

Annual Report

2018/19

DVCONNECT
Be heard. Be safe.



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Board of Directors

Shaan Ross-Smith, Chair

Shaan commenced at Griffith University in late 2016 as the Director of the MATE program delivered through Griffith University's Violence Research and Prevention Program. Prior to commencing at Griffith University Shaan spent sixteen years working with the Queensland Corrective Services through various managerial and director roles, including Director of Offender Rehabilitation and Management across Queensland. Shaan chose to diversify this experience in 2014 to work with victims/survivors at the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre as the Integrated Response Manager. Shaan did this while continuing to work with perpetrators through a behaviour change program. Shaan is passionate about ending gender-based violence. Shaan holds post graduate qualifications in Psychology.

Enid Hughes, Deputy Chair

Enid is the Human Capital Partner at Deloitte. Enid is a strategic thinker and experienced management consultant bringing to the table broad executive capabilities across; business strategy, HR management, project management, brand management, organisational change and information technology. Her experience covers the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. Enid is focused on performance; with a passion for business transformation through technology and organisational change. She has managed multi-million dollar projects of multi-disciplined teams in large and complex organisations. Enid is an advocate of women at all levels and gender equality and is an active mentor. Enid holds a Master of Business Administration and Bachelor of Applied Science (Computing).

Linda Dreghorn, Secretary

Linda is currently Company Secretary for Green Cross Australia and Manager, Business Performance – Governance at Arts Queensland. 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, Co-ordinator of Due Diligence for SunWater's acquisition of major water infrastructure and Lecturer in Law at the Queensland University of Technology. Linda has a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Laws from the University of Queensland, a Graduate Diploma in Company Secretarial Studies and is a graduate of the ACID Company Directors' course.

Heather Castledine, Director

Aunty 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 & Torres Strait Islander Community Elders. She is also Chair of Murrigunyah Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders for Women and a Director of Youth & Family Service. Aunty Heather works as an Indigenous Cultural Consultant to a team of clinicians for the Child & Youth Mental Health Service of Queensland Health. She holds a Bachelor of Social Work, as well as a Diploma of Community Services and Certificate IV in Indigenous Leadership, Diploma of Community Services.

Glenn Henderson, Director

Glenn is the General Manager at Qscan Radiology Clinics. Glenn is also the Chair of the Audit Risk and Finance Committee for DVConnect. He previously worked for Stellar Asia Pacific as Group General Manager Operations (Bigpond), Trading Post and APN News and Media in finance, sales and operations roles. Prior to these roles Glenn gained experience in public practice as an accountant. Glenn has a Bachelor of Business (Accountancy) from Charles Sturt University – Albury NSW. He is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Fiona Maxwell, Director

Fiona's career has spanned the non-profit, government and university sectors in Australia and the USA. Prior to becoming CEO of Brisbane Powerhouse, Fiona was Queensland Manager for Philanthropy Australia, establishing the Brisbane office and supporting philanthropists and non-profits alike to grow the sector. Fiona has extensive experience building strong relationships with stakeholders in various industries including the service industry, internet start-up sector and philanthropic sector. Fiona holds a Bachelor of Arts from Queensland University of Technology, a Masters from the University of New South Wales and recently completed the Executive Program for non-profit Leaders at Stanford University.

Leigh Talbrett, Director

Leigh has worked as a secondary teacher, a university administrator and senior public servant, ending her public service career as Deputy Director-General (Arts Queensland) in the Department of Premier and Cabinet. She has served on numerous state and national bodies and has been an advisor to both State and Federal Governments on higher education and on arts and cultural policy. She now works as a company director and business coach. She is Chair of Bleached Arts Ltd, which delivers the Bleach Festival on the Gold Coast, Deputy Chair of the Queensland Performing Arts Trust and a Director of the Community Services Industry Alliance. As Chair of One Mind Ltd, she worked to develop the WOW (Women of the World) Festival in Australia and the Pacific, including staging the Festival as part of the cultural program for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Vision

Our vision is for all relationships to be free from domestic, family & sexual violence.

Values

Respect
Safety
Equality
Accountability
Empowerment

Mission

Through collaboration we enable seamless pathways from violence to safety and beyond.

Principles

We operate from a feminist framework and **we acknowledge** that domestic, family and sexual violence is gender-based violence, predominantly perpetrated against women.

We provide services to support everyone experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence.

We are committed to working collaboratively as part of the broader system, developing innovative services and providing robust governance and organisational sustainability **to deliver on our vision and mission.**

Message from Chair

For 39 years DVConnect has been responding to the needs of Queenslanders escaping domestic and family violence. During 2018/19 we have undergone an important transformation to ensure we can continue to respond for many more years to come.

The past year has seen significant investment in an upgrade to the telephony, client data systems and technological infrastructure that is critical for the availability and responsiveness required of a state-wide 24/7 crisis service. Coupled with improved clinical governance, re-imagined program leadership and important investment in the professional development of our specialised workforce; these enhancements are ensuring our clients are receiving timely, consistent and expert support when they need it. We acknowledge the Queensland State Government for their support to achieve this.

Change of this magnitude is not an easy passage and has only been successful due to the unwavering commitment and resilience of our incredible staff. We would like to make mention of the strong and focused leadership of Kathy Whiting and Sophie McCashin. We are proud to say the effort from all involved has not only resulted in improved outcomes for our clients but has seen our funding future secured with a 5 year contract extension for our state-wide crisis services.

