



2013-14 ANNUAL REPORT



Index

DVConnect - In brief	4
Message from the Chair of the Board	5
Where we started, where we are now and who we are	6
Where we're going	7
Message from our CEO	8
What we do	9
Womensline	10
Sexual Assault Line	12
Mensline	13
DVTraining Connect	15
Prison Support Program	16
HPIQ Homeless Persons Information Queensland	16
Homeless Connect	16
Pets in Crisis	17
Community Engagement	18
Sector Engagement and Development	19
Board of Directors	20
Sector Networks	23
Service Agreements/Funding	24
Our Partners and Supporters	25
Resources	26
Financial report	27

DVConnect

In brief...

DVConnect is the 24/7 state-wide crisis telephone response service for people experiencing domestic and family violence.

We offer professional and non judgemental telephone support and advice to thousands of callers every year and coordinate immediate safety for those having to leave the violence in their homes from anywhere in the state.

DVConnect Womensline received over 53,000 calls last year and assisted more than 9,000 women and children to immediate safety throughout the state.

Through our Pets in Crisis program we were able to assist a further group of women and children, constrained by the fear that their pets might become victims if they were left behind by arranging emergency shelter for 238 pets. This was an average of around 20 pets per month.

DVConnect also helped over 7,500 men via our Mensline last year. In addition Mensline also provided face to face court assistance to a further 2,000 men who attended one of seven courts, in and around Brisbane, in relation to domestic violence protection orders. Mensline also provided court assistance to a further 200 men from other parts of the state by phone.

DVConnect also provides the State-wide Sexual Assault Helpline and assisted more than 3,400 women and men in relation to recent and past sexual assaults including institutional abuse.

‘A woman in Australia is more likely to be killed in her own home by an intimate partner than anywhere else or by anyone else’

(ABS 2006)

This chilling statistic is reinforced by another recent study which states that

“95% of all violence committed against both men and women is committed by men”

(National Community Attitudes Survey 2014)



A Message from the Chair of the Board

On behalf of DVConnect, it is my privilege to welcome you to our Annual Report for 2013-14. The Report highlights our many achievements over the past year, and provides an insight into the services we offer to the Queensland community.

In chairing the Board for the past twelve months, I have had the support of a wonderfully dynamic group of people who have been the backbone of DVConnect. This amazing team, under the guidance of our CEO Ms Diane Mangan, continues to be pressured by a growing need for our services. Their resilience in dealing with the many sad and often horrifying stories, and their pride in the work DVConnect provides can only be described as inspiring. A simple thank you to each and every member of the team does not seem adequate when acknowledging the professionalism they bring to often very difficult situations.

The past 12 months have seen some significant changes for DVConnect. We have relocated to our own premises where the team have spread out (just a little) more than in our previous office space. Even though the relocation took place in the summer months when our services were most needed, our phone lines continued to be staffed 24/7. It was a credit to the organisational skills of the entire team at DVConnect that every woman and man who called for our services during the transitional period was able to be helped in some way.

Unfortunately though, the need for our services still continues to grow. Our call statistics for 2014 financial year indicate our team has responded to over 64,000 incoming calls to our Womensline, Mensline and Sexual Assault line. A further 72,762 outgoing calls have been made to follow up, or to organise transport, accommodation, pets in crisis etc. These calls are handled by a team of only 35 counsellors working around the clock.

The need to house women and children in alternate accommodation until places become available in a refuge is also becoming more and more apparent. This past year we have provided a place of safety for over 4,700 women and 5,500 children which has seen our funding stretched to the limit in order to provide these very services so desperately needed by many women and children of Queensland.

We are however, extremely grateful for the continuing support of Government agencies such as the Department of Communities for our core funding, Womensline Court Support and the Sexual Assault Helpline, and to Legal Aid for our Mensline Court Assistance program. We would also like to acknowledge our many corporate and individual donors for their generous ongoing support especially RSPCA Qld. This organisation has been our lifeline in helping to provide the Pets in Crisis program for families who cannot leave their animals behind. To all of our other supporters large and small, we thank you for your commitment each year. We cannot do what we do without the support of each and every one of you. Your assistance each year, no matter how small or how large, makes such an enormous difference to the services we are able to provide to every woman who calls for our help.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members. The Board is only effective because of the expertise, commitment and dedication of each of them. The time each director has freely given to the organisation in reviewing our constitution and policies, helping create our strategic plan and educating both the team and Board members is truly motivating. I feel honoured to be given the opportunity to be a part of this incredible organisation.

Michelle Farr

Where we started

DVConnect has been funded by Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services to provide the 24/7 statewide crisis response to people living with domestic and family violence since 2002. The department itself provided the service from 1978 to 1991 until it was outsourced to the Domestic Violence Telephone Service on the Sunshine Coast until early 2002 where it resumed provision of the service until DVConnect won the tender.

In 2003 an amendment to the Domestic Violence Act saw the inclusion of Family Violence (extending to elder abuse and informal care relationships) as a core component of the domestic violence telephone service, further extending the reach of our services; and in 2008 the Sexual Assault line was added to our list of core services.

Where we are now

DVConnect now employs 54 staff including a small management and administration team and almost 50 counselling staff all of whom work varying shifts to cover our 7 day 24 hour telephone service.

In 2013/2014 DVConnect responded to over 64,000 calls across all lines and provided crisis intervention and telephone support across a number of services including:- emergency responses, evacuation and emergency accommodation placement for families, telephone counselling for men, women and victims of sexual assault, education and support for men, prison and court support, homelessness support network, community education and arranging care for pets of families experiencing domestic violence.



Our Mission

To enable the seamless passage from violence to safety by delivering a range of support services to those in crisis as a result of domestic and family violence.

What we value

- The right of all people to live free from violence and abuse
- The health and safety of staff and clients
- Planning and decision making that reflects justice, equity, integrity and collaboration
- The diverse needs of marginalised and disadvantaged groups
- Responsiveness, adaptability, innovation, creativity and an openness to change when attempting to address the needs of those affected by domestic and family violence

Where we're going

Our Vision

Be heard - be safe

DVConnect is committed to the right of people to be safe from violence both within their families and their communities. Our response to those affected by domestic and family violence strives to be professional, flexible and empowering which includes collaborative processes with other support services throughout Queensland.

