

# QHVSG ANNUAL REPORT 2021







# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PATRON



I sincerely appreciate the ongoing efforts of the QHVSG in providing the much needed support and assistance to the families and friends of homicide victims.

The enduring collaboration between QPS and QHVSG highlights the strong relationship and shared purpose in assisting friends and families to cope after these tragic events. I strongly encourage you to engage with QHVSG if you or someone you know has been affected by homicide and make use of the many support options available.

Katarina Carroll APM  
COMMISSIONER  
QLD POLICE SERVICE

QHVSG honours all Police Officers who have been lost to homicide whilst selflessly serving the public.



# QUEENSLAND HOMICIDE VICTIMS' SUPPORT GROUP FAMILY SUPPORT AFTER MURDER INC.

Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group, Family Support after Murder Inc. Annual Report 2020-21 Financial year.

We pay our respects to every person who has lost their life through homicide; all women, all children, all men. We also honour all of our members who every day continue their journey of life after homicide.

We thank all those who give their time to help others who have lost loved ones. Your contribution is priceless.

The Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group Board of Directors, Operational team, Peer Supporters and Volunteers respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners, Elders and Leaders past, present and emerging as Custodians of the lands across which we deliver our Family Support After Murder Services.

## VISION

To be the leading organisation, providing high-quality support, education and reform for victims of homicide.

## MISSION

To provide support to victims of homicide through:

- our unique peer network, providing a family environment of empathy, compassion and understanding;
- education and awareness for members and the community; and
- advocacy for reform on behalf of our members.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## CHAIRPERSON – DR SAMARA MCPHEDRAN

Dr Samara McPhedran is an experienced leader who has worked for around 20 years in research, policy, and program management positions within government and academia, as well as in the private sector. She has a track record of leading diverse teams of people, thinking strategically about the direction those teams go in, managing change, and negotiating effective solutions to difficult problems.

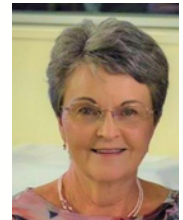


She is experienced in advocacy and advisory positions, with an extensive history of providing evidence-based recommendations to decision-makers to shape policy change. She has served on a number of high-level advisory groups, including state and federal Ministerial panels, and is often invited to provide advice to government about violence prevention and related challenges. She has a strong commitment to building and strengthening collaborative relationships between different groups, and significant experience establishing and expanding networks across multiple sectors.

She is internationally recognised for her contribution to public debate and scholarship into homicide and other forms of violence, and from 2018-2020 was the Founding Director of the Australian-first Griffith University Homicide Research Unit. She holds a PhD in Psychology, a Bachelor of Arts (with First Class Honours in Psychology), a Bachelor of Laws, and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice. She has held honorary title with the Department of Economics at the University of Otago (New Zealand) and is also an Honorary Associate Professor in the TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland. She currently runs her own business.

## DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON – LEANNE PULLEN

Leanne became engaged with QHVSG in 2012 when her son Tim was declared a victim of homicide after having been listed as a missing person. Tim's remains have never been located even though six people were charged and imprisoned over his homicide.



Leanne is a dedicated and passionate Peer Support Leader whose main focus is on providing support for members, especially those living in rural and regional areas by being an advocate for them and a confidante. Leanne is a dedicated Court Supporter and has participated in detective training. She was recognised for the work that she contributes to QHVSG when she was awarded the QHVSG Volunteer of the Year in 2017.

Leanne was involved in the No Body No Parole Legislation by being instrumental in having the legislation amended to include all perpetrators involved in a homicide rather than only those sentenced for murder.

Leanne brings extensive fundraising experience from her involvement raising funds for and awareness of the Royal Flying Doctor Service (QLD). From 2006 to 2012 Leanne raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to help purchase lifesaving medical equipment for RFDS aircraft. Leanne actively raises funds for and awareness of QHVSG by selling raffle tickets and manning driver reviver stations.

As well as Peer Support meetings, Leanne also organises Awareness Day and Memorial Day events along with Christmas get togethers for her Support Group members. Leanne co-organised with Monique Ferrario 'A Splash of Silver', QHVSG's 25th Anniversary Celebration.

Leanne's family has appreciated immensely the support provided by QHVSG and she dedicates her time to give back.





## SECRETARY - MONIQUE FERRARIO



Monique became a member of QHVSG when her 36 year old brother Mitchell was murdered in April, 2009.

Monique is a professional Early childhood Educator and has run her own successful business for more than 20 years. She has been a volunteer with QHVSG since 2010 and in 2015 first served on the QHVSG Board of Directors as a General Board Member. Since then Monique has served as the Treasurer and more recently, as the Secretary.

As a Peer Support Group Leader Monique is aware of the importance of peer support.

She has supported many members through home visits, telephone support, Court support and facilitating the monthly Gold Coast Support Group meetings.

Monique is committed to raising awareness in the community, supporting our education programs and providing advocacy for our members. She has shown total commitment to making a difference in the life of our members.

Monique is a dedicated fundraiser and has volunteered at many events. Monique is innovative and has been involved in the organising of events such as the 2015 Brisbane Walk for Support and Family Fun Day, Annual Night of Recognition and Christmas Celebration, the Children's Christmas Party and more recently she co-organised the 25th Anniversary event 'A Splash of Silver' with Board colleague Leanne Pullen. Monique was also a key driver behind the Member Weekends which commenced in 2018.

Monique was recognised for her volunteer efforts in 2014 and 2018 when she was awarded the QHVSG Volunteer of the year.

Monique feels privileged to support our members in memory of her brother and finds a great deal of comfort in providing support to people who also have experienced homicide in their lives.

## TREASURER - CONOR O'BRIEN



Conor's professional career spans 15 years in which time he has held various commercial, economic and policy advisory roles. Conor has worked within a variety of commercial and public service organisations including utilities, global advisory firms and the Queensland Parliament. Conor possesses intimate knowledge of Queensland policy and law making processes along with professional and academic experience in infrastructure development and financing.

In 2020 Conor gained entry into the University of Queensland's Doctor of Medicine (MD) program. During his medical studies Conor has focused on developing the skills necessary to achieve excellence in patient centred care through translation of biomedical and psychosocial knowledge to the clinical environment. Conor has special interests in critical care and rural medicine, and management of patients experiencing traumatic stress.

Conor joined the QHVSG Board in 2021 after learning of the important and unique contribution the organisation makes to the wider community through both support and advocacy for those impacted by homicide. Through his role on the Board, Conor works to assist in the development and execution of the QHVSG's operational and strategic objectives to ensure the organisation's capability enables it to continue to deliver the highest quality support services and advocacy.

## GENERAL MEMBER – CHRIS CLARKE

Chris Clarke is a former crime reporter with 10 years' experience working in newspapers across the country.

Having covered some of the nation's most heartbreaking crimes and tragedies, Chris has been honored to have been in touch with countless men and women who have chosen to share their loved one's story with him.

After several years in North Queensland and Tasmania, Chris began at The Courier-Mail in 2017 where he became a mentor for young reporters covering homicide. The role allowed Chris to work closely with members of QHVSG to deliver informed and compassionate news to Queenslanders, as well as campaign for law and policy changes to help bring justice to families in need.

Furthermore, Chris has given talks at Queensland schools about the role of journalism in our society, and the importance of compassion when reporting on homicide.



## GENERAL MEMBER – IAN ROWAN

In 1997 in the UK, Ian's niece Kate Bushell was brutally murdered while walking her neighbour's dog, close to her home. It is still an unsolved case for the Exeter Police. Ian vowed to honour her memory where he can and has been a White Ribbon ambassador for over 10 years. Ian started the charity 'Safe Streets' and is very keen to serve QHVSG.

Ian brings over 40 years' experience in the business sectors of marketing, events, finance, strategic/operational planning, insurance and banking. He has held senior positions in not-for-profit charities with DGR status in CEO and General Manager positions in community, health, public safety and emergency rescue.

Ian is focusing his skills and experiences on the help, advice and support that QHVSG offer to victims of homicide.





