



MDAS
MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

ANNUAL 20
REPORT 23



ELDER



MDA

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Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned this document may contain images of persons who are now deceased

ABOUT MDAS

For Community, By Community

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which we deliver services across the Mallee Region.

We pay our respects to our Elders past and present, and to our emerging leaders, and acknowledge our ancient connection to our Country

We acknowledge that our traditional Aboriginal lands have never been ceded.

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



our Vision

Self-determined, healthy, robust and culturally strong Aboriginal communities across the Mallee Region.

our Purpose

- Healing, supporting, serving and protecting our communities throughout the Mallee Region.
- Healthy, resilient and capable Aboriginal people and families who can be their very best selves and exercise true self determination.
- Caring for, strengthening, empowering, motivating and guiding our Mob.

our Values

MIND:

Integrity, Accountability, Confidentiality



SPIRIT:

Respect, Elders, Culture



BODY:

Compassion, Empathy, Nurturing



In Community

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) 5412 6004

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Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited
ACN 607 331 144
MDAS Limited ACN 602 202 139

Symbolism of our logo

Our logo is based on a design by Sharon Kirby.

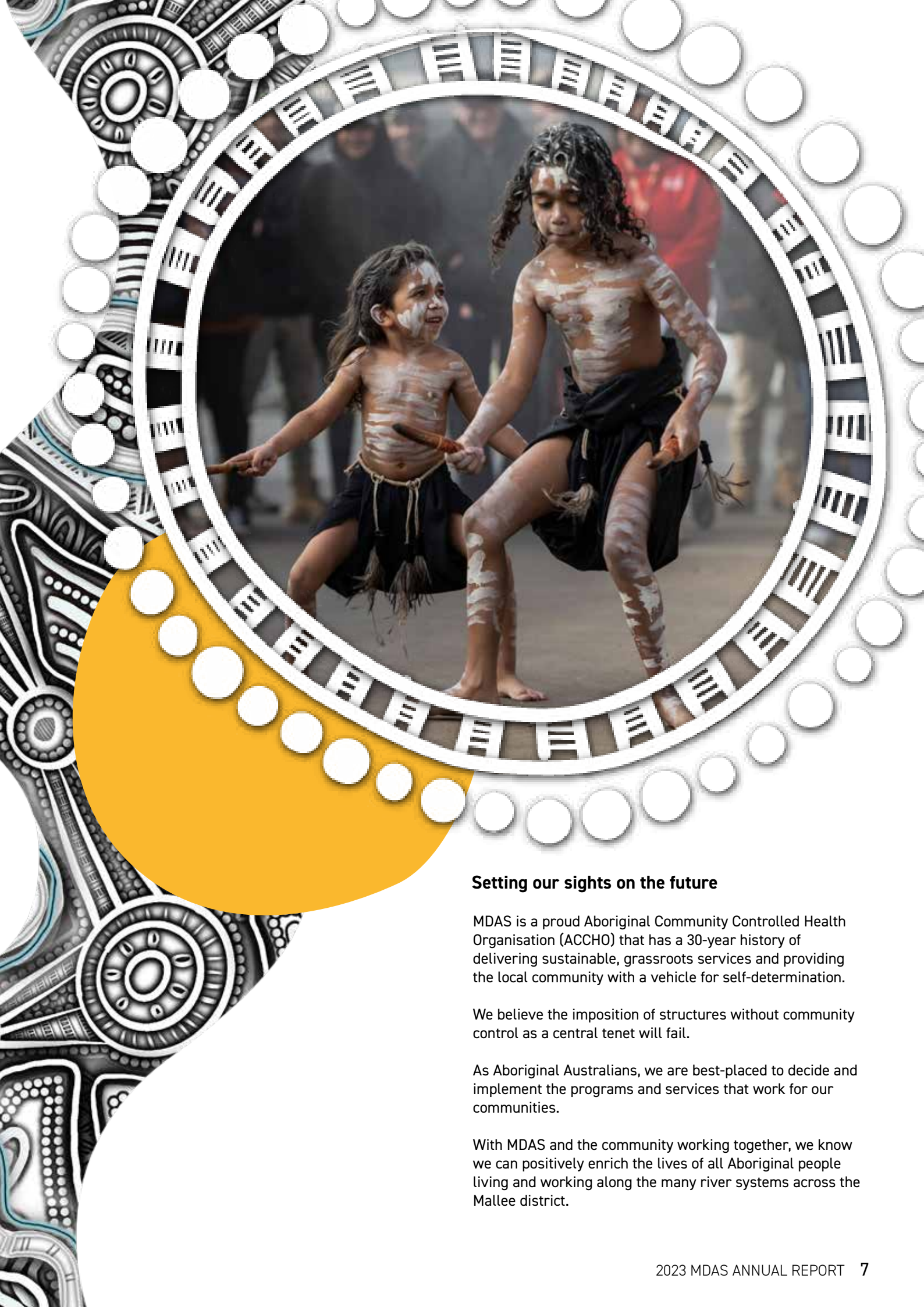


Cover Artwork

The artwork on the cover of this year's MDAS Annual Report is adapted from an original artwork by Kadaesha Jackson

Mallee District Aboriginal Services wishes to pay tribute to all community members who have passed away in the Mallee this year, as well as those in other communities with a family connection to MDAS members, staff or community as a whole.





Setting our sights on the future

MDAS is a proud Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) that has a 30-year history of delivering sustainable, 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.

How we work

The Helping Hand of MDAS

The MDAS Core Business Model has been developed to underpin the key operational functions of MDAS. At MDAS we have “the person” at the centre of all that we do.

Our business model is depicted as the “Helping Hand of MDAS”, where the person is at the centre of our service delivery, surrounded by the community.

MDAS provides service delivery in a holistic manner to meet all needs including: Person-Centred Ages and Stages; Soul & Culture; Family, Children & Youth; Social and Emotional; Body Health/Housing; Environment/ Self determination.

The MDAS vision is aimed at assisting clients and community to be empowered and achieve the self-determination that can create lasting change.



Person-Centred
Ages & Stages



Soul/Culture



Family, Children
and Youth



Social and
Emotional



Body Health,
Housing



Environment,
Self-determination

Constitution Preamble

Our Constitution enshrines the rules of MDAS as a company, and ensures democratic fairness and integrity in MDAS representation and operation.

MDAS is one of very few Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to adopt a Preamble as part of the Constitution.

Our MDAS Preamble outlines the context in which our Constitution operates.

Constitution Foreword

As an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation, we operate under two systems of law.

We abide by and comply with our statutory legal obligations under the Corporations Act (Cth) 2001.

We report to and are regulated by both the Australian Securities and Investment Commission and the Australian Charities and Not for Profit and Commission.

In addition to the western legal system that governs our operations we also follow and honour our own cultural obligations under Aboriginal LORE.

Our LORE sets the foundation and values by which we operate our business and deliver services to our communities.

Our LORE is the customs and stories of Aboriginal peoples learned from the Dreamtime, passed from generation to generation through our ceremony, songs, stories and dance and requires us to respect Country.

Our LORE from time immemorial has governed all aspects of our lives. Our culture is a vibrant evolving expression of who we are.

We acknowledge the four cornerstones to our LORE:

LAND - our ancestors birthing Country is our link to our sacred lands where ceremony and healing takes place.

ORAL - our history is an oral tradition, we pass on generation to generation our language, customs, song lines and ceremonies through story telling.

RESPECT - we show respect for our Origin, our Country, our Elders, our cultural practices and the cultural practices of others, our animals and our Dreamtime.

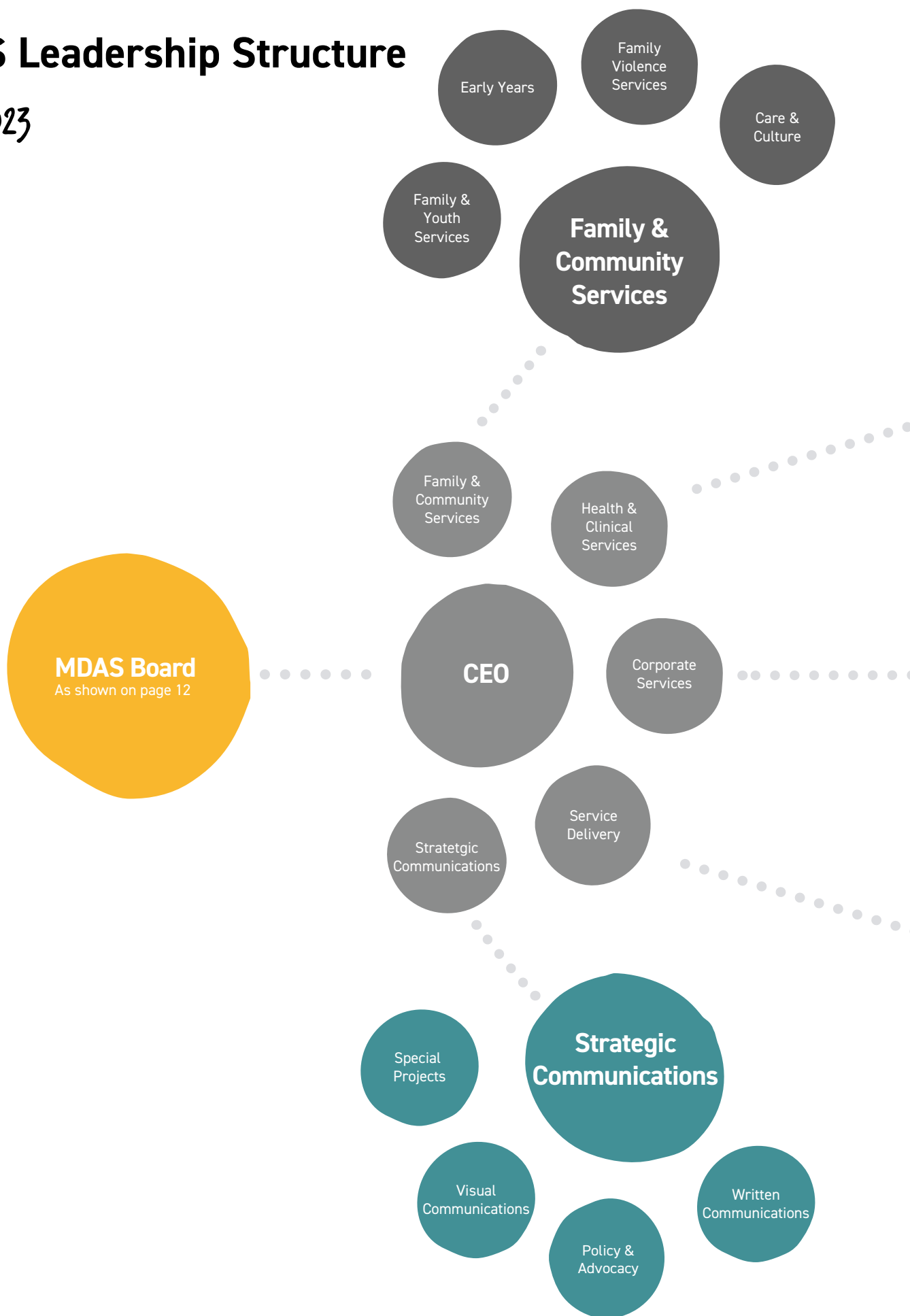
ELDERS - are our wisdom holders, our story tellers, our links to our culture and history. They are our knowledge keepers and spiritual guides for our families and people.

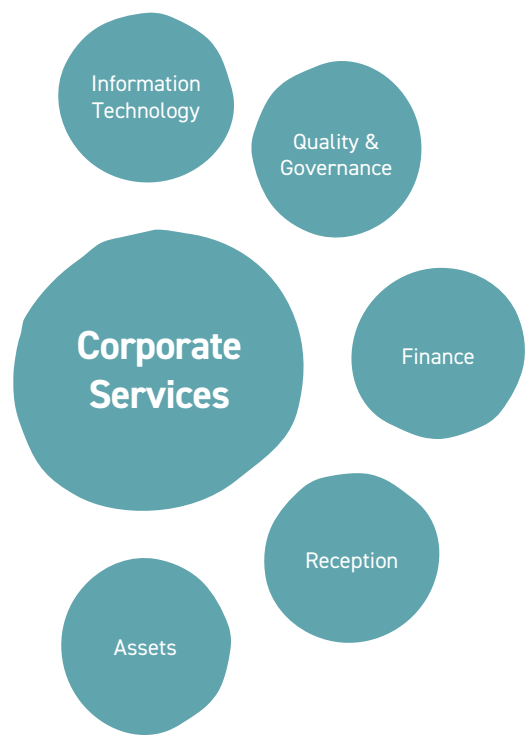
Our constitution has been written to guide the governance of our company under western law, and through the Objects expressed in clause 6, to ensure we honour and acknowledge our obligations under our LORE



MDAS Leadership Structure

2022-2023





Our MDAS Board

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thelma Chilly: Chair (Robinvale)



Thelma Chilly is a proud Aboriginal woman who has ties to the Wiradjuri, Muthi, Wemba, Wadi, Barapa and Yorta nations. Born in Robinvale, Thelma has worked with Aboriginal communities in the Mallee for more than 38 years and is a strong advocate for our Koori Community. Thelma was placed on the 2010 Women's Honour Roll and was a finalist in the National Dreamtime Awards in 2018. Thelma has a strong knowledge and background in family violence prevention and worked for the Victorian State Government for 18 years. Thelma holds qualifications in Community Development and Planning through Swinburne University and was responsible for the Local Aboriginal Networks. Thelma founded Maliyan Consulting in 2022 and remains passionate about her communities in the Mallee.

Vicki Clark (Swan Hill)



Vicki Clark is a descendant of the Mutthi Mutthi / Wemba Wamba, and is the proud mother of Tamara, and grandmother of three beautiful children.

Professionally, Vicki dedicated 25 years to the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Victoria, in a Coordinator position, making a profound contribution to the Australian Catholic Church, Catholic Education and to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. She has taken a leading role in the national Reconciliation Process; she is the former co-chair of Reconciliation Victoria and is currently on the Reconciliation Council. Vicki volunteers her time as a Founding Trustee of Opening the Doors Foundation (a foundation that supports and encourages the participation of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in Catholic education); and as a director of Yingadi Aboriginal Corporation, an Indigenous corporation dedicated to nurturing Indigenous spirituality and preservation of culture. She was founding Secretary and past Chairperson of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council. She has also given her time and expertise to a number of organisations and boards, including the Australian Catholic University, Mary Mackillop Foundation, Caritas Australia Indigenous Programmes, Sister of St Joseph, Edmund Rice Education Australia, Mallee District Aboriginal Services and MacKillop Family Services.

Rita Simmons (Mildura)



Rita Simmons is a Gadigal woman, born on Gadigal Country in the 1960s. As child, Rita was raised both in Fiji & Sydney and she is part of the Stolen Generation. Ten years ago, Rita sought out her family and upon finding them, she returned to Gadigal Country for the first time. Rita has connections with the Barkindji & Ngiyampaa communities. Rita is passionate about community and is dedicated to ensuring their health and wellbeing needs are met through; integrity, respect, understanding and compassion. Rita has been actively involved in Aboriginal community work for over thirty years, and has also volunteered with various church groups and charities. A highlight for Rita is her work with the AFL Indigenous Academy, mentoring youth, encouraging them to keep in school and giving them opportunities whilst instilling values, and life lessons.

Jacinta Chaplin (Swan Hill)



Cert III Nursery production, Cert IV Conservation and Land Management

Jacinta has worked within the community, health, and farming sectors. She is an active community member and sits on several Aboriginal committees in the Mallee district. She has been heavily involved in coordinating and organising family medical appointments, workshops and community events, She had oversight of program funding and grant applications, development, delivery and reporting as the MDAS Health Promotion Officer for more than nine years.

Sharon Johnson (Mildura)

Master of Public Health (MPH)



Sharon is a proud Senior Aboriginal Health Practitioner (AHW/AHP) of 26 years and is registered with AHPRA. Sharon grew up in Melton, Victoria until the age of 15 when her parents moved back to Charleville, Queensland. She lived and worked in the Northern Territory for the 20 years before moving to Mildura with her family in 2019. Sharon works across many fields but is also on the Mildura Council Aboriginal Action Committee (AAC), the Mallee Regional Partnership Group, and is the first Aboriginal person to be appointed by the Health Minister on to the Mildura Base Public Hospital Board.

Nikita Hart (Mildura)

Graduate of the Northern Mallee Leaders



Nikita Hart is a proud Bundjalung woman born and raised on Latji Latji country. Nikita is currently employed by the Department of Education as a Koori Engagement Support Officer and has previously worked in areas of education and training, community development, evaluation, health and wellbeing and early years. Nikita is passionate about community and seeing community thrive. Nikita is deputy chair of the Ngiwa Yarna committee and a 2022 graduate of the Northern Mallee Leaders. Nikita values the importance of volunteering and leadership. She has volunteered in spaces from aged care centres, youth programs to the annual Salvos Christmas lunch. She is proud of her work with Connected Beginnings where she created a safe space for women and children through Cuppa n Yarn. She is grateful for the opportunity of Board director to serve her community.

Marcus Horwood (Mildura)

Diploma of Government – Contract Management, Currently undertaking MBA - Latrobe University Business School, Graduate Certificate in Public Sector Management- Latrobe University, Diploma in Community Services – SuniTAFE.



