



# TMSG

TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.



## Annual Report 2019-2020

## Funding Bodies & Contracts

- Australian Government  
Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Government  
Department of Social Services
- Morris Family Foundation
- Multicultural Australia Ltd
- Queensland Government  
Department of Local  
Government, Racing and  
Multicultural Affairs
- Refugee and Immigration Legal  
Service
- Townsville City Council

## President's Report

TMSG acknowledges the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun and Bindal people, elders, past, present and future.

Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (TMSG) is a strong committed organisation that punches well above its weight in terms of providing compassionate and practical support for people coming to Australia under the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) to settle in our vibrant communities. Individuals and families seeking support at TMSG may also have access to the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS), Safer Pathways for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women (SPW) and Community Action for Multicultural Society (CAMS) programs. The services provided by TMSG make a significant contribution to the social fabric of our broader communities.

During the past year, the TMSG community experienced unprecedented challenges; firstly, the resignation of the Manager, Meg Davis, and secondly, the direct impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Meg led the team at TMSG for over two decades. The impact of her contribution and commitment has been both transformative and inspirational for those who encountered her. Meg has left an amazing value-based legacy that will assist TMSG to grow and prosper in a changing world. Meg ensured that TMSG is living evidence that welcoming and valuing diversity creates opportunities for all citizens and communities. Meg's faithfulness to her feminist beliefs and values has supported many women in our communities to thrive, because when women are strong, families and children do well. Meg has always been a very collaborative presence in what is now a very competitive environment. On behalf of the TMSG Management Committee and staff I sincerely acknowledge Meg's contribution and thank her for her untiring service over the past two decades. We also wish Meg well in her doctoral studies at JCU.

In March 2020 Covid-19 placed many challenges at TMSG's doorstep, which meant that the organisation had to rethink the service model, due to the lockdown and the strict social distancing rules. This pandemic also immediately had a financial impact on TMSG; however, thanks to the great work of the Management Committee, particularly the Treasurer, Manager, Finance Manager, and senior staff we were able to access the JobKeeper payment. TMSG's solid financial position assisted the Finance Subcommittee to deliver a series of sound financial projections that enabled TMSG to keep our hard working and valued staff employed. The Management Committee sincerely thank the Manager and staff for their innovative and flexible approach to their work.

Regardless of the impact of Covid-19, TMSG has a bright future. The Management Committee, General Manager, and Senior Management team will collaborate to investigate opportunities for expansion into new revenue sources in 2020-21. TMSG will also work to expand our partnerships with local businesses, schools, governments, and community groups by inviting the community on a journey to cultural inclusion, to realise our vision that settlement is everyone's business.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Management Committee for their support and commitment to TMSG. I thank the staff for their ongoing commitment to TMSG and I also thank those people who place their trust in TMSG to assist them to settle in our communities. Your courage and determination inspire us every day.

**Cathy O'Toole**  
President, Management Committee



## General Manager's Report

"To address needs through greater participation in and contribution to a better quality of life for our multicultural society", these words epitomize the vision and work of Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. and the passion shown by the Management Committee and staff.

My name is Vincent Bin Dol and I am a new member of the TMSG family, having started work as General Manager in August. TMSG has undergone significant changes over the past few months with long-time Manager Meg Davis leaving the organisation and the advent of Covid-19 changing the face of service delivery to our clients. You have to admire the resilience of the Management Committee and staff in their flexibility in adapting to these changes.



The retirement of long-time Manager Meg Davis has left big shoes to fill. Meg's perseverance, passion, dedication and her strong beliefs in social justice will be sorely missed. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the great effort and professionalism at TMSG which is attributed to the Management Committee and the dedication shown by Meg Davis.

There has been other significant changes in the staffing at TMSG with a number of staff retiring, moving on to roles in other organisations, and staff changing their roles. This year we said farewell to Terry, Tahlia, Ruping, Debbie, Tony, Danielle and Gabe but have been pleased to welcome a number of new staff who have joined our team.

The current Management Committee has shown strong leadership over the past year and they should be congratulated on the work that they have achieved. Working with Management and senior staff, there have been a number of organisational successes over the past 12 months and these include:

- Negotiation of the renewed subcontract with Multicultural Australia along with the implementation of more robust claims lodgement processes.
- Extension of the Community Action for Multicultural Society (CAMS) funding.
- Success in obtaining further funding for Settlement Engagement Transition Support (SETS).
- Participation in ANROWS research and funding extension for the Safer Pathways for CALD Women (SPW) program.
- Recruitment of a new General Manager.
- Increased capacity of the volunteer program and diversity of tasks.
- Ongoing student engagement from local high schools, TAFE, local and international universities.
- From the onset of Covid-19, leading the work viability and eligibility for JobKeeper and small business financial assistance; the implementation of a Covid-19 safe workplace plan and risk management reviews; and ensuring the range of community groups and clients were kept informed of pandemic-related information.