We are committed to these objectives:

- Ensuring that no Queenslanders will be more than a telephone call away from professional support and information with which to sustain him or her through the domestic and family violence impacting his or her life
- Protect the caller's privacy and confidentiality while within the law and the policies of this organisation
- Taking into account all our callers cultural and special communication needs when they phone in

- Continuing to be a key part of a seamless and coordinated system within the support service sector of Queensland, that is both supportive and meaningful for people affected by domestic and family violence
- Developing and providing administrative structures that ensure accountability of service and support for the organisation

Our Goals

- To be the leaders in crisis response for the Domestic and Family Violence Sector in Queensland
- To be financially sustainable
- To strive for improved refuge and crisis accommodation
- To be an effective, safe and supportive workplace
- To provide a high quality and effective crisis service
- To deliver a best practice and contemporary service
- To develop productive partnerships

Message from the CEO

The Chair has talked about the achievements of DVConnect throughout the past year and the acknowledgements to those who made it happen. I also want to echo that and thank the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for the core funding that allows DVConnect to reach as far as we do to assist some of the most vulnerable people throughout the state. I wish to also acknowledge the LPITAF grant through Legal Aid that allows for Mensline to provide a vital face to face service to men who attend court in relation to domestic and family violence with the specific purpose of enhancing family safety.

My message this year though is about one of the main barriers we see to reducing the fear and upheaval of families that are racked by domestic and family violence in Queensland: misinformation, misunderstanding and a potentially dangerous perception of domestic violence.

DVConnect is on the frontline of domestic violence in Queensland and we are responding to a level of violence towards women and their children in 2014 that is not only increasing in intensity but is also in severity. Yet there appears to be a 'disconnect' between the reality of what we know about this increasing violence towards women and what many Australians think about the perpetration of domestic violence.

Three national surveys on domestic violence over a 20 year period have looked at the community's perception of what it is and what must be done about it. It is natural to assume that with the increased awareness of domestic violence since the 1970s, universal legislation against it and a widespread network of social support for victims and perpetrators of domestic violence that we should be seeing a decrease and an informed community. Strangely, this does not appear to be the case. Surveys are showing that while most people accept that domestic violence is prevalent within the community and that the authorities have to do something about it they are quite confused as to who the victim is and who the perpetrator is. Most people surveyed said that they believed women were just as violent as men. Some went further to say that some women make false allegations of domestic violence and that in the case of rape, many believed that men rape because of an overwhelming desire for sex. We seem to be going backwards in some respects and at a time when the violence towards women is getting worse.

The national Personal Safety Survey of 2012 showed that one in three men said that they had been the victims of violence with a third of the perpetrators in these cases being female. However, when you look at the behaviours that the female is responsible

for in this report they are related to verbal abuse, name calling, demeaning, manipulative behaviours and threats to harm. We do know that there are some instances of violence towards men either by a male or a female partner that requires a safety response from DVConnect's Mensline but these calls are very small in comparison with those that Womensline responds to and should not be seen as equal to the violence against women. Also, when people are asked to respond to questions about their personal safety it is important that their responses, if they are going to be used in the context of domestic violence, need to be seen within a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour that instils fear in the other party. To not understand these behaviours in this context which is outlined in the legislation only serves to confuse people but more importantly, diminish the fearful existences of those who are in most need of the community's protection. In the absence of this clear analysis we are seeing the legislation being used as a tool for 'tit for tat' recordings of acts of violence against both the male and female in the relationship. This then often sees a woman being named as a respondent where her act of violence was often in defence or herself or as result of prolonged physical assaults and/or psychological terror and threats to her life. This misuse of the Act cannot be underscored.

So, how is it that in 2014 we have come to such ambivalent but dangerous conclusions about domestic violence when we continue to see the murder of four to six women every month in Australia? Most men killed in domestic or family violence settings are killed by another man or by suicide after killing their female partners. This is not a time for the community to be uninformed and even deliberately confused about this most preventable of family crimes.

Domestic violence is gendered violence within intimate or family relationships and that means that where there is domestic violence it is mostly perpetrated against women and children by men. However, it is equally important to note that most men are not violent and do not resort to it when challenged by life's trials but equally so they do not call out those who are. Those living in fear need non-violent men to speak out and to intervene instead of staying on the sidelines or excusing another man's violence as the result of pressure, stress or incitement from the victim. If we don't have the community on board and that includes non-violent men and places of male influence then it will be almost impossible to maintain an effective response to this family nightmare and services like ours will continue to battle this increasing trend of suffering.

Diane Mangan, CEO – DVConnect



What we do

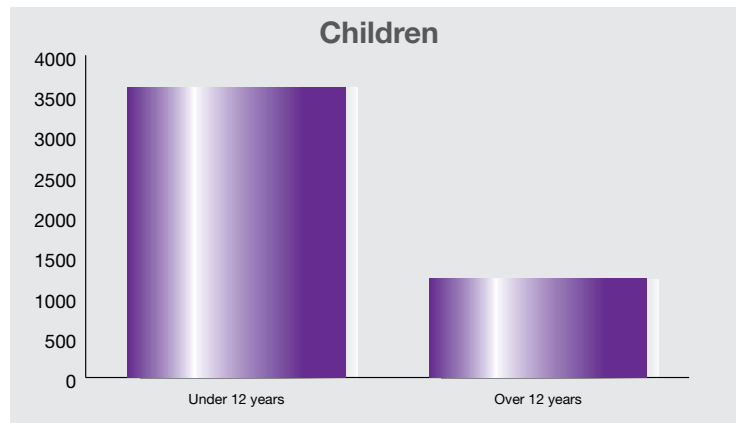
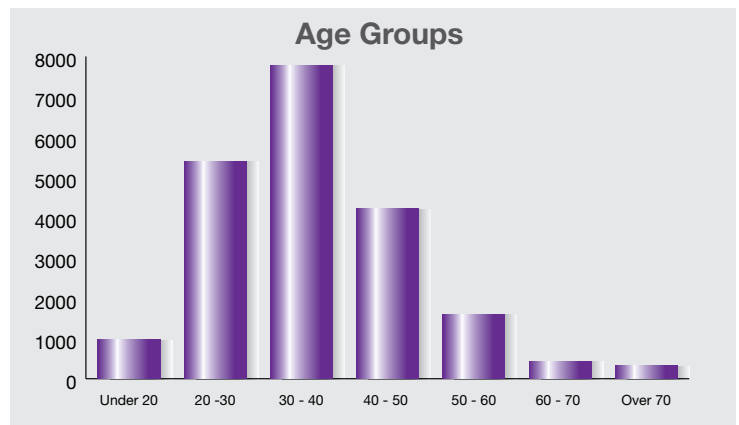
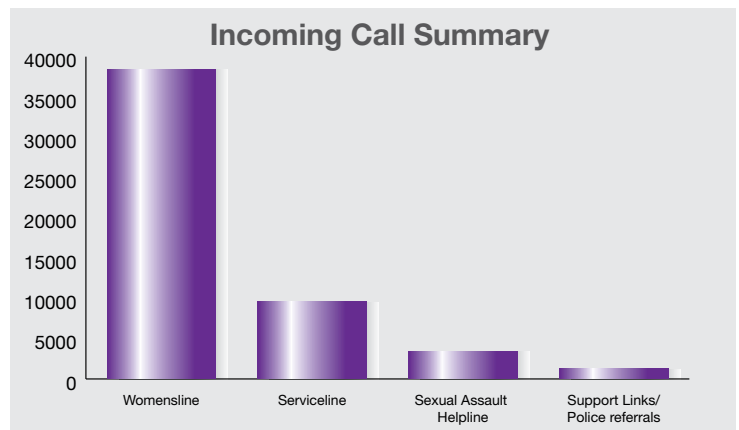
DVConnect responds to domestic and family violence in Queensland via three public lines: Womensline, Mensline and Sexual Assault Helpline.