Marcus Horwood is a proud Bangarang man whose family ties trace back to Wahgunyah Victoria. Marcus has lived in and out of Mildura for a large part of his life, returning permanently in 2018. Marcus works as the Senior Manager – Aboriginal Workforce for the Department of Justice and Community Safety. He is also a Justice of the Peace and in 2022 was awarded the Public Service Medal.

Mark Morgan (Mildura)

Diploma in Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Health, Certificate in Critical Incident Stress Management, Certificate in Mediation



Mark is experienced in advocacy for community and Indigenous students and has a history of statewide participation in improving Aboriginal Education. Mark has held senior positions in the Magistrates Court of Victoria and the Children's Koori Court Officer. This included several organisations, where he ensured that compliance with funding bodies were met. He also worked as Practice manager of Murray Valley Aboriginal Cooperative.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Darlene Thomas

Darlene Thomas is a proud Barkindji woman and the Chief Executive of Mallee District Aboriginal Services. With over 25 years of experience working with local communities, Darlene has provided support services for victim / survivors of family and sexual violence, developed social and emotional wellbeing programs and delivered innovative justice diversion programs for men and women.



Darlene is passionate about driving better long-term outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living in the Mallee region. She has a clear view of the policy and funding reform that is required to provide the appropriate support for her community, and Darlene advocates for these fiercely.

Darlene is also a director on the Board of Djirra and sits on a range of committees, supporting collaborative approaches to securing collective impact.

Chair's Report

Thelma Chilly



Firstly, I would like to thank members of the Mallee District Aboriginal Services for affording me the opportunity to serve as Chair to continue improving the governing and oversight responsibilities that you entrusted in me and my fellow board members.

I would also like to express gratitude to the MDAS executive team, staff, our volunteers, community members and partners, including our generous funders and donors. The support and commitment across MDAS programs and projects over the year cannot be over-emphasised.

As MDAS members, your mandate to the board was to ensure that service delivery within the Mallee district was consistent with community expectations. With COVID-19 restrictions a thing of the past,

our staff are back onsite, working collaboratively across the Organisation. It is my pleasure to report on the Organisation's performance and key developments for the 2022-2023 financial year and to reiterate the board's commitment to continuous improvement in the years to come.

After the loss of some key senior staff in the previous financial year, which almost paralysed the Organisation, the CEO and board have worked very hard to recruit a full complement of staff at the executive level. At the time of writing, I am confident that the collaborative work being undertaken by our CEO, executive team, new company secretary, and staff will support our vision for achieving self-determination, and robust, and culturally strong Aboriginal communities throughout the Mallee region.

As the financial year progressed, we saw advancements across the Organisation. Notably, in consultation



with recently appointed internal auditors – AFS and Associates Chartered Accountants – we have focused on our financial stability. Whilst this body of work is ongoing, improvements to our processes are already delivering benefits. Operationally, like most health services, MDAS has experienced a staffing shortage in our Health Clinics. Our executive team has worked tirelessly to onboard a permanent general practitioner for Swan Hill, for a four-year tenure.

Strategically, our board completed governance training alongside our executive team. We also continue to explore the viability of longer-term initiatives and partnership opportunities. This includes ongoing discussions with funders about the Big Build Project. We piloted the Community Kitchen in Mildura which has proven to be extremely successful, providing amazing food to community. There is now a plan to develop a

similar model in Swan Hill. As we continue to make progress across all elements of the Organisation, we are well on our way to becoming an employer of choice, with job applications increasing substantially.

The board is committed to strengthening the governance and regulatory compliance obligations of the Organisation through continuous learning and development strategies. With resilience and collegiately, the board can achieve much more. No organisation is without its own challenges, but with integrity, transparency, and accountability, whilst we will not always get it right, we will make incremental, impactful change. I must emphasise that open communication is the cornerstone of successful organisations. As spoken by Patrick Henry in 1799 – united we stand – divided we fall.

I encourage continuous dialogue with our members. As a board, we are

receptive to input from our members and communities as this can only enhance our growth journey and service delivery.

Once again, I would like to thank our government funders and other donors for their continued financial support. Without them, our work would be difficult to achieve. I would like to further extend my appreciation to our hard-working staff, volunteers, my fellow board directors, and our board committees for their dedication. Together we have made significant strides in fulfilling our Mission, Vision, and LORE.

In closing, as a proud Aboriginal woman with ties to the Wiradjuri, Muthi, Wemba, Wadi and Yorta nations, I am very proud of what our Organisation has achieved over the past twelve months. I look forward to another successful year ahead and to the continuous growth of MDAS.

CEO Report

For any organisation undergoing a period of transformation, progress can seem slow, and achievements can be forgotten in the course of day-to-day business.

An Annual Report presents an opportunity for reflection and compiling this Report, I have been reminded of the work that has been done, the obstacles we have overcome and the opportunities that exist for both MDAS, and for the community we serve.

Fulfilling the role of chief executive of MDAS is a profound privilege and in accepting the position, I committed to supporting a culture of accountability, integrity, and respect. Beyond these core values, I am also committed to engendering a spirit of optimism and inclusivity at MDAS. Our Organisation should be an employer of choice in our community, MDAS should be a powerful advocate and a centre for connection and collaboration. I want to ensure MDAS once again becomes what our Mob needs us to be, an organisation offering quality services, programs, and care.

The 2022-2023 financial year was meant to be one for recovery, with the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic behind us. However, Mother Nature had other ideas and in late 2022, our region faced a flood crisis unlike anything we have experienced for decades. With many businesses and communities still reeling from the impact of successive lockdowns, MDAS developed a flood response team that prioritised the safety and wellbeing of our clients, members, and community. The team developed evacuation plans, implemented flood protection measures for at-risk properties, delivered supplies and conducted

daily welfare checks. I was immensely proud of the support MDAS was able to provide to impacted community, whilst continuing to deliver all our other programs. Just as we saw during the pandemic, the challenges we faced highlighted our strengths and our potential. We established relationships with local organisations, identified new ways of working together and reaffirmed our commitment to caring for our people.

During this reporting period, after an exhaustive recruitment process, MDAS secured a full complement of executive directors, and we are focused on creating stability for the Organisation. The leadership is supporting the healing and growth of our staff through improved professional development processes. We are offering enhanced pathways for further study and training to expand employment options and we are creating opportunities for our younger staff to take on leadership roles. These processes are underpinned by an agreed 'build our own' approach designed to address the challenges of attracting and retaining staff and to supporting career and life outcomes for our community members. Our vision for the future of MDAS is to have a stable, qualified workforce comprising largely of our community members. We acknowledge that this is a long-term plan that will require commitment over several years, but the seed has been planted.

Reflecting on our renewed focus on workplace culture, it is pleasing to note that MDAS has seen a significant increase in applications for advertised positions over the last twelve months. We have worked hard to improve our culture within and to elevate our reputation with funders, stakeholders, and the broader community. Our recruitment outcomes and feedback on performance are indicators that we

are on the right track. Of course, only one year into this reformation, there is a great deal of work still to do and we value the feedback and suggestions we receive that will direct future improvements and strategies.

Nominating highlights for the year is difficult as there have been many. It was an honour to accept the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards 'Supporting Healthy Populations: Active Outreach Vaccination Clinics – Providing Equity of Vaccines to All' Award, along with our local partners. The success of this partnership speaks to the value of community organisations supporting each other and working together for the benefit of our community. All involved worked extremely hard, under what were at times, challenging conditions. This Award belongs to every member of staff and community who stepped up to help.

In addition to strengthening our partnerships this year, we also focused on lifting our profile which has led to an improved media presence and increased visits from government ministers and shadow ministers. This engagement with government allows MDAS to be involved in conversations around policy and funding reform that will better serve our community. People are reaching out to us in a new and positive way.

The overall highlight for me has been the feedback I have received from community and from our funders. People with a long association with MDAS, are contacting me to say they are seeing a promising change. They know we are on a journey but the MDAS of today is giving them hope. It is their hope and their experience that drives me and drives my team. Our region is blessed with Elders who have kept the vision for self-determined, healthy, robust, and



culturally strong Aboriginal Mallee communities alive. Their wisdom guides us. Our community, from our youngest to our oldest, are our motivation – we see you; we hear you and we thank you.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge the work of our dedicated staff. The success MDAS has achieved – the growth of the Organisation, the nominations and recognition – do not occur in isolation. Our staff come to work each day focused on supporting the needs of their clients. Sometimes the days are long, and the barriers seem insurmountable, but our staff keep coming back because they care.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the board for its commitment to community and for its ongoing support of the MDAS team.

When we all stand together, we are strong.



Victorian Public Healthcare Awards



Impact

A Café Community

After significant planning, in January 2023, MDAS Mildura launched its Community Café with a focus on providing nutritious free meals and drinks for our community.

Offering an escape from the summer heat and winter chill, we have seen increasing numbers of people coming into the Cafe, not just for a meal but to connect with staff and other community members.

With upgraded kitchen equipment and an expanded staff, the Café served 4,941 community meals and 4,893 community drinks in its first six months of operation.

“From the beginning, our staff understood that by purchasing their coffees and food through the Café, they were helping us to offer the free community meals.”

In addition to this, we also launched our free breakfast bar that allows community to come into MDAS for a healthy start to the day, with cereal, fruit, toast and hot tea, coffee, and milo available on a self-service basis.

Catering and Events Manager, Jo Murray, says the team has been delighted by the way everyone has embraced the Café.

“Each week we seem to get new regulars coming in for a yarn and a feed and this has meant we have been able to increase our Café staffing numbers.

“We have hired more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and we are training them in hospitality, helping them to develop customer service, food preparation, baking and barista skills.

“It has been rewarding to watch our staff gain confidence and to see their



pride in being able to support their families, whilst they are also giving back to their community.”

Jo says it has been the support of MDAS staff that has really underpinned the success of the Community Café concept.

“From the beginning, our staff understood that by purchasing their coffees and food through the Café, they were helping us to offer the free community meals.”

“They take a lot of pride in knowing they’re making a difference and they all stop and have a chat with community members while they wait for their order to be prepared.”

Between them, Jo and her Community Kitchen Coordinator, Tamara Marshall, bring over 25 years of catering experience to the Café and this is undoubtedly helping to drive its success internally, and the increased

JANUARY - JUNE 2023

Community meals provided
4941

Community drinks provided
4893

interest from the broader community. Local organisations are now seeking out the Community Café to provide catering for their meetings and events.

“We are getting more external enquiries for our catering service, and we have also been providing support and work experience to our future hospitality superstars, currently studying at SuniTAFE through the Dulka Yuppata Centre.

“It’s a growing part of what we do and it’s only going to get bigger as people embrace the ‘pass it on’ ethos of our Café concept.”

Your lunch-time purchase paying for someone else’s – why wouldn’t you support that?

Swan Hill Youth Program

Bringing Community Together

Like many country towns, Swan Hill is not always overflowing with entertainment options for our young people but that changed when our Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) staff decided to establish a youth program.

Running on Wednesday nights, the program offered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, aged between eight and twenty-four, a range of activities designed to help them develop friendships, skills, and confidence.

Commencing at the tail-end of 2022, the youth group initially had up to fifteen children attending each session and less than a year later, that number has doubled, and the program has extended to offer an additional weekly session for children in grade prep to year 12 and special school holiday sessions. The program is led by MDAS Swan Hill staff members, Malinda Loats, Sahra Summerfield and volunteer, Conner Arif, who all share a passion for supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to build connections with culture and community.

“The program came about in response to feedback we were receiving – our youth needed something to do – so together, we developed a plan and began promoting it. Engaging with the kids, they became comfortable with us and felt that the space we offered was a safe one, so we quickly saw participation increase.

“We encourage the children to have ownership of the program by allowing them to have input; they share their ideas on what we should include in our activities,” Mal explains.

Among the group’s activities are cooking, arts and crafts, and indoor and outdoor games, the children’s favourite game is ‘Knockout’ and by all reports, they are extremely competitive. The holiday

program allows for more time and Sahra, Mal and Connor have used it to engage the kids in culture; the group has made coolamons, learnt, and performed a cultural dance for the Elders and attended a cultural movie, ‘Sweet As.’

As the senior member of the team, Mal brings several years of experience to the program, and she can’t speak highly enough of its value.

“There are so many things to love about it but what I love most is seeing the children grow within themselves; seeing their personalities erupt from someone so shy to nothing can stop them from thriving and having a load of fun.”

While the program is about letting the children have fun, it is also about helping them develop into capable young adults and Mal says that even after less than a year, she is seeing this ethos bear fruit. “I have already seen benefits. The program teaches the children how to understand and manage emotions, how to set and achieve goals, create meaningful relationships, and make responsible decisions. Through the youth group I have seen kids rekindle friendships, make new ones, learn skills, and increase their independence.”

From the beginning, the program has been about offering a safe space for young people to engage in cultural activities, sport, and socialisation. Ensuring Aboriginal youth feel connected to their community and have hope and aspirations for their future forms part of the fabric that will close the gap in life experiences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. The power of this is not lost on Mal, Sahra and Connor.

“Programs like ours matter, they bring our younger community together and can make a difference to their

lives today and into the future,” Mal explains.

Reflecting on the ways the group has built relationships with each other, with Elders and with MDAS staff, Sahra says the impact of the program reaches beyond those who attend.

“The program is so important because it offers a way for diverse groups in our community to connect in a positive way. They are learning from each other and supporting each other.”

Given the interest in the youth group continues to grow, clearly the community shares the team’s enthusiasm for the program. Steven has been going to the youth group for a while and enjoys the time he spends with his new friends (and the good feed is a bonus.)

“The Youth Group helps me engage with my culture and it is a place where I can catch up with my mob. I love the food, and we always have a great laugh and loads of fun. This program is a great way to get involved with your culture and connect with mob.”

Like Steven, Levi loves the opportunity the group gives him to catch up with mates and learn more about his culture.

“I go because it teaches me more about my culture, I love seeing all the kids involved with different cultural properties. I think more people should get involved because more people need to know about culture and the way we lived and through this program you learn that.”

Knowledge and confidence are the foundations for self-determination. When we support our young people to learn about their heritage and to develop life skills through programs like the Swan Hill Youth Group, we are setting them up for a better tomorrow.

Fibroscan

For a healthier Mallee Mob



As part of Mallee District Aboriginal Services commitment to improving health outcomes through preventative health and chronic disease management, the Organisation has invested in a Fibroscan machine.

Aboriginal people are disproportionately affected by liver disease, it remains one of their leading causes of death and it is the third leading cause of the mortality gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Concerningly, whilst data has shown a reduction in mortality rate for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for many diseases, including diabetes and kidney disease, there is no similar data indicating a decline in mortality for liver disease.

MDAS chose to purchase the Fibroscan to increase its capacity to deliver diagnoses and preventative health care. The Fibroscan machine can identify potential liver problems before they become critical, allowing for patients to receive treatment and make lifestyle changes, to avoid or delay, the progression of liver disease.

The Fibroscan is much like an ultrasound; it is painless, non-invasive, and only takes a few minutes to complete. In many instances, it replaces the need for a biopsy which, as an invasive procedure, is a lot more daunting for a patient.

Results are immediately available to the doctor, who can develop treatment plans where necessary, and if done regularly, doctors can use fibroscans as mapping tool for patients, allowing them to measure the impact treatment and lifestyle changes are having on their liver. Jo Lenton, MDAS Sexual Health Coordinator, says the addition of the Fibroscan machine will allow Health Clinic patients to be more proactive about their own health.

“We often put off check-ups due to the fear of pain, or the time off work required for procedures and recovery. The Fibroscan removes these barriers because it is quick and painless and the value it brings in terms of preventative health and disease management cannot be under-estimated.

“We know Aboriginal people in our community are more likely to become critically unwell with liver disease, so the introduction of the Fibroscan will help MDAS address this. We want to see the day where our community is not overrepresented in rates of preventable disease.”

MDAS is working hard to close the gap for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Mallee and initiatives such as the Fibroscan, which address their health outcomes, are a powerful example of what is achievable through investment and innovation.

HIPPY

HIPPY kids are happy kids

If we are going to successfully close the gap in life experiences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, there needs to be increased government focus on, and investment for, early years programs.

Supporting our young ones to be healthy, to be safe and to be engaged in education is critical to their future. Mallee District Aboriginal Services (MDAS) delivers a variety of programs aimed at ensuring better outcomes for our children and some of them, like the HIPPY program, are meeting their targets and demonstrating what is possible when families are supported to build their capacity.

MDAS has been offering the HIPPY program to families since 2016, through a mix of in-home and group activities, designed to support school readiness, build parental capacity and confidence, and strengthen the relationship between parents/carers and their child.

Team leader of Early Years Services, Vanessa Dyke, is an enthusiastic advocate for the HIPPY program and she says she has witnessed great outcomes for both children and adults who have participated.

“HIPPY is one of the best programs of its type that I’ve seen. It is well-thought-out, structured, and monitored to allow all participants to get the most from the activities. While designed to encourage school readiness, it is implemented with a much broader scope, one that acknowledges that there is a lot more to school readiness than simply reading to your child.

“The program supports the development of curiosity, conversation and connection.”

One of the things that sets HIPPY apart from other programs is that the tutors who deliver the program, are often former participants. Their lived experience of the program and its benefits, adds a unique perspective

and allows for a more meaningful understanding between the tutors and participants.

Current HIPPY tutor, Dannii Renkin-Kimpton is a notable example of this. Having completed the program with her son, she credits his strong progress at school to HIPPY.

“Doing the program really helped build our relationship and I learnt so much about how children learn and how I can support my child. He is now in school and doing better than I ever imagined and as a HIPPY Tutor, I can help other families share a similar experience,” Dannii explains.