## GENERAL MEMBER – JULIE WATERS

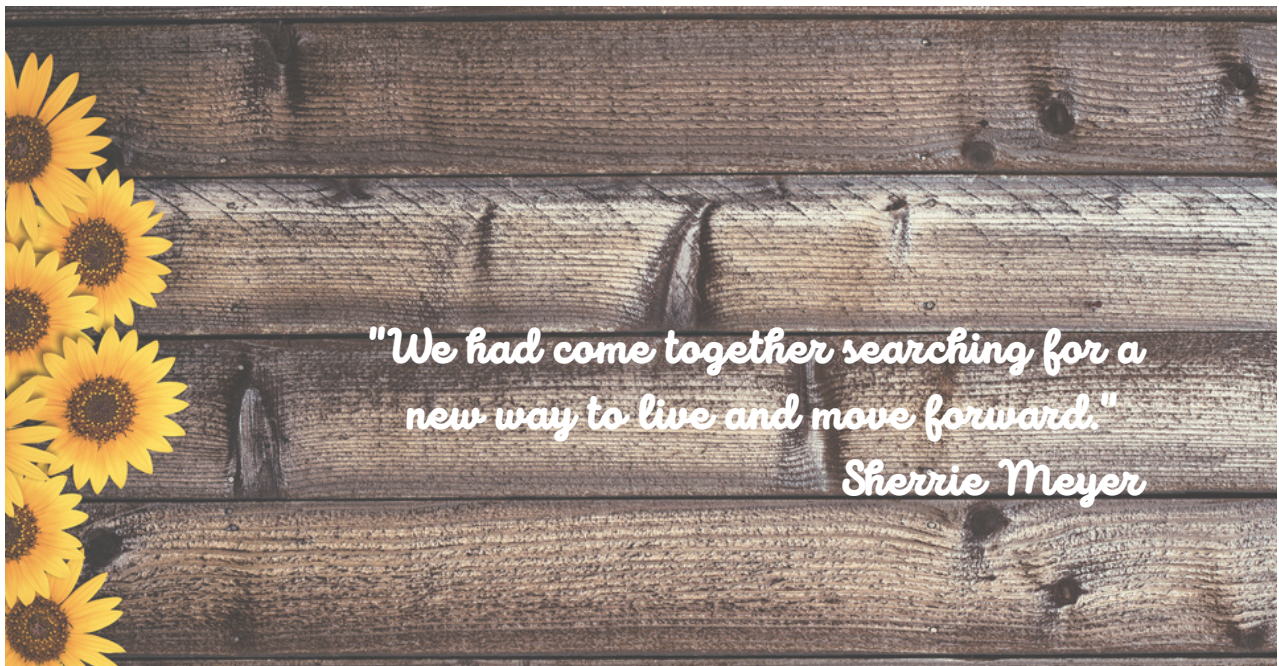
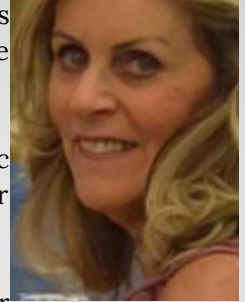
Julie became a member of QHVSG in July 2011, when her son Damian Leeding was murdered. Initially Julie went to the meetings for support, but it soon became apparent to her that this organisation was unique in what it did for its members.

Julie realised that she would like to be a part of helping others through this horrific journey we have to face, and consequently she has served on the board for a number of years.

Julie is committed to supporting the board and staff achieve greater outcomes for members in all facets of the organisation, be it support, legislative reform, education programs and research projects: building awareness and developing an inclusive engagement strategy.

Julie is a keen advocate of law reform and will continue to support members by helping to implement new strategies for law reform, advocacy to achieve positive outcomes for our members and continue to strengthen existing relationships, while forging new ones with community organisations and government.

Julie has helped the Marketing and Communications Projects Committee with the QHVSG Brisbane Family Fun Day, Walk for Support, International Women's Day Dining With Daisies breakfast, Gold Coast Family Fun Day and Walk for Support and the Inaugural Annual Night of Recognition and Christmas Celebration.



## OUR PEOPLE

In 2021 QHVSG operated with a total of seven employees in the following roles:

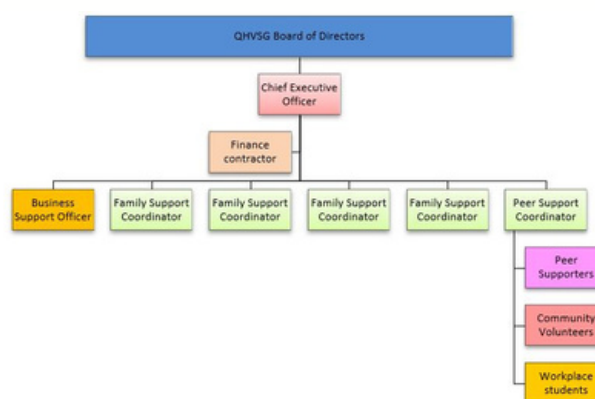
One Chief Executive Officer, one full time Business Support Officer, an expansion to four full time Family Support Coordinators, and one full time Peer Support Coordinator. In addition, QHVSG engages an external finance contractor to provide expertise.

QHVSG has always utilised many volunteers across a variety of roles to meet our governance and operational needs.

We currently have twenty three Peer Supporters who have a lived experience of homicide, as well as thirty two Community Volunteers. All of these generous people are invaluable and enable us to provide 24 / 7 support across Queensland.

QHVSG also values the contribution of the twelve tertiary education workplace students who were with us in 2021.

## ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Plans to introduce a youth focused Counsellor to support our younger members are in place for the 2021-22 Financial Year. This will bring our Family Support Coordinator team to five, with an overall FTE of eight.



## OUR FUNDING

QHVSG is a not-for-profit organisation that receives the majority of its funding through government tender. The funds are supplied from the budget of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (DJAG). The current tender ends on June 30, 2022, however we have been successful in securing the 2022-2028 tender after being chosen as the preferred provider in November in 2021.

We are extremely grateful for the support of the Honourable Mark Ryan MP, and Commissioner of Queensland Police Service Katarina Carroll APM, who have committed to an additional \$1,000,000 across a five year period. This is to be used for the provision of counselling. This funding will continue until the end of the 2025 financial year.

QHVSG values and acknowledges the positive relationship that we continue to have with all levels of government.

## Donors and grants

We are extremely grateful to have had the support of many individuals, businesses and philanthropic programs. We sincerely thank those who have chosen to support our work by financial or pro-bono contributions.

In 2021 we acknowledge:

- The Department of Premier and Cabinet
- The Queensland Police Service
- McInnes Wilson Lawyers
- Robertson Web Design and Development
- Logan City Council
- Gold Coast City Council
- Speaker of the House
- Big W Carseldine
- Ma's Pizza Kitchen, Mackay
- Kmart
- Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens
- Beautiful Doves

We receive generous donations from many individuals which we utilise for our various programs. This ongoing support is critically important - thank you.

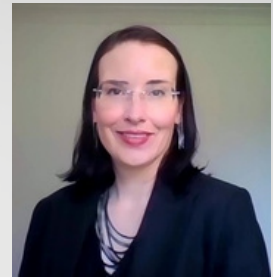


Hon Curtis Pitt MP  
Speaker and Member for Mulgrave



# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

I want to begin my report by acknowledging you, our members, and your loved ones. I pay my respects to your loss, your courage, and the journey you have travelled. I am always deeply moved by the fact that you give so much back to QHVSG and to the community. No matter what you are going through in your own lives, you still unhesitatingly reach out to others with compassion and support. Words are not enough to capture the difference you make to people in need.



After the year that was 2020, it has been wonderful to be able to see each other in person again and to get together face to face once more. Despite 2021 being another year of unpredictable disruptions, we have still been able to be together for a number of special events throughout the year. There is nothing quite like human contact. However, we have continued to use technology to reach out to members who – for whatever reason – may not be in a position to attend in-person events. It has been wonderful to include more members in this way, and our plans for the future reflect this.

You can read more about what we have been doing in the CEO's report. On that note, I thank Brett and the team in the office for their hard work and perseverance throughout the year, as well as for their willingness to try new ways of doing things. This has not always been easy, and they have done a great job under often difficult circumstances.

