

South Australian
Council of Social Service
67th Annual Report
2013-14



SACOSS

*South Australian Council
of Social Service*

South Australian Council of Social Service 67th Annual Report 2013-14
Published by the South Australian Council of Social Service, November 2014

Marjorie Black House
47 King William Road
Unley, SA 5061 Australia

p (08) 8305 4222

f (08) 8272 9500

e sacoss@sacoss.org.au

www.sacoss.org.au

© South Australian Council of Social Service, 2014

This publication is copyright. Apart from fair dealing for the purpose of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission. Enquiries should be addressed to the Communications Officer, South Australian Council of Social Service.

Contents

4 Chair's Report

Helen Connolly

6 Executive Director's Report

Ross Womersley

8 2013-14 in Numbers

10 SACOSS Secretariat

11 Social Justice Issues

12 Energy & Water

15 Cost of Living

16 State Election Campaign

19 Anti-Poverty Week

20 SA Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice

21 Sector Development

22 Helping to Develop Our Sector

23 Not-for-Profit Regulatory Reforms – ACNC

24 Healthy Workers Healthy Futures

26 Events

29 Publications

33 Media

37 Board and Policy Council

38 External Committees

40 Members

43 Financial Summary



Chair's Report

Helen Connolly

On behalf of the SACOSS Board and Policy Council, I present this report on highlights, achievements and challenges for SACOSS and the broader community sector in SA for the 2013-14 year.

This year, the Board and Policy Council again demonstrated both practical leadership and high standards of governance in the pursuit of our mission: to be a powerful and representative voice that leads and supports our community to take actions that achieve our vision, and to hold to account government, business and communities for actions that disadvantage vulnerable South Australians.

The SACOSS Board is expected to not only attend monthly Board meetings, but attend sub-committees and support functions, seminars and events. As senior leaders within organisations, the willingness to invest their time and energy into the sector through their SACOSS contribution is testimony to their leadership and commitment to collective action.

Likewise, Policy Council members this year have contributed to the formulation of SACOSS policy positions. Many Policy Council members have been longstanding contributors with substantial experience in the sector able to provide grounded and operational insights into social policy and program impacts and consequences. Consequently, SACOSS social policy positions, submissions, reports and other key publications are strongly influenced by the experience of South Australia's most disadvantaged people.

The work of both bodies has been driven by a commitment to be a strong and cohesive health and community services sector driving social change. To this end, resources and support have been directed to a number of alliances with strategic partners. These include our work with the SA Health Care Services and joint work on identifying the impact of cuts to SA Health services in response to the federal budget changes.

One of the functions of a peak body is to stimulate discussion and debate on what constitutes civil society, and despite our diversity, differences and complexity, we can and have developed a shared agenda to work outside of our own organisational interests to those affected by poverty, injustice and inequality. This has been most evident in our work with the South Australian Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice, and leadership in the development of cultural protocol for non-Aboriginal organisations meeting with Aboriginal people.

This work has deepened our own connections with a number of Aboriginal controlled organisations, and as a sector has compelled us to reflect on our roles as organisations in excluding people directly affected by the decisions we make and the services we provide.

This year the Board authorised a member survey as a precursor to future work in the area of determining the SACOSS value proposition.

Responses were received from 100 mostly Organisational Members, rating the ability to access social policy issues and information as their main reason for being members. This was closely followed by support in relation to sector wide funding and contracting issues and importantly their desire to support SACOSS advocacy work.

An interesting finding for us was the low number of members who use social media professionally. Given the investment SACOSS has made in this area over recent years, we are now looking at how to embed our social media platform deeper within organisations. This is a key strategy for us to directly engage with the staff and volunteers of member organisations using interest networks.

A key focus of the Board work plan this year was to actively promote key policy issues contained in our budget submission and election platform, source campaign funding and develop alliance partners. This was achieved in a number of ways, specifically through one-to-one meetings with key ministers and department heads and invitations to key leaders to address joint

Board and Policy Council meetings. We had a number of these meetings with MPs from all parties, particularly in the pre and post-election periods.

A key highlight of the year was the successful adoption of the new constitution. Following a lengthy process of consultation and drafting, the new, more modern, clear and consistent constitution was passed at a Special General Meeting. The new constitution amended a number of anomalies in relation to the relationship between the Board and Policy Council, the membership of Policy Council, and the process for elections. A sub-committee of the Board provided input and oversight to the drafting which was primarily driven by Greg Ogle. It was a significant piece of work and hopefully our new constitution should stand us in good stead for many years to come.

In terms of governance, the Board's major focus this year was in relation to managing the potential risks associated with the federal and state election campaigns and budget submissions. In keeping with our increasing expertise to run sophisticated campaigns and our preparedness to resource campaigns as core business, the Board endorsed a platform of policies in relation to:

- > A fair and sustainable revenue base
- > A Cost of Living Relief Package
- > Key Social Justice Policies related to Health, Housing Justice and Participation
- > Community Services Sector Support

We undertook considerable consultation in developing our state election platform. A combination of sector workshops, focus groups and sought professional advice with regards to framing key campaign messages.

"Without taxes, vital services disappear" became our campaign slogan and it was produced on a range of flyers, postcards, radio ads and was the focus of our 2014 Conference - the formal launch of the campaign. The key messaging related to financing the sector sustainably in order to provide the essential public services and infrastructure that enables us all to live, positively age and work safely.

This level of investment in our campaigning and lobbying activities was new for SACOSS and created some risks and tensions that required careful and sensitive management given the post-election manoeuvring.

Like other years, we held a pre-election forum for members to hear directly from candidates on their platforms. This was followed up with the production of a "Report Card" in The Advertiser on the major parties responses to a range of issues requested by SACOSS.

It was not all smooth sailing post-election and the Board and Policy Council engaged in an internal review process. We were however, relatively pleased with the effectiveness of the campaign and some of the specific policy asks we were able to successfully negotiate.

Within the context of a federal and state election, a tough federal budget with a profound impact on SA, and a difficult state budget, considerable resources have been needed to advocate in partnership with others, on the impact of cuts to funding and changes to eligibility. This has required time and energy of Board and Policy Council members and others in managing political, bureaucratic, and sector relationships. Like other years, the Board has endorsed and supported a wide ranging number of strategies and activities to improve services, systems and the impacts of social policy. These include our new techniques using multimedia and public forums, coalition and network building. All metrics in relation to these strategies remain positive. In the coming year we will invest more in supporting grass roots organisation mobilisation.

The Board farewelled Leigh Garrett this year; Leigh was a strong Deputy Chair and provided wise counsel and support in my role as Chair. With the reduction in Board member numbers in the new constitution, we anticipate change in the composition in the coming year. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the Board and Policy Council members for their commitment, participation, wisdom and support in achieving the objectives of SACOSS.



Executive Director's Report

Ross Womersley

You know you have been in the SACOSS Executive Director's role for a while when you realise the second round of state and federal elections is approaching during your watch. While some bits about this role do get easier, other bits seem just as hard and maybe even harder as time goes by.

Take elections, for example. They are always challenging because they are a prime moment for peak bodies like SACOSS; our chance to bring a focus on social justice issues and to make political progress on long standing policy objectives. However, this is also one of the most highly charged political environments and therefore advancing our agenda, especially in a non-party political way, is always a great challenge.

As SACOSS' ED I have a key role working with our Members, Policy Council and Board to build our agenda, and then as spokesperson I get to argue very publicly for all the things we want. I don't think this latter role will ever get easier although in the last state election we were as well prepared as we might have ever been. We made a very deliberate and courageous decision that we not only wanted a series of policy improvements, but we also wanted to play a role in shaping debate about the diminished base of state tax revenue – an issue that would confront whichever party was going to form government.

Our sector knows only too well that without adequate revenue vital services will disappear, and as a consequence more people will be faced with increased injustice, and poorer access to healthcare, housing, education, employment and ultimately, life opportunities.

As governments withdraw funding from these areas of need even more, people inevitably turn to our sector for assistance. There is more detail on the campaign later in this Annual Report but here I would

like to thank all of you who helped shape and build it. I particularly note the fantastic work of our own Dr Greg Ogle. Given the extremely limited resources we had available, I believe we prosecuted (and continue to prosecute) the case extremely well.

The issue of course hasn't gone away at a state or federal level. There hasn't been an enormous recovery and South Australia's budget situation was made worse with the federal government's decision to make massive cuts to federal funding for services run by the states, particularly in health, education and housing.

