

NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party Inc.

**Formerly known as NSW Women's Refuge
Referral and Resource Centre Inc.**



ANNUAL REPORT

2004/2005

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NSW WOMEN'S REFUGE MOVEMENT WORKING PARTY INC ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party Inc is the peak body of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. The NSW Women's Refuge Movement is the statewide representative body of refuges for women and children escaping domestic violence.

1. OVER-ARCHING PRINCIPLES

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement operates within the framework of a feminist philosophy.

Domestic violence must be understood in the context of unequal relations of power between men and women and children. In the patriarchal structures of our society, men have greater access to power than do women or children.

Domestic violence is the result of this unequal power relationship and it also reinforces it. Those who perpetrate domestic violence often believe they have a 'right' to control and coerce women and children.

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement operates within a collective framework for decision making.

Historically the NSW Women's Refuge Movement has maintained a commitment to encourage all refuges to participate in the decision making process. This is achieved through regional and state conferences and the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party, Indigenous, NESB, lesbian and Child Support Groups.

Women's Services for Women

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement supports the policy and practice of women managing and operating refuges within a feminist framework for women alone and women with children escaping domestic violence.

Domestic Violence includes all types of violence

Domestic violence includes physical, verbal and emotional abuse, stalking, abduction and confinement, deprivation of cultural and spiritual rights, humiliation, harassment, intimidation, denial of access to money and resources, isolation from support, sexual abuse and assault including rape and incest, threat of or actual abuse, and, as part of the continuum of violence, murder.

Domestic Violence occurs in all types of relationships

Domestic violence can occur within all relationships of a personal nature, including heterosexual or lesbian, marital or defacto, extended families and ex-relationships.

Domestic Violence-Power Disparities based on Cultural Background

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement acknowledges the disadvantages experienced by women and children as a result of discriminatory policies, practices and attitudes in our society based on cultural background.

Domestic violence is a breach of Human Rights

Domestic violence is a violation of human rights. It is a crime against the individual and against society. Domestic violence is a problem for the whole of society and not just an individual or private problem.

Domestic violence is a crime

Domestic violence is a crime and must be responded to as such. The perpetrator is solely responsible for domestic violence.

Domestic Violence requires a comprehensive response

A comprehensive response to domestic violence must involve government and community and include:

- Advocacy for the rights of individual women and children as well as for society as a whole;
- Change to the patriarchal structures of our society as they are reflected in the political, legal, economic, and social systems and as they occur in institutions and government departments
- Removing barriers to women and children's safety and empowerment wherever they occur.

Children experiencing domestic violence have particular needs

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement recognises that children have some needs that are separate to their mothers. Providing specific support for children is a crucial component of an effective response to domestic violence.

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement is committed to breaking the cycle of violence through providing effective support for children who have experienced domestic violence.

Access & Equity

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement values diversity. The Movement is committed to promoting access to and equity of, services for *all* women. This includes Indigenous & Torres Strait Islander women and children, women and children from non-English speaking backgrounds, lesbians and their children, women and children in rural and isolated areas, older women, young women and women and children with disabilities.

Representation of Women of Indigenous/Lesbian/non-English speaking backgrounds

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement promotes decision making processes that involve diverse groups in the community. This includes promoting the involvement of Indigenous women, immigrant women and lesbians in staffing and management. The Movement also supports the development of policies, which ensure appropriate and sensitive support and responses to domestic violence.

Indigenous Issues

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement recognises that domestic violence experienced by Indigenous women and children must be understood in a cultural and historical context, acknowledging that they remain a disadvantaged group due to discriminatory (overt and covert) structures in our society. The NSW Women's Refuge Koori Support Group, now called Walan Jineras (strong women), was formed by Indigenous women in the NSW Women's Refuge Movement as a support network to ensure issues relating to Indigenous women and children remain on the agenda.

Migrant, non-English Speaking Background Issues

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement recognises that migrant, non-English speaking background and refugee women and children in our society, face many barriers to accessing services. The Immigrant Refuge Support Workers Action Group, now called NESB Support Group, was formed by women from a non-English speaking background as a support network in the NSW Women's Refuge Movement to ensure issues relating to non-English speaking background women and children remain on the agenda.

Lesbian Issues

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement recognizes that lesbians and their children experience particular difficulties and barriers when trying to access services. The Lesbian Support Group was formed by lesbians in the NSW Women's Refuge Movement as a support network to ensure issues relating to lesbians and their children remain on the agenda.

Women and Children with Disabilities

The NSW Women's Refuge Movement recognizes that there are a wide range of barriers which impede women and/or children with disabilities from accessing services and has a commitment to addressing these issues.

2. ROLES OF RESPONSIBILITY

Chairperson:	Karen Truscott/Yvonne Wilson
Secretary:	Sue Cable
Financial Officer:	Yvonne Wilson/June Wilson
Vice Financial Officer:	Alex Ayrton
Book Keeper:	Brenda Roberts
Public Officer:	Elwyn Ried

3. MANAGEMENT AND WORKING PARTY MEMBERS

The WRRC is unique in that it is the only Women's Refuge Resource Centre in Australia to have a representative body of regional groups of refuges from across the state, as well as Indigenous, NESB, Lesbian and Child Support Group representatives as the management committee; the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party (WP).

Region	Delegates	Refuge	Refuges Represented
North Coast	Alex Ayrton	Warrina	Grafton, Hastings, Kempsey, Lismore , Manning District, Tweed Shire, Warrina, Yinganeh Aboriginal
West/South West Metro/ Country	Sally Steele	Essie	Bonnie, Cawarra, Corner House, Essie's, Joan Harrison, Marcia, Mimosa House, Muslim, Pam's Place, Penrith, Wimlah and Jessie St DV
Hunter/Central Coast	Karen Truscott / June Wilson	Muswellbrook Elandra	Carrie's Place, Eastlakes, Elandra, Faith Cottage, Jenny's Place, Muswellbrook, Tanderra, Warlga Ngurra, Woy Woy
Metropolitan	Caroline Burke	Killara	Amelie House, Bringa Women's Resource Centre, Delvena, Erin's Place, Marian Villa
Inner City	Phyllis Mason / Jan Christie	Elsie Dolores	Butler Lodge, Dolores Single Women's, Elsie's, Jean's Place, Killara, Marian Centre
Riverina	Yvonne Wilson	Griffith	Albury, Catherine Haven, Forbes, Griffith, Wagga Wagga
New England	Debbie Smith	Tamworth	Armidale, Inverell, Ngala House, Tamworth
South Coast	Cheryl Nelson	Bega	Bega, Louisa, Lottie's Place, Moruya, Rosa Shoalhaven and Warilla
Lesbian Support	Sue Bell / Sue Cable	Penrith Woy Woy	
Walan Jineras	Justine Elbourne/ Natalie Loy	Jessie St DV Armidale	
Child Support	Jill Evans	Jenny's Place	
NESB Support	Meryem Ali	Elsie	

NSW WOMEN'S REFUGE RESOURCE CENTRE (WRRC)