We not only work with almost every specialist and community service throughout Queensland around the safety needs of women and children but we also have the unique position of having a 'helicopter view' of the sector as a whole. This often allows us to see the gaps in the system enabling us to make decisions and take swift action. The physical and psychological safety of women and children living with domestic violence is the overriding focus of our work both on Womensline and Mensline.

Our 'Serviceline' is reserved exclusively for communication with external and sector services.

Demand on the service

Last year the three crisis lines of DVConnect responded to over 64,000 incoming calls for assistance from people all over the state because of domestic violence, family violence or sexual assault.





Womensline

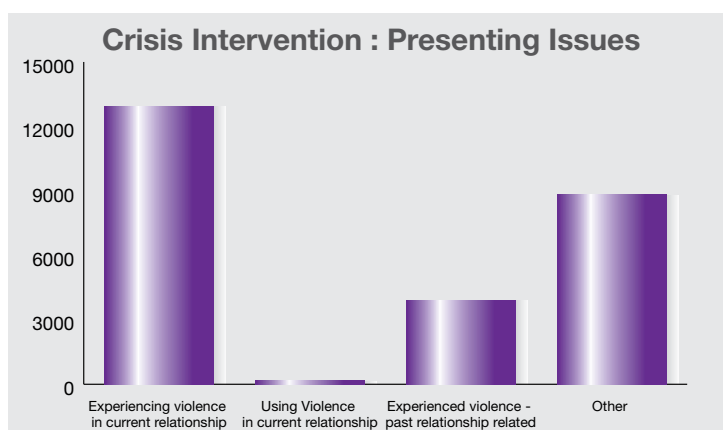
DVConnect Womensline is the 24/7 crisis response service for domestic and family violence throughout the state and responded to 53,313 incoming calls to both the 1800 and 1300 lines last year.

While Womensline receives many calls looking for information, crisis counselling and support around legal issues in relation to domestic violence, responding to the immediate safety needs of women and children, is by far the most demanding of the services DVConnect provides. Every month 400 of the callers to Womensline are women in fear of their violent partners or family members and need a place of safety for themselves and their children and sometimes their pets. Womensline arranges all the travel and accommodation needs for the family until they have reached their destination be it one of the many domestic violence refuges throughout the state, family or friends elsewhere in the state/country/overseas or other accessible housing. Providing this outcome for women fleeing the violence at home can be very complicated and demanding on workers because of the short time frame to work within and the limited options available as evidenced by more than 6,000 outgoing calls a month.

The response by Womensline is supportive and non judgemental and understands that women often leave domestic violence a number of times before making a final move. We understand that throughout this period of uncertainty women are often painfully working through what they need to do for themselves and their children. We are also aware of some women who are suffering psychological

and emotional trauma after a long history of abuse sometimes beginning in childhood and not presenting as articulately as they would wish. Some may also present in ways that indicate some form of mental illness and or substance abuse often also related to an extensive history of violence.

We know and recognise that it takes a great deal of courage for the women who phone in for help for themselves and their children as they come to terms with having to leave their homes, belongings and lifestyle behind. Their courage and sacrifice cannot be understated.



Police Referrals to Womensline via SupportLink

SupportLink referrals are non urgent requests by Queensland Police sent out via email for agencies to make follow up calls to people who they have been called out to in relation to domestic violence; and who they may have particular concerns about or may feel would benefit from speaking with a professional counsellor. Whilst most SupportLinks are managed by Mensline, our Womensline service also handles referrals.

Last year, DVConnect received and followed up with phone calls to 3,722 referrals from this service.

Services provided by Womensline

The service provided by Womensline is largely broken down into four main categories, such as Information and Support, Crisis Counselling and Safety Planning, Face to Face Court Support and most importantly, Crisis Intervention. The latter is where Womensline is required to arrange an immediate place of safety for women and children escaping the violence at home. Last year, Womensline arranged emergency accommodation for over 9,000 women and children throughout the state. Around 8,000 women and children were transported to safety including 108 air flights (around one flight every three days) from the Torres Strait and other remote areas.

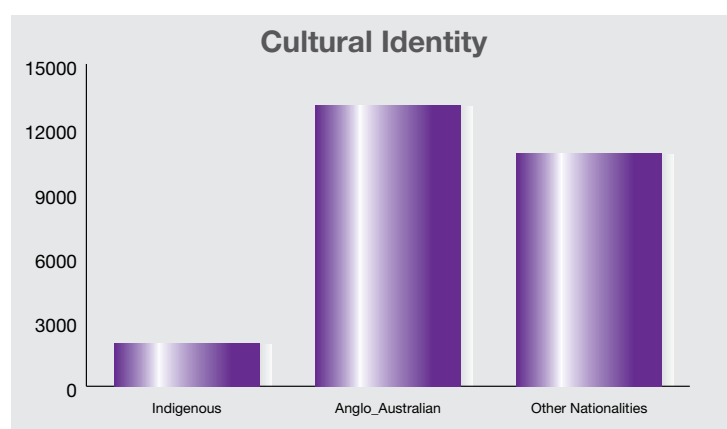
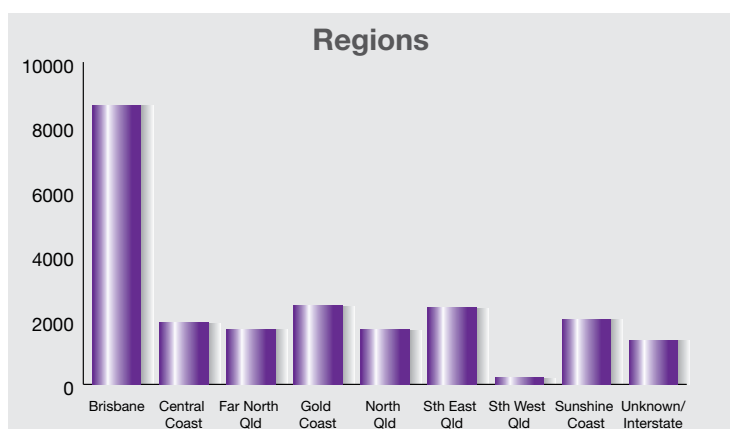
Regional and Cultural Breakdown

Womensline calls are received mostly from the south east corner of the State. Whilst only around 9% of calls are from the Far North, most of these are from the Torres Strait Islands and tip of the mainland where the only transport to safety is by plane. Of the women from the various cultural groups calling the service:

- 58.2% were Anglo Australian;
- 8.8% were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander – but this rose to 24% of those needing immediate assistance to leave the violence at home;
- 25.7% were non Australians but from an English speaking country.
- 7.3 % were from a Non English Speaking Background (NESB) but this increased to 10.6 % for those that required crisis intervention. Of requiring crisis intervention 22% also needed an interpreter.