We are acutely aware that our work is only made possible by the generosity of our partners, supporters and funders. From our friend Jules from Mackay, who held a cupcake sale and raised \$1000 as a thank you for us helping her and her children escape violence. To Tilly in Brisbane who raised \$1050 by asking her family and friends to donate to her DVConnect Facebook Fundraising Page in lieu of giving her birthday gifts. Through to our partners, QSuper who donates the cost to fund a full time Crisis counsellor each year and Halcyon and Mirvac who donated almost \$1.7 million through the creation of Bella's Sanctuary. Your contributions and investment have directly and profoundly impacted the lives of many. We sincerely thank you for your ongoing support.

Some of the years' highlights:

- In January 2019 we relocated offices. All programs and staff are now in one location which has improved infrastructure and opportunity for expansion with 40% more space than previous facilities. This move has resulted in improved team cultural strength, improved security, as well as staff attraction and retention benefits.
- Strengthening our commitment to diversity and inclusion, we are working with the Queensland Aids Council to re-develop their Queer without Fear training package. This working group is also rewriting Queer Without Fear safety card and Domestic and Family Violence information booklet for LGBTIQ+ communities.
- We were gifted Bella's Sanctuary, a transitional accommodation residence for longer term housing of women and children affected by domestic and family violence. We partnered with Mirvac Residential and Queensland builders Halcyon, together with 90 building industry suppliers to co-design and construct Australia's first commercially funded bridging accommodation residence on the Gold Coast with a total in-kind contribution of almost \$1.7 million.
- We have gone through significant re-branding within the last year with a refreshed website and new social media platforms. Throughout the development of our online media, we have maintained a strong emphasis on reflecting our values and demonstrating our efforts to be as accessible as possible for all individuals who are experiencing violence.
- We undertook the co-secretariat on the Queensland Domestic Violence Network (QDVSN).

Finally in June 2019 we farewelled Michelle Wicks who served as the Business Transformation Manager and leader of Project Bell throughout the year. We are grateful for Michelle's vision and tenacity to see us through the journey of change, ensuring a strong foundation to continue our work.

The Board is delighted to welcome Beck O'Connor to our team as CEO in 2019. Beck has already shown her unwavering commitment to DVConnect and we consider our organisation very fortunate to have her on our team.

Shaan Ross-Smith, Chair

Requests for Service

103,663 CALLS & REFERRALS received across all 3 helplines in **2018 / 2019.**

31% more CHILDREN received safe emergency accommodation in **2018-19** compared to the previous year.

On average, EVERY NIGHT we provide safe emergency accommodation for up to **30 FAMILIES.**

EVERY DAY, on average, we provide up to **24 new families** with safe emergency **ACCOMMODATION.**

WOMENSLINE was in need of **10% MORE room nights** in **2018/19** to provide safe emergency **ACCOMMODATION** compared to last year.

EVERY NIGHT on average, we provide up to **15 children** with safe emergency **ACCOMMODATION.**

Womensline

- 95,294 phone calls received
- 67% were assisted/supported to access counselling & support
- 26% of all intakes were provided with crisis intervention
- 12% of callers identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 16% identified as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)
- 5201 women and children received emergency transport
- 2066 women received emergency transport
- 3135 children received emergency transport
- 10,494 emergency accommodation room nights used by Womensline
- Increase of 1009 additional room nights compared to last year
- 2982 women received support to access emergency accommodation
- 5668 children received emergency accommodation
- 1359 more children needed emergency accommodation this financial year, compared to last

Mensline

- 11,952 calls and referrals
- 6812 calls were received
- 6488 Police Referrals were received, 21% more than the previous year
- 2016 men were interviewed by Mensline Court Support staff
- 2248 men received counselling
- 5014 men received information
- 20 men received crisis intervention
- 16 men received emergency transport
- 20 men received emergency accommodation

Sexual Assault Helpline

1638

phone calls & referrals received

107

callers were 'acute' (abuse took place 72-96 hours prior)

104

callers were 'recent' (abuse took place 2 weeks prior)

124

callers experienced sexual assault as a child/adolescent & were calling as adults

177

callers were children (under 18 years) who experienced sexual assault as a child (parent or child calling)

268

callers were adults calling in relation to past sexual assault that occurred in adulthood

Pets In Crisis

188 pets were taken care of within our Pets In Crisis Program

103 dogs

77 cats

7 birds

1 guinea pig

On average, we decline almost 2 animals weekly due to no space available in the RSPCA Queensland shelters and no foster carers available.

Workplace Training

During 2018-19 DVConnect provided domestic, family and sexual violence workplace training to a variety of organisations. The training is tailor suited to each workplace and focuses on developing safe, best practice response to domestic, family and sexual violence.

30

organisations received DVConnect workplace training

450

people received DVConnect workplace training

over **70**

hours of domestic & family violence training



Our People

At the heart of what we do are our employees, volunteers and students who work together every day towards ensuring our clients have a seamless passage to safety and beyond. It has been a huge year of change and the teams have risen to the challenge of transforming our organisation, through new ICT systems; a new office and new programs. Our people are what makes the difference, we value their commitment, passion and contribution to the work they do in changing lives every day. We are here to support them by providing a safe and inspirational work environment that celebrates achievements, provides development and career opportunities and recognises our talent.

Bringing our people together at a time of change.