Regrettably, these federal cuts reached right to the heart of SACOSS with the immediate cancellation of the National Partnership Agreement on Health Reform – the source of funding for our Healthy Worker Advisor role. We remain enormously disappointed, and I would like to acknowledge the poise and maturity with which Kate Kameniar has dealt with these very difficult circumstances. Our determination to ensure investments continue to be made in preventive and primary health care is not diminished but it does seem unlikely that we will be able to continue this project for very long.

In dollar terms there will still be additional federal funding coming to SA, but it will be nowhere near that which had previously been agreed. This put an \$898m hole in the state budget over the next four years and more beyond that. The state government dealt with this in its own budget by cancelling most of current concessions on the Emergency Services Levy (ESL), promising to reinstate it should the federal government change its mind.

Many commentators have argued the federal government made these cuts to drive the states into a conversation about lifting the rate and breadth of the GST. ACOSS and all the state and territory Councils of Social Service agree that tax reform is necessary at both state and federal levels, but if we are going to have a mature conversation about how to boost tax revenue we want much more than GST reform on the table.

We want reforms that sweep away the tax shelters that disproportionately benefit people on high incomes, remove inequity and waste in tax breaks for superannuation, and curb tax avoidance by multinational companies. We want the state government to consider and model the merits of some other revenue strategies (e.g. inheritance taxes, broader land tax etc.). We also clearly need to ensure that if GST is expanded, people on the lowest of incomes across our community are adequately and properly compensated in a sustainable way.

There were other issues that emerged from the federal budget which potentially have more dire consequences for many of the people our sector supports. There were a number of measures that continue to seem profoundly unfair and are certain to have significant impacts on people on the lowest incomes across our community, including:

- > Changes to Newstart leaving some unemployed people under 30 without access to income for 6 months at a time
- > New GP and pharmaceutical co-payments
- > Changes to the way in which pensions are indexed which sees their value eroded

Post budget modelling by NATSEM demonstrated that despite the temporary increases in their marginal tax rates, high income earners will end up better off overall, while low income earners will be most adversely affected.

We have joined with a wide range of groups including the state government itself to oppose the cuts to the states. We will continue to work with ACOSS, the COSS network and others to hopefully get the measures which unfairly target and punish people on the lowest of incomes across our community reversed.

We have also spent time this year working on our relationships with the state government and I am hopeful we have set the scene for some real changes in the ways in which we engage with each other, and will see some major reductions to red tape and regulatory processes.

The policy challenges tend to grow even more complex as the boundaries around state and federal responsibilities blur - both levels of government get squeezed for cash and we now have governments that come from different political traditions.

That said, so much of our work is only possible because of the funding and support we get from government. I record our sincere thanks for that support here.

As you'll see in other parts of this SACOSS Annual Report we have maintained a focus on cost of living, expanded our work in energy and water, developed our focus on healthy workplaces, and invested in building our relationships with the Aboriginal community. We are widening our communication strategies, in an effort to ensure we can better explain why certain social policy outcomes are more likely to deliver people out of poverty.

Our contribution is only possible because of the terrific support I receive from our members broadly and specifically from our Board, our Policy Council and the small but fantastic group of colleagues who work with me in the Secretariat.

I particularly thank Leigh Garrett (Deputy Chair), Monique Palmer (our Treasurer), Ed Carson, Angela De Conno & Libby Craft (Policy Council) and both Angie Bletsas and Stephen Graham (Secretariat) who have all provided great contributions to our work and either have, or are intending to, move on to new roles. I feel very fortunate and I thank you all.

In solidarity,



2013-14 in Numbers



18 775

SACOSS tax campaign postcards distributed in Bright and Morialta

6 000

information packages letterboxed to support consumer choice in energy contracts



4

Cost of Living Updates

\$50 pa

increase in the state concession for electricity as a result of SACOSS lobbying

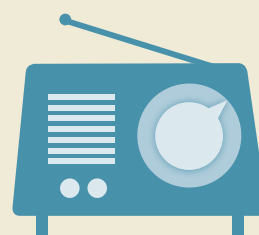


70

reports/submissions/information sheets

28

energy & water submissions and reports



48

editions of SACOSS' radio show Small Change

150

Small Change podcasts



9000

SACOSS website visitors

27 000

SACOSS website page views

58 000

people reached via Facebook
during 1 month of SACOSS
election campaign



9

SACOSS branded events
and conferences

600

consumers surveyed to build
an evidence base for our energy
campaigns

22

Board & Policy Council meetings

dozens

of conference and workshop
presentations



1

SACOSS staff bicycle

550

kilometres ridden to meetings

hundreds

of dollars saved on parking fees



14

solar panels installed on
Marjorie Black House



and 1 phone call

for dead possum removal
assistance.....**priceless**

SACOSS Secretariat

Executive Director

Ross Womersley

Senior Research & Policy Officers

Dr Angie Bletsas (full time)

[parental leave contract ended December 2013]

Dr Catherine Earl (part time)

[parental leave until January 2014]

Jo De Silva (part time)

Dr Greg Ogle (part time)

Policy Officers

Bronwyn Colby (part time)

Hannah Corbett (part time)

[July 2014]

Stephen Graham (full time)

[January - July 2014]

Sector Development

Kate Kameniar (full time)

[Healthy Workers Healthy Futures Initiative]

Communications Officer

Marnie Round (full time)

Events Coordinator

Vivian Clark (full time)

Office & Finance Coordinator

Libby Connell (part time)

Student Placement

Benjamin Weir - University of Adelaide

Kirsten Wynn - University of Adelaide



A large, stylized human figure composed of overlapping circles and arcs in shades of beige and cream, serving as a background for the top half of the page.

Social Justice Issues

Energy & Water

Cost of Living

State Election Campaign

Anti-Poverty Week 2013

SA Aboriginal Coalition
for Social Justice

2013-14

Energy & Water

Electricity Disconnections Campaign

Electricity disconnections have been a priority campaign area for SACOSS over the last two years. The SACOSS campaign has included publication of the Keeping the Power On Report; multiple meetings with consumers, retailers, the Energy and Water Ombudsman of South Australia and the Energy Minister; ongoing media including media releases (in 2013/14, on 9 July, 20 November, 26 November and 15 January); and meetings with the state government's Disconnections Special Project team.

As a result of SACOSS campaigning, the state government has commenced a Special Project on Electricity Disconnections.

SACOSS continues to engage with the Special Project team, including meetings to discuss retailer data and develop a retailer survey of disconnected customers.

Concession Wins

SACOSS has lobbied extensively for extensions to the Energy Concession and Medical Cooling & Heating rebate. A \$50 increase to the energy concession was promised by the ALP on 10 March 2014 as part of its election campaign. This promise was kept in the state budget announcement on 19 June 2014 with the Weatherill government confirming a \$50 increase to both the energy concession and medical cooling and heating rebate.

Consumer engagement

In 2013-14 SACOSS worked with both the Australian Energy Market Commission (AEMC) and the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) to organise consumer consultations on energy issues.

This agenda was helped by SACOSS hosting three meetings of the National Consumer Roundtable on Energy in 2013-14.

The Roundtable consists of senior representatives from more than 20 consumer organisations from around Australia, including:

- > SACOSS
- > St Vincent de Paul
- > Consumer Utilities Advocacy Centre
- > Public Interest Advocacy Centre
- > UnitingCare Australia
- > Australian Council of Social Service

Previous meetings have hosted the Federal Energy Minister, Chairman of the AEMC, Chairman of the AER and other senior industry leaders.

The Roundtable sets a strategic agenda for energy consumer advocacy across Australia. In 2013-14 SACOSS held high level discussions with the AEMC about ways to improve consumer engagement with this institution. SACOSS received funding from the Consumer Advocacy Panel to host three Roundtable meetings.

Presentations

SACOSS was one of three organisations from around Australia requested to present at the Australian Energy Market Commission's Consumer Priorities Forum on 19 May. SACOSS highlighted key consumer issues. At the request of the AEMC, SACOSS had an active role in advising the AEMC on all aspects of planning for the forum, including survey design, format and invitation list.

SACOSS Hardship & Affordability Conferences

In January 2013, SACOSS commenced planning for a major Hardship and Affordability Conference. The Consumer Advocacy Panel project provided the initial resources to progress the Conference organisation to a point where additional funding for the event was secured.

