



**MDAS**  
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

# 2014

ANNUAL REPORT



We are the proud  
and strong descendants  
of the oldest living culture  
in the world



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*WARNING: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned this document may contain images of deceased persons*



OPTIMISM  
COMMUNITY  
RESPECT  
COMPASSION

# ABOUT US

We wish to acknowledge the land and river systems of the Mallee District and pay our respects to the traditional custodians.

We are the proud and strong descendants of the oldest living culture in the world.

## Symbolism of our logo

Our logo is based on a design by Sharon Kirby

## Our Vision:

Generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities.

## Our Values:

Our values drive our culture, are central to how we make decisions and ensure services are delivered in a socially-responsible way.

## Our four values are:

Optimism

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Community

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Respect for Culture

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Compassion

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## Our Offices:

Our Mallee communities are serviced by MDAS offices in Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang.

Mildura (administration) 120 Madden Avenue, Mildura (PO Box 5134 Mildura 3502) Phone (03) 5018 4100

Swan Hill, 70 Nyah Road, Swan Hill Phone (03) 5032 5277

Kerang, 9 Nolan Street, Kerang, Phone (03) 5450 3019

## Setting our sights on the future...

MDAS is a proud Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation (ACCO) that has a 30-year history of delivering sustainable, democratic, grassroots services and providing the local community with a vehicle for self-determination. We believe the imposition of structures without community control as a central tenet will fail.

As Aboriginal Australians, we are best-placed to decide and implement the programs and services that work for our communities.

With MDAS and the community working together, we know we can positively enrich the lives of all Aboriginal people living and working along the many river systems across the Mallee District.

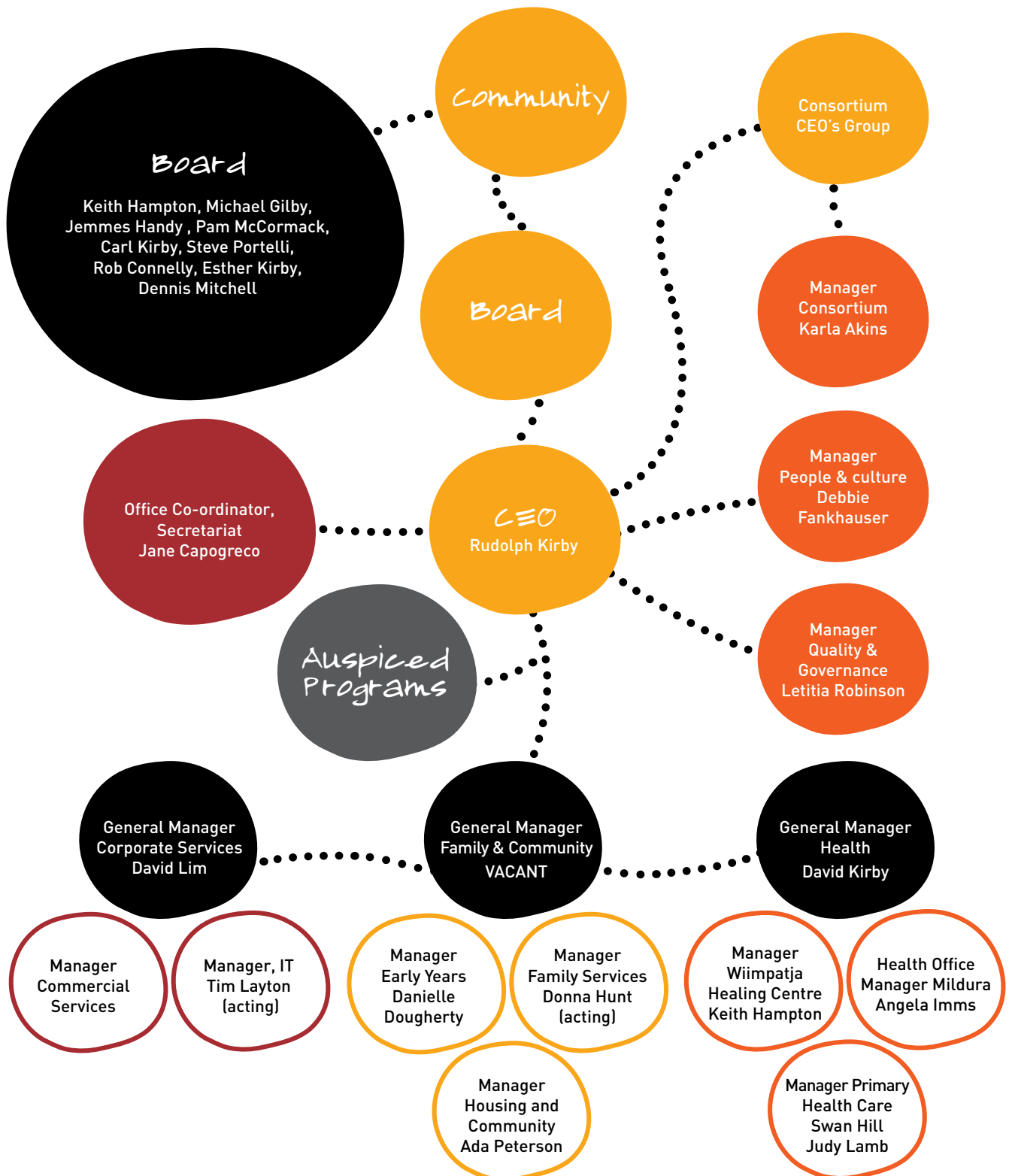
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*MDAS is grateful for the use of artwork in this report from original works by Sharon Kirby, Charlie Egan, Esther Kirby, H Charles, Glen M and unknown artists*

*Design and annual report artwork by Mildura Living Magazine*

# OUR ORGANISATION

Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) delivers health, family and community services to a potential client base of nearly 5000 Koori people. MDAS services are provided from offices in Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang under the following organizational structure:



# OUR COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT



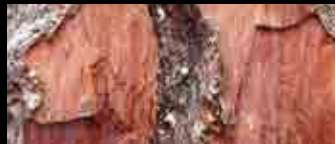
*Keith Hampton*  
President



*Michael Gilby*  
Vice President



*Jemmes Handy*  
Secretary



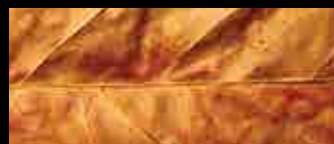
*Pam McCormack*  
Treasurer



*Rob Connelly*  
Committee Member Swan Hill



*Esther Kirby*  
Committee Member Kerang



*Dennis Mitchell*  
Committee Member



*Steve Portelli*  
Committee Member



*Carl Kirby*  
Committee Member



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2013/14

**July 2013** MDAS Health services in Mildura given top accreditation with the Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL) – MDAS’s first accreditation under new and higher standards set by the Royal Australia College of General Practitioners

**August** MDAS held the second of two forums to inform and engage the community in discussion about the prevalence of the drug methamphetamine, or ice. Alcohol and other drugs counsellors from MDAS took the lead in drawing this issue to the attention of the community. Wider follow-up events by a consortium of community and health organisations would establish the ground-breaking Project Ice Mildura initiative, of which MDAS was a partner.

**August** A new female doctor was recruited to improve maternity care for Koori women in Mildura. Local GP Doctor Jane Neyland is completing her obstetrics diploma, and began providing the Koori specific service through MDAS.

**November** MDAS was finalizing the purchase of the former Mildura Fire Station building in Orange Avenue. The fire station had been vacant for a year. It would allow MDAS to complete the consolidation of its operations in Mildura.

**November** A Welcome Baby to Country celebration was held for the first time in Swan Hill. More than 180 babies were born to Swan Hill’s Aboriginal community in the past six years, with the births to be honored at the community celebration.