Alongside the operational team, we have been fortunate to have the unwavering support of our volunteers. Every year, I am astounded by how incredibly committed our volunteers are and 2021 has again shown this. Thanks to the efforts of volunteers, our members can always hear a comforting voice no matter the time of day, can always reach support when they need it, and can always know that QHVSG is there for them. From the Board and all of QHVSG – our heartfelt gratitude.

It has been a busy year for the Board. The QHVSG Strategic Plan 2021-2024 was finalised early in the year, and marks a new phase of expanding activity for the organisation. The Plan reflects our firm belief that members should be at the centre of all of our efforts, and reinforces our objective to provide high-quality support services to all who want or need those. The Plan also emphasises the value we place on creating positive change and having dedicated and skilled staff and volunteers who work with QHVSG's mission and vision always in mind. As we look to the future, there are some ambitious goals in the Plan but we are confident that QHVSG is on track to achieve them.

Over the course of the year, I have had the pleasure of working with a fantastic Board who bring a range of different backgrounds and perspectives to our discussions, and whose knowledge, passion, and experience broadens and deepens our ability to guide QHVSG's direction and make difficult decisions. To Leanne (Deputy Chair), Monique (Secretary), Conor (Treasurer), Julie, Ian, and Chris – thank you for all that you have done and continue to do.

In everything we do, we strive to be the best possible organisation that we can for our members. On behalf of the Board, I sincerely thank you for the support you have given us, and I extend my very best wishes to you for the year ahead.





# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



To be able to speak for those who feel that they have no voice, for those who may feel so overwhelmed that the hill seems too big, and for those who are exposed to systems and processes that don't seem to have ever considered the impact of what has occurred, is an honour.

To be given permission to be able to contribute to someone's life when all hope and all trust may seem to be lost, is a privilege, and I echo the words of our Board Chairperson Dr. Samara McPhedran in acknowledging your loss.

## Our advocacy

Our relationships with key stakeholders are critical to our work, and I am pleased to state that these continue to be very positive. It is essential that our discussions are respectful, are solution focused and are undertaken with the experiences of our members as the driving force.

In particular I acknowledge and thank the leadership of the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Corrective Services, Parole Board Queensland, NSW State Parole Authority, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and Victim Assist Queensland for their ongoing willingness to listen to the experiences of our members and be so open to change.

Of course our advocacy must also be conducted in an apolitical way, and we thank all Queensland political parties for being accessible, and for your ongoing support for QHVSG. It is as a result of our consistent respectful dialogue, that we have continued to drive change. Key changes are show below.

## Serious Violent Offender Review

In October 2020, QHVSG approached all political parties and independents, asking them to commit to a range of election promises. We are pleased that the Queensland Government is honouring its pre-election commitment to reviewing the Serious Violent Offence Scheme, via the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council (QSAC).

In its 2018 final report, the Council stated that it "is concerned that the operation of Part 9A of the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992 (Qld) is exerting downward pressure on head sentences for child manslaughter in Queensland. A court is required, as a form of mandatory sentencing, to declare an offender convicted of a serious violent offence when imposing a sentence of 10 years or more for listed offences (including manslaughter). This unintended impact highlights the importance of fully considering all potential implications of reforms to sentencing law and practice."

In 2021, QHVSG was invited to partner with the QSAC to undertake targeted consultation with victims and survivors of crime on their views about sentencing for serious violent offences. Mindful of the sensitivities, QSAC has asked to partner with QHVSG to co-design and co-deliver a workshop to hear the perspective of our members. In addition, we have been invited to take part in a Symposium on the sentencing of serious violent offences in February 2022.

The QSAC report is due for completion in April 2022.

## No Body No Parole

In late 2020, The Queensland Government had committed to QHVSG to examine the issue of timeliness in relation to the No Body No Parole Legislation. The Parole Board Queensland's interpretation of the legislation had seen timeliness overlooked in many cases, to the point where it was felt by our members that the consideration of the element of timeliness or cooperation was effectively irrelevant. It was felt that this this was not the intended purpose of the legislation.

In October 2021, The Honourable Mark Ryan MP asked for input from QHVSG around changes to the Ministerial Guidelines - the QHVSG Board of Directors made clear recommendations which have now led to the consideration of timeliness as essential and collective part of their decisions. We will now wait and see how and if this change impacts future decisions.

## Frequency of Parole applications

In the past, offenders who were sentenced for murder were able to apply for parole every twelve months. This meant that families were subjected to ongoing uncertainty by being told each year that a parole decision was yet again being made.

We are pleased that our concerns have been listened to and understood, which has resulted in significant legislative change for families. The laws will give the President of Parole Board Queensland the power to make a "restricted prisoner declaration", blocking certain inmates from obtaining parole for up to 10 years, with no limit on the number of bans made.

These reforms are aimed at protecting the victim's families from the trauma of repeated and unnecessary parole applications.

## Round table event: criminal law proposals

QHVSG advocated for several legislative changes prior to the 2020 elections. Three specific areas were:

1. For the victims of homicide to be further acknowledged in the Mental Health Court.
2. To consider changes to the current 'Right to Silence' laws.
3. To consider changes to the introduction of 'Bad Character'. We feel that the UK model has great merit.

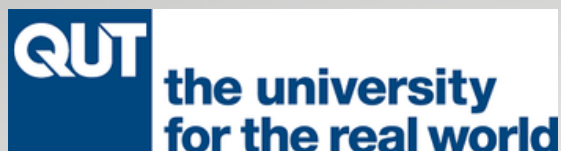
The Queensland Government had committed to investigate these proposals as a part of their election promise to QHVSG, and on October 7 the Queensland Attorney General hosted a round table event to facilitate discussions. A range of organisations and government departments were present to understand more about our point of view, to raise questions and of course to provide their own point of view.

At such events there are never decisions made, however the wide range of views have been documented and provided to the Attorney General for consideration. We will arrange a subsequent discussion once we receive the final documents from the meeting facilitator.

Finally, I thank QHVSG member Sonia Holiday, who provided a compelling firsthand perspective around why the change in the Mental Health Court is so important.



## Journalism and Hospital awareness sessions



Our Peer Support program moved into a new space in August, when Sonia Holiday and I provided an awareness session to Bachelor of Journalism students at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT).

The one-hour online session within the Journalism Ethics and Issues course covered a wide range of topics, and explored how the words and the behaviours of journalists can be supportive, but can also at times cause greater trauma.

The concept of a trauma informed approach underpinned the session.

As Sonia stated, "Having victims' families interact with journalists or trainees gives them real perspective and understanding from our side, with journalists needing to know we are real people, our murdered loved ones were very real people, part of the community. Their engaging with us, families of victims, gives a new perspective."

"Many families have been harmed by unethical or non-empathetic journalism, post murder and these sessions provide insights into respecting the person murdered, and empathising with their family."

Sonia also discussed how the media plays a vital role as soon as a murder occurs. "We, along with the police, need their help to ensure every avenue of the investigation can happen with the assistance of the public. This can help with an arrest and hopefully conviction."

Sonia spoke incredibly well and the session was well received. QUT lecturer Susan Hetherington was grateful for the opportunity, and stated "The presentation delivered by the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group was extremely powerful and well received. For journalism students to hear first hand about good and bad practice in respectfully approaching and talking to people who are living with trauma is truly invaluable. We certainly welcome the organisation back and actively encourage other universities to take advantage of the service."

Following on from our successful media student awareness session in September at the Queensland University of Technology, we provided a similar session to Social Workers at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

The focus was on interactions that occur in Emergency and Intensive Care settings. The experience of our peers is used to provide insight into how words and actions can both help and hinder our members at this very early stage of grief.

I sincerely thank the wonderful people who put their hand up to speak at these sessions. It is not an easy task but is also one that provides an opportunity to help others who are faced with the unimaginable.



## Peer Support

As is shown with this report, our Peer Supporters contributed an enormous amount of time and effort into a wide range of activities. Whether it be as a Board Member, an event planner or helper, an education and awareness advocate or an after-hours phone supporter, the wealth of knowledge and understanding is the true strength of our organisation.