The SACOSS Hardship and Affordability Conference: Perspectives on Energy and Water was held on 10 July 2013. Keynote presenters included Andrew Reeves, Australian Energy Regulator Chairperson.

Over 100 South Australian and interstate delegates came together to develop a better understanding of the very complex areas of utility policy and regulation, and to share and consolidate knowledge of issues within the area.

Delegates engaged in genuine conversations around how the issue of affordability can be managed by industry, providers, and the welfare sector.

The 2014 SACOSS Hardship and Affordability Conference: Stakeholder Conversations brought together a range of groups representing different consumer segments on 12 May. Delegates included representatives from:

- > Anglicare SA
- > Uniting Communities
- > The Salvation Army
- > UnitingCare Wesley Bowden
- > UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide
- > UnitingCare Wesley Country SA
- > South Australian Financial Counsellors Association

The energy retail industry was represented by AGL, Origin Energy, Alinta Energy and Energy Australia.

The key aim of the conference was to define best practice relating to energy consumers in financial stress. The workshop style of the conference involved facilitated discussions with individual retailers and community sector personnel working with vulnerable energy consumers.

A key outcome of the conference was the development of a Better Practice Guideline for Energy Retailers, to prevent hardship among energy consumers. This Guideline will be released in 2014-15.



SACOSS HARDSHIP & AFFORDABILITY CONFERENCE
PERSPECTIVES ON ENERGY & WATER



SACOSS HARDSHIP & AFFORDABILITY CONFERENCE 2014
STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS



Energy & Water (continued)

Wholesale market monitoring

SACOSS partnered with Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) on the issue of tight supply conditions linked with very high wholesale electricity prices in South Australia during April, May and June 2013.

18 occasions were identified when generators offered electricity to the system at prices above \$5000/MWh, that is two orders of magnitude above the normal price (SACOSS and CMU Report “High SA Electricity Prices: A Market Power Play?”, 2013).

This was proximately due to the aggressive bidding behaviour of some generators which offered normally low priced electricity at prices in excess of \$12000/MWh whenever it seemed likely such a bid would succeed.

The conditions of tight supply linked with very high wholesale electricity prices were found to likely to be replicated in the future. We will be pursuing this issue.

Memorandum of Understanding for Energy Financial Hardship

In 2014 SACOSS joined with government and industry to co-sign a Memorandum of Understanding for better practices in the provision of assistance to South Australian energy customers experiencing financial hardship and having difficulties in meeting payments for energy debts.

SACOSS negotiated the inclusion of additional clauses related to clear and consistent energy messaging, helping eligible customers obtain the energy concession and better practices in targeting energy efficiency options.

The MOU promotes dialogue between community sector, DCSI and retailers regarding best practice to ensure customers who are experiencing financial stress to manage their energy payments can remain connected to the energy supply.

The MOU encourages action from all signatories in support of customers in financial stress.

Research and Submissions

SACOSS completed a number of research reports and fact sheets as well as 28 submissions on energy and water issues in 2013-14 including:

- > State of the South Australian Retail Energy Market 2013: A review of the first year of retail price deregulation in SA from the perspective of household consumers
- > Energy Payment Research: To conduct research into electricity usage and perceptions of pricing amongst 600 South Australians
- > Finding a Better Deal?: to help householders navigate the energy market with energy deals and contracts.

SACOSS Consumer Advocacy and Research Fund Consultation

SACOSS was funded by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion to conduct a consultation on the Consumer Advocacy Research Fund (CARF) for water advocacy and research.

The purpose of the consultation was to identify priority water advocacy and research projects. The consultation identified a series of issues in need of further advocacy and research including:

- > Pricing
- > Consumer Protection (and the Safety Net)
- > Water Use and Water Security
- > Priority End-users

SACOSS built a coalition of key sector partners to tender for the funding to undertake this range of activities across the next year, but this application was unsuccessful. This has severely curtailed SACOSS and the sectors capacity more broadly to engage in the regulatory processes relating to the reform water pricing.

We are grateful for some support from ESCOSA that enabled us to obtain some much needed technical expertise.

Cost of Living

SACOSS continued its work around cost of living issues throughout 2013-14. During the year food, utilities, health and transport prices all went up by more than the general inflation rate. While we did not see the massive hikes of previous years in electricity prices, increases in gas prices kept energy at the centre of cost of living concerns.

As always, our focus was on the impacts of price rises on vulnerable and disadvantaged people and ensuring that government policy aims to assist them.

This is particularly important because low income households spend proportionately more of their income on the basic necessities, so any big price changes in necessities impacts more on those households than on the average. Low income households also have less room to move in their weekly budgets to manage price hikes, and often fewer resources to fall back on.

Cost of Living Area	Adelaide CPI June 2013 - June 2014 %
Food	3.4
Housing	2.5
• Rent	1.9
Utilities	4.4
• Electricity	2.9
• Water	1.0
• Gas	13.5
Health	5.4
Transport	4.4
CPI All Groups	3.1

SACOSS continues to watch and comment on cost of living issues and to publish the quarterly Cost of Living Updates at sacoss.org.au/reports/cost-living

SACOSS produced 4 cost of living reports throughout the year. The report on the June Qtr 2013 (published in August 2013) focused on telecommunications - although costs per unit are not rising, the amount of use and the overall expenditure required to live normally and be socially connected in a modern society is increasing. This is creating some hardship patterns similar to those seen in relation to other utilities.

The September Qtr 2013 report focused on housing costs, and included a profile of housing costs and housing stress in 40 Local Government Areas across the state. The December Qtr report contained a summary of price movements in all key cost of living areas and was designed to underpin SACOSS' state election campaign.

Cost of living issues were a key feature of the state election, and part of SACOSS' election platform (see separate article) was a package of 12 cost of living relief measures we promoted to all parties.

The measures dealt with housing pressures, utilities, transport and debt issues - with all the measures focusing less on prices, and more on support for vulnerable and disadvantaged households in dealing with price increases.

Concession & Funding Wins

We were pleased that all parties recognised the problems caused by rising energy prices and promised increases in concessions, and also a long overdue increase in the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme to help sick people in regional areas with transport costs.

The Labor government also committed to two key measures to support people struggling with debt - the implementation of the agreed funding for the Consumer Credit Legal Service (which is now up and running) and the establishment of a Good Money micro-financial services shopfront (which has now been funded).

State Election Campaign

In the lead up to the South Australian election, from the middle of 2013 SACOSS developed an ambitious campaign that sought to:

- > Frame the election debate by putting the need for a sustainable revenue base to pay for vital services at the centre of the campaign;
- > Promote and get commitment to specific policy initiatives across a range of social justice areas; and,
- > Get outcomes for the sector in areas of better contracting and red tape reduction.

These goals all came together in a comprehensive platform which we promoted to all parties during the election campaign.

Given that we published an election report card in *The Advertiser* in the final week of the campaign, and one of the key people who would decide the next government (Geoff Brock) announced to the media that he wanted to consult SACOSS (among others) as part of his decision making process, we clearly made an impact.

Our message around taxes and the need for a sustainable revenue base was viewed as credible in the media and the Premier publicly acknowledged that there was a real issue with South Australia's revenue base.

Taxes actually became a key issue in the campaign and a point of difference between the parties. We did not get our ultimate goal of bipartisan support as the Liberals promised a range of tax cuts without any balancing measures to restore lost revenue, but our tax campaign was important advocacy underpinning vital services to vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

While we got more publicity than expected on tax issues, we struggled to get profile on other issues.

Wins for Vulnerable & Disadvantaged South Australians

The launch of our Cost of Living Relief Package in December was overwhelmed by the announcement later the same day of Holden's closure, but by the end of the campaign there were significant bi-partisan outcomes on energy concessions and the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme.

Through our election platform, media work, negotiations around the release of our Report Card, as well as through previous campaign efforts, the new Labor government committed to:

- > \$50 pa increase in the energy concession for low income customers
- > \$2.5m increase in the Patient Assistance Transport Scheme
- > Establishment of a Good Money shopfront for financial services for low income South Australians (including NILS debt consolidation)
- > Implementation of agreed funding for the Consumer Credit Legal Services
- > Transfer of title of 4,000 Housing SA houses to the community housing sector
- > A new Mental Health Plan for SA
- > 3+3+3 as the default length of service contracts with 6 months' notice of whether long term contracts will be renewed
- > Implementation of simple, low risk grant processes for contracts under \$100,000
- > Government-wide grant guidelines to reduce red tape

(ADVERTISEMENT)

SA State Election

PARTY REPORT CARD

See where the major parties stand on the issues that matter

SACOSS has developed a platform of election policies to help vulnerable and disadvantaged South Australians. Our Report Card scores the parties on those policies.



