

MURRI WATCH

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation



25th ANNUAL REPORT - 2016

ABN: 75 628 946 046

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ABOUT MURRI WATCH

Murri Watch is a not-for-profit incorporated organisation originally registered under the Aboriginal Councils and Associations Act 1976. This Act was superseded by the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 ('the CATSI Act').

Murri Watch was established in 1991 just prior to the handing down of the Recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Murri Watch has grown from humble beginnings located in an old house in Woolloongabba to the strong thriving association it is today. Our success has been built on a strong foundation – our Elders and members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

OUR MISSION

Our Culture - Our Land - Our Healing - Our Future

OUR VISION

To be the agency of first choice for communities and key stakeholders to deliver culturally proficient community sensitive and highly professional services to empower people

We are

- An Indigenous organisation whose Board and staff have walked in the shoes of their people and therefore have the credibility and cultural sensitivity to engage with the Indigenous client group in a meaningful manner in a number of areas.
- A nimble flexible organisation with low overheads capable of making quick decisions to embrace strategic opportunities.
- Strongly linked to a range of Indigenous organizations and many Traditional Owners who could be enthused to work with Murri Watch to progress worthwhile initiatives.
- The Board, CEO and Staff are highly committed and capable and can attract high quality Indigenous staff as required for worthwhile programs that have longevity.

OUR VALUES

- We have the traditional Indigenous values of Care, Share, and Respect which form the foundation of our organisation.
- We **CARE** deeply for our clients and remain wholly committed to improving their physical, cultural, social, spiritual and economic wellbeing.
- We **SHARE** a detailed knowledge and understanding of the historical through to contemporary problems and issues and remain wholly committed to providing culturally proficient, community sensitive and highly productive services and support options.
- We **RESPECT** the personal circumstances and cultural backgrounds of our clients and are wholly committed to restoring their cultural integrity, dignity and pride.

OUR PRIORITIES

- To maintain our record of zero deaths in custody through our Diversionary Centre Services and Watch House Cell Visitor Services and our high standards of service provision to people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through our Bowman Johnson Supported Accommodation Program and Townsville Community Patrol Program.
- To develop youth programs, including education programs for young school children to “break the cycle”.
- To address the problems of the elderly many of who have nowhere to go. To support domestic violence programs starting with a national day for Indigenous men to say “sorry” to Indigenous women.
- To provide employment and training services.
- To develop rehabilitation and cognitive change programs to do more to change client’s life styles.
- To provide Probation and Parole services.
- To support agencies and develop programs in the areas of suicide and self-harm.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

Consistent with our Mission, Vision and Values the following principles to underpin, guide and focus our approach to providing culturally proficient, community sensitive and highly productive service and support options for our clients:

PRIDE - We maintain a strong sense of integrity, dignity and pride knowing that our organisation is owned by the community for the community.

PASSION - We are determined to break the cycle of psychological trauma, chronic disadvantage and dysfunction by strengthening pride in the unique richness of our culture among our clients.

CULTURAL INTEGRITY - We maintain absolute respect and compliance with the ancient lores, customs, protocols and traditions of Indigenous people in a contemporary context.

FUNDING BODIES

We acknowledge that the ongoing support from our funding bodies and collaborative partners, coupled with the commitment from our members and staff are the core elements of our success and development.

Over the previous year, Murri Watch's programs were funded by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, Department of Housing and Public Works, Aboriginal Hostels Limited, Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and Community Solutions.

OUR PROGRAMS

Murri Watch is determined to stop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander deaths and self-harm in custody, and to deliver high quality services and support options for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness.

Murri Watch has grown from one initial program to a current position where we deliver a range of programs across the State.

These programs are:

- Brisbane Diversionary Centre;
- Brisbane Cell Visitors Service;
- The Bowman Johnson Hostel Supported Accommodation Program;
- Caboolture Cell Visitors Service;
- Mackay Cell Visitors and Community Patrol Services;
- Townsville Cell Visitors and Community Patrol Services; and
- Palm Island Cell Visitors Service.

DIVERSION FROM CUSTODY SERVICE

The Diversionary Program is aimed at reducing the potential risk/s to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults being held in police watchhouse custody for public intoxication related offences.

The Diversionary Centre is a 14 bed facility located at 15 Hubert Street Woolloongabba.

The Centre provides a short term sobering up support service in a safe and monitored environment for adult clients who are recovering from intoxication together with related support and referral services (health, legal, accommodation).

CELL VISITOR SERVICES

Our Cell Visitors program aims to stop deaths in custody and reduce the risk of self-harming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are detained in watchhouses.

The program operates in Brisbane, Richlands, Ipswich, Beenleigh, Cleveland, Strathpine, Redcliffe, Caboolture, Mackay, Townsville and Palm Island.

Murri Watch Cell Visitors respond to referrals and calls from families, the community, watchhouses, police cells and other organisations regarding concerns about people in watchhouse custody.

Our Cell Visitors offer company, support and assistance; help to prevent suicide and self-injury of persons in custody; liaise with families and friends; and provide information and referral/s to support services to persons in custody.

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

Bowman Johnson Hostel is a 20 bed hostel which provides short term accommodation combined with case management services for homeless persons or persons at risk of being homeless.

The Hostel is situated at 5 Oxford Street South Brisbane, in close proximity to the city, bus stops, the West End shopping precinct and Southbank.

Bowman Johnson Hostel offers fully supported short-term accommodation at reasonable rates (which are inclusive of meals, use of facilities and case management services).