**January** About 100 people attended a meet and greet barbecue for the community of Swan Hill at the Swan Hill MDAS complex

**January** Work started on expansions and upgrading work at Swan Hill involving conversion of the termite and water-damaged auditorium into open-plan office space. The project would effectively double the size of the family services area.

**February** Swan Hill’s Sisters Day Out program was a huge success. The Sisters Day Out workshop is a day that celebrates Aboriginal culture and brings Aboriginal women within the community together for a day of pampering including hairdressing, massage, manicures and more. The project is part of the Victorian Government’s Reducing Violence Against Women and Their Children Grants initiative, under the Koori Community Safety Grants Program.

**February** A highly-effective international program that improves the school-readiness of vulnerable children was announced for Mildura. The HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) is a free, two-year home-based parenting and early childhood program assisting parents with developing the skills to be their child’s first teacher. It is being delivered in Mildura by

Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) under the auspices of the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

**March** Mallee District Aboriginal Services stepped up to back one of Mildura’s biggest annual charity events in the Relay for Life. The Cancer Council fundraiser drew 113 teams, 70 percent of which are youth teams with a connection to cancer in some way. About 50 MDAS staff, board-members and community members were involved in the relay.

**March** An experienced and respected Mildura health professional and administrator was appointed to head the MDAS health clinics and services. David Kirby was previously the Director of Mental Health Services at Mildura Base Hospital and took up an appointment as the General Manager of Health Services at MDAS.

**April** Koori communities at Mildura and Swan Hill laid wreaths at ANZAC Day ceremonies for the first time at the region’s ANZAC Day commemorations. ANZAC Day 2014 marked the beginning of a 12-month project to record the names of current serving and past serving members of the armed services from the Koori Communities in the Mallee. It is hoped to establish memorials to honor the service of these Indigenous service personnel.

**April** A half-million dollar upgrade of MDAS Mildura facilities was announced. The funding came from the Victorian Coalition Government’s \$1 billion Regional Growth Fund and was announced by the Member for Mildura Peter Crisp. It will allow the continued improvement to MDAS facilities with the redevelopment of the Family Services and outdoor community areas.

**April** A new community committee was established to give members of Koori communities in Swan Hill and Kerang input into MDAS services. The 10-member advisory group was formed from expressions of interest from the community.

**April** MDAS formed a 10-member advisory group for the Swan Hill and Kerang regions so community members have more input into the services provided by the organisation.

**May** A group of Mildura’s up-and-coming young Koori leaders were part of an exciting first – the inaugural Victorian Koorie Youth Summit in Melbourne. Mildura’s Lucy-Rose Doolan was named one of the recipients of the prestigious Ricci Marks Award at the conference, while another Mildura teenager Kayla Carter was nominated for the award. Four young staff members at MDAS attended the two-day event -- trainees Indi Clarke, Melissa Badenoch and Simone Philp and customer services officer Rosie Faulkhead found the summit a “life-changing experience”.

**June** The Koori communities of Swan Hill and Kerang in partnership with MDAS made application for the Indigenous Land



# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2013/14

Corporation-held farming property Menera Station. The 1455 hectare freehold station is on Wamba Wamba country on the NSW side of the Murray River, 25 kilometres from Swan Hill. A sustainable farming enterprise will be established between Swan Hill and Kerang to create employment and provide skills development opportunities for Aboriginal people.

**June** The award-winning MDAS program Bumps to Babes and Beyond was recognised internationally at the World Association for Infant Mental Health International conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. The Bumps to Babes and Beyond initiative focusses on pregnant Aboriginal women aged 14 to 25 and was introduced in 2012 by Mallee District Aboriginal Services with support from one of the leading parenting centres in Australia, the QEC Early Parenting Centre. It is being implemented across the Loddon Mallee Region in 2014-15.



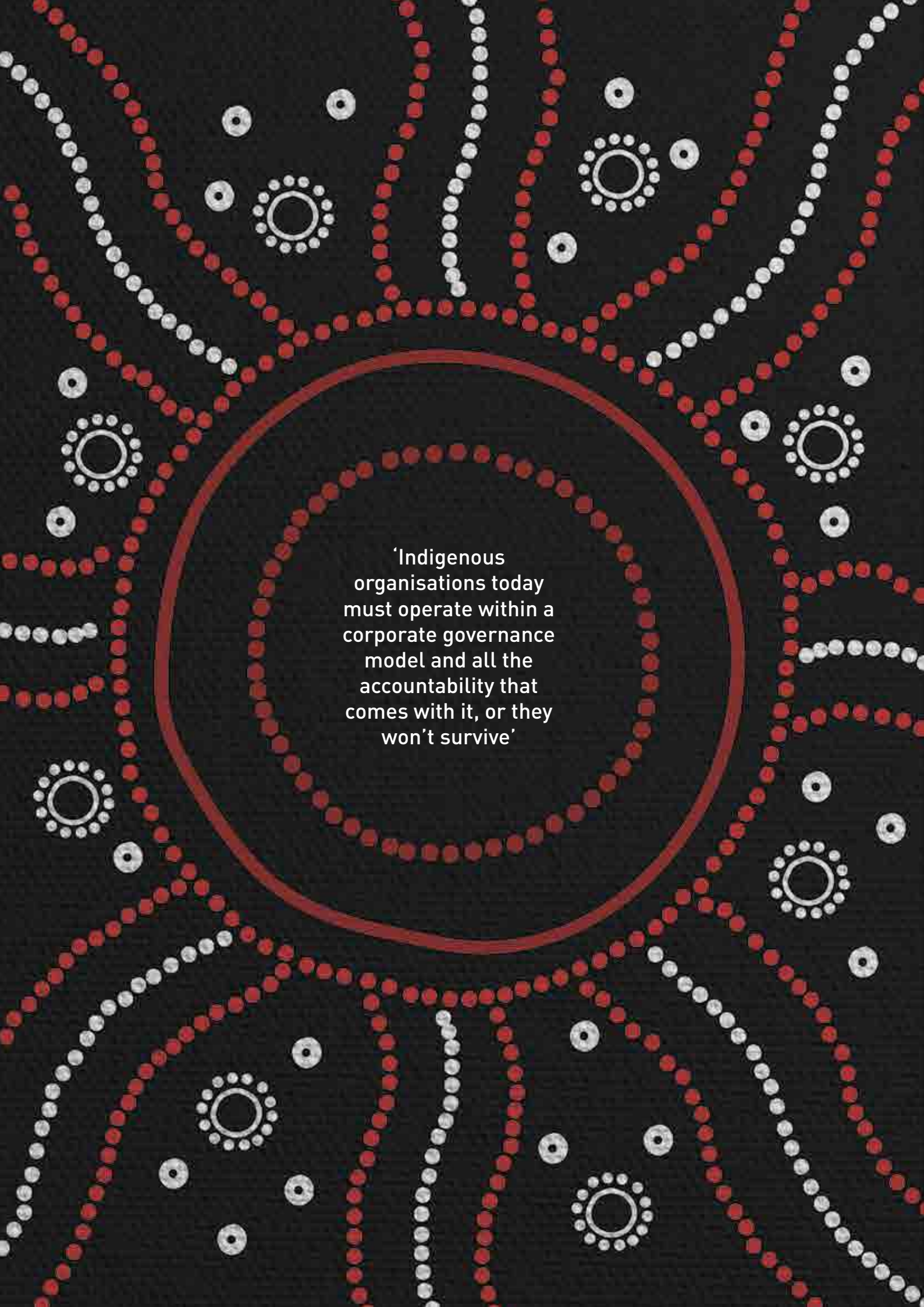
## OUR NAIDOC AWARD RECIPIENTS 2013/14

### Mildura

- Janine Wilson** Elder of the Year
- Travis Philp** Outstanding Achievement
- Shantelle Thompson** Sports Person of the Year
- Murray Paaka Hope Dancers** Performing Artist of the Year