Providing pathways to employment for participants is one of the factors that both Vanessa and Dannii believe has made the MDAS HIPPY program so successful.

“All our tutors, and even our program coordinator, are past HIPPY participants, so they are all proud advocates for the program. They attend community events and are all working hard to build relationships with other services.

We are seeing this commitment translate into an increase in enrolments to HIPPY,” Dannii says. Currently, thirty families are enrolled in HIPPY and as more people hear about the outcomes the program is delivering, Vanessa believes enrolments will continue to increase. “The program is about school readiness, but it is also about supporting parents and families, it has a wrap-around approach participants come to appreciate. The wellbeing and



Women's Group

*Marli's Story

confidence of parents and carers is critical to the success of HIPPY."

The MDAS HIPPY program is delivered through a cultural lens, with Aboriginal families getting enrolment priority but Dannii says families from diverse cultural backgrounds attend the sessions and she has seen a growing understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families, and she views this as one of the added benefits of HIPPY.

"We have seen families, who may otherwise never have met, come together, and learn from each other. Barriers are removed, and friendships are made."

The Close the Gap targets are a national commitment to ensuring Aboriginal children thrive in their early years and that they are engaged in education through the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Much needs to be done to achieve this. However, programs like HIPPY that prepare children and families for life-long learning, that support connection, capacity, and confidence, are a valuable step in the process.



Marli started with the Women's Group in September 2022 after she was referred by the MDAS Gambling, Mental Health, and Housing teams.

Marli suffers from intense anxiety and was initially very unsure about attending the group.

Marli has since attended every session; she's made several friendships and is considered the 'mother' of the group, showing support and a warm welcome to everyone who joins the group.

Marli suffers from physical discomfort which often means she is incapacitated; sometimes simply walking is difficult.

When the group was scheduled to attend the Mildura Wave Pool for an aqua fitness class, Marli was reluctant but once she got in the pool, she did an amazing job. In fact, Marli enjoyed it so much that the next day she sent a thank you message to her support worker.

MDAS SEWB organised an ongoing membership for Marli so she could continue to attend Mildura Waves, improving her health and fitness.

** Name has been changed to protect client privacy*



Strategic Communications





Controlling Our Narrative

At the commencement of the 2022-23 financial year, a new team was established to focus on the rebuilding of MDAS's reputational branding and advocacy with a commitment to controlling the Organisation's narrative.

A Director of Strategic Communications was appointed to lead this body of work and over successive months, a team of matter specialists was recruited to address the identified gaps within the Organisation. The roles include a Policy and Advocacy Adviser, Visual Communications Manager, Graphic Designer (videography/animation), Graphic Designer/Photographer (trainee), Communications Officer and special projects Partnership Coordinator.

During the first twelve months, the team has conducted an audit of communications and marketing assets and developed a range of materials and merchandise for promotional and communication applications. Refreshing the branding, to reflect a new era for MDAS has been an integral part of the visual asset development, as has the refining of written content and the exploration of advocacy opportunities.

Effecting change in the way MDAS is perceived, both internally and externally and the way it communicates will be a journey. We need to set goals, whilst accepting those goals need to have a degree of flexibility. We need to be innovative and adaptable; we need to be proactive and anticipate issues that may arise. We need to understand our capacity, manage expectations, and celebrate our wins.

Reflecting on this, the team created a Communication Delivery Plan 2023 – 2025 to guide their activities with the objective of driving a proactive communications and advocacy strategy that positions MDAS as the author of its own narrative, a respected voice for, and of, the community and a reliable partner for positive change.

Profile and Narrative

Significant work has been dedicated to re-establishing the profile of MDAS during the reporting period. An approach that saw MDAS build relationships with media and release press statements ahead of issues arising, rather than responding once they'd broken has proven effective. Media releases distributed by MDAS are now being published, with very little, if any, editorial changes, and headlines attached to MDAS news have become less negative.

We have also focused on raising the profile of MDAS as a thought leader, with a view to securing the Organisation as a resource media, stakeholders, government, and policy makers refer to for advice on matters impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living in the Mallee. A notable success in this regard was the invitation we received for the chief executive to appear as a panellist on the ABC TV program QandA. With media training and preparation prior, the chief executive performed strongly during the live show and consequently, we have received multiple speaking engagement and editorial requests which we have capitalised on to further enhance the MDAS profile.

Complementing the high-level communications approach, we have reimagined our other platforms, including social and digital media and newsletters. During the first half of 2023 work commenced on a new website. This is a significant project that has seen collaboration between the Communications and Information Technology teams. One of the key outcomes of this work will be to deliver a user-friendly interface that is visually appealing and has the capacity to be entirely managed and updated in-house. A fully functioning website will provide MDAS with another avenue for sharing news and improving profile and our new approach to social media will further underpin this.



Darlene Thomas and staff pictured with Federal Member for Mallee Dr. Anne Webster and the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Federal National Party.



Senator Jana Stewart with Darlene Thomas

Advocacy

In broad terms, advocacy is the pursuit of influence and is driven via two methods – lobbying and direct communication. Through an advocacy plan, MDAS will ensure our community's needs and views are considered in the development of government policy, reform, and investment.

We have embedded advocacy as a key pillar of our external communication strategy and over the reporting period we have taken advantage of opportunities to drive reform agendas through submissions, public comment, and policy consultation support. Longer term, these activities will assist MDAS in establishing a new reputation as a trusted and prominent authority, aligned to the intent of the Organisation's Strategic Plan.

Providing advocacy support to other ACCHO members and the Victorian Aboriginal Children and Young People's Alliance has also been a feature of our strategy this year and ongoing, it will be an effective mechanism for strengthening relationships and broadening the scope of the Organisation's influence.

During this financial year, we developed several submissions to government including federal and state inquiries exploring housing affordability and the worsening rental crisis. The first government inquiry we chose to address was The Senate Education and Employment References Committee Inquiry into the national trend of school refusal or 'School Can't' – as distinct from truancy. We made a submission to the Inquiry with seven key recommendations to government.

In the Committee's final report, MDAS was both quoted and referenced several times. Giving MDAS, and by virtue, our community, a voice in policy discussion and reform, aligns with our commitment to supporting self-determination and enhancing the Organisation's reputation as a trusted service provider, partner, and advocate.

Controlling Our Narrative

Visual Communications

The objective of our visual communications strategy has been to lift the identity of our Organisation using consistently applied branding. Both Internal and external documents and forms are being updated to reflect a refreshed, professional image for MDAS.

The incorporation of artwork from community members has been the feature of major promotions. In early 2023 we launched the 715 Health Check branding and leading up to NAIDOC Week, we created a range of products including shirts, bags, water bottles, coffee mugs and towels. Both these projects required a significant amount of time to develop but the result was a collection of eye-catching promotional materials that are unique to MDAS. We also developed a suite of branded assets to be used at events such as marquees, table covers and banners. These assets support a cohesive and easily identifiable public facing image for the Organisation.

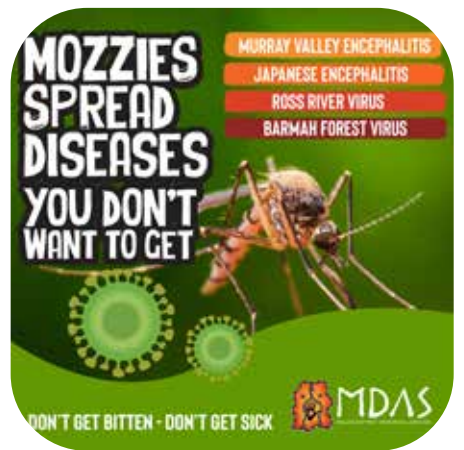
Promotional material has been a significant focus area to encourage participation in MDAS events and activities and create awareness of issue that impact our community. Audits of existing design collateral showed that historically, they were inconsistent in design, tone, and articulation. In response to this, our priority has been to ensure messaging is clear and concise, but most importantly culturally appropriate for our target audience. Increased use of visuals, rather than the reliance on written text within communications has been an important strategy for removing literacy barriers and ensuring inclusivity.

Achievement

The use of tailored language and imagery while retaining key messaging was exemplified in the redesign of a mosquito campaign launched by the Department of Health (see image).

Flooding over the warmer months of 2022 and 2023 increased the number of mosquitos along the Murray River and elevated the risk of mosquito borne disease for our communities. The Department of Health launched a campaign to generate awareness and to encourage mosquito safety (vaccinations, use of repellents etc.) and hosted a weekly meeting for communications specialists working within the impacted regions. In these meetings it was suggested and agreed, that materials should be recreated for distribution in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the MDAS Strategic Communications team was tasked with the project.

We reworded the messaging and redesigned the visuals for social media and printed assets. Ultimately the MDAS version was so well received that several organisations used them as part of their health prevention campaigns.



Health & Clinical Services



Primary and Preventative Health

The 2022-23 financial year was extremely exciting for our MDAS Health Clinics.

We were one of three Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations in Victoria to have Aboriginal Health Practitioners (AHP) graduate from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University with qualifications that allow them to apply Fluoride Varnish to the teeth of children aged between the ages of three and seventeen.

This is a significant achievement, as previously, only dental technicians could undertake the qualification. Our staff are among the first Victorian AHPs to have this scope of practice. The course was delivered over eight months and consisted of written and face-to-face assessments. Across Mildura and Swan Hill, MDAS now has four Aboriginal Health Practitioners qualified to apply Fluoride Varnish and we extend our congratulations to Zoe Kelly, Paul Roberts, Rebecca Wilson (Mildura) and Georgina Johnson (Swan Hill) and acknowledge their commitment to providing quality preventative health care for our children.

MDAS health service will implement the Fluoride Varnish program within their 715 Aboriginal Health Assessments. With regular application, the Fluoride Varnish will decrease the risk of cavities and other dental complications that would otherwise require specialist dental services.

Whilst we continue to work on expanding our service delivery, we have also been improving the atmosphere at our Mildura Clinic. Making our reception area culturally safe and welcoming has been a focus for our clinical team, and they are dedicated to making each visit to the Mildura Clinic an enjoyable experience for community members.

We have also reimagined our clinical spaces, furnishing them with the appropriate equipment and systems to ensure clients can receive continuity of quality care when attending for their regular health assessments and medical appointments. Our staff are creating an environment that promotes a sense of comfort, safety, and empowerment, ensuring our clients are involved in the decision-making process regarding their own health journey, from prevention and treatment, through to outcome.





In early 2023 MDAS introduced an AHP Primary Health Educator position to support our service delivery. With extensive experience in senior Aboriginal health practitioner roles, former MDAS employee, Justine Williams was excited to return to our Health Clinic in the role. Creating this position is a milestone moment not just for MDAS, but for ACCHOs across the state, with Justine becoming the first AHP educator permanently embedded in a Victorian ACCHO. Since her commencement, Justine has supported seven staff on their educational pathway to gain a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care, and she has supported triage training for our clinicians and reception staff, to facilitate excellence in service delivery. Justine is also developing a Portfolio of Professional Practice for Clinicians to manage our staff's Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registration and to reinforce competence.

Looking forward, one of the goals of the primary health educator role is to increase the delivery of onsite professional development training for MDAS health staff to ensure our services are not impacted by shortages

caused by employees being required to travel to complete training and studies.

MDAS Mildura Clinic now has a Fibroscan machine and metabolic scales, and all clinicians and GPs have completed the training required to use the equipment in their assessment of clients as part of their preventative health care program.

Hepatitis C (HCV) is a major public health concern, with rates of Hepatitis C and liver disease overrepresented in Aboriginal communities. The Fibroscan is a non-invasive device that assists with the diagnosis and monitoring of liver scarring or fibrosis caused by several liver conditions.

In conjunction with Sunraysia Infectious Diseases, Visiting Medical Officer Infectious Disease, Murray Primary Health Network, and Mildura Rural City Council, we are currently participating in a Hepatitis C Micro Elimination Project in Mildura. Our Fibroscan, which is the only one in Mildura, is central to this project and as it is designed to be transportable, we travel to Swan Hill to provide outreach services, further extending the benefits to our Aboriginal communities across the Mallee.

Primary and Preventative Health



In the 2021-2022 Annual Report, we celebrated the winner of our Health Promotions Art Competition.

Local artist, and proud Barkindji woman, Simone Spencer's artwork titled 'Healthy Mob – Journey to Healing' was chosen to be the inspiration for our new 715 Health Check branding. Simone's design, which speaks to healing, connection, and hope, aligns perfectly with the values and vision of our health service and of MDAS more broadly. In March 2023, we hosted a Mildura Community Health Day to launch the new design which features on t-shirts, flyers, banners and other 715 related merchandise.



The Community Health Day was well attended, with the Health team creating a festival atmosphere with marquees, decorations and activities for the young and young at heart. The fun included a jumping castle, face painting, a balloon

artist, a Jujitsu demonstration, and an arts and craft table that was set up on the Water Tower lawn.

The clinic car park was transformed into an avenue of stalls where community members could engage with staff, ask questions, get help with any Medicare issues, pick up information and arrange appointments for health checks (with the new 715 design on display, community members were eager to book their next health check, so they could receive their own t-shirts).

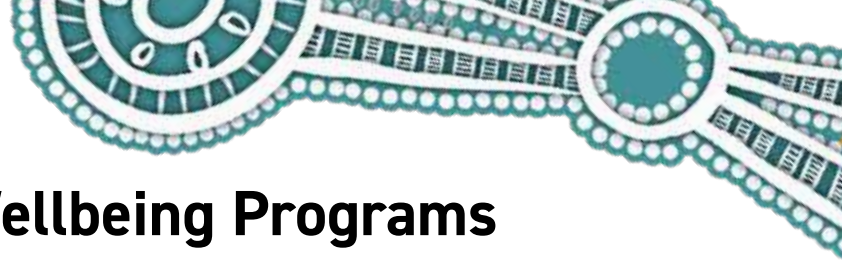


After visiting a stall, community members were given a raffle ticket to go into the draw to win great prizes. Thanks to the support of our MDAS catering team and Mallee Meats, we had plenty of healthy lunch options (and some delicious cupcakes) and that, coupled with the activities and great conversation, meant no one was in a hurry to leave.

Indeed, the Community Day was so successful that we have decided to make it a yearly event to be held on National Closing the Gap Day, with a focus on driving better health outcomes for our Aboriginal community through preventative health care. Also in this reporting period, Breast Screen Victoria visited MDAS, providing women in our community with a critical preventative health service that helps in the early detection of breast cancer. Using shawls designed by local artist, Melinda Cain, thirty-one women were successfully screened.

The Breast Screen Victoria bus tours around the state and visits Mildura every two years. The next visit is scheduled for July 2024 and we look forward to welcoming them back as part of our shared commitment to supporting the health of women living in our community.





Social, Emotional and Wellbeing Programs

The Social Emotional Wellbeing Hub continues to provide support through a holistic 'POD' model of care that sees several teams co-located. The services available at the hub include Alcohol and Other Drugs, Housing, Mental Health, Gambling and Justice.

The co-location 'POD' model reflects the importance of wrap-around service delivery, that provides integrated supports with a 'no-wrong-door' approach. When a client enters SEWB, they are invariably impacted by multiple issues and the POD system addresses these complexities in a collaborative environment; staff with a range of skills work together to support clients. During this financial year we have expanded both our services within our mental health and justice teams.

Mental Health Team

This team was previously known as the 'Demonstration Project' but it was renamed earlier this year to Ngawingi Kiya Ngawingi – the Latji Latji words for 'day to day'.

The team consists of a clinical practice lead (nurse), psychologist, senior youth dual diagnosis counsellor (social worker), Aboriginal mental health clinicians, mental health support workers, and a dual diagnosis case worker.

We also have a psychiatrist who provides three hours of clinical support weekly and a psychiatric registrar for an additional twenty hours per week, providing clients with daily access to psychiatric reviews and support.

Culture Care Connect Team - Suicide Prevention and Aftercare Service

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities continue to be devastated by the impact of suicide and suicidal ideation. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a suicide rate 2.3 times higher than other Australians, and this rate has increased over the past few decades (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2020). The Coroner's Court Report into Suicides of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Victoria (2023) revealed that whilst there has been a small decline in deaths by suicide over the last five years, the rates remain troubling. The Mildura Local Government Area has one of the higher rates of suicide frequency in the state and this is borne out by what MDAS is seeing on the ground.

In response, we have temporarily recruited two experienced Aboriginal mental health staff in the Culture Care Connect team; a suicide prevention coordinator and an aftercare worker/clinician.

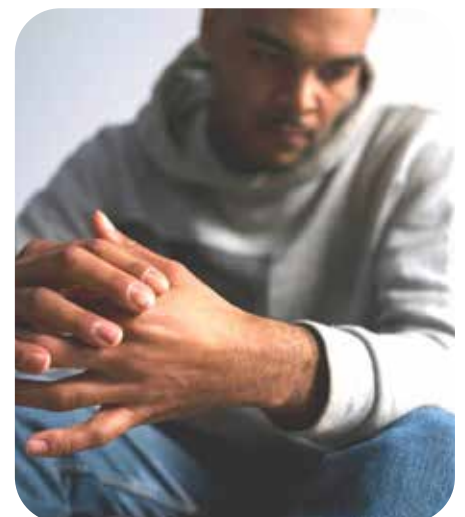
The Culture Care Connect (CCC) team will enable choice and control in suicide prevention planning and the delivery of aftercare services within the Mildura region. This will be achieved by extensive community consultation with the aim of establishing a local Suicide Prevention Network and to develop a Suicide Prevention Plan and after-care service model.

