from December 2014)BINSA (from May 2015) Legal Services Commission Baptist Care OARS/Community Transitions Life Without Barriers (until November 2014) Lutheran Community Care BINSA (until April 2015) Multicultural Aged Care (from February 2015) COTA SA (from May 2015) UCW Port Adelaide (until November 2014 SHine SA (until November 2014) Reconciliation SA	
Reps of Aboriginal NGOs	Kate Braham Karen Glover	Indigenous Community Volunteers Pangula Mannamurna Inc	
Reps of non-metro NGOs	Rob Foggo Anthea Pavy	AC Care UCW Country	
Individual Members	Phillip Beddall (Deputy Chair) Angela de Conno (until November 2014) Pas Forgione (co-opted member from March 2015) Paul Laris Jane Longbottom (from December 2014)		

# **KEY POLICY ISSUES**

SACOSS has focused on a number of key issues this year including continuing to lobby for a fair and sustainable tax system.

### Tax

Building on the momentum of the "Without Taxes Vital Services Disappear" campaign in the lead up to the last South Australian state election, SACOSS has continued to advocate for policies to make the tax system fairer and to ensure that governments have an adequate revenue base to fund vital services.

Throughout the year, SACOSS fed into and supported ACOSS' national advocacy which has been successful in getting the issue of tax expenditures (the revenue forgone by tax concessions) on the agenda. Key amongst these are the overly generous tax concessions for superannuation which predominantly benefit those who already have significant resources, and negative gearing - which coupled with capital gains discounts for housing has distorted the housing market, given a bonus to investors and not necessarily led to more affordable housing.

SACOSS has also continued to raise concerns about proposals to increase the GST or to broaden its base to include items like fresh food which are currently exempt. Because low income people spend a greater proportion of their budget (while higher income households can save), the GST hits them disproportionately hard. Any increase in GST would mean an unfair increase in their taxes while those with a greater capacity to pay would be taxed proportionately lighter.

As a state Council of Social Service though, SACOSS' primary role is on state matters and we were pleased that in February, the South Australian government launched a major review of state taxation. SACOSS did considerable work in developing a response to that review, which the Treasurer publicly hailed as the best submission received.

The SACOSS submission responded to one of the big ideas floated in the government's discussion paper, namely replacing stamp duties on house sales with an annual land tax, by recognising the problems with stamp duties but also working out the key issues that would need to be addressed to make the policy work fairly. SACOSS also commented on a range of other issues in the paper, but went beyond the existing taxes to propose investigation of other ways to raise revenue needed to fund services and address poverty and inequality. These included a congestion/car park tax, a disused buildings tax and inheritance taxes.

The SACOSS submission to the state tax review sets out a broad agenda for tax reform and provides a foundation for SACOSS' ongoing advocacy around tax issues.

Read the full SACOSS state tax review submission at sacoss.org.au/submissions



## Fairer to base our taxes on household values: Report





xes consume more on pos-zople's incomes. The National Centre for ocial and Economic Model-ng report reveals that house-olds whose average isposable income is \$25,495 a ear pay 5.79 per cent of that ato the state's coffers. But ouseholds with an average lisposable income of \$156,193 iyear pay 3.05 per cent. Treasurer Tom Koutsanto-is said the report was internal

# State hits a \$50m jackpot

tax review, obtained by The Advertiser, shows modelling by a "top four" accountancy firm estimated the new tax take would be worth \$4.7 billion nationally over 10 years. SA's take would be worth \$4.7 billion nationally over 10 years. SA's take to the state of the s

Clubs SA CEO Mike Pen-fold said online gambling

# YOUR STATE WA, SA & NT

# Budget 'spark for risk-takers'

### EXCLUSIVE

South Australian Labor Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis says his second budget will increase business confidence via a bold set of tax reforms and other measures to "incentivise" risk-takers and encourage job creation.

In the strongest indication yet that he is willing to act on proposals raised in his review of state taxes, Mr Koutsantonis hinted that his next budget, due on June 18, could include the introduction of a disused building tax. of a disused building tax.

ot a disused building tax.

The measure, pushed by the South Australian Council of Social Services since January 2013, is aimed at preventing property developers from sitting on empty shops and commercial buildinge.

fight for

funding

Social

# MICHAEL OWEN

help spark job creation. "They are the people who we are interested in trying to protect, encourage and incentivise ... not the people who sit on property, do nothing with it and hope that capital growth will eventually give them returns." Mr Koutsantonis said.

"We want a tax system that encourages people to take risks. What you will see in our budget are tax measures that are designed to incentivise those people who want to get out there and have a go."

have a go."

Mr Koutsantonis said the gov-

Hepraised Joe Hockey's sm business package in the fedel budget as "inspired". Mr Koutsantonis acknov edged that business and consuler confidence was "a big part what South Australia needs". "We have some recent grow

"We have some recent grow "We have some recent good in figures in terms of state final of mand and it shows the southe states are now replacing t northern and western states terms of an outlook for econon growth — I think South Austra fundamentally has got some versed over metrics but one this good core metrics but one thi that it lacks is a belief that it c

## Treasurer continues tax

SOUTH Australian treasurer Tom Koutsantonis continues to meet with key industry and advocacy groups as discussions continue on state tax reform.

Mr Koutsantonis said the government had so far received more than 60 submissions following the release of its State Tax Review Discussion Paper in February, Services

Discussion Paper in February, which canvasses a number of reform ideas and options for all state taxes

A recent meeting with the

Service (SACOSS) flags reforms relating to con and land tax, motor gambling taxes, and e

"I have been impre quality of the submis seen so far and the wour state's peak bodies a matur

Mr Kou Visit more in online.

## Tax reform proposed to attract investment

South Australia is aiming to attract businesses to the state through comprehensive tax reform, Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis says. The state government recently issued a discussion paper that floated widespread changes including replacing stamp duty with a broadbased annual land tax, changes to payroll tax and hiking up gambling taxes. It says it will now extend the consultation period for submissions on the proposed changes until April 24. The Treasurer met yesterday with representatives from the

### Social service suggests tax reforms

THE South Australian Council of Social Service will use its submission to the State Government tax review this week to put forward three ideas for reform that go beyond the options suggested in the discussion paper.

We want to put forward a few other ideas that would support a sustainable revenue base for the government, but not at the expense of vulnerable and disadvantaged people," SACOSS executive director Ross Womersley said.

debate expanded so that we are not just fiddling with existing taxes, but rather genuinely building a sustainable tax base to pay for the vital services we all need"

The organisation's suggestions include changing tax concessio arrangements for clubs to promote gambling harm prevention measures, cutting vehicle registration fees and offsetting revenue loss with a revamped car park tax and establishing a "disused building tax" to encourage

# DANIEL WILLS

SOUTH Australia's social services sector wants funding so it can campaign against change to federalism and the tax sys tem that would leave the dis advantaged worse off.

In its submission on th State Budget to be hande down next Thursday, the S Council of Social Services sa shrinking tax revenues at cuts made by the Federal Gc billion per year if for distributing th changed, as has b ed by larger states Mr Womersle

SA:South Australia aims for big tax reforms

ADELAIDE, April 15 AAP - South Australia is aiming to become one of the best places to do business in Australia through a comprehensive tax reform package, Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis says. In Australia through a comprehensive tax reform package, Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis says. In State government recently issued a discussion paper that floated widespread changes including Treplacing stamp duty with a broad-based annual land tax, changes to payroll tax and hiking gambling taxes. replacing stamp duty with a broad-based annual land tax, changes to payroll tax and hiking gambling taxes. "We really now extend the consultation period for submissions on the proposed changes until April 24. "We really want to differentiate from the rest of the federation in terms of our ability to reform," Mr "Koutsantonis told reporters on Wednesday. "This is a very in-depth piece of tax reform.

The treasurer met with representatives from the South Australian Council of Social Services (SACOSS) on Wednesday to discuss its submission.

SACOSS executive director Ross Womersley said tax reform should ensure community members continued to have access to essential state services.

"Tax is a complicated business and understanding the differential impacts can be quite difficult," he said. "Those measures that are proposed need the opportunity for genuine analysis."

Mr Womersley said SACOSS believed there was an argument for transition to a broader-based land tax

"L'an toute discourage developers from sitting

## **Aboriginal Youth Justice**

Growing from our work with the South Australian Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice (see SACOSS Annual Report 2013-14), in April this year we launched **Justice or an Unjust System?** - a significant report into the continuing over-representation of Aboriginal young people in South Australia's juvenile justice system. The research project involved interviews with 24 key stakeholders from the juvenile justice system.

The concept of over-representation relates to the discrepancy between the rates for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people's involvement in the justice system. Our report focused on the custodial and non-custodial systems applying to a young person once a breach of the law has been identified. Significant over-representation is clear in these parts of the system.