### Swan Hill

- Ivy Bell** Lifetime Achievement Award
- Brian Bourke** Person of the Year
- Aunty Stephanie Charles** Elder of the Year
- Joe Kelly** Caring for Country Award
- Jaya Blandthorn** Youth of the Year
- Kevin Kropinyeri** Artist of the Year
- Djallarjna Hamilton** Scholar of the Year
- Eric Morgan** Apprentice of the Year
- Elvie Kellie** Sportsperson of the year
- Esther Kirby** Community Service Award
- Kristy Gordon** SHAS Worker of the Year
- Jody Croft** SHAS Worker of the Year (health)
- Jeremiah Kirby** Volunteer Award
- Graham Hill and Wayne Walsh** Acknowledgement Award



'Indigenous  
organisations today  
must operate within a  
corporate governance  
model and all the  
accountability that  
comes with it, or they  
won't survive'

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Keith Hampton** President Mallee District Aboriginal Services

Looking back on the year 2013-14 to write this report, I am proud of what we have achieved together.

As MDAS and as a community, we are continuing to reach milestones and achieve goals towards our vision for MDAS to become the main service provider of health, family and community services for Aboriginal people in the Mallee region – to achieve “generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities”.

Through the year, we are proud to have been nominated for a Reconciliation Australia Governance Award. These awards are for organisations who are about Aboriginal people making and implementing decisions about their communities, lives and futures. Another major achievement was the implementation of new financial and quality assurance standards. For the first time in the 30-year history of MDAS we are being benchmarked against national best-practice standards and it is showing MDAS to be performing well.

We continue to build the skills and knowledge of the board, and this year all board members have completed Good Governance training by an independent provider. MDAS has also implemented a Drug and Alcohol Policy, with board members and senior executive staff undergoing independent screening as an example to all MDAS staff and as part of our commitment to ensure a safe work environment.

Communication continues to be important for MDAS and the community. We keep the community up to speed with what is happening across the Mallee through community meetings, in the mainstream media and in the Koori News Newsletter and the new members' Message Stick newsletter.

One of the most significant milestones of the year was the expanding of the board, and reserving two places for Swan Hill

and Kerang. It has been a pleasure to welcome Rob Connelly and Esther Kirby to the committee as the inaugural representatives from Swan Hill and Kerang. Rob and Esther and all members of the committee have a strong commitment to seeing MDAS grow and ensuring it can eventually have a future without government support. For all members of the committee and for the organisation, this continues to be a long-term and core goal.

A key planning event that aided the committee this year was a two-day planning meeting. The meeting set out a calendar of events and issues to assist the board to focus on big-picture goals and specific areas of the organisation. Each month the committee schedules discussion on a specific item such as strategy, the CEO performance, reviewing key trends, progress on accreditations, the committee itself, reviewing of key policies and trends and community engagement. The focus provided by this process is allowing the committee to set strategic plans for the future that impact on Aboriginal health, housing, employment etc.

Indigenous organisations today must operate within a corporate governance model and all the accountability that comes with it, or they won't survive. We must deliver the services required by the community and meet the Governance requirements that allow us to work in collaboration with Government, the corporate sector and other not-for-profit organisations in delivering those services. We are continuing to make the transitions that will strengthen MDAS for the long term.

I am proud about how far we have come as an organisation in this past year, but I am excited about what lies ahead in terms of improving outcomes and opportunities for MDAS and our mob. Our overriding goal must be for MDAS to have a long future beyond the current committee and all the community will play a part in helping achieve that goal.

**‘The reality has been that community members are voting with their feet – taking the opportunity to improve their health and manage their lifestyle so conditions such as diabetes become less of a factor for our mob’**



# CEO'S REPORT

Rudolph Kirby Chief Executive Officer MDAS

The year 2013-14 has been a year of consolidation and continuing progress for Mallee District Aboriginal Services.

As North West Victoria's major Koori organisation, July 1, 2013 was an important milestone, when MDAS became the trading name of the Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc.

In a sense, it was a coming-of age and a day of practical and symbolic importance for our organisation and the Mallee's Koori community. Not only did we adopt a new trading name, but also we embraced key organizational and governance documents to set the course for the long-term future of MDAS. Obviously, many people will be aware of our strategic plan, outlining how we will run MDAS now and in the future and our Code of Ethics, which outlines how we do business with clients, other organisations and each other. These documents are readily available at MDAS offices if you would like to read them.

MDAS is a dynamic and proactive corporation that is continuing to grow consistently as we work to provide better and more effective health, community and family services. Although our organizational base is in Mildura, we provide services in Swan Hill and Kerang and the broader Mallee region. Our new name is an important recognition of the entire geographic region and a symbolic step towards unifying and strengthening our Mallee Koori communities under one banner.

While symbolism is important, it must be underpinned by practical and meaningful action. We have established a new Swan Hill and Kerang Community Reference Group, and for the first time, Swan Hill and Kerang community-members are formally represented at board level, ensuring the issues and concerns of the whole region and its communities are considered and acted upon.

Indigenous organisations today must operate within corporate governance structures and all the accountability that comes with it, or they will not survive. So we have continued to make the transitions over the past year that will strengthen MDAS for the long term. Our new governance documents and structures were the first step in a series of reforms that changed the way MDAS does its business. Some of the change has been challenging. The Family Services arm of MDAS was restructured during the year and work continues throughout the organisation to streamline and refine the way we do business.

Our intent is to deliver services required by the community, in a meaningful, responsive way. Strong governance arrangements and a robust and accountable structure allows us to work in collaboration with Government, the corporate sector and other not-for-profit organisations in delivering those services. I am proud MDAS is now being regarded widely as an organisation that is a leader not only in the region, but in the wider health, family and community services sector. Our status and performance has allowed us to secure over \$4million in extra funding in the past 18 months (Programs such as HIPPY, Stronger Families, KOSMP, Koori Private Rental, Family Violence, Health, Capital works, Cradle to Kinder and Early Years). Our health services were also given top accreditation in assessments during the year from the Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited.

I commend the leadership shown by our staff and board in recognizing and responding to important community issues in the past year. Our Health Services and Social and Emotional Wellbeing Teams, in particular, have responded with programs and initiatives specifically focused on identified areas of need. As a result, MDAS Health services have seen a 50% increase in



'There are currently more Koori staff working for MDAS than at any time in our 30-year history'

Continued...

client numbers coming through our doors. MDAS's leadership in running Information and community forums on the prevalence of Methamphetamine (ice) was a catalyst for this important issue being recognised in the wider Mallee community, as were forums and workshops in response to suicides in our communities.

Our goal as an organisation is to improve our frontline service delivery, improve access to housing, strengthen community engagement and culture and create safe homes, workplaces and communities. But we also know that having a job and contributing to the local economy builds identity and independence. We are continuing to set our sights squarely on the development of commercial enterprise opportunities that will provide for the long-term sustainability for MDAS and the Koori community.

To this end, an important step this year was the leasing of Menera Station, at Mellool, on behalf of the Swan Hill and Kerang communities for a sustainable farming enterprise. The operation of the Menera will create employment and provide skills development opportunities for Aboriginal people. MDAS is currently exploring several more social and economic enterprise business opportunities across the Mallee Region

I am proud that we have continued to build strongly the expertise and skills of our staff throughout the year, and have made particular effort at enhancing the skills and providing opportunities for our Koori staff. There are currently more Koori staff working for MDAS than at any time in our 30-year history. This is supported by our Aboriginal Employment and Career Development Strategy, scholarships, traineeships, cadetships and identified (Aboriginal Only) positions.