Suicide prevention activities and strategies will include training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid (ATSIMHFAT) which is designed to improve understanding about suicide, reduce stigmatising attitudes and increase confidence in the ability to help people,

which ultimately increases intervention rates. This training is currently being offered to MDAS staff with a plan to offer the training to key contacts in the community including Elders, and Stars and Clontarf staff at schools.

The team has engaged with Chaffey Secondary College in Mildura and will offer school-based information sessions to increase mental health literacy and help-seeking skills. After-care services are critical to suicide prevention because an unsuccessful suicide attempt is the biggest predictor of further suicidal behaviour.

The after-care worker will connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, family, and our local community to develop an after-care service that is holistic, trauma-aware, and healing informed. The service will provide assertive case management, rapid follow up after a suicide attempt or suicidal crisis, linking with mainstream after-care services to provide screening and assessment in consultation with support people such as family members, kin, or Elders. The service will provide interventions and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people after a suicide, for the bereaved family, friends, kin, and community.





Critical Incident Stress Management Debrief Service (for MDAS)

Our clinical practice lead and psychologist have been trained by Crisis Intervention and Management Australia to provide MDAS staff with an opportunity to engage in critical incident stress management debrief and psychological first aid following a critical incident.

The service provides individuals and teams with an opportunity to debrief, and link in with external after-care services, follow up sessions and support are also available as required.

In recent months we have provided support for MDAS staff who were impacted by serious incidents involving threats of violence with a weapon and other staff who were affected by a car accident.



Re-Connect Program

Finally, the SEWB team is extremely excited about the upcoming launch of the Reconnect Program, which we will deliver in partnership with the Victorian Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders.

Reconnect is part of the Corrections Victoria Reintegration Pathway and is a voluntary outreach program for people being released from prison. It aims to support them to reintegrate into their community and access services. The Reconnect case manager will undertake pre- and post-release planning and case management with complex clients and will be located in the SEWB building.



Wiimpatja Healing Centre

In late 2022, Wiimpatja was impacted by flooding from the Rufus River. Flood water blocked the main access roads between Wentworth and Wiimpatja and breached levy banks in the lower sections of Warrakoo Station, inundating around 150 acres of our property.

This resulted in the evacuation of all our clients and staff to temporary accommodation in Mildura, causing significant disruption to the lives and routines of clients. Relocating from the seclusion of Wiimpatja to urban Mildura, posed risks due to the renewed proximity to temptation that could lead back to bad habits. However, with the risks identified, our team ensured our programs could function and all our clients were able to continue their healing journey. It is a credit to the effort and commitment of our staff that all the clients completed their programs, despite the additional challenges of the flood and three-month evacuation.

When we were finally able to relocate back to Wiimpatja we found there was significant damage to our property and infrastructure, with critical issues, such as repairs to our irrigation system, taking weeks to complete. Non-critical reparations were staggered over the ensuing months, and we are grateful for funding we have received to support projects designed to protect Wiimpatja from future flooding events of the magnitude experienced in 2022-2023.

After the challenges of the flooding, Wiimpatja Healing Centre received a much-needed boost in morale when we received an unexpected \$5000 donation from a family with a connection to Warrakoo (past generations lived and worked on the Station). The family wanted to honour their connection and 'give something back' – they felt a donation to Wiimpatja Healing Centre was a meaningful way of doing this.

Thanks to the donation, we were able to refurbish the client bedrooms. Each room was fitted out with new bedroom suites, which included upsizing the beds from singles to doubles and the purchase of new linen, quilts, and pillows.

We have also ensured each room has a desk which is suitable for both painting and journal writing, to assist in the healing journey.

This reporting period has had its challenges, in no small part due to the unprecedented flooding. However, our staff and our clients have shown courage and resilience. They made the best of the circumstances and supported each other. We acknowledge their achievements and look forward to a better, slightly dryer year ahead.





Healthy Ageing Programs

Our Healthy Ageing (formally Aged Care) programs have grown quite significantly, and our social support groups are very well attended.

Groups are now running on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursdays with attendance increasing. We have linked in with the cultural team to provide culturally safe groups.

Our team now has a community connector role offering case management for community members aged over forty-five, supporting their health and wellbeing, and social and spiritual needs. The program's client base is increasing, and members of our community have reported benefits from their participation.

We have also welcomed a Dementia Australia funded linkage worker to our team. This role will support individuals and families who are impacted by dementia, offering referral pathways to related services, education resources and carer respite.

We have noted that our Elders have become increasingly engaged with our activities, attending community Elders On Country events. We are proud of the evolution of our Healthy Ageing programs and the impact they are having in our community. Our group and individual, home-care sessions are supporting our Elders in a culturally safe, holistic way and we look forward to continuing to provide this support and case management in the coming year.



Healthy Ageing Programs Swan Hill

With the addition of another aged care worker, we are reinvigorating the Elders' group with greater structure, supports and reporting. As a result, we have seen our Elders engaging more with each other, their community and with MDAS.

A part of our revised planning has been to reconnect our Elders in Swan Hill with Elders living in Mildura. We have arranged shared visits on Country, during which everyone participated in a yarning circle; they discussed what it means to be an Elder within the community, and many of the Elders also shared some of their personal stories.

In the coming year we will focus on reconnecting our Kerang Elders with our Swan Hill Elders through a shared weekly group.





Family & Community Services

For a Better Tomorrow

Improving the lives of vulnerable children, families, men, women, and teenagers.

Over the 2022-2023 financial year, Family and Community Services undertook a review and consolidation of MDAS's legal responsibilities as a state funded community service Organisation. The review was valuable in identifying both our challenges and opportunities.

Analysis revealed that historical instability at the leadership level, coupled with onerous operational expectations were driving factors impacting staff retention. Two years of COVID had also had a detrimental effect and in the first half of this financial year, understaffing was an ongoing concern.

Program areas most impacted were Therapeutic Residential Care, Intensive Family Services, Integrated Family Services, Family Preservation Reunification, Youth Services and Aboriginal Child Specialist Advice Support Services (ACSASS).

In response, Family and Community Services, focused on building the strengths and capacity of our existing workforce through the provision of training and professional development. We engaged Bendigo TAFE to deliver the Diploma of Community Services to staff on site, removing barriers such as the need to travel, that often limit staff's ability to pursue further study and training.

Addressing the issue of attracting and retaining suitably qualified and

experienced staff, in tandem with our organisational professional development program, led much of our workforce planning. It is pleasing to report that over the twelve months from June 30, 2022, Family and Community Services has seen a high number of former, skilled MDAS employees return to the Organisation. This has contributed to an increased knowledge base, and the sharing of expertise is improving the support we can provide and as such, is delivering better outcomes for MDAS clients and their families.

To provide better scaffolding around our ACSASS staff, we implemented a restructure, creating a team leader, senior case worker, and case worker, and at time of writing, we are seeking to recruit a fourth team member to work in the Swan Hill Local Government Area to ensure service provision across our Mallee catchment.

Initially understaffed, our Therapeutic Residential Care team continued its critical service delivery to vulnerable clients and over the twelve months, has achieved a high level of staffing stability.

Cultural Care Services, through programs including Better Futures and Home Stretch, which support the transition to independent living, worked closely with young people exiting from the care system. Our home-based care team has also made significant progress in rebuilding to meet the needs of our community and they are now committed to growing the foster care pool across our region.

MDAS is seeking families, couples and single people who have the capacity to welcome children into their own home for short-, medium-, or long-term care.

As a Child Safe Organisation, we continue to champion the rights of a child to be safe. We are committed to ensuring MDAS creates a culture, adopts strategies, and takes action to promote child wellbeing and prevent harm to children and young people. Across our Organisation, from the board and volunteers to the executive and staff, we must lead by example – demonstrating an understanding of our professional responsibilities – with the knowledge that the actions we take and decisions we make can have a lasting impact on a child.

Like many of our program areas, Family Violence, including Man's Case Management, Adolescent Family Violence, and Meminar Ngangg Gimba, had some staffing challenges during the reporting period. Despite this, they met their program outcomes for their funded activities. The Orange Door team and Therapeutic Family Violence will focus on improving their capacity to engage with the broader Family and Community Services clients in the upcoming year.

Due to some necessary infrastructure improvements, the youth services team was forced to relocate for much of 2022-2023. They used this time to consider their program plans and workforce and consequently, have committed to growing to a team of sixteen. The increased staff capacity will support the After-School



Homework Program and the Before-School Breakfast Club, which will offer extended hours of operation, from 7am to 7pm. It is anticipated that this will be achieved over the next twenty-four months.

Thanks to the support of our valuable volunteers, our Koorie Night Patrol continues its operation on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings and is regularly utilised by children and young people. This service relies on volunteers, and we are always seeking people who are willing to support our Koorie Night Patrol, outside of normal business hours.

The Early Years team has also slowly rebuilt during the first half of 2023, the Koori playgroup facilitator and wayipungitj (Koori pre-school assistant) positions are now filled, after prolonged vacancies. And, for the first time, the MDAS HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) Program filled all available places and is providing valuable support to young families.

After an extended period of challenge, it is sometimes difficult to remain optimistic and motivated. However, given a new way forward, the teams across Family and Community Services, have risen to the occasion. They have worked with dedication, focused on what success looks like – Aboriginal people across the Mallee having access to the support services they need, when, where, and how they need them – our achievements are Community's outcomes.



The Family and Community Services leadership group has grown from eight on 1 July 2022 to twelve as of 30 June 2023, and overall, we have a total of 89 staff members.





Swan Hill & Kerang

Highlights and Activities

Community Engagement

Our events have been successful over the last year with our community making the most of opportunities to come together. Events that we delivered included Welcome to Country and flag raising ceremonies, cultural community days and Elders' luncheons. Of all the events we held, our NAIDOC and Reconciliation events were the highlight for both our community and for our staff. The NAIDOC Ball had strong attendance and it was wonderful to see our Elders celebrating with our younger people.

Whilst not strictly an event, our Indigenous football rounds were another meaningful engagement activity. The rounds offered a terrific opportunity for many of our young men and women to participate, improving both their fitness and their social connections.

Keeping our links with community strong were particularly important this year, as the Mallee faced one of its worst floods in decades. The flooding, which temporarily isolated Kerang, lasted several weeks and took an emotional and financial toll on the region.

In response, MDAS established a Flood Emergency Response Committee and developed a range of measures to support our communities. This included delivering care packages to community in need, developing potential evacuation and recovery plans and safeguarding properties from water damage where we could.

Communicating with our community was our top priority and we performed daily welfare checks and responded to requests for assistance. The teams in Swan Hill and Kerang did a remarkable job under what were undeniably challenging conditions. Their commitment to supporting the community was outstanding and it played a key role in our success in providing adequate supplies and ensuring access to services.

Health

Our primary challenge this year was to secure a permanent GP to support our clients. While we sought out opportunities, our Health Clinic staff maintained our much-valued health services to Swan Hill and Kerang through the ongoing use of locum doctors. Without question, this was not a viable long-term solution, but the locums allowed us to provide quality health care without disruption of continuity.

In April 2023, we established a partnership with Swan Hill District Health and as a result, we secured the services of Dr. Hosni. Dr. Hosni has become a firm favourite with

patients and brings with him a background in Aboriginal health. We move into the next financial year confident that our partnership will deliver further benefits to MDAS, including the expansion of our GP offering.

Bolstering the Health Clinic's services, in June we successfully recruited a health practice manager. First coming to MDAS earlier in the year as a locum registered nurse, Valery Martin liked MDAS, the community and Swan Hill so much that she decided to move permanently from her home in Western Australia to accept the role in our leadership team. Val brings a wealth of experience and compassion to her role and is committed to supporting better health outcomes for our Mob. The addition of Dr. Hosni and Valery Martin is further complemented by a paediatrician who visits twice a month to care for the health needs of our younger community members.

Our Chronic Disease Management Program continues to grow and is successfully supporting our clients to improve their health and lifestyle. Through the Program we assist clients living with chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes, hypertension, and cardiovascular and kidney disease, monitoring their health and enabling them to manage better at home.

Community members at risk of, or with diabetes, are also benefiting from monthly checks using our diabetes testing equipment, provided through the QAAMS Program.

Another achievement for our Health Clinic was the successful signing of a service agreement with Swan Hill City Rural Council. This partnership secures the services of two maternal child health nurses to offer our young families culturally safe, high quality integrated care, whilst strengthening the relationship between Maternal Child Health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.

In collaboration with VACCHO we continue to support the career pathways of our staff. We currently have two Aboriginal health workers who are continuing their studies and training in Certificate IV in Aboriginal Health Care Primary Practice. They are very enthusiastic about the health of their community and are looking forward to becoming qualified Aboriginal health practitioners in the coming months.

Elsewhere, we continue to recruit, seek out and implement partnerships, and critically, look to develop the capacity of our team and community, so that we can create a self-sustaining health practice model that ensures our Mob has access to the services and supports, they need.

Highlights and Activities

Allied Health

We continue to offer allied health services such as podiatry, physiotherapy, audiology, dietetics, and optometry. We have strong collaborative relationships with all our allied health providers, and we will continue to seek further opportunities to expand our allied health service delivery.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Our Swan Hill Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) team provides support to community through a holistic, culturally safe, best-practice approach and form an integral part of our health service. The team provides our clients with a range of supports, and this includes linking them to mental health, medical and allied health, and chronic care services. They also help them navigate the NDIS, and other aged care services.

During this year, the team started a monthly men's group and a fortnightly women's group, and both are well attended. As a means of improving referral pathways for our community, the team has also focused on building relationships between MDAS and other services. This has resulted in greater awareness of the services that collectively, we can provide community and increased collaboration and communication. The team also assists with Confirmation of Aboriginality and Bringing Them Home requests and referrals. Our SEWB team receives up to four new referrals each week, some for mental health support, some for AOD matters, and often some from people who require support from both services.

Looking to the future, as part of our early intervention and prevention approach, the team has consulted with multiple primary and secondary schools with a view to delivering cultural wellbeing programs. Additionally, on completion of their training with the AFL and headspace, the team will be able to deliver the Ahead of the Game Movember Mental Health Community Program to interested football clubs in the Mallee.

Family and Community Services

The teams across our family support services; Out of Home Care, Family Preservation Reunification Response (FPRR) and Intensive Family Services (InFS), Local Justice and Youth Justice programs are working hard to promote the safety, stability and development of vulnerable children, young people, and their families in our community, and it is pleasing to see the positive impacts of this work.

The Out of Home Care team is looking to increase its preventative services to those who are at risk of having child protection involvement and we continue to implement a therapeutic model. In a reflection of our commitment to safety and stability for the young people we support, over the previous twelve months we have transitioned multiple children into permanent care.

Recognition

One of our carers from Kerang was chosen to attend the International Foster Care Conference in Darwin. This was an all-expenses paid trip, supported through the Carer Café – Kinship and Foster Care programs. Only six tickets were allocated to Victorian carers, so for a MDAS carer to be selected was particularly significant.

The Department of Justice commended Swan Hill and Mildura MDAS for its community work, noting that we exceeded the output of other like-agencies. This recognition is a powerful demonstration of the outcomes we can achieve for our Mob.





Pregnancy & Early Years Expo

The Early Years team attended the Pregnancy and Early Years Expo in early 2023 to promote our services and engage with other early years service providers. Members of our youth group and children from our playgroups accompanied the team to the Expo and performed a cultural dance for all attendees, including community and stakeholders. They did an amazing job and looked great, proudly dancing on the stage.



Photo Shoot

Children in care often have few, if any, photos of themselves, or with the significant people in their lives, so our staff decided to arrange a photo shoot for our children in care, their families, and their carers.

The photo shoot was a momentous day for everyone involved, with lots of laughter and special moments. After the photo shoot, we presented a framed photo to each child, their families and carers and additional photos were placed in Life Story books that the team created for the children, capturing their connections to family, community, culture, and country.

Highlights and Activities



Early Years – Koori Families First Educators (KFFE)

Our Early Years Koori Families First Educators (KFFE) are also doing remarkable work within our community. Four group sessions run in Swan Hill each week, a culturally focused playgroup, sensory playgroup, development focused playgroup and a young mum’s capacity building group. The groups average between 7-10 families per session.

Following on from the success of our Swan Hill playgroups, in May 2023 we launched a playgroup in Kerang and now across both sites, we have eighteen children attending our sessions.

Youth Group

During this financial year we launched a Youth Group Program, and it has proved extremely popular; we have an average of nineteen young people regularly attending the sessions.

One of our Early Years trainees and a community volunteer have been working with the group each week, providing a range of activities including cultural dance, music, art, and cooking. They have also offered a school holiday program with activities and outings which have been equally well-received.

Building our workforce

Dr. Hosni has been a valuable addition to our Health Clinic, and he is providing wonderful care to our community. In the coming months, his work will be supported by the commencement of a long-awaited permanent GP. After a lengthy recruitment process, MDAS has engaged Dr. Leo, who will be moving to Swan Hill from Canada. Dr. Leo briefly visited Swan Hill MDAS in June and will join us on a permanent basis in October 2023. Dr. Leo is passionate about providing quality, compassionate health care to regional communities. Collaborating with Dr. Hosni and our dedicated health team, Dr. Leo will help MDAS ensure continuity of quality health care for our community.





Corporate Services

Human Resources

During the last twelve months our Human Resources (HR) team has expanded, to reflect the emerging needs of our Organisation.

