TRAVELLERSaid

97TH ANNUAL REPORT 2012–2013

Making everyday travel possible for all people

Our Vision

For travellers at the point of need to have access to services which are relevant and to assist in providing solutions with dignity.

Our Mission

To assist travellers at the point of need and to ensure that travellers reach their destination safely and confidently.

Our Values

Accountability, compassion, integrity, leadership and teamwork: these are the attributes we prize over all others. We believe in displaying these values at all times to users of our services, our clients, our members, stakeholders, staff and volunteers.

Our Purpose

To provide support, advice and assistance at the point of need to the travelling public with special requirements and to those in emergency situations.

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2012–2013

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President and Chief Executive Officer's Report

Travellers Aid Australia (TAA) continues its focus on providing travel support and a range of related support services to a diverse range of clients

As Melbourne's population increases (and ages), so too does the demand for services at TAA.

2012-2013 has been a busy year for TAA, which continues to provide a vital service for so many travellers whether it be helping elderly people off trains through to assisting young people travel to school.

As in other years, a big focus has been on doing what we do well: supporting people travel from point A to point B independently.

During 2012-2013 we delivered over 212,000 services to travellers in need – this is an 11% increase on the previous year.

We also answered the call to establish a pilot TAA site and we were delighted to work closely with Wodonga Council and open our first regional facility in the North East of the state. The opening at The Cube Wodonga, has enabled us to expand our services and share our expertise and help more people. We are continuing discussions with other councils around the viability of expanding to other areas. An additional pilot site in Wangaratta will open in September 2013.

The challenge with regional expansions is ensuring the ongoing funding to manage the operations.

On the topic of expansion, our TAA team has also grown and now includes 29 staff and 43 volunteers allowing us to assist approximately 500 people on a daily basis from our sites at Flinders Street and Southern Cross stations, our pilot site at The Cube in Wodonga and in our administration office at City Village in Melbourne's CBD. Maintaining our financial viability continues to be a prime focus for everyone at TAA, particularly given the more challenging climate of funding and fundraising we now operate in.

The TAA board and management team are working together to prioritise opportunities to ensure TAA has the funds required to meet future demands. We are pleased to report that our first year of fundraising has delivered $211,807. A key focus for us in 2013-2014, will be on how we can continue to increase our financial reserves and be in a position to serve Victorian, interstate and overseas travellers.

Working with stakeholders will continue to be vital for our future. A key achievement during this year was our contribution to Public Transport Victoria's (PTV) goal to improve customer service experiences for public transport users by working with the Public Transport Ombudsman and transport operators to address systematic issues. Additionally, we worked with Tourism Victoria to create the "Accessible Tourism – It's Your Business" resource kit for businesses in Victoria to improve their accessibility.

We were saddened to farewell three TAA Life Members; Mrs Eveline Lark, the Hon. Geoffrey Connard AM, and Mrs Dorothy Hobson BEM. Their loss is keenly felt within the tight knit TAA community.

Our sincere thanks go to all service users, staff, volunteers, board members, funders and stakeholders. Your support is the lifeblood of Travellers Aid.

Lisa Bowman
President

Jodie Willmer
Chief Executive Officer

A Bit About Us

People from all walks of life use Travellers Aid services.

- Seniors • People with a disability and/or mobility cha
- Families • Travellers attending medical appointments

Established in 1916 to assist unaccompanied women and children when they arrived into Melbourne via sailing ship, TAA has been providing services to travellers for 97 years. From public transport information services to tangible travel assistance during a crisis, we strive to do our upmost to preserve a person's dignity when things go awry.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we operate independently of government whilst delivering services on behalf of local, state and federal governments.

We are proud to be operating from four sites: Southern Cross and Flinders Street stations, our pilot facility at The Cube in Wodonga; and our administration and project coordination hub at City Village in Bourke Street (a City of Melbourne initiative).

Successfully accomplishing a journey, with practical assistance, can have an enormous impact on a person. We are committed to social justice and providing access and equity to any person whose path brings them to TAA.

llenges • Students • Tourists • Public transport users •
in Melbourne • People facing financial disadvantage •

A Very Long Way

An 89 year old male was found wandering Southern Cross Station and was brought into TAA by a passerby.

The man was chatty but quite confused as to why he was at Southern Cross Station. The man said that he often forgets things. We were able to establish his name, age and the suburb of where he lived. The man carried on him a piece of cardboard with his son's and daughter in-law's contact details. His family lived in Queensland. Staff at TAA were able to contact the son. Our staff realised that the man had the early stages of Alzheimer's. The police were called who assisted the man back to his home.

Our People and Culture

Board of Directors

Lisa Bowman

President

B. Arts, GAICD

Lisa joined the TAA Board in October 2010. She is currently a Director of PLUM Communication, a company specialising in providing communication, consultation and stakeholder engagement services throughout Australia. Lisa is a Williamson Community Graduate (2007) and undertakes a range of pro bono work in the Victorian prisons. Lisa is a member of TAA's Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Bernie Delaney

Immediate Past President

BA, Grad Dip. Management, AFAIM, FAICD

Bernie joined the TAA Board in October 2002. Formerly a senior executive at BHP Billiton, Bernie has held many senior positions within the Federal Public Service before joining BHP Billiton in 1990 to work on external and government relations, and mergers and acquisitions. In 2008 Bernie was appointed to the Board of the Australia Korea Foundation by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. He is currently a Board Member of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (Victorian Section) and chairs their Audit and Risk Committee. He is the Principal of his own business DF Strategy & Advisory Pty Ltd. Bernie sits on TAA's Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Denise Orchard

Honorary Treasurer

CPA

Denise has held the position of Honorary Treasurer since April 2008. After retiring from Tabcorp Holdings Ltd. Denise established a gallery promoting Australian contemporary glass art. Denise has extensive experience at senior management level across sales, marketing, financial management, business development and multi-site management. Her career has covered both the private and public sectors in the leisure, hospitality and construction industries. She is also a board member of the Dolphin Research Institute, a not-for-profit organisation undertaking research and education services relating to the marine environment. Denise is the Convenor of the Finance and Fundraising Committee for TAA.

Trevor Huggard

Vice President

Dip. C.E. M.I.E. (Aust), J.P

Trevor joined the TAA Board in October 1991. He is Managing Director of Finmay Pty Ltd and Principal of Trevor Huggard and Associates, a firm of consulting engineers. Trevor is a former Lord Mayor of Melbourne and was a Melbourne Councillor for ten years. He is the Convenor of TAA's People and Services Committee.