Languages most requiring the Telephone Interpretation Service are:

Amharic, Arabic, Burmese, Cambodian, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, Dinka, Farsi, Filipino, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Kirundi, Korean, Lao, Mandarin, Persian, Punjabi, Portuguese, Russian, Samoan, Spanish, Sri Lankan, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil and Vietnamese.





Sexual Assault Helpline

DVConnect has been providing the state-wide Sexual Assault Helpline since 2008 and every year we assist more than 4,000 women, men and young people. Last year, calls relating to sexual abuse in childhood accounted for 3,135 of the calls with the remaining calls coming from victims of acute/recent sexual assault.

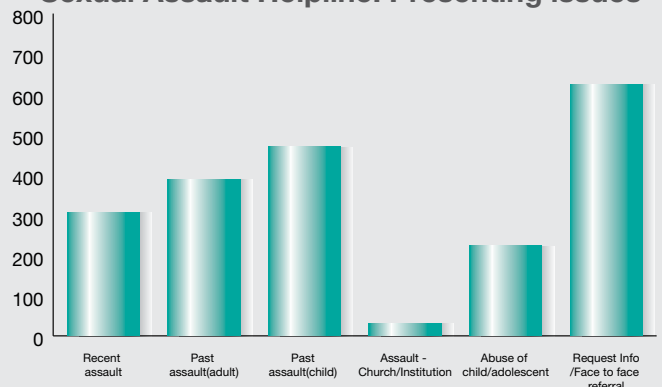
DVConnect offers crisis counselling and support mainly but also information and referral for those needing urgent assistance and/or face to face counselling and support.

The impact of sexual violence can be considerable and may include experiences of anxiety, depression, flashbacks and panic attacks, feelings of guilt and worthlessness and a myriad of other health and social issues. Our counsellors provide validation and support, information on forensic and general medical processes, accurate information on making a complaint to police, referral phone numbers for further support in the caller's local community and some strategies around self care and keeping safe.

The Sexual Assault Helpline also responds to SupportLink referrals from police.



Sexual Assault Helpline: Presenting issues





Mensline

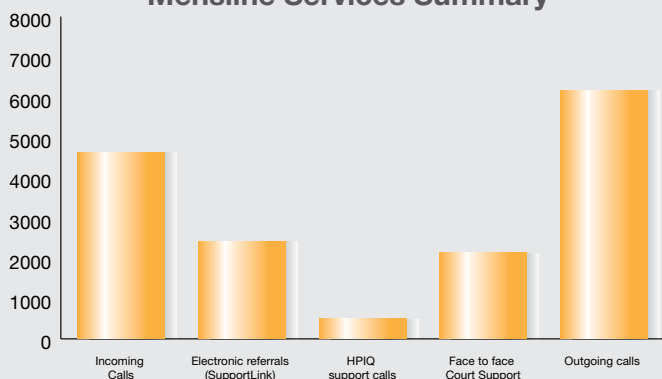
DVConnect Mensline provides counselling and referral to men who are violent to their partners and other members of their family and also to those who are victims of domestic and family violence. Last year Mensline provided this assistance to 7,588 Queensland men either by phone via the Mensline helpline or in person at one of the seven magistrate's courts in and around Brisbane.

Mensline is available from 9am to midnight, seven days a week and is covered by a dedicated team of male and some female counsellors. Whilst they do not provide legal advice, our Mensline team do also provide assistance to men appearing in one of the seven magistrate's courts in relation to Domestic Violence Protection Orders. We spend time with the men before they enter court preparing them for the court process around these applications. Mensline

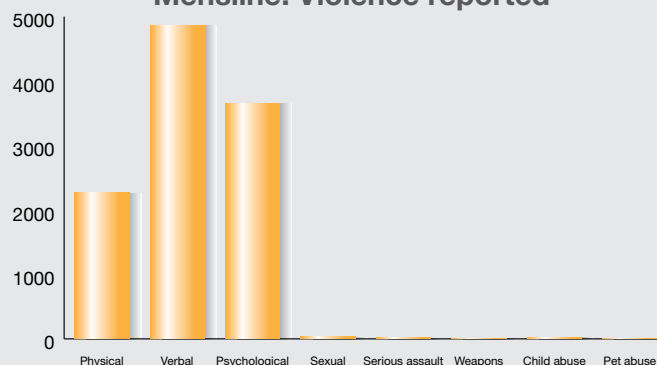
provided Court Assistance to 1,954 men, either in person or over the phone.

All of the assistance by way of counselling and practical support that is provided to men either by phone or at court is done through the lens of family safety. Mensline uses every opportunity to work with individual men whose actions create an environment of fear for their partners and children. Our resolve is to highlight the impact of abusive behaviours, challenge those who use violence to take responsibility for their actions and encouraging them to contact services to help them change.

Mensline Services Summary



Mensline: Violence reported



Mensline Court Assistance case studies

CASE STUDY ONE:

George did not consider that breaking down the bedroom door to get to his wife was domestic violence or that it was abusive for this to happen in front of the children.

Our worker explained the definition of domestic and family violence in Australia, our court process and his options in court.

The man was reluctant to take responsibility for his abuse, he thought that having a domestic violence order against him meant that he and partner automatically could not live together.

Once it was explained to him that this was not necessarily the case, as long as his partner agreed; he began to cry and said that he was sorry for what he had done and consented immediately to the order.

The effects of his behaviour might have on his children was also discussed and the man also agreed to consider a Behavioural Change Program as well as to accept a follow up call from our worker to see how he was going in the future

CASE STUDY TWO:

Peter from South Brisbane was seen by one of our court workers prior to his court appearance; the man was very uneasy and maintained he had been doing everything the temporary order stated such as staying with friends and not going near his wife and children. The man had previously been to prison and expressed his fear of being arrested again.

After it was explained to him that as long as he agreed to abide by the various conditions of the order, such as not trying to contact his wife or children and surrendering his weapons, and all other conditions – it would remain a civil matter, and he would not be breached in criminal court.