During this financial year, we had an experienced HR Manager to MDAS, who led three HR officers, with further growth of the team anticipated in the upcoming twelve months.

A priority for the HR team is to implement measures that ensure all processes are followed and that the importance of confidentiality is reinforced across the Organisation to improve staff confidence in, and interaction with, HR.

The team has also been refining its recruitment processes, embedding transparency in the employment of new staff and in the redeployment of current staff. All applicants must undergo best-practice recruitment processes, from submitting written applications addressing key criteria, to attending a panel interview. This transparency will have a roll-on effect for our auditing, positive workplace culture and reputation, enforcing our values.

The HR team recently completed ConnX training to ensure we are using the system to its fullest capacity. As part of the process, we have initiated ConnX Careers and it includes additional features to improve our customer service into the future.

In our pursuit of continuous improvement, the Human Resources team has diligently focused on enhancing workplace culture. Our commitment to fostering a more inclusive and collaborative environment has begun to bear fruit.



Through staff consultation and the reviewing of Exit Interviews, we have gained valuable insights into the needs and aspirations of our workforce, and it will help inform our future workforce planning.

To support the induction of new employees, we have begun the implementation of a new onboarding process to ensure new employees seamlessly integrate into MDAS culture. Whilst this is an ongoing project, a partnership between HR and Learning and Development, is delivering early improvements in process and initial new-staff experience. The introduction of the ELMO Learning Management System will further support induction and ongoing staff training. Also, in collaboration with Learning and Development, as part of our commitment to creating career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, we have been reviewing and improving our work experience processes, to provide greater opportunities and support training,

Our effort to streamline HR processes has resulted in increased efficiency and reduced administrative burdens, allowing the HR team to allocate more time to strategic endeavors. ConnX will soon automate some of our manual processes and we have already identified that the HR inbox has been more responsive.

As we move forward, the HR department remains dedicated to driving positive change, promoting a culture of continuous improvement, and nurturing a workplace where innovation and collaboration flourish.



Learning & Development

Staff Inductions

The MDAS Induction Program satisfies multiple organisational and legislative requirements in supporting new employees to be competent in their roles and to have a sound knowledge of internal processes and expectations, upon commencement. Our Induction currently runs monthly for a full week and covers our policies and procedures and acquaints new employees with our organisational structure and introduces them to our executive team.

The Learning and Development team continue to ensure all staff are meeting mandatory training requirements and that employee training records are maintained and current. As part of this process, they provide updates to the leadership team regarding the progress of training for staff within their teams. They identify any unattempted or incomplete mandatory training for follow up and monitor and manage re-certification requirements.

Training and Professional Development.

A major achievement within the mandatory training space this year was the introduction of nine new modules, three more than in the previous year. We have also scheduled 'De-escalation Train the Trainer' and 'Lateral Violence Train the Trainer' training for implementation in the next financial year. This will expand our training workforce and allow MDAS to rectify outstanding requirements more quickly. From 2024, it is anticipated that Lateral Violence will form part of our mandatory training suite.

We are currently supporting sixty-four staff to complete nationally accredited courses, including bachelor and master's degrees. Learning and Development assisted these staff with enrolments, study support applications and other negotiations with Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and offer ongoing progress support and monitoring.

In a reflection of MDAS' commitment to upskilling our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, of the sixty-four staff currently studying, forty-three are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders.

Further strengthening the capacity of our Aboriginal workforce, over the reporting period, we have had twelve trainees working with MDAS. Of the sixty-four staff undertaking training or study, six of those were trainees. Another six trainees completed either a Certificate III in ATSI Primary Health Care (5) or a Certificate III in Business (1). Learning and Development conduct spot audits to ensure all staff meet the minimum qualification requirements relevant to their role, or that alternatively, they are currently studying or are enrolled to commence study within the year.

Program Specific Training and Short Courses

In addition to induction and professional development training, we have also been supporting the capacity building of MDAS by arranging and developing (where necessary), program specific training and short courses.

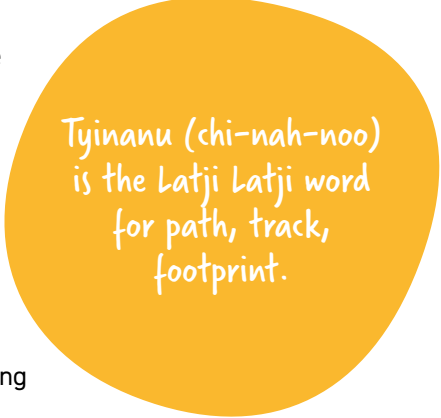
It is not uncommon for client-focused roles, such as those funded through the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH), to require the completion of specific short courses, as a compliance measure. For example, most staff in DFFH funded programs, require Beginning Practice training. The Learning and Development team monitor these requirements and facilitate the training as appropriate, through a combination of onsite and offsite external training. We also have the capacity to develop program specific training at the request of managers to meet identified skills gaps within their team.

During this year, the training has included Medicare and Triage training and Case Note training for staff working as part of the Family Violence team. Moving forward, courses that Learning and Development have been asked to develop to meet skill gaps, will be embedded in our new online Learning Management System, ELMO/Tyinanu, as an ongoing resource for continuous improvement. The first course to be included is the Case Note, Documentation and Clinical Case Presentation training.

The expanded training has resulted in several staff being qualified to accept additional duties and responsibilities within their roles, including but not limited to first aid officers, health and safety representatives and fire wardens. These additional roles and responsibilities are imperative to ensuring MDAS remains a safe workplace whilst supporting the professional growth of staff.

Tyinanu

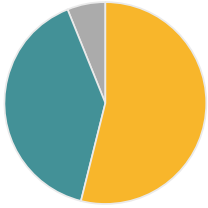
Tyinanu is our Learning Management System, the new home for MDAS staff training and professional development. Our staff can walk their own career path, control the track of their learning, and look back at the footprints they've left along their journey.



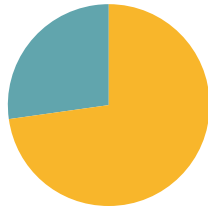
Tyinanu (chi-nah-noo) is the Latji Latji word for path, track, footprint.

263 Staff

- 142 Indigenous
- 105 Non-Indigenous
- 16 Unidentified

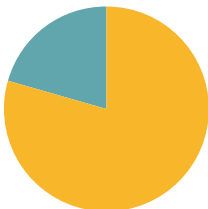


- 190 Females
- 71 Males



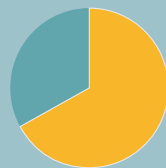
ATSI

- 113 Females
- 29 Males



64 STAFF

Currently completing nationally accredited courses.



- 43 ATSI
- 21 Non-ATSI

Asset Management

As noted in our financial statements, our assets are valued at approximately \$30 million and consist of land, water, housing, infrastructure, and fleet vehicles.

Our infrastructure supports service delivery to our community, and it is subject to regular review to ensure it is fit for purpose. An audit conducted in 2023 identified several issues with our current inventory that could impact our capacity to meet current and emerging community needs. To address these issues effectively, MDAS leadership has committed to developing an overarching Organisation Master Plan that reviews all current infrastructure whilst simultaneously considering the priorities of community both now and into the future and the opportunities that exist for service expansion.

The Organisation has applied to the Aboriginal Community Infrastructure Program (ACIP), seeking funding to support the development of the Master Plan which will include community and stakeholder consultation and service delivery forecasting, all of which will be used to inform infrastructure planning and architectural concept and design. The outcome of this project will be a blueprint for the future of MDAS.

During the reporting period we undertook a review of our fleet requirements with a view to improving our management of MDAS motor vehicles. This review revealed that we had several vehicles that were surplus to our requirements. Based on this, we relinquished the under-utilised vehicles, decreasing the operational and maintenance burden on the Organisation.

The review also highlighted opportunities to implement better fleet processes and as a result, we commenced the implementation of an

organisational-wide fleet management system. This new system will ensure that MDAS vehicles, and their use, will be managed in accordance with policy. They will be serviced and maintained in a manner that is appropriate for service delivery across our organisation.

MDAS continues to play a significant role in our partnership with Haven Home Safe (HHS), the key objective of which is to provide culturally safe, and appropriate, affordable housing that aligns with the priorities of our community. There is a national discussion taking place around the increasing cost of living and the lack of affordable and social housing and our region is not isolated from this. Locally, we are seeing upward pressure on the rental market, with low housing stock and escalating rent. By way of example, the medium costs for a house and unit in Mildura, have risen by 33% and 47% respectively, since the first quarter of 2018. The provision of, and access to, stable, safe, and affordable housing is identified in the nationally agreed Closing the Gap targets and in the Victorian Closing the Gap Implementation Plan 2021-2023 and is further underpinned by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Sector Strengthening Plan.

MDAS is committed to working constructively and collaboratively with partners, funders, and government to drive progress locally. We will advocate for policy reform that advances place-based approaches that ensure our Mallee communities have access to appropriate housing, designed to suit the demands of our climatic and environmental conditions. We will also capitalise on our partnership with HHS; in



addition to the provision of housing, one of the expected outcomes of this partnership is the upskilling of MDAS staff to support the eventual transition of the management and expansion of the housing portfolio from HHS back to MDAS. HHS and MDAS are jointly committed to achieving this in the spirit of driving self-determination and building the capacity of MDAS, its staff and community.

With the demand for more housing across the Mallee, HHS and MDAS are keenly focused on opportunities to gain financial support for construction projects. As such, the partnership continues to pursue funding via the State Government's Homes Victoria Big Housing Build.

Planning for the next financial year has been undertaken and the Organisation remains focused on continuous improvement and managing operational costs to better support community need. We will conduct ongoing reviews of asset utilisation and maintenance. We will release assets that are identified as no longer being fit for purpose, or surplus to requirements, this will include the sale of 104 Pine Avenue.

The Asset team plays a key role in managing and maintaining MDAS resources so that the Organisation can fulfill its purpose to support healthy, resilient, and capable Aboriginal families who can exercise true self-determination and live their absolute best lives.

Quality and Governance

Governance

Throughout the financial year, the Quality and Governance team continued to work with our Quality LogiQC system which is used by many health sector organisations to achieve and maintain accreditation. This is a system that supports management of MDAS's quality safety and risk. To ensure MDAS is benefiting from the features and tools available through the LogiQC system, the Quality and Governance team will undertake training so that they can support and upskill other staff in its use. Embedding LogiQC in our 'business as usual' processes will enhance effective organisational-wide quality and risk management.

As part of MDAS's commitment to sound governance, the MDAS board and executive team participated in a three-day training session facilitated by the Australian Institute of Company Directors. Subject matter related to roles and responsibilities of board members and the executive, finance, risk, and strategy. This was a great shared learning opportunity and led to meaningful conversations regarding future planning for MDAS.

During the reporting period, like many areas of business, the Quality and Governance team undertook a review of processes through the lens of continuous improvement and assurance. Following this review, MDAS initiated a 'third line of defense' which will scrutinise processes, measures, and controls through a five-year rigorous program of internal audits conducted by an external consultant auditor. All aspects of MDAS operations including finance, governance, people, and culture will be audited over successive years. Implementation of this program has commenced and by the close of the financial year, two related to financial processes had been completed.

Quality

During the year the Quality and Governance team worked with the Health and the Family and Community Services teams to prepare for a schedule of both internal and external audits.

In September 2022, an allocated team from Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited conducted an on-site accreditation assessment of our health service against the Royal Australian College General Practitioners Standards. Despite many of the key health staff being relatively new to the Organisation, supported by the Quality team, they were able to demonstrate the level of compliance required for successful accreditation.

In the latter part of the reporting period, focus turned to the upcoming Mid-Cycle Quality Innovation Performance Health Services Standards audit. While not scheduled until August 2023, a large body of work had to be completed in preparation and this has seen teams across the Organisation collaborating and supporting each other with the intent of delivering a positive outcome. Work also commenced during this reporting period in preparation for the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners audit for our Mildura health services, tabled for January 2024.

With increased staffing across the Organisation, bringing critical skills, qualifications, and experience to MDAS, we are confident that we will achieve improved outcomes across all audits in the next financial year.

The Quality and Governance team is responsible for the monitoring of community and client feedback. The feedback we receive assists us in identifying issues, trends, and themes and to respond in both a compassionate and strategic manner, with the objective of improving the overall client experience.



Quality and Governance

Safety and Risk Management.

During this year, the business continuity plan was tested because of the widespread flooding along the Murray River, which affected our operations in Swan Hill, Kerang and Wiimpatja. Most significant was the forced relocation of the Warrakoo operations, which necessitated the evacuation of staff and clients into housing in Mildura. MDAS also provided flood relief, including the delivery of food and supplies to Kerang and Swan Hill community members and assistance with flood protection measures to property.

Other safety and risk management activities undertaken during the year include:

Duress alarm compliance

Fire safety compliance

First Aid kits were updated to meet compliance

Defibrillators installed in Elders Hub and Family and Community Services

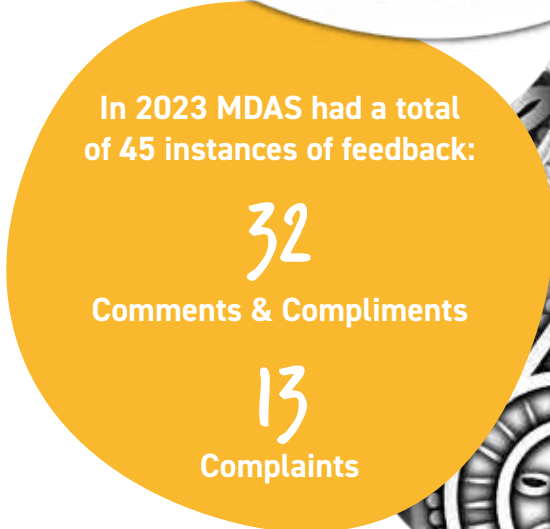
Community Safety Officers employed to support operation of Mildura Community Café and Reception

Over the last twelve months we have improved our Mildura Community Kitchen, working towards developing a true café experience, with a range of healthy meal options and an all-day breakfast bar.

The trial of this concept has demonstrated strong interest and need in community.

Through staff support and internal and external catering bookings, we have been able to provide free meals to community and this has resulted in increased community attendance which in turn has led to improved informal engagement between staff and community. With the increased visitation, we have seen some escalation in aggression from a small number of community members, within our shared spaces. To address this, we have implemented some security arrangements to ensure the safety of our staff and of all our visitors to MDAS.

The 2022-2023 financial year certainly presented some challenges but as an Organisation we overcame the barriers, and we look to the next year with optimism and confidence. The Quality team will continue to support the work of MDAS staff across our Kerang, Swan Hill and Mildura sites, with a commitment to ensuring organisational compliance while prioritising the safety of our staff, clients and community.



Directors' Report





Directors' Report

For the year ended 30 June 2023

The directors present their report, together with the financial statements of the consolidated entity ('Group'), being Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited (the Company) and its Controlled Entity; MDAS Limited for the financial year ended 30 June 2023.

Board of Directors

The following persons were board members of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited during the whole of the financial year up to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated:

Thelma Chilly

Appointed: 15/06/2021
Title: Non-Executive Director & Board Chair

Vicki Clark OAM

Appointed: 11/12/2020
Title: Non-Executive Director

Rita Simmons

Appointed: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director (Deputy Chair)

Sharon Johnson

Appointed: 17/05/2021
Title: Non-Executive Director

Mark Morgan

Appointed: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Jacinta Chaplin

Appointed: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Nikita Hart

Appointed: 1/03/2023
Title: Non-Executive Director

Marcus Horwood

Appointed: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director



Former Board Directors

The following persons were board members of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited for part of the financial year, unless otherwise stated:

Debra Chaplin

Appointed: 27/05/2021
Ceased: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Damien Murray

Appointed: 11/12/2020
Ceased: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Jenene Murray

Appointed: 11/12/2020
Ceased: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Shantelle Joan Thompson OAM

Appointed: 17/06/2021
Ceased: 17/12/2022
Title: Non-Executive Director

Company Secretary

There have been two Company Secretaries holding the position during the financial year:

David Simon Goldberg

Appointed: 29/04/2021
Ceased: 17/12/2022

Clariss Tambudzai Bourne

Appointed: 24/04/2023
Ceased: -



Directors' Report

Director Meetings

Attendances by each Director during the year were as follows:

Director	Board Meetings		Finance Audit & Risk Committee Meetings	
	A	B	A	B
Thelma Chilly (Appointed 15/06/2021)	12	11	-	-
Vicki Clark (Appointed 11/12/2020)	12	12	12	10
Rita Simmons (Appointed 17/12/2022)	7	7	7	1
Sharon Johnson (Appointed 17/05/2021)	12	11	-	-
Mark Morgan (Appointed 17/12/2022)	7	7	-	-
Jacinta Chaplin (Appointed 17/12/2022)	7	6	-	-
Nikita Hart (Appointed 01/03/2023)	3	3	-	-
Marcus Horwood (Appointed 17/12/2022)	7	7	7	5
Debra Chaplin (Appointed 27/05/2021 - 17/12/2022)	6	6	-	-
Damien Murray (Appointed 11/12/2020 -17/12/2022)	6	-	6	2
Jenene Murray (Appointed 11/12/2020 -17/12/2022)	6	4	-	-
Shantelle Joan Thompson OAM (Appointed 17/06/21-17/12/2022)	6	-	6	2

A - The number of meetings eligible to attend.

B - The number of meetings attended.