COMMUNITY PATROL SERVICES

The Community Patrol Program provides personal support and transport for homeless and intoxicated people in public spaces, and delivers an effective “outreach” service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Townsville and Mackay.

Clients who have been ‘sleeping rough’ have their immediate transport needs met, and are assisted to gain access to accommodation and support services.

STRATEGIC RISKS

- Resources – ensuring there are sufficient funds for our organisation to meet current and future service deliver needs.
- Governance – ensuring our governance structures are effective and support integrity and high ethical standards, transparent decision-making and accountability.
- Community response – working with other Indigenous and other community organisations to ensure the best outcomes for our clients.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

- Zero deaths in custody in any watch house where Murri Watch provides services.
- Providing responsive and effective culturally appropriate service in those areas of need to our community.
- Strong relationships with key government, private and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.
- Stakeholder and client satisfaction.

MURRI WATCH HONOUR ROLL



On behalf of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community, Our Members, the Board of Directors, Staff and Clients, Murri Watch honours our Elders and previous members of the Board of Directors, who are now deceased, and who laid the foundations for our organisation. They provided leadership, love and guidance. We recognise their invaluable contributions and pay tribute to them.

They are (in alphabetical order):

(photos are not included out of cultural respect for their families)

Aunty Jane ARNOLD

Roy HOPKINS

Uncle Herb BLIGH

Diane MOORE

Norm BROWN Snr

Aunty Monica O'CALLAGHAN

Aunty Jessie BUDBY

Mervyn RILEY

Harold HOPKINS

Ruby (Marion) STORER

Robbie WILLIAMS



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you, on behalf of the Board of Directors, Members, Staff and Clients to the 25th Annual General Meeting of Murri Watch Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

First, I wish to acknowledge the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul peoples as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today.

I also pay my respects and gratitude to our Elders, past and present, for their continued struggles for country, culture, dignity, self-management and social and economic equality for our people.

The history of Murri Watch embraces twenty-five years of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members uniting in spirit, culture and courage to protect our people from deaths in custody.

Initially a small group came together meeting in a private home in the late 1980s and Murri Watch was established. The efforts of these Murri Watch founding members provided the confirmation and impetus for action that coincided with the 1991 Royal Commission into Deaths in Custody recommendations.

Aunty Jane Arnold (dec'd), Uncle Harold Hopkins (dec'd) and Aunty Jessie Budby (dec'd) and other were founding pioneers who had a dream to serve and protect our people who were held in the custody in the Brisbane City watchhouse. Murri Watch was launched on the principle that *"every client taken into police custody live through that experience"* (Sam Watson 2014).

It is significant to note that there has not been a death in custody in any watchhouse serviced by Murri Watch Cell Visitors since Murri Watch services began. This is a reflection of the founding members' foresight and the cultural integrity and professional service standards of staff and all members of Murri Watch inclusive of Murri Watch Board Members and WE STAND PROUDLY ON THAT RECORD.

Over the years, Murri Watch has worked tirelessly to build strong partnerships with successive governments at State, Commonwealth and Local levels, and to create effective working relationships with our collaborative partners at the community level.

We will continue to do this until Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are no longer 15 times more likely to be imprisoned than non-Indigenous Australians; and around half of all young Australians in juvenile detention are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not the most likely group of people to be homeless or at risk of homelessness in Queensland.

Pivotal to this agenda is that we build on and maintain those relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and government agencies, and we thank our funding bodies for facilitating this process.

I wish to acknowledge our regional contact officers from across the State from the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services (Brisbane, Mackay, Townsville and Palm Island), the Department of Housing and Public Works (Brisbane), and Community Solutions (Caboolture). Our contact officers have provided valuable support and guidance over the year.

Indeed, I thank the many people who have been part of the journey over the past 25 years. I am proud of what we have accomplished together to date. However, we are aware of the continuing over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men, women and young people in contact with the justice system, and the alarming fact that the incarceration rate of our people has doubled since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

My thanks go to my colleagues on the Board for their commitment and ongoing support over the past twelve months. Although our Board members have private and family responsibilities, they volunteer their time and services in the best interests of this organisation, and I thank them wholeheartedly for that.

It is most appropriate that I acknowledge our members and clients from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in our service areas for their ongoing support to Murri Watch. Our pride in our community is displayed in our staff shirt logo of “Owned by the Community – for the Community”.

Additionally, Murri Watch recognises the contribution of our staff. Program staff have consistently achieved remarkable outcomes in service delivery in all programs. Their diligence and commitment to high standards of service delivery ensure that we achieve the aims and goals of this organisation and enhance our reputation in the community.

I am pleased to announce that the Board of Directors has introduced for our 25th Anniversary, an award for exceptional service delivery. All of our services would be worthy candidates for the award, however the Palm Island Cell Visitor Service is this year’s recipient.

The service is delivered by our Cell Visitor Tessa Bulsey on Palm Island. Tessa not only provides support services to clients in the Palm Island watchhouse, she offers assistance to watchhouse staff, prepares and provides meals to every client in the watchhouse, relays messages to families of clients, provides referrals to other service providers, and offers court support to young people and their families for court appearances.

Over the past two years, the Palm Island Cell Visitor Service has been recognised by the Palm Island community as “the most responsive service” on the island. It is fitting that Murri Watch acknowledge this accolade, and on behalf of the Board and members, I congratulate Tessa for her outstanding achievements.