I am pleased that this year we have been able to recruit an experienced and respected Mildura health professional and administrator as General Manager of MDAS Health Services. David Kirby was previously the Director of Mental Health Services at Mildura Base Hospital and has provided the leadership and stability to allow our health services to continue to work at closing the health gap for Mallee Koori people.

Our focus on community has continued to strengthen throughout the year. Initiatives such as the SAMSA (Sunraysia Aboriginal Men's Group), our playgroups and our Elders groups as well as regular community days at Swan Hill are important in strengthening us as a community, providing mentoring support and improving awareness about services available to groups and individuals. In the wider community we have continued to work hard to lift our profile as an organisation and as a community. For the first time this year, the Koori community laid wreaths at the Mildura and Swan Hill ANZAC Services, and we have continued to build our collaboration with partners including local council and government bodies.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to our board members and to every member of our staff and management team. This has been a defining year, and there are, no doubt, more challenges ahead. But, through our combined efforts we are continuing to grow MDAS services, respond to issues as they arise, build understanding and appreciation of Koori culture and provide leadership to our community.

I look forward to continuing to work with you in the year ahead.

**'Aboriginal health, wellbeing,  
culture and economic  
prosperity are everyone's  
responsibility, but they are the  
core business of MDAS'**



# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

## COMMUNITY AND HOUSING

The Community and Housing team at MDAS worked hard in 2013-14 delivering our core programs to community, and finding new ways to engage and support community members.

Our Koori Offenders' Support and Mentoring Program (KOSMP) Facilitator Brendan Johnson had 25-30 Koori male and female offenders referred to his program during the year, all of whom have successfully completed their Community Corrections Orders. This program allows participants to complete the terms of their order, avoiding further penalty or jail, but also connects them to support, advice, health services and culture, allowing the clients to address other underlying issues.

An important community initiative this year has been the establishment of the Sunraysia Men's Group (SAMSA). The group has had an average of 30 men attending with regular expert guest speakers at meetings. The popularity of SAMSA and the mentoring and support networks it has created has drawn interest from across the nation.

Housing continues to be an area of challenge. The demand for public and community housing far exceeds the availability of property, evidenced by the growing time spent on the waiting list. The MDAS housing support team helps community through this difficult process. Our Koori Private Tenancy Support Worker Martin Peterson has worked tirelessly with Indigenous Community Members and has been communicating with private rental agencies on a regular basis. Martin has approximately 30 clients on his books, and during the year successfully assisted six through to tenancies in the private sector.

The Koori Youth Night Patrol provides a valuable service in transporting our youth to a safe place. In the last financial year, 229 young people were delivered to safety by this valuable service. I commend and thank all the staff and community members who

have put their hands up to support by volunteering their time to make this important program happen.

Our Elders are continuing to access the Mildura and Swan Hill Housing Home and Community Care (HACC) program. The program links Elders to support services that can assist them to retain independent living and wellbeing.

A major initiative during the year was our Family and Community Violence Prevention Program. This was part of the Victorian Government's Reducing Violence against Women and their Children Grants Initiative under the Koori Community Safety Grants Program. The project has adopted a range of tactics to tackle family violence in our area. It was launched with a series of locally-developed television advertisements using community members from Mildura, Swan Hill and Robinvale. As well as the advertisements, the project has included events aimed at empowering and strengthening women and girls and programs targeting behavioural change in men. MDAS invited Family Violence Prevention Legal Service Victoria and Dardi Munwurro into partnership to deliver Sisters Day Out, Dilly Bag and Youth Behavioural Change workshops in three key locations over three years.

We continue to work hard in building the connections MDAS services and staff have with the community. Our volunteer co-ordinator Nathan Yates is running a Community BBQ project in Partnership with Department Of Justice and Department Human Service. Barbecues are held in areas with high Koori populations with MDAS senior management volunteering to cook and mingling with community members. The barbecues are providing a great opportunity for discussion around service and community issues. We are planning to further develop this concept in 2015 by inviting more organisations on board.



Ada  
Peterson

Manager Community  
and Housing



## EARLY YEARS

It was been an incredibly busy and challenging 12 months for the Early Years program, but one in which we have continued to refine our delivery model to ensure the best outcomes for the community.

Early Years provides services and support to families of pre-school aged children. We offer a range of services including supported playgroup, home-based learning and the pre-school assistant program.

However we are proud to have been able to introduce some new and ground-breaking programs to the region during the year. Partnering with other organisations has been a key factor in being able to deliver these programs. Highlights include:

- Securing funding and launching the Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters (HIPPY) – a highly effective, two-year home-based program that helps parents develop skills to be their child's first teacher. We are delivering the program free of charge under the auspices of the Brotherhood of St Laurence

- Partnering with Mallee Family Care to offer Cradle to Kinder to the community. This antenatal and postnatal case management and support service provides intensive family and early parenting support to vulnerable young mothers and their children. Support for a young woman commences during pregnancy and continues until the child is four years old

- Recognition of the success of the Bumps to Babes and Beyond program pioneered by MDAS in partnership with the Queen Elizabeth Centre. The program was showcased at the World Congress for Infant Mental Health in Edinburgh.

Another major success for the year was the publishing of our Early Years model of service delivery, positioning it as a

benchmark to be used by other organisations in the development of similar services. The model is also now being rolled out across the Loddon Mallee region in 2014-15.

While we are proud of the successes in delivering innovative programs to the community, we have also been working within the organisation to improve practice and case management across the Early Years service. The intensive case management model is now integrated across the Early Years Service, ensuring there are fewer opportunities for vulnerable families to become disengaged from support and services.

With emergent funding opportunities the MDAS Early Years hopes to continue to grow and expand to be able to offer intensive case management to every Aboriginal family. Our aim is to meet families as early as possible in their first pregnancy and help them build a strong connection to their baby and hold the baby in mind while in utero.

The Early Years has undergone a restructure in order to allow the Early Years model to be implemented at MDAS and for the intensive case management model to be embedded into practice. However, MDAS is committed to continuous quality improvement and to ensure this will occur, the model will undergo evaluation throughout every stage of implementation to make sure that we accomplish what we have set out to achieve and that we are meeting the needs of the community at every step.

**'Our aim is to meet families as early as possible in their first pregnancy'**



*Danielle  
Dougherty*  
Manager Early Years



# FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

## FAMILY SERVICES

As I have reflected on the Family Services Unit, particularly in the past six months, I have to share my excitement of how impressed I am with the work that is done with our communities along the river!

During the year, we have completed two Program Manuals. These important foundation documents set the theme for future program manuals across all programs within Family Services Unit.

I am proud that our Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM) and Cultural Support Planning (CSP) are leading the way across Victoria. Our hardworking staff are currently facilitating 12 or more AFLDM cases each quarter. We have also achieved our targets within Aboriginal Stronger Families and are meeting all referrals made by the DHS to our programs.

In addition, we are working hard to connect with the community and clients. Thanks to Mel Watson and Di Yates for organising and planning a Seminar 'Holding the Infant in Mind' and An Evening with Dr Nicole Milburn 'The infant in Therapy'. Dr Milburn, is a Clinical Psychologist and Infant Mental Health specialist, as well as Infant Mental Health consultant at Take Two Childhood Institute and regularly presents at national and International conferences. We plan to continue holding these professional development sessions to assist and support our staff in the jobs they do. An Elders' Forum and Information Day in May was also a great success.

The work performed in Mildura, Swan Hill and Kerang communities by our Family Services Unit teams is not measured only in the numbers of clients, but in the quality of the client experience. By its nature, working in the Family Services Unit is intensive and requires amazing commitment on the part of each of our staff members.