Dan Feldman

Honorary Lawyer / Secretary

B.Ec, LLB (Hons), BA (Hons)

Dan joined the TAA Board in July 2004. He is Managing Partner of HR and CIE Legal, with extensive experience in workplace relations and safety. Dan provides pro-bono legal advice to TAA and also sits on TAA's People and Services Committee.

Helen Battellino

MTEc., BA, B.Com (Ecs)

Helen joined the TAA Board in February 2012. From NSW, Helen is widely experienced in community transport, transport planning, research and project management. She currently works in the Community Transport sector in NSW and holds positions on both the State and National Peak Bodies. Helen sits on TAA's People and Services Committee.

Peter Moran

Peter joined the TAA Board in February 2009. He is currently the Advancement Manager with the University of Melbourne, Faculty of Veterinary Science. Peter has 20 years experience in the fundraising area combined with senior management roles in marketing and communications. Peter sits on TAA's Finance and Fundraising Committee.

Richard Stone OAM KSG

MAICD, FFin

Richard joined the TAA Board in 2010. He is presently retained by Effective Governance Pty Ltd as a Senior Advisor, from 1994 to 2011 he was an Associate Director in KPMG's Board Advisory Service. An experienced not-for-profit Director, Richard has served as a national board member for the Australian Red Cross and still a member of the CatholicCare Melbourne Board, the Steering Committee for the Victoria Police Mentoring Program and St Vincent's Health Clinical Ethical Committee. Richard is a member of TAA's People and Services Committee.

Talking the Talk

Travellers Aid Staff

It is a testament to the diversity and professionalism of TAA staff and volunteers, that we now provide supportive assistance to more than 500 travellers in need or crisis on a daily basis. Offering genuine hospitality, care and concern are the qualities that enable our team to carry out their tasks with dedication.

Our front line Client Support Officers (CSOs) perform a dual role when assisting people via the provision of support and information services. The Active Service Model (ASM) philosophy is embedded in all of our client communications and services delivered. The quality improvement model provides a focus for the delivery of our services to assist people to live as independently and autonomously as possible.

Rocco Fammartino

Coordinator, Southern Cross Station

"I have been with TAA six months now and feel privileged to be part of a team that is passionate and committed to assisting and supporting travellers in need. It's amazing, every team member in the organisation, no matter what position they are in, will make themselves available to work any shift at any given time, at any location. TAA is unique!"

Robyn Dean

Project Coordinator, Wodonga

"TAA has given me an incredible opportunity to get involved with the wider community.

Having a wonderful bunch of volunteers who care about making someone's day easier is a delight.

Daily, I see the stress dissipate when we explain TAA services and what we can help with in Wodonga and Melbourne, understanding the difficulties travellers face and having time to listen to people. Just being able to make that small difference to improving someone's day while providing choices for them to remain mobile and independent within their community is job satisfaction."

Jyju Jossey

Customer Support Officer

"I am proud to be part of such a wonderful organisation that cares about people who experience economic and social disadvantage. TAA originated nearly a century ago for a good cause – to support the people who are vulnerable, homeless, aged, and with a disability. I always come to work with the hope of meeting lots of new people with whom I can share the joy of being a proud member of our diverse team. I am looking forward to seeing more people around the globe and to let them know about the love and care we share. I really love this job."

Kate Stephens

Volunteer

"As a totally blind person I have used the services of TAA for many years. I was given the opportunity to help with the promotion of some of TAA's services and really enjoyed it. When a volunteer receptionist position became vacant that suited my skills, I jumped at the chance to be able to return something to a wonderful organisation that has given me and my family so much."

Cultural diversity at TAA

At TAA we are dedicated to being a consistent and dependable service for travellers in distress. It is our goal to always be here.

Our dependability relies on the cultural diversity of our team and our ability to extend human kindness to all who cross our path. Our team's diversity is demonstrated by:

- Two thirds of our team come from a culturally and linguistically diverse background;
- Personal Communications: our team includes people who can converse in Cantonese, Dutch, Urdu, Punjabi, Arabic, German, Polish, Spanish, Italian, French, Hindi, Mandarin, Japanese, Korean and Australian Sign Language (Auslan);
- Written Communications: our service brochure is translated into seven languages: Burmese, Chinese (Mandarin), Greek, Italian, Polish, Sudanese Arabic and Vietnamese. Our website includes an online translation service into over 20 languages.

We are proud that our team reflects the diversity of Australian society and those who chose to travel and explore Australia.

Life Members

TAA staff, board members and volunteers were saddened to farewell three of our Life Members during the year.

It has been a great privilege to have known Eveline, Geoffrey and Dorothy, and our lives are richer because of their contributions.

Mrs Eveline Lark

Eveline Bertha Hope Brown was born at Kensington in Melbourne on the 28th June 1916.

In May 1964 when she was almost 48, Eveline started working for the Travellers' Aid Society of Victoria (as TAA was previously known) as a representative at what was then the Spencer Street Railway Station, and for the next 25 years, Eveline met hundreds, if not thousands of people, with the simple inquiry, "Can I help you?"

Aged 73, Mrs Lark retired from full-time work, and continued to work as a volunteer for TAA, as well as for the Brotherhood of St Laurence Opportunity Shop in Ormond, a role of service which she undertook with enthusiasm, continuing to do her weekly stint in the Op Shop until she was 93!

The Hon Geoffrey Connard AM

A staunch supporter of TAA, Geoffrey served as President from 2000-2003 and Vice-President from 1991-1999, bringing energy and commitment to the work of TAA on top of his already extensive roles in organisations such as Macfarlane Burnet Centre, International Diabetes Institute and as Member for Higinbotham Province in the Victorian Parliament from 1982-1996.

As a key member of TAA's "new guard" Geoffrey was most definitely a reformer.

Geoffrey Connard's leadership placed TAA on a pathway to securing funding with external organisations and government instrumentalities, in essence his efforts ensured that TAA evolved from a mid twentieth century organisation into the modern, dynamic and innovative entity we are so proud of today.

Mrs Dorothy Hobson BEM

Mrs Dorothy Hobson BEM, dedicated over 44 years of her life to TAA, utilising her vast networks and relationships to promote the important services that we provide to people who experience travel disadvantage. Her link with The Travellers Aid Society of Victoria (as we were then called) dates back to 1968.

Dorothy dedicated 35 years of her life and time to a number of organisations connected with the Country Women's Association.