LABOR

LIBERAL

A Fair & Sustainable Revenue Base

Addressing the revenue problem to ensure that there is money to fund vital services



Cost of Living Relief

Assisting low income households to meet cost of living pressures



Housing

Increasing and improving access to affordable housing and social housing



Health

Focusing on community and preventative health, and a plan for mental health services



Social & Economic Participation

Fixing the child protection system and supporting asylum seekers in our community



Justice

Having fewer people in prison and ensuring supports are in place to help people get back on the straight and narrow



Community Sector Support

Reducing red tape and making better contract arrangements so we can get on with delivering services to people



What about the other parties?

Of the other current parliamentary parties, the Greens position appears closest to SACOSS' big concern about ensuring a fair and sustainable tax base, while Family First, Dignity for Disability and the Xenophon team seek to achieve a sustainable revenue base through economic growth and cutting waste. These are good goals, but may not be enough to fix the revenue problem.

For full details on all the policies, see sacoss.org.au/party-report-card

SACOSS.ORG.AU

The South Australian Council of Social Service invites you to view the detailed election party report card on our website

Authorised by Ross Womersley, 47 King William Road, Unley on behalf of the South Australian Council of Social Service.

Above: Party report Card as it appeared in *The Advertiser*

Both parties also addressed other cost of living issues. Labor committed to some of our policies initiatives, while much of Liberal's relief package was aimed at middle-SA, rather than targeted to the most vulnerable households. These differences were reflected in our election report card.

Unfortunately, with limited resources we were unable to fully promote much of the rest of our platform, although building on work being done in the Human Services Partnership Forum, the Labor party also promised some significant red tape reduction reforms.

Obviously there is more work to do with the government to make these commitments a reality, but these are significant outcomes which will make a difference for struggling households.

Our campaign was non-partisan and our assessment of the parties in the final week of the campaign was fair and transparent. It was not and did not pretend to be an analysis of all government and opposition policies, or of who would form the best government. It did not direct anyone how to vote. It simply provided a report on how the parties had responded to our platform.

We published a simplified two-party version in *The Advertiser*, while our website contained the full report card on all parliamentary party responses to our platform, as well as links to party policy statements and both major parties' formal responses to our platform.

Despite this level of detail and transparency, publishing a Report Card in the last week of an election is inevitably controversial.

Overall, we implemented our election campaign broadly as planned and achieved some good policy outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged people. Our key task now is to work with the government to see its policy commitments implemented. However, in running such a busy and high-pressure campaign we also came up against some of our own organisational limitations, and so we have a number of important internal things to address to further build our capacity and to continue to be an effective voice in the future.

State Election Campaign (continued)

Our Election Timeline

Preliminaries – mid 2013

- > Development of campaign platform and strategy
- > Board & Policy Council sign-off
- > Letter to SACOSS members

November 2013

- > **6 November:** Housing Cost of Living Report launched
- > Meetings with Parties: Greens, D4D, Liberal, Anne Bressington, Family First, Labor
- > **25 November:** AGM Launch of Tax Campaign and website

December 2013

- > Two-week tax advertising (5aa, InDaily)
- > **11 December:** Cost of Living Package Launched

January 2014

- > SACOSS News Election issue published
- > Letters to all major party lower house candidates re tax
- > **20 January:** Asylum seeker policy launched
- > **29 January:** 18,775 tax postcards in Messenger in Bright and Morialta
- > **30 January:** Cost of Living Report launch (concessions)

February 2014

- > **10 February:** 19,000 tax postcards in Messenger in Dunstan and Cheltenham
- > **28 February:** Write to all parties in Upper House re tax pledge

March 2014

- > **5 March:** SACOSS Tax Report Launch
- > **12 March:** Launch of Policy Report Card
- > **17 March:** Post-election letters to Bob Such & Geoff Brock
- > **17-21 March:** Meetings/conversations with Premier, Opposition Leader and Geoff Brock
- > **20 March:** Media re election

The SACOSS Campaign Numbers



40 media stories, comments or references to SACOSS' campaign

3 Advertiser opinion pieces

4 Letters to the Messenger Press editor published

3 research reports published

20 Small Change radio pieces on election issues



1 major conference

Lots of meetings and phone calls to MPs and staffers



5,000 visits to our website during the campaign

Countless Tweets to 1300 followers

19 Facebook election posts



Anti-Poverty Week 2013

Each year SACOSS supports Anti-Poverty Week. The week surrounds the UN's International Anti-Poverty Day on 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.

In 2013 SACOSS was again part of the SA Anti-Poverty Week state facilitation group. Co-chaired this year by Helen Lockwood and Simon Schrapel the group met on a regular basis throughout the year encouraging and promoting the participation of others. Made up of individuals from our sector and various levels of government and industry, the group provided a coordinated effort, mirrored in other states, to encourage and support others to engage with the week.

In addition to assisting with the facilitation of Anti-Poverty Week, SACOSS was involved with four major activities during the week: amplifying messages from the release of ACOSS report *Poverty in Australia 2014*, a recipe competition, a survey, and the release of our own Anti-Poverty Week Statement.

ACOSS helped open public discussions in Anti-Poverty Week with its own report exploring the extent of poverty in Australia. It attracted considerable media interest and led to a number of local media interviews on the report.

Foodbank SA joined our ongoing collaboration with Community Centres SA to coordinate a recipe competition. Once again community members were challenged to come up with interesting and nutritious meal recipes, this time, working with the staple ingredients included in a standard Foodbank SA hamper.

The recipe competition aims to challenge people to think about food poverty and the difficulty people face in maintaining a healthy diet on a low income. The winners, representing various community centres, had their recipes published in an online cookbook and received awards at a ceremony held at Bowden Brompton Community Centre.

Understanding Poverty -SACOSS Anti-Poverty Week Survey

The 2013 survey asked a series of questions about poverty, its causes and the extent to which there is belief that poverty and deprivation are features of life in Australia.

The survey was advertised through SACOSS and Local Government Association networks. 129 participants completed the survey.

The three key findings were:

- > Almost all respondents recognised that there is poverty in Australia, with many understanding the complexities of poverty and deprivation;
- > The majority did not believe that existing levels of the Newstart payment are adequate to keep people out of poverty and the majority increased when those who were unsure were presented with the level of the payments; and,
- > Few people identified people in poverty as solely responsible for their situation, with most seeing poverty as everyone's responsibility – with a role for government, the community, community sector organisations, business, and individuals themselves.

You can download SACOSS Anti-Poverty Week Statement at sacoss.org.au/anti-poverty-week

SA Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice

Supported by SACOSS, the SA Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice (SA ACSJ) met regularly throughout 2013-14. During this time the SA ACSJ developed an information flyer, using it to recruit new members and gain the formal support of numerous mainstream organisations and non-Aboriginal people.

The SA ACSJ held its first public event on 9 August, the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples. The Community Sector Forum drew together representatives from Aboriginal and mainstream organisations with an aim to initiate new and ongoing dialogue on how the community sector should work with Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal organisations. The community sector forum provided an excellent opportunity to begin discussion about shared goals and concerns.

These important discussions provided the foundation for the development of the SA Aboriginal Coalition for Social Justice Protocols and Principles document. It aims to give mainstream organisations guidelines on how best to engage with Aboriginal communities and the issues they face while building capacity and upholding the important principle of self-determination. The principles and protocols document was finalised shortly after the 2013-14 financial year with the next stage of work getting mainstream organisations to commit to following the guidelines outlined in the document.

We really appreciate the leadership and support provided to this initiative by Narrungga-Kaurna Elder Tauto Sansbury, and a close group of other contributors in the Coalition. We look forward to supporting the work of the SA ACSJ as it develops.