One of our key activities this year was our move to a new office, with a search for the ideal work environment taking over 6 months and culminating in securing beautiful open premises. This has resulted in all teams being located at the one site which has enhanced team dynamics. The facilities provide a light filled office environment, along with spacious meeting/training rooms and areas for relaxation and coming together. The move has truly had such a positive impact on all team members and they have relished the opportunity of engaging more widely with each other.

The other major change through this year, has been the enhancement of our ICT systems across the crisis teams, resulting in more streamlined, secure and contemporary systems to improve our support to clients. From previous staff surveys and other communication, this was a change our staff had been seeking for some time and they worked tirelessly with the Transformation team to ensure the success of this project and we thank them all for their support, flexibility and efforts.

As well as new systems in our service delivery area, it was also a time of great change in the People & Culture space, implementing for the first time a new HRIS; LMS and Recruitment system and upgrading our payroll system – a huge piece of work. These new systems have improved engagement and benefits for staff with a wide range of self service options; streamlining many P&C activities resulting in huge efficiencies; integration and hosting of internal data; improved organisational training capability and optimisation with rostering and scheduling, as well as many others.

DVConnect have talented and quality practitioners across all our programs and another key initiative undertaken this year, to enhance our reach and attraction, was the successful trial for our specialist counsellors to 'work from home'. Being able to offer more flexibility with remote working arrangements, has only enhanced the quality of our staff undertaking this work and provided opportunities outside of Brisbane for experienced practitioners. We thank all those staff in this trial for their extensive feedback, to ensure success.

All these improved systems combined with contract extensions for all our programs, provides a wonderful platform for us to continue to enhance our service delivery and opportunity for more innovation and diversity into future. A huge thank you to our teams in a year of significant change.

Our Funders

DVConnect would like to recognise and express our sincere gratitude to funders, donors and partners that make it possible to deliver our services.

Our Funders

Womensline, Mensline, Sexual Assault Helpline

Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women

Mensline Court Support

Department of Justice and Attorney General

1800RESPECT

Medibank funds specialist counselling through a subcontracted panel of providers. In addition to the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Our Partners



QSuper funds Crisis counsellor for another 3 years

In 2016 QSuper entered into a three-year partnership with DVConnect to fund the employment of an additional full-time telephone crisis counsellor. In September this year, QSuper announced it will extend the partnership for an additional three years.

QSuper CEO Mr Michael Pennisi believes organisations have a responsibility to take an active role in eliminating domestic and family violence, both within their workplaces and the broader community.

“There is only so much that governments and not for profits can do to overcome issues such as domestic violence. More and more it’s up to organisations to work collaboratively to help tackle domestic violence in our communities. Domestic violence takes a significant social, emotional and financial toll on its victims, who are predominantly women. With women making up almost two-thirds of QSuper membership and more than half of our workforce we feel a great responsibility to act. As an organisation with over 575,000 members and around 1,500 staff, we can play a role in calling out this abhorrent behaviour and letting the community know that we don’t tolerate domestic and family violence,” he said.

The additional full-time Crisis counsellor funded by QSuper is positioned within the helpline centre in Brisbane and takes calls from all over Queensland. The counsellor assists the additional 4000 callers with:

- Emergency transport away from the violence situation they are in. Emergency accommodation in a safe location.
- Safety planning so they stay safe during their departure. Research shows this is the most dangerous time for those leaving violence.
- Crisis Counselling and Intervention to help them through this extremely traumatic time.

With so many QSuper members supporting victims of domestic violence in their roles as police, nurses, emergency services, teachers, child safety and legal officers, QSuper wanted to mirror their commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable Queenslanders. QSuper employees are supportive of the DVConnect services as well. They regularly hold Bake Sales to raise money to help more Queenslanders. They also volunteer with the organisation and event co-ordination of the annual Brisbane Candle Lighting Vigil, held on the 1st of May yearly.

Our Donors

Thank you to all our amazingly generous donors. We have a number of generous people and organisations who hold bake sales, Facebook fundraisers and so much more to help us continue to help Queenslanders experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence.

Some significant donations include:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Dangerous Females – selling T.shirts | \$11,326 |
| • White Ribbon Breakfast | \$9,611 |
| • Containers for Change recycling program | \$5,540 |
| • QSuper Staff Bake Sale | \$2,436 |
| • Mirvac Enriching Communities, Pimpama | \$1,800 |
| • Mirvac Enriching Communities, Greenbank | \$1,235 |
| • Tilly Leeman, Facebook Fundraiser | \$1,050 |
| • Slater & Gordon | \$1,000 |
| • Inner Wheel Club of Brisbane | \$1,000 |



Creating Bella's Sanctuary

Mirvac and lifestyle community developer Halcyon, designed, built and then donated a \$1.7 million dollar, 5 unit purpose-built bridging accommodation facility for survivors of domestic and family violence, to DVConnect.

The project, which opened in August 2019, is a first-of-its-kind collaboration between the private sector, not-for-profit and government in Queensland.

Mirvac and Halcyon worked in consultation with DVConnect, over 90 subcontractors and suppliers and the Queensland Government to build the home. The home provides a safe and comfortable environment for women with children exiting domestic violence situations.

Indistinguishable from other homes in a master-planned community, it comprises 2 one-bedroom units, one especially for the disabled, 2 two-bedroom units and 1 three-bedroom unit. Each unit has its own kitchenette, living area and courtyard. The facility

also has a communal kitchen and living room, a play area, a dedicated office space for DVConnect support services, as well as an alarm, state-of-the-art security system and keypad entry on all doors and gates.