1. BACKGROUND

The NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre (WRRC) is a community based service that has been operating since 1986. The Centre has historically filled a crucial role in assisting women and children escaping domestic violence to access refuges. It has also functioned as a women's information service. Currently the Resource Centre acts as a point of contact for the NSW Women's Refuge Movement (WRM). It provides resources and information on issues related to domestic violence and refuges. A focal point of the service is to promote community awareness on issues relating to the needs of women and children escaping domestic violence and to advocate for improved responses.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE WRRC

- To act as a point of contact for women in the community, government and non-government agencies, the media and interstate refuges for the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- To resource women's refuge workers on issues relating to domestic violence and other relevant matters
- To resource women and children as well as others in the community on issues of domestic violence, child abuse, housing and legal matters.
- To undertake research to maintain an accurate information base on services provided by refuges to women and children escaping domestic violence and use this information in future planning and service development.
- To resource the NSW Women's Refuge Movement on broader issues such as government policy, legislation and projects.
- To promote community awareness on domestic violence, child abuse and the Women's Refuge Movement.
- To aim towards equal representation of women from Non-English Speaking Background, Indigenous and Anglo/Celtic backgrounds.

3. WRRRC Working Party Sub Group

The WRRRC Working Party sub group maintains a specific focus on the day-to-day operation of the WRRRC. The sub group is made up of Working Party Delegates from both city and country regions and Support Groups. The composition of the sub group reflects the equal representation policy of the WRM. The WRRRC sub group meets with the WRRRC staff prior to the Working Party meeting each month and feeds back relevant information to the Working Party. Delegates on the WRRRC sub group during the 2004-2005 period included: Meryem Ali, Sue Cable, Yvonne Wilson, Alex Ayrton and Jill Evans.

4. FUNDING

The NSW Women's Refuge Working Party is funded by the Department of Community Services under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). Refuges also pay a subscription amount to the WRRRC to belong to the NSW Women's Refuge Movement. In 2003-04 the subscription amount was a percentile amount of .015% of the service's funding.

5. WRRRC Staff Members

Workers at the Centre have included:

Catherine Gander	Executive Officer
Wendy Wang	Admin Officer
Karen Williams	Project and Policy Officer
Brenda Roberts	Bookkeeper
Monica Mazzone	Project and Policy Officer
Kate Sawtschuk	Project and Policy Officer/Admin Officer

6. SERVICES PROVIDED

- The WRRRC acts as a point of contact for government and non-government agencies, community groups, the media and women in the community who may need information regarding domestic violence, or contact with the WRM.
- The WRRRC facilitates interaction, networking and linkages between the WRM and other relevant services at a state and national level.
- The WRRRC also raises community awareness of NSW women's refuges, the WRRRC and the issue of domestic violence.
- The Centre contains information and resources on issues such as:

- ◆ The Women's Refuge Movement.
- ◆ Domestic Violence with regards to following issues:
 - ◆ Aboriginal
 - ◆ Lesbian
 - ◆ Children
 - ◆ Disabilities
 - ◆ Child Protection
 - ◆ Training
 - ◆ NESB
 - ◆ Legal
 - ◆ Older women
 - ◆ Mental Illness
 - ◆ Housing
 - ◆ Sexual Assault
- Records and resources for the NSW Women's Refuge Movement are stored at the Centre.

7. RESOURCE FUNCTIONS

The Centre provides resources and information to refuges as well as other services, and to the general community. There are also students who access information on domestic violence issues.

The WRRC is responsible for recording and disseminating the NSW Women's Refuge Working Party minutes along with other information of value to refuges.

The Executive Officer also co-ordinates WRM responses and meetings regarding legislative changes, as well as negotiation on documents such as the SAAP V, the Family Law Campaign and other processes as appropriate.

8. REFERRAL

The WRRC receives many calls from refuges, organisations and the general community who require assistance with accommodation, or information on a myriad of issues, including legal, immigration, social security benefits and housing. Although the role of the WRRC has moved away from organising crisis accommodation, there are instances when it is not appropriate to refer on. There is also a crisis counseling role on some occasions when women need support or information.

9. MEDIA, PUBLIC AWARENESS AND ADVICE TO GOVERNMENT

The WRRC works hard to raise the profile of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement, advocating for the principles and policies that have been endorsed by

the WRM. This includes participation in consultations and meetings as well as media interviews.

The role of the WRRC in raising the issues and needs of women and children escaping domestic violence has been an important (and busy) one. Media interviews have been conducted with radio, print and television journalists on issues including refuges, domestic violence and its effects on children, the National DV line, SAAP V negotiations, the move of VAW to AG, the restructure of the Community Division in DOCS, and proposed changes to Family Law.

The EO has carried out the following media work:

- ✓ Cosmopolitan article on pregnant women and women with babies and domestic violence.
- ✓ press conference on the shifting of the Violence Against Women Unit to DOCS, featured on TV and in the newspapers.
- ✓ radio interviews for Triple JJJ and the ABC news re SAAP V funding issues and unmet demand.
- ✓ interview with ABC radio and Adele Horin of the Sydney Morning Herald regarding the Centrelink Crisis Payments.
- ✓ interviews on Today on Channel 9 and by the BBC Radio, the Telegraph and Sydney Morning Herald on the National DV Line

- ✓ interview by Sunday Telegraph on the DV campaign and unmet demand

Press releases and letters to the Editor, along with numerous letters to relevant ministers have also been put out regarding current issues and concerns.

We have maintained strong links with the other NSW SAAP Peaks; Homelessness ACT.NSW and Youth Accommodation Assistance. The Peaks have worked together on SAAP V issues and on the Risk Assessment Tools for SAAP services.

10. ACTIVITIES

10.1 SAAP V

The WRRC has been very involved in the campaign for adequate funding for SAAP V.

In 2004 a government-commissioned evaluation of SAAP recommended a minimum increase of 15% to maintain services at the current level and an increase of 40% to meet unmet demand.

In collaboration with the other NSW SAAP peaks (Homelessness ACT.NSW and Youth Accommodation Assistance), the WRRC has continued campaigning for an increase in funding.

WRRC has been lobbying on a federal and state level focusing on viability and unmet demand.

This was done by:

- ✓ **Survey:** The WRRC sent out a Viability and Innovations Survey for refuges to fill out and return. The surveys were compiled and showed that without any increase in funding for the five years of SAAP V, many refuges will have to reduce the level of service they are currently offering and within 12 months many will have viability issues.
- ✓ **Working with State Shadow Minister for Women**
WRRC met with the Shadow Minister and briefed her on the issue of SAAP V. As a result, the Shadow Minister offered her support in raising questions in Parliament, specifically to the Federal Minister regarding unmet demand and viability issues and in assisting the WRRC in a media campaign.
- ✓ **Briefing the NSW Minister for Community Services**
WRRC has worked continuously with State Minister's office to provide them with information on how the lack of funding increase will impact on services in NSW and other advice as required.
- ✓ **Faxing campaign:** The WRRC developed template letters to be faxed to Federal Minister every time someone had to be turned away from a member refuge because there was no room.