**SA Aboriginal
Coalition for
Social Justice**





Sector Development

Helping to Develop Our Sector
Not-for-Profit Regulatory
Reforms – ACNC
Healthy Workers Healthy Futures

2013-14



Helping to Develop Our Sector

- > Promotion of better relationships with government through the Human Services Partnership Forum and other engagement processes
- > Developed and promoted to government a 20 point plan for red tape reduction
- > Running a legal challenge to WorkCover Premium increases in our sector
- > Lobbying government around F&CD tender issues
- > Lobbying for and contributed to development of State Grant Guidelines
- > Lobbying for anti-gag legislation at state and federal level
- > Providing input on ACNC governance standards
- > Supporting the continuance of the national charity regulator (ACNC)
- > Organising events to showcase Best Practice programs, services and ideas
- > Promotion of healthy workplace management and behaviours through the Healthy Workers Healthy Futures initiative
- > Working with SA Aboriginal Coalition of Social Justice to develop and promote a set of NGO Cultural Protocols and Principles
- > Working with ACOSS and COSS colleagues to advocate and lobby nationally on issues of sector concern

Not-for-Profit Regulatory Reforms – ACNC

After many years of lobbying by the community sector, and a raft of official reports recommending it, a purpose built national charities regulator (the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission) was established in December 2012.

The task then for SACOSS and the COSS network around the country in 2013-14 should have been to ensure that our members were aware of the ACNC, its requirements and the support and resources it offered to not-for-profit associations, and to progress the red tape reduction opportunities the new national regulator opened up.

This was particularly the case in South Australia where the state government had drafted legislation to remove duplicate reporting requirements and some fundraising licence requirements for charities registered with the ACNC.

However, with the election of a new federal government with a platform to abolish the ACNC, much of this positive agenda was replaced with trying to convince the new minister, the government and the senate that the ACNC was in fact widely supported and it would be counter-productive to return sector regulation to the tax office and to ASIC.

SACOSS was pleased that in the lead-up to the federal election, Senator Nick Xenophon joined with Labor and the Greens in publicly supporting the ACNC, while Family First candidate Bob Day said he would not do anything to harm the sector (although since his election he has said he would support abolishing the ACNC and returning regulation to the tax office).

The government has pushed ahead with plans to abolish the ACNC. Although with limited or no consultation with the sector, it has been hard to understand and comment on what the new arrangements might look like. When the abolition bill got the senate, there were no alternative arrangements included, and submissions to the Senate Committee inquiry into the bill again heard the widespread support in the sector for retention of the ACNC.

SACOSS put in a separate submission supporting ACOSS' national submission, noting that the good SA government initiatives were being stalled by the plan to abolish the ACNC. However, despite the vast majority of submissions the government committee members' "majority report" still recommended abolishing the ACNC.

The bill has not passed the senate and so despite trying circumstances the ACNC remains in place is still registering charities and producing useful support materials and SACOSS continued to inform our members of its operations and advocate for its continuance.

Healthy Workers Healthy Futures

Healthy Workers Healthy Futures

The Healthy Workers Healthy Futures initiative is an SA Health strategy funded by the Australian Government under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health. The initiative encourages managers and workers to create workplaces that foster and support healthy lifestyles, through the implementation of healthy catering policies and increasing opportunities for staff to be physically active.

More than 40 workplaces from the non-government health and community services sector have engaged in the program through working with the Healthy Workers Adviser, attending education sessions, competing in workplace challenges, and utilising tools and resources such as the Wellbeing Toolkit.

Supporting Our Sector

Educational and Professional Development Workshops

SACOSS worked in partnership with Aged & Community Services SA & NT and Australian Services Union, who also host Healthy Workers Advisers, to offer successful education and professional development workshops on healthy catering and smoke free work environments in metropolitan and regional South Australia. These sessions were attended by over 100 community sector workers from a variety of organisations. To increase the accessibility of the education sessions, video resources have been developed on smoke free workplaces, healthy catering and alcohol in the workplace. These are available on the SACOSS website.

Resources and support

Written and video case studies have been developed to showcase some of the changes workplaces have made and these are available on the SACOSS website. The Healthy Workers Monthly Update has been an effective way to keep subscribers up to date with opportunities, resources and case study examples of the changes that local organisations are making.

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



Let's Get Physical!

SACOSS, ACS SA & NT and ASU have hosted Workplace Physical Activity Challenges to encourage and motivate workplaces into incorporating physical activity into daily operation. 16 workplaces have been involved in the two challenges with winning entries including:

- > **Red Cross** coordinating a table tennis competition used to launch its social and wellbeing committee
- > **Neami** starting regular staff walks held after its weekly staff meeting
- > **Central Domestic Violence Service** developing a cook book based on fruit and vegetables starting with different letters of the alphabet
- > **Sammy D Foundation** implementing a staff kitty for a shared healthy lunch each Friday



SACOSS Pedal Power

- > SACOSS purchased a commuter bike which is used to ride into the CBD for meetings and is also available for staff to ride on their breaks
- > Smoothie Bike at SACOSS End of Year Breakfast and Hardship & Affordability Conference for participants to blend smoothies by pedalling
- > SACOSS staff participated in Ride to Work Day in October 2013
- > SACOSS entered a team in the Bupa Community Challenge Ride as part of the Tour Down Under in January 2014. The team went for training rides in the lead up and competed in a variety of ride lengths ranging from 33km up to 125km
- > In February 2014, as part of Adelaide City Council's Tour de Work, SACOSS and Red Cross organised a Love to Ride parade to Café Amore for a discounted coffee and a free apple from the Produce Market for any community sector worker who rode their bike to the café



Federal Budget Funding Cuts

The Healthy Workers Healthy Futures project was initially funded for a three year term.

In May 2014 the federal government withdrew the funding from the National Partnership Agreement on Preventive Health, which resulted in the project being cut halfway through.

This was enormously disappointing and undermines the early investment and progress this program was making.

SACOSS has long been an advocate for preventive and community health investment and since the federal budget cut has continued to advocate through letters to ministers, a trip to meet with senators in Canberra, supporting the Keep SA Healthy initiative, as well as participating in and promoting the Keep SA Healthy Rally in May 2014.

The SACOSS Healthy Workers Adviser position has reduced to two days per week, to increase the length of the project and allow time for the collection of data to support the project evaluation.

SACOSS is now attempting to ensure the Healthy Workers project lives on after the funding is completely expanded. We continue to search for alternative funding sources.

The background is a solid light beige color. Overlaid on this are several large, overlapping circles and arcs in shades of beige and light tan, creating a stylized, abstract graphic. On the left side, there is a vertical light blue rectangular bar. Inside this bar, the word "Events" is written in a dark red, serif font, oriented vertically. A thin, dotted blue line runs horizontally across the bar, positioned just below the word "Events".

Events

2013-14

Events 2013-14

SACOSS continued to expand and diversify its Event Coordinator role in 2013-14, with fee-for-service events offered to SACOSS member organisations, as well as other organisations within the wider Australian community services sector. The generation of this additional source of revenue contributes to the ongoing viability of the Event Coordinator position into the future.

Two major SACOSS branded conferences were held this year, as well as a series of events run in conjunction with our *Taxing Times: Sustaining Vital Services* election campaign.

The Healthy Workers Healthy Futures events program has expanded with it continuing to offer popular and highly informative forums and training sessions coordinated through this role. SACOSS has continued to support and engage the sector through the organisation of events, and also by supporting and promoting events run by other sector organisations on relevant topics.

SACOSS advertises and promotes events through the many communication avenues available within the organisation, such as the fortnightly SACOSS eBulletin, in Member Advisories, in the events section of the new SACOSS website launched in November 2013, as well as growing social media promotion following the development of a SACOSS Facebook page.