Named Bella's Sanctuary, it was designed to provide a safe space for women and children to create new life plans and where relevant, re-enter the workplace with confidence. The residence eliminates the pressures of time constraints, and ensures that victims of domestic violence are able to take a considered approach in rebuilding their lives, providing an alternative so that they do not feel forced to re-enter a potentially dangerous and violent situation.

Bella's Sanctuary is a tangible example of how the private sector and not-for-profit sector can work together to solve very real challenges in communities. Mirvac and Halcyon hope the facility leads the way in encouraging businesses to get behind critical, not-for-profit infrastructure that benefits the most at-risk people living in our communities.



Thank you to everyone who helped create Bella's Sanctuary

A1 Services Carlee
Accent Stone
API Locksmiths
Assure Designs
ATF
Beds Galore
Big River Timber
Bridgehampton
Coastal Building and Construction
Coastal Kitchens
Corinthian
Cosby Foundation
Cross Cranes
Delonghi
Dynamic Bradview
Flick Anticimex
Frame Carpenter
Global Waterproofing
GMC Engineering Consultants
Harvey Norman
Highpeak Concrete
Hytec
Jason Gannon Cabinets
JJD Enterprises/Factory Fit Screens
LocScape Fencing
Modern Cladding
NGV
Northcoast Seamless Floors

Parklane Tile & Grout Cleaning
QLD Stairs
RT Edwards
S+P Mckey
Slabtech Concreting
Suncoast Blinds & Shutters
Tiler
Timber Trend Kitchens
Treasured Interiors
UD Furniture
World Carpets
GMC Stone
A&L Windows
Advantage Air
ARC
Beacon Lighting Commercial
Beaumonts
Bluescope Steel
Bradnam's
Buildsafe
Caeserstone
Clipsal
CNW Wholesaler / Nexus
Coldfront
CSR
CSR Bradfords
CSR Hebel
CV Services

Daikin
DC8
Direct Hire
Dulux
Dynamic Door Service
Electrolux
Express Blinds
Franke
Get Creded
Zonta Paradise Point
Goop Guys
HD Solutions
James Hardie
Kevin Holt
Mirvac
Mojo Mastic
Nicoll Industries
QEBS
Reece
Rinnai
Shane Denman Architects
So Solid
Stegbar
Sunni Clothesline
Superstructure
Victoria Carpets
Wake Energy
Your Home Building Services

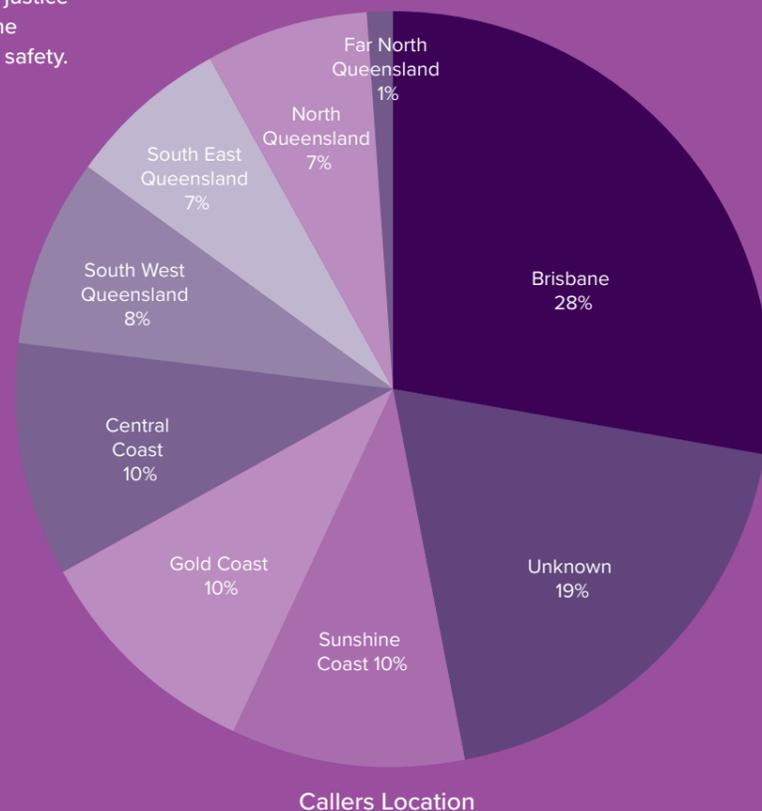
Womensline

DVConnect's Womensline is Queensland's 24 hour a day, 7 day a week crisis response telephone service for domestic and family violence. Womensline responded to 98,174 calls in the 2018-2019 Financial Year.

The Womensline team have gone through a period of significant change this financial year. There is no doubt that Project Bell, our business transformation project, has assisted us to improve service efficiencies and women's experience when contacting us for support during a time of crisis. The teams input into this huge project, as well as their patience and flexibility in learning new systems and processes, all while managing the 24/7 Womensline service, is a testament to the commitment that our workgroup have to keeping women, families and pets safe from violence.

It is no small feat to be able to say that this financial year, Womensline assisted 8650 Queensland women and children to access safe emergency accommodation. Even this figure does not do justice to the amount of work that happens behind the scenes to ensure that families have access to safety.