The re-establishment of the Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba Support Groups was wonderful news, as is the creation of the Maryborough and Gympie Support Group settings. Our Mackay, Gold Coast and Ipswich groups continue to be well supported and we acknowledge the long term contributions from our wonderful Peer Support Group Leaders.

We welcome our new Peer Support Coordinator in late 2021, and we thank Michelle Gadke for her contribution to the program over the past two years.

We are aiming to continue to increase the number of Peer Supporters across Queensland and look forward to hearing the wonderful stories about these new connections.

## Introduction of QHVSG Educational Scholarships

This year we were proud to announce the commencement of Educational Scholarships for QHVSG members. The one off \$2500 grant will be provided to one young person who wants to undertake tertiary education, or who has already commenced studies in a justice or mental health related course.

This initiative was introduced due to the impact that homicide can have on education. Time away from school, changes to friendships or the impact of trauma on learning are sadly some of the challenges that can arise. We hope that this can help open up some opportunities, and encourage eligible people to apply.

McInnes Wilson Lawyers have been a long term supporter of QHVSG and have generously provided the funds for our Inaugural Scholarship. Our sincere thanks to Mark, Prue, Emily and their wonderful team.



### 2021 QHVSG Educational Scholarship

Proudly sponsored by McInnes Wilson Lawyers



#### 2021 QHVSG Educational Scholarship

We know that homicide has an enormous impact on our lives – this can hold some people back from reaching their goals in education or in their careers. Our educational scholarships aim to make this path easier.

Each year in Queensland, we award a one-off grant of \$2500 to a young person who wants to undertake tertiary education, or who has already commenced studies in a justice or mental health related course. Importantly, this grant is provided to students who genuinely need financial assistance.

#### Scholarship details?

- Scholarships are awarded annually
- Applications close on 30th November each year
- Selection will be made by the QHVSG Scholarship Awards Committee
- The successful applicant must attend the Awards Ceremony and provide media release consent

#### Who can apply?

To apply for a scholarship, you must meet the following criteria:

- You need to be between 17-22 years of age (permission from a parent or guardian is required for children under the age of 18)
- You need to have lost an immediate family member to homicide in QLD
- You must be eligible to attend a tertiary or vocational institution such as University, College or TAFE
- You have already commenced or have been accepted into a justice or mental health related course in 2022

#### Criteria for assessment

- Your personal goals
- Your current achievements which demonstrate your motivation to overcome adversity
- Your career pursuits and how this scholarship will help achieve your goals
- Your community and or school involvement
- Proof of tertiary admission into a justice or mental health related course in 2022
- Proof of genuine need for financial assistance

Please contact us via [admin@qhvsg.org.au](mailto:admin@qhvsg.org.au) for an application form, or for further information.



## Thank you

Our board of Directors has wonderful mix of skills which include academic research, economics, executive leadership, journalism, fundraising, education and business administration. Critically, the Board has four directors who have a lived experience of homicide. This team is a strong one, and I sincerely thank Samara, Leanne, Monique, Conor, Ian, Julie and Chris for donating their time and sharing their expertise. I thank them for the ongoing support that they provide me.

We are well placed to continue our advocacy, support and education across our current Strategic Planning period, after being chosen as the preferred supplier for Homicide Support Services for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's Victims Services Funding Program for the period 2022-2027.

Our operations team have a role which is incredibly challenging, and also incredibly rewarding. Like me, I know that each of the team also feel honoured to be able to help. These are incredibly talented individuals and as a team, are providing simply wonderful support to QHVSG members.

Without our Peers and our Community volunteers, we would not be where we are. Your selfless contributions changes lives and I sincerely thank you for the wide range of responsibilities that you undertake. In 2021, your 20,175 hours of giving equates to a monetary value of \$852,000. Whilst this is a remarkable effort, the real contribution to the wellbeing of someone else cannot be measured. Please feel proud of what you do for the members of QHVSG.

I would like to specifically acknowledge the work of Detective Superintendent Craig Morrow. Craig has been a reliable and supportive point of contact, and his level of commitment is indicative of the wonderful relationship that QHVSG and the Queensland Police Service has had since 1995. His team of Queensland Police Officers work incredibly hard to investigate these horrendous crimes.

I acknowledge the genuine support that Queensland Corrective Services, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, Parole Board Queensland, Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and the Queensland Health Victim Support Service provide. I am proud of the professional relationships that we have developed and I look forward to continuing to work together to make the journey of our members one that is acknowledged and understood.

An essential part of our work is our relationship with the government and I thank all Members of Parliament for their willingness to listen, and for their ongoing support of QHVSG. Our dealings with the office of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, along with the office of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services have been outstanding, and I sincerely thank the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, the Honourable Mark Ryan MP and their teams for the respect and genuine consideration for both our work, and the welfare of our members.

Finally, to those who have lost a loved one. You are our motivation and are the common thread among our Board of Directors, our paid operations team, our Peer Supporters, and our Community Volunteers. We will continue to listen to your needs, we will speak for those of you who may have lost their voice, and we will proudly stand beside you when you ask.

If you need us, please never hesitate to let us know.

Take care

Brett Thompson  
Chief Executive Officer



# OUR FINANCIAL REPORT

The 2020-21 financial year saw the Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group Inc. (QHVSG) achieve a net operating surplus of \$174,266, a significant improvement on the small operating deficit (-\$1,219) in the 2019-20 financial year. This result was driven by an increase in income to \$867,545 with a majority of income relating to grant funding which increased to \$795,791 in 2020-21 compared to \$612,237 in 2019-20. The source of the increase related primarily to \$200,000 in grant funding from the Queensland Police Service as part of a \$1,000,000 grant to be delivered over five years starting in the 2020-21 financial year.

COVID-19 income also increased to \$56,333, up from \$38,691 in 2019-20, however income from fundraising and promotional activities declined to \$11,310 from \$63,914 the previous year. This decline reflects both the impact of COVID-19 on fundraising activities during 2020-21 as well as income earned from one-off activities in the 2019-20 financial year, including the 25th Anniversary event.

Consistent with previous years, a vast majority of QHVSG's expenses related to staff costs and wages which increased modestly to \$554,860 in 2020-21, up from \$545,946 in 2019-20. Peer support expenses increased from \$3,633 in 2019-20 to \$14,394 due to procurement of external advice in relation to the needs of young people impacted by homicide. The cost of these services was covered by a grant provided by the Brisbane City Council.

Total expenses for 2020-21 were 5% lower than the 2019-20 year, reaching \$693,279, owing to lower costs related to managing COVID-19 impacts, including reduced IT expenses and costs associated with promotional activities. Other expenses remained stable over 2020-21.

Current assets saw a significant growth in 2020-21 thanks to an increase of more than \$160,000 in cash assets held at bank. Non-current assets reduced marginally to \$8,992 primarily due to accumulated depreciation on property, plant, and equipment. Combined, QHVSG's current and non-current assets puts the organisation in a very robust position with total assets of \$378,172. Total liabilities reduced from \$64,821 in 2019-20 to \$50,014 in 2020-21, due largely to a reduction in employee entitlements. This leaves QHVSG in a strong position with net assets of \$328,157.

QHVSG's accumulated operating surplus of \$328,157, combined with a strong revenue position will ensure we are well placed to continue to deliver our core support and advocacy services, as well as strengthening our service offering and income sources through the delivery of our strategic priorities over the coming years.

QHVSG has recently been chosen as the preferred supplier for Homicide Support Services for the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's Victims Services Funding Program for the period 2022-2027.

This is a very significant achievement and ensures a level of revenue certainty that will be fundamental in continuing to deliver QHVSG's important advocacy and support services. This result is a reflection of the dedication, compassion and hard work of the QHVSG staff and volunteers, and I congratulate them for their achievements.