In 1965 she was appointed to the Victorian Consumer Affairs Council and remained on the Council as a Consumers' Representative for 15 years. It was the outstanding contribution in the field of Consumer Affairs that earned her the British Empire Medal (B.E.M). in the Queen's Birthday Honours List of June 1979.

In the 1970's, Mrs Hobson, and the other women on the executive, made the difficult decision to sell The Lodge, and move services to "My Ladies Lounge" in Collins Street. It was also at this time that TAA opened its services to men as the services since our inception in 1916 were only provided to women and young children.

Her consideration of others extended to encouraging her friends, to donate money to TAA in lieu of birthday presents for her.

Our Services

TAA's services are designed to be accessible to everyone as we are always ready to assist clients, members of the general public and travellers whenever they require us.

Travellers Aid Access Service (TAAS)

Free Personal Care

This service enables people with a disability to participate in daily activities such as work and social activities. TAAS supports social inclusion and promotes independence of service users. We are confident that no other service like TAAS exists in Australia. TAA believes that every journey counts regardless of your physical ability – travel is for everyone. People who are vision and hearing impaired travel, people with a disability, people who are frail – we all like to explore our world. TAAS offers travellers with a disability tailored personal care assistance. Trained staff and volunteers assist with personal care needs, meals, communication (for people with speech impairments) and provide access to internet services. Amenities include fully accessible toilet facilities and wheelchair/scooter recharging facilities. Friends and clients' personal support workers are also welcome. TAAS operates at Flinders Street and Southern Cross Stations and Wodonga – no appointment or referral is necessary.

Pathways to Education

Travelling to Learn is Paramount

This program is administered from our Southern Cross Station site. We provide student travel passes

to young people whose circumstances jeopardise their ability to pay for their transport fares to and from school.

We issue monthly, half-yearly and annual travel passes to students who are at risk of disengaging from education including:

- Students from families of low socio-economic backgrounds;
- Students experiencing various stages of homelessness; and
- Students from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

This service is kindly partnered by V/Line and The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Studying for a bright future

Katie, a 17 year old girl, grew up in a family where the father was abusive towards her and her mother. At secondary school, Katie started to mingle with young people who were not interested in attending school. She skipped school to spend time with her friends and enjoy the fun she had with them to balance the abuse she was exposed to at home.

With time, she started to use drugs and get involved in petty crime. Living at home became more and more unbearable. When her mother separated from her father and left the family home, Katie decided to move in with a friend. Things did not work out that well and Katie began couch surfing. In her constant struggle to find a couch for the night and the money for her addiction she gave up on school completely.

It was not until Katie was referred to a youth service that she started thinking about what she wanted to achieve in life – and that her current decisions were not helpful in that regard. Katie started to engage with her youth worker and work towards her goals, one of which was to become a childcare worker. She started a VCAL course that was offered by another youth service, and that catered better for her many needs than a mainstream school. Teachers had a much better awareness of the issues she was facing.

The youth service was able to provide accommodation in a youth refuge, but this meant that Katie had to travel to school – an expense that she could hardly afford. When Katie found out that TAA was able to support her with a subsidised yearly student travel pass, she was overjoyed, because it meant that she could continue attending the VCAL course and working towards her ultimate goal.

Our Services

Buggy and Personal Guidance Service

Navigating safely through Southern Cross Station

Melbourne is a popular and highly desirable travel destination, but unfortunately not all travellers can navigate Melbourne independently. The hustle and bustle of a large train station, such as Southern Cross, can be overwhelming and stressful. TAA provides free buggy transport, manual wheelchair access and personal guidance services. The service is available for anyone with a disability or mobility issue, requiring assistance within Southern Cross Station. This buggy service provides a pick-up and drop-off service to train platforms, bus terminals and taxi zones. The service is free and a pre-booking is preferred.

Medical Companion Service (MCS)

Stress relief is here

Melbourne is home to many worldclass specialist medical centres and experts. Annually, over 50,000 people travel to Melbourne from regional Victoria for medical appointments. TAA's trained volunteers meet travellers attending medical appointments in Melbourne at Flinders Street or Southern Cross stations and accompany them on public transport to and from their appointments. The MCS is a milestone – it empowers visitors to Melbourne by providing them independence and autonomy and is delivered with a genuine, warm welcome by a dedicated volunteer. All that we ask is that if you need MCS, you let TAA know 48 hours in advance by either phone or email.

Safe, supportive, comfortable lounge areas, toilets and traveller advice

We now have three locations to provide some peace and quiet from the day's bustle

In Melbourne's CBD at Flinders Street and Southern Cross stations and in Wodonga at The Cube travellers can access:

- A comfortable lounge area with amenities;
- Public internet cafes for everyone to use;
- Breast-feeding friendly environments with baby-change;
- Fully accessible toilet facilities with adult change tables and ceiling hoists;
- Public transport, transit and tourism information;
- Sleeping rooms and showers (Southern Cross Station only); and
- Short-term luggage storage (Flinders Street Station and City Village).

Mobility Equipment Hire

Exploring the city with ease

We provide this service to allow people with mobility needs (you might need an electric scooter or a stroller for a child) access to urban experiences. The point of difference in our hire service is that the equipment can be used across Melbourne on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. Mobility equipment for hire includes electric and manual wheelchairs, three or four wheel electric scooters, walking sticks and frames, white canes and childrens strollers. Bookings for this service are not essential but we encourage travellers to get in touch with TAA via email or phone.

TAA at City Village

Project and admin hub

The administration office at City Village is the project coordination hub. Service delivery management, training, governance, marketing, media and fundraising activities, finance and administration also take place at this location. Additionally, City Village offers long and short term luggage storage during week day business hours.

Strategic Directions 2012 – 2016

TAA is executing our 2012-2016 Strategic Plan. The Plan was signed off by the Board in June 2012 and we commenced implementation in July 2012.

TAA funding is complex, our stakeholders include all three tiers of government, government authorities, corporations, philanthropic trusts and foundations, private donors, staff, volunteers and of course, our clients. We are comitted to good governance to ensure transparency, sustainability and accountability.

Goal 1

Autonomy – Independence – Social Inclusion

We are aiming to achieve this goal via:

- Establishing partnerships to deliver existing and new services;
- Embedding the ASM and a strength based approach in every service we deliver; and
- Communicate this goal to clients, ensuring services are accessible and understood.

Goal 2

Sustainability – Enhancing our legacy

We are aiming to achieve this goal via:

- Establishing industry and government funding partners;
- Establishing independent ongoing income streams;
- Continuing to implement best practice corporate governance; and
- Continuing to develop our staff via the implementation of our Workforce Development Plan.