Events 2013-14 (continued)

2013-14 SACOSS Branded Events:

SACOSS Hardship and Affordability Conference
10 July 2013

SACOSS Pre-Election Forum
3 September 2013

\$2 Talk: Health in All Policies
20 September 2013

Healthy Workers Healthy
Futures Healthy Catering Forum
8 November 2013

SACOSS 66th AGM
25 November 2013

SACOSS End of Year Breakfast
6 December 2013

SACOSS 2014 Conference – Taxing Times:
Sustaining Vital Services
11 February 2014

SACOSS Hardship and Affordability
Conference: Stakeholder Conversations
12 May 2014

Post Budget Breakfast with the Treasurer
26 June 2014



SACOSS
**HARDSHIP &
AFFORDABILITY
CONFERENCE**
**PERSPECTIVES ON
ENERGY & WATER**

**SACOSS 2014
CONFERENCE
TAXING
TIMES
SUSTAINING
VITAL SERVICES**

Events Coordinator External Contracted Services Events:

AYAC 2013 Conference
5, 6 & 7 August 2013
(Contract commenced January 2013)

SANDAS Conference 2014
Contract commenced November 2013
(event days in next financial year)

YACSA NetFest 2014
February 2014



Publications

Submissions
Reports
Information Papers
Magazine

Visit the SACOSS website to read and
download our publications www.sacoss.org.au

2013-14

Publications

Submissions

May 2014

- > Submission to the Senate Economics Committee inquiry into the Bill to repeal the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission
- > Submission on Review of Renewable Target
- > Submission on AEMC Bidding in Good Faith Rule Change
- > Submission on AEMC Metering Competition Rule Change

April 2014

- > Submission to Adelaide City Council's review of the City Wide Dry Area which focuses mainly on the process of the review

March 2014

- > Submission on New and Replacement Meters
- > Submission to AEMC Ramp Rate Rule Change

February 2014

- > Submission on SA Government Social Impact Investment Discussion Paper
- > Submission on DMITRE Energy White Paper
- > Submission on Building A Stronger Society
- > Submission on AER ElectraNet Heywood Interconnector Upgrade Contingent Project Application
- > Submission on AEMC Review of Electricity Customer Switching Options Paper
- > Submission on AER-SAPN Framework and Approach
- > Submission on AEMC Retail Competition Review

January 2014

- > Submission on SAPN SSF to ESCOSA

December 2013

- > Submission on AER Energy Made Easy Results Page Web Redevelopment – Phase II
- > Submission on AEMC Distribution Pricing Principles
- > Submission on AEMC Review of Electricity Customer Switching
- > Submission on ESCOSA NERL Review Issues Paper

Reports

May 2014

- > State of the South Australian Energy Market 2013
- > Energy Payment Research Report

April 2014

- > Keeping The Power On: SACOSS Response to Electricity Disconnections Update

March 2014

- > Taxes and the South Australian Election

February 2014

- > Energy Tariffs and Vulnerable Consumers

January 2014

- > Energy Tariffs and Vulnerable Consumers
- > Cost of Living Update No. 17

December 2013

- > High SA Electricity Prices: A Market Power Play?

November 2013

- > Social Impact Bonds: New Financing for the NFP Sector?
- > Relative Energy Poverty In Australia
- > Keeping The Power On: SACOSS Response to Energy Disconnections in SA

October 2013

- > Implementing Energy Efficiency in the Home
- > Cost of Living Update No. 16

September 2013

- > Solar Feed-in Scheme Briefing Paper

Information Papers

December 2013

- > SACOSS Fact Sheet – Energy Efficient Housing

October 2013

- > SACOSS Fact Sheet – Door Knocking

July 2013

- > SACOSS Fact Sheet – Utility Prices
- > SACOSS Fact Sheet – Housing Stress Across Australia

SACOSS Magazine

SACOSS' quarterly 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 2013 Big Society edition

Contributors:

[Christopher Stone](#) – Centre for Policy Development, [Julia Slay](#) – New Economics Foundation UK, [Nick Ellison](#) – University of Leeds, [Graham Brown](#) – Junction Australia, [Damien Chalmers](#) – Barbara Garrett Scholarship recipient



Summer 2014 State Election edition

Contributors:

[Ian McAuley](#) – fellow, Centre for Policy Development, [Evelyn O'Loughlin](#) – Volunteering SA & NT, [Kathryn Cunningham](#) – Alzheimer's SA



Spring 2013 Anti-Poverty Week edition

Contributors:

[Jill Lang](#) – Anti-Poverty Week, [Dr Cassandra Goldie](#) – ACOSS, [Kate Pickett](#) – University of York, [Richard Wilkinson](#) – University of Nottingham, [Tim Graham](#) – JusticeNet SA



Autumn 2014 Austerity, Cars & Lucky Country edition

Contributors:

[John Pilger](#) – journalist and filmmaker, [Greg Goudie](#) – DOME, [Fran Baum & Anna Ziersch](#) – Southgate Institute, [Malcolm Robinson](#) – Bower Place Complex Needs Clinic, [Kate Leaney and Manal Younous](#) – Welcome to Australia

Media

SACOSS media

SACOSS radio

Social media

Website

External media

Print & Online

Radio & TV

2013-14

SACOSS Media



SACOSS radio show - Small Change

In August 2013 SACOSS launched a new weekly radio program on Radio Adelaide. **Small Change** has provided us with a widely accessible platform to discuss the issues, ideas and questions around social justice and community development in more detail, and with more insight than is often available to our sector and wider community. Every week we share voices that could otherwise remain unheard, and promote the inspiring work of our members.

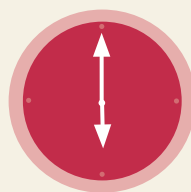
In 12 months on air we've featured academics, policy makers, politicians, community workers, and local communities. We've also heard from passionate advocates on disability, young people, economic sustainability, housing affordability, homelessness and hardship.

We're extremely grateful to the people who have been willing to share their personal experiences facing hardship; helping us put the human face to the issues that the community and social services sector works tirelessly on.

Small Change is broadcast on Radio Adelaide at 6pm Tuesdays.

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

12 months of Small Change



1 hour
per week on air



2nd most visited
program page on the
Radio Adelaide website



3000
unique visitors to Small
Change webpage

150
podcasts
8000
plays/downloads

SACOSS Radio Expands in 2014



In May 2014 SACOSS, Radio Adelaide, and Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement collaborated to produce *Conversations About Recognition* – a program that takes a step back from

discussions about constitutional change to ask what kind of recognition might be 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 recognitions in their own lives; what do each of us take for granted; what makes many of us feel acknowledged, accepted and valued? What does it mean to you?

Conversations About Recognition went to air for the first time on 7 August 2014.

It's supported by the Australian Government through the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and the Community Broadcasting Foundation.

radio.adelaide.edu.au/program/conversations-about-recognition/

SACOSS Website

SACOSS launched its new website at the 2013 AGM. Since November last year traffic on the website has included 9000 sessions and 27,000 page views.

Of all visitors to the SACOSS website over 5000 have been new visitors and 3500 returning visitors.

In the lead up to the state election our campaign page attracted over 1000 visitors – our second most visited page after the SACOSS website home page.

The SACOSS website contains information, media, resources and publications.

sacoss.org.au



Social Media

SACOSS' social media presence has increased with over 1500 followers on Twitter. SACOSS started using Facebook as a campaign tool during our state election campaign, and the use of some paid and targeted campaign advertising quickly increased our following.

Between 16 February - 15 March 2014 targeted ads helped our campaign reach 58,000 people on Facebook. We continue to use Facebook as a way to engage with the general public, promote the work of our members and share information and news to a new audience in and out of the community and social services sector.

facebook.com/sacoss
twitter.com/sacoss



External Media

SACOSS continued to have a strong presence in the South Australian media landscape, establishing itself as a leading commentator on cost of living issues. Energy & water has been another area in which considerable media coverage has occurred. Our significant state election campaign Without Taxes, Vital Services Disappear, and major party Report Card received strong coverage across radio, television and print.



Print & Online

Tax policies must not hit vital services

ROSS WOMERSLEY
SACOSS will rely on taxes to pay for the services that households need. However, the Labor Party is also proposing long-term tax cuts, which will mean that the cost of those services will rise. The Labor Party has promised a number of big tax cuts in the coming year, but the cost of those services will rise.

Saving on power to cost \$500

MILES KEMP
A GOVERNMENT proposal to introduce "smart" electricity meters across the state will cost householders up to \$500 each.

"SACOSS accepts that advanced metering offers a range of benefits, but is disappointed that the discussion paper does not provide any quantitative information in this regard," he said.

USAGE LOGGED
A smart meter allows your house and electricity company to "talk" to each other every half hour about how much electricity you are using and what you should be charged.

More households being shocked by power bills

DAVID NANKERVIS

MORE householders are falling into energy bill debt, new figures show.

Almost 60,000 residential customers owed money for gas and electricity bills in the December quarter last year – a 10 per cent increase on the previous quarter.

Not all states are monitored by the national regulator and comparative information is not included in the report.

The only major area where figures did not worsen was disconnection rates, the regulator reported. It said "there was no significant change in the number of households disconnected from gas or electricity."