- - Not a member of that committee.

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the Mallee District Aboriginal Services during the 2022-2023 financial year were to promote Aboriginal health and wellbeing, strengthen family relationships, support individuals from infancy through to old age, and encourage cultural and community connection through the delivery of range of services and programs for clients based in Mildura, Swan Hill, and Kerang. Whilst all the communities across our region experience challenges, MDAS is focused on identifying and enhancing the strengths and opportunities that exist, both on an individual and collective level and remains committed to offering a holistic care model that speaks to the cultural ethos of mind, body, and spirit. This model links all parts of a person's lived experience: their physicality, their values, their connection to land, culture and community and their aspirations, to deliver best outcomes.

There has been no significant changes in the nature of these activities during the year.

Operating Result

The profit of the company for the financial year after was:

	30 June 2023 \$	30 June 2022 \$	Movement
Profit for the year	2,318,132	4,538,693	-49%

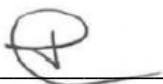
Contribution in Winding up

The entity is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the entity is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$1 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. As at 30 June 2023, the total amount that members of the entity are liable to contribute if the entity is wound up is \$ 317 (2022: \$317).

Auditors Independence Declaration

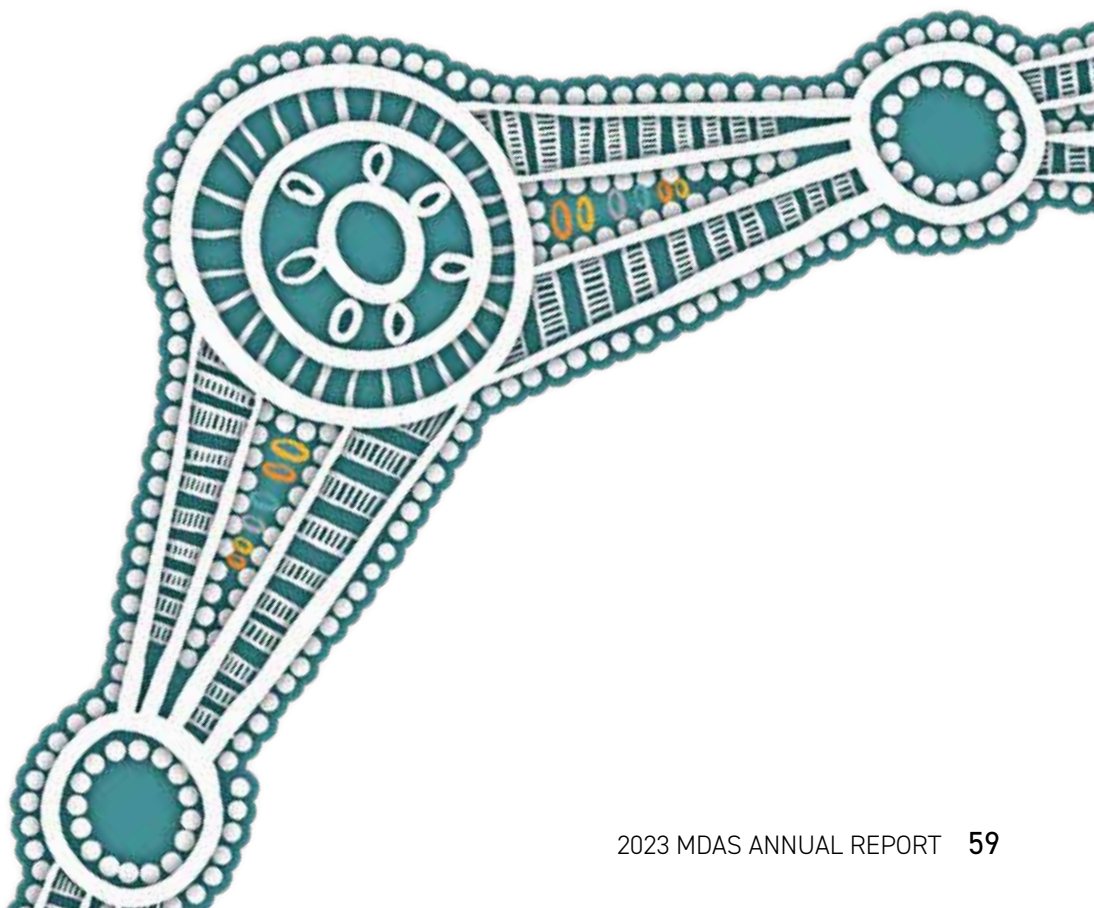
A copy of the Auditor's Independence Declaration as requested under section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, for the year ended 30 June 2023, has been received and can be found on page 61 of this financial report.

This directors' report is signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors



Thelma Chilly
Chair

Dated this 25th day of October, 2023



Financials





41A Breen Street
Bendigo, Victoria 3550
PO Box 448, Bendigo Victoria 3552

Ph: (03) 4435 3550
admin@rsdaudit.com.au
www.rsdaudit.com.au

Auditor's Independence Declaration under Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act s 60-40 to the Directors of Mallee District Aboriginal Services

In accordance with Subdivision 60-C of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, as the auditor of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited for the year ended 30 June 2023, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2023 there has been no contraventions of:

- (i) the Auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) Any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

RSD Audit

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kathie Teasdale', is written over a light blue circular graphic element.

Kathie Teasdale
Partner
41A Breen Street
Bendigo VIC 3550

Dated: 30 October 2023

Richmond Sinnott & Delahunty, trading as RSD Audit
ABN 60 616 244 309

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue			
Revenue from operating activities	7	31,608,324	30,531,244
Other income	8	2,562,826	2,937,472
		34,171,150	33,468,716
Expenses			
Employee benefits expense		(19,568,341)	(17,627,784)
Client costs and program development/delivery		(6,384,160)	(5,755,658)
Depreciation and amortisation	9	(985,174)	(995,829)
Interest expense		(7,189)	(12,972)
Motor vehicle expense		(489,899)	(430,451)
Occupancy expense	10	(1,412,486)	(1,451,320)
IT expenses		(482,700)	(565,626)
Travel expense		(434,300)	(234,192)
Grant returns		(17,932)	(567,518)
Repairs and equipment replacement		(914,024)	(320,296)
Other expenses		(1,156,813)	(968,377)
		(31,853,018)	(28,930,023)
Profit for the year		2,318,132	4,538,693
Other comprehensive income		(33,250)	378,745
Total comprehensive income for the year		2,284,882	4,917,438

FINANCIALS, YEAR END 30 JUNE 2023

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Assets			
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	11	13,013,196	17,735,755
Trade and other receivables	12	437,107	801,885
Financial assets	13	11,062,164	894,412
Other assets		210,937	6,387
Total current assets		24,723,404	19,438,439
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	14	28,226,672	27,970,440
Right-of-use assets	15	393,312	505,542
Intangible assets	16	1,561,315	1,594,565
Total non-current assets		30,181,299	30,070,547
Total assets		54,904,703	49,508,986
Liabilities			
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	17	8,486,988	5,027,605
Lease liabilities	18	286,119	389,983
Employee benefits	19	1,262,037	1,216,521
Total current liabilities		10,035,144	6,634,109
Non-current liabilities			
Lease liabilities	18	112,576	120,829
Employee benefits	19	84,706	366,653
Total non-current liabilities		197,282	487,482
Total liabilities		10,232,426	7,121,591
Net assets		44,672,277	42,387,395
Equity			
Retained earnings		38,118,587	35,800,455
Reserves		6,553,690	6,586,940
Total equity		44,672,277	42,387,395

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Consolidated Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	Retained earnings \$	Property revaluation surplus reserve \$	Water revaluation surplus reserve \$	Total Equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2021		31,261,762	5,249,681	958,514	37,469,957
Comprehensive income for the year					
Restated Profit for the year	6	4,538,693	-	-	4,538,693
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-	378,745	378,745
Balance at 30 June 2022		35,800,455	5,249,681	1,337,259	42,387,395
Balance at 1 July 2022		35,800,455	5,249,681	1,337,259	42,387,395
Comprehensive income for the year					
Profit for the year		2,318,132	-	-	2,318,132
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-	(33,250)	(33,250)
Balance at 30 June 2023		38,118,587	5,249,681	1,304,009	44,672,277

FINANCIALS, YEAR END 30 JUNE 2023

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2023

	Note	2023 \$	2022 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Grants receipts		38,991,295	31,408,436
Other receipts		2,392,469	3,838,867
Payments to suppliers and employee		(34,921,727)	(27,789,285)
Interest received		63,886	75,948
Interest paid		-	(12,972)
Net cash flows provided by operating activities	22 (b)	6,525,923	7,520,994
Cash flows from investing activities			
Proceeds from sale of investments		-	16,692
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(839,498)	(267,129)
Payments for financial assets		(10,000,000)	-
Net cash flows used in investing activities		(10,839,498)	(250,437)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of lease liabilities		(408,984)	(418,554)
Net cash flows used in financing activities		(408,984)	(418,554)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(4,722,559)	6,852,003
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of financial year		17,735,755	10,883,752
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	11	13,013,196	17,735,755

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

The financial report includes the consolidated financial statements and notes of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited and Controlled Entities ('Group'), both of which are incorporated and domiciled in Australia and are companies limited by guarantee.

Note 1. Financial Reporting Framework

The consolidated financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the requirements for the *Corporations Act 2001*, Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the *Australian Charities & Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The entity is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards.

These financial statements comply with the recognition and measurement requirements of Australian Accounting Standards, the presentation requirements in those standards as modified by AASB 1060 *General Purpose Financial Statements - Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-profit Tier 2 Entities* (AASB 1060) and the disclosure requirements in AASB 1060.

Note 2. Basis of Preparation

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs, modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

These financial statements were authorised for issue by the Directors on 25 October 2023.

Note 3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and are consistent with prior reporting periods unless otherwise stated.

(a) Income Tax

The company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(b) Revenue

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the company expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the company have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Rebates, refunds and reimbursements

Fees charged for care or services provided to clients are recognised when the service is provided.

Rental income

Rental income from operating leases (net of any incentives given to the lessee) is recognised in accordance with the lease agreement, which is considered to best represent the pattern of service rendered through the provision of the leased asset. Income for short term rental is recognised as income when the service is provided.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(b) Revenue (continued)

Grant Income

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligations is satisfied.

Within agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Revenue recognition policy for contracts which are either not enforceable or do not have sufficiently specific performance obligations.

The revenue recognition policies for principal revenue streams of the Company are:

Grant Income

Revenue in the scope of AASB 1058 is recognised on receipt unless it relates to a capital grant which satisfies certain criteria, in this case the grant is recognised as the asset is acquired or constructed.

Donations and other revenue

Revenue is recognised on receipt of cash or at the time a receivable is recorded, if earlier.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accrual basis when the Company is entitled to it.

Interest Income

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.

Unrealised gains/losses on investments are recognised as the difference between the carrying value and the fair value of the investments at year end. Realised gains/losses are recognised when the investments are sold.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains and losses are recognised in profit or loss in the period in which they arise. When revalued assets are sold, amounts included in the revaluation surplus relating to that asset are transferred to retained earnings.

Other income is recognised when the amount of revenue can be measured reliably and collection is probable.

(c) Goods & Services Tax

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of GST.

Cash flows in the statement of cash flows are included on a gross basis and the GST component of cash flows arising from investing and financing activities which is recoverable from, or payable to, the taxation authority is classified as operating cash flows.

(e) Property, Plant & Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(e) Property, Plant & Equipment (continued)

Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost of items of property, plant and equipment less their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives, and is recognised in profit or loss.

The estimated useful lives of property, plant and equipment for the current and comparative periods are as follows:

Asset Class	Method	Useful Life
Buildings	Straight line	20 - 40 years
Leasehold improvements	Straight line	20 - 40 years
Plant & equipment	Straight line	2 - 7 years

Depreciation methods, useful life, and residual values are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted if appropriate.

(f) Leases

At inception of a contract, the company assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the company where the company is a lessee. However, all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Initially the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the company uses the incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees
- the exercise price of purchase options, if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease.

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest. Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the company anticipates to exercise a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 3. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (continued)

(g) Financial Instruments

Initial recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the entity becomes a party to the contractual provisions to the instrument. For financial assets, this is the date that the entity commits itself to either the purchase or sale of the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instruments (except for trade receivables) are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs, except where the instrument is classified as "at fair value through profit or loss", in which case transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss immediately. Where available, quoted prices in an active market are used to determine fair value. In other circumstances, valuation techniques are adopted.

Trade receivables are initially measured at the transaction price if the trade receivables do not contain significant financing component or if the practical expedient was applied as specified in AASB 15: *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*.

Classification and subsequent measurement

Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are subsequently measured at:

- amortised cost; or
- fair value through profit or loss

All financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Financial Assets

Financial assets are subsequently measured at:

- amortised cost;
- fair value through other comprehensive income
- fair value through profit or loss

Measurement is on the basis of two primary criteria:

- the contractual cash flow characteristics of the financial asset; and
- the business model for managing the financial assets.

A financial asset that meets the following conditions is subsequently measured at amortised cost:

- the financial asset is managed solely to collect contractual cash flows; and
- the contractual terms within the financial asset give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding on specified dates.

The financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

A financial asset that meets the following conditions is subsequently measured at fair value through other comprehensive income:

- the contractual terms within the financial asset give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding on specified dates; and
- the business model for managing the financial asset comprises both cash flows collection and the selling of the financial asset.

The financial assets measured at fair value through profit or loss are water entitlements, shares and securities held as investments.

All other financial assets that do not meet the measurement conditions of amortised cost are subsequently measured at fair value through profit or loss.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 4. Critical Accounting Estimates & Judgements

The company makes estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Grant Income (Key Judgement)

For many of the grant agreements received, the determination of whether the contract includes sufficiently specific performance obligations was a significant judgement involving discussions with a number of parties at the company, review of the proposal documents prepared during the grant application phase and consideration of the terms and conditions.

Grants received by the company have been accounted for under both AASB 15 and AASB 1058 depending on the terms and conditions and decisions made.

If this determination was changed then the revenue recognition pattern would be different from that recognised in these financial statements.

Receivables (Key Estimate)

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Estimation of asset useful lives

Key assumptions on historical experience and the condition of the asset. The company reviews the estimated useful lives of property, plant and equipment at the end of each annual reporting period.

Revenue recognition

To identify a performance obligation under AASB 15, the promise must be sufficiently specific to be able to determine when the obligation is satisfied. Management exercises judgement to determine whether the promise is sufficiently specific by taking into account any conditions specified in the arrangement, explicit or implicit, regarding the promised goods or services. In making this assessment, management includes the nature/ type, cost/ value, quantity and the period of transfer related to the goods or services promised.

Note 5. Financial Risk Management

The company has exposure to the following risks arising from financial instruments:

- credit risk
- liquidity risk
- market risk

The company's overall risk management program focuses on the unpredictability of financial markets and seeks to minimise potential adverse effects on the financial performance of the company. The company does not utilise any derivative instruments.

Risk management is carried out directly by the Board of Directors.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 5. Financial Risk Management (continued)

(a) Credit Risk

Credit risk is the risk of financial loss to the company if a customer or counterparty to a financial instrument fails to meet its contractual obligations, and arises principally from the company's receivables from customers.

The company has no significant concentrations of credit risk. It has policies in place to ensure that customers have an appropriate credit history.

(b) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk is the risk that the company will encounter difficulty in meeting the obligations associated with its financial liabilities that are settled by delivering cash or another financial asset. The company's approach to managing liquidity is to ensure, as far as possible, that it will have sufficient liquidity to meet its liabilities when they are due, under both normal and stressed conditions, without incurring unacceptable losses or risking damage to the company's reputation.

(c) Market Risk

Market risk is the risk that changes in market prices e.g. foreign exchange rates, interest rates, and equity prices will affect the company's income or the value of its holdings in financial instruments. The objective of market risk management is to manage and control market risk exposures within acceptable parameters, while optimising the return.

The company has no exposure to any transactions denominated in a currency other than Australian dollars.

Price Risk

The company is not exposed to equity securities price risk as it does not hold investments for sale or at fair value.

Cash Flow & Fair Values Interest Rate Risk

Interest bearing assets are held with Westpac Banking Corporation and subject to movements in market interest. Interest rate risk could also arise from long term borrowings. Borrowings issued at variable rates expose the company to cash flow interest rate risk.

The company held cash and cash equivalents of \$13,013,196 at 30 June 2023 (2022: \$17,735,755). The cash and cash equivalents are held with Westpac Banking Corporation, which are rated A+ on Standard & Poor's credit ratings.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 6. Correction of Error

During the current financial year it was identified that the information used to prepare the revenue recognition calculations for the 2022 financial year was not applied in line with AASB 15 *Revenue from Contracts with Customers* and AASB 1058 *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*. Performance obligations were not factored into the calculations resulting in a material error in revenue recorded for the financial year and contract liabilities recorded at the end of the financial year.