Goal 3

Innovation – employing agility to be effective

We are aiming to achieve this goal via:

- Optimising our internal capacity;
- Expanding our reach through growth and development;
- Changing our service mix to reflect the needs of our clients; and
- Developing solutions to overcome usage barriers and increase autonomy.

Successes

Travellers Aid expands to Wodonga and Wangaratta

Our Strategic Plan has growth and development as a major objective and priority. This year we secured funding for an Innovation and Feasibility Study from the Sidney Myer Fund enabling us to expand our services regionally.

Stakeholders who participated in the Feasibility Study included Iconic Consulting, the North East Transport Connections Project, the Department for Planning and Community Development, the Cities of Greater Geelong, Wangaratta, Wodonga and TAA.

The pilot project to establish a regional TAA facility is located at The Cube – 118 Hovell Street, Wodonga. The site opened on 22 April with Robyn Dean employed as a Coordinator on board to generate the momentum and community awareness required.

The aim of our Wodonga site is to provide assistance to residents and visitors with specific needs enabling them to engage and participate in normal daily activities in and around the CBD of Wodonga. In our first two months of operations we assisted over 500 people – the majority of whom were elderly, suffering chronic medical conditions and people with a disability.

The Wangaratta pilot site will open in September 2013, and is located at the King George V Memorial Gardens in Wangaratta.

Victorian Tourism Awards

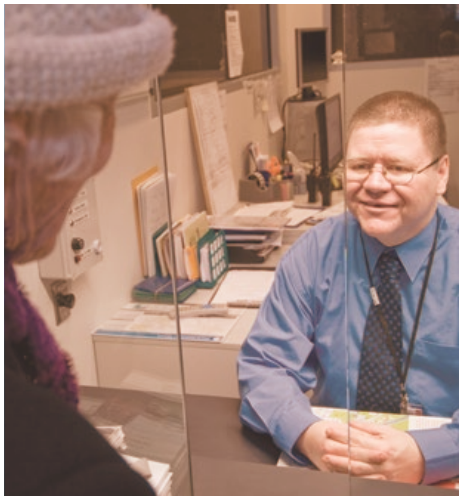
TAA took out top honours being presented with the “City of Melbourne Award for Specialised Tourism Services” at the RACV 2012 Victorian Tourism Awards. Each year, the RACV Victorian Tourism Awards recognise and reward the best tourist experiences across our state and honour our highly skilled workforce and promote award-winning products.

Successes

Advocacy and Representation

A key feature of TAA activities is our commitment to social justice. This year we have played a strong part in providing a voice for travellers via the following:

- Nurturing our relationship with PTV, we have successfully advocated the implementation of a refund scheme for the myki travel pass that is accessible to all travellers;
- Our team conducted 62 presentations to community organisations, participated in six Expos and distributed information on our services to over 400 groups. These outreach activities are vital to ensuring we connect regularly with our referral networks, clients and supporters; and



- Making a submission to the Victorian government's Service Sector Reform (a project established to improve the way government and the community sector work together to improve the lives of vulnerable and disadvantaged Victorians). Our submission focussed on:
  - positioning TAA as a specialist lead agency for travel and transport needs for vulnerable and disadvantaged people;
  - opportunities for better use of resources, reducing administrative costs such as shared services, mergers/amalgamations; and
  - innovation and a call for investment needs to be made in new products, technology and consulting services for the community services sector to solve problems, co-create solutions with clients and business, government, not for profits and academia.

Mobility Equipment Service

The City of Melbourne's Melbourne Mobility Centre at Federation Square ceased operations on 31 December 2012. TAA is now working in conjunction with the City of Melbourne to continue this service in addition to our existing mobility hire service. We have been pleased to improve the service within the TAA structure and have achieved the following during 2012-2013:

- 341 equipment rentals;
- 60% of clients using this service reside outside of Melbourne including interstate and overseas; and
- Nearly 50% of clients choose to hire equipment to go to a special event in the city (sporting games, concerts, exhibitions etc).

We are looking forward to expanding and further promoting this valuable service during 2013-2014.

Medical Companion Service (MCS)

Now a fully fledged core TAA service, we are delighted to report the following statistics from our "Client Scorecard" conducted in February 2012, here is what our client's had to say:

- 97% said they will use TAA services again; and
- 100% said they were treated with respect and dignity by their volunteer companion. Universally they considered that our volunteers were friendly, very nice and helpful.

In terms of meeting and exceeding our clients' expectations:

- 98% of our MCS volunteers arrive on time to meet their client;
- MCS clients rated our volunteers as "excellent" 94% of the time;
- 100% of clients are satisfied that their needs and expectations are met; and
- 100% of clients will recommend the service to others.

HACC Community Care Standards Review

In March 2013 TAA successfully passed its 2012-2013 HACC Community Care Common Standards (CCCS) Review. An improvement plan was subsequently developed with enhancements that could be made to our processes, procedures and communication to service users and referral agencies as part of the ongoing quality improvement.

The CCCS are part of an ongoing process of reform by the Australian Federal, State and Territory governments that has been underway since 2005 to develop and streamline arrangements in community care.

There are three standards:

- Effective Management;
- Appropriate Access and Service Delivery; and
- Service User Rights and Responsibilities.

The CCCS are applicable to our services that are partly HACC funded, including the Buggy and Personal Guidance Service and the Access Service.

Nomination: Jodie Bateman for the SACS Leadership Award 2013

Jodie Bateman, Service Coordinator at Flinders Street Station was nominated for the SACS Leadership Award 2013 (Not For Profit – Non Executive Category) for great leadership potential and a strong commitment to improving the lives of people with a disability. Jodie has played a significant role in changing TAA's approach in working with people with disabilities. Jodie has positively influenced the organisation and supported management, staff and volunteers in adopting up to date values for the disability sector.
With the implementation of creative solutions, Jodie contributed to a change in our service delivery that empowers our service users and promotes their autonomy and independence.

Partnerships

During 2012-2013 TAA has consolidated its partnerships with:

- The Country Women's Association of Victoria Incorporated;
- Destination Melbourne; and
- V/Line.

V/Line is the principal partner of the MCS and in addition to supporting our quarterly newsletter, "Welcome Aboard", the organisation also contributed $25,000 to again support the MCS.

Destination Melbourne organised the annual travel and tourism industry professionals' Trivia Night in May 2013 raising $8,000 for TAA and very generously provided an advertisement for us in the Official Visitors' Guide to Melbourne – with a circulation of over 1 million.