Individuals who come into contact with our service commonly have experienced and/or are experiencing grief and/or loss, housing concerns, drug and alcohol problems, budgeting, domestic violence, parenting difficulties and much more.

When the Family Services Unit accepts a referral into programs, the respect and building of relationships is the most important part of the work that occurs during the client's journey with us.

Relationship building consists of lots of visits and small talk initially (sometimes a bit of not answering doors or telephone by the individual/family initially). These short contacts are useful for collecting and sharing each other's stories. Once this happens and the TRUST is formed (and there is no time limit) the great work can begin.

Here is a typical process to be part of the "Aboriginal Stronger families" program:

- DHS identify a family who has been involved with DHS and who could have had their child removed for a short time and/or at risk of their child being removed

- DHS advise MDAS of the referring family and provide comprehensive information about the family's situation

- DHS/MDAS and MFC meet to discuss the referral and if agreed we accept the referral

- Coordinator, Andy, will seek out the best-fit case worker for the family. The case worker will then begin to work together to heal and make changes to be able to offer care to their children

Family Services doesn't work in isolation. As I mentioned above, reception are a part of this work as much as our administrative team, corporate services staff, health services, early years and community teams. In most cases our clients are a part of all these programs and it is so important that we all support one another to do the work we do!

Every day our staff tolerate the intolerable stories they hear and sometimes see; and go above and beyond in working to help heal families. Thanks to these staff, MDAS is progressing towards fulfilling the vision for: "Generations of vibrant, healthy and strong Aboriginal communities".



Donna  
Hunt  
Manager  
Family Services





## BUILDING TRUST FROM THE BEGINNING

Reception is usually the first point of contact for anyone accessing MDAS.

Come into the Family Services Unit reception before 9am and you will find 'Uncle Ricky' usually out the front or in the foyer. Uncle Ricky greets reception and staff, he is greeted back and he is usually provided with a coffee and a yarn. Ricky isn't asking of anything most days – just that he is lonely and sees MDAS as a place to come and visit. Another of our regulars is 'Aunty Penny', who is usually looking for pounds and shillings! Again, the reception staff offer her some lollies and biscuits or coffee and Penny then goes on her way. Again, Penny isn't coming to MDAS for anything in particular, purely a visit. Reception is the front -of-house and the social and emotional contact for not only the regulars but also the general community. Answering phones and taking messages is a small part of what reception does. The staff look after the sport and recreation and the emergency relief funds and all the administration that entails. It is not just filling in a form – it consists of having a yarn, hearing individual's stories of poverty or situations that have led to an event that means they are coming to MDAS seeking assistance.

Clearly counselling skills come into play at front-of-house as well as flowing on to all Family Services programs. The utmost respect given to individuals and families is to be commended. Our Aboriginal reception staff ensures cultural sensitivity is being adhered to during these sometimes-difficult requests and does assist to ensure community members feel safe and secure upon entering the Family Services Unit area.

'Reception is not just answering a phone or filling out a form... it's having a yarn and hearing people's stories, too'





INNOVATING  
FOR POSITIVE  
CHANGE



MDAS is taking a new approach to delivering results for our communities and people.

To bring about meaningful change and real progress in Closing the Gap, we need innovative programs that tackle our problems at the source.

Community and culture will always be at the centre of all that we do, but finding creative solutions to our challenges involves collaboration and co-operation. Emerging leaders in our organisation are showing the way.

The following pages outline some of the innovative programs and the level of commitment of our MDAS staff to bringing about positive and meaningful change.

## INNOVATING FOR POSITIVE CHANGE EARLY YEARS

### Naomi, Jason and Bonny

MDAS Bumps to Babes and Beyond Co-ordinator, Marg Sharman:

I first met Naomi and her partner Jason when Naomi was 34 weeks pregnant with her first baby. Naomi has an intellectual disability, and our Swan Hill MDAS staff had referred Naomi and Jason to our Mildura Midwife Jacinta Molloy. It was felt the couple would have stronger support here from Jason's brother and other extended family members as well as the facilities available by giving birth at a larger hospital and regional centre.

MDAS maternal welfare nurse Jan Herrmann and I began working with Jason and Naomi and trying to prepare them for the birth. The other agencies who had been involved in the case were very sceptical about Naomi and Jason being able to care for their baby. Naomi would clearly be unable to care for the baby herself, but as we worked with them, we found Jason had a very strong capacity to care for the baby and Naomi. We started working with Jason and Naomi but mostly with Jason, getting him to handle and dress the interactive dolls we use in our programs, doing baths and talking about what it was going to be like to have a baby. Naomi was still finding it to be really hard but we included her as the third person in every session – but mostly addressed our interaction with Jason so Naomi didn't become overwhelmed with the responsibilities. At the same time we helped them with practical needs – although they were late in the pregnancy, they had none of the material needs for caring for a baby. Getting together everything they would need in hospital and when they returned home was, in itself, an important part of Jason and Naomi's preparation for the birth.

Beautiful baby Bonny was born on Mother's Day 2013. We spent a lot of time at the hospital working with Naomi and Jason in the days after Bonny was born. It was a difficult birth for Naomi and she struggled to bond with Bonny in the early days. Jason just fell



in love with Bonny from the first moment he saw her. Both Jason and Naomi were so compliant – and whatever Jason was asked to do, he did it with a positive attitude. He was totally focussed on doing and learning whatever he needed to be able to care for Bonny. The staff at the hospital said that was the most they had seen an agency put into one of their new families ever...they were amazed at the support MDAS gave to this couple... But we really felt it was important that they were given the opportunity to be a family. And I was just so proud and confident in them when it came time for them to go home. I felt it was such a privilege to work with them.

Probably one of my favourite moments was when Naomi let me put Bonny beside her on the bed to take a photograph of the two of them together. The likeness between them was striking and when Naomi looked at the photograph, she said "she looks like my baby". A week or so later she sent me a text telling me: "I love her now, Marg". It was such a precious thing to watch her fall in love with that baby. Jason sings to Bonny, he talks to her – he is the competent, caring hands-on dad you would hope for. I am so proud of them, they are doing so well. I think it was probably one of the most useful things I have ever been able to do in my life – to keep that baby with her dad and mum.

**'It's been great to be able to get help with the things we didn't know about or to ask questions when we need to. Naomi does some things, I do some things. We are working it out. But being a dad is the best thing You belong to someone... and someone belongs to you.'** Jason



# INNOVATING FOR POSITIVE CHANGE PEOPLE & CULTURE

*Melissa Badenoch*



MDAS established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy last year, which initiated a system of scholarships, traineeships, cadetships and identified (Indigenous-only) positions for the first time.

In 2013-14, Melissa Badenoch became the first trainee to graduate from the program. The 22-year-old completed her 12-month traineeship in conjunction with a Certificate Three in Business. She was promoted to the position of Project Officer within the MDAS People and Culture Division in Mildura.

#### Melissa's Story:

I am proud to be the first Koori trainee to finish my training through MDAS.

When I was chosen for the traineeship I had a part-time job and I was doing volunteer work, but what I really wanted was any full-time work to establish a work-life balance, keep me motivated and to try to set myself up financially.

I was mainly interested in Community Services or Child Care but I was applying for anything full-time at the time.

The experience has been fantastic! I've been exposed to many experiences and opportunities I just wouldn't have had elsewhere and everyone is so supportive and helpful. The Committees and general community participation that I have now, I also wouldn't have been exposed to if I worked elsewhere.

My career goals are always evolving, and have changed a lot since I began my traineeship in June 2013.

Back then, I just wanted to be an office person – now I want to be someone who creates and contributes to positive changes within my Community and hopefully, one day, our whole Nation.