Our CEO Ken Georgetown and his head office team have delivered sound management and administration of the organisation, providing the day to day management of our staff and services and ensuring compliance with our contractual obligations. They are also responsible for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of the internal structures we have in place that allow us to make ongoing progress.

In September 2016 the Board of Directors adopted and launched Murri Watch’s Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The plan was developed by the Board and senior staff. It sets the blueprint for us to be proactive and deliver those services required by our communities in a culturally meaningful and responsive manner.

We face new challenges now and in the future that require us to engage effectively with our communities and funding bodies and be united on the issue of developing innovative justice and homelessness strategies to address these matters. We look forward to continuing to enhance positive relationships, continuing to be proactive, and advocating on behalf of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Queensland with government and non-government sectors, and at community and grass roots levels.

Murri Watch has achieved zero deaths in custody for 25 years. As Chairperson, I call upon our members to join in a pledge to our Elders and our founding members to continue to build on their legacy for years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "F. Coolwell." The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Fred Coolwell
Chairperson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



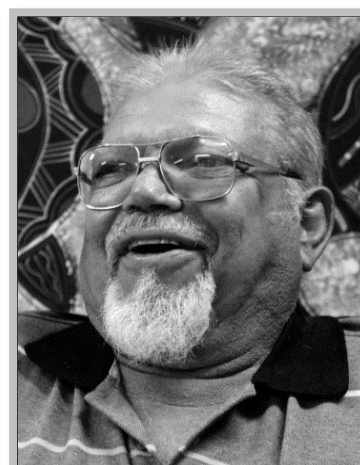
*Fred Coolwell
Chairperson*



*Shae Cubillo
Deputy Chairperson/
Treasurer*



*Adrienne Barnett
Secretary*



*Ken Murphy
Director*



*Nancy Bamaga
Director*

Directors' attendance at Board meetings held since their election to the Board (from January to June 2016) was as follows:

Fred Coolwell	6
Shae Cubillo	5
Adrienne Barnett	6
Ken Murphy	3
Nancy Bamaga	5

CEO's REPORT

I commence by acknowledging the Jagera, Yuggera and Ugarapul peoples as the traditional owners of the land upon which we meet today - as well as paying my respects to the Elders past and present.

I also would like to take the opportunity to congratulate Murri Watch for reaching a key milestone - 25 years' service to our community. 2016 marks the 25th anniversary of our organisation as well as the 25th anniversary of the Report of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC).

Murri Watch Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation was registered on the 22nd of July 1991 in response to recommendation of the RCIADIC.

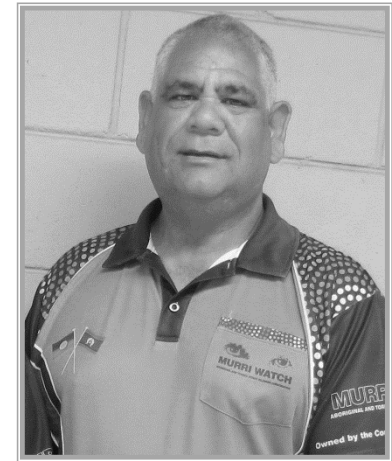
I extend a very warm welcome to all members and guests.

I am extremely proud how far this organisation has come over the 25 years. For the past twenty-five years, Murri Watch has been transforming itself into an effective service for the clients it serves and this year was no exception. Despite some huge challenges and much change, members, Board and staff combined to turn our challenges into opportunities and our change into progress.

As we commence our 26th year and look back over the past year, I wish to acknowledge and thank our funding bodies, the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, the Department of Housing and Public Works, and Community Solutions who have provided invaluable support and guidance to our organisation to enable us to deliver our services.

I also thank the Board of Directors and our staff for all their support, commitment and hard work throughout the year.

I acknowledge the significant contributions of our collaborative partners in our support services networks. Their support and cooperation allow us to access the most appropriate service provision and thereby provide cost effective and service efficient responses to our clients' needs.



Murri Watch has well established cooperative arrangements with the Queensland Police Service in all of our service areas. These collaborative arrangements have in no small part enabled us to maintain our record of zero deaths in watchhouse custody through our Diversionary Centre Services and Watch House Cell Visitor Services.

Over the past year, Murri Watch continued to provide presentations to graduates at the Oxley Police Academy about diversion and cell visitor programs, and to stress the value of, and benefits that may be derived by police officers accessing these services.

In collaboration with QAIHC (Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council) Murri Watch also provided similar presentation to GP registrars as part of their cultural awareness training.

In October 2015 all Service Agreements with the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for the delivery of our Diversion from Custody, Cell Visitor and Community Patrol programs were renegotiated until September 2018.

The Service Agreement with the Department of Housing and Public Works for the Bowman Johnson Hostel Supported Accommodation Program was renegotiated until September 2016 with a subsequent variation to March 2017.

After a meeting with Murri Watch in February 2016 regarding the ongoing viability of delivering the Bowman Johnson Hostel Supported Accommodation Program, the Department of Housing and Public Works implemented a program of installing security and energy saving installations at the Hostel.

The Department also undertook a service assessment at the Hostel and assisted Murri Watch to develop an Asset Management Plan.

During the year, Murri Watch commenced the certification process for the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) for funded service providers.

The HSQF incorporates:

- *a set of quality standards, known as the Human Services Quality Standards which cover the core elements of human service delivery*
- *an assessment process to measure the performance of service providers against the standards (assessment occurs at organisation level across all in-scope services)*
- *a continuous improvement framework, which supports the participation of customers in quality improvement.*

To help protect customers and provide consistency in quality, the department requires funded organisations delivering complex and/or direct services to vulnerable clients to demonstrate compliance with the Human Services Quality Standards through independent audits and certification.