The Country Women's Association of Victoria Incorporated have been exceedingly generous to TAA, encouraging their substantial member network to not only donate funds and goods and also to disseminate information regarding our services and how they benefit residents in regional Victoria. The total funds raised were in excess of $6,000.

Renewal of agreements with Southern Cross Station Pty Ltd

TAA entered into negotiations with Southern Cross Station to renew the triennial agreement. Arrangements will be finalised in the 2013/14 financial year.

Safety and support

Samira was a young mother of two toddlers. When she presented at TAA, Samira was distressed and in tears. She had moved to Melbourne from Tasmania with her partner a few months prior and had since experienced emotional and physical abuse from her partner.

The night before, Samira's partner had a particularly violent attack and Samira left the home with her two children, spending the night in their car.

Samira wanted to return to Tasmania, where she had family and other supports. Our Emergency Relief Officer provided initial debriefing and encouraged Samira to get in touch with a family violence service as well as Centrelink to apply for a crisis payment, so she had funds for food and nappies. In the meantime the Emergency Relief Officer obtained quotes for Samira to travel back to Tasmania and with Samira's consent made phone calls to other services to secure contributions towards the fare.

Samira and her two children spent the afternoon in one of our resting rooms at Southern Cross Station, where they were sheltered and safe. When the ticket was finally booked and Samira was able to make her way to Station Pier to go on the ferry to Devonport, she was very relieved and grateful.

She knew that there was still a lot ahead of her that she had to deal with, but knowing that she was returning to a safe place and the support of her family and friends helped her.

Our Performance

Travel Related Emergency Relief

This program assists people with solutions such as subsidised transport fares for travel within metropolitan Melbourne, regional Victoria, interstate and limited international destinations. We provide information and referrals and a range of practical assistance through our centres.

Getting to places is a very basic part in everyone's life. Whether we go to school or work, shopping, social activities or simply return home – usually there is some sort of travel involved. Many people take travel for granted and seldom think about travel being a barrier. However, for many people it is – either for physical or financial reasons. Through this program we can assist people in crisis, whether it be financial or simply to reach their destination. The Emergency Relief service can include assisting people travel home or to reach a place of support, to go to medical appointments, court hearings, funerals or flee from dangerous situations, such as violent and abusive environments.

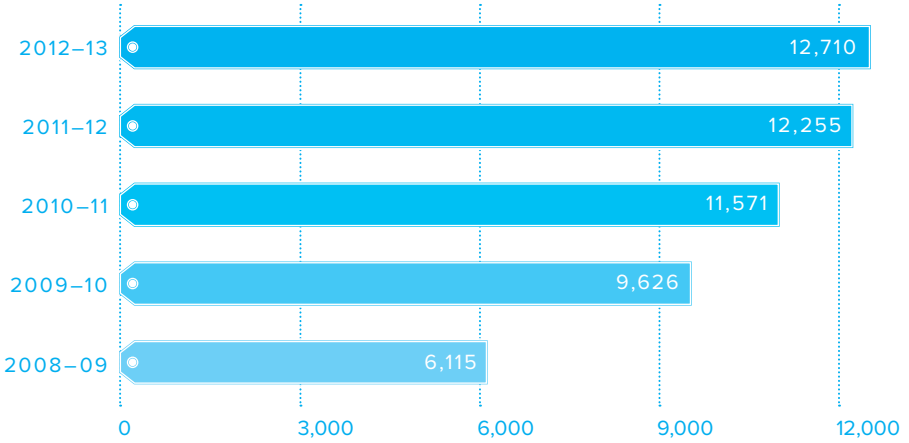
A decision by PTV not to continue to fund our Emergency Relief program meant we needed to reduce the operating hours of this program. Despite the reduction in operating hours the number of services delivered remained high, but the number of clients we were able to see and support was reduced. 200 agencies depend on TAA to make travel arrangements for their clients across Australia.

A sad farewell

Peter was referred to TAA by a metropolitan community information and support agency.

Peter had been struggling with mental health issues for many years. He had been taken away from his mother and placed in institutional care as a baby, because his mother was considered unfit to care for him. He had never met his mother. When he received a phone call from his

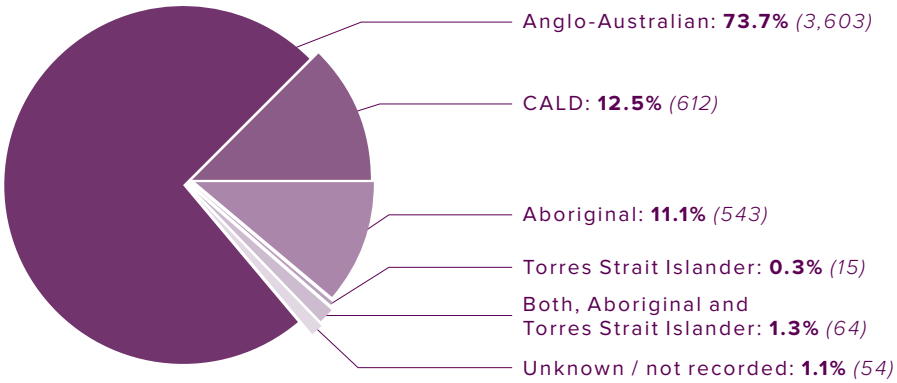
Travel Related Emergency Relief: Number of Services



Notes

- Overall ER services increased by 4%
- Hygiene requests increased by 54%
- Number of clients decreased by 6%

Travel Related Emergency Relief: Cultural Identity



Notes

- 13% of clients come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD)
- The proportion of people from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds remained at 13%
- Half of clients are between 26 and 45 years old
- 36–45 year old males are the most frequent client group

mother's brother telling him that his mother had just died in New South Wales, he was devastated. He felt that he wanted to meet his mother for at least this last time and attend her funeral. His case worker strongly supported this decision. As Peter was on a Disability Support Pension and was spending most of his income on rent he did not have much money left for a ticket to travel to New South Wales. Peter's case worker made the contact to the local Emergency Relief agency who then contacted TAA. We arranged for a ticket for Peter to travel to New South Wales to attend his mother's funeral and also meet other family there he had never met. When Peter got back he told us about the sad, but still very helpful experience he had in attending his mother's funeral. He started saving for another ticket to go and visit his new-found family over Christmas.