The issues considered in the report are complex and cross over a number of government departments and ministerial portfolios. SACOSS briefed the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, the Minister for Youth/Communities and Social Inclusion and the Minister for Education and Child Development regarding the report, and met with a number of MPs with shadow portfolios and/or related interests.

Currently, SACOSS is partnering with the Department for Communities & Social Inclusion (DCSI) in a community development project that builds the findings of our report and the existing work of the Aboriginal community

### SACOSS' KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- > South Australia's youth justice policies and practices should be informed by principles of self-determination of involving and empowering Aboriginal people at all levels of the system.
- > The state government should develop an Indigenous Justice Agreement in partnership with local Aboriginal communities and organisations. Such an agreement would cover all aspects of the justice system, but also contain youth justice specific programs and policies and would be the cornerstone for all subsequent policy, practice, evaluation and monitoring.
- > Justice Reinvestment initiatives should be developed specifically targeting overrepresentation in the juvenile justice system.

in northern metro Adelaide. The project will support the community to consider early intervention approaches to reduce the number of Aboriginal young people coming in contact with the justice system in the local area.

→ cont'd overleaf



# Aboriginal young people

**4%** of the total population aged 10-17 years

**34%** of young people under community-based supervision

**46%** of young people in detention

**12.5** times likely to be in the juvenile justice system than non-Aboriginal young people

**19.7** times more likely to be in detention than non-Aboriginal young people

(Productivity Commission, 2015, Tables 16A.9, 16A.10).



# **Economic costs**

### Incarceration

= \$1,000 per young person per day

### **Community supervision**

= \$73 per young person per day

#### \$13.3m per year

spent on detention and non-custodial supervision of Aboriginal young people

(2013-14 costs in South Australia. Productivity Commission, 2015, Table 23, 24).





### ABORIGINAL YOUTH JUSTICE REPORT LAUNCH AND MEDIA COVERAGE

On 1 April 2015 the SACOSS report Justice or an Unjust System? Aboriginal Over-representation in South Australia's Juvenile Justice System was formally launched by Justice John Sulan, Justice of the Supreme Court of SA, and Khatija Thomas, SA Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement.

While our report focused on South Australia, the issue of overrepresentation of Aboriginal young people in juvenile justice systems across Australia Is prevalent. The report received significant local media coverage, and national media coverage through SBS and NITV, as well as CAAMA radio in the Northern Territory.

## Halting youth offending rate 'could save millions'

SOUTH Australia could save more than \$12m a year if it addressed over-representation of Aboriginal people in the juven-

The SA Council of Social non-Aboriginal peers. Service today launches a report which finds Aboriginal youths are 19 times more likely in detention than their

peak welfare body argues that more resources should be targeted at addressing the causes of disadvantage.

It is also calling on the State Government to more formally involve Aboriginal South Australians in its approach to tack-







### **Utilities**

SACOSS has an ongoing program of work related to energy and water. The focus is on preventing financial hardship, achieving affordability, facilitating social and financial health and wellbeing, and supporting government and businesses in dealing with their customers and communities.

### BETTER PRACTICE GUIDELINE

In November 2014, SACOSS released the *Better Practice* Guideline for Energy Retailers - a collaborative approach to preventing hardship amongst energy consumers.

The overarching guideline objective is to work towards minimising the financial stress experienced by vulnerable energy consumers.

There are *Five Better Practice Principles* that support the objective and highlight the priority issues experienced by vulnerable energy consumers. These are:

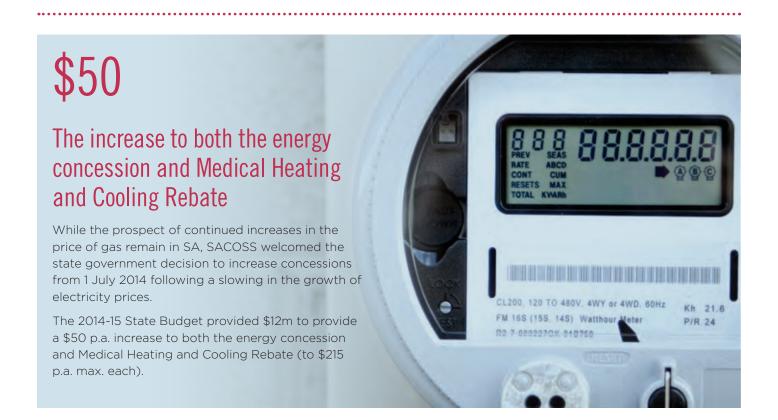
- 1. Early intervention
- 2. Customer focused capacity to pay
- 3. Collaborative partnerships
- 4. Measurable outcomes
- 5. Hardship policies

# Better Practice Guideline for Energy Retailers

A collaborative approach to preventing hardship amongst energy consumers

November 2014





# \$197

# How much less SA consumers will be paying each year for electricity

SACOSS has welcomed the plan that SA Consumers will be paying \$197 less under the AER Decision on SA Power Networks' Regulatory Proposal, announced 30 April 2015.

SACOSS had previously called for a cut of at least \$193 per customer, so we were extremely heartened by the AER SA Power Networks Preliminary Decision for 2015-20.

From the outset, SACOSS argued that SA Power Networks' proposal was a misread of SA Power Networks' role in the SA economy and its entitlement to a share of household budgets. The AER Decision returns prices to pre GFC levels, which means there will be more households and small businesses with the capacity to pay electricity prices.

South Australian households have endured steep electricity price increases during the current five-year regulatory period that have not been matched by increases in the community's capacity to pay.

93%

Number of respondents who wanted to see a reduction in the price of electricity (SACOSS survey of 600 consumers about electricity prices)

# 205,000

# The number of households across South Australia to benefit from the new SA Cost of Living Concession

SACOSS welcomed the state government's announcement on 14 May 2015 that saw the introduction of a new Cost of Living Concession. The concession was partly in place of the local government pensioner rates concession, but with the addition that pensioners and low income renters will also benefit with a new \$100 per year payment to help offset very real cost of living pressures. In fact, the announcement pushed a modest increase in the value of the concession to those households (\$190 increased to \$200).

This new concession addresses an inequity SACOSS has always argued as unreasonable: the existing concession was limited to home owners while pensioners who were renting their houses were left without any assistance, despite often facing higher housing costs with lower incomes. By extending this new concession to include a \$100 payment for pensioners and low income households who are tenants, the SA government has extended support to those who really need it.

The decision was welcomed by South Australian pensioners and low income households, and ended months of uncertainty about the future of the rates concession after the federal government cancelled concession-related funding to the states in its Federal Budget.



→ cont'd overleaf

### SACOSS UTILITIES EVENTS

The Death Spiral: Supporting 'On Grid' Consumers | 21 November 2014

Smart Meters Masterclass | 3 December 2014

Energy Round Table, Sydney | 23 - 24 October 2014

Energy Round Table, Hobart | 26 - 27 February 2015

Hardship & Affordability Conference: Energy, Water & Telecommunications | 29 April 2015

Energy Round Table, Melbourne | 11 - 12 June 2015

Adelaide Oval provided the green backdrop for SACOSS to deliver another thought-provoking and engaging major conference event for 2014-15.



The day's sessions highlighted key issues of energy, water and telecommunications hardship, showcased examples of best practice in dealing with customers in financial difficulty, and demonstrated how consumers are engaged in the development of hardship and affordability measures.







### WATER REFORM

In 2014-15 SACOSS lobbied strongly and worked across all of the parliamentary parties and cross benchers to protect SA Water customers from future price increases related to third party access.

SACOSS was delighted with the move by the South Australian government to amend its Water Industry (Third Party Access) Amendment Bill 2015 in June 2015.

In South Australia we are faced with an immature and emerging water market with very divergent interests between consumers. SACOSS had serious concerns about the impact of the Water Industry Bill on the prices paid by water consumers. Specifically, SACOSS was concerned that opening up third party access provisions could reduce the income available to SA Water, which

would lead to it charging its remaining consumer base higher prices as it seeks to maintain its revenue.

In response to action by the cross benchers, the SA government said, "...in response to concerns raised by [SACOSS] and others and to provide further comfort to existing customers that they will not be impacted by new access contracts...moved an amendment to the Bill that requires the arbitrator to take into account any direction that I give to SA Water under section 6 of the Public Corporations Act 1993...It is my intention to provide SA Water with a direction to base negotiations for access prices on retail price less avoidable costs" (Minister Ian Hunter, letter to SACOSS 7 July 2015).

SACOSS was extremely supportive of this move.