TMSG was also successful in obtaining funding for the Regional Employment Trials program with the invaluable cooperation of local coordinator, John Hall. The program was successfully delivered, resulting in local people attaining Certificates for the Community Skills for Interpreters which provides a further career option of accreditation under NAATI to become registered interpreters. This training provided the entry level skills development which in the future, with further accreditation, the opportunity to provide interpreter services to support the local community and social services sector with interpreter services to support newly arrived people of refugee and migrant backgrounds.

On behalf of the organisation I would like to thank TMSG funding bodies and contractors (p. 1) as well as the long list of partners and Supporters (pg. 5). Sincere thanks to the Blessed Mary Mackillop Parish Office for their ongoing support. Townsville City Council and Mercy Community Services also continue to support TMSG by providing us with short-term accommodation properties to house newly arrived families.

I have no doubt at next year's AGM I will be able to provide you with a more comprehensive General Manager's report and I extend my thanks to the Management Committee and staff for their support and willingness in showing me the ropes in the short time I have been here. I have found TMSG to be a great place to work, with the Management Committee and staff having a strong passion for their work and the clients.

**Vincent Bin Dol**  
General Manager

# Treasurer's Report

## Introduction

This report provides a summary of significant issues affecting the financial viability of Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. Matters of accounting and audit are covered in the audit report.

## General

TMSG remains solvent with a very healthy balance sheet as at 30 June 2020. Although TMSG has healthy bank balances, this needs to be preserved as far as possible due to:

- Cash required for liabilities such as taxation, employee leave and other entitlements.
- Unexpended grant income that must be spent on that grant.
- Post Covid-19 there will be many challenges and TMSG may have to pivot to respond to new programs or needs and it is important that we maintain reserves to allow us to act.
- Covid-19 poses significant financial threats to TMSG and as such the bulk of this report addresses these threats and the Management Committee strategy in response.

## Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP)

In 2018-19 income from the HSP program was 64% of the total and as such the performance of this program is critical to the financial health of TMSG. Margins are tight and administration of claims has to be well managed to ensure sufficient revenue to cover costs. Happily the TMSG team has performed well and the program was able to cover its costs as illustrated on the following charts. HSP however relies on continued humanitarian arrivals to keep the revenue flowing. Covid-19 clearly affects this as arrivals are currently suspended. Note that because of the 'tail', meaning that claimable services continue to be provided and claimed for a period after arrival, the effect is not readily apparent in the charts, or the 2019/2020 financial statements.

## Covid-19 Response

Suspension of humanitarian arrivals in consequence of Covid-19 is causing a very significant revenue reduction for TMSG. Upon realising the threat to TMSG's financial viability, the Management Committee established a Finance Sub-committee to evaluate the situation and recommend strategies. The committee comprises:

- Two Management Committee representatives – Treasurer and Secretary.
- Two Management representatives—General Manager and Finance Manager.

Key outcomes:

- JobKeeper payment scheme applied for and granted.
- Financial projections to mid-2021 completed indicating significant revenue reduction, but offset to some extent in the near term by the JobKeeper package.
- Irrespective, without new HSP arrivals, losses will become severe in 2021.
- A recommendation (adopted) that most staff go onto reduced hours.

The head HSP contractor, Multicultural Australia continues to advocate for the HSP program, but they too have had to make very severe staff cuts. It has been further agreed by the MC, to reduce stress upon staff on short term contracts, that contracts are to be extended as far as funding streams allow.

## The Strategic Response

The net effect of JobKeeper, reduced staff hours, some staff attrition and good work in maximising HSP claims is that the finances of TMSG are stable and secure for the time being. To secure TMSG into the future, the MC and the management team is:

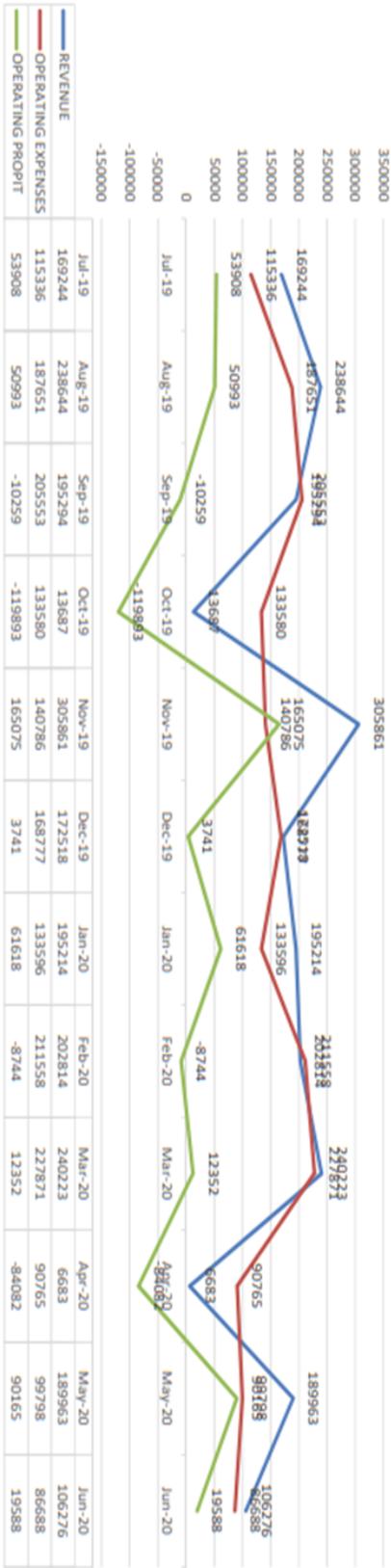
- Seeking new programs/revenue opportunities.
- Advocating wherever possible for a recommencement of HSP arrivals.

Finally, an alternative measure of the value of TMSG is the quality and capacity of its staff.. As such in all considerations, an overarching objective is to stabilise staffing while senior management (and the Management Committee) applies itself to the task of identifying new revenue streams.