In my lifetime, I want to see a 'no gap' between our Cultures and I'm on the right track as one of many proud employees of MDAS.

MDAS Manager of People and Culture, Debbie Fankhauser:

We are proud of Melissa's commitment and dedication to completing her traineeship – she has delivered all the potential we saw in her when she was selected for the traineeship.

One of the aims of our Employment Strategy is to be proactive in succession planning within our workforce. Melissa's experience is the Employment Strategy in action – Melissa now moves up within the Organisation, and we now have another trainee in place.

We have two other trainees who are close to completing their formal training period – Indi Clarke (Corporate Services) and Simone Philp (Early Years Services) – and there are another two new trainees recently appointed within the Health and Family Services areas.

The traineeship and mentoring processes are so important in building the capacity of our workforce as an organisation and as a community. But also to provide the opportunity to extend the skilled Koori workforce into other workplaces and to provide role models and mentors for our next generation of young people making the transition from school to work.



# INNOVATING FOR POSITIVE CHANGE FAMILY SERVICES

Donna Hunt

Someone told me recently that our Family Services Unit Staff are "tolerant to the intolerable stories they hear and sometimes see". It is true. The stories of some are excruciating and our staff do this work daily. They deal with enormously complex problems and manage often-conflicting needs. They have to cope with regular setbacks that derail progress for clients and set new challenges in helping get them back on track. I am so fortunate to be a part of this daily work that is here at MDAS. I am inspired by the persistence, compassion and determination of our staff always to hearing the stories and finding the best outcomes for people who come through our doors. This is a typical story for a lot of our clients within FSU and our staffs are amazing, awesome people, as are the families who are involved with our programs.

Jane, Zac, Kyra and Ben

Jane (not her real name) is a mother, aged 24, with three children aged one, two and three. Jane suffers mental health issues, domestic violence and issues around her home environment. At times, this will mean she is admitted to Mildura Base Hospital's Ward 5 (Mental Health Unit) for short periods of times. When Jane and her children are referred to MDAS on this occasion, the chosen caseworker through Jane's previous involvement with MDAS services already knows them. Jane trusts her caseworker – a positive start, as it means she is sharing her concerns and her activities (good and bad) that have led her to being at risk of losing her children and consequently being involved with this program. The initial phase involves a lot of assessing the family (using common risk assessment tools).

In this case, it was deemed necessary to seek a therapeutic assessment from the Take Two clinician attached to this program. Take Two is a Statewide developmental therapeutic program for children and young people in the Child Protection system.



We know that care alone is not sufficient to help children and young people recover from the trauma of family violence, abuse and neglect. Through Take 2, we work intensively with the distressed child or young person, and their carers, families and teachers, to help them understand their pain and learn to trust again.

Jane reveals she has been using ICE as well as Yarndi (marijuana) (we were aware of her Yarndi use not the ice use until a few weeks into the case work). The caseworker seeks support and brings in a Drug and Alcohol worker from MDAS health services. Both programs work collaboratively with Jane but her behaviour is chaotic and she experiences hallucinations at times. [The work with people on ice and or mind-altering drugs can be exhausting. It requires intensive assessment and observation and much collaboration between caseworkers. This is both to ensure the best outcomes for the client, and that caseworkers are feeling supported and sharing some of the burden that comes with this work].

The threat to the young children means they are unable to reside in Jane's care. The caseworkers are able to advocate that the children stay with extended family. A caseworker works with the extended family and children, and while the children are safe, work continues with Jane to detox. Rehabilitation now becomes the goal.

A lot of effort goes into getting Jane placed into a detox program (away from Mildura) and a transition directly to rehab after detox is planned. Unfortunately, Jane becomes exited from detox due to her behaviour (the result of her mental health issues). It is disappointing and sad for our case workers but they step back in to assist Jane's return to Mildura (not an easy task)...and the work continues...



# INNOVATING FOR POSITIVE CHANGE SUNRAYZIA MENS GROUP (SAMSA)

A successful Aboriginal "men's business" group established in Mildura in 2013 is being used as a model for similar groups in South Australia and Victoria. The Sunraysia Aboriginal Men's Support Alliance (SAMSA) focusses on addressing local community issues by providing a mechanism for mutual support for Koori men. SAMSA is about reintroducing the traditional supports, networks and mentoring that is a strength of traditional Koori culture.

Brendan Johnson

My role with MDAS is as co-ordinator of the Koori Offenders' Program. A lot of the men we were dealing with through my program and others seemed to be really lacking positive support from other men and they were looking for opportunities to get that support. We formed the group to try to provide that opportunity and the response was phenomenal. From the very first meeting we had a terrific response not only in terms of attendance numbers at our fortnightly get-togethers, but also in what the men are able to offer to each other. We have an average of 25 men attend the SAMSA fortnightly barbecues. We often also include a health presentation, screening or testing initiative. We also collaborated with Centacare to deliver a five-week physical and emotional health and wellbeing program.

Wayne Clarke

It's really about empowering our blokes to take charge of their lives – that was our aim, and that is definitely what we are noticing is happening. Our philosophy is positive – it is basically 'show respect to earn respect'. It is about helping each other to help ourselves. The group's proving to be a good way for men to share their experiences and problems and what they're going through – and the men know what's said at SAMSA stays here.



We get new faces coming along every fortnight to our meetings, so the word is getting out there in the community that it's a really positive group and experience. Other communities around Victoria and South Australia are interested in what we have done. We've told them that from our experience it's been a great initiative for everyone involved and it's bringing about positive changes in our community. It's providing a really great opportunity for Aboriginal men to share their good habits, ideas, stories and life skills, but also to work through problems and challenges in their lives and to make friendships.

Empowering our  
blokes to take charge  
of their lives



**MDAS is the largest  
employer of Koori  
people across the  
Mallee Region**



# OUR PEOPLE

As the Mallee's largest employer of Koori staff MDAS has implemented many initiatives that are aimed at further increasing our Indigenous workforce and the participation of Koori people in the workforces of other organisations in the region.

Already, about half of our MDAS workforce is made up of people from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background – our longer-term initiatives are aimed at achieving a strong majority of Koori staff in our workforce in the next two years.

In October 2013, we adopted our first three-year Aboriginal Employment Strategy developed last year, and in the first months of implementation, we were pleased to be able to appoint Aboriginal people to 50% of the positions we advertised.

MDAS now has robust processes around recruiting good staff, so we also are now focussing on initiatives that will help us achieve that longer-term goal of 60% Koori staff by 2016.

Other initiatives now being implemented will work on improving the skills of existing staff and enhancing their career path and choice, by empowering Koori staff to either seek promotion internally or externally to MDAS. Aboriginal members are now included on each job recruitment panel at MDAS and initiatives such as a work experience program are now being developed.

Our first priority is always to recruit the right people to the right job, but we also have a responsibility to create opportunities that help break down barriers for Aboriginal people entering the workforce, so we are proactive in our recruitment policies.

We are prepared to invest in Koori people who have the right skills, interests and abilities for roles within the organisation, by providing the right opportunities for them to access the training and skills development for them to continue their career aspirations.

One of the initiatives we are developing that will make a real difference to staff members who are wanting to progress is the setting up of a study centre at MDAS – so staff have access to a quiet area that is set aside only for study purposes.

We are also proud of the wonderful young people we have coming through MDAS. In June 2014, Melissa Badenoch became the first trainee to complete her Traineeship Program with the organisation. Several others will also soon graduate from their traineeships in various areas of the organisation. Melissa and three other young MDAS staff members, Indi Clarke, Simone Philp and Rosie Faulkhead represented the region at the Victorian Koori Summit in Melbourne.