### UTILITIES REPORTS AND SUBMISSIONS

SACOSS completed a number of research reports and fact sheets, as well as submissions on energy and water issues in 2014-15, including:

South Australian Disconnection Project | August 2014

Single Concession Payment Concept | October 2014

SACOSS Submission to AER Distribution Determination on SA Power Networks Regulatory Proposal January 2015

SACOSS Submission to AER Preliminary Decision on SA Power Networks Determination | June 2015

### UTILITIES MEDIA



SOARING energy prices and a poor economy are being blamed for a blowout in the number of householders with unpaid energy bills and rising debt lovels.

unpaid energy bills and rising debt levels.

Latest figures show there were almost \$5,000 householders with unpaid gas and electricity bills in the December quarter last year – an increase of more than \$400 or 12 per cent – compared to the previous quarter.

And the total in unpaid energy bills rose by around \$45 million to more than \$32.4 million than \$32.4 milli

million to more than \$3.2.4 mil-lion in the same period, ac-cording to the latest Australian Energy Regulator's report. Welfare experts fear the debt is likely to rise with the onset of winter.

As gas prices soared by I4 er cent last year the number f residents with unpaid gas ills jumped more than 27 per ent from the September to ecember quarter.

Gas bill debt levels also rose \$14 to \$295 on average in

And while electricity prices have plateaued in the past

this meant gas the cheap altern tricity that it tran

tricity that it trac
"Clearly the is
prices have ca
electricity." Mi
said. 'So electr
debt are both ine.
"I think it's clt
figures that peop
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and as we approx
of year when gas i
to be used more
communities shas
energy industry, i
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electricity prices ha

year, the number of house-holders with unpaid electricity bills still grew by more than 6 per cent, while the average debt level jumped \$41 to \$691, the regulator's report found. The \$A Council of Social Services said an increase in ease exports had h prices. Council rector Ross W Whis meant eas

# SA:Solar group critical of power price c

ADELAIDE, May 27 AAP - Households with sc by the power distribution company, a solar advoca SA Power Networks on Tuesday announced pla with solar panels will get the smallest cut.

The Solar Citizens group says solar homes red reduction is just a money grab.

"Solar households are most common in lower i is to help with the rising cost of power bills," natio Wednesday.

In a submission to the Australian Energy Regu SA would get a \$386 cut in electricity bills in 201 retailers pass on the savings.

However, households with solar panels would higher load they place on the network relative to The South Australian Council of Social Servi





# Power company fined for cut-offs

### DAVID NANKERVIS

ENERGY retailer AGL has been fined \$40,000 for disconnecting electricity from nine customers who were on hardship payment programs.

It is understood the company was fined \$20,000 for cutting power to five customers in this state and \$20,000 for disconnecting four from NSW.

Under national energy rehigh." Lensink said the State

Lensink said the State ment was making hun-f millions of dollars per m overcharging house-twater bills, a cost that ffect a "hidden tax", er ESCOSA chief e Paul Kerin quit after state election, claim-State Government had ly inflated the salve of

## Regulator zaps rising energy bills

DAVID NANKERVIS
HOUSEHOLD electricity
bills will be slashed by almost
20th electricity
20th

# Power bill savings unplugged

HOUSEHOLDS with solar panels will make bigger savings on energy bills at the ex-

# Flood of trouble paying the bills

REPORT, PAGE 5

# ar win a loss for battlers

### DAVID NANKERVIS

HOUSEHOLDS with solar panels will make bigger sav-ings on energy bills at the exsaid yesterday SAPNs plan contravened "the rules which state that retail customers with a similar load and usage profile

\$100 million over the next ten years". Mr Roberts said the company believed its new tariff proposal was "compliant with the National Electricity.

## **Cost of Living**

Cost of living pressures impact on all households, but when costs for basic necessities like housing, utilities, food, health and transport increase, it is a particular problem for low income households.

These basic necessities make up a greater proportion of the expenditure of low income households than for other households, so price rises have a disproportionate impact on those who already have less room to move in their household budget. This is especially the case when incomes and income support payments fail to keep pace with price rises.

SACOSS' cost of living advocacy focuses on the plight of poorer households, and demands policies that will provide relief to vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians. Our advocacy includes regular media commentary, lobbying of governments, and the



production of quarterly Cost of Living Updates. These research reports utilise three different ABS data sets to provide an indication of cost of living pressures for low income households.

SACOSS continued to be active in relation to cost of living issues throughout the year, producing our Cost of Living Update in each quarter with feature editions in the June 2014 and March 2015 quarters.



### JUNE QUARTER 2014 HEALTH COSTS

The impact of health costs on household budgets was highlighted in August (June Qtr 2014), as health prices increased at more than twice the general inflation rate over the last decade.

This Cost of Living Update was particularly important in the light of changes (then) proposed in the Federal Budget, such as Medicare copayments and changes to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, which would have increased health prices and made services more inaccessible for low income households. Fortunately, the proposed co-payment was abandoned, but increasing health prices remain a concern.



### MARCH QUARTER 2015 TELECOMMUNICATIONS COSTS

Like other utilities, telecommunications expenditure is essential, a significant part of the household budget, and

regressive in that low income households spend proportionately more on telecommunications than other households. The good news is that over recent years telecommunication costs have decreased markedly in real terms. But as technology, social expectations and government policy has changed, telecommunication usage has skyrocketed. This Cost of Living Update highlighted a number of premiums on poverty in telecommunications charges, and called for a rethinking of concession payments as the existing Commonwealth Telephone Allowance is limited and out of date with current technology and society.

### COST OF LIVING ADVOCACY WINS

SACOSS has used its Cost of Living Updates as evidence to advocate for the implementation of a number of key initiatives and policy changes.



On 1 July 2014 the SA Energy Concession increased by \$50p.a.



**SA's first Consumer Credit Legal Service opened** Development of Good Shepherd Microfinance's Good Money shopfront program in Salisbury to assist those in financial trouble.



**SA State Budget announcement of new cost of living concession** This replaces the pensioner council rate concession and will commence in July 2015

### **Child Protection**

Following the harrowing and high profile deaths of at-risk children known to Families SA and still living in the family home, and the charging (and subsequent conviction) of a Families SA carer for the abuse of children in his care, the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission was implemented to inquire into the adequacy of the legislation governing the SA's child protection system, and of the policies, practices and procedures of SA's child protection authorities and other government and non-government organisations charged with the care and protection of children deemed at risk.

This South Australian Royal Commission adds to the momentum created by the national Royal Commission inquiring into abuse of children in institutional settings across Australia.

SACOSS advocacy around child protection has focused on long-delayed reform of many elements of the current system, and on addressing the many social determinants that are correlated with inadequate and abusive parenting.

### SACOSS SUBMISSION TO SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ROYAL COMMISSION ON CHILD PROTECTION

Following SACOSS' critique of the narrowness of the draft Terms of Reference of the Commission, this submission argues for a broad view which sees that an effective child protection system should support families to thrive through measures that react meaningfully, flexibly and considerately to at-risk families and children, and should seek to diminish the wider societal drivers of abuse and neglect.

www.sacoss.org.au/submission-child-protectionsystems-royal-commission

# CHILD PROTECTION ON SACOSS RADIO

In a three-part series on our SACOSS radio show, Small Change, we brought together a group of child protection experts to share important perspectives on the state of our system in South Australia. Joining SACOSS Executive Director Ross Womersley was CAFWA Executive Director, Albert Barelds, Professor Fiona Arney from the Australian Centre for Child Protection, and Pam Simmons, Guardian for Children and Young People.

You can listen to and download the podcasts at:

radio.adelaide.edu.au/the-state-of-the-system-child-protection-in-south-australia-part-1

radio.adelaide.edu.au/the-state-of-the-system-child-protection-in-south-australia-part-2

radio.adelaide.edu.au/the-state-of-the-system-child-protection-in-south-australia-part-3



### TEN POINT PLAN FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In April 2015, SACOSS endorsed the Ten Point Action Plan released by CAFWA which calls for the urgent appointment of a children's commissioner or ombudsman, the development of an engagement strategy with the sector from government, and promotes a joint planning and resource allocation strategy to define and address well known short, medium, and longer term issues in the system.

You can download the CAFWA Ten Point Action for Child Protection at **www.childandfamily-sa.org.au** 

# **Work Ready**

In May 2015, the state government announced its intention to change the Skills For All work training scheme to a new system called WorkReady which would slash currently subsidised training delivered through community-based Registered Training Organisations.

A number of SACOSS member organisations were impacted and continue to seek ways to offset major reductions in their income streams. Subsidised training is a key pathway into workforce participation and SACOSS remains deeply concerned about these cuts - at the very time South Australia has a major unemployment crisis. SACOSS will continue to advocate for a strong well-resourced, high quality training system in South Australia.

Along with the Mental Health Coalition of South Australia, we added our voice to a public chorus of business and welfare groups concerned by the state government's WorkReady training systems proposal.