Initially the respondent had denied the violence described on the application, our worker raised the issue of the respondent's three children being named persons on the DVO application, and further discussion took place around the impact of his behaviour on them.

The court assistance worker provided contact details for local support services to help the man address his need to change his behaviour. Further assistance was given to understand the decisions he would have to make in court today and how his choices could make all the difference in the lives of his wife and children in the future.. The man eventually thanked our worker and stated he felt a lot calmer for having had the time to express his fears, worries and concerns, before entering the court room.

A much smaller percentage of men who call Mensline do so because of the violence they are experiencing within their relationships often by another male partner or family member. Sadly, Mensline also supports men at court who are seeking a protection order from their adult children. An even smaller number of men call Mensline because of violence from a female partner or family member. Often this violence is on a very different level to that experienced where the male is the perpetrator of violence. Most of these situations do not have the element of fear in these relationships but Mensline is very responsive to these situations and provide support and practical assistance where required.

Mensline also received over 2,422 police referrals via SupportLink this year. These referrals involve a follow up call to men who have consented to police for Mensline to contact them for ongoing assistance. These are instances where police have been called to the home because of domestic violence. Many of the men are pleased to have this support from Mensline and engage with the counsellor about strategies for the future prevention of violence within the home.





DVTraining Connect

DV Training Connect is a new division of DVConnect; formed specifically to respond to the increasing demand for professional training in this specialised field. As part of our commitment to improve the response to and the safety of women, children and men affected by Domestic and Family Violence, DVConnect has developed a range of workshops to present across disciplines and communities throughout Queensland.

Our trainers are all highly regarded practitioners, uniquely qualified to share their wealth of knowledge and understanding of the true nature of Domestic and Family Violence, and its effect on individuals and families, as well as the flow on effects on workplace productivity.

We are able to develop customised courses on a fee for service basis for specific industry and corporate settings and our non-accredited courses are well suited to those working in the area of community services including family lawyers and family services, faith-based organisations, court workers, allied services and community health.

Our flagship (non-accredited training) Developing Safe, Best Practice Responses to Domestic and Family Violence has been met with nothing but positive feedback and praise from participants and employers alike.

Training can take place in groups at various training locations around Brisbane or we can tailor workshops to deliver in the workplace.

Here's what participants have had to say about what they gained from their training:-

"Insight into the journey of a victim of DV"

"Good reflection on how the sector is responding to DV & Family Violence"

"More insight on perpetrators" "Emphasised systems abuse – more application"

"The importance of recognising DV in our community"

"The importance of continual support of agencies"

"To self-reflect and seek supervision where necessary"

"Ability to recognise less obvious indicators of DV"

"The importance of keeping safety as highest priority"

Prison Support Program

DVConnect continues to provide counselling to prisoners of the Brisbane Women's Correctional Centre (BWCC) at Wacol, most of whom have experienced childhood abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault throughout their lives. Prison statistics showed that 86% of the inmates experienced some or all of the above and many would be returning to this life upon release from prison.

The program has evolved into a series of information sessions followed by counselling. As part of our program of support, DVConnect has implemented a pathway for women who choose not to return to a violent home life by referring them to a safe refuge instead. Others are offered follow up by DVConnect for the purposes of continuity and a handing over to a local service for the ongoing support.

This is a valuable program for the women because many of them have lived lives of such deprivation and degradation that knowing they could leave this abuse and that there are services like DVConnect was not something they had any



understanding of. Our hope is to reach as many women, in prison as we can, to offer some information about their experiences and options for their own future safety, to help them break the cycle of abuse and violence in their lives.



Homeless Persons Information Queensland (HPIQ)

For the past six years Mensline and Womensline have been providing professional support to the 24/7 state-wide Homeless Persons line after hours. Cases that are generally referred are those involving adults with children and particularly vulnerable adults all of whom who have been assessed as not capable of safely 'sleeping rough'. We will often arrange overnight accommodation or transport to a safe place in these situations with a follow up back to HPIQ the following day. Mensline and Womensline assist more than 498 homeless adults and children throughout the state via HPIQ every year.

Homeless Connect

Twice a year Brisbane City Council brings together community and government organisations as well as "hands on" services such as massages, haircuts, podiatry and optometry visits to provide direct support for the homeless people living in the inner Brisbane area. A free breakfast and lunch is also served and the DVConnect stall is always in hot demand with counselling sessions, by our Mensline and Womensline staff, often occurring on the spot.



Pets in Crisis

For any pet lover whose animal is part of the family, the thought of leaving them behind in an emergency is unthinkable!

DVConnect counsellors regularly speak to women whose intimate partners use violence or threats of it towards their pets in order to frighten and control them into staying.

Places available in refuges for the victims of domestic and family violence are scarce, and in Queensland none are able to accommodate pets.

Sadly, hundreds of women, children and their beloved pets across Queensland are constrained in violent and fearful relationships because the fear and practical challenges of leaving are just too overwhelming.

And for the children moving without their special companions, at this time, compounds the loss and makes the trauma they are facing in their family life that much more intense.

These already emotionally drained and mostly financially strapped women are torn between protecting themselves and their children and the increased risk that their dear pets will (if they are not already affected) become the victims of the violence if they leave them behind.

Pets in Crisis is an extension of the RSPCA Qld's foster care program that facilitates safe refuge for animals at risk until they can be reunited with their families.

Last year we assisted 238 animals with safe passage and since the program began, over 1,200 animals have been placed in the temporary care of RSPCA Queensland and on a much smaller scale, the Animal Welfare League on the Gold Coast.

This is one of the most valued support programs we offer and without exception beneficiaries of Pets in Crisis express their overwhelming relief and gratitude and we all cannot thank RSPCA Qld enough.

Pets in Crisis helps whole families!

Knowing that their pets will be cared for and that they can be reunited as soon as they can get back on their feet is sometimes the catalyst for many women having the courage to take that vital step towards leaving a violent domestic situation and protecting themselves their children and just as importantly their pets.



Community Awareness and Engagement

Every month in Australia six women die at the hands of their intimate partner, at least one of them is from Queensland.

Through two significant community events DVConnect joins with other services and individuals in the sector and the community to highlight the most preventable of all deaths.

Candle Lighting Ceremony

The Candle Lighting Ceremony is a State-wide simultaneous vigil held on the first Wednesday of May. (Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month) In recent times the ceremony has become recognised and adopted as a national event with vigils in every State and Territory.

This year's Candle Lighting Ceremony in Brisbane was once again a great success. With hundreds turning out for the event at the Southbank Forecourt. We were thrilled to have additional support from the participants in the Minter Ellison / CEO Challenge twilight walk from the city and the inaugural Darkness to Daylight 110km team event.