Managing transport options after hours, assisting women who are contacting from the side of the road in a rural area with no car, no local taxi service and the nearest Police Station 3 hours away, working with women who have 10 children and who require specific transport and accommodation options, sourcing safe arrangements in the face of natural disasters like the North Queensland floods and most recently, the fires raging throughout Queensland. The Womensline team of counsellors, Support Workers and Team Leaders are constantly and consistently working around the clock every day of the year to overcome the barriers that are presented and problem solve to ensure safety can be achieved for those who need our assistance.



Survivor Story: Far North Queensland

Our Womensline received a Police referral from a station in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Far North Queensland, seeking assistance for a 17 year old First Nations female, Courtney*. The young woman had been experiencing domestic violence from a much older partner, which had been escalating over the past few months since there had been a death in Courtney's close family. Due to living in a small remote community, Courtney's partner lived in close proximity to her (both Courtney and her partner lived with their family). Courtney was also feeling tension between herself and her mother as the passing of their family member had inflamed pre-existing conflict.

The Police advised that though Courtney's partner was currently detained, there was a high likelihood he would be released within 24 hours, therefore this situation needed to be treated with a sense of urgency. Courtney had identified a safe family member whom resided in Mt Isa*, however, we were having difficulties getting in contact with them as Courtney did not have a contact number for them. It is our process to always confirm that family or friends identified to be safe, are willing to assist an individual who has contacted us for support, prior to us facilitating travel arrangements to alternative locations. In order to contact Courtney's family and confirm they were

supportive of her staying with them, the Womensline team had to coordinate with local Police to locate the family member and confirm they were happy to have the young women stay with them.

Having confirmed safety and sustainability of the option in Mt Isa, the Womensline team booked the next available flight. Local Police supported Courtney to the airport. Courtney arrived safely and is now residing with her family in Mt Isa. Courtney remains connected to her culture and her goal is to engage back in education.

The collaborative action between DVConnect and local remote Police has enabled this vulnerable young woman whom has experienced significant trauma, the opportunity to live a safe life and has start her journey of healing. Courtney's survivor story demonstrates DVConnect's ability to quickly respond to complex circumstances, while also including culturally sensitive and appropriate practice. The initial call from Police was made less than 24 hours before Courtney was assisted with relocation to safety.

**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*

Survivor Story: South East Queensland

Initial contact to the Womensline was made by a Social Worker from a South East Queensland Hospital*, seeking safe accommodation for a very vulnerable client who had been admitted following a domestic violence incident. We were advised that the client, a transgender woman, was deaf and non-verbal, communicating via written notes or texts only and she had no phone. As a further challenge it was advised that the client, Shelly*, was from overseas, having entered the country on a tourist visa which had expired 2 days prior. Shelly wanted to return to her country of origin, but the person using violence had taken her passport.

Following the initial contact with the hospital Social Worker and other medical staff, we were able to facilitate an extended social admission for Shelly due to her high level of vulnerability and to provide us with time to secure support for her on discharge. We then engaged directly with Shelly and the Embassy from her country of origin to get assistance in securing a visa and passport as a matter of priority.

Given Shelly's reliance on written communication, we sourced a Westnet phone and enlisted support from Centacare to deliver it directly to Shelly to enable text communication.

Once Shelly had the phone set up, she was medically discharged and we booked motel accommodation and assisted her with travel to the motel. DVConnect worked very closely with the Embassy and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and Shelly's documentation was confirmed within 2 business days. Shelly was promptly on a flight home to her mother within 4 days from her initial contact with us.

The following day, the Womensline team received an email from the Embassy Consular or Shelly's Embassy, simply stating: "this is amazing TEAMwork". We also received a text message from Shelly who told us that she was so happy to be reunited with her mother and she thanked us for all of the support that we provided to assist her to safety.

DVConnect's strengths lie in our ability to respond quickly, think laterally and act collaboratively, in order to provide an individualised and sensitive response to women seeking safety in this dynamic and still emerging global world.

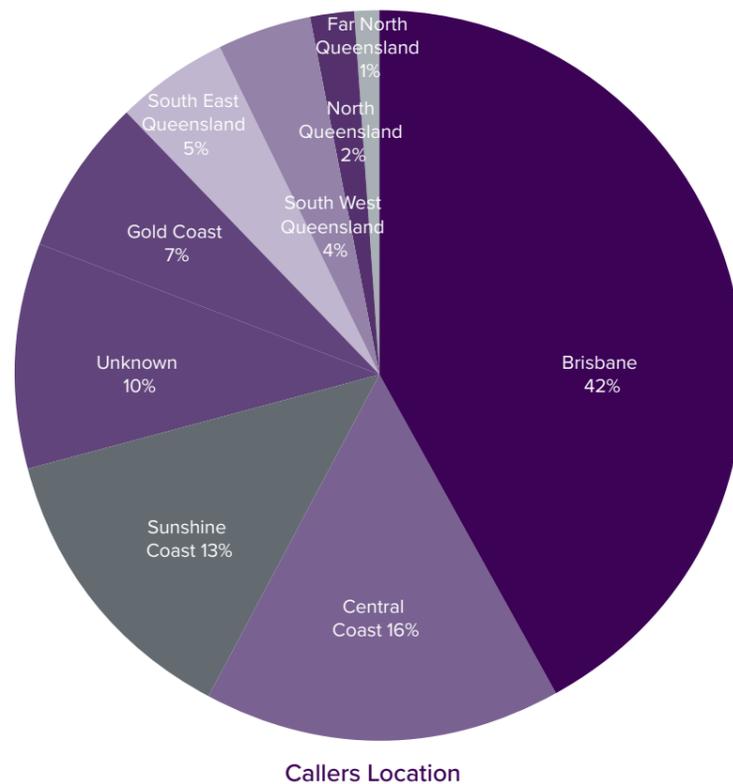
**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*

Mensline

DVConnect Mensline is a free, confidential telephone crisis counselling, referral and support service for Queenslanders identifying as male.