SACOSS and MHSCA were concerned that the decision by the government was made without proper consultation with current training providers, and disregarded the important connection that these providers have with employers and the community, and the customised and flexible and specialised services that are equipped to provide.

# TAFE furore: Gago can't detail private job losses

#### MICHAEL OWEN

The South Australian minister responsible for a move to allocate 90 per cent of subsidised training places to TAFE at the expense of private providers— sparking a \$65 million funding stoush with the federal government — does not know what the jobs impact will be.

Employment Minister Gail Gago's admission came yesterday as pressure intensified on the state government to overturn its decision. The South Australian

She said the impact on the private sector would not be large, but private training providers say 500 to 1000 jobs will be lost and some businesses will close under the regime, being implemented without consultation. "We're enwitnout consultation. "We're engaging with the private sector, we're working through what sort of impact that's going to have," she said on ABC radio yesterday. Ms Gago said changes would behased in overfour years from next month. and 2015-16 would

next month, and 2015-16 would be "the most difficult year ... That's going to be really challenging, particularly for the private sector'

### SA:Business SA says wait on training changes

Business and welfare groups have joined the call for the South Aus new funding arrangements for training places.

The government has moved to cut funds to some private courses, wi the 51-thousand subsidised training places next financial year.

Business SA says the cuts have blind-sided the private training sector of a meeting of all stakeholders

The South Australian Council of Social Service and the Management of the Australian Council of Social Service and the Australian Council of Service and the Service concerns, saying the gove

# **Training** reform's chorus of critics

### TIM WILLIAMS EDUCATION REPORTER

THE Pharmacy Guild of Aus-The Pharmacy Guild of Australia has poured scorn on Skills Minister Gail Gago's claims of consultation on radical training reforms, saying it waited eight months for a meeting which she subsequently failed to attend.

Welfare groups yesterday

Welfare groups yesterday joined the chorus of business complaints against the new WorkReady policy

any concerned stakeholders, given it took since last September for her office to schedule a meeting in late April, from which she was 'Cailled away' before it began.

Mr Robertson said the guild had received subsidies to train had received subsidies to train dup to 150 parmacy assistants at year prior to the introduction of Workeady's predecessor, Skills for All, in 2012.

Now it receives no assistants at all, leaving some unat all, leaving some unat propose with the subsidies of seeling poincedicines)" and nuttine.

sibility of "selling poi-nedicines)" and putting e on pharmacists to on-the-job training. haustralian Council of Services executive di-coss Womersley said organisations in areas of disability, mental and drug and alcohol would have to shut everely cut back their egimes.

quality TAFE cour Mr Womersley back on training 1 hurt the disadvant: to skills short ages at the skills and be skilled from the skills and the skills and skills

# Sparks fly over The State Government has angered business and welfare groups, who have combined in opposition to its new WorkReady training policy. Government also admitted it was failing to track employment also admitted it was failing to track employment outcomes, except for voluntary student surveys, despite powering. Softs million to the scheme injustrees are two consenses to the provider TAFE S. And many private providers. The State Government subsidises hundered to the subsidies for t

# **Advice**

# **SUBMISSIONS**

One of SACOSS' core roles is to provide advice to government and other policy makers on issues that affect our sector or impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged people. This advice is often provided by making submissions in response to public consultations run by government or statutory authorities, but SACOSS also initiates submissions on issues of deep concern to our Members and people experiencing hardship. SACOSS submissions range from broad statements of principle to detailed and technical policy advice, and are often used as platforms for further advocacy.

#### 2015

#### June 2015

- Submission to AEMC re Bidding in Good Faith Rule Change Draft Decision
- Submission to AER on SAPN Preliminary Decision

#### May 2015

• Submission to ESCOSA Review of the NEFC in SA

#### April 2015

- Submission to AEMC Expanding Competition in Metering and Related Service
- Submission to AEMC Optional Firm Access Review
- Submission to AER re ElectraNet Application for Early Implementation of STPIS
- Submission to Review of Governance Arrangements for Australian Energy Markets
- Submission to South Australian State Tax Review

#### March 2015

- Submission to COAG New Products and Services in the Electricity Market
- Submission to AER Residual Metering Cos

### February 2015

- Submission to AER SAPN Distribution Determination 2015 New Issue Premium
- Submission to AEMC Bidding in Good Faith Rule Change Options Paper
- Submission to Draft Water Allocation Plan for the River Murray
- Consortium Submission to Transforming Health Proposals Paper

### January 2015

- Submission to ESCOSA SA Water Rate of Return
- Submission to Royal Commission on Child Protection
- Submission to AER SAPN Distribution Determination 2015-20
- Submission to ElectraNet Network Capability Proposal January 2015

#### 2014

#### December 2014

- Submission to Senate Electricity Networks Inquiry (December 2014)
- Submission to Courts Administration Authority re Impact of Court Closures

### November 2014

- Submission to AEMC 2015 Retail Competition Review
- Councils of Social Service Network Submission to Competition Policy Review
- Submission to ESCOSA re Water Retailer Flow Restrictions

### October 2014

- Submission to Energy White Paper Green Paper
- Councils of Social Service Network Submission to Productivity Commission Draft Report into Natural Disaster Funding
- Submission to AEMC Network Pricing Arrangements Rule Change

### September 2014

• Submission to ESCOSA Water Pricing Inquiry

#### August 2014

- Submission to AEMC Optional Firm Access, Design and Testing First Interim Report
- Submission to Department of State Development Planned Interruption Consultation
- Joint Consumer Submission to EWON Prepayment Meter Discussion Paper
- Submission to Department of Social Services re post-ACNC Options Paper
- Submission to ESCOSA Minor and Immediate Retailers
- Joint SAACSJ Submission to Select Committee on Statutory Child Protection and Care in South Australia

# Advocacy

### WORKCOVER CASE

In 2014-15 a number of SACOSS member organisations were hit by changes to the way their Work Cover premiums were calculated. SACOSS supported a number of these organisations to pursue an appeal against new premiums through the Work Cover Appeals Tribunal.

In the intervening period the state government has made major reforms to the workers compensation system leading to major reductions in premiums. Following this decision SACOSS withdrew the appeal. We remain hopeful that the new workers compensation arrangements in South Australia ensure reduced premiums for employer groups, enhanced support to injured workers, and high rates of and rapid return to work.

# ADVOCACY AND CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

SACOSS undertakes countless meetings and discussions with political representatives and parliamentarians, public servants, local government, business, unions, environment and community groups. Most often these relate to policy and legislative processes at both state and federal level.

### NATIONAL COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE NETWORK

The Council of Social Service Network comprises the Councils of Social Service in each state and territory and nationally through ACOSS.

The COSSes are a voice for the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged Australians. As peak bodies for non-government social and community organisations in states, territories, and nationally, we are also informed by our membership that is engaged in the full spectrum of community and social services. The COSS Network brings diverse local perspectives to our national focus on social justice issues.

COSS directors meet quarterly to share issues and develop policy agendas that extend across state and

territory jurisdictions. This often formulates into national advocacy strategies on social justice issues.

#### In 2014-15 the COSS Network:

- > provided joint submissions to federal politicians about the harshest measures in the 2014 federal budget
- > provided joint submission to the National Competition Policy Review DSS tender debacle
- > provided joint submissions to the Productivity Commission Draft Report into Natural Disaster Funding



















### EXTERNAL MEDIA

SACOSS' presence in the South Australian media landscape continued to grow in 2014-15. In recent years, SACOSS has established itself as a leading commentator on cost of living and utilities issues in South Australia.





Our continued work on the cost of living, tax reform, and water, gas and electricity issues received very strong coverage across radio, television and print. SACOSS has been quoted and referenced in dozens of print and online articles.

SACOSS continues to build its profile and reputation as a trustworthy and authoritative voice on social justice, as well as encouraging

# Warming to hotspot idea

#### **Kurtis Eichler**

FREE Wi-Fi devices would be provided to those who need them the most under a proposal being considered

The idea comes from New York where libraries started renting out 10,000 Wi-Fi hotspots to residents last year.