The following table summarises the impacts on the 30 June 2022 financial statements.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Position (extract)	As previously stated \$	Adjustment \$	As restated \$
Liabilities			
<i>Current liabilities</i>			
Trade and other payables	2,560,671	2,466,934	5,027,605
Total current liabilities	4,167,175	2,466,934	6,634,109
Total liabilities	4,654,657	2,466,934	7,121,591
Equity			
Retained earnings	38,267,389	(2,466,934)	35,800,455
Total equity	44,854,329	(2,466,934)	42,387,395
Statement of Profit or Loss and other Comprehensive Income (extract)	As previously stated \$	Adjustment \$	As restated \$
Revenue			
Revenue from operating activities	32,998,178	(2,466,934)	30,531,244
Total revenue	35,935,650	(2,466,934)	33,468,716
Profit for the year	7,005,627	(2,466,934)	4,538,693
Total comprehensive income for the year	7,384,372	(2,466,934)	4,917,438

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 7. Revenue From Operating Activities

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Revenue From Contracts With Customers		
- Government grants	10,131,568	12,958,043
- Rental income	429,240	461,740
	10,560,808	13,419,783
Revenue From Other Sources		
- Government grants	21,047,516	17,111,461
- Other operating income	-	-
	21,047,516	17,111,461

All revenue from contracts customers shown above was recognised at a point in time. There was no revenue from contracts with customers recognised over time during the financial year.

Note 8. Other Revenue

	2023 \$	2022 \$
- Rebates and refunds	1,173,144	1,801,944
- Reimbursements income	809,881	977,456
- Farm Income	37,956	30,284
- Sale of temporary water	4,500	36,009
- Interest and investment income received	170,357	75,948
- Unrealised gain/(loss) on investments	105,148	(161,089)
- Realised gain/(loss) on investments	-	16,692
- Other revenue	212,101	160,228
- Profit/(loss) on disposals of property, plant and equipment	49,739	-
Total Other Revenue	2,562,826	2,937,472

Note 9. Depreciation and Amortisation

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Depreciation and amortisation expense		
<i>Property, plant and equipment</i>		
Buildings	420,911	419,343
Plant and equipment	99,807	103,567
Motor vehicles	20,693	30,927
IT equipment	17,669	4,205
Computer software	18,240	18,861
Leasehold improvements	5,946	5,364
<i>Right-of-use assets</i>		
Motor vehicles	401,908	413,562
Total depreciation and amortisation expense	985,174	995,829

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 10. Occupancy Expense

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Telephone expenses	524,170	497,150
Cleaning expenses	387,011	441,681
Electricity	173,531	222,890
Rates - Land	139,537	80,673
Water	57,015	63,574
Other expenses	131,222	145,352
Total occupancy expense	1,412,486	1,451,320

Note 11. Cash & Cash Equivalents

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and on hand	13,013,196	17,735,755
	13,013,196	17,735,755

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at bank.

Note 12. Trade & Other Receivables

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
Current		
Trade receivables	449,909	803,920
Accrued revenue	190,118	83,647
Loans and advances	20,863	20,863
Provision for impairment	(223,783)	(106,545)
	437,107	801,885

Trade and other receivables are initially measured at the transaction price. Trade and other receivables are due for settlement usually no more than 30 days from the date of recognition.

The company applies the simplified approach to providing for expected credit losses prescribed by AASB 9, which permits the use of the lifetime expected loss provision for all accounts receivable. To measure the expected credit losses, trade and other receivable have been grouped based on shared credit risk characteristics and the days past due. The loss allowance provision as at 30 June 2023 is determined as follows; the expected credit losses also incorporate forward-looking information.

Note 13. Financial Assets

	2023	2022
	\$	\$
At FVTPL		
Listed investments	1,062,164	894,412
Term deposits	10,000,000	-
	11,062,164	894,412

Securities in listed corporations are held for trading purposes to generate income through receipt of dividends and capital gains. Such investments as measured at fair value through profit and loss.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 14. Property, Plant & Equipment

(a) Carrying Amounts

	2023			2022		
	At Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation	Written Down Value	At Cost / Valuation	Accumulated Depreciation	Written Down Value
Land & Buildings at fair value	27,633,429	(840,254)	26,793,175	27,633,429	(419,343)	27,214,086
Leasehold improvements at cost	609,976	(21,593)	588,383	114,294	(5,783)	108,511
Plant & equipment at cost	3,919,004	(3,481,991)	437,013	3,996,659	(3,474,934)	521,725
Works in progress at cost	408,101	-	408,101	126,118	-	126,118
	32,570,510	(4,343,838)	28,226,672	31,870,500	(3,900,060)	27,970,440

(b) Movements in Carrying Amounts

2023	Land & Buildings at fair value \$	Land & Buildings at cost \$	Leasehold improvements at cost \$	Plant & Equipment at cost \$	Works in progress at cost \$
Opening carrying value	27,214,086	35,323	73,189	521,725	126,118
Additions	-	-	495,680	61,834	281,983
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation expense	(420,911)	(9,863)	(5,946)	(146,546)	-
Closing carrying value	26,793,175	25,460	562,923	437,013	408,101

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 14. Property, Plant & Equipment (continued)

2022	Land & Buildings at fair value \$	Land & Buildings at cost \$	Leasehold improvements at cost \$	Plant & Equipment at cost \$	Works in progress at cost \$
Opening carrying value	27,405,000	-	74,938	507,986	297,655
Additions	-	35,520	3,418	171,299	56,892
Transfers	228,429	-	-	-	(228,429)
Revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation expense	(419,343)	(197)	(5,167)	(157,560)	-
Closing carrying value	27,214,086	35,323	73,189	521,725	126,118

(c) Capital Expenditure Commitments

	2023 \$	2022 \$
<i>Committed at the reporting date but not recognised as liabilities payable:</i>		
Within one year	237,640	436,420
One to five years	-	-
More than five years	-	-
	237,640	436,420

(d) Changes in Estimates

During the financial year, the entity assessed estimates used for property, plant and equipment including useful lives, residual values, and depreciation methods.

There were no changes in estimates for the current reporting period.

Note 15. Right-of-use Assets

Right of use assets are measured at amounts equal to the present value of enforceable future payments on the adoption date, adjusted for lease incentives, make good provisions, and initial direct costs.

The Company derecognises right of use assets at the termination of the lease period or when no future economic benefits are expected to be derived from the use of the underlying asset.

The Company lease portfolio includes motor vehicles.

Options to Extend or Terminate

The option to extend or terminate are contained in the property lease of the Company. All extension or termination options are only exercisable by the Company. The extension options or termination options which were probable to be exercised have been included in the calculation of the right-of-use asset.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 15. Right-of-use Assets (continued)

AASB 16 Amounts Recognised in the Statement of Financial Position

	2023	2022
	Leased motor vehicles	Leased motor vehicles
Leased asset	1,208,515	1,930,658
Accumulated Depreciation	(815,203)	(1,425,116)
	393,312	505,542

Movements in carrying amounts:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
	Leased motor vehicles \$	Leased motor vehicles \$
Opening balance	505,542	324,680
Remeasurements	145,297	-
Additions	144,381	587,415
Depreciation expense	(401,908)	(406,553)
Net carrying amount	393,312	505,542

AASB 16 Amounts Recognised in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive income

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Depreciation expense related to right-of-use assets	401,908	413,562
Interest expense on lease liabilities	7,189	4,924

Note 16. Intangible Assets

	2023 \$			2022 \$		
	At Valuation	Accumulated Amortisation	Written Down Value	At Valuation	Accumulated Amortisation	Written Down Value
Water Entitlements	1,561,315	-	1,561,315	1,594,565	-	1,594,565

Water entitlements are not subject to amortisation as the permanent water entitlements have an indefinite life.

Increase in the carrying amounts arising on revaluation of water rights are recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in the revaluation reserve in equity. Revaluation decreases that offset previous increases of the same asset are recognised in other comprehensive income under the heading revaluation surplus and against revaluation reserve directly in equity; all other decreases are recognised in profit or loss.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 16. Intangible Assets (Continued)

(b) Movements in Carrying Amounts

	2023
Opening carrying	1,594,565
Additions	-
Disposals	-
Revaluation	(33,250)
Depreciation	-
Closing carrying value	1,561,315
	2022
Opening carrying	1,215,820
Additions	-
Disposals	-
Revaluation	378,745
Depreciation	-
Closing carrying value	1,594,565

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 17. Trade & Other Payables

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current		
Trade creditors	71,973	505,928
Other creditors and accruals	765,422	541,065
Contract liabilities	7,649,593	3,980,612
	8,486,988	5,027,605

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the entity that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

Trade and other payables are initially measured at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Note 18. Lease Liabilities

Lease liabilities were measured at amounts equal to the present value of enforceable future payments of the term reasonably expected to be exercised, discounted at the appropriate incremental borrowing rate on the adoption date. The discount rate used on recognition was 1.4%.

The discount rate used in calculating the present value of enforceable future payments takes into account the particular circumstances applicable to the underlying leased assets (including the amount, lease term, economic environment, and other relevant factors).

The company has applied judgement in estimating the remaining lease term including the effects of any extension or termination options reasonably expected to be exercised, applying hindsight if appropriate.

Lease liabilities are presented in the consolidated statement of financial position as follows:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current	286,119	389,983
Non-current	112,576	120,829
	398,695	510,812

Note 19. Employee Benefits

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Current		
Provision for annual leave	1,093,174	1,026,793
Provision for long service leave	168,863	189,728
	1,262,037	1,216,521
Non-Current		
Provision for long service leave	84,706	366,653
	84,706	366,653

Provision for employee benefits represents amounts accrued for annual leave and long service leave.

Employee Attrition Rates

The Entity uses historical employee attrition rates in determining the probability of an employee achieving continuous employment eligible for entitlement in accordance with long service leave legislation.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 20. Members Guarantee

	2023 \$	2022 \$
MDAS Limited	8	8
Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited	317	317

MDAS Ltd and its controlled entity are both incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and are Companies limited by guarantee. If the Companies are wound up, the institution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$1 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the entity. As at 30 June 2023, the total amount that members of the companies are liable to contribute if the Companies are wound up.

Note 21. Reserves

Other components of equity include the following:

Property Revaluation Reserve

The revaluation surplus reserve records the revaluations of land and buildings.

Water Revaluation reserve

The revaluation surplus records the revaluations of intangible assets (water entitlements).

Retained earnings include all current and prior period profits.

Note 22. Cash Flow Information

(a) Cash and cash equivalents balances as shown in the Statement of Financial Position can be reconciled to that shown in the Statement of Cash Flows as follows:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Cash and cash equivalents (Note 11)	13,013,196	17,735,755
As per the Statement of Cash Flows	13,013,196	17,735,755

(b) Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with profit/loss after income tax

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Profit/(Loss) for the year	2,318,132	3,519,412
Non-cash flows in profit		
- Depreciation and amortisation	985,174	995,829
- Unrealised gains/loss on investments	(167,752)	161,089
- Realised gains/loss on investments	-	(15,560)
Changes in assets and liabilities		
- (Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	354,011	(756,796)
- (Increase) / decrease in prepayments and other assets	(193,783)	(6,387)
- Increase / (decrease) in trade and other payables	3,466,572	3,827,281
- Increase / (decrease) in provisions	(236,431)	(203,874)
Net cash flows from operating activities	6,525,923	7,520,994

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 23. Related Party Transactions

Key management personnel are those people with the authority and responsibility for planning, directing and controlling the activities of the entities, directly or indirectly.

Key management personnel	Position title
Darlene Thomas	Chief Executive Officer
Caroline Smith	Executive Director Corporate Services (27/02/2023-30/06/2023)
Kelly Dart	Director Health Services (18/07/2022-30/06/2023)
Pauline Ugle	Director Family Services (04/10/2022-30/06/2023)
Kirsten Lloyd	Director Strategic Communication & Partnership (25/07/2022-30/06/2023)
Marie Griffiths	Executive Director Service Delivery (09/01/2023-30/06/2023)
Toni Webster	Director - Swan Hill & Kerang (01/07/2022-30/06/2023)
Jacqualyn Turfrey	Chief Executive Officer (01/07/2022-18/09/2022)
David Goldberg	Company Secretary (01/07/2022-21/12/2022)
Claris Tambudzai Bourne	Company Secretary (24/04/2023-30/06/2023)
Frank Piscioneri	Finance Audit and Risk Committee Chair
Thelma Chilly	Board Chair
Vicki Clark	Director
Rita Simmons	Director (17/12/2022-30/06/2023)
Sharon Johnson	Director
Mark Morgan	Director (17/12/2022-30/06/2023)
Jacinta Chaplin	Director (17/12/2022-30/06/2023)
Nikita Hart	Director (01/03/2023-30/06/2023)
Marcus Horwood	Director (17/12/2022-30/06/2023)
Debra Chaplin	Director (01/07/2022-17/12/2022)
Damien Murray	Director (01/07/2022-17/12/2022)
Jenene Murray	Director (01/07/2022-17/12/2022)
Shantelle Thompson	Director (01/07/2022-17/12/2022)

Related parties include close family members of key management personnel and entities that are controlled or jointly controlled by those key management personnel, individually or collectively with their close family members. The Company considers key management personnel to be the members of the Board of Management.

The totals of remuneration paid to the key management personnel of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited during the year as follows:

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Short-term benefits	852,446	584,551
Post employment benefits	94,629	33,169
Long-term benefits	-	4,549
Termination benefits	-	-
Total Remuneration of Key Management Personnel (KMP)	947,075	622,269

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 23. Related Party Transactions (continued)

Transactions With Key Management Personnel & Related Parties

During the year, the company purchased goods and services under normal terms and conditions, from related parties as follows:

Name of Related Party	Description of Goods or Services Provided	Value \$
Kiilalaana Pty Ltd (related party of Shantelle Thompson)	Mentoring programs	1,000
Webster Cleaning Service (related party of Toni Webster)	Cleaning services	4,785

Note 24. Parent Entity information

Information relating to Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited ('the Parent Entity')

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Statement of Financial Position		
Current Assets	12,675,152	7,395,943
Non-current Assets	30,181,299	30,070,545
Total Assets	42,856,451	37,466,488
Current Liabilities	10,034,982	6,639,701
Non-current Liabilities	197,282	487,482
Total Liabilities	10,232,264	7,127,183
Net Assets	32,624,187	30,339,305
Reserves	6,553,690	6,586,940
Retained Earnings	26,070,497	23,752,365
Total Equity	32,624,187	30,339,305

	2023 \$	2022 \$
Profit/(Loss) for the year	2,318,132	4,874,160
Other Comprehensive Income	(33,250)	378,745
Total Comprehensive Income	2,284,882	5,252,905

The above table does not include MDAS Ltd information. The difference between the consolidated information provided in the financial report and the above Parent Entity information is MDAS Ltd.

The Parent Entity has the following capital commitments for 2023: \$237,640 (2022: Nil).

The Parent Entity does not have any contingent assets or contingent liabilities at year end.

Note 25. Events After the end of the Reporting Period

The financial report was authorised for issue on 27 October 2023 by the Board of Directors.

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Entity in future financial years.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 26. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Contingent liabilities

MDAS is currently still under an Independent Board-based Anti-corruption Commission investigation. At date of report it is unclear the ramifications and any possible damages that may arise due to the investigation.

Contingent Assets

Doompah Pty Ltd and Doompah Investments Pty Ltd are currently controlled two properties, 9 Delamere Court, Merbein and 30 Avoca Street, Dareton. MDAS is currently deriving rental income from these properties. These properties originally owned by MDAS and were transferred to the Warrakoo Aboriginal Assistance Trust several years ago to be used as security on loans. The titles for the two properties are registered in the name of the corporate trustees (Doompah Pty Ltd and Doompah Investment Pty Ltd) of the trust. The trust has since ceased all operations and trading activities and both corporate trustees have been deregistered.

As the titles of both properties were not transferred back to the MDAS prior to deregistration, the assets now rest with ASIC.

The company's legal representative is currently working with ASIC to have the titles to both properties transferred back and the matter is expected to settled soon.

Note 27. Company Details

The registered office of and principal place of business of the Company is:

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited
Australian Business Number: 54 334 685 198
118-124 Madden Avenue
Mildura, Victoria 3550

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 28. Fair Value Measurements

The Company may measure some of its assets and liabilities at fair value on either a recurring or non-recurring basis, depending on the requirements of the applicable Accounting Standard.

Fair value is the price the Company would receive to sell an asset or would have to pay to transfer a liability in an orderly (i.e. unforced) transaction between independent, knowledgeable and willing market participants at the measurement date.

As fair value is a market-based measure, the closest equivalent observable market pricing information is used to determine fair value. Adjustments to market values may be made having regard to the characteristics of the specific asset or liability. The fair value of assets and liabilities that are not traded in an active market are determined using one or more valuation techniques. These valuation techniques maximise, to the extent possible, the use of observable market data.

To the extent possible, market information is extracted from either the principal market for the asset or liability (i.e. the market with the greatest volume and level of activity for the asset or liability) or, in the absence of such a market, the most advantageous market available to the entity at the end of the reporting period (i.e. the market that maximises the receipts from the sale of the asset or minimises the payments made to transfer the liability, after taking into account transaction costs and transport costs).

For non-financial assets, the fair value measurement also takes into account a market participant's ability to use the asset in its highest and best use or to sell it to another market participant that would use the asset in its highest and best use.

The company measures and recognises the following assets at fair value on a recurring basis after initial recognition:

- land and buildings
- listed investments
- water entitlements

The company does not subsequently measure any liabilities at fair value on a non-recurring basis.

(a) Fair Value Hierarchy

AASB 13: *Fair value measurement* requires the disclosure of fair value information by level of the fair value hierarchy, which categorises fair value measurements into one of three possible levels based on the lowest level that an input that is significant to the measurement can be categorised into as follows:

Level	Measurement Details
Level 1	Measurements based on quoted prices (unadjusted) in active markets for identical assets or liabilities that the entity can access at the measurement date.
Level 2	Measurements based on inputs other than quoted prices included in Level 1 that are observable for the asset or liability, either directly or indirectly.
Level 3	Measurements based on unobservable inputs for the asset or liability.