*Prepared by*

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**QUEENSLAND HOMICIDE VICTIMS' SUPPORT  
GROUP INC.**

**AUDIT REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
30th June 2021**

## 2020-2021 FINANCIAL AUDIT

### Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group Inc. Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30th June 2021

	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>		
<b>Grant Income</b>		
Grants Received	795,791.28	612,237.31
<b>Group Income</b>		
Covid-19 Income	56,333.00	38,691.00
Donations	3,401.38	4,837.59
Fundraising & Promotions	11,310.13	63,914.25
Sales	10.91	100.00
Interest Income	0.48	487.53
Membership	6.00	59.00
Sundry	-	102.91
Tax Appeal	692.29	-
Profit/(Loss) on Sale	-	4,484.48
	<b>867,545.47</b>	<b>724,914.07</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
<b>Administrative Expenses</b>		
Accountancy	5,182.50	4,237.50
Auditors Fees	1,140.00	1,380.00
Bank Service Charges	630.67	1,426.95
Board Expenses	52.15	2,559.40
Consulting IT Services	25,105.55	54,312.89
Covid-19 Expenses	385.14	-
Dues and Subscriptions Paid	9,103.87	5,468.49
Equipment Hire & Acquisitions	2,371.26	3,857.35
Gifts & Donations	62.73	546.41
Insurances	5,304.91	4,143.53
Interest Paid	-	22.44
Lease Fees	2,616.37	3,029.29
Licence & Permit Fees	1,187.51	1,382.08
Postage - General	2,368.12	3,174.16
Printing	962.38	2,393.72
Professional Fees	1,400.00	900.00
Registrations & Licences	3,636.60	101.90
Stationery	1,810.20	1,266.07
Sundry Expenses	796.78	-
Repairs	94.55	-
Telephone	9,267.21	9,965.40
<b>Total Administrative Expenses</b>	<b>73,478.50</b>	<b>100,167.58</b>
<b>Client Related Expenses</b>		
Meeting Costs	140.06	266.76
Parking	23.27	35.41
Peer Support	14,394.35	3,633.31
<b>Total Client Related Expenses</b>	<b>14,557.68</b>	<b>3,935.48</b>

This statement should be read with the attached Notes and Audit Report.

**Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group Inc.**  
**Statement of Financial Performance**  
**for the year ended 30th June 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>Motor Vehicle</b>		
Fuel, Oil and RACQ	517.12	638.76
Depreciation	1,434.00	1,793.00
Parking & Tolls	481.80	1,104.63
Lease	-	1,974.27
Motor Vehicle Service Costs	135.72	722.64
Registration & Insurance M/V	<u>1,286.38</u>	<u>1,532.49</u>
<b>Total Motor Vehicle</b>	3,855.02	7,765.79
<b>Property &amp; Energy Expenses</b>		
Cleaning Costs	1,950.00	1,462.50
Electricity	1,816.24	2,169.13
Property Management	863.56	818.10
Rent	20,707.68	20,375.82
Waste Disposal	<u>302.00</u>	<u>196.27</u>
<b>Total Property &amp; Energy Expenses</b>	25,639.48	25,021.82
<b>Staff Costs</b>		
Allowances	9,847.54	10,444.78
Staff Provisions	(15,884.59)	7,902.98
Superannuation	45,680.09	42,317.93
Wages	501,931.72	472,444.51
WorkCover	<u>13,285.56</u>	<u>12,836.12</u>
<b>Total Staff Costs</b>	554,860.32	545,946.32
<b>Staff Management</b>		
Staff Supervision	8,682.28	7,565.00
Staff Training	818.18	2,968.18
Staff Amenities	416.65	591.40
Staff Event	<u>19.64</u>	<u>18.18</u>
<b>Total Motor Vehicle</b>	9,936.75	11,142.76
<b>Other Expenses</b>		
Depreciation	1,095.00	1,514.00
Fundraising Expenses	200.00	400.00
Promotions & Displays	7,937.82	28,448.73
Travel	425.78	538.78
Volunteer Expenses	<u>1,292.98</u>	<u>1,252.60</u>
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<u>10,951.58</u>	<u>32,154.11</u>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>693,279.33</u>	<u>726,133.86</u>
<b>Net Income/(Loss)</b>	<u><b>\$ 174,266.14</b></u>	<u><b>\$ (1,219.79)</b></u>

This statement should be read with the attached Notes and Audit Report.



**Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group Inc.**  
**Profit & Loss Appropriation**  
**for the year ended 30th June 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	174,266.14	(1,219.79)
Prior Years Adjustment	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	174,266.14	(1,219.79)
Accumulated Surplus/Deficit - Beginning of Year	<u>153,891.75</u>	<u>155,111.54</u>
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<u><u>\$ 328,157.89</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 153,891.75</u></u>

This statement should be read with the attached Notes and Audit Report.

**Queensland Homicide Victims Support Group Inc.**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**as at 30th June 2021**

	2021	2020
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Cash Assets</b>		
WBC 308940 - Working	366,300.17	203,181.68
WBC 308959 - Debit Cards	969.14	2,100.12
WBC 308967 - Interest	289.99	289.99
Rental Bond Authority	1,620.00	1,620.00
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>369,179.30</b>	<b>207,191.79</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Property, Plant &amp; Equipment</b>		
Motor Vehicles - At Cost	19,645.23	19,645.23
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(13,907.80)	(12,473.80)
	5,737.43	7,171.43
Office Equipment	131,083.52	131,083.52
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(128,189.77)	(127,134.77)
	2,893.75	3,948.75
Accom Plant & Equip. - At Cost	2,594.14	2,594.14
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(2,232.60)	(2,192.60)
	361.54	401.54
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<b>8,992.72</b>	<b>11,521.72</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>378,172.02</b>	<b>218,713.51</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>Payables</b>		
Accounts Payable	5,439.80	1,710.62
PAYG Tax Payable	6,268.00	8,571.00
Superannuation Payable	4,112.03	5,302.55
Tax Payable	(3,169.74)	(2,253.94)
<b>Provisions</b>		
Employee Entitlements	32,422.84	48,307.43
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>		
Accruals	4,941.20	3,184.10
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>50,014.13</b>	<b>64,821.76</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>50,014.13</b>	<b>64,821.76</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 328,157.89</b>	<b>\$ 153,891.75</b>
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		
Accumulated Surplus at beginning of the year	153,891.75	155,111.54
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	174,266.14	(1,219.79)
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>	<b>\$ 328,157.89</b>	<b>\$ 153,891.75</b>

This statement should be read with the attached Notes and Audit Report.

# OUR PEER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group was founded in North Queensland in 1995 by five families, all affected by homicide. These families united to advocate for effective support and acknowledgement by the State government in relation to the enormous distress co-victims of homicide experience.

From this grassroots beginning, volunteer peer support groups and activities were established across Queensland. After 26 years, QHVSG is still committed to the practise of mutual support and self-help.

Our peer facilitated activities, such as monthly support groups, peer to peer phone calls, social events, community awareness days and memorial days, are crucial to the recovery of families and enable us to build a community of survivors.

Six new Peer Supporters undertook training through our Peer Support Coordinator and existing Peers were provided with the opportunity to undertake a range of support and self care learning sessions through Blue Knot and the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement. In total, two hundred and ninety four hours of operational time was used to facilitate training.

There were ten Peer Support Groups operating across Queensland throughout the 2020-21 year, as well as two online sessions. A total of forty two Peer Support Group meetings took place.

We welcomed new Peer Support Groups in Townsville, Gympie, Maryborough and Rockhampton.

Sixty two new Peers accessed support, with 646 individual instances of support recorded.