Cr Osborn said 27 per cent of residents in the council

# being rol eil's n Extra payout as white entres a North flag raised on pensions

🚺 There are concerns a new voluntary penalty rate structure for small ret

891 ABC Adelaide, Adelaide, 07:45 News, New Duration: 0 min 41 secs • SA • Australia • SACOSS Radio &

There are concerns a new voluntary penalty rate structu Business SA and the Shop Workers Union have agreed to a staff. Ross Womersley, Executive Director, SACOSS, says

#### Audience

36.000 ALL, 15.000 MALE 16+, 20.000 FEMALE 16+

#### Interviewees

Audience

36,000 A

Ross Womersley, Executive Director, SACOSS

Also broadcast from the following 5 stations

ABC Broken Hill (Broken Hill), ABC Eyre Peninsula and Wes, the Nick Xemophon Team tickPirie), ABC Riverland SA (Renmark), ABC South East SA (Mt Gambler)

891 ABC Adelaide, Adelaide, 07:45 News, Newsreader

Better Practice Guidelines from SACOSS and the Energy Retailers As

Duration: 0 min 50 secs • SA • Australia • SACOSS Radio & TV • ID: W00061107343 Better Practice Guidelines from SACOSS and the Energy Retailers Association aim to ease the

**MPs short-changed in** push for \$1 pokies limit

Family First MP Rob Bro-

# Foodbank demand at record high

### DAVID NANKERVIS

FREE food hand outs have soared by 30 per cent as increasing numbers of "working poor" seek help.

Foodbank SA is supplying a record 7500 meals a day compared to 5800 in late 2013, but it still cannot cope with demand from struggling families.

It estimates every month more than 8000 people – including 3000 children – are missing out on a meal and it

number of people requiring these services here." He said some families were

faced with a choice of "heat or eat" when it came to buying groceries or paying energy

Foodbank SA has 20 staff, 300 volunteers and distributes 170 tonnes of food a month to charities such as Red Cross and the Salvos and provides breakfasts to 240 schools.

"These include schools in Juley, Mitcham, Aarion that also

don't get breakthe morning, id to emphasise could be found

to pay larr improve t SA:SA to cover pensioner concessions help ener

> ADELAIDE, May 14 AAP - More than 200,000 pensioner households in So cession payment to help cover the cost of rates, water and utility bills, endir over the future of the assistance.

> The state government has extended payments to renters as well as home or void left when the federal government axed pensioner concessions in last year Under the new deal eligible home owners will be paid \$200 a year while per get \$100.

> That will add 45,000 households to the number receiving help taking the tot But about 20,000 self-funded retirees will no longer be eligible for assistanc the government \$36.5 million a year, more than the \$30 million in concessions "As a result of this reform, more South Australian pensioners will be better



# NY Wi-Fi plan headed for Oz

NEW YORK-style free Wi-Fi rrowing service would be ovided to those who need nost in the inner-north, der a Port Adelaide Enfield

uncil proposal. Councillors ve backed a plan for wires internet modems to be



Schools taking legal action as more parents Information
Dissemination to
the Sector

**SACOSS NEWS** 

**eBULLETIN** 

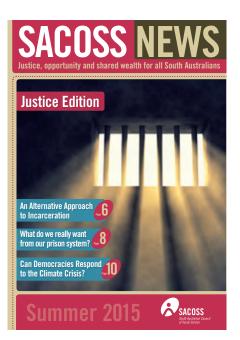
MEMBER ADVISORIES

POST-BUDGET BREAKFAST WITH THE TREASURER

# **SACOSS News**

SACOSS' quarterly (ish) magazine SACOSS News focuses on a social justice theme which allows us to share perspectives, ideas and analyses in greater depth from a broad range of local, national and international contributors.







Winter 2014
Tale of Two
Budgets edition

Summer 2015

Justice Edition

Spring 2015

Multicultural edition

# eBulletin

SACOSS issues a fortnightly eBulletin listing upcoming events, job vacancies, and other items relevant to the community services sector. The SACOSS eBulletin is emailed directly to subscribers every fortnight and is currently distributed to 850 email addresses. All SACOSS Members receive a copy of the eBulletin.



# Member Advisories

SACOSS sends out regular Member Advisories as a way to keep Members up to date with current policy and sector issues, or to provide information about upcoming events and opportunities for involvement in SACOSS work.



# Post-Budget Breakfast with the Treasurer





Our annual Post-Budget Breakfast with the Treasurer is a SACOSS Member-only event which provides an exclusive opportunity to hear the Treasurer of South Australia explain and be questioned on key areas of the State Budget crucial for the community and social services sector and for vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians.





# Information Dissemination to the Community

**ANTI-POVERTY WEEK** 

**FACT SHEETS** 

**SACOSS RADIO** 

**SOCIAL MEDIA** 

# **Anti-Poverty Week**

### Each year SACOSS supports Anti-Poverty Week

The week surrounds the United Nations' International Anti-Poverty Day (17 October) and aims to strengthen public understanding of the causes and consequences of poverty in Australia and internationally. Individuals, communities, organisations and governments are encouraged to take part in action to address poverty and typically a burst of activity and events occur.

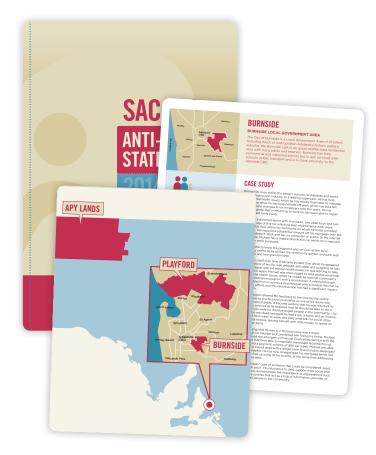
In 2014, SACOSS was again part of the SA Antipoverty Week State Facilitation Group which meets on a regular basis throughout the year. Made up of individuals from our sector and various levels of government and industry, the group provides a coordinated effort, mirrored in other states, to encourage and support others to engage with the week.

# ANTI-POVERTY STATEMENT

Each year SACOSS releases an Anti-Poverty Statement to shine a light on the issue of poverty, outlining potential solutions, and the need for fairness and a decent standard of living for all South Australians.

In 2014 our statement profiled poverty in four different South Australian communities:

- > Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands
- > Burnside Local Government Area
- > Mount Gambier Local Government Area
- > Playford Local Government Area



The report included Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Community Profile Census data relating to education, employment, ethnicity, income and other economic resources for each area as well as for South Australia as a whole. Accompanying the demographic data we asked a SACOSS member organisation in each area to provide a case study of a person's real current day experience of poverty in their community.

The full 2014 ACOSS Anti-Poverty Statement is available at sacoss.org.au/reports/anti-poverty-week

SACOSS acknowledges the support and contribution to our 2014 Anti-Poverty Week Statement from:









# **Fact Sheets**

Throughout the year SACOSS may compile and distribute Fact Sheets designed to provide a concise overview on a specific topic or issue. You can read SACOSS' Fact Sheets at www.sacoss.org.au/publications/fact-sheets



#### Food, Food (In)Security, and Poverty - 2014

at of us could do more to "make a titled po a long new" for some people in our community, and stretching resources is not in literal deducate to allow them to meet their food needs, shows that people in our community on low incomes report missing out on regular meals as obseased social events. 3.5% of South Australian households went without meals in the 12 mod leading up to the last Household Expenditure Survey (2000/10) and 15% of households reported that they could not afford a people limed along a well-

South Australian households spend on average \$191 per week on food, accounting for 17.2% of current household expenditure. Food is the second biggest household expenditure item (behind housing), Individuals on low incomes pay a significantly higher percentage of their weekly income on their weekly grocy shopping.



Source: Derived from ARS HES, SA Summary, Table 5

The high cost of healthy food exacerbates food insecurity. In fact, researchers are beginning to identify a relationship between poverty and obesity in affluent countries. This relationship occurs because it is often cheeper to quell hunger with energy-dense fast-food than it is to acquire the same amount of calcine from healthy foods that are purchased raw and prepared at home.



# diture on motor vehicle fuel & lubricants by Income Quintile, Australia

Income Quintile	June 2014 \$ per week	consumption expenditure
Lowest	\$26.17	3.70
Second	\$43.91	4.26
Third	\$64.87	4.38
Fourth	\$79.96	4.27
Highest	\$107.90	3.95
All Households	\$65.54	4.13

The lowest income quintile spends on average less on fuel in both absolute and proportionate terms, but this is likely due to the over-representation of aged pensioners in this category as they spend markedly less on perbut I household expenditure by other categories of income support recipients tells a different story.

Payment Type	H/hold Expenditure June 2014 \$ per week	% of household consumption expenditure
Age Pension	\$28.35	3.97
Disability and Carer Payment	\$38.73	4.21
Unemployment and Study Payment	\$42.12	4.67
Family Support Payments	\$45.70	4.33

The most alarming figure here is that households whose primary source of income is Newstart or youth/study allowances spend proportionately more on petrol than any other household time. This is in and the law queril income and nocebble also because



#### Energy Consumers Australia

#### Background

The South Australian Government introduced the Statutes Amendments (Energy Consumers Australia) Bill on October 15th, 2014. CoAG Energy Council has committed to a 1 January 2015 start date for the organisation (a company limited by guarantee).

ECA will replace the Consumer Advocacy Panel. The CAP has funded the SACOSS energy program since 2004 (with a break of a few years in the middle).