The Mensline service is available from 9am until midnight, 7 days a week, 365 days of the year and is supported by specialist counsellors. The counsellors can also provide Court Support and practical support through the lens of family safety and accountability. Mensline aims to highlight the impact of abuse on partners and families and challenge people who use violence to change their behaviour.

In 2018-19 Mensline provided support to 13,300 Queensland men.



Survivor Story: LGBTIQ+

Shaun* rang the Mensline and stated he fled to Queensland from Melbourne*, as he was unable to find an organisation in Melbourne that could support him. Shaun stated his partner was very violent to him and has made him permanently disabled due to many surgeries he has had on his leg from assaults. Shaun spoke about how he is qualified in his chosen industry, however, he had been unable to work in this field for the last year due to the severity of his injuries.

Shaun informed the Mensline counsellor that he was kicked out of his family home at 15 years old because his family didn't approve of him identifying as gay and therefore, he doesn't have family support. He also said that his ex-partner is in jail for 6 breaches of the Domestic Violence Order, but Shaun remained fearful of the potential ramifications to his personal safety when his ex-partner was released, as he blamed Shaun for calling the Police after the most recent serious assault.

Shaun had been staying in an Air BnB and was unsure where to start in terms of linking in with support services. The Mensline counsellor provided emotional support and discussed 'gayshare housing' which allows room sharing with people from the queer community, whom Shaun stated he would feel safer staying with. Open Doors was also provided as an option (Shaun is under 25 years old) and the option for face to face support through Open Doors was discussed. Information for Diverse Voices and HPIQ was also text through to him so that Shaun had immediate access to services that were available to assist him in meeting his immediate needs. Shaun thanked the counsellor for all the support and stated he felt overwhelmed that someone was willing to talk to him and provide him with non-judgemental support after everything that he had experienced.

**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*

Mensline Story of Person Using Violence

Forty year old James contacted DVConnect Mensline from a remote area in Central Queensland. James identified that the Police had provided the Mensline phone number and that he had been ousted from the house after he had used violence against his wife (the most recent incident witnessed by his children). As he called at 4.30pm the nearest Centrelink Office and other services were closed and James identified that he had nowhere to stay that evening. He expressed outrage at being ousted from the house, although stated that his name was not on the lease.

The Mensline counsellor worked with James around the immediate presenting issue, that he had nowhere to stay. James was articulating his desire to return to the house he was ousted from and his anger at this not being an option because of his choice to use violence.

The Mensline counsellor spoke with him about: The possible legal consequences of returning to the house he was ousted from, using this as an opportunity to reflect back to the individual that violence was always a choice that he made. As well as how he saw the impact of his violence on his children, whether he might consider connecting with ongoing supports and reengage with positive networks that he had previously been supported through and exploring alternative options to returning home, including staying with possibly family/friends.

Court Support

At a local Queensland Magistrates Court in Brisbane the DVConnect Mensline Court Support worker was able to liaise and work with Domestic Violence Action Centre (DVAC) regarding a high risk client that there were significant concerns regarding.

DVAC were able to speak with the Court Support worker prior to them meeting the client and informed them of his high risk status and concerns around lethality. This information was not noted in the DVO application that had been provided to by the client, however was contextual information that

The Mensline counsellor encouraged him to see how the Police intervention and the impact of his violence on his wife and children could be drawn upon as motivation for positive change and growth if he wanted to remain part of their lives and be a positive role model for his children.

James confirmed that he would receive his next Centrelink payment the following day, therefore, the Mensline counsellor, with the consent and input of the caller, was able to ring Anglicare in the next town and confirm that shared housing/hostel was available for the individual.

The Mensline counsellor booked bus travel out of the town that evening, thereby removing him from the likelihood of returning to the home. The caller also entered into an agreement with the Mensline counsellor that he would contact us from the hostel the following morning to confirm what his plans were for that day, as well as to consider what further support he might need. The caller followed through with this agreement and contacted Mensline, stating that he planned to remain in the hostel for the next week whilst seeking to contact family who lived in Cairns with the intention of relocating, and looking for employment.

**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*

came through the sharing of information between agencies working with both respondents and aggrieved. The Court Support worker was able to tailor questions around this additional information and provide this back to DVAC to inform their risk assessment.

The client, after being seen by the Court Support worker, also left that meeting stating that he felt like he had been heard by the DVConnect staff member and had a clearer understanding of what to expect from the day as he was sitting with a lot of anxiety around the upcoming proceedings.

Sexual Assault Helpline

DVConnect's Sexual Assault Helpline offers free, confidential telephone support and crisis counselling to anyone who has been sexually assaulted or abused. It is also for anyone who is concerned that someone they know may have been assaulted or abused.

The Sexual Assault Helpline is available from 7.30am until 11.30pm, 7 days, 365 days of the year and is supported by specialist counsellors. In 2018-19 the Sexual Assault Helpline received 1638 calls from Queenslanders.

Survivor Story: South East Queensland

Gavin* from South East Queensland* contacted the Sexual Assault Helpline to talk about an incident that happened the previous night that made him uncomfortable. Gavin disclosed that he had a disability that impacted on his overall size and strength and that his parents were his full time carers.