There are currently three staff, Derek Jones, Kirsty Hampton and Carl Kirby, who are training to be Aboriginal Health Workers, and we have appointed five Koori reception staff across our locations. Mildura Aboriginal Health Worker James Peterson has received a grant from Department of Health to commence a bachelor in Nursing, our Swan Hill Aboriginal Health Worker Jody Croft is completing her work towards becoming an Aboriginal Health Practitioner – both are firsts for the Mallee. Koori Youth Justice Worker Andy Charles has been participating in the Lodden Mallee Northern Leadership Program. MDAS also supported several scholarships and sponsorships for young people to support their studies during the year. Our work in the area of adult learning and education allowed us to be a finalist in the Wurreker Learn Local Award.

All of our initiatives are making a difference to these individuals and to our organisation – but they also mean there are benefits to the wider community by providing an opportunity to employ local Koori people, allowing them to kick start their career aspirations and dreams.

**“We need to begin focussing on initiatives which will help us achieve that longer-term goal of 60% Koori staff by 2016”**



*Debbie Fankhauser*

Manager of  
People and Culture



# HEALTH SERVICES REPORT

The 2013-14 year has been one of great progress in the provision of health services to Koori people in the Mallee.

I joined MDAS in March 2014 to take up the newly-created role of General Manager of Health Services. The creation of this position within MDAS was recognition of the critical role we have as an organisation to lead sustainable change that will address critical health and social factors that currently result in the 10-year gap in life expectancy for Aboriginal people.

Prior to working at MDAS I was the Director of Mental Health Services and Manager of the Aboriginal Health Unit at Mildura Base Hospital. This experience was part of my motivation for taking up the MDAS role. Mildura Base Hospital has more Aboriginal admissions than any other hospital in Victoria and in general, Aboriginal people are much more likely to spend time in hospital due to chronic disease issues such as diabetes, cardiac and renal diseases.

Our vision is to provide high quality, culturally appropriate health services to and with the local community, which involves developing life-long, respectful partnerships with community members. Initially, these partnerships will be developed by supporting people to take proactive steps through primary health care linking them into the system, through health checks, immunisation and promotion. Health outcomes will be achieved through treatment by skilled staff offering appropriate, timely services and follow-up; rehabilitation support after treatment by specialist services; but most importantly by encouraging people to manage their own health.

Equally important is ensuring we are responsive to the community needs through accurate data collection and analysis and importantly listening to what the community wants through community forums, events and feedback. I also want to develop the capacity of the Aboriginal workforce at MDAS and build the

numbers of Aboriginal health staff at our clinics by providing access to training and education.

2013-14 has been a year of significant achievement and we will continue to build on these initiatives throughout the year ahead.

## Highlights of 2013-14

- The opening of the new state-of-the art health building in Mildura on October 31, 2013
- Employment in Mildura of a full-time GP, Dr Graham Gordon and a part-time GP registrar, Dr Noore Nipa
- Extensive redevelopment of the Swan Hill Health Building and significant expansion of allied health services available

## Taking Care of our Health

Modern, well-run, culturally-appropriate health facilities are effective in supporting clients to take control of their health

- Our clinics recorded 9218 consultations for the year 2819 for Swan Hill and Kerang and 6419 for Mildura
- Clinical staff completed 400 health checks for the year recording a 43% increase in the number of Health Checks in Mildura in the period January to June 2014

**“I want to develop the capacity of the Aboriginal workforce at MDAS and build the numbers of Aboriginal health staff at our clinics by providing access to training and education”**



David Kirby  
General Manager  
Health Services



# CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

What a difference a year makes in the life of Corporate Services.

As reported last year, MDAS as an organisation was undergoing significant change. That hasn't stopped as the organisation continues to respond to Government funding requirements and community needs.

This has a flow on effect for Corporate Services as we also strive to bring in changes that will enhance service delivery and respond to greater transparency required of the area in terms of providing reports that have meaning and are useful.

We have refined our accounting package and are continually looking to improve the reporting around it to enhance the end user experience – that is, MDAS managers. As reported last year, our payroll and fixed assets are now all integrated and continue to produce meaningful reports for management use. We are continuing to look for improvements to our systems and procedures with a view to eliminating manual entries and paper as much as possible. The administration team continues to strive to do things better and smarter.

One of the major changes in Corporate Services was the outsourcing of our IT system. This was brought about by the ever-increasing threat to our network security not only from hackers but also in terms of data integrity.

Hence, we began a project to identify the best company to provide this service. We are pleased to report that all of MDAS data is now hosted by a major IT company based in Melbourne with 24/7 security comparable to the banking sector.

A major focus this year has also been the establishment of a Quality Reporting System (QRS), partly in response to funding bodies' increased requirements but also from the Board's increased requirements for ensuring good governance practice in the areas of Risk Management and Accreditation. We are pleased

to report that MDAS leads the way in the area of QRS and has been requested to help other Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisations.

Our People and Culture team also have been busy during the year implementing new procedures and programs. One such program was the new online orientation program that helps new MDAS staff transition in as smoothly as possible. This has proved invaluable to not only new staff but also existing employees who also were required to complete the package. Industrial relations laws are also continually changing and if not managed properly expose MDAS as an organisation. This has also been a major focus of the People and Culture team.

Housing continues to be a priority but with the cessation of all funding for capital purchase, housing proves to be an issue that is not going to be solved in the near future.

We also continue to explore areas of new enterprises that MDAS can develop build into self-sustaining ventures that will provide employment for our community and help grow resilience.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to all the members of the Corporate Services Team. Without their fantastic work ethic and devotion, MDAS would not be in the strong position it enjoys today.

THANKS TEAM.

**“We continue to explore areas of new enterprises that MDAS can build into self-sustaining ventures”**



David  
Lim  
General Manager  
Corporate Services







# FINANCIALS

## Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc. Financial Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2014

### DIRECTORS' REPORT

Your directors present their report, together with the financial statements of Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2014.

#### Directors

The names of the directors throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Keith Hampton  
Jan Etrich (resigned 21 May 2014)  
Jemmes Handy  
Steve Portelli  
Esther Kirby (appointed 30 May 2014)  
Pam McCormack  
Rob Connelly  
Michael Gilby  
Dennis Mitchell (appointed 28 August 2014)  
Carl Kirby (appointed 4 December 2013)

#### Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were the provision of community assistance, health services and affordable housing accommodation to members within regional Victoria and New South Wales, including Mildura, Swan Hill, Kerang and Balranald areas.

#### Significant Changes

There were no other significant changes in the nature of the principal activities during the year.

#### Operating Results

The net current year deficit for the 2014 financial year amounted to \$641,564.

#### Review of Operations

A review of the operations of the association during the financial year and the results of those operations show a decrease in net assets of \$641,564 to \$23,403,666 down from \$24,045,230 in 2013. This decrease in net assets has largely resulted from a significant reduction in cash due to increased program costs incurred during the year and an increase in capital investment.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors:

.....  
  
Keith Hampton  
.....  
  