The very personal and emotional stories that were shared on the evening were a sad reminder to us all of the tragic consequences of domestic violence and why we were all gathered there.

Red Rose Rallies

These silent rallies in Queensland are the initiative of the Domestic Violence Death Review Group (DVDREG) and are held in the same location outside Parliament in Brisbane on Friday lunch time of the week that the alert about the death of a woman is circulated by DVDREG.

Sadly in the year ended June 2014 we held 10 rallies for 18 women who died at the hands of their male partners.

As with the Candle Light Vigils, these rallies are now taking place throughout the state.



Candle Lighting Ceremony images courtesy of:
Damian Bredberg Photography

Sector Engagement and Development

Every year staff from DVConnect travel to as many parts of the state as is necessary for the building of stronger working relationships with local services.

A specific area of interest in recent times has been Far North Queensland and Torres Strait Islands because of the high number of requests from women from the region for assistance to get to safety.



DVConnect's visit to the Gulf (arriving in Weipa). Also visited Aurukuun, Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama

DVConnect assists many women and their children to escape the violence at home by flying them to other parts of the Torres Strait or the mainland to either family or refuge on Thursday Island or in Cairns. Because of the regularity of our work in this area we have made a concerted effort to have a closer working relationship with services, including police, in the area.

Staff also travelled to Cairns, Mackay, Innisfail and Mt Isa for the purposes of meeting with local services providers and attending network meetings.



Annual Indigenous Forum - Mackay

Every year in May, DVConnect sends at least two workers to this forum which is hosted by the Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research Centre. The forum is specifically hosted for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in the field and because of the state-wide reach of our service delivery we want to make contact with as many services and workers as we can throughout the state.



Dr David Adams- Training

Together with Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service we were thrilled to be able to facilitate a much sort after training session by the renowned Dr David Adams.

The workshops entitled "Safe engagement with men who abuse or control their partners" were held in Cairns and Brisbane in late May. The sessions covered a range of topics and issues relevant to working with men who use violence as well as those who support their partners and children. They left a deep and lasting influence in the level of analysis within our Mensline and extended workgroup as well as the 80 plus people attending from the human services sector.

What was of particular interest was the structure and practices of a high risk assessment team. It draws together professionals from law enforcement, judiciary, child protection, probation, legal, victims' advocates and behavioural change to form a comprehensive group that supports the victim and holds the perpetrator accountable – something we wholeheartedly support.

DVConnect is governed by a Board of Directors

Besides providing a strategic framework that guides and supports the professional management team in the development and financing of the company's activities, our Board also acts as a reference point for specific issues that require expertise beyond the core capability of the company's professionals.

The Board undertakes its duties and obligations as required by the Corporations Act, our Service Agreement and other funding service delivery guidelines issued by the Department of Communities.

Michelle Farr – Director/Chair (16th July 2013)/ Audit, Risk & Finance Committee member

Michelle Farr is a certified practising accountant with over 20 years' experience in the small business and not-for-profit sectors. She has owned her own practice since August 2003, and continues to provide business advice to many long-term clients.

Michelle's qualifications include Certified Practising Accountant, member of the National Tax and Accountant's Association, member of Australian Institute of Company Directors (MAICD), and is a registered Tax Agent. Michelle has a Business Degree from Griffith University (Accounting) and is a Commissioner for Declarations. She has completed her Diploma of Financial Planning, and is a CPA accredited Self-Managed Superannuation Fund specialist.

Michelle has been involved in business growth advice, business planning, structuring, tax minimisation strategies, superannuation, capital gains implications, human resource management, compilation and implementation of policy manuals and procedure manuals as well as typical accounting duties for her many clients across numerous industries.

Her passion for community involvement has seen Michelle actively involved in various community committees over the years, including CPA Australia, Business Women Incorporated, and many school Parents and Friends Associations. Whilst in these roles, Michelle has successfully established a community not-for-profit kindergarten, and restructured a school canteen into a profitable business for a local private school on the Gold Coast.

Michelle is registered as an authorised consultant with the Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation to provide business advice to clients in receipt of government grants. She also regularly consults with clients to assist in obtaining such government grants for business development, and more recently flood recovery.

Natalie Ewin - Director/Audit, Risk & Finance Committee member

Natalie has 12 years experience in project management in the government and non-government sectors. She is an experienced portfolio analyst and performance consultant who provides business planning advice to small business and also manages the Portfolio, Program and Project Management methodology in the Department of Communities. Natalie holds a Masters of Business Administration from the Queensland University of Technology and was presented with the Directors Award for outstanding academic achievement and recognised for excellence in business planning. She holds a Bachelors Degree in Biomedical Science from Newcastle University for which she was presented with a research scholarship for the regulation of mast cell secretion in Asthma.

During her time with the Queensland Police Service, Natalie worked as a Domestic Violence Liaison Officer, a Women's Advisory Group Coordinator and after being awarded Dux of the 51st Prosecutors Course, worked as a police prosecutor including prosecuting in the Brisbane Domestic and Family Violence Court.

Linda Dreghorn – Director/Company Secretary

Linda is the Company Secretary and is also currently Company Secretary for Green Cross Australia and a Principal Arts Development Officer at Arts Queensland. Her previous roles include Company Secretary and Legal Counsel for Major Brisbane Festivals Pty Ltd, General Manager of Brisbane Festival 2006, Secretary and Director of the Secretariat of the Queensland Law Society Inc., Coordinator of Due Diligence for Sun Water's acquisition of major water infrastructure and Lecturer in Law at the Queensland Institute of Technology. Linda holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Queensland and a Graduate Diploma in Company Secretarial Studies. She has practised as a solicitor in Queensland for over 20 years.

Dr Ron Frey - Director

Ron is a psychologist who has lectured at the School of Psychology and Counselling at QUT for the past 20 years on topics of gender, human sexuality and developmental psychology. He holds a Bachelors Degree and a Masters in Special Education (1980) from Harding University in the United States, a Masters Preliminary Degree in Psychology (1985) from Sydney University and a Doctorate on The Nature of Gender from the School of Education and Social Work at the University of Queensland (2004).

Ron's vocational background includes youth work, child protection, probation and parole and refugee assistance. For 13 years he worked with the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Program and contributed to the manual developed for this program – Domestic Violence and the Churches (1995). He has been active in Men Against Sexual Assault (MASA) and served on the Australian National Committee of Defence for Children International. He has also worked extensively with the preschool sector and with child protection issues in cross cultural communities. Ron is a full member of the Australian Psychological Society, a nationally registered psychologist and currently divides his time between preparing forensic psychological assessments for courts, working at a south side centre which specialises in working with children and families affected by all forms of family violence and lecturing at QUT.