A total of 165 faxes, representing 629 women and 688 children were sent to the Federal Minister. The faxes provided excellent hard data on unmet demand and turn away rates, which was used in lobbying for more funding.
- ✓ **Snapshots on unmet demand:** WRRC carried out 2 snapshots of turn-away rates in refuges to obtain data on unmet demand.

In the most recent one, we found that of our 55 member refuges, 11 (or a fifth) of them were forced to turn away 367 women and 436 children in the two month period February-March 2005.

- ✓ **Briefing of the Lower and Upper House:** Briefings for the State Lower and Upper House Independents on SAAP V issues were held jointly with YAA and Homelessness NSW ACT on 3rd May 2005. WRRC asked refuges in the electorates of the Independents about the particular issues they were currently facing and how they would be affected if no extra viability

funding were provided over the next few years. This information on each electorate was presented to relevant members with a general brief on viability issues, unmet demand, implications of lack of funding for women and accompanying children based on the above data and survey.

✓ **Lobbying kit**

In collaboration with the other NSW SAAP Peaks (Homelessness NSW.ACT and Youth Accommodation Assistance), a kit for lobbying politicians for increased SAAP V funding was produced and sent to all refuges.

The kit consisted of a pro-forma letter to be sent to all politicians standing for each refuge's local seat, a list of recommendations to be enclosed with the letter, a sheet to report what feedback is received from the politicians, and a list of candidate contact details.

The Multilateral Agreement between the Commonwealth and the States was signed at the end of September, while the Bilateral between NSW and the Commonwealth is still being finalised. The Commonwealth will only provide an increase in SAAP funding of about 2% per annum for indexation and an "innovation fund" for innovative projects under the themes of prevention, linkages and post-crisis support, of which only 2 mil are guaranteed for the whole NSW SAAP sector. The Commonwealth refused any increase in core funding to address viability and unmet demand issues.

The NSW government position is that it already more than matches the Commonwealth contribution and is not in a position to further increase its share of SAAP funding.

However, a clause in the Multilateral Agreement provides that either party can increase their contribution to SAAP without the Agreement having to be renegotiated.

10.2 FAMILY LAW CAMPAIGN

The WRRRC developed a response to the Government Discussion Paper on proposed changes to Family Law released last November and a response to the Exposure Draft of the Family Law Amendment (Shared Parental Responsibility) Bill 2005.

In both documents the WRRRC argued that the proposed changes to Family Law would make it harder for parents to protect their children from violence and would put women and children experiencing domestic violence at risk of continuing abuse at the hand of the partner/father.

The proposed changes are based on the men's lobby myth that women frequently use false allegations to obtain an unfair advantage in Family Law proceedings and do not reflect current research finding or respond to identified problems in Family Law, whereby women and children are put at risk due to unsafe contact arrangements.

10.3 FAMILY LAW COURT STRATEGY

The WRRC produced a presentation on the issues facing women and children escaping domestic violence going through the Family Law Court. The presentation was given to Court Counselors, Deputy Registrars, Mediators and other Court staff at Goulbourn St. registry as part of their staff training.

The presentation focused on the large number of women going through the Family Law Court with such issues and on how, given the high level of non-disclosure of domestic violence, there should be an assumption of the presence of domestic violence for every case that goes through the Family Law Court. This was followed by suggestions of how the Court could be more responsive to and improve women's safety – both in its physical surroundings and in its practices. The presentation was well received and a number of the recommendations have since been implemented.

The WRRC also gave a presentation to Family Law Lawyers focusing on important issues such as the prevalence of domestic violence in cases that go to the Family Law Court and the need to be proactive about exploring these issues. It also highlighted some practical suggestions for best practice specific to Family Law lawyers.

Both presentations are available on the WRRC website if refuges want to use them as guidelines for similar work with their local registries.

10.4 RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

One of the findings of the 2004 Ombudsman's Inquiry was that some SAAP services are in contravention of SAAP and anti-discrimination legislation in the criteria they use to exclude clients (e.g. blanket exclusions of people with mental health or drug and alcohol issues). In response, a project has been funded by DoCS to develop and pilot a valid risk assessment tool that will enable NSW SAAP funded services to make informed decisions about a person's appropriateness for acceptance as a SAAP client. The WRRC has been on the Reference Group for the project.

The project has developed draft Risk Assessment Tool (RAT) and guidelines which were piloted in 20 SAAP services across NSW (of which 10 were DV services). While results on the data collected and evaluation forms are not yet

available, the evaluation forms collected to date are mostly positive of the pilot and indicate an increase in workers' awareness and skills in relation to risk assessment.

DoCS is developing a training process to roll out the RAT State-wide next year.

10.5 BODY SHOP AND CHILD PROJECT AND POLICY OFFICER

The WRRRC went into partnership with The Body Shop's *Stop Violence in the Home* campaign.

The Body Shop sold merchandise during the campaign and raised funds for the WRRRC. It was endorsed at conference that this money, in recognition of approximately two thirds of our clients being children, be spent on a Children's Policy and Project Officer to work at the WRRRC on a short-term basis. This position will produce an educational kit for management and refuge staff on the effects of domestic violence on children. The kit will assist services in moving towards better practice through the education of management bodies, development of policies, practices and resource allocations that will improve the provision of services to children.

10.6 EXCLUSION FORUM

The WRRRC co-hosted a Forum entitled Homelessness and Exclusion held in Sydney on June 1st. The Forum followed from the Ombudsman Report last year which reported high level of "blanket exclusions" exclusion in SAAP services.

The Forum explored the issue of exclusion in SAAP services, provided some responses and good practice models as well as an overview of how key government agencies can support SAAP services to better respond to homelessness and to exclusion issues.

An outcome of the forum was the formation of a sub-group from the sector to advise the Partnership Against Homelessness (PAH), the WRRRC will take up a position on the sub group.

10.7 CENTRELINK CRISIS PAYMENTS / STAYING HOME LEAVING VIOLENCE

Recent changes to Centrelink practices have make it possible for men who are excluded from the home due to being perpetrators of domestic violence, to apply for Crisis Payment. However, women remaining in the home are not eligible, even if usually they find themselves in difficult financial situation and need extra money to make their home secure. The WRRRC met with Ludo McFerran, co-coordinator of the Staying Home, Leaving Violence Pilot in Bega and Tanya Plibersek's advisor to discuss a proposed policy that would give women the real option of staying home and leaving violence.

The WRRC has drafted a policy proposing that a person will be entitled to the Crisis Payment where they have left a violent relationship but remain in the home and there is an order that the perpetrator of the violence be denied access to that home.

This policy was sent to Minister Kay Patterson to consider.

10.8 NATIONAL DV HOTLINE

Following the Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Estimates (Budget Estimates), the WRRC has been interviewed by the media on the National DV Hotline.

The WRRC wrote a letter to Kay Patterson and attached documentation of the 15 random calls made to the Hotline by refuge workers with various scenarios. This documentation outlines the scenarios and responses from Lifeline Counsellors. The WRRC included an analysis of each scenario that identified best practice in relation to a crisis response to DV.