Our Performance

Thank You

Thank you again, it really is an amazing support for our students who miss out on so many 'normal things'.
Linda Hammond, School Chaplain, Lynall Hall Community School

Pathways to Education Program/ NILS® Performance

The Pathways to Education program is part of the Emergency Relief program and has assisted students with tickets to attend school since 2004. While the demand for the program had grown exponentially over the past years, funding has decreased. The main funders are currently FaHCSIA through their Financial Management Program, V/Line through a community partnership and the Invergowrie Foundation.

In order to ensure the sustainability into the future of the Pathways to Education program, it has been reviewed in consultation with referring schools and community service organisations, relevant government departments and other key stakeholders. As a result of the review we made significant changes to the eligibility criteria enabling us to focus on one contained and manageable target group and reduce the pressure on the program. On the other hand the changes mean that many worthy cases miss out, and we can no longer support many of the students who relied on our assistance for years.

The new criteria focuses on students who are disengaged from mainstream schooling and are at a high risk of disengaging from education altogether. The students we currently support attend secondary education in an alternative setting such as at community schools, tertiary institutions or in community organisation settings. The students typically try hard to finish their education despite a high level of disadvantage. The lack of financial resources is one barrier to their goal of finishing education and breaking the cycle of poverty. Through the provision of a half-yearly or yearly student travel pass this barrier is removed and the students are enabled to travel to school every day without risking fines for fare evasion.

- In 2012-2013, Travellers Aid assisted 65 students with 71 tickets, 55 of these tickets were yearly tickets. This is a 70% decrease in students assisted compared to the previous financial year.
- The total cost for the tickets was $28,074.

No Interest Loan Scheme (NILS®)

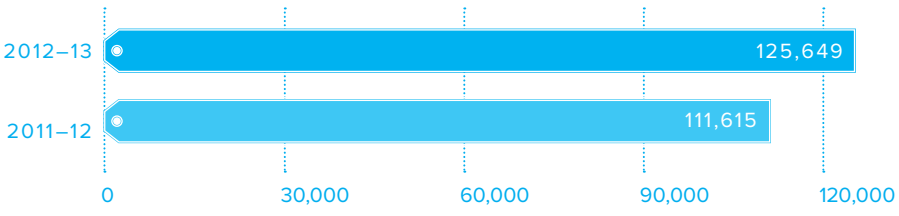
Our NILS® was implemented in 2011-2012 as an alternative to our Pathways to Education program. Via NILS®, TAA provides loans with no interest to low income families for the purpose of purchasing a half-yearly or yearly student travel pass. Although the uptake for NILS® loans has been low so far, we believe in the potential of the scheme and continue to offer and promote it.

Buggy and Personal Guidance at Southern Cross Station (SCS)

There has been a significant increase in the number of new clients accessing TAA services, in particular the buggy service. This year the buggy service has increased by 12.6% (12,001 trips compared to 10,651 the previous year). Staff initiative and a proactive approach to assist and support travellers in need during quiet periods, has significantly contributed to the increase in buggy services. This dynamic approach ensures travellers who are visibly distressed, emotionally exhausted or disorientated and unable to manage their luggage or reach their destination will be approached by TAA staff and offered support.

The number of visitors accessing our SCS lounge for information, emergency relief, advice and a place to rest has increased by 12.6% (125,649 clients compared to 111,615 the previous year). There are number of reasons contributing to the increase of visitors including – emergency relief referrals, special events, an increase in national and international visitors and extreme weather conditions.

Southern Cross Station: Number of clients assisted



Our Performance

Travellers Aid Access Service (TAAS)

During 2012-2013 we are pleased to report that we provided over 4,000 hours of personal care. The implementation of DisabilityCare Australia can potentially provide TAA with an opportunity to look at service delivery in new and innovative ways, for example there is an opportunity to work closer and partner with other disability services providers.

Medical Companion Service (MCS)

Now in its third year of operation, the MCS continues to make a positive impact on the lives of travellers requiring a visit to Melbourne to attend medical appointments:

- The MCS has assisted over 700 clients with 87% of our clients travelling from regional / rural Victoria. Specifically 22% of our client base came from North West Victoria (Swan Hill, Mildura, Campaspe shire);
- 24% of our clients have low or no vision;
- 20 active volunteers contribute nearly 1500 hours to keep the MCS viable;
- Our referral network has strengthened, we have good relationships with organisations such as Vision Australia, Regional Health Centres, Refugee support organisations and Melbourne based hospitals;
- A successful fundraising campaign raised $76,000 to continue the service for the duration of 2012-2013;
- 32% of total trips are now one-way trips only, this means that our clients were empowered to return independently home; and
- Our partnership with V/Line has reached new goals demonstrating TAA's ability to successfully work with non-government funders on a long term basis.

Daunting destination

Karen heard about the MCS through a friend who had recently used it to get to her hotel before an early morning appointment at the Alfred Hospital in Prahran.

Karen had recently lost her husband and after moving from Perth, she was feeling quite isolated and had only been to Melbourne once, coming from the airport en-route to Warrnambool.

Karen's health issues were quite serious and she rang requesting a companion to take her to her medical appointment at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. It was going to be a long day and we organised a volunteer to take her to her appointment early and another volunteer to collect her at the end of the day.

The thing that impressed Karen the most was that her first companion of the day did not just drop her off and leave, he waited with Karen until she was taken in for her tests. A waiting room can be a lonely place. Her second volunteer made sure she was there before Karen was due out so that she had a friendly face waiting for her. On the way back on the tram the volunteer pointed at places of interest and explained a little more about Melbourne's public transport system.

Karen still uses the MCS but only for new appointments in different places, or for when she feels a little company might ease the stress. She feels much more confident about using public transport but still uses the TAA Buggy service to get to TAA and to her train as she finds SCS really daunting.

Karen has now used the service 6 times and her health is on the improve, it's nice to think in a simple way TAA has made her life a little easier.

Future Directions

Our plans for 2013-2014 are focussed on continuing to support clients and ensuring our long-term financial capacity. Our commitment to innovation will see TAA develop the following next steps and new facilities, allowing us to continue to make everyday travel possible for everyone.

Wangaratta Service

In September 2013 our second pilot regional location will open at The King George V Memorial Gardens in Wangaratta. A Coordinator based in Wangaratta will be appointed to lead a team of volunteers providing a suite of TAA services to the residents and visitors of Wangaratta.