As part of the certification process, we are reviewing all Murri Watch's policies and procedures prior to the final independent audit in March 2017.

In light of all these activities taking place it becomes a challenge to find the necessary time and resources for the important work of staff development. I am pleased to report that the organisation has achieved its key responsibilities throughout the course of the last year with the assistance of dedicated Board members and the support of the senior management staff.

Staff appraisals were completed for all programs, and new training plans were developed from those appraisals.

Our Centre Manager has diligently overseen that all staff have undertaken mandatory training in first aid and fire safety as well as suicide prevention and dealing with challenging behaviours training.

All staff completed training in the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services' Guidelines and Toolkit for Staff Working across Cell Visitor, Community Patrol and Diversion Centre services.

We will continue to rely on and appreciate the dedicated and professional service provided by our Murri Watch staff. I am particularly proud of the cultural competence that staff underpin all their client interactions with. All of Murri Watch's employees across all programs are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and we are proud to be descended from the oldest living culture on earth. Our staffs' cultural competence in service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients is acknowledged by other agencies in the diversion / cell visitor and homelessness sectors and we are the "go to" organisation when other agencies require assistance.

This year, I am proud to present CEO Awards for Achievement to our 5 staff members who successfully completed TAFE studies through TAFE QLD South West. They are Wendy Lacey and Clarrina Bond (Diplomas in Community Services), and Rosita Collins, Samantha Bond and Billy Lacey (Certificates IV in Community Services). Congratulations to each and every one.

With sadness we note the loss of a former member of the Board of Directors - Norm Brown Snr, and former staff members, Sue Ivers and Aunty Peggy Borey. We will miss the hugely positive impacts that they brought to Murri Watch and express sincere condolences to their families on behalf of every member of our community.



On a lighter note, we farewelled Wally Blackman who retired this year after 20 years' service. Wally commenced in 1996 and worked in our diversion and cell visitor services. Uncle Wally was a role model for other Cell Visitors and shared his skills and knowledge with his younger colleagues.

I know that watchhouse officers in greater Brisbane, Beenleigh and Ipswich will miss him equally as much as we do. We wish Wally all the best in his well-earned retirement.

"Uncle Wally was an asset to Murri Watch and provided a professional service to the clients of the Brisbane City Watchhouse. He will be missed by clients and staff collectively. He was always smiling, happy to chat and was a real gentleman. No problem was ever too big for him to handle." Marcus Cryer, Senior Sergeant, Officer in Charge Brisbane Watchhouse, August 2016

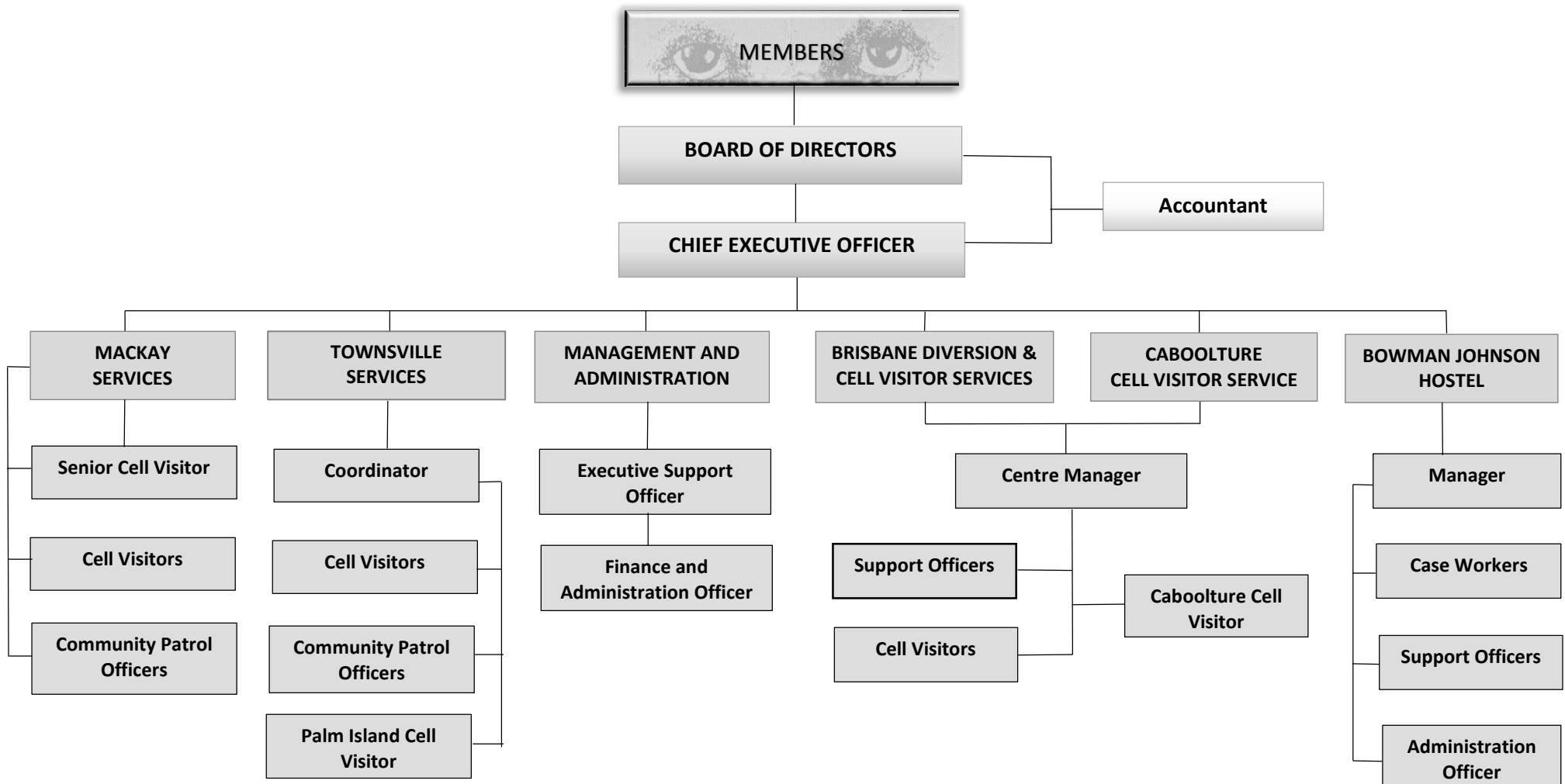
Whilst I am proud of how far we have come, we look ahead to the upcoming year. We know that other new challenges and opportunities will present themselves.