IT WAS TOUGH BEFORE THE FEDERAL BUDGET, BUT NOW IT'S GOING TO GET MUCH TOUGHER FOR MANY MORE SOUTH AUSTRALIANS. AMONG THE HARDEST HIT ARE THE RESIDENTS OF BOMBAY ST, CHILKINDRA RD AND CANTLEY RD IN THE HORTON, AS SALLY BROOKS AND JACKSON GOTHE SHARP REPORT.



Radio & TV

Radio: SAA, Adelaide, 05:30 News, Newsreader, 11 Feb 2014

The SA Council of Social Services is launching its SA election wish list...

The SA Council of Social Services is launching its SA election wish list, topped with easing cost of living pressures and tax reforms.

Radio: MIX FM 102.3, Adelaide, 18:00 News, Newsreader, 03 Feb 2014 6:00 PM

SACOSS says new cost of living data shows a clear need for increases in State ...

SACOSS says new cost of living data shows a clear need for increases in State Government concessions for low income earners. Ross Womersley, SACOSS, says their latest cost of living update shows that key Government concessions have failed to keep pace with rapidly rising prices over the past five years.

Radio: ABC North and West SA, Port Pirie, Late Afternoons, Annette Marner 12 Mar 2014 4:40 PM

Regular segment: Federal politics with Simon Cullen, ABC political reporter...

Marner says people representing SACOSS claim the rich are getting richer, while the tax burden falls on the workers.

TV: Channel 10, Adelaide, TEN Eyewitness News, Rebecca Morse, 18 Jun 2014 5:01 PM

South Australians are warned to brace for a brutal blow when SA Treasurer Tom Koutsantonis delivers his first budget.

Public Service Association spokesperson Jan McMahon says the PSA will not accept federal budget cutbacks being used as a scapegoat for state budget cuts, while SACOSS spokesperson Ross Womersley says budget cuts will have major community implications.

ABC News 24, Sydney, ABC News Breakfast, Michael Rowland, Virginia Trioli, and Paul Kennedy 16 Jun 2014

The SA State Government is moving to protect pensioners from Federal budget cuts, saying they will keep transport and utility concessions when the State Budget is announced later in the week. The South Australian Council of Social Service says it's incredibly important they make this move.

Board and Policy Council

Board Members

Helen Connolly – Chair

Monique Palmer – Treasurer

Nicole Chaplin

Michael Dawson

Leigh Garrett

Patsy Kellett

Peter Sandeman

Paul Scully

Ross Womersley

Policy Council

Category Description	Person Elected	Organisation
Chair	Helen Connolly	
Peak Org Reps	Andris Banders Anne Bainbridge Geoff Harris Gill McFadyen	SANDAS YACSA MHCSA CCSA
Reps of NGOs	Professor Ed Carson Libby Craft Susan Errington Jane Fisher Lee-Anne Gassner Cate Keane Louise Kelly Mariann McNamara Helen Lockwood Jane Longbottom Kate Simpson Holley Skene Mark Waters	SPRG UniSA UCW Port Adelaide Legal Services Comm. COTA – SV Baptist Care St Johns Youth Services OARS/Cty Transitions BINSAs LCC LWB Uniting Communities ACSA 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 Angela de Conno Paul Laris Sageran Naidoo	

External Committees

Representatives and nominees of SACOSS sat on the following boards and committees in 2013-14. SACOSS thanks them all for offering their time and commitment.

ACOSS Board of Governors

Helen Connolly

In 2013-14 the ACOSS Board of Governors welcomed new president Frances Lynch and we thank incumbent Simon Schrapel for all his commitment and work. The Board provided significant input into the Federal Commission of Audit agenda, federal election, and was a strong lobbying force around the federal budget. One key focus of the Board has been on governance reform and I was pleased to be able to sit on the constitutional reform sub-committee

Courts Administration Authority Community Relations Committee

Susan Errington

Dame Roma Mitchell Trust Fund for Children and Young People

Colleen Fitzpatrick

Energy Consumers' Council

Rosalyn Williams

As SACOSS rep on the Energy Consumers Council (ECC) I have advocated on behalf of vulnerable South Australians for access to affordable energy. SACOSS has supported my role through the provision of monthly summaries of SACOSS submissions and discussion papers to energy issues. Main issues taken up by ECC in 2014 have included:

- > Continuation of the Memorandum of Understanding between The Minister for Energy, The Minister for Communities and Social Inclusion, retailers and SACOSS to promote dialogue regarding best practice to ensure customers who are experiencing financial stress can manage their energy payments and remain connected to the energy supply

- > Review of the Residential Energy Efficiency Scheme
- > Impact of increasing gas prices and the underlying factors
- > Future structure of the energy market including alternatives to reliance on the grid

This was the final year of the ECC, having been axed in the recent reform of Boards and Committees. The South Australian government considered that ECC is a duplication of the planned national representation body Energy Consumers Australia, that will be established by The Council of Australian Governments Energy Council. I have greatly appreciated the opportunity to represent SACOSS on this Council.

Essential Services Commission of SA (ESCOSA) Consumer Advisory Committee

**Mark Henley
Ross Womersley**

Increasing responsibility for electricity and gas network regulation has been vested in the national Australian Energy Regulator, and as such has reduced the role played by ESCOSA; its regulatory focus increasingly turned to water and sewerage regulation.

Key activities for 2013-14 for the Committee included commencing an Inquiry into Drinking Water and Sewerage Prices, developing retail codes, and playing a greater role in regulating water prices in SA. These have not been easy processes and SACOSS appreciates the willingness of ESCOSA commissioners and staff to actively seek the best interest of consumers.

We would like to pay tribute to CEO, Paul Kerin who resigned during the year, and to record our appreciation for the very constructive relationship that we had with him. We also welcome new CEO, Adam Wilson, and look forward to maintaining an active and constructive working relationship with him and the Commission.

Legal Services Commission Board

Michael Dawson

This 2013-14 year has been a challenging one for the Commission with the publication of the Attorney-General's review of the Commission which is quite confronting and considers possible significant changes to legal aid in SA; a new National Partnership Agreement with the Commonwealth; discussions nationally and at state level about funding reductions to Aboriginal and community legal services; and a productivity Commission report and recommendations about Australian legal services more generally. We are certainly having 'interesting' times for legal and other justice issues in many areas of human rights in our nation.

There may be challenges ahead for the Commission in maintaining maximum accessibility to legal aid as the Courts Administration Authority closes such local Magistrates Courts as Holden Hill, Port Adelaide and Mt Barker. Internally the commission has a new Chairperson, Michael Abbott AO QC; moved into its more modern, accessible and efficient offices at 30 Flinders St; is improving its IT systems to improve capacity for clients and lawyers; and has established panels for practitioners who wish to undertake legal aid work. These are all initiatives to modernise and improve service quality.

Planning and Reform Reference Group

Ross Womersley

This group was established to advise the Expert Panel on Planning and Reform in SA. SACOSS was one of a small number of community groups participating. We advocated strongly for planning to have a broader interest beyond roads, housing, and infrastructure, and to incorporate concepts of planning as the means to build socially and environmentally sustainable communities built for now, tomorrow and 100 years' time. The expert group's final report is in the process of completed to be delivered to government.

SA Dental Service Consumer Advisory Panel

Libby Craft

SA Water Residential Customer Council

Ross Womersley

This customer council emerged when SA Water decided to divide customer groups into residential and business categories. The Council plays an important role in reacting to critical issues relevant to residential customers. A key focus has been representing the needs of vulnerable customers and pursuing enhancements to SA Water's hardship programs. This has been particularly important as SA Water prepares for a more competitive water market into the future.

UniSA Communication & Media Advisory Panel

Marnie Round

The UniSA Communication & Media Advisory Panel has been made up of PR, communications, media and journalism industry experts, to guide the development and delivery of the University of South Australia's new Bachelor of Communication and Media program starting in 2015. Over the last year the panel has worked to develop course structure and content and will oversee its implementation from its commencement in 2015.

UniSA School of Psychology and Social Work Advisory Committee

Ross Womersley

This committee provides advice and feedback from the sector relevant to training and research undertaken through the Schools of Psychology and Social Work at the University of South Australia. The committee has played an important role in guiding the development of new academic degrees and is a vehicle for ensuring the sector's needs and interests are recognised in professional training.