The WRRC provided input on the evaluation of the National DV Line.

The WRRC carried out a survey to find out how many WRM refuges received any money from the \$100 Lifeline gave to services they referred to last year. As very few refuges received any money, the WRRC is working with the refuges to monitor the referral system again this year, as well as the quality of the responses provided by the National DV Hotline.

10.9 ORIENTATION MANUAL

The Orientation Manual was finalised and is on the website. It introduces new members to the WRM and has sections on the history of the WRM, its achievements and structure.

10.10 WEB SITE AND INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTS

To improve communication within the WRM, the website has been revamped, with the addition of a chat room and notice boards for each region and support group and a member only part.

Since 1st September 2005, the WRRC has offered the service of setting up members with their own individual email accounts. This is an exciting development because it enables WRM members to:

- Get information confidentially and directly
- Communicate easily and directly with other WRM members, the WRRC and other agencies and people they may be working with
- Access emails from anywhere there is internet access

Individual email accounts are especially useful for members of Working Party, Auspice Committee members, members of Steering groups /Subgroups/Support Groups.

The mentoring program to match mentors and mentees, is also online.

10.11 LONGITUDINAL SERVICE TRACKING PROJECT

The WRRRC together with the other 2 peaks is involved in a Longitudinal Service Tracking project, with the aim to investigate the relationship between the funding of a range of SAAP services and the operation of these services over a five-year period, so as to document how funding issues will impact on service delivery.

All SAAP services in NSW belonging to any of the 3 peaks will receive a benchmark survey to collect baseline information about the service, particularly in relation to their financial position and current operation across a range of variables (staff numbers, open hours, client group, service type, programs offered etc.). Refuges that choose to participate in the project will have to fill it in and return it to the WRRRC. Follow up surveys will need to be completed once a year for the duration of SAAP V to monitor changes that have occurred in the service, and over time these changes will be analysed for cause/effect relationships in the services (i.e. how the funding situation of the service is effecting the programs and activities of the service.)

Services will be identified by a code and only the WRRRC will have access to the master list of refuges. Surveys are confidential and no individual service will be identified.

11. SPECIAL PROJECTS

11.1 RESTRUCTURE

The WRRRC worked closely with the Working Party to progress the Restructure of the WRM. A consultant was appointed to develop a Business Plan and Management Restructure Report and to propose models for the Restructure in consultation with the movement.

The Business Plan and Management Restructure Report were presented to the WRM at the Special Issue Day Meeting in March 2005, where the Sustainable/Growth Model was endorsed.

This model will provide flexible and high quality management services to refuges which are unable to continue with community management arrangements as well as office back up services, human resource development and grievance procedures services to all refuges in the WRM that may request them.

The WRRRC has then been working with the Working Party on the final version of the report to present to DOCS and on the draft of the MOU, the Code of Conduct and the Grievance Procedures.

The WRRRC also worked closely with the consultant to develop a detailed financial analysis, which clearly demonstrates the sustainability of the model.

The WRRRC developed a presentation on the Restructure for Docs and presented it to Regional Directors and to DOCS Central Office.

11.2 ORANA PROJECT

This project aims at strengthening the viability of the Orana Safe Houses and Bourke Refuge and at identifying a model that best meets the needs of Aboriginal women and children experiencing and escaping domestic and family violence and sexual abuse in each community.

The WRRRC worked closely with the Orana Reference Group to develop Terms of Reference for the project and appoint a consultant.

The project is set up in two distinct stages:

1. Stage One: Strategies to strengthen the services will be developed in order to determine an effective model of service delivery specifically tailored in terms of the local community needs. This process will involve extensive consultation with each community to design and develop the work plan and its implementation, and to identify key organizations and individuals from each community to be involved in the project. Some capacity building within the services will also occur in this stage
2. Stage Two: The model identified in Stage One will be implemented.

Stage 1 started in August 05 and the project team has completed 2 rounds of visits in each community.

The project works from a strength based framework and has focused intensively on capacity building, which has included developing improved policy and procedures for services, connecting services to the Internet and training workers on the use of Internet and email, improving data collection, identifying governance issues and developing clear duty statements for positions in services.

Work plans for each service have been developed and issues/training need to be addressed in Stage 2 have been identified.

The project will be launched in Bourke as part of the celebration for NSW Stop DV Day.

12. MEETING AND CONFERENCES ATTENDED

- ✓ Presentation on data collection given by Doug Limbrick, Director of Performance Information, FACS David Ramsay, Assistant Director of Performance Information, FACS Justin Griffin, AIHW (which contains NDCA)
- ✓ Steering of Transitional Housing
- ✓ Changes to Parenting Payment consultations
- ✓ Domestic Violence Network meeting
- ✓ Transitional Housing Reference Group meetings
- ✓ SAAC (Supported Accommodation Advisory Council)
- ✓ Meeting with NSW Police Association to discuss proposal for Police officers being able to issue AVOs on the spot
- ✓ Consultation on Guidelines for Child Protection Intervention
- ✓ DOCS Ethnic Affairs Advisory Group
- ✓ Meeting with DV line manager
- ✓ Wesnet meetings
- ✓ Meeting with the Stay at home leaving violence pilots
- ✓ Reba Meagher Consultation with SAAP services on SAAP V
- ✓ Office of Community Housing Consultations regarding Community Housing legislation
- ✓ 16 days of action to eliminate VAW working party
- ✓ NCOSS SAAP pre-budget consultation
- ✓ Partnership against homelessness SAAP subgroup
- ✓ Consultation with DOCS re information management for SAAP

13. ABBREVIATIONS

ACWA	Australian Children's Welfare Association
ACOSS	Australian Council of Community Services
AFHO	Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations
AG	Attorney-General's Department
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ASU	Australian Services Union
AVO	Apprehended Violence Order
CTS	Community Tenancy Scheme
DoCS	NSW Department of Community Services
DV	Domestic Violence
FaCS	Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services
FONGA	Forum of Non-Government Agencies

NCOSS	NSW Council of Social Services
NDCA	SAAP National Data Collection Agency
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
SAAC	Supported Accommodation Advisory Council
SAAP	Supported Accommodation Assistance Program
SACS Award	Social & Community Services Award
VAW	Violence Against Women Specialist Unit
WP	NSW Women's Refuge Working Party
WRM	NSW Women's Refuge Movement
WRRC	NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre
YAA	Youth Accommodation Association (NSW) Inc.

NSW Women's Refuge Working Party

Annual Report

2004/2005

1. Working Party Aims and Objectives

- To provide representation of refugees across NSW through the inclusion on Working Party of endorsed regional delegates, as well as specific representation of Koori, NESB, Lesbian and Child Support Groups.
- To represent issues and implement decisions as endorsed at NSW WRM state conferences.
- To provide a unified approach to the development of Women's Refuge Services.
- To act as the Management Committee for the NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre.
- To co-ordinate special projects as agreed at state conferences.
- To ensure that the WRM policy of equal representation is reflected at Working Party and any delegation, representation, or sub-group Working Party may be involved in.
- To promote community awareness about issues related to domestic violence and the services women's refuges provide.
- To research and supply material to state conferences as requested by NSW Women's Refuges.
- To inform delegates, through skill-sharing and education, of the aims and goals of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement.
- To inform and educate the community of these aims and goals.