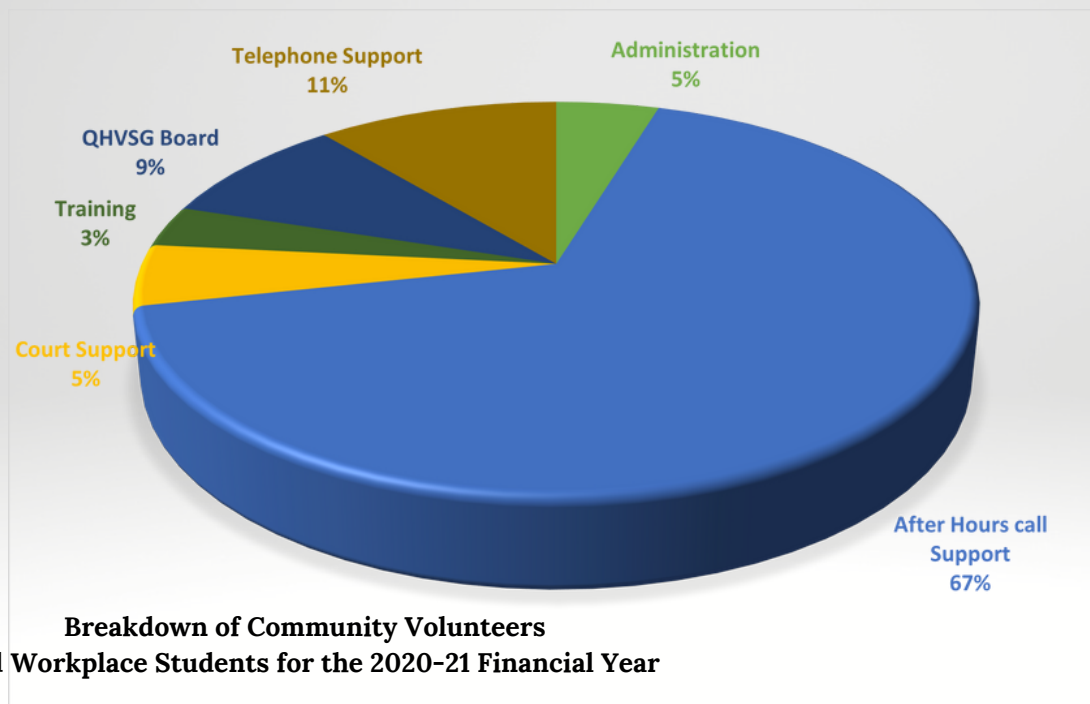




## Our community volunteers and workplace students

Our Community Volunteers do not have a lived experience of homicide but without question, demonstrate deep empathy for our cause. Working side by side with our peers, these individuals work in many areas, and undertake the majority of after hours telephone support, 365 days every year.

Like our Peer Supporters, our Community Volunteers undertake a wide range of tasks to support all aspects of the organisation, and their contribution is priceless.

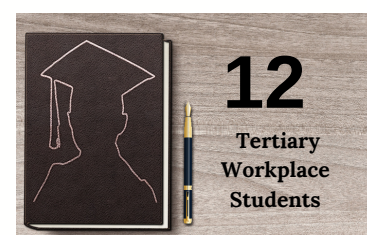


QHVS supports the professional development of tertiary level students who are undertaking studies in psychology, criminology, counselling and human services. Students undertake formal work-placement for a minimum of 50 hours.

Our links to Griffith University, the University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology and a range of other colleges, are long term and beneficial for all parties.



**\$577,599.75**  
Monetary value of  
Community Volunteer and student  
placement hours in 2020-21 FY



## Our Peer Supporter contributions

Our Peer Supporters undertake a wide range of tasks that are vital within our mission. These roles are matched to the interests and skill sets of the individual.

Tasks undertaken included:

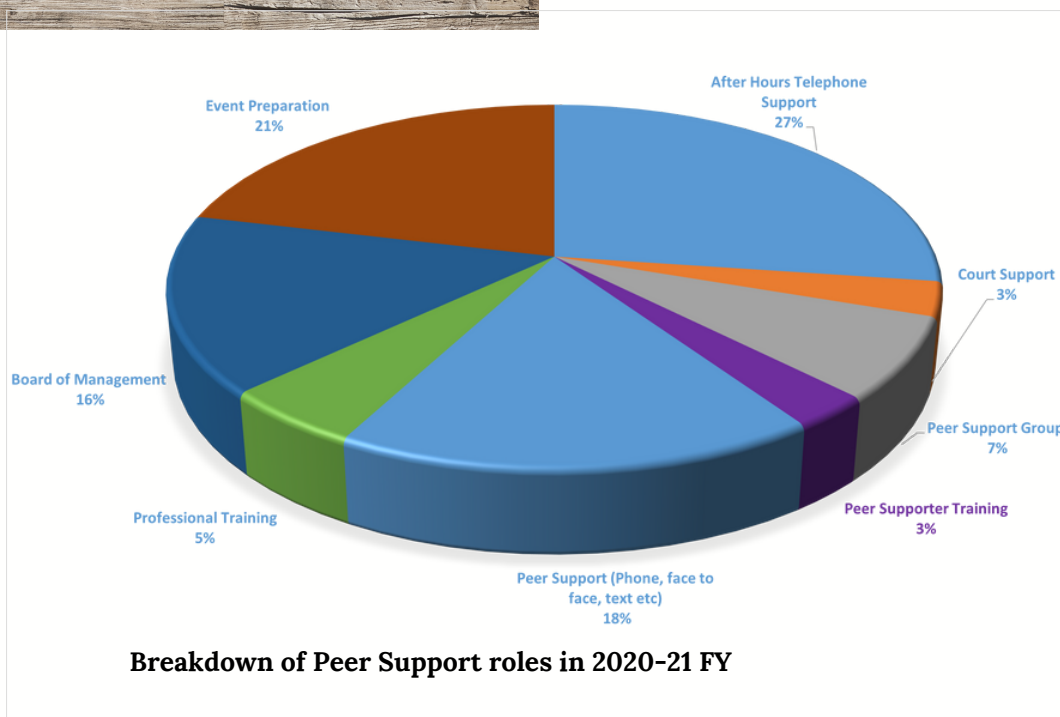
- Online forum moderation
- After hours telephone support
- Board of Director roles
- Community education
- Court support
- Event organisation and attendance
- Fundraising
- Peer Support Meeting facilitation
- Professional Education to Detectives and university students
- Supported and facilitated Peer Support weekends
- Telephone support

In 2021, our Peer Supporter Volunteers provided 6504 hours of voluntary time.



# \$274794

**Monetary value of  
Peer Support Hours in 2020-21 FY**



## OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

One homicide is too many and our thoughts are with all those who have been impacted by these senseless acts. Our loved ones who are lost are from our families, they are our friends, they are our work and school colleagues and they are our sporting and community group connections.

Regardless of your connection, we acknowledge your loss and we offer you support whenever you need it.

Across the 2020-21 financial year, QHVSG responded to three less homicides compared to 2019; in that year we saw a significant increase across QLD. We hope that with the genuine efforts that are being made by so many to prevent violence, we will witness a significant decrease in this abhorrent trend.

Number of new homicides responded to  
by QHVSG in the 2020-21 financial year

55

16 females



39 males



1 less homicide

5 less female homicides

**3.66% decrease**  
since June 30, 2020

Source. QHVSG ACT! database. 2021 \*

1.7.20 - 30.6.21

\*figures refer to the number of homicides that QHVSG was  
formally notified of by the Queensland State Crime Command.