Fair values of assets and liabilities that are not traded in an active market are determined using one or more valuation techniques. These valuation techniques maximise, to the extent possible, the use of observable market data. If all significant inputs required to measure fair value are observable, the asset or liability is included in Level 2. If one or more significant inputs are not based on observable market data, the asset or liability is included in Level 3.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 28. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

The following tables provide the fair values of the company's assets and liabilities measured and recognised on a recurring basis after initial recognition and their categorisation within the fair value hierarchy:

	30 June 2023			
	Level 1 \$	Level 2 \$	Level 3 \$	Total \$
Recurring Fair Value Measurements				
Non-financial Assets				
Land and buildings	-	27,970,440	-	27,970,440
Water entitlements	-	1,561,315	-	1,561,315
	-	29,531,755	-	29,531,755
Financial Assets				
Listed Investment	1,062,164	-	-	1,062,164
	1,062,164	-	-	1,062,164

	30 June 2022			
	Level 1 \$	Level 2 \$	Level 3 \$	Total \$
Recurring Fair Value Measurements				
Non-financial Assets				
Land and buildings	-	27,970,440	-	27,970,440
Water entitlements	-	1,594,565	-	1,594,565
		29,565,005		29,565,005
Financial Assets				
Listed investment	894,412	-	-	894,412
	894,412	-	-	894,412

There were no transfers between levels for assets measured at fair value on a recurring basis during the reporting period (2022: no transfers).

(b) Valuation Techniques

The company selects a valuation technique that is appropriate in the circumstances and for which sufficient data is available to measure fair value. The availability of sufficient and relevant data primarily depends on the specific characteristics of the asset or liability being measured. The valuation techniques selected by the company are consistent with one or more of the following valuation approaches:

Approach	Valuation Details
Market Approach	Valuation techniques that use prices and other relevant information generated by market transactions for identical or similar assets or liabilities.
Income Approach	Valuation techniques that convert estimated future cash flows or income and expenses into a single discounted present value.
Cost Approach	Valuation techniques that reflect the current replacement cost of an asset at its current service capacity.

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Notes to the Consolidated Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2023

Note 28. Fair Value Measurements (continued)

Each valuation technique requires inputs that reflect the assumptions that buyers and sellers would use when pricing the asset or liability, including assumptions about risks. When selecting a valuation technique, the company gives priority to those techniques that maximise the use of observable inputs and minimise the use of unobservable inputs. Inputs that are developed using market data (such as publicly available information on actual transactions) and reflect the assumptions that buyers and sellers would generally use when pricing the asset or liability are considered observable, whereas inputs for which market data is not available and therefore are developed using the best information available about such assumptions are considered unobservable.

Valuation Techniques & Inputs - Level 2 Fair Values

Asset	Fair Value at 30 June 2023 \$	Valuation Techniques	Inputs Used
Land and buildings	28,226,672	Market approach	Direct market comparison
Water entitlements	1,561,315	Market approach	Quoted price
Listed investments	1,062,164	Market approach	Quoted price

The fair value of freehold land and buildings is determined at least every three years based on valuations by an independent valuer. At the end of each intervening period, the Directors review the independent valuation and, when appropriate, update the fair value measurement to reflect current market conditions using a range of valuation techniques, including recent observable market data and discounted cash flow methodologies.

There were no changes during the period in the valuation techniques used by the company to determine Level 2 fair values.

(c) Reconciliation of Recurring Level 2 Fair Value Measurements

Level 2	Land and buildings \$	Water Entitlements \$
Balance at the beginning of the year	27,214,086	1,594,565
Additions during the year	-	-
Gains recognised in profit or loss during the year	-	(33,250)
Depreciation expense for the year	(420,911)	-
Balance at the end of the year	26,793,175	1,561,315

FINANCIALS, YEAR END 30 JUNE 2023

Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited

Director's Declaration

For the year ended 30 June 2023

In accordance with a resolution of the directors of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited, the directors of the registered company declare that, in the directors' opinion:

- (a) the attached consolidated financial statements and notes to comply with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.
- (b) the attached financial statements and notes give a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date and
- (c) In the directors' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

Signed in accordance with subs 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.



Thelma Chilly

Chair

Dated this 25th day of October, 2023



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Bendigo, Victoria 3550
PO Box 448, Bendigo Victoria 3552

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES LIMITED

Audit Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial report of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited, which comprises the consolidated statement of financial position as at 30 June 2023, the consolidated statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, consolidated statement of changes in equity and consolidated statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying consolidated financial report of Mallee District Aboriginal Services Limited, is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosure Requirements (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Regulation 2022*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and, the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the Company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the Company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

Richmond Sinnott & Delahunty, trading as RSD Audit
ABN 60 616 244 309

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation



As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the board of director's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the board of directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Information Other than the Financial Report and Auditor's Report Thereon

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

RSD Audit

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kathie Teasdale'.

Kathie Teasdale
Partner

Dated: 30 October 2023



Thanks

THANKS

Our Partners and Supporters

Achieving better outcomes for our community is made possible through collaboration with our valued partners and supporters

Department of Justice

Department of Health

Department of Families Fairness and Housing

Koori Justice Unit

Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation

Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency

Haven Home Safe

Sunraysia Community Health Services

MacKillop Family Services

Berry Street

National Indigenous Australians Agency

Murray Primary Health Network

Bendigo Health

SecondBite

Mildura Base Hospital

Northern District Community Health

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation

Mallee Family Care

Head Space Mildura

Orange Door

Mildura Rural City Council

Coles Supermarkets

Local Aboriginal Justice Advisory Corporation

Regional Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committees

Loddon Mallee Aboriginal Reference Group

Mallee Sexual Assault Unit and Domestic Violence Service

AFS and Associates Chartered Accountants

CFB Group

Suncity Cleaners

Toyota Fleet

Victorian Managed Insurance Authority

THANKS

MDAS Staff

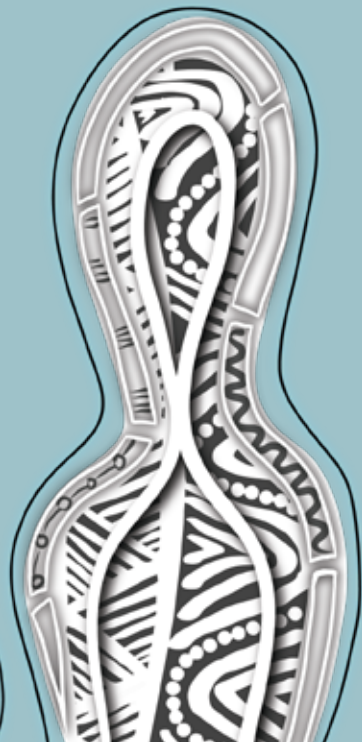
And well done to our team for another year of hard work and progress...

Christina Abela	Sidney Clarke	Jarrold Griffin	Jessica King
Indyca Adams	Peter Clarke	Chloe Griffiths	Carl Kirby
Sadia Afrin	Bronwyn Coe	Mackayla Griffiths	Crystal Kirby
Grace Albert	Wayne Coe	Marie Griffiths	Delureen Kirby
Rodney Anagipura	Anthony Coluccio	Lowanna Gwilliam	Elsa Kirby
Bonnie Andrews	Julia Couacaud	Kelly Haley	Harold Kirby
Georgie Anil Jaicob	Mahli Cross	Maddi Haley-O'Bree	Jeremiah Kirby
Chantelle Appoo	Katherine Crouch	Brady Hall	Toby Kirby
Andrew Arden	Lorraine Cruse	Blake Hall	Lenay Knee
Josephs Azzarelli	Chantelle Curnuck	Rex Handy	Julie Knight
Kimberley Bacon	Rebecca Curphey	Maresha Handy	Jan Koopmans
Ryan Bailey	Maddy Dal Farra	Margaret Handy-Locke	Terrance Kuchel
Taylah Baird	Kelly Dart	Nathan Hamence	Melanie Lane
Rochelle Barry	Jen Dawson	Steph Harradine	Monique Lauder
Barnaby Bates	Carolyn De Jong	Roy Harris	Jennifer Laurie
Gemma Bates	Salvatore Deluca	Jadan Havea	Reeanne Laurie
Stewart Bates	Lorraine Denholm	Bec Hawthorn	Kim Lavery
Carly Batson	Robert Dini	Rachel Hay	Russell Lawson
Deb Berg	Nicholas Dorman	Briana Hayden	Sonia Lawson
Aaron Best	Jayden Dowsley	Skye Hayden	Jo Lenton
Tori Best	Pearl Dunn	Tanya Hayes	Sue Leonard
Ceciline Biles	Pamela Dunrobin	Margaret Hayes-Hampton	Danielle Libchard
Tina Blair	Vanessa Dyke	Kye Henderson	Kirsten Lloyd
Mark Bland	Jillian Edens	Holly Highdale	Malinda Loats
Lytisha Blore	Keya Edge	Bethany Hudson	Rachel Lovski
Claris Bourne	Jae Edwards	Amy Hunt	David Lowe
Justine Bowden	Rayna Egan	Nathan Hura	Sue Lynch
Terrance Brennan	Dominic Eggmoesse-Smith	Jason Hura	Eric Magoga
Kylie Briggs	Leilani Eggmoesse	Leanne Ibbs	Marie Mah
Kristy Brims	Leroy Eggmoesse	Meg Imms	Tamara Marshall
Elvie-Marie Britten	Bree Evans	Anna Irons	Valery Martin
Allison Buchanan	Belinda Fanshaw	Tamika Jenkins	Lola Masasso
Jack Buchanan	Corrinne Faulkhead	Dewella Johnson	Kelly Maskell
Jacob Buchanan	Daisy Faulkhead	Georgina Johnson	Kenita-Lee McCartney
Donna Burnett	Rosie Faulkhead	Joanna Johnson	Pamela McCormack
Chantel Cameron	Angelika Fevaleaki	Robert Johnson	Leanne McDermott
Janine Carr	Aroha Fisher	Sharon Johnson	Rachael McGann
Billie-Lee Carruthers	Genevieve Fitzgerald	Ami Johnston	Hayden MCGowan-Pearse
Shayne Carter	Bec Fitzgerald	Diane Jones	Rhonda McInnes
Michele Carty	Jordan Fleri	Kienan Jones	Amanda Mccole
Jacinta Chaplin	Brody Flowers	Derik Jones	Tayla Mckenzie
Joanne Chaplin	Chantelle Frankcombe	Shae Jones	Michelle McQuillan
Latiesha Chaplin	Glenn Fulton	Tian Jones	Alex McWilliam
Madina Charles	Steven Fumberger	Brodie Jones	Kara Merritt
Damien Charles	Krystal Gadsby	Sharni Karpany	Dustin Milner
Ethan Chilly	Blake Gibbins-Pappin	Annalise Kelly	Amelia Mitchell
Thelma Chilly	Noel Giddings	Erin Kelly	Caitlin Mitchell
Joshua Chilly	Marissa Gilbert	Kaneesha Kelly	Joanne Mitchell
Robert James Chinnian	Samantha Gledhill	Nathan Kelly	Jacinta Molloy
Loretta Circosta	John Goddard	Pettina Kelly	Keina Moore
Kailey Clark	David Goldberg	Tina Kelly	Mark Morgan
Tessa Clark	Amanda Goodall	Zoe Kelly	Merle Morgan
Ree Clark	Julia Goodes	Siobhan Kempton-Roden	Travis Morvell
Alison Clarke	Norma Gowers	James Kennedy	Jo-Ann Murray
Elizabeth Clarke	Tiffany Griffin	Molly King	Kiera Nagyidai

Maralea Nau
Sarah Nalder
Jo Neill
Laetitia Nelson
Tahlia Newman
Glenda Nicholls
Sharon Nitschke
Kristie Nixon
Carly Noll
Kellie Nulty
Tariq Odegaard
Claire O'Connor-Johnson
Jasmine Page
Jane Parker
Bobbi-Marie Pappin
Anand Patel
Manu Paul
Sophie Payne
Katie Pebbles
Mason Peter
James Peterson
Courtney Peterson
Simone Philp
Sophie Philp
Anthony Pike
Melissa Pippin
Frank Piscioneri
Colin Pitts
Jackson Pollard
Jai Portelli
Neive Price
Breanna Quick
Mou Rashid
Rodney Ray
Shauna Ray
Jane Reid
Dannii Renkin-Kimpton
Chloe Richards
Geoffrey Richards
Nikita Richards
Kristin Roberts
Paul Roberts
Kirstin Roberts
Kendall Russell
Darlene Sanders
Mekhi Scambler
Janie Schliefert
Jared Schliefert
Sarah Schurr
Ryan Sedgmen
Leah Shanaughan
Ruchika Sharma
Margaret Sharman
Skie Sherwell
Tegan Shiner

Simone Shiner
Deepa Shrestha
Aroha Shuttleworth
Kylia Sloan
Lisa Sloan
Gregory Sloan
Caroline Smith
Chereeta Smith
Derek Smith
Lacynnda Smith
Lakiyah Smith
Mandy Smith
Phillip Smith
Rexy Smith
Tanya Smith
Tegan Smith
Robyn Smythe
Jesse Staker
Tanisha Stevens
Paula Stevens
Sahra Summerfield
Ari Sykes
Kelly Taliloa
Ilaisaane Tamale
Ah Tay
Danielle Taylor
Leanne Taylor
Lois Taylor
Russell Taylor
Zah Thebe
Ivy Theodore
Darlene Thomas
Terry Thomas
Remya Thomas
Wade Thompson
Bianca Thorpe
Claire Thorpe
Monica Threadgold
Lori Tickell
Nosi Toetuu
Sharlee Towle

Alesha Tucker
Vaasili Tuifao
Jacki Turfrey
Mandy Tuthill
Pauline Ugle
Ugo Ugochukwu
Mincy Varghese
Jazz Versteeg
Jessica Versteeg
Milka Waithaka
Les Warburton
Aimee Waters
Patricia Watson
Brendan Webb
Harold Webster
Toni Webster
Ian Wescombe
Amanda Whitton
Dallas Widdicombe
Ashton Williams
Justine Williams
Kelly Williams
Grace Williams-Rigby
Chloe Wilson
Kim Wilson
Rebecca Wilson
Kara Winters
Cazna Winters
Erica Wise
Ray Wise
Ashton Wren
Angela Yates
Nathan Yates





Our Services

FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES

CARE AND CULTURE

Aboriginal Children Specialist Advice Support Service (ACSASS)
Aboriginal Family Led Decision Making (AFLDM)
Cultural Support Planning (CSP)
Kinship Care
Home Based Care (Foster Care)
Therapeutic Residential Care
Therapeutic Residential Case Management
First Supports
Kinship Reunification

FAMILY AND YOUTH

Family Services
Integrated family services
Stronger Families
Family Preservation

YOUTH SERVICES

Early School Leavers
Youth Support Program
Youth Justice
Koori Connect
Koori Night Patrol
Youth Justice Robinvale

HOUSING SUPPORT

Crisis Support
Aboriginal tenants at risk of eviction
Transitional support
AOD Robinvale

FAMILY VIOLENCE

Meminar Ngangg Gimba - Refuge
Meminar Ngangg Gimba - Outreach (Mildura/Robinvale/ Swan Hill/ Kerang)
Meminar Ngangg Gimba - Cultural Healing Group Work
Men's Family Violence Case Management
Men's Family Violence Cultural Behaviour Change Group Work
Men's Family Violence Cultural Healing Group Work
Adolescent Family Violence Case Management
Adolescent Family Violence Culture Healing Group Work

EARLY YEARS

Maternity Services
(Swan Hill & Mildura)
Maternal and Child Health
(Swan Hill & Mildura)
In Home Support program
(Swan Hill & Mildura)
Cradle to Kinder (Swan Hill & Mildura)
Koori Supported playgroups
(Swan Hill & Mildura)
Koori Preschool Assistant program
(Mildura)
HIPPY (*Home Interactive Program for Parents and Youngsters*) (Mildura)
Connected Beginnings (Mildura)

HEALTH

GP
Nurse
Aboriginal Health Workers
Outreach Workers
Chronic Disease Management
Maternal Child Health
Nurse Health Checks
Transport

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

Koori Women's Diversion (Mildura)
Mental Health Demonstration Project (Mildura)
Alcohol and other Drugs Treatment Service (Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)
Bringing them Home (Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)
Aboriginal Communities Gambling Awareness program (Mildura)
Family Wellbeing program (Mildura Swan Hill/ Kerang Robinvale)
Local Justice Worker program (Mildura) (Swan Hill)
Dual Diagnosis Model of Care (Mildura Youth 12-25) (Swan Hill Adult 16-65)
SEWB Mental Health Access (Swan Hill)
Clinical & Therapeutic Mental Health (Swan Hill)
Mental Health Community Support Service (Swan Hill & Mildura)

SPECIALIST SERVICES

Drug And Alcohol Worker
Psychologist
Maternal And Child Health Nurse
Podiatrist
Urologist
Paediatrician
Optometrist
Cardiologist
Audiologist
Physiotherapist
MDAS Health Program

AGED AND DISABILITY

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)
Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC-PYP)

CLINICS

Well Women's Clinic
Immunisation Clinic

TACKLING SMOKING AND HEALTHY LIFESTYLES SERVICES

Quit Smoking Support



MDAS

MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL SERVICES

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