2. Working Party Structure

A delegate from the Young Women's Support Group attended Working Party on a trial basis. Due to lack of numbers in this Support Group, at the May 2004 State Conference it was decided that this delegate's position would no longer be filled unless the Young Women's Support Group numbers increase. As a consequence, the number of Working Party delegates changed from seven (7) regional delegates and five (5) Support Group delegates in May, 2004 to eight (8) regional delegates and four (4) Support Group delegates. Delegates are endorsed for an eighteen (18) month term.

Delegates meet in Sydney on the third Friday of each month, the exception being January when no meeting is held. To compensate for this, a two day meeting is held in February. The Working Party meetings are held at the NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre (WRRC) Elizabeth Street, Redfern.

Working Party delegates are required to:-

- Report back to refuges in their region each month on Working Party matters.
- Attend their regional conferences and give a report to these conferences and give feedback to Working Party.
- Take on tasks as allocated at Working Party meetings.
- Attend any relevant meetings as directed by Working Party on its behalf and adhere to the policy of equal representation.

Working Party is a representative management body that makes decisions between state conferences, as long as those decisions do not override those made at conference. The Working Party is accountable to the NSW Women's Refuge Movement and therefore presents a report to each state conference. For urgent non-policy decisions between conferences, each delegate will be contacted and refer the matter for decision to each refuge in their region.

3. WORKING PARTY FUNDING

The NSW Women's Refuge Working Party is funded by the Department of community Services under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). Funding covers the sitting fee paid to delegates, enabling refuges to pay a replacement worker in place of the worker attending the monthly Working Party meeting. Travel, accommodation and administration costs are also covered.

A Bookkeeper is employed to be responsible for the financial management of Working Party.

Other funding is applied for and received from time to time to fund specific projects.

The Financial Officer of Working Party administers all expenses.

4. WORKING PARTY SPECIAL PROJECTS

4.1 AUSPICING

This year the Working Party has been involved in a number of interim auspices including Delvena, Dolores, Elsie, Forbes, Kempsey, Moruya, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga, Wimlah, and Woy Woy. Some of these auspices have been on-going from the previous year and some are new auspices.

The auspicing of these services has been a major undertaking by Working Party. Other women from the Women's Refuge Movement have also been seconded onto auspices from time to time. Without the dedicated commitment of the Working Party Delegates and the seconded women it would not have been possible for Working Party to assist a number of refuges who were experiencing difficulties.

Auspicing would also not be as successful without the commitment of a number of Women's Refuges within the Movement who release their workers on a regular basis to allow them to participate on an auspice management committee. It would not be possible for the Working Party to take on the number of auspices that they do without this support and the services of the Working Party's Bookkeeper, who has been instrumental in ensuring the smooth operation of the financial management of the auspiced refuges and has provided invaluable expertise to auspice members.

When Working Party agrees to auspice a service, it is always at the request of the funding body. On taking over the method of operation is assessed and depending on the circumstances changes may be made and policies and procedures implemented to reflect the service delivery.

It is Working Party's preferred option at the end of their auspice that a community based management committee of women with expertise that has been recruited with some training provided take on the responsibility of managing the service.

With the energy given to auspices it is only appropriate that we begin with a brief outline of the services that are currently being auspiced.

4.1.1 DELVENA WOMEN'S REFUGE

Members of the auspice are Jenny McGrath, Yvonne Wilson, Alex Aryton and Jill Evans.

The refuge is running extremely well with a full compliment of staff which consists of a manager, three crisis workers, two child support workers and one casual relief worker. They have re-established themselves within the Lower North Shore Community and established numerous networks and partnerships with local services.

Mart Allbon, as manager has proven to be invaluable. Staff has been working well individually as well as a team to provide case management and empowerment workshops for both women and children.

Policies and procedures continue to be updated as well as the development of information booklets for clients which have proven to be invaluable. Numerous changes have been made to the premises and grounds to ensure that it meets occupational, health and safety requirements.

4.1.2 DOLORES SINGLE WOMEN'S REFUGE

Dolores Single Women's Refuge came under Auspice in 2001. The Manager is Ms Kerry Walker who has held that position since the reopening of the service.

The Major issues for Dolores have been staff turn over and the difficulty attracting new staff. It has been a difficult time for Kerry as she has lost a number of experienced women who found the traveling to Bondi was onerous. Currently in 2005 2 support workers have been employed and a Koori Outreach worker. The outreach position is yet to be filled.

Dolores has focused on partnerships in the community:

Innarnura

Community Health

Randwick Information Community Centre

Women's Housing

These partnerships are important to Dolores as single women face different issues, many of which are very complex, and they lend an extra dimension of support for clients. Dolores also experiences a high number of women without Residential Status and this involves another area of skills that is required of staff or skills they need to gain. Other community involvement was support for the safety campaign at the 2005 Koori Knockout Day. Dolores also lent their bus to the Aboriginal Women's Group to attend the Aboriginal Healing Centre at Picton.

Dolores has implemented a brokerage program for the Outreach Program in 2005 to meet the needs of single women escaping domestic violence. Ms Walker

has developed guidelines for the use of these funds with her Management Committee.

Ms Walker has completed Management Training and has indicated that she has found it very useful in her position of Manager of Dolores Single Women's Refuge. The Manager and Staff have agreed to participate in the Risk Assessment Pilot with Glen Sorenson and will attend training in 2005.

4.1.3 ELSIE WOMEN'S REFUGE

The Management Committee members for Elsie Women's Refuge for 2004/05 were Yvonne Wilson, Carrol Farlow, Jenny McGrath, Jill Evans, Marilyn Fogarty, Alex Ayrtton, Anne Sillett, Justine Elbourne.

An outreach/drop in center for aboriginal women, was established in Waterloo in October 2004.

The refuge celebrated its thirty year anniversary with a well attended harbour cruise in December 2004.

A full service review took place in March, 2005. Several staffing changes took place in the year. The manager Phyllis Mason resigned and an acting manager was in the position for ten weeks. In June 05 a new manager Debbie Locke was engaged. The outreach worker, three crisis workers and a child support worker have been replaced. The outreach hours have been extended. The child support hours have been enhanced with another 35hours per week.

Despite the staffing changes the refuge has been mostly fully occupied with a high percentage of CALD clients. The two exit houses have been fully utilized.

The refuge has been repainted and child support area renovated. Investigations were instigated for a possible extension of the child support area by renovating and refurbishing the garage in the lane behind the refuge. Hopefully this will take place in the next year.