DisabilityCare Australia (National Disability Insurance Scheme – NDIS)

Whilst DisabilityCare Australia is still in its pilot phase, the creation of this insurance scheme provides opportunities for TAA to:

- Examine fee for service and membership models for clients accessing TAA services;
- Focus on our current clients to see how under a new funding regime we can better assist with travel related care;
- Investigate the creation of formal funding agreements with other not for profit organisations for new or existing TAA services; and
- Establish an "innovation incubator" working party within TAA's Board structure to drive strategic actions including how TAA responds to the future HACC changes scheduled for 2015 and documents such as the Research Paper on the NDIS.

Consultancy and Shared Services

Incorporating external expertise, TAA will approach our key stakeholders with a view to investigating the viability of providing consultancy services (including a social venture or enterprise) in what we do better than anyone else – we are experts in supporting people to overcome usage barriers with additional needs or in a crisis get from point A to point B.

The TAA Board has created a working group to consider and frame a recommendation to the Board regarding the positive gains that could be achieved by working with shared services co-operatives such as "Project Streamlined". A shared services project would entail TAA reduced administration costs, allowing more funds to be available for service delivery.

Communications, Marketing and Fundraising

Helpful hiring

To the Staff at TAA, Southern Cross Station,

Please pass on our thanks and appreciation to two of your fine staff, Paul and Martin who assisted my sister and I last night at the Southern Cross Station.

My sister required and enjoyed the use of a hired wheelchair through your centre over the past three days and found the hiring process via email prompt and professional.

We are particularly grateful to Paul and Martin for the way they assisted us after we returned the chair. Paul went out of his way to help us.

Both men were happy, helpful and very kind to us as they let us store our shopping for a short while after returning the wheelchair. They then assisted us on to Platform 14 in time to catch our V/Line train back to Gippsland, all at a time when it could've been so difficult, given that my sister cannot walk far.

We extend our most sincere thanks to all of our donors and supporters. Without your commitment, TAA would not be able to assist more than 500 people per day who visit our centres.

TAA is proud to have gained financial support from the Victorian community, philanthropic trusts and foundations and from all three tiers of government. Alignment with our Strategic Plan requires that we cast our net wider to develop independent, sustainable income streams.

The vast majority of organisations that, like TAA, operate as not for profits, are pursuing fundraising initiatives creating an environment of ever increasing competition. Hence our forays into this arena must be creative and successful to provide TAA with "un-tied" funds and the freedom and innovation to develop new services that flows from this.

The focus of income generation this year has been to build on the foundations created in 2011-2012 for a suite of sustainable income streams.

Specifically during 2012-2013, TAA achieved the following:

- our program of regular mailing appeals, raised a total of $70,000 (including $52,000 for the MCS) to provide for services in 2013-2014;
- we initiated an innovative thank you to donors for the MCS campaign – a MCS and TAA branded myki© cover;
- our donor acquisition program yielded an additional 465 people providing financial support;
- a concerted effort to raise our social media profile on the Facebook platform meant we increased our 'Likes' from 300 to 2,400.

Our overall goal for 2013-2014 is to raise TAA's brand awareness and see substantial growth in our supporter and donor numbers.

Acknowledgements and Supporters

In 2012–2013 we worked with 78 not for profit agencies across Australia who made financial contributions for travel related emergency relief services, and approximately 200 not for profit agencies for referrals, information and advice for clients.

Thank You

Please accept our thanks to individual donors for their generous donations.

Community Partners

- Country Women's Association of Victoria Incorporated
- Destination Melbourne
- V/Line

Individuals

- Patron in Chief – Mrs Elizabeth Chernov
- Michael Pearlman
- Jo Prior
- Jill Ruchel
- Eric Woelkerling
- Peter Wright

Travellers Aid Australia

- Board Members
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Medical Companion Service Volunteers
- Wodonga Volunteers
- Ambassadors for Travellers Aid

Bequests

- Mrs Leslie Cox
- Mr Robert Davey
- Joe White Bequest

Corporates and Supporters

- 13CABS – Cabcharge
- Australian Institute of Company Directors
- Backpackers World Travel
- Community Accessability Inc
- DonorTec
- ER Victoria Inc
- Foodbank Victoria
- Grant Thornton Australia
- HLB Mann Judd
- HR Legal
- Iconic Consulting
- Infoxchange
- Melbourne Airport Corporation
- Metro Trains Melbourne
- Metropolitan Transport Forum
- Public Transport Ombudsman
- RACV City Club Melbourne
- Skal International Melbourne
- Skybus
- Southern Cross Station Pty Ltd
- Techware
- Telstra
- The Westin Hotel
- Travelers Aid International Washington DC, USA
- Victoria Day Council
- Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS)
- Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce (VECCI)
- Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC)
- Website Travel
- Wilson Security
- Yarra Trams

Government Supporters

- City of Greater Geelong
- City of Melbourne
- City of Wodonga
- Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)
- Department of Health – Victoria under the Home and Community Care Program (HAAC)
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship
- Department of Justice – Melbourne Magistrates Court
- Public Transport Victoria (PTV)
- Rural City of Wangaratta
- Tourism Victoria and Victorian Awards Unit
- Victorian Government's Transport Connections Program
- Wellington Shire Council

Trusts and Foundations

- Dawn Wade Foundation
- The Invergowrie Foundation
- The Myer Foundation and Sidney Myer Fund
- The William Angliss (Victoria) Charitable Fund

Travellers Aid Australia
Treasurer's Report for 2012–13

For the financial year ended 30 June 2013 TAA recorded a loss of $76,803 from continuing operations. Revenue from operations totaled $1,889,800 which was in line with the year prior but 6% below budget for 2012-13. The cost of continuing operations for the year was $1,699,571 reflecting a decrease of 9% when compared with the previous year. Expenses continued to be very tightly controlled and ended the year 7% below budget.

The cash on hand at 30 June 2013 was $380,363 compared with $250,175 for the prior year.

The significant achievements of TAA over the past 12 months were only made possible by the continuing support of Federal, State and Local Government who last year provided 71% of the organisation's operational funding.

We also wish to thank the many philanthropic trusts, organisations and individuals who provided financial support for TAA's key programs of Buggy and Personal Guidance, Emergency Relief, TAAS, Pathways to Education, MCS and Mobility Equipment Hire.

Continuing to grow the organisation's revenue base is critical to TAA being able to deliver and expand its services. This is a significant challenge given the ever increasing competition for funds in the not for profit sector, however the Board of TAA is confident that the work done to date in the area of fundraising will provide a platform from which to secure future funding to meet the growing demand for services.