Heather Castledine - Director

Heather is a proud Kamilaroi-Kooma (aboriginal) woman and is actively involved with many indigenous organisations in Queensland. She is the Aboriginal Chair for Reconciliation Queensland Inc., committee member for the Logan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Elders and Board for Murrigunyah (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation for Women – a sexual assault service).

Heather works as an Indigenous Cultural Consultant to a team of clinicians for the Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS) of Queensland Health. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work, Certificate IV in Indigenous Leadership, Diploma of Community Services, Certificate of Attendance to Attachment Theory and Practice Relevance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Peoples, Statement of Completion A&TSI Cultural Awareness Facilitator Training, Outstanding Achievement for Reconciliation Learning Circle Kit, Certificate of Participation in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills and Statement of Attainment Senior First Aid and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people Mental Health First.

Katherine Marnane - Director

(resigned 15th April 2014)

Kath is the Director of Kath Marnane and Associates, Pty. Ltd., an international development firm based in Brisbane. Kath has over 20 years experience working in vocational education and training and holds a Masters in Arts (Policy and Leadership), Graduate Diplomas in Public Sector Management and Business (Human Resources Management), a Diploma in Teaching and a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. Kath is internationally experienced having worked in Australia, Asia, and the UK and in the Pacific. She has also held senior management roles in Government and has led Australian TVET missions internationally. Her consultancy business is internationally connected with business networks including international government ministries and agencies, industry and community organisations in countries such as Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia.

Elissa Farrow – Director/Audit, Risk & Finance Committee Chair

Elissa Farrow has extensive experience in defining strategy and implementing it successfully. Elissa runs a successful training and consultancy business in Brisbane and has supported many organisations in private, public and community to successfully deliver customer and client value. Elissa has practically managed programs and projects for the last 12 years. She has also been a organisational change manager on a number of large government reforms. Elissa has delivered key governance documents such as strategic plans, performance frameworks and reports. She has reviewed governance arrangements at corporate and strategy delivery levels and provided program and project assurance and benefit reviews.

Elissa is experienced in providing training, mentoring and coaching in the areas of project management, program management, executive and team coaching and personality profiling. Elissa manages her own business About Your Transition and is a registered trainer of PRINCE2 and holds Certificate IV in Training and Assessment as well as PROSCI, Myers Briggs Type Instrument and Team Management System certification and facilitation.

Elissa has formal academic and industry qualifications in social science, management, program, project, portfolio and change management amongst other certifications.

Wilhelmus Kerkhof - Director

(appointed 18 February 2014)

Will Kerkhof is an experienced transformational leader with over 28 years' experience in not-for-profit, public and private sector organization. Will works with MDA Ltd (previously Multicultural Development Association) to enhance the data management and reporting capability of this organisation that focusses on achieving the best settlement outcomes for clients and works to actively promote multiculturalism. As a previous Chief executive officer of three not-for-profit organisations in health and housing context, he brings a wide range of knowledge, skills and experience to support the important work DVConnect Limited is undertaking. Will is married with two young children.

Lydia Mudryj – Director/Audit, Risk & Finance Committee member

(appointed 14 April 2014)

Lydia is an experienced trans-Tasman lawyer, commercial litigator and manager, with over 25 years working in the legal jurisdictions of New Zealand, Australia and the Pacific region. She was a partner of a national firm in New Zealand and more recently the head of litigation for a Gold Coast law firm. She is also qualified to teach English as a second language and has a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. She has over 20 years' experience teaching many components of law to lawyers, legal clerks, students and clients through oral presentations and in the provision of written work in New Zealand and Australia.

In particular Lydia's skills competencies include managing and advising on high level corporate litigation strategies for clients across a diverse range of industries, advising clients

in the banking and finance industries and representing professional indemnity insurers in Australia and New Zealand. She also has extensive experience in various dispute resolution forums including arbitration, mediation and litigation, and advises businesses on corporate governance, risk management strategies, competition and trade practices.

Most recently Lydia has become involved in teaching English as a second language, on a voluntary basis, to foreign students / new migrants on the Gold Coast and also contributes her time as a committee member to a not-for-profit association, Business Women Incorporated.

Janet Collier – Director/Chair of the Board

(resigned 16th July 2013)

Janet is a senior management and finance professional with 30 years' experience and has worked throughout Australia, United Kingdom and East Timor. She has a broad range of experience in not-for-profit, public practice, business and government organisations. She is a fully qualified Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) and has a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy). Janet also holds a Masters of Asian Studies (Research). Janet's current focus is capacity building projects in South East Asia, focusing on strengthening the management and financial capability of organisations in the not-for-profit sector. Her previous roles include Chief Financial Officer for DVConnect Ltd, Director and owner of Biz Dynamix Pty. Ltd, a consultancy providing business and management consulting services to the SME market and Partner at Peden, Lavis and Co, Chartered Accountants.

Sector networks

As the only State-wide 24/7 telephone service, DVConnect plays a pivotal and unique role in the overall crisis response to domestic and family violence and sexual assault in Queensland.



Staff from DVConnect participating in the first statewide meeting to discuss the forming of a new Peak Body

Queensland's first Women's Sector Peak

DVConnect and a committed group of representatives from across the state and service areas (sexual assault, women's health and domestic and family violence) got together late 2013 to prepare for the first full statewide meeting of our wider sector for the purposes of finally forming a Peak Body.

We held this meeting in February 2014 with an amazing turnout from around the state and across service areas within the women's sector.

From the meeting we formed a Steering Committee which was charged with putting the framework of the Peak together in preparation for the second statewide meeting a year later.

Financial commitments were made by some services along with funds from the Violence Against Women Conference in 2012 that allowed not only for the hosting of the statewide meeting but also to support the secretariat position.

During the course of consultation and formalisation of the Peak a website was put together and an eNews to keep the wider sector informed of the progress and what was to come.

The first formal meeting of the Peak will be held in March 2015.

VISION (Victim Services Interagency Organisation Network) Vision is a network of government and non-government agencies funded for direct service delivery for victims of personal (violent) crime in Queensland. The network, rather than providing service delivery itself, offers a networking and information sharing opportunity for agencies to discuss policy matters and areas of interest to victim services.

DFVCLAN (Domestic and Family Violence Crisis Lines of Australia) is a network of the statewide crisis lines throughout Australia. This network meets bi monthly by teleconference and face to face annually. Last meeting was held in Melbourne. Both CEO and Practice Manager attended this. Next meeting to be held in Canberra

CWRG (Combined Women's Refuge Group: Southeast Queensland, Central Queensland and North Queensland) is the oldest network in the domestic violence sector. It is made up of the refuges/safe houses and meets monthly in the southeast and quarterly in the regions. DVConnect attends bi monthly meetings in Brisbane and attends regional meetings throughout the state including the Torres Strait, one a year.