Gavin disclosed that his parents went away to attend a close friends engagement celebrations. In order to have support while they were away, Gavin's parents arranged for their friend to come over. During the night, Gavin said that the individual began touching him inappropriately, even when he attempted to resist and told them to stop.

Gavin said he felt helpless and angry at having a disability that prevented him from being able to stop someone from sexually abusing him. The Sexual Assault Line counsellor stressed that the assault was not Gavin's fault and the individual who did this to him is the one accountable for their behaviour. Gavin had told his parents, who were wanting to press charges, but he was unsure as to whether he wanted to do this himself. The Sexual Assault Helpline counsellor validated Gavin's feelings and emphasised that it was his decision whether or not to press charges as he would be the one who would be going through the investigation process.

During the conversation, Gavin was provided with information about other services that could support him, including information about Living Well who provide face to face specialist sexual assault counselling and support.

**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*

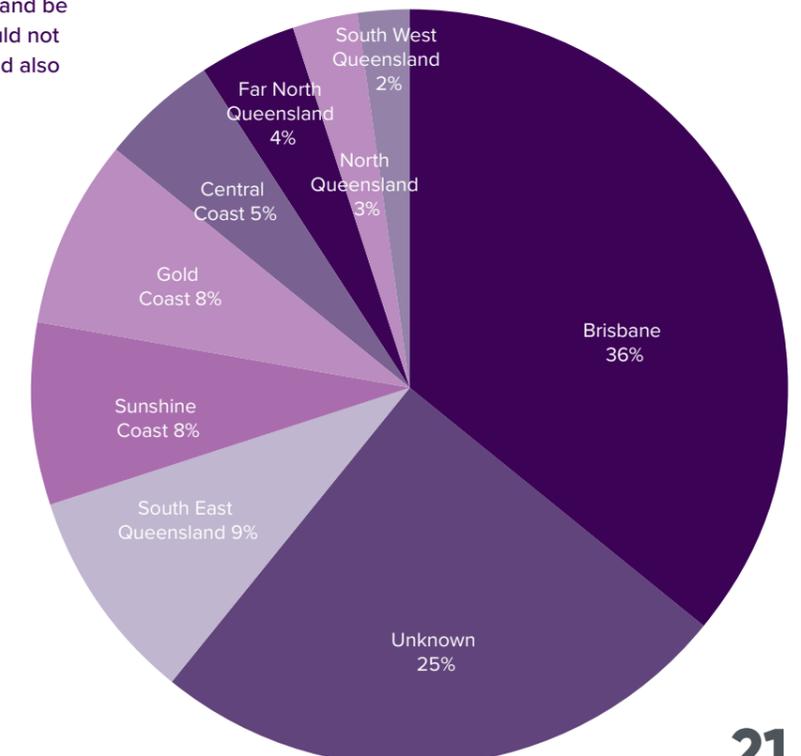
Survivor Story: MacKay

Janet* contacted the Sexual Assault Helpline from the Mackay* area and advised the counsellor that she was "having a meltdown," and needed to talk to someone. Janet, now in her mid-thirties, stated that when she was 14 years old, she had been sexually assaulted by an Uncle. Janet said that a few years after the assault, her Uncle had left Australia and returned to the UK where her family had migrated from and she hadn't seen or spoken to him since.

The reason Janet was calling in a distressed state was that she had just found out that her Uncle was returning to the Townsville area and that she had started to have flashbacks of the abuse, a constant reminder of what happened to her. Janet disclosed that she had never reported the assault to anyone and no-one in her family knew. When asked whether there was a family member that she could trust with this information, Janet identified that her sister would likely support her and be able to manage questions around why Janet would not be attending family events where her Uncle would also be present.

The Sexual Assault Line counsellor confirmed with Janet that she felt safe where she currently lived and offered strategies to manage the flashbacks. Janet was also encouraged to speak with her sister if she felt safe to do so and reiterated the value in having support networks. Janet was also provided with contact information for the Townsville Women's Centre with Mackay Women's Centre to access counselling supports, which Janet was very interested in. Janet finished the call with the Sexual Assault Line counsellor feeling equipped with knowledge of local support services, strategies to manage her flashbacks, and a plan to speak with her sister. Janet presented calm, and no longer as distressed as she was at the start of the call when she initially contacted the Sexual Assault Helpline for support.

**Name and location have been changed to protect our client's identity.*



Callers Location

1800RESPECT

1800RESPECT, the national sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling service, is delivered by Medibank on behalf of the Federal Government Department of Social Services as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

1800RESPECT provides specialist counselling through a panel of expert non-profit sexual assault, domestic and family violence support services, including DVConnect. This partnership is integral to ensuring a high quality service, while meeting the significant number of contacts to 1800RESPECT.

Survivor Story 1

I was nervous to call and didn't want to do this at first, as I felt no-one would believe me. When I finally got the courage to phone, the counsellor was amazing, she listened to me and it felt like she understood. She talked about how concerned she was for me and the rest of my family and I finally felt like I could breathe.

I rang 1800RESPECT because I was feeling devastated about my relationship with my husband. I was provided emotional support and had my experiences validated by one of the Specialist counsellors who listened to my story with empathy and understanding. I felt supported by the counsellor who encouraged me to look at the strength it had taken to walk away from the relationship, protect my children and start again. We focussed on the future, discussing self-care strategies and support networks for myself and my children. She encouraged us to engage in ongoing counselling from a service who had experience in working with the impacts of domestic and family violence.