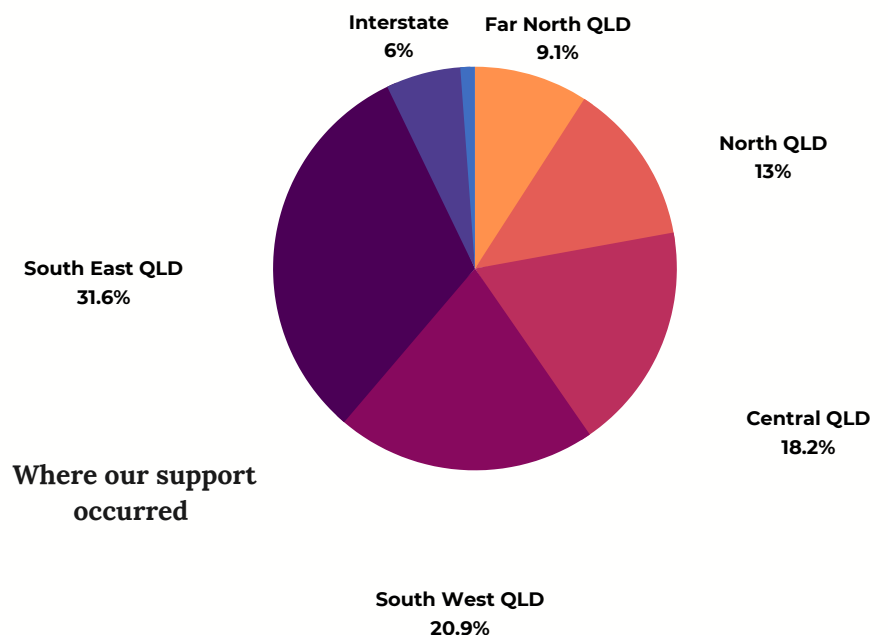
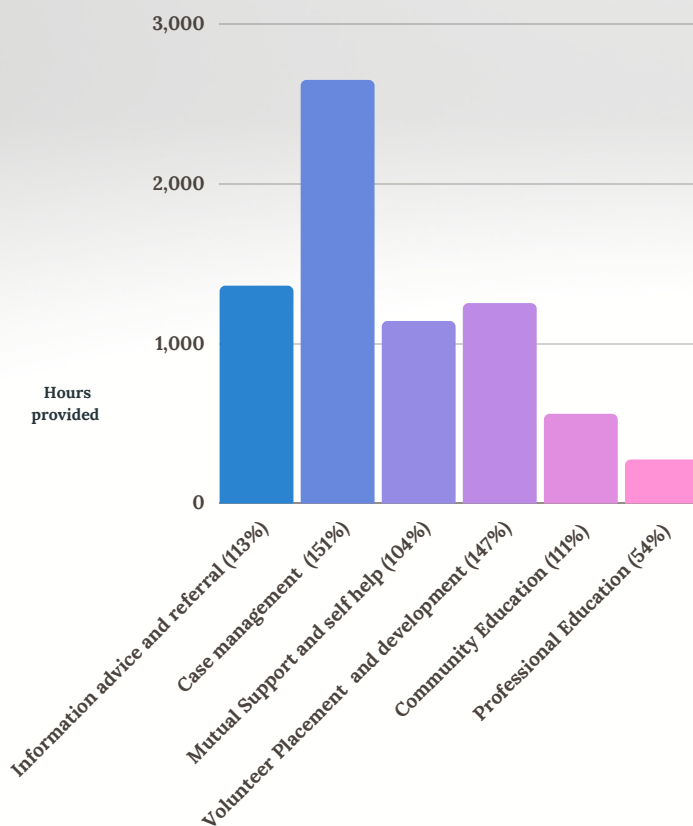
## Output measures

In our 26th year of operation, QHVSG has again provided enormous levels of support across Queensland. We have a contractual obligation to the Queensland Government to meet specific operational measures known as outputs, and we are required to report to Victim Assist Queensland (VAQ) each quarter. VAQ is a business unit within the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

QHVSG met all output targets across the 2020-21 financial year, with the exception of the professional education. This aspect of our work was impacted as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions; put simply the opportunities to provide the usual level of training and development to professional and community sectors decreased.

QHVSG was proactive around communicating this concern to VAQ, who were satisfied that we were meeting all obligations.

### VAQ key output categories



## OUR EVENTS

QHVSg conducts events for a variety of purposes, and we will continue to evaluate what we currently do. We will also continue to listen to the needs of our members and consider new ideas for events that are in line with our strategic direction.

In 2021, a range of events were planned which included:

- Men's and women's weekends at Coochiemudlo Island
- Homicide Awareness Days
- QHVSg Memorial Day
- Night of Recognition (Gala Ball)
- Children's Christmas Parties
- Peer Supporter and Volunteer Christmas and appreciation Party

### Member Support Weekends



Our member weekends at Coochiemudlo Island were organised and set to take place in June. Members had put their plans aside, and we had booked flights for attendees. But news of a potential lockdown was a significant issue and the tough decision to postpone the two weekends had to be made.

As the year progressed, so did the uncertainty around lockdowns and restrictions, which prevented us from setting new dates. In 2022, we will do all we can to hold these wonderful member support weekends.

### Memorial Day 2021

QHVSg's Memorial Day enables members to come together to remember their loved ones while being supported by both peers and staff. While we would have loved nothing more than to hold a beautiful Memorial Day to pay tribute to our loved ones, due to restrictions we were unable to do so again this year.

Despite the challenges, the 2021 Memorial Day was still very special.

On 17 October at 10am we lit a candle online and asked members to keep the candle burning in honour of their loved one, by sharing the candle to their own Facebook page and by lighting a candle at home. Tributes of loved ones were then displayed on our Facebook page and a memorial photo slideshow was posted at the end of the event.

Across the 2-hour period which culminated in a 20-minute memorial slide show, we had a reach of over 46,000 views.

We thank the many people who provided support through kind words, likes and shares and sincerely thank Monique Ferrario for initiating the concept.



## 2021 Night of Recognition



These QHVSG Recognition Awards publicly acknowledge exceptional Police, Media and Service Providers across Queensland who have gone above and beyond the everyday demands of their role and displayed exceptional qualities of compassion and empathy towards our QHVSG members.

Now in their fourth year, the state wide awards highlight the need for a compassionate, trauma informed approach when working with people who have lost a loved one to homicide.

Our 2021 Annual Night of Recognition was another event that needed to be modified, however Parliament House was a wonderful setting to witness these wonderful achievements. We sincerely thank the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP for her support in securing the venue.

### **Damian Leeding Compassion in Policing Award Presented by Julie Waters**

Julie is the loving mother of Detective Senior Constable Damian Leeding. Damian was murdered in the line of duty 10 years ago and Julie feels that sponsoring the Damian Leeding Compassion in Policing award is a wonderful way to honour her son's memory.

Julie and her family are honoured to sponsor this award as a wonderful reminder of the individuals in Policing who exude the qualities of care and compassion and go above and beyond in the most challenging of situations.

### **Nominees**

Detective Senior Constable Julian Libbis, Detective Senior Constable Dan Hubbard, Detective Sergeant Mark Bruggemann, Detective Senior Constable Matt Haynes, Detective Sergeant Chris Lafferty, Detective Senior Sergeant Warren Gibbs, Acting Sergeant Tracey Clouston, Assistant Commissioner Mark Wheeler, Acting Chief Superintendent Rhys Wildman, Acting Inspector Ken Murray, Detective Inspector Damien Hanson, Detective Sergeant Andrew Abraham.



### **Recipients (jointly nominated)**

Detective Senior Constable Ashley Shepherd, Detective Senior Constable Natalie Harrison and Detective Senior Constable Shane Fry (represented by Belinda Fry), pictured with award sponsor Julie Waters



## Mitchell Ferrario Compassion in Media Award Presented by Gai and Monique Ferrario

The Ferrario family chose to sponsor this award because of their experience with the media during the trial into Mitchell's death. There were some terrible untruths written about him and at times it felt like he was the one on trial, not the offender.

Mitchell's family hope that by sponsoring this award, it will serve as a reminder to the media that there are real people behind the stories they report on, and that what they say can have a damaging and lasting impact on the families left behind.

They also hope that this award will show our members that there are truly compassionate media representatives who honour our loved ones, and who care about making positive changes to the lives of others. This is a legacy that the family know Mitchell would have been proud to leave behind.

### Nominees

Grace Mason from the Cairns Post  
Mayeta Clark from ABC's Australian Story,  
Jamie Pultz from Six media for the Beenham Valley Road Podcast.



### Recipient

Ann Wason Moore from the Gold Coast Bulletin,  
pictured with award sponsors Gai and Monique Ferrario

one kind word  
can change  
someone's  
entire day...

## Brad Lees Compassion in Service Award Presented by Maureen Sutton

Maureen is the loving grandmother of little Brad Lees whose life was taken in 2012.

Brad was 2 years 1 month and 24 days young when he died. There are no words to describe the loss of an innocent child.

Maureen says "Sponsoring the Brad Lees Award for Compassion in Service has given us a meaningful and positive way to pay tribute to Brad, and to acknowledge and thank the many people who help victims of homicide on the road to recovery by their acts of compassion and kindness.

It is a special privilege to honour Brad in this way and keep the dream of him alive.

There is no foot too small that it cannot leave an imprint."

### Nominees

Doris Zagdanski from All About Grief  
Mark Woolley, Prue Poole and Emily Billiau from McInnes Wilson Lawyers  
Peter Boyce from Butler McDermott Lawyers.