While the pathway ahead may be challenging and we know that "life wasn't meant to be easy", we are confident that Murri Watch will continue to grow and deliver programs and services that provide tangible outcomes for our people.

Thanks

Ken Georgetown
Chief Executive Officer

MURRI WATCH ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



STAFF TRAINING

Murri Watch recognises that our staff continue to be our greatest asset. Staff discharge their duties with cultural integrity, professionalism, zeal and commitment which is evidenced by their having achieved exceptional outcomes in service delivery in all programs.

Murri Watch views staff training as an integral part of our organisation being a leader in the delivery of high quality services to our clients. As such we are committed to investing in staff training and development. These training investments result in immediate and lasting benefits to our organisation. More importantly, the benefits flow on to our clients, our communities and the wider community.

5 staff successfully completed TAFE studies through TAFE QLD South West, with Wendy Lacey and Clarrina Bond gaining Diplomas in Community Services, and Rosita Collins, Samantha Bond and Billy Lacey gaining Certificates IV in Community Services.



Brisbane Staff – Nicole Costello, Clarrina Bond, Karina Henaway, Kristy Lacey, Natalie Lewis



Townsville Staff – Mick Wilson, Melinda Wyles, Janelle Gough, Basana Neliman, Charlotte Mairu, Stephen Lenoy

TABLE OF STAFF TRAINING

DATE	ACTIVITY	PARTICIPANTS	PROGRAMS
July - Sept 2015	Senior First Aid and Fire Safety	Cell Visitors and Support Officers	Brisbane
	Departmental Tool Kit Learning	Cell Visitors	Brisbane
	First Aid & Fire Safety Mental Health First Aid Developmental Tool Kit Guidelines Workshop	Cell Visitor	Caboolture
	Suicide Assist Prevention Training First Aid & Fire Safety Departmental Tool Kit Guidelines Workshop Public Intoxication Workshop	Cell Visitor	Palm Island
	Departmental Tool Kit Learning	All Staff	Brisbane
Oct – Dec 2015	Assist Suicide Intervention Training	Brisbane Cell Visitors, Support Officers Bowman Johnson Hostel Case workers	Brisbane
	Mental Health First Aid	Brisbane Cell Visitors & Support Officers Bowman Johnson Hostel Case workers	Brisbane
	Toolkit Guidelines Workshop	All Staff	Townsville
May 2016	Assist Suicide Prevention Training First Aid & Fire Safety Public Intoxication Workshop	All Staff All Staff 3 Staff members	Townsville
June 15 – June 2016	First Aid & CPR Fire Training	All Staff	Bowman Johnson Hostel
June 15 – June 16 2016	First Aid & CPR Fire Training	All Staff	Brisbane
June 2016	Crystal Clear: Methamphetamine	Cell Visitor	Townsville
Jan 16 - June 2016	Action Learning Program	All Staff	All Programs

DIVERSION FROM CUSTODY SERVICE

Purpose built in 1991, the Murri Watch Diversionary Centre is located at 15 Hubert Street, Woolloongabba. The Centre operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and offers a safe, monitored environment for adult clients recovering from the effects of intoxication, and an alternative to being taken into police custody for public intoxication offences.

Centre staff provide a range of care, support and referral services to ensure the health and wellbeing of clients.

The Centre has a bed capacity of 14, with separate accommodation for male and female adult clients. Staff rosters include both male and female workers on each shift in order to deliver gender appropriate and culturally sensitive services.



Our clients are adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous males and females who are at risk of being taken into custody for public intoxication offences.

Clients are referred to the Centre by:

- Queensland Police Service seeking to divert intoxicated people from police custody to a diversion centre;
- Other government and community services seeking diversion services for people intoxicated in public places; and
- Individuals (self-referrals) and community members seeking diversionary care and support services for intoxicated people.

Photo at left: Support Workers Shane Burr and Lois Gorham in the Diversionary Centre

The past 12 months of the Diversion Centre practices and procedures regarding the intake and assessment process of clients presented ongoing challenges for staff particularly with respect to the gap between services that are required and those that can be provided.

The complex and problematic issues clients present with range from, but are not limited to:

- Drug and Alcohol dependencies
- Rehabilitation relapse
- Alcohol and Methamphetamine Psychosis
- Increase of clients presenting under the influence of illicit drugs (ICE)
- Homelessness
- Health and Mental Health Issues
- Intergenerational trauma
- Domestic and family violence
- Disconnection from culture, country and identity
- No access to brokerage/financial assistance.