SPEAQ (Services and Professionals for the Elimination of Abuse Qld)

This network meets monthly by teleconference – mostly the practitioners. The managers meet annually.

DVDRAAG (DV Death Review Action Group) initiated the Red Rose Rallies in Queensland that are held outside Government House at midday on Fridays, every time a person (mainly women) is killed because of domestic and family violence. Generally there are between 12 and 24 such deaths and rallies in Queensland each year.

DVLON (Domestic Violence Liaison Officer's Network) Womensline and Mensline representatives attend these meetings every three months. This is the only network that involves police and is a valuable network for DVConnect.

QDVSN (Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network)

This network is made up of the 12 regional specialist domestic violence services, the Centre for Domestic and Family Research and the Immigrant Women's Support Service. DVConnect meets with the network at each of their quarterly meetings.

SPEAQ (Services and Practitioners for the Elimination of Abuse Qld)

is the only network of practitioners and service who provide behaviour change programs for perpetrators of domestic and family violence. While Mensline does not provide a behaviour change program our membership is a significant one because of our statewide response to all men and the high number of men we refer to these programs either from court of as a result of their call to our helpline. DVConnect also auspices the secretariat of SPEAQ".

Current Service Agreements/Other Grants

Current Service Agreements

- **Womensline**

Funding for our core service, Womensline, comes from the **Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services**; Violence Prevention Team and our service agreement is covered by the Community Service Act 2007.

Funded by



- **Sexual Assault Helpline**

Funded through the Department of Communities

Funded by



- **Womensline Court Support**

Funding for this service is from Department of Communities for Holland Park Court.

Funded by



- **Mensline Court Support**

This program is funded by and made possible by the Legal Practitioner Interest on Trust Accounts Fund (LPITAF) and is administered by Legal Aid



Our Partners and Supporters

DVConnect recognises the significant support and contribution made by the following Government, Corporate and Community Supporters. Without the invaluable support and fiscal contribution provided by these organisations our Statewide domestic and family telephone crisis lines would not be able to continue to provide and expand our essential services to the growing number of individuals and communities in need throughout urban, rural and remote Queensland.

Partners and Supporters

- RSPCAQLD / Pets in Crisis program. A highly regarded and much valued program this year we assisted 238 animals to safety. We are truly appreciative of the amazing support the team at RSPCA Qld provide to our workers during some of the more challenging scenarios around moving animals to safety.



- Animal Welfare League QLD, who partner with us to foster animals in the Gold Coast area.

- Queensland Rail who is a major supporter of DVConnect in the free long distance travel they provide to our clients. This partnership was brokered through CEO Challenge.



- Thanks must go to the staff at Accenture and to Accenture too for initiating and supporting their workplace giving program. Your monthly contributions are sincerely appreciated



- CEO Challenge who provide us a voice in the Corporate Sector and are tireless in their pursuit of financial and social support for domestic and family violence services throughout Queensland.



- The Queensland Country Women's Association, who through their numerous members and volunteers around the state, including some very remote areas, support us by collecting and covering the costs to provide emergency Carepack bags for our women and children in emergency accommodation.



- Greyhound Australia who provide assistance to us by distributing Carepacks to various destinations throughout the State.



- Intimo Lingerie who have been a financial supporter of DVConnect for seven years. In November each year, Intimo donates \$1 for every white bra sold to community organisations in each State. The money raised by Queensland Consultants is donated to DVConnect.



This inspiring group of women are providing hope and practical assistance to women setting up home after being in refuge but increasingly are supporting a large number of related support programs



Special thanks this year must go to the many community groups and individuals who went out of their way to make donations, participate in and even initiate some fabulous events to raise awareness and important funds to support DVConnect, especially Alannah and the Shimmy Mob, as well as Michelle and Wala who participated in the Gold Coast Marathon

We are sincerely grateful and THANK YOU!

Resources

In 2013 we were pleased to publish a new website, packed with information, advice and links to other services, and we joined the social media world with a Facebook page, aimed at educating and helping women and men to understand the complex nature of Domestic and Family Violence.

We also launched a new range of promotional/referral cards. The business card size referral cards are intended for wide, yet discreet, distribution to people at risk and those who care for them.



FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

DVConnect Limited ABN 66 101 186 476

Special Purpose Financial Statements for the organisation for the financial year 2013-2014
were prepared by PKF Lawler Audit

DVConnect Limited has been endorsed by the ATO as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and has
Authority to Fundraise in Queensland, under the Charity number 1459

INCOME STATEMENT	2014(\$)	2013(\$)
REVENUE	3,231,446	3,176,912
EXPENDITURE		
Administrative Expenses	140,058	130,571
Property Expenses	157,525	155,838
Depreciation	19,363	454
Employment & Contract Expenses	2,514,226	2,380,854
Client Related Expenses	432,818	332,733
Other Expenses	82,288	93,079
Profit (loss) before income tax	(114,832)	83,383
Income tax expenses	-	-
Profit (loss) for the year	(114,832)	83,383
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(114,832)	83,383
Total comprehensive income (loss) attributable to members of the entity	(114,832)	83,383

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2014

	2014(\$)	2013(\$)
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
- Cash and cash equivalents	653,748	959,235
- Trade & other receivables	17,085	5,632
- Total Current Assets	670,833	964,867
Non-Current assets		
- Trade and other receivables	20,167	-
- Property, plant & equipment	114,360	3,181
- Total Non-Current assets	134,527	3,181
Total Assets	805,360	968,048
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
- Trade & other payables	229,263	290,873
- Provision for annual leave	120,785	123,496
- Other	3,446	4,361
- Total Current Liabilities	353,494	418,730
Non-Current Liabilities		
- Provision for Long Service Leave	104,094	86,714
- Total Non-Current Liabilities	104,094	86,714
Total Liabilities	457,588	505,444
Net Assets	347,772	462,604
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	(2,228)	169,924
General reserve	350,000	292,680
Total Equity	347,772	462,604

Domestic or Family Violence?

DV CONNECT
anyone can **make the call.**

1800 811 811

www.dvconnect.org



WOMENSLINE

1800 811 811

Phone line for women, children
& young people. 24 hours, 7 days



MENSLINE

1800 600 636

Phone line for men.
9am - midnight, 7 days



SEXUAL ASSAULT LINE

1800 010 120

Sexual Assault Helpline 24 hours, 7 days





DVConnect Limited

PO Box 10575

Adelaide St

Brisbane Qld 4000

Phone 07 3156 2323

Womensline 1800 811 811

Mensline 1800 600 636

Sexual Assault Line 1800 010 120

Email: mail@dvconnect.org

www.dvconnect.org

Funded by