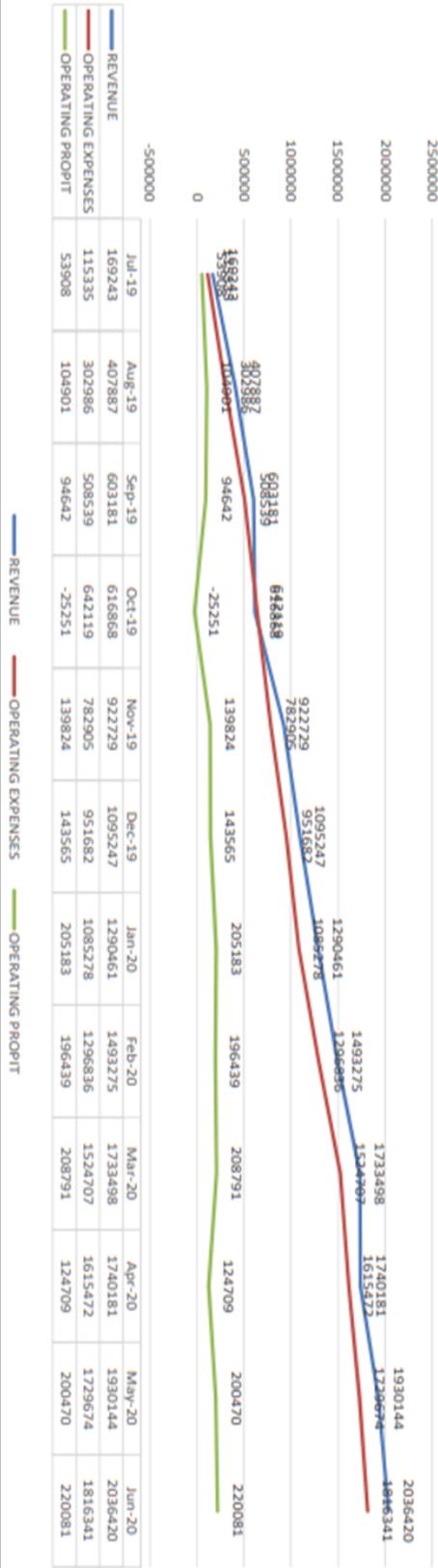
**Alan Carpenter**

**Treasurer, Management Committee**

HSP Financial Data - July 2019 to June 2020



HSP Progressive Data - July 2019 to June 2020



## Partners & Supporters

- Access Community Services Ltd
- Aitkenvale Primary School
- Amnesty International Townsville
- Blessed Mary MacKillop Parish
- Boots for Liberia
- Catholic Diocese Townsville
- Centacare Cairns and Townsville
- Chris Blyth
- CityLibraries Townsville
- Coast to Country Housing Company
- Community Leaders
- Communities for Children Townsville West
- Crystal Clear PR
- DanceNorth
- Department of Human Services
- Dr Betty McLellan
- Entire Wellbeing Family Law Pathways Network
- House of Prayer
- Individual community members
- Inclusion Support Agency
- James Cook University
- Mercy Community Services
- Northern Australia Primary Health Ltd
- NQ Combined Women's Services Inc.
- NQ Domestic Violence Resource Service Inc.
- NQ Women's Legal Service
- NQ Primary Health Network
- On Bundock Services
- PCYC Townsville
- Qld Department of Health
- Qld Department of Housing
- Qld Human Rights Commission
- Qld Police Service
- Qld Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma
- QSTARS
- Quota Thuringowa
- Refugee Council of Australia
- Refugee Health Network Qld
- Settlement Council of Australia
- Society of St Vincent De Paul
- St Benedict's Catholic School
- St Margaret Mary's College
- Surf Life Saving Qld
- TAFE North
- The Smith Family
- TMSG Volunteers and Members
- Townsville Chamber of Commerce
- Townsville Community Legal Service
- Townsville Islamic Society
- Townsville State High School
- Volunteering North Qld
- Youth With a Mission



## Multicultural Women's Group Report

Bringing together people from different cultural backgrounds is part of the mission of TMSG. The Multicultural Women's Group helps to implement this mission with a particular reference to women. The Group is grateful for ongoing support through the Queensland Government-funded CAMS program. The work of the group over the past year has also been supported by local government and community including Townsville City Council Emergency Management and Community Planning and Development, Cervical Cancer Foundation, Diversicare, and a JCU academic member. These collaborations have been particularly helpful during Covid-19 in making the adjustment to the "new normal" life.

Activities this year have included learning English words found in daily life and monthly gatherings with guest speakers. Additional activities that have developed include holding an empowerment forum for sharing motivational stories, a Community Fun and Learning Day, as well as organising handicraft as a hobby, and micro business workshops. Prior to Covid-19 restrictions starting Multicultural Women's Group meetings included more outdoor and learning activities such as education excursions to Local Disaster Coordination Centre, Disaster Ready Sunday, outreach activities to visit Parkinson Hub and Loreto Nursing Home. The Group was also proud to contribute to local community events including the decoration of Fringe Ephemera-Idalia signage, performing at Townsville Eats and Cultural Festival, and organising a music workshop at the Mentally Healthy Wellness City Expo. One of the most prestige contributions was as one of the 20 successful applicants to participate in 2019 Pop-Up North Queensland (PUNQ) organised by Umbrella Studio. Eight TMSG artists, clients and supporters including the TMSG Sewing Group showcased and sold their handicraft and artworks at NorthTown in the city. About 400 people visited the shop during the PUNQ period. The artists learnt how to present and showcase their products, market them, and set up rational prices. TMSG also held recycled handicraft and music workshops at the event.

More recently, the pandemic has taught us all to be more resilient and creative in finding strategies to communicate via digital technology. With support from volunteers and various digital platforms, the Group has successfully maintained its planned activities despite Covid-19 restrictions. Online sessions have covered conversations about parenting, and we were privileged to have retiring TMSG Manager Meg Davis share her successful life story of her involvement with TMSG as well as her personal life in raising her children while engaging in a demanding professional career. Everyone is becoming more confident in using digital technology in our daily lives and now combining online sessions with some face-to-face meetings. Thank you particularly to Jean Dartnall, Cheryl Wells, Rex Grattidge and Kitty Nankervis, our dedicated volunteers and all members of their group for their ongoing support to make the Multicultural Women's Group an ongoing success.

**Johanna Kodoatie-Cahill**  
CAMS Practitioner



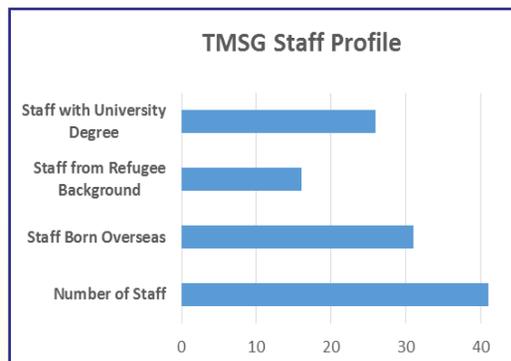
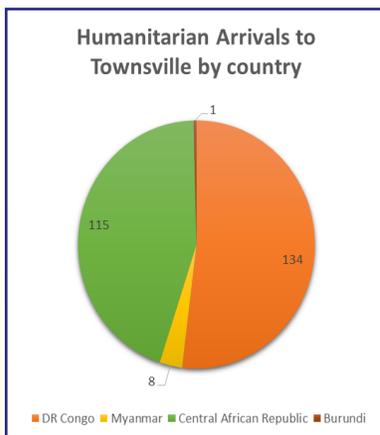
## Staff and Client Statistics 2019-2020