Steve Portelli

Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014



**Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc.**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014**

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
Revenue	17,267,478	17,354,025
Other income	4,284,926	3,900,571
Employee benefits expense	(9,852,027)	(8,619,647)
Program administration expenses	(3,459,577)	(2,223,752)
Depreciation expense	(1,011,089)	(929,424)
Client / program delivery	(4,151,781)	(2,891,393)
Motor vehicle expenses	(490,252)	(612,773)
Travel expenses	(579,242)	(406,302)
Grant returns	(50,428)	(19,247)
Occupancy costs / utilities	(767,245)	(737,693)
Repairs & equipment replacement	(486,284)	(517,090)
Interest expense	(12,841)	-
Other expenses	(1,333,202)	(860,252)
<b>Net current year surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>(641,564)</b>	<b>3,437,023</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income:</b>		
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total other comprehensive income	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	(641,564)	3,437,023
Total comprehensive income attributable to the entity	(641,564)	3,437,023



**Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc.**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2014**

	2014	2013
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	5,249,882	8,800,244
Trade and other receivables	526,166	214,370
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>5,776,048</u>	<u>9,014,614</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Trade and other receivables	250,898	250,898
Property, plant and equipment	20,092,284	17,583,301
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>20,343,182</u>	<u>17,834,199</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>26,119,230</u>	<u>26,848,813</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	1,423,124	2,125,890
Short-term provisions	526,268	469,221
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>1,949,392</u>	<u>2,595,111</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Long-term provisions	133,672	93,472
Other liabilities	632,500	115,000
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>766,172</u>	<u>208,472</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<u>2,715,564</u>	<u>2,803,583</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>23,403,666</u>	<u>24,045,230</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained surplus	23,403,666	24,045,230
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<u>23,403,666</u>	<u>24,045,230</u>





**Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc.**

**ANNUAL STATEMENTS GIVE TRUE AND FAIR VIEW OF FINANCIAL POSITION AND PERFORMANCE OF INCORPORATED ASSOCIATION**

We, Keith Hampton and Steve Portelli, being members of the committee of Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc., certify that –

The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc. during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30 June 2014.

Signed: .....  .....

Keith Hampton

Signed: .....  .....

Steve Portelli

Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014





## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MILDURA ABORIGINAL CORPORATION INC.

### **Report on the Financial Report**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Mildura Aboriginal Corporation Inc. (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2014, and the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the committee.

### ***The Responsibility of Committee for the Financial Report***

The committee of the association are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are appropriate to meet the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibilities also include establishing and maintaining internal control as the committee and management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

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

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

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the committee's financial reporting under the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

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

### ***Independence***

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.



***Auditor's Opinion***

In our opinion, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Mildura Aboriginal Corporation as of 30 June 2014 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations).

**Chan & Naylor Southern Audit**  
Registered Company Auditors

  
**Philip Shugg**  
Partner  
**MILDURA**

Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2014

# THANK YOU

## **Congratulations and thank you to long-serving staff with more than 10 years' service**

John Rogers  
(27 years)  
Rhonda McInnes  
(16 years)  
Donna Hunt  
(11 years)  
James Peterson  
(11 years)

## **Our Staff**

(MDAS staff as of  
30/06/14, listed in  
alphabetical order)

Karla Akins  
Narelle Anderson  
Joseph Azzarelli  
Melissa Badenoch  
Ryan Bailey  
Mary Baker  
Majella Ballard  
Sally Barker  
Helena Baxter  
Jennifer Berry  
Xavier Bisson  
Jennifer Blackman  
Samantha Brennan  
Terry Brennan  
Ruth Broughton  
Kerrie Burton  
Amanda Caddy  
Jane Capogreco  
Sarah Carn  
Jacinta Chaplin  
Michelle Chapman  
Alisha Charles  
Andy Charles  
Sue Charles  
Tim Chase

Ethan Chilly  
Trent Chilly  
Indi Clarke  
Rupert Clarke  
Wayne Clarke  
Natasha Colbourne  
Shaina Collins  
Alva Connelly  
Carol Cook  
Jan Cook  
Jody Croft  
Nahtanha Davey  
Charlene Davis  
Nicole Davis  
Tina DeGroot  
Alicia Deppeler  
Alana Doe  
Danielle Dougherty  
Pearl Dunn  
Mark Etrich  
Stacey Fa'ase  
Debra Fankhauser  
Sheryl Farrow  
Rosie Faulkhead  
Jacob Fifita  
Valentina Fifita  
Michelle Gadsby  
Carla Germane  
Noel Giddings  
Tahnaya Giddings  
Marissa Gilbert  
Graham Gordon  
Kristy Gordon  
Michelle Gray  
Jade Griffiths  
Laura Hallett  
Keith Hampton  
Kirsty Hampton  
Briana Hayden  
Edward Hayden  
Ross Hensgen  
Jan Herrmann  
Karyn Hilton  
Beverlyn Hinetana  
Donna Hunt

Orion Hunt  
Summer Hunt  
Brendan Johnson  
Derek Jones  
Jade Kelly  
Nathan Kelly  
Casey Kennedy  
Frankie Kennedy  
Carl Kirby  
David Kirby  
Delureen Kirby  
Rudolph Kirby  
Emily Knights  
Michelle Knights  
Bianca Krause  
Terrence Kuchel  
Judy Lamb  
Melanie Lane  
Dennis Laurie  
Victoria Laurie  
Tim Layton  
David Lim  
Trudi Louchard  
Jessica MacDonald-  
O'Dwyer  
Elisha Mangal  
Bernadette Manson  
Amanda McCole  
Maurisa McColm  
Pam McCormack  
Leanne McDermott  
Rhonda McInnes  
Jessica Micale  
Luke Milne  
Sarah Mitchem  
Jacinta Molloy  
Travis Morvell  
Damien Murray  
Jane Neyland  
Noore Nipa  
Tracy Orr  
Jason Pappin  
Eddie Paul  
Manu Paul  
Greg Pepper

Ada Peterson  
James Peterson  
Martin Peterson  
Simone Philp  
Cathy Pickup  
Badrika Piyumal  
Paul Robert  
Letitia Robinson  
John Rogers  
Margaret Sharman  
Victoria Simpson  
Roger Sims  
Tenealle Skerry  
Anne Smith  
Travis Smith  
Robyn Smythe  
Jennifer Sonnemans  
Simone Spencer  
Raelene Stephens  
Andrea Stewart  
Kim Taha  
Kelly Taliloa  
Hine Taurima  
Anthony Taylor  
Russell Taylor  
Dorothy Telford  
Zanele Thebe  
Ashely Valinoti  
Melanie Wade  
Della Walker  
Melissa Watson  
Patricia Watson  
Tracy Watson  
Gary Webb  
Harold Webster  
Joelle Whiting  
Zachary Wilksch  
Amanda Williams  
Erin Williams  
Justine Williams  
Rebecca Wilson  
Bobby Wise  
Diane Yates  
Nathan Yates

# OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

## Our Partners

MDAS has formal Memorandums of Understanding with:

- Sunraysia Community Health Services -
- Mildura Base Hospital -
- Mallee Family Care -
- Lower Murray Medicare Local -
- Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation -
- Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group -
- Monash University -
- Rural Workforce Agency Victoria -
- Tip Toe Podiatry -
- Take Two Berry Street -
- Koori Justice Unit -
- Sunraysia Community Health Services -
- Healthy Together Mildura -
- Mildura Rural City Council -
- QUIT Victoria -
- Haven Homesafe -
- Victoria Police -
- Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation -
- Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative -
- Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative -
- Queen Elizabeth Centre -
- Lateral Projects -
- Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network

MDAS is grateful for the ongoing support of our important financial partners and supporters.

## Current major funding bodies are:

- Victorian Department of Human Services
- Victorian Department of Health
- Victorian Department of Justice
- Federal Department of Social Services
- Federal Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Federal Department of Health

## Other financial supporters include:

- Bendigo Health Care Group
- Brotherhood of Saint Laurence
- Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local
- Mallee Family Care
- Mildura Rural City Council
- Vic Health
- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
- Victorian Department of Education & Early Childhood Development (DEECD)

MDAS is a member of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO)

MDAS is also a member of the following:

- Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group
- National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- Northern Mallee Community Partnership



**Mallee District Aboriginal Services** (trading as MAC Inc)  
120 Madden Avenue PO Box 5134 Mildura 3502

**MDAS Annual Report 2013-14**  
**Mallee District Aboriginal Services (trading as MAC Inc)**

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