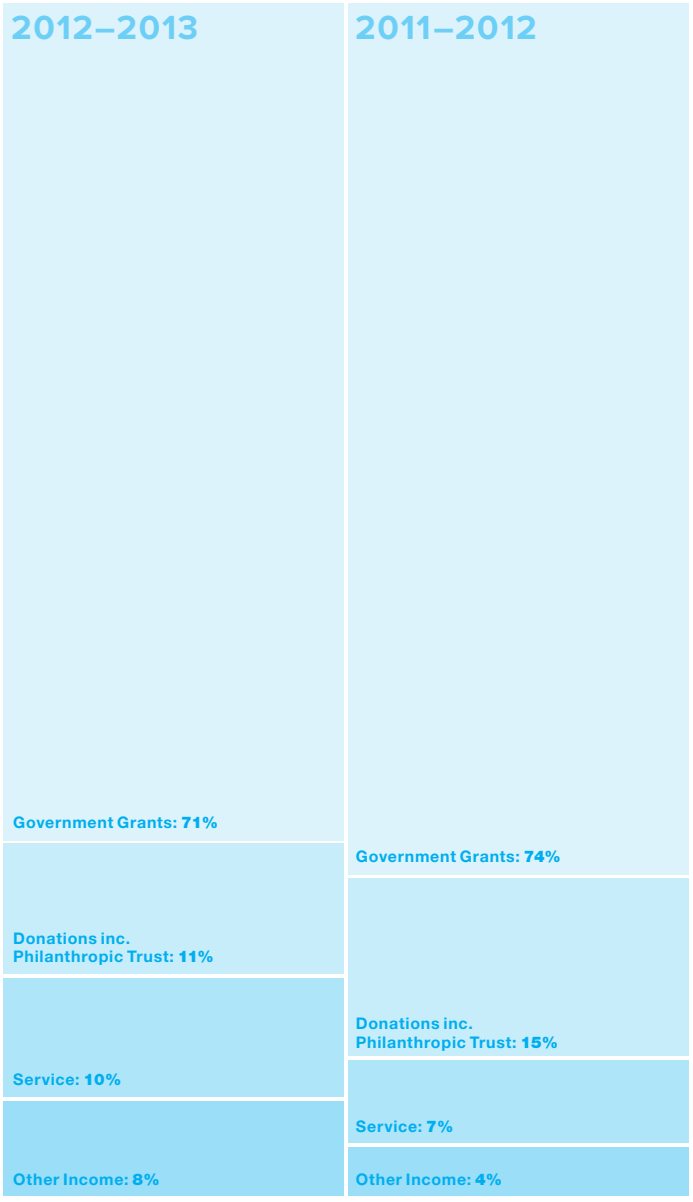
The commitment and dedication of our staff and volunteers in providing excellent service and support to the many thousands of travellers in their time of need is greatly appreciated.

Finally I wish to thank the members of the Finance and Fundraising Committee for their contributions and support over the past year.

Denise Orchard, C.P.A
Honorary Treasurer

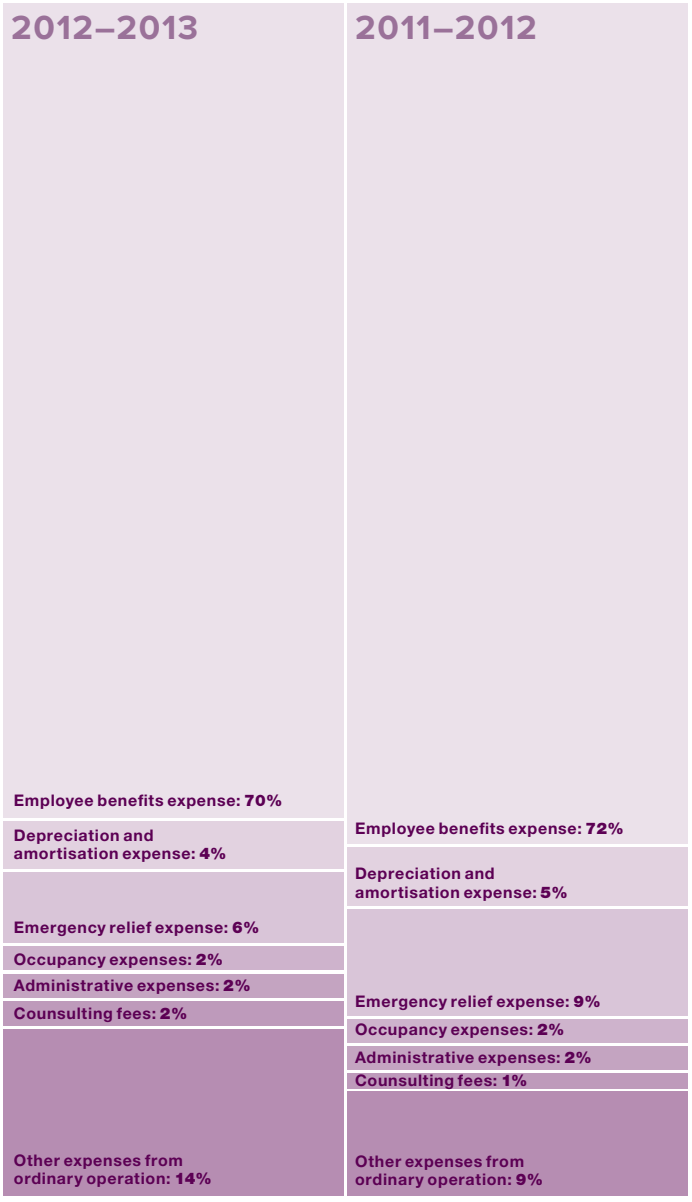
Detailed financial results are presented in our final audited statements which can be found at www.travellersaid.org.au by calling 03 9654 2600 or email info@travellersaid.org.au

Income



Income	2012-2013 $	2011-2012 $
Government Grants	1,345,157	1,417,172
Donations (inc.Philanthropic Trust)	211,807	287,191
Service	187,619	124,752
Other Income	145,217	68,605
Total Income	**1,889,800**	**1,897,720**

Expenses



Expenses	2012-2013 $	2011-2012 $
Employee benefits expense	1,373,252	1,432,296
Depreciation and amortisation expense	86,269	96,200
Emergency relief expense	115,990	176,850
Occupancy expenses	45,695	47,403
Administrative expenses	45,365	32,514
Counsulting fees	33,000	28,925
Other expenses from ordinary operation	267,032	172,265
Total Expenses	**1,966,603**	**1,986,453**

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Accessibility

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