### 2019-2020 Staff

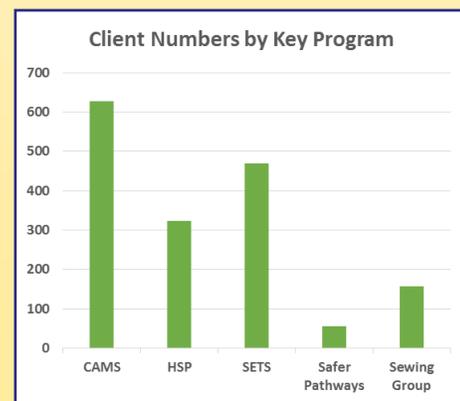
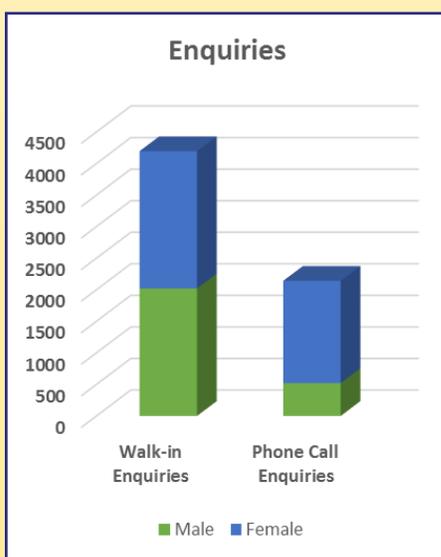
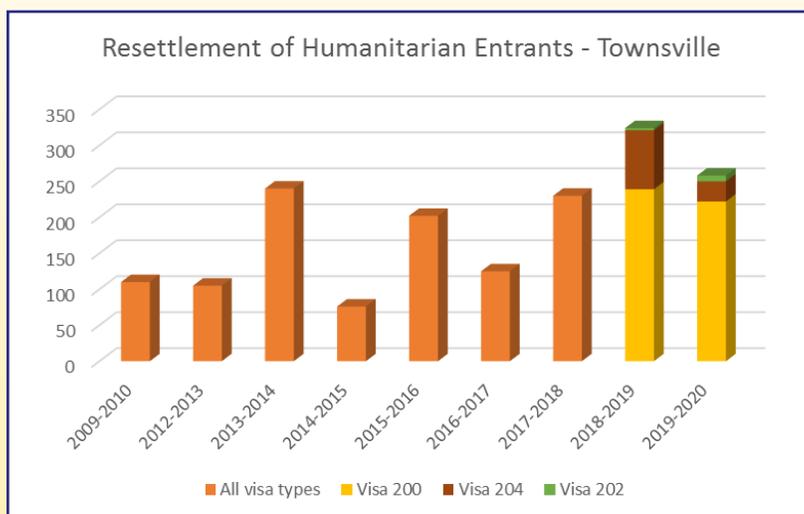
Anong	Jolie	Sibbo
Belesila	Kasma	Tahlia
Danielle	Kulimushi	Teneale
Daoud	Meg	Terry
Debbie	Paw Wah	Thelma
Dev	Rachel	Tony
Donna	Rahila	Tra
Gabe	Ramla	Tshika
Gary	Rose	Vincent
Innocent	Rukiye	Yasmin
Iris	Ruping	Yu-Chih
Jacky	Saida	Zakaria
Jenny	Samhoun	Zhen
Johanna	Sandi	

### 2019-2020 Management Committee

President: Cathy O'Toole  
 Vice President: Danni Bruch  
 Secretary: Ann Roebuck  
 Treasurer: Alan Carpenter  
 Members:  
 Linda Davis  
 Mick McCabe  
 Daisy Jebichii  
 Rachel Montgomery



**1735 VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED**





TOWNSVILLE MULTICULTURAL SUPPORT GROUP INC.

**PROGRAMS:**

- >> Advocacy for Multiculturalism
- >> Community Education and Health Programs
- >> Multicultural Women’s Group



**TMSG Vision**

To address needs through greater participation in and contribution to a better quality of life for our multicultural society.

**Statement of Apology and Reconciliation**

To all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, your families and communities:

We apologise for the human suffering and injustice that you have experienced as a result of colonisation and generations of discrimination and marginalisation that has resulted from that.

We acknowledge your right to self-determination.

We commit to working in solidarity with you in ways that you choose and determine.

We recognise your leadership, we honour your visions and we join with you in your hopes for your future and for our futures together.

**CONTACT:**

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