I cried because I felt heard. She sat with me and just listened and I was so happy that I made the decision to call and ask for help.

Survivor Story 2

I phoned 1800RESPECT because I was worried about how my relationship was changing and I wasn't sure if it was domestic violence. I told the counsellor how my boyfriend had become jealous when I went out with my friends, or with my mum for a weekly coffee. I then admitted that he had pushed me and I had fallen and that I was feeling frightened about what he might do next.

I was so grateful when I talked to the Specialist counsellor about my fears and how upset and overwhelmed I was feeling. I felt like she really understood what I was going through and I felt safe enough to share with her that he had forced me to have sex a number of times. The counsellor explained what domestic and sexual violence is and we talked about a safety plan. She was very helpful and reassured me that what I was feeling was understandable, telling me that I was strong and could have a safe, bright future. I am very grateful for the service.

Case studies are based on common 1800RESPECT calls and scenarios.

Pets In Crisis

For people experiencing domestic and family violence in their relationship, the practical logistics of keeping a pet out of a violent environment can seem too great and may discourage them from leaving.

Our Pets In Crisis program is a collaboration with the RSPCA Queensland and the Queensland Government. The program is designed to care for pets of those experiencing violence in their relationship, until they can find safe, alternative accommodation. While in the care of the RSPCA Queensland, pets are provided with safe accommodation, healthy food and medical attention.

The majority of the pets required vaccinations, microchipping and desexing and were placed into foster care for the duration of their stay rather than housed in RSPCA QLD Shelter where there are limited spaces available. Most pets are happily reunited with their owners at the end of the care period.

In 2018-19 the Pets In Crisis program cared for 188 pets. This included 103 dogs, 77 cats, 7 birds, 1 guinea pig. Total number of days of care was 3616. The average length of stay per pet was 34 days.



Financial Report

Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2019

DVConnect Limited ABN 66 101 186 476

DVConnect Limited:

Is a Registered Charity (Public Benevolent Institution entity subtype) with the ACNC has been endorsed by the ATO as a Deductible Gift Recipient has authority to fundraise in Queensland under Charity Number CH1459

Statement of Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
Operating Revenue	9,142,430	7,636,441
Other income (non-cash property donation)	1,552,018	-
Administrative expenses	(286,477)	(266,411)
Property expenses	(341,318)	(364,381)
Depreciation	(63,037)	(51,216)
Employment and contract expenses	(6,620,910)	(5,219,854)
Client related expenses	(1,352,740)	(1,210,282)
Other expenses	(187,875)	(146,785)
Surplus (loss) before income tax	1,842,091	377,512
Income tax expenses	-	-
Surplus (loss) for the year ¹	1,842,091	377,512
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income (loss) for the year	1,842,091	377,512
Total comprehensive income (loss) attributable to members of the entity	1,842,091	377,512

¹The majority of this surplus has resulted due to the company receiving a once-off non-cash donation of \$1,552,018 (2018:\$nil). The donation comprised of land and a furnished, purpose built building to be used for transitional housing with occupancy commencing in September 2019.

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2019

	2019 \$	2018 \$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	1,464,953	1,665,901
Other current assets	63,709	7,163
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	1,528,662	1,673,064
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Other non-current assets	33,698	33,698
Property, plant and equipment	1,952,826	94,437
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	1,986,524	128,135
TOTAL ASSETS	3,515,186	1,801,199
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	339,810	666,679
Unearned income	111,500	17,500
Provisions	510,640	396,964
Other	(100)	2,388
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	961,850	1,083,531
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Provisions	38,210	44,633
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	38,210	44,633
TOTAL LIABILITIES	1,000,060	1,128,164
NET ASSETS	2,515,126	673,035
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	-	-
General reserve	2,515,126	673,035
TOTAL EQUITY	2,515,126	673,035

Thank you for your help, for everything you have done for me over the last few days. Your services are more than impressive and impeccable for anyone who may be in danger or in need of help of any kind. I may not be here today without your protection and the services you provided me. It is amazing to know there are people out there that give their absolute best to keep others safe, because they can and they care. Before making the call to you I felt too ashamed and far too proud to ask anyone for help. But now I feel strong knowing that I had the courage to put my hand up and ask for help. It saved my life!

Womensline

1800 811 811

24 hours, 7 days

Mensline

1800 600 636

9am – midnight, 7 days

Sexual Assault Helpline

1800 010 120

7:30am – 11:30pm, 7 days

1800RESPECT

1800 737 732

24 hours, 7 days

Contact Details

PO Box 10575, Adelaide Street, Brisbane QLD 4000

P: 07 3156 2323

E: mail@dvconnect.org

 @DVConnect  @DVConnectQld  @DVConnectQld

DVConnect respectfully acknowledges and celebrates the Traditional Owners/Custodians throughout Australia and pays its respects to Elders, children and young people of past, current and future generations. We are committed to helping anyone experiencing domestic and family violence and/or sexual violence. This includes the LGBTIQ+ community, children, pets and people of all ethnicities, religions, ages and physical abilities. Our core values are respect, safety, equality, empowerment and accountability.

DVConnect acknowledges the many women, women's organisation and survivor advocates who have spoken out about their experiences for decades. The work that we are doing builds on their legacy, their dedication and their advocacy that has preceded us. It is critical that we continue to learn from and include the voices of women when seeking to prevent violence across society.