Rest and recovery for clients in a culturally appropriate and safe environment is still the overall best practice and approach to assist our clients.

Where clients present with problematic issues, the Diversion Centre Support Officers assess the client's needs with a holistic approach providing mini case management and referral for each individual client. However even after referrals to more appropriate services, there are still high numbers of "repeat" clients presenting to the Centre

In most cases crisis accommodation, brokerage, detox and rehabilitation beds have not been readily available for clients. These matters have been discussed in meetings with Murri Watch's funding bodies, and our collaborative partners such as MICAH to raise the issues and address them. Ongoing advocacy for clients with Government and non – government agencies by Support Officers and the Centre Manager will continue until further funding and resources are in place for referral agencies to meet the needs of clients.

Over the 12 months' staff provided supervision for rest and recovery on 2280 occasions.

Clients also accessed meals, light refreshments (tea, coffee biscuits, etc.), laundry facilities, showers, clean clothing, transport, case management and referrals to other service providers.

BRISBANE CELL VISITOR SERVICE



Lionel Henaway



Jacob Luffman



Natalie Lewis

The Brisbane Cell Visitor Service operates from the Diversionary Centre at 15 Hubert Street, Woolloongabba.

The Cell Visitor program provides support and referral services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained in custody in police watchhouses in the greater Brisbane (Brisbane City, Richlands, Cleveland), Beenleigh, Pine Rivers, Redcliffe and Ipswich areas.

The program aims to stop the incidence of deaths and suicides, and minimise self-inflicted injuries, and other health conditions which may result from intoxication, while people are held in police custody. The program focuses particularly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained for public intoxication and/or who require individualised support services.

Murri Watch has continued to work in close cooperation with the Queensland Police Service to deliver the service. The Centre Manager maintains regular contact with the Inspector and Senior Sergeant in charge of watchhouses.

The CEO has delivered presentations to every graduating class at the Queensland Police Academy on diversion and cell visitor services.

Queensland Police Service have notified that they are progressing the service agreement with Murri Watch for diversion and cell visitor services. A service agreement with ATSILS has been drafted, and will consider protocols regarding our mutual clients in watchhouse custody.

During the year Cell Visitors also met with the following agencies regarding potential support for clients:

- ATSILS;
- Brisbane Murri Court - Brisbane Murri Elders Community Justice Group;
- Ganyjuu – Logan Indigenous Community Justice Court Officer; and
- Kurbingui Youth Development Inc.

During the 12 months, cell visitors undertook 2818 cell visits, relayed 1443 messages to families of clients, and provided 388 referrals to other agencies.

As an indication of the benefits of the Cell Visitor program, the following feedback was received from an officer in the Ipswich Watchhouse:

“Amongst many of the good programs and services offered by Murri Watch, the cell visitor scheme aims to support Indigenous people in the justice system. The Cell Visitor demonstrates such compassion for her clients and I have no doubt that her words and presence assist them to manage while they are in custody. The Cell Visitor makes sure that her clients are supported by notifying family on their behalf of the fact that they are in custody and also passing on any messages but she does so much more, including connecting clients with resources to help support them in their choice to stop offending.

Most importantly, the Cell Visitor works with staff in the Watchhouse to achieve the best results for her clients, and this benefits everyone immensely. The Cell Visitor has made the effort to learn about the Watchhouse environment and to get to know the staff and how they operate. The Cell Visitor communicates with Watchhouse staff about the needs of her clients, and that communication is now flowing back to her, making sure that she has all the information she needs to achieve the best outcomes for her clients. What this means for us is that we are more aware of the needs of people in our care and we can better ensure a safe environment for our clients, not least by acknowledging the influence of culture.

While I appreciate the work that the Cell Visitor does for her clients and the ways that this assists us to manage the Watchhouse, the way that the Cell Visitor conducts herself is achieving so much more. The Cell Visitor ability to represent Indigenous people but identify with everyone is helping to bridge the gap that has existed for far too long. I have learned so much from the Cell Visitor and she has certainly helped me to understand our Indigenous clients and better address their needs. I feel privileged that the Cell Visitor has been so willing to share her story with me and I know that I am a better Australian and a better person for the understanding that she has helped me achieve. I hope that everyone continues to benefit from having the Cell Visitor in the Murri Watch cell visitor scheme for a long time to come.”

CABOOLTURE CELL VISITOR SERVICE

The Caboolture Cell Visitor Service is funded by Community Solutions – Sunshine Coast.

The Cell Visitor is rostered to work Monday to Friday from 2 pm to 6 pm.

The Caboolture Cell Visitor services the Caboolture, Redcliffe, Pine Rivers and Sandgate Watchhouses during the shift.

In order to ensure a 24-hour service 7 days a week, the afterhours and weekend services are undertaken by the rostered Brisbane Cell Visitors staff.



Cell Visitor – Tarquin Stevens

Outcomes

- There was a total of 208 cell visits to clients detained in the Caboolture watchhouse.
- 204 (96.6%) clients identified as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.
- Of the 208 clients there were 170 Male and 38 Female clients.
- The Cell Visitor further assisted clients by delivering 226 messages to families of clients detained in the watchhouse.
- The Cell Visitor also provided assistance to 63 “at risk” clients in the Pine Rivers and Redcliffe watchhouses.
- The Brisbane Cell Visitors responded to 12 out of business hours call outs to the Caboolture and Redcliffe watchhouses.
- The Caboolture Cell Visitor completed Senior First Aid, Fire Safety, Applied Suicide Intervention and Managing Challenging Behaviours training during the year.
- There were **no** reports of incidents relating to self-harming by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in police custody in the Caboolture watchhouse.