4.1.4 FORBES WOMEN'S REFUGE

Forbes Women's Refuge has been auspiced since May 2003. Forbes has mostly long-term staff and experiences very few changes. Only one staffing change occurred during the year when the part time child support worker moved interstate and we were lucky to employ another child support worker with good

skills. Currently the staff at Forbes consists of a Coordinator, Crisis Worker/Bookkeeper, Crisis /Outreach Worker and two part time Child Support Workers. For few staff the service provided is excellent and the staff must be complimented on this. The level of funding is not great for a Women's Refuge in a rural area.

The service is staffed from 8am to 5 or 6pm, depending on the day Monday to Friday. On call is provided outside of these hours. Programs include Outreach within the local community and surrounding areas up to around 50 kilometres. Support Groups for women who have been residents and who are referred are held on a regular basis. The groups are both educative and fun. Usually it is a large group as women like the contact. One group that was a huge success was a visit to the Alpaca Farm! Child Support is provided whilst these groups are held. Child Support programs include regular after school groups and playgroup for both resident, ex-resident and referred children. Again, these are working well.

It is a busy refuge and travel is involved in the support of women as many services are in Parkes, which is about 50 kilometres away or Orange, which is further away. Staff are involved with various community agencies and network extensively within the district. Forbes has a signed Support Agreement with Community Housing and also with the Police Local Command to follow up on women referred via the Domestic Violence Pro-Active Service (DVPASS) "yellow card system". Court Support is also offered on a regular basis. The refuge auspices the funds for the local Domestic Violence Committee and is instrumental in organising various community awareness campaigns relating to Domestic and Family Violence.

One area of concern that has been on going for the auspice management has been the unsafe upper floor balcony that children could potentially climb over. After failing in negotiations with OCH and Forbes Council the decision was made to enclose at the refuges expense.

The auspice management committee is Sue Bell, Carrol Farlow, Yvonne Wilson and Ann Sillett

4.1.5 KEMPSEY WOMEN'S REFUGE

Kempsey refuge has been under Working Party Auspice since July 2004. The Management Committee Members were Phyllis Mason, Sandra Tanner, Debbie Smith, Gemma Roberson, Alex Ayrton.

The service was restructured to convert from 24 hour staffing to a five day per week roster with evening and weekend on call system. The security system was upgraded to support this move.

The acting team leader who had been in the position for over one year was made manager of the service. There have been 1.5 child support positions, two crisis workers, 0.5 follow up, 1 outreach worker, a bookkeeper (15hours per week) and one relief worker. A South East Asian Domestic Violence Project Officer position was auspiced by KWR for three years under the Area Assistance Scheme, finishing this year.

Kempsey Refuge has a service agreement with Community Housing Mid North Coast to supply 6 exit houses for medium term accommodation. KWR recommends and supports women and children for these houses. CHMC have agreed to consider successful tenants in these houses for permanent residence whilst continuing to replace these houses, keeping up the number six houses for use of refuge clients exiting the refuge.

As well as providing accommodation and support for women and children in crisis fleeing domestic violence, supporting and following up families in medium term housing, KWR is providing an outreach service. Groups are held weekly providing women with education about domestic violence and setting up networks to combat isolation.

4.1.6 MORUYA WOMEN'S REFUGE

The Moruya Women and Children's Refuge had been under Auspice with the NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party for approximately two years. Initially the refuge was to be under Auspice with the Working Party for six months only, but due to OH&S issues and the need to negotiate with OCH to provide necessary repairs, plus various issues that required time and support the time frame was extended by the WP and DOCS at six monthly intervals.

During the period of repairs members of the auspice managed the service, as well as a member of staff was seconded as the Team Leader for short periods. In 2004 a new manager was employed with the refuge, and the service maintains a full compliment of staff.

Community based meetings were held in the region over the two years of auspice to encourage input to the refuge from local women. After eighteen months the auspice group sought community membership to the refuge, which

was successful and new members now form the new management committee with all members residing within the local region.

During this period the auspice management and the manager successfully incorporated the refuge with a new local committee in place. The refuge was officially handed back to the community by the WP auspice to the new Moruya Women and Children's Refuge Inc committee on the 26th July, a regional representative remains on the Moruya Refuge committee to aid and support the transition to community based management.

4.1.7 TAMWORTH WOMEN'S REFUGE

Tamworth Women's Refuge is currently auspiced by the NSW WRM Working Party under agreed terms with DOCS, the terms of this agreement end in the year 2007.

The refuge has been under the WP auspice for approximately three years with an auspice committee managing the affairs of the refuge on behalf of the Working Party. Over the years of the auspice the refuge had various complex issues that culminated in a decision by the auspice management to resign from the management of the Tamworth Women's Refuge.

The Working Party along with the outgoing auspice management held discussions and the decision was reached that a new auspice committee be formed to manage the Tamworth Women's Refuge. Further a decision was made to close the refuge, dismiss all staff and restructure the refuge to meet the SAAP 1V requirements.

Soon after the closure of the refuge and termination of workers the Australian Services Union, acting on behalf of the staff initiated legal action to re-open the refuge and reinstate all staff.

After a series of teleconferences, much deliberation and meeting with the ASU the WP agreed to move forward by re-opening the refuge and reinstate all staff.

The refuge re-opened on the 21st September, and all staff were re-instated, the auspice committee and WP are currently working in partnership with the regional DPP from the north coast, and others to develop a concise and progressive restructure plan that will aide women and children in crisis in the region.

The Tamworth Community have recently indicated that the refuge should be returned to community control, the local member and others within the region remain steadfast in their desire to gain community control.

4.1.8 WAGGA WAGGA WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S REFUGE

Wagga Wagga Women and Children's Refuge has been auspiced since 1 June 2004. The auspice management elects to attend the refuge for the management meetings, which usually occurs every six to eight weeks, with phone contact made if necessary in between. This way the staff have access to the management on a regular basis.

Wagga Wagga is a rural inland city and therefore the refuge is busy and is well integrated within the community. Some members of the community have been vocal in their opinion that the refuge should be returned to local management. Staff of the refuge are committed long term workers who provide a range of programs both internal and external of the refuge for women and their children.

The staff consists of a Manager, three Crisis Support Workers, an Outreach Worker, two Child Support Workers and a Bookkeeper. During the year the Bookkeeper resigned along with a part time Child Support Worker. New staff were employed in these positions.

The refuge is very new so very little in the way of repairs is needed. The management have made the decision to relocate the manager's office and make small changes to the child support area within the refuge. The grounds were beautified with plants, watering system and outdoor children's play equipment was installed.

The refuge has signed a Protocol Agreement with South West Community Housing Association to provide support and housing to mutual clients. This protocol ensures women and children are supported to access housing and remain as tenants of the Association.

The staff of the refuge are involved with a number of community agencies that have, as their focus, issues relating to women and children. The Outreach Program includes a partnership with TAFE, which includes a structured program over a number of weeks. The focus is on self-development.

The auspice management committee consists of: Sally Steele, Carrol Farlow, Ann Sillett (now resigned) and Yvonne Wilson.