"... a recovery methodology should seek to recover costs from consumers who most directly benefit from the service being provided."

According to the draft ECA constitution, the customers targeted by ECA are the househo and small businesses classed as "small customers" and covered by the National Energy Customer Framework.

The South Australian 'small customer' electricity market serves around 845,000 individual connections (at end June 2014) generating \$1,400m in retail sales from 5.2TWh of electricity (cod%) of state demand). This contrasts the 'large customer market' where around 7.000 customers provide around \$1,000m in revenue from 7.6 TWh of electricity (c60% of state demand).

- around 90% are residential providing revenue of about \$1,100m pa from around 4TWh (4,000 GWh or c30% of state demand) of electricity

The Bill itself is administrative. The policy decisions that shaped the ECA proposal are outlined on the CoAG Energy Council website and in the draft ECA Constitution (August 2014).



#### The South Australian Gas Market Consumer Factsheet 2014

- Gas prices are rising as a result of the emerging export market for Liquefled Natural Gas (LNG)
   Pleplien capacity constraints limit alternative supply options
   Competition in the small customer market is weak
   The Residential Gas Market could be experiencing its own 'death spiral'.

	PJ	% of total
Commercial	6.2	5%
Residential	11.8	10%
Industrial	40.9	34%
Electricity	67.6	56%
TOTAL	120.3	

GJ/person	QLD	NSW/ACT	VIC	SA	TAS
2008/09	75	49	119	188	64
2009/10	75	53	108	178	77
2010/11	84	53	112	175	88
2011/12	87	48	106	67	92
2012/13	84	50	106	170	101
2013/14	82	48	99	147	70

# SACOSS Radio

Using Facebook and Twitter for Conversations About Recognition and Small Change has been an effective way for us to engage with listeners, and the general public. We've been able to share our stories and interviews with a wider audience, and the bonus of high profile guests promoting their involvement in the program has increased the download numbers of our podcasts.



# **SMALL CHANGE**

Small Change is SACOSS' weekly radio program broadcast on Radio Adelaide. In August 2015 we celebrated two years on air.

Small Change provides us with a widely accessible platform to discuss the issues, ideas and questions around social justice and community development in more details – and with more insight than is often available to our sector and wider community.

Each week we share voices that may otherwise remain unheard, as well as promote the inspiring work of our members and wider community. In the last year we have featured academics policy makers, community workers and local communities, and heard from passionate advocates on disability, young people, tax, homelessness, human rights, social justice and hardship.

For someone to share their own experiences of hardship, poverty and disadvantage can understandably be confronting, but for others to hear such experiences can sometimes be the only thing that reminds us that there is real human impact to the issues that the community and social services sector works tirelessly on.

One of the benefits of radio as a platform is the anonymity people can maintain. Through Small Change we've been privileged to speak with people willing to share their experiences in a safe and trustful environment - young asylum seekers on temporary protection visas, people forced onto Compulsory Income Management, and those struggling daily to make ends meet.

But in all the challenging things we talk about, we continue to love the fact we can share fantastic stories of community achievement, innovation and inspiration. The community and social services sector in South Australia does so much that goes unnoticed, and we think the wider community should hear about it.

Small Change is broadcast on Radio Adelaide, 6pm Tuesdays

radio.adelaide.edu.au/program/small-change/

# 12 MONTHS OF SMALL CHANGE





# 1 hour per week on air

5th most visited program page on the Radio Adelaide website



# 14 000

unique visitors to Small Change webpage



# 163

podcasts



# 12 000

plays/downloads

# Our most popular podcasts (downloads/listens)...

# 720

Young Activist Takes Campaign from Adelaide to Borneo

# 340

Purple House - The Story of the Travelling Dialysis Truck 340

# 270

Sally & John - Personal Stories of Compulsory Income Management

# 230

Good Money Hub to Assist Those in Financial Hardship

# 170

Tafe Students Protest Against Skills for All Inquiry

# **CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RECOGNITION**

In August 2014 SACOSS, Radio Adelaide and Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement went to air with our collaborative radio program Conversations About Recognition.

This program takes taking a step back from discussions on federal constitutional change to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ask an important question - what kind of recognition would be most meaningful for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people? It aims to help non-Aboriginal people understand

the views, feelings and experiences of Aboriginal people, so they can help create real change and social justice. And to think about recognition in our own lives - what do each of us take for granted; what makes many of us feel acknowledged, accepted and valued?

Conversations About Recognition has allowed us to add different voices (high profile and non-high profile) and very different perspectives to a complicated and broad national discussion.

# 10 MONTHS OF CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RECOGNITION



# 1 hour per week on air

(starting August 2014)



# 1200

unique visitors to Conversations About Recognition webpage



# 90

podcasts



# 6300

plays/downloads



# 10

short video interviews with some of our guests



# 1

fantastic visit to Umeewarra Radio in Port Augusta to record and share the perspectives of the local community



Conversations About Recognition is broadcast on Radio Adelaide every Thursday 2-2.30pm and in the second half of 2015 will be syndicated around Australia through the national Community Radio Network

Listen to or download podcasts at radio.adelaide.edu.au/programs/conversations-about-recognition

Find us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @recognitionyarn

# Our most popular podcasts (downloads/listens)...

### 2020

Peter Garrett - former Midnight Oil singer & federal minister (Part 1)

# 480

John Pilger - Journalist/Filmmaker

#### 440

Peter Garrett - former Midnight Oil singer & federal minister (Part 2)

## 190

Hon. Justice John Sulan - Supreme Court judge

# 170

June Lennon - Yankunytjatjara community leader

# Social Media

SACOSS' social media presence has continued to increase. Using social media enhances our position in public debate, and provides us with platforms to engage and interact with the general public.

# **FACEBOOK**

SACOSS' use of Facebook page has proven an effective way to engage with the wider community. The page has over 1000 'likes' and while we do connect with other organisations in the sector, the majority of our Facebook interaction is with personal Facebook users. This platform gives us the ability to share information in more detail, publicly express our standpoint on particular issues, and target our posts to reflect the interests of the general public who engage with SACOSS on Facebook.



# facebook.com/SACOSS



# **TWITTER**

SACOSS' Twitter account has over 2000 followers. It provides us with direct and public communication with politicians, organisations and journalists, as well as the general public. All Councils of Social Service across Australia are now using Twitter – this provides with a public platform to stand together on issues and share our voices more widely through each of our vast social media networks.



# twitter.com/SACOSS



# **Sector Development**

HELPING TO DEVELOP OUT SECTOR

HEALTHY WORKERS HEALTHY FUTURES

SA NOT-FOR-PROFIT FUNDING RULES & GUIDELINES

# Helping To Develop Our Sector

- Running a legal challenge to WorkCover Premium increases in our sector
- Promotion of health workplace management and behaviours through the Healthy Workers Health Futures initiative
- > Working with SA Aboriginal Coalition of Social Justice to seek endorsement for sector organisations of the NGO Cultural Protocols and Principles
- > Working with ACOSS and COSS colleagues to advocate and lobby nationally on issues of sector concern
- > Working on the development of SA NFP Funding Rules and Guidelines
- > Advocacy to retain and promote the ACNC
- Providing governance training to various boards and committees
- > Working within the Human Services Partnership Forum to build collaborative relationships with the state government
- Continued to grow the SACOSS Essential Services Group, consisting of SACOSS members and associates
- Organising events to showcase Best Practice programs, services and ideas



# **Sector Development Events**

SACOSS presented and supported a number of events in 2014-15 that aimed to develop the skills and knowledge of our sector, with themes ranging from activism, sector funding, leadership, and worker health.

# **SACOSS Healthy Workers Leadership Series**

Why workers health and wellbeing is critical to the community services sector
16 July 2014 (Final in the HWHF branded event series due to funding cut)

Activism Masterclass with Dr Gary Foley 18 November 2014

Community Sector Briefing on Federal Funding with Dr Cassandra Goldie 19 February 2015

SACOSS Healthy Workers Healthy Leadership Series
Leading & motivating through uncertain times
13 April 2015

Managers of Micro and Small Community Service Organisations Networking Series

Surviving in a time of tightening budgets 9 April, 16 June 2015

SACOSS Policy Council and Board meeting with Premier Weatherill

21 April 2015

SACOSS-HESTA Boardroom Networking Lunch 22 May 2015

**Return To Work Scheme Information Session** 16 June 2015

## **SACOSS - DHA Forum**

Mobilising Action for Community Health and Wellbeing: the important role of the NGO sector 24 June 2015

# Healthy Workers Healthy Futures

The Healthy Workers Healthy Futures project was an SA Health strategy, funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health. It was an organisational change management project, providing leadership direction and support for non-government health and community services organisations. The aim was to create healthy work policies, environments and cultures that encourage employees to address chronic disease risk factors of smoking, nutrition, alcohol and physical activity.