SA National Framework for Child Protection Partnership Group

Simon Schrapel

With representation from across Commonwealth and state based government agencies and authorities and the NGO sector the Group has been a valuable mechanism for sharing and planning major reforms and developments such as FSA's solution based casework, the progress of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and the roll out of National Out of Home Care Standards. One of the Group's key achievements in the last year was the running of the successful Family Engagement Forum, co-hosted by CAFWA(SA) and Families SA, which brought together policy makers, advocates and practitioners in a series of workshops. The recommendations from this initiative are being used to inform the Group's future work plan.

Members

Lifetime Members:

Phillip Beddall
Grethe Brown
Harvey Brown
Brian Butler
Ed Carson
Kym Davey
Michael Dawson
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

Organisational Members:

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 Red Cross (SA Division)
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.
Carers SA Inc.
CBB the not4profit people
Centacare Catholic Family Services
Centacare Catholic Family Services CDDP
Central Domestic Violence Service
Chinese Welfare Services of SA Inc
Churches of Christ CareWorks
Citizen Advocacy South Australia
City of Onkaparinga
Clubhouse SA Inc

2013-14

Combined Charities Incorporated

Community Centres SA

Community Living Project Inc

COTA SA

Diompillor Kissia SA Inc

DOME Association Inc

Drug Arm Australasia

Goodwood Community Services

Grandparents for Grandchildren SA Inc.

Health Consumers Alliance of SA Inc

Hepatitis SA Incorporated

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 Inc

Mental Health Coalition of SA Inc

Mental Illness Fellowship of
South Australia Inc

Migrant Resource Centre of SA

Milang & District Community Association Inc

Mission Australia - SA Region

Multicultural Aged Care Inc

Multicultural Communities Council of SA Inc

Neami

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

Parkinson's South Australia Inc

Playford Community Fund Inc

Positive Life SA

Quality Innovation Performance

Reconciliation South Australia Inc

Relationships Australia (SA) Inc

SA Country Carers

SA Unions

Safer Communities Australia Inc

The Salvation Army

SHine SA Inc

The Smith Family

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

Members (continued)

Organisational Members (continued)

St Vincent de Paul Society (SA) Inc

Stable Help Inc

Statewide Superannuation

SYC

The Broughton Art Society Inc.

The Junction Community Centre Inc

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

Financial Summary

SACOSS has again enjoyed healthy income growth this year. This was almost entirely expensed, leaving us finishing the year with a small surplus. Additional income was primarily generated through new grants, as well as some small once off grants and contributions made by a number of our members to our successful election campaign.

SACOSS also held two successful conferences which had good support from sponsors. In undertaking the work for which grants were received, costs relating to consultancy and employment increased. These costs particularly related to our growing body of work concerned with energy and water policy and regulation.

During the year we were funded to take up a new project convening and co-ordinating the National Consumer Energy Roundtable and as a result saw big increases in expenses relating to Travel and Accommodation arising from payments to support the participation of delegates from around the nation at roundtable meetings.

The Board continues to closely monitor the SACOSS financial management structures and in endorsing the budget for the coming year has set a target of another small surplus. As always SACOSS remains highly resourceful and efficient and we anticipate a good year ahead.

Board Statement

Income and Expenditure Statement

Assets and Liabilities Statement

Notes to and Forming Part
of the Financial Statement

Independent Auditor's Report

2013-14

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

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:

1. the financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 1 to 4, present fairly the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2014 and its performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report; and,
2. 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



.....
Monique Palmer, Treasurer

Dated 3 November, 2014.

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

Income & Expenditure Statement For the year ended 30 June 2014

	Notes	2014 \$	2013 \$
Income			
Grants		966,006	629,193
Member subscriptions		63,914	61,505
Donations		2,183	467
MB house fees		9,864	9,136
Sales and advertising		360	151
Interest		18,835	24,398
Research and development		29,019	118,394
Conference and sponsorship		80,920	15,000
Other Income		30,970	8,087
Total Income		1,202,070	866,331
Expenses			
Conference costs		6,442	7,273
Consulting fees		140,317	84,530
Employment		722,044	640,369
Office accommodation		69,394	70,397
Supplies		31,083	15,991
Services		122,461	48,494
Reference materials		9,986	13,903
Travel and accommodation		71,858	15,433
Equipment		15,870	20,788
Other expenses		6,451	1,726
Total Expenses		1,195,904	918,906
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)		6,166	(52,575)
Transfer from Reserves		-	-
Marjorie Black House renovations and expenses		-	-
Net Surplus (Deficit)		6,166	(52,575)
Accumulated Funds at the beginning of the year		200,002	252,577
Accumulated Funds at the end of the year		206,167	200,002

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the Auditor's Report

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

Assets & Liabilities Statement As at 30 June 2014

	Notes	2014 \$	2013 \$
Current Assets			
Cash On Hand		140	140
Cash at Bank		842,486	856,957
Receivables		34,910	85,977
Prepayments		8,877	7,821
		<u>886,412</u>	<u>950,895</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	2	854,676	861,283
		<u>854,676</u>	<u>861,283</u>
Total Assets		<u>1,741,089</u>	<u>1,812,178</u>
Current Liabilities			
Creditors and Borrowings			
Creditors and Accruals		18,987	54,064
Grants and Funds Received in Advance		196,448	227,494
Membership Fees in Advance		-	1,379
Salary Accruals		-	19,981
Provisions			
Provision for Conference		-	49,235
Provision for Building Repairs	2	106,544	81,656
Provision for Annual Leave		60,630	50,203
Provision for Long Service Leave		15,091	12,927
Provision for PAYG		16,488	13,612
Provision for Staff Redundancies		47,312	33,115
		<u>461,498</u>	<u>543,666</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provision for Long Service Leave		14,712	9,800
		<u>14,712</u>	<u>9,800</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>476,210</u>	<u>553,466</u>
Net Assets		<u>1,264,878</u>	<u>1,258,713</u>
Accumulated Funds and Reserves			
Accumulated Funds		206,167	200,002
Reserves	3	1,058,712	1,058,712
Accumulated Funds and Reserves		<u>1,264,878</u>	<u>1,258,713</u>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the Auditor's Report

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2014

Note 1 : Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act. The Board has determined that the organisation is not a reporting entity.

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 following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this report.

Income Tax

The organisation is exempt from income tax as a non-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.

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the Auditor's Report

South Australian Council of Social Service Inc.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2014

	2014 \$	2013 \$
2. Property, Plant & Equipment		
Marjorie Black House	800,000	800,000
Office Furniture, Equipment & Software - at cost	166,484	166,484
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(111,808)	(105,201)
	<u>854,676</u>	<u>861,283</u>

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	81,656	70,000
Provisions	40,000	38,000
Funds expended	(15,113)	(26,344)
Balance at end of year	<u>106,543</u>	<u>81,656</u>

3. Reserves

Balance at beginning of year	1,058,712	1,028,712
Bequest - Marjorie Black House	-	-
Funds expended - Marjorie Black House	-	-
Asset revaluation reserve	-	30,000
Balance at end of year	<u>1,058,712</u>	<u>1,058,712</u>

4. 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.

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the Auditor's Report

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICE INC**

PARTNERS:
David Ellis
James McKenzie
Ross Musolino
Alexander Reade

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 which comprises the Statement by Board, Income and Expenditure Statement, Asset and Liabilities Statement, and accompanying notes.

Board's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The board of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act SA (as amended) and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The board's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the board's financial reporting responsibilities under the Associations Incorporation Act SA (as amended). We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

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

Basis of Accounting

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 requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act SA. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of South Council of Social Service Inc presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the entity as at 30 June 2014 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.



SOTHERTONS
Adelaide Partnership

42 Hurtle Square, Adelaide



ALEX READE

Dated 7 November, 2014

SACOSS acknowledges funding and sponsorship support from



Government of South Australia

Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion



Government of South Australia

Department for Manufacturing,
Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy

(Known as Department of State Development as of 1 July 2014)



**Government
of South Australia**

SA Health





South Australian Council of Social Service

Marjorie Black House
47 King William Road
Unley, SA 5061 Australia

t (08) 8305 4222

f (08) 8272 9500

e sacoss@sacoss.org.au



facebook.com/SACOSS



[@SACOSS](https://twitter.com/SACOSS)

www.sacoss.org.au



SACOSS

*South Australian Council
of Social Service*