The Caboolture Cell Visitor has been connecting and strengthening relationships with ATSILS, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Justice and the Caboolture Elders agencies. Linking in with these community services provides clients with further culturally appropriate support services to provide the best outcomes for our clients.

MACKAY CELL VISITS & COMMUNITY PATROL



Mackay staff with the CEO – back – Isaac Fewquandie, Coral-Ann Fewquandie, Ken Georgetown, Clrissa Kris; front – Lonny Fewquandie

The Community Patrol provides mobile patrols (on foot or vehicle) to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients who are affected by alcohol in public spaces and who may come to the attention of police for public intoxication offences or be at risk of harm as a result of their intoxication.

Community Patrol staff offer clients with options other than what police may provide. This may include transport to a place of safety or referrals to other service providers.

The patrol operates on varying rostered shifts 7 days a week.

Patrol staff attend major community functions including NAIDOC and the Brown Sugar Festival, as well as providing assistance to families when there is sorry business being conducted.

The Mackay Cell Visitor Service is a 24 hour, 7 days a week service. Cell visitors work rostered shifts with on-call provisions for afterhours services. The Cell Visitor program provides support and referral services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained in custody in the Mackay watchhouse. The program aims to stop the incidence of deaths, suicides, self-inflicted injuries, and other health conditions which may result from intoxication, while people are held in police custody.

Over the past 12 months, the Community Patrol provided support and referral services for 1354 clients.

The Cell Visitor Service undertook 1023 cell visits to clients in the Mackay watchhouse.

There were **no** deaths in custody or reports of self-harm by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained in the Mackay watchhouse.

TOWNSVILLE CELL VISITS & COMMUNITY PATROL



The Cell Visitors program provides support and referral services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained in custody in the Townsville police watchhouse.

The program aims to stop the incidence of deaths, suicides, self-inflicted injuries, and other health conditions which may result from intoxication, while people are held in police custody.

The program focuses particularly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people detained for public intoxication and/or who require individualised support services, however non-Indigenous people are also provided with support services when requested.

Photo at left – Cell Visitors Warren Fisher and Connell Maher.

The program operates from 7.30am to 11.30pm seven days a week with on-call provisions for after-hours service.

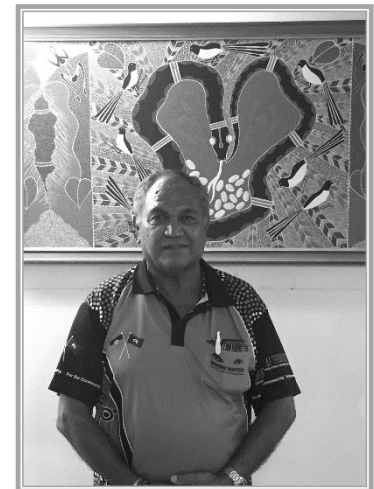
The continuing success of the program is demonstrated by the fact that there were no deaths in the police watchhouse in Townsville.

Further our staffs' cultural competency in dealing with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their abilities to provide appropriate support may be evidenced by the fact that there were no reports of incidents relating to self-harming by our people in police custody in the Townsville watchhouse.

Cell Visitors undertook 2367 cell visits to clients in the Townsville watchhouse, and delivered 2505 messages to families of clients.

The Cell Visitors also provided 106 referrals to other service providers on behalf of clients.

Photo at right – Cell Visitor Alfred (Uncle Bimbo) Smallwood





The Community Patrol program provides transport, support and referral services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at risk of harm or of being taken into police custody as a result of intoxication in public spaces in Townsville.

The program aims to reduce the incidence of deaths and injuries, and other health conditions which may result from intoxication or sleeping rough.

The program focuses particularly on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people at risk of being detained in police custody for public intoxication offences and/or who require individualised support services.

Photo at left – Charlotte Mairu and clients in the Townsville Mall

Patrol staff actively engage with adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander males and females who are at risk of being taken into custody for public intoxication offences, and/or who may be homeless. Non-Indigenous clients are also provided with support from the Community Patrol.

The priority of Patrol staff is to ensure the safety and dignity of clients in a culturally respectful manner.

The Community Patrol operates from 9am to 12 Midnight Monday to Friday and from 10am to 12 Midnight on weekends.

The Townsville Community Patrol provided 12,243 transports for clients over the year.

9174 clients (75%) were diverted to the Townsville Diversionary Centre, and all others were transported to another place of safety ie to their homes or to families and friends.

The majority of these clients were either intoxicated and/or homeless or at risk of being homeless; and might otherwise have come to the attention of the police for public intoxication offences, or been at risk of harm.

PALM ISLAND CELL VISITOR SERVICE



The Palm Island Cell Visitor service operates from Stanley Lane on Palm Island and is a 24 hour, 7 days a week service. The Cell Visitor works rostered shifts with on-call provisions for afterhours services.

The program aims to stop deaths in custody and reduce the risk of self-harming of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are detained in the watchhouse.

The Cell Visitor responds to referrals and calls from the Palm Island watchhouse, families, the community and other organisations regarding concerns about people in watchhouse custody; offers company, support and assistance; assists to prevent suicide and self-injury of persons in custody; liaises with families and friends; and provides information and referrals to support services to persons in custody.