4.1.9 WIMLAH WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S REFUGE

The Wimlah Women and Children's Refuge has been under auspice by the WP for approximately one year. The refuge provides a broad range of distinctive services to the Blue Mountains region. The refuge has recently upgraded the outdoor Child Support area, and has had various maintenance work to the refuge units undertaken by OCH. The refuge is currently providing various groups within the area and formalizing partnerships with local services within the region. New pamphlets have been developed and printed and training needs of workers are being reviewed at this time. The service has identified the need for an Indigenous worker and will be working toward filling this position by January 2006. The refuge continues to insure that all services provided are inclusive and that the refuge remains viable in all areas of service delivery. The refuge maintains a professional approach to all areas of services provided and is currently seeking to enhance partnerships in place as well as seeking to increase partnerships with the region.

4.1.10 WOY WOY WOMEN AND CHILDREN'S SERVICE

Working Party took on the auspice of Woy Woy Women's & Children's Service in approximately July 2004. The members of the Auspice Committee are: Kerry Walker, Jill Evans, Caroline Burke, Marilyn Fogarty, Phyllis Mason and Charmaine Anderson.

The refuge itself opened its doors in early September 2004. Since the opening the refuge has accommodated 58 women with 128 children.

At the present Woy Woy has a full compliment of staff; Sue Cable – Manager, Kerrie-Ann Cook - Child Support, Debbie Katt - Women's Support, Chris Kerr - Child Support, Carol Kingi - Women's Support, Debbie Smith – Outreach Support, Carol Fitton – Bookkeeper, Tammy Zerzwadja & Tracey Russell - Relief Workers.

The team at Woy Woy has worked extremely well together since the beginning of the auspice. Two wonderful groups were started in the community and have since grown into a great resource & space for women & children. The women's group is called the Butterfly Group & the children's group the Flutterbye Group, both groups are run on a weekly basis.

In regards to the dwelling itself, a great deal of work is still required to make the building Occupational Health and Safety compliant. We are hoping to propose to the Office of Community Housing for a purpose built building given the current state of disrepair. In saying that the staff themselves have done a great deal of

work in making the building more aesthetically pleasing with staff refurbishing their child support area and painting the fences to mention a few.

In conclusion the management committee would like to congratulate the team at Woy Woy for all their hard work & effort in creating a great service for women & children escaping violence.

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES

The NSW WRM Working Party has had an extremely busy year again this year concentrating on our commitment to auspice refuges that encountered difficulties. This left us with considerably less time than we would have liked to devote to other projects. Working party has encountered a number of difficulties over the past year. The impact of auspicing so many refuges has stretched many of us. This area still poses our greatest challenge. Making it difficult at times to attract delegates given the increase in the levels of responsibility, time, and tasks now required of the delegates.

Existing delegates and Auspice members and their services are to be congratulated on their commitment in ensuring the level of quality services offered to women and children escaping domestic violence throughout New South Wales. Whilst the commitment shown is to be applauded this area requires ongoing consideration to ensure that we are able to match our commitment with availability of personnel and resources. The number of refuges requiring auspice has placed a strain on the workers and services assisting the auspiced refuges. Working Party continues its endeavour in addressing this area with the range of complexities involved.

A more detailed summary of each auspiced refuge is included in this report. In regards to other projects, below is a summary of the projects undertaken.

5.1. Restructure:

The NSW WRM formed a restructure committee that met regularly to investigate the range of issues facing us as a Movement in regard to current and ongoing auspice refuges. We engaged a consultant, Sally Ireland who worked with us in identifying strengths, gaps and strategies for the future. Sally helped us to draw up a Business Plan that will enable us to address the range of issues and complexities involved in auspicing and managing a large number of refuges. The Business Plan has been discussed at state conference and a Special Issues Day earlier this year as this area affects the Movement as a whole. Meetings were also held state-wide with various offices of the Department of Community Services to present the restructure document.

5.2. Orana:

The Steering Committee was very pleased to secure Pam Greer, Cleonie Quayle and Judy Harrison as the consultants for this exciting new project. The NSW WRM plans to hold the launch of this project together with a state conference held in Bourke later this year.

5.3. Guidelines of Child Protection Intervention 2000 Focus group:

A number of interagency meetings with peaks & service providers were planned for 2005. Child Protection Senior Officers Group members asked a limited number of relevant local people from their agencies and their community partners to participate in these regional meetings. The meetings were held in Bankstown, Shell Harbour, Broken Hill, Parramatta, Dubbo, Auburn and the City. A thank you is expressed to those who participated on a regional level. The final report is still a work in progress.

5.4. ASU:

This year saw us in conversation with the ASU more frequently than previous years. This is a direct response to our role in auspicing refuges particularly where conflict has driven the need for our intervention.

Whilst we have met with ASU officials during the past year we accept that this process and discussions will be ongoing as each party endeavours to meet and fulfil their differing responsibilities.

5.5. Articles of Association:

Proposed changes to the Articles of Association were drafted over the twelve months. All members were given opportunity to make comments at State conference & Special Issues Days. A special meeting has been called before the AGM this year to endorse the proposed changes and amendments.

5.6. SAAC:

Cat Gander has been standing in as the representative of the WRM & Working Party on the SAAC. Over the past twelve months the SAAC has dealt with issues around the SAAP V negotiations, the Ombudsman Report and issues pertaining to domestic violence and homelessness.

5.7. Child Support Working Group:

The Child Support Working Group held meetings throughout the year to look at ways to better assist children escaping domestic violence. The group presented a report to the Child Support Conference in March held at Bankstown. This group has recommended a general job description be developed for Child Support Workers, to highlight and further validate their roles.

5.8. Fair Day and the NSW WRM Lesbian Support Group:

The NSW WRM Lesbian Support Group attended Fair Day which was held in February, they distributed DV pamphlets & information on the day.

The group also organised a two day meeting for 2005 to start the process of putting together a training package for workers in refuges on lesbian issues. The group will also look at the possibility of an accreditation process i.e. if a service is a lesbian friendly refuge, some members of the lesbian support group will go & ensure that they have the appropriate resources, information & posters etc. A survey will be designed accordingly. If the service passes the accreditation, it would be eligible to use the specific logo on their letterhead. The group are continuing to work on this project.

On the 10th of March 2005, the group organised a SHAVE FOR A CURE day at Penrith Women's Refuge. This day was a huge success, raising \$2000 approx for the Leukaemia Foundation. The following refuges were in attendance; Jessie St, Killara, MARCIA, Pam's Place, Penrith, Toukley, Wimlah & Woy Woy.

5.9. Auspice Manual:

The Auspice Manual continues to be updated in meeting the challenges that arise through the Auspicing process. Numerous issues were discussed at length to better develop the policies, procedures and practices in managing a service that has experienced conflict and is trying to be re-established. Some of the issues addressed were grievance procedures, employment procedures, working with children check and conflict of interests. Anne Sillett continues to work on this Manual updating it as required through consultation with Working Party and the NSW WRM. The Auspice Manual continues to be presented to State Conferences.