### Recipient

Colette Smart (second from right), Deputy Registrar for the Supreme, District & Magistrates Court from Mackay, pictured with award sponsor Maureen Sutton, The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP and Brigita Cunningham, Executive Director of Queensland Magistrates Court

## QHVSg Volunteer of the Year

Presented by The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP  
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and  
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence

### Nominees

Bernadette Schiller and Margaret Murray



### Recipient

Bernadette Schiller

Pictured with nominator Gai Ferrario and The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP

### Nomination

Bernadette is such a warm, lovely person and is a true asset to the QHVSg community. Nothing is too much trouble for Bernadette, and she happily gives her time to others, always offering to help with whatever she can.

Over the years, Bernadette has volunteered at many QHVSg events. She has helped take photos for the Annual Night of Recognition and assisted with BBQ fundraisers at Awareness Day events.

Bernadette also helps at the annual Children's Christmas parties, doing everything from helping with food and drinks, setting up the event, talking with members, assisting with anything needed on the day and importantly, helping Santa.

Bernadette also provides peer support for QHVSg, visiting members to check in them, making phone calls and driving people that are unable to do so themselves.

Bernadette has suffered her own incredible grief, not only losing five friends to homicide, but also still bearing the physical pain of been injured in the same horrific event many years later.

Despite all of this, everything Bernadette does, she does with a smile and kindhearted nature. Everyone that meets Bernadette is truly grateful for what she does and the love that she gives. Thank you for all that you do, Bernadette. We are so lucky to have you!

*We look forward to acknowledging outstanding service at our  
2022 QHVSg Night of Recognition.  
We hope that you can join us.*



## Homicide Awareness Days

Over one hundred and twenty people attended the 2021 Brisbane Homicide Awareness Day event, which for the first time was held inside Parliament House.

The event which took place on May 11, provided the opportunity for Members of Parliament to interact directly with people who have been impacted by homicide, as well as a range of agencies and not-for-profits who provide services in this space. Queensland Health Victim Support Service, Brisbane Domestic Violence Services, Victims Register, Court Network, Vulnerable Person Unit QPS, McInnes Wilson Lawyers, Red Rose Foundation, DV Connect, Department of Public Prosecution, Adult Restorative Justice Conferencing, Victim Assist Queensland, The Daniel Morcombe Foundation, Relationships Australia, QUT and the University of QLD provided wonderful information booths.

Thirty Members of Parliament, including a number of Ministers took the time to come, meet and listen to the needs that exist by both individuals and organisations. This number of Government representatives was a significant increase on previous years when we held the event outside of the Parliament precinct.

Thank you to The Honourable Mark Ryan MP and House Speaker The Honourable Curtis Pitt MP for their recognition of the work of QHVSG. Their comments in Parliament on the day can be seen here [https://tv.parliament.qld.gov.au/?reference=0Mba20210511\\_101143](https://tv.parliament.qld.gov.au/?reference=0Mba20210511_101143)

We also acknowledge the support of Queensland Premier Anastasia Palaszczuk who recognised the work of QHVSG widely on social media following the event. This is greatly appreciated.

Finally and most importantly, we recognise the QHVSG members who attended, and for those who spoke so bravely to those present. You made an unforgettable impression.



# Collaboration

## Mackay Awareness Day

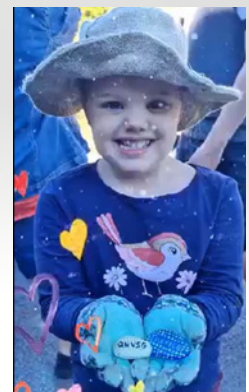
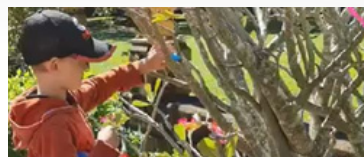
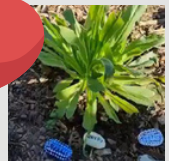
On a cool Saturday 5th of June morning, Mackay QHVSG members planted daisies in memory of their loved ones at the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens followed by a lovely picnic. Our Awareness Day coincided with the Gardens open day which attracted lots of visitors.

The children took great delight in spreading love and awareness by placing the lovely stones which were so beautifully painted and generously donated by Michelle Symonds around the Gardens to be found and either treasured or repositioned throughout the Gardens for someone else to be able to find.

Members and the public will be able to visit the Gardens and see our beautiful garden of yellow daisies – a symbolic tribute to our loved ones.

Thank you to the staff of the Mackay Regional Botanic Gardens for making this possible for our members.

QHVSG would also like to thank Leanne Pullen for organising this lovely day for the Mackay members. We appreciate you and everything that you do.



We acknowledge the wonderful generosity of the Rotary Club of Mackay Sunrise. In late 2021 the group provided a financial donation to support our Peer Support Activities.

We also acknowledge the Commonwealth Government for providing a \$5000 Commonwealth Community Grant to support the work of our volunteer program in the Dawson Electorate.



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## Gold Coast Awareness Day

On Saturday May 29, QHVSG held its annual Awareness Day, Walk for Support and Family Fun Day on the Gold Coast.

The Gold Coast Awareness Day is a special event that allows members to come together to remember their loved ones and receive support, while raising vital public awareness for the organisation. Well over 100 people were in attendance, including members, supporters and service providers.

QHVSG would like to take this opportunity to thank Queensland Corrective Services, Crime Stoppers Queensland, The Jack Beasley Foundation, QLD Police Service and Queensland Health Victim Support Service for supporting us on the day.

Thank you to also to Zanna for her generous donation of a beautiful 21 dove salute in memory of our loved ones.

Thank you to the QHVSG staff who attended the event, and the Board members and members that volunteered their time on the day.

A special thank you to Gai Ferrario for all of her hard work to ensure this event is a success each year - we appreciate you Gai.



CITY OF  
**GOLDCOAST.**<sup>TM</sup>





## Children's Christmas Parties

Our annual Children Christmas Parties bring families together and in 2021 events were held in Brisbane and Mackay. We sincerely thank Monique and Gai Ferrario from the Gold Coast and Leanne and Gary Pullen from Mackay for the time and energy that they put into making these days so wonderful.

The 2021 Brisbane event was all set to go – jumping castles, pony rides, face painting and of course the farm animal patting. Unfortunately, also arriving during the week of the event was a great deal of rain.

We were not deterred, and after some head scratching, an alternate plan was hatched.

As the photocollage shows, there were a lot of smiles and laughs as Mike the Magician wove his magic, which of course included a rabbit appearing from a hat!

Thanks to the assistance of the Logan Community Police, Santa somehow found his way to the party, and he arrived with lights and sirens. He was also very grateful when he arrived to see that the super elves (Gai and Monique Ferrario) had already found his sleigh and had arranged the presents to be ready. Even Mike was impressed!

There is a lot of voluntary time and effort that go into arranging this event each year, and we sincerely thank the parents who were so flexible and came along despite the need for a late change.

The Mackay event may be smaller, but the event was a huge success.

Local businesses provided discounted goods and free services – thank you to Kmart, Big W the Reject Shop.

The Sunshine Rotary Club, Mackay provided a wonderful cash donation which we

The evening was held at Ma's Pizza, who were extremely generous and ensured that everyone left with a Santa type belly!

The children received special gifts and a great time was had by all.

These two events are more examples of the incredible work of our volunteers.



## Volunteer Christmas and appreciation party

We acknowledge and thank our founding members for the incredible determination and skill in initiating QHVSG over 26 years ago, and we recognise the ongoing commitment of those who choose to help people in the most unfathomable of life circumstances. Proudly, this incredible team still has founding members providing support.

They do this without fanfare, without asking for anything in return, simply because they understand that a little bit of help can last a lifetime.

It was a pleasure to be able to spend time with some of our wonderful volunteers on Saturday night, 20 December. Being able to say thank you and publicly acknowledge each attendee was an honour.

Hopefully next year we will see less restrictions in travel, and we can organise similar thank you events for more areas across Queensland.

We thank all of the volunteers that give of their time so generously to QHVSG and its members. We appreciate everything that you do!



*Did you know that volunteers contributed over 18000 hours of their own time to QHVSG in the 2020-21 financial year?*





**Queensland Homicide Victims' Support Group  
Family Support after Murder Inc.  
Annual Report 2021  
[www.qhvsg.org.au](http://www.qhvsg.org.au)**