Photo at left – Cell Visitor, Tessa Bulsey

Over the 12 months, there was a total of 375 cell visits to clients detained in the Palm Island watchhouse.

The Cell Visitor further assisted clients by delivering 350 messages to families of clients detained in the watchhouse.

The Cell Visitor prepared and delivered meals to all clients detained in the watchhouse.

There were no deaths in custody or reports of incidents relating to self-harming by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Palm Island watchhouse.

For the 2nd year running, the Palm Island Cell Visitor Service was regarded as the best service provider on the island in relation to efficiency, reliability, response time and effectiveness.

BOWMAN JOHNSON HOSTEL

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

Bowman Johnson Hostel is a 20 bed hostel which provides short term accommodation combined with case management services for homeless persons or persons at risk of being homeless. Bowman Johnson Hostel offers fully supported short-term accommodation at reasonable rates (which are inclusive of meals, use of facilities and case management services).

The Hostel is situated at 5 Oxford Street South Brisbane, in close proximity to the city, bus stops, the West End shopping precinct and Southbank.

Our clients are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander male and female adults (over 18 years old) who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Non Indigenous adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness may also access our service when rooms are available.

Bowman Johnson Hostel offers:

- Private rooms (12 single rooms and 4 double rooms)
- Communal bathrooms (double rooms have ensuite)
- All meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- Communal dining room
- A common room with cable TV
- Laundry facilities
- Bed linen and pillows
- CCTV for safety and security
- Limited off-street parking
- Alcohol and Drug free environment





Bowman Johnson Hostel is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Our staff are:

- Manager (part-time) to manage Hostel operations
- Administrative Officer (part-time) to provide administrative support
- Support Workers to ensure Hostel safety and security and to prepare all meals
- Case Workers to assist clients to develop case plans, access support services and gain independent living.

Photo at left – Bowman Johnson Hostel Staff – from left Wendy Lacey (Manager), Sylvia Vicca (Support Worker), Greg Lacey and Samantha Bond (Case Workers), Evelyn Tattam (Administrative Officer)

Upgrades were completed at the hostel to improve security which included the installation of emergency phones and security screens. Solar Panels were also installed as a cost saving measure.

An Asset Management Plan was developed after the completion of a Service Review undertaken by the Department of Housing and Public Works. The Asset Management Plan will be utilised in the recording of all repairs and maintenance requirements for the Hostel.

In the last twelve months Bowman Johnson Hostel provided 5105 bed nights' accommodation and assisted seventy clients into independent, transitional and long term accommodation.

Our successes in assisting clients to stabilise their lives and move into sustainable accommodation have been many and rewarding. Our staff derive a great deal of job satisfaction knowing that every success impacts positively on our clients and their families and communities, and also the wider community.

Pictured at right is client Ian and Caseworker Samantha. Ian was successful in obtaining a two-bedroom house for himself and daughter. Ian was most grateful for the support he received at the Hostel. Ian stated that he has never received this amount of help before in his life. He added that this has been the longest period of time he has stayed out of jail and is looking forward to providing a stable home for himself and his daughter.



STAFF FEEDBACK

Murri Watch acknowledges that our staff are our greatest asset. They deliver all services with professionalism and cultural integrity whilst maintaining the rights, privacy, and dignity and ensuring the safety of our clients.

Staff across the State provided the following feedback on their reasons for working at Murri Watch:



OUR CONTACT DETAILS

MURRI WATCH HEAD OFFICE (BRISBANE)

15 Hubert Street, Woolloongabba Qld 4102

PO Box 8144 Woolloongabba Qld 4102

Telephone: 07 3891 6431

Fax: 07 3891 6031

CEO's Mobile: 0411 862 325

MURRI WATCH DIVERSIONARY & CELL VISITOR SERVICES (BRISBANE)

15 Hubert Street, Woolloongabba Qld 4102

PO Box 8144 Woolloongabba Qld 4102

Telephone: 07 3891 2822

Fax: 07 3391 0613

Centre Manager's Mobile: 0427 033 431

CELL VISITOR SERVICES (BRISBANE) – MOBILES

Shift 1: 0439 880 348

Shift 2: 0499 639 333

Shift 3: 0499 639 433

BOWMAN JOHNSON HOSTEL SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION PROGRAM

5 Oxford Street South Brisbane Qld 4101

PO Box 8144 Woolloongabba Qld 4102

Telephone: 07 3844 2115

Fax: 07 3844 6165

Manager's Mobile: 0439 880 320

TOWNSVILLE COMMUNITY PATROL & CELL VISITORS PROGRAM

3/277 Finders Mall, Townsville Qld 4810

PO Box 5919 Townsville Qld 4810

Telephone: 07 4772 3806 or 07 4772 2182

Fax: 07 4772 3247

Coordinator's Mobile: 0403 525 570

Cell Visitor's Mobile: 0423 611 606

Community Patrol Mobile: 0431 282 820

MACKAY CELL VISITS & COMMUNITY PATROL

D Block, CQ TAFE Campus

Alfred Street, Mackay Qld 4740

PO Box 1664, Mackay Qld 4740

Telephone: 07 4829 4705

Fax: 07 4944 0509

Cell Visitor's Mobile: 0400 574 047

PALM ISLAND CELL VISITS

272 Stanley Lane, Palm Island Qld 4816

c/ PO Palm Island Qld 4816

Mobile: 0448 402 894

CABOOLTURE CELL VISITS

Mobile: 0499 115 608