5.10. NCOSS:

Sally Steele continues to represent the Working Party at NCOSS. Some of the issues Sally has worked on are:

- TIS this has been a very successful campaign as DoCS has agreed to pick up the cost for telephone interpreters in SAAP funded services once the

Federal Government ceases to fund TIS. This vital service ensures women and children from NSEB are able to access interpreters.

- NCOSS has developed insurance packages for the non-government organisations.
- Client risk assessment tool with consultant Glen Sorensen is an important project as it will show who has access to services and who and why they may be turned away. This also flows on to O.H. & S issues for workers and management committees.
- NCOSS also campaigned strongly for funding for SAAP V and unfortunately this wasn't as successful as we would have liked.

5.11. Stakeholder's Forum:

Maureen Lacey and Sally Steele continue to represent the Working Party on this valuable forum. Where they can raise any issue of importance to the Minister for Community Services and or the Director General Mr. Neil Shepherd. The Orana Region is one such example of how the issue was raised and the Minister Ms. Carmel Tebbutt followed up with this and the Orana Project is now happening.

Auditors' Financial Reports

2004-2005

**NSW Women's Refuge
Movement Working Party
Incorporated**

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre (WRRC)

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Delvena Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Elsie Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Forbes Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Kempsey Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Moruya Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Tamworth Women's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Wagga Wagga Women and Children's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Wimlah Women and Children's Refuge

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

Woy Woy Women and Children's Service

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

**NSW Women's Refuge
Movement Working Party Inc.**

Combined Report

Auditor's Report

2004/2005

MINUTES OF THE NSW WOMEN'S REFUGE MOVEMENT WORKING PARTY
INC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD THURSDAY,

14TH OCTOBER 2004

Attendance:

Phyllis Mason	Elsie
Sue Cable	Woy Woy - Lesbian
Meryem Ali	Elsie - NESB
Caroline Burke	Killara - Metro
Jan Christie	Dolores- Inner City
Brenda Roberts	WRRC
Debbie Smith	Tamworth - New England
Jill Evans	Jenny's Place - Child Support
Sally Steele	Essie- West/South West Metro&Country
Karen Williams	WRRC
Yvonne Wilson	Griffith - Riverina
Karen Truscott	Muswellbrook – Hunter/Central Coast
Marilyn Fogarty	Marcia Women's Refuge
Alex Ayrton	Warrina – North Coast

Starts: 10:15am

1. Welcome
2. Apologies: **Elwyn Ried, Maureen Lacy, Justine Elbourne, Cheryl Nelson, Kerry Walker and Catherine Gander**, Tweed Shire Women's Services and Erin's Place.

Moved by: Sally Steele

Seconded by: Debbie Smith

3. Previous AGM Minutes – September 18, 2003

Moved by: Karen Truscott

Seconded by: Phyllis Mason

4. Previous Special Meeting Minutes – September 17, 2004

With changes:

Observer: Sue Cable from Woy Woy, not Tamworth

***Name amendment: Carole Alcock not Carloyn Alcock
from Marion Centre***

Moved by: Phyllis Mason

Seconded by: Alex Ayrton

5. Correspondence relevant to AGM: **None**

6. Auditor's Report

- NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre

Moved by: Meryem Ali

Seconded by: Karen Truscott

- NSW Women's Refuge Working Party

Moved by: Phyllis Mason

Seconded by: Jill Evans

- Delvena Women's Refuge

Moved by: Alex Ayrton

Seconded by: Brenda Roberts

- Elsie Women's Refuge

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson

Seconded by: Karen Truscott

- Forbes Women's Refuge

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson

Seconded by: Sally Steele

- Moruya Women's Refuge

Moved by: Phyllis Mason

Seconded by: Caroline Burke

- Tamworth Women's Refuge

Moved by: Sally Steele **Seconded by: Brenda Roberts**

- NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party Inc Combined Reports
(For Office of Fair Trading)

Moved by: Karen Truscott

Seconded by: Sally Steele

7. Reports

- a) WRMWP Inc. Report by Karen Williams

Moved by: Karen Truscott **Seconded by: Jill Evans**

- b) WRRC Report by Karen Williams

Moved by: Alex Ayrton

Seconded by: Debbie Smith

c) Working Party Report by Meryem Ali

Moved by: Sally Steele Seconded by: Alex Ayrton

d) Delvena Women's Refuge Report by Jenny McGrath

Moved by: Karen Truscott Seconded by: Phyllis Mason

e) Elsie Women's Refuge Report by Justine Elbourne

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson Seconded by: Meryem Ali

f) Forbes Women's Refuge Report by Yvonne Wilson

Moved by: Phyllis Mason Seconded by: Karen Truscott

g) Moruya Women's Refuge Report by Phyllis Mason

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson Seconded by: Marilyn Fogarty

h) Tamworth Women's Refuge Report by Phyllis Mason

Moved by: Sally Steele Seconded by: Phyllis Mason

8. Election of Officer Bearers
(Declared all positions vacant)

Phyllis Mason to take the Chair.

Chairperson: Karen Truscott

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson Seconded by: Alex Ayrton

Secretary: Sue Cable

Moved by: Brenda Roberts Seconded by: Yvonne Wilson

Financial Officer: Yvonne Wilson

Moved by: Phyllis Mason Seconded by: Sue Cable

Vice Financial Officer : Alex Ayrton

Moved by: Brenda Roberts Seconded by: Alex Ayrton

9. Bank Signatures for Accounts

WRRRC & Working Party **(8 signatures)**

Elwyn Ried	Yvonne Wilson
Alex Ayrton	Catherine Gander
Sally Steele	Phyllis Mason
Meryem Ali	Karen Truscott

Moved by: Brenda Roberts Seconded by: Jill Evans

10. 2 People to Sign Official Papers for Office of Fair Trading

Yvonne Wilson

Alex Ayrton

Moved by: Brenda

Seconded by: Karen Truscott

11. Appointment Public Officer for NSW Women's Refuge
Movement Working Party Inc

Elwyn Ried was nominated to be Public Officer.

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson

Seconded by: Alex Ayrton

12. Appointment of Auditor for 2004/2005

Howard & Christensen Chartered Accountants appointed auditors for:

NSW Women's Refuge Movement Working Party Inc

NSW Women's Refuge Resource Centre

NSW Women's Refuge Working Party

Tamworth Women's Refuge

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson

Seconded by: Karen Truscott

Crispin & Jeffery Chartered Accountants appointed auditors for:

Elsie Women's Refuge

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson

Seconded by: Phyllis Mason

Williams Reilly Chartered Accountants appointed auditors for:

Forbes Women's Refuge

Moved by: Yvonne Wilson Seconded by: Brenda Roberts

13. Appointment of Auditor for 2003/2004 & 2004/2005

Kothes Chartered Accountant appointed auditors for:

Moruya Women's Refuge

Moved by: Marilyn Fogarty Seconded by: Yvonne Wilson

Meagher Howard & Wright appointed auditors for:

Delvena Women's Refuge

Moved by: Karen Truscott Seconded by: Sally Steele

14. General Business relevant to AGM: None

15. Meeting Closed 10.45 am