Healthy Workers Healthy Futures was well-received by the sector, which places high importance on staff wellness. A variety of strategies were utilised to engage workplaces across the sector. It became increasingly evident throughout Healthy Workers Healthy Futures that there is no "one size fits all" approach. A clear, multi-pronged strategy was required to engage workplaces, managers and staff across different levels within workplaces.

### 2014 federal funding cuts

As we wrote in the last SACOSS Annual Report, the Healthy Workers Healthy Futures project was initially funded for a three year term. In May 2014 the federal government withdrew its funding from the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health, and the HWHF project was subsequently defunded 18 months prior to the original contract end date.

Kate Kameniar, SACOSS Healthy Workers Healthy Futures Advisor, wrapped up the project and finished her role in April 2015.





20

organisations were actively engaged in making organisational changes to their workplaces.

Many more received information through monthly email updates and attending workshops and education sessions that were delivered.

100%

of respondents to the annual evaluation survey reported making changes in their workplace post engagement with the Healthy Workers Adviser

50%

of those respondents implemented a dedicated wellbeing committee or responsible person in their workplace



# Physical and mental wellbeing in the community sector

Throughout this HWHF project, we've seen South Australian community sector workplaces really recognise the importance of maintaining a healthy, happy workplace. There are not only benefits for the organisation and the staff, but there is also the potential for flow on affects to their clients through role modelling. Workplace wellbeing was recognised by the sector as a highly valued but underfunded and under-resourced area where many workplaces would like to invest more time and energy into supporting their staff who work tirelessly to support some of South Australia's most disadvantaged people.

The HWHF project identified a particular need for increased focus on mental health and resilience in the workplace, so we were very pleased to be successful in our application for a small research grant to trial the new Healthy Workers, Healthy Minds project in 2015-16.



# **Resources and support**

All resources including best practice recommendations and key learnings from the project are available on the SACOSS website. Written and video case studies have been developed to showcase some of the changes workplaces have made.

sacoss.org.au/healthy-workers-healthy-futures

→ cont'd overleaf

# Successful HWHF strategies for the workplace.

Many of the most successful initiatives in the Healthy Workers Healthy Futures project were relatively cheap - requiring an investment of time, rather than the implementation of expensive programs such as gym memberships or large structural changes.

Inexpensive and simple projects like coordinating healthy recipe/fresh produce swaps, standing or walking meetings, and establishing lunch time walking groups proved very popular with staff in most workplaces. Some other ideas strategies included:

- > embedding wellness into business plans goals and other strategic documents
- > developing smoke free healthy catering or active transport policies

- > upgrading facilities such as lockers or purchasing commuter bikes
- > establishing a workplace wellbeing committee at the organisation
- > needs analysis/audits
- > training and education for staff
- > implementing walking groups or encouraging walking meetings
- > building partnerships with nearby service deliverers such as local cafes to promote healthy lunches



# SA Not-For-Profit Funding Rules & Guidelines

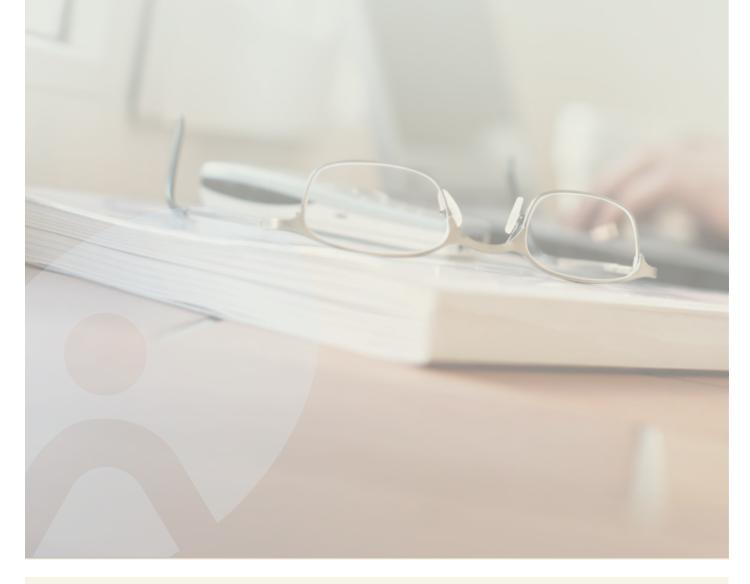
During the year SACOSS continued to work, under the auspices of the Human Services Partnership Forum, on the SA NFP Funding Rules and Guidelines. SACOSS lobbied in the lead-up to the last state election for a range of changes to funding and contract management, and the state government mandated that a set of whole-of-government guidelines be written jointly with the sector.

The process has been slow, but agreement was reached that the guidelines would:

> cover all funding (service contracts as well as oneoff grants)

> be binding (rather than a best-practice guide they will be a policy under the State Procurement Board and referenced in the Treasurer's Instructions).

The drafting process began slowly and a new process was implemented to move the guidelines forward. SACOSS continues to work in this process.



# **SACOSS Secretariat**

# **Executive Director**

Ross Womersley

# Senior Research & Policy Officers

Dr Catherine Earl (part time)

Jo De Silva (part time)

Dr Greg Ogle (part time)

# **Policer Officers**

Bronwyn Colby (part time)

# Sector Development

Kate Kameniar (contract ended April 2015) Healthy Workers Healthy Futures Initiative

# Communications Officer

Marnie Round (full time)

# **Events Coordinator**

Vivian Clark (full time)

# Office & Finance Coordinator

Libby Connell (part time)

# Radio & Publications Assistant

Lisa Burns (casual - commenced July 2014)

### Student Placement

Emma McArthur



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Financial Summary Statement

Independent Auditors Report

**Board Statement** 

Income & Expenditure Statement

Assets & Liabilities Statement

Notes to & Forming Part of the Financial Statement

# Financial Summary Statement

SACOSS has had a healthy year financially with a very small increase in both income and expenditure. As at the end of June 2015, there was a modest surplus of \$35,578.

Additional income flowed from a slight increase in Grants, payments relating to Research and development activities, and from Conferences and sponsorship.

There has been an increase in expenses relating to Consulting fees, Computers and IT, Travel and accommodation, and Equipment. Consulting fees have primarily increased because of the work and advocacy we undertake on energy issues. Much of this work demands highly technical knowledge across a range of areas, so as required we source advice from expert consultants. This kind of investment has allowed us to successfully argue for major savings on electricity network charges in South Australia, which has resulted in savings of around \$200 for average households.

Computers and IT expenses increased because of our decision to invest in a new database to help enhance our membership and communication functions, while adjustments to depreciation costs resulted in increased expenses on Equipment. Travel and accommodation expenses appear considerable but the majority of expenses under this heading directly result from the role SACOSS plays supporting the National Consumer Energy Roundtable. SACOSS provides the secretariat function convening and coordinating several Roundtable meetings a year, and large travel and accommodation expenses occur as delegates are drawn together from across the nation in support of building the capacity of consumer advocates.

SACOSS is grateful for the funds it receives from a range of Departments and Funders. For their support in 2014-15 we would specifically like to thank the Department of Communities and Social Inclusion, Energy Consumers Australia (formerly the Consumer Advocacy Panel), the Department of State Development, and the Department of Health and Ageing. It would not be possible to deliver the outstanding work outlined in other parts of this report without these resources.

SACOSS continues to develop ideas to deliver even stronger outcomes for South Australians who experience poverty, injustice and disadvantage, but this of course requires further resources.

The SACOSS Board continues to enhance SACOSS risk, audit and investment functions and remains committed to ensuring SACOSS regularly returns a small surplus.



PARINERS
David Ellis
James McKervzie
Alexander Rindle
Kym Howard
Ravi Rajon

# INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE INC.

# Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of South Australian Council of Social Service Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2015 which comprises the Income and Expenditure Statement, Assets and Liabilities Statement, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Statement by the Board.

# Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The board of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (as amended) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members.

The board's responsibility also includes such internal control as the board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

# Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the company's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view 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 company's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness



SOTHERTONS ADELAIDE PARTNERSHIP ABN 43 863 627 311 42 Hurlle Squere Adelaide SA 5000 GPO Box 2193 Adelaide SA 5001 Prone (08) 8223 7311 Fax: (08) 8223 7488
Email sothertons disothertons adelaide com au
Wabsite www.sothertons adelaide com au
Collection: An association of making indicate
accounting from throughout Aurophana



of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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 the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (as amended).

# **Auditor's Opinion**

In our opinion the financial report of South Australian Council of Social Service Inc. is prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (as amended), including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the organisation's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and,
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1.

# Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist South Australian Council of Social Service Inc. to meet the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

SOTHERTONS Adelaide Partnership

42 Hurtle Square, Adelaide

ALEX READE

3 October, 2015

50 SACOSS 68th Annual Report 2014-15



Marjorie Black House 47 King William Road Unley SA 5061

P. 08.8305.4222 F. 08.8272.9500 E. sacoss@sacoss.org.au www.sacoss.org.au

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

ABN 93 197 662 296

### Statement by Board

The Board has determined that the entity is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The Board declares that:

The financial statement and notes present fairly the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012, Australian Accounting Standards, the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (as amended) to the extent outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

There are reasonable grounds to believe that the entity will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board members by:

Helen Connolly, Chairperson

Emma-Louise Crosby, Treasurer

Dated 13 October, 2015

# Income & Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 \$
Income			
Grants	4	\$1,004,387	966,066
Member subscriptions		64,636	63,914
Donations		713	2,183
MB house fees		14,412	9,864
Sales and advertising		1,109	360
Interest		16,022	18,835
Research and development		51,677	29,019
Conference and sponsorship		87,493	80,920
Other Income		2,773	30,970
Total Income		1,243,222	1,202,070
Expenses			
Conference costs		55,119	50,349
Consulting fees		178,367	140,317
Employment		667,450	722,044
Office accommodation		71,826	69,394
Computers and IT		21,644	8,425
Printing, postage, and stationery		17,538	22,658
Insurance		13,273	12,924
Professional services		38,088	65,629
Reference materials		10,141	9,986
Travel and accommodation		89,929	71,858
Equipment		34,247	15,870
Other expenses		10,022	6,451
Total Expenses		1,207,644	1,195,904
Net Surplus / (Deficit)		35,578	6,166
Transfer from Reserves Marjorie Black House renovations and expenses		-	
Net Surplus / (Deficit)		35,578	6,166
Accumulated Funds at the beginning of the year		206,167	200,002
Accumulated Funds at the end of the year		241,745	206,167

# Assets & Liabilities Statement for the year ended 30 June 2015

	Notes	2015 \$	2014 \$
Current Assets			
Cash On Hand		140	140
Cash at Bank		1,040,789	842,486
Receivables		31,346	34,910
Prepayments		9,997	8,877
		1,082,272	886,412
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	2	838,355	854,676
		838,355	854,676
Total Assets		1,920,627	1,741,089
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and Borrowings		07.000	10.007
Creditors and Accruals		27,869	18,987
Grants and Funds Received in Advance Provisions		255,082	196,448
Provision for Conference		31,050	_
Provision for Building Repairs	2	140,335	106,544
Provision for Annual Leave	_	53,938	60,630
Provision for Long Service Leave		16,013	15,091
Provision for PAYG		15,470	16,488
Provision for Staff Redundancies		56,707	47,312
		596,464	461,498
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		23,706	14,712
		23,706	14,712
Total Liabilities		620,170	476,210
Net Assets		1,300,457	1,264,878
Accumulated Funds and Reserves			
Accumulated Funds		241,745	206,167
Reserves	3	1,058,712	1,058,712
Accumulated Funds and Reserves		1,300,457	1,264,878

# Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

# Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The Board has prepared the financial statements on the basis that the entity is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements. The financial statements are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared in order to meet the needs of members.

The special purpose financial statements of the entity have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, Australian Accounting Standards, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1985 (as amended) to the limited extent described below. A statement of the compliance with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB) cannot be made due to the organisation applying not-for-profit specific requirements contained in the Australian Accounting Standards.

The financial report is prepared on a cash basis, is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the significant accounting policies disclosed below which the Board has determined are appropriate to meet the needs of members. Such accounting policies are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise.

#### *IncomeTax*

No provision for income tax has been raised as the entity is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The entity is a not-for-profit organisation and funds are not available for distribution to members.

#### GST

All income and expenditure are stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

#### Comparatives

Where necessary comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with the presentation of current year figures.

#### Fixed Assets

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated over the useful life of the asset commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Assets purchased by grant funding are expensed in the year of purchase.

# Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for the organisation's liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements include annual leave, long service leave, and redundancies where applicable.

Contributions are made by the organisation to superannuation funds and are charged as expenses when incurred.

#### Revenue

Government and other grants are brought to account as income to the extent to which they have been applied to the intended projects. Amounts received and not yet applied are recorded as liabilities under Grants and Funds

### Received in Advance.

Membership fees are brought to account as income to the extent to which they represent fees for the current year.

Fees received for subsequent years are recorded as liabilities under Membership Fees in Advance.

# Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

		2015	2014
	N	\$	\$
2. Property, Plant & Equipment			
Marjorie Black House		800,000	800,000
Office Furniture, Equipment & Software - at cost		112,457	166,484
Less: Accumulated Depreciation		(74,102)	(111,808)
		838,355	854,676

The property known as Marjorie Black House was transferred to SACOSS in 2006 (value \$600,000) and is disclosed at the Valuer General's previous valuation.

Provision is made for the anticipated repairs to the building. The costs of building repairs will be charged to the provision when incurred.

Provisions for Building Repairs		
Balance at beginning of year	106,544	81,657
Provisions	40,000	40,000
Funds expended	(6,209)	(15,113)
Balance at end of year	140,335	106,544

	1,058,712	1,058,712
Asset revaluation reserve	-	-
Funds expended - Marjorie Black House	-	-
Bequest - Marjorie Black House	-	-
Balance at beginning of year	1,058,712	1,058,712
3. Reserves		

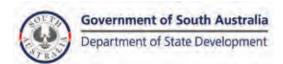
	1,058,712	1,058,712
4. Grant Funding		
·	776 007	750.004
Operating	376,907	358,924
Consumer Advocacy Panel	137,492	138,930
CAP Roundtable	90,274	94,072
SA Energy Consumer Advocacy	320,283	235,298
Healthy Workers Project	57,359	116,395
Other	22,072	22,386
	1,004,387	966,006

# 5. Related Party Transactions

No officer nor any related party of any officer or employee of the organisation has received directly or indirectly from the organisation any payment or other benefit of a pecuniary value.

# SACOSS acknowledges funding and sponsorship support from







Energy Consumers Australia





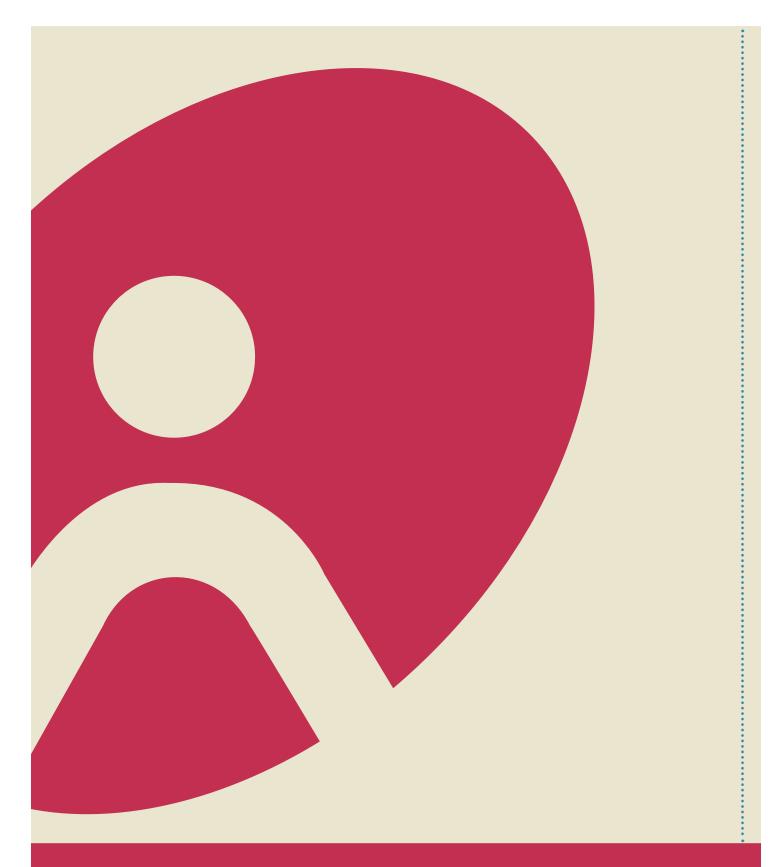


The South Australian Council of Social Service does not accept poverty, inequity or injustice.

We will be a powerful and representative voice that leads and supports our community to take actions that achieve our vision.

We will hold to account governments, business, and communities for actions that disadvantage vulnerable South Australians.

We have a vision that all South Australians can live a life free from poverty, in a genuinely inclusive society where there is equality of opportunity and equity of outcomes for all.



# South Australian Council of Social Service

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