



Tenants Queensland Inc
Annual Report
2015 – 2016



Established in 1986, Tenants Queensland (formerly Tenants' Union of Queensland) is a specialist state-wide community and legal service that provides free tenancy law advice services for residential tenants. Tenants Queensland (TQ) seeks to protect and improve the rights of all people who rent their home in Queensland including those who live in marginal tenures such as caravan parks and boarding houses.

TQ Vision

A society where renting is a secure and respected housing tenure



TQ Purpose

To unequivocally advocate for and empower tenants to protect and improve their rights through access to effective information, advice and representation.



TQ Focus

All Queenslanders who rent their home, including tenants in private rental, community housing, public housing, caravan parks, boarding houses and hostels.



TQ Aims and Objectives

- To improve conditions for residential tenants
- To enhance and protect the rights of residential tenants
- To organise about common issues affecting tenants
- To educate the community about tenancy law and tenant rights

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The Steering Committee is pleased to report that last financial year saw a dramatic turn-around in the state of the organisation with Tenants Queensland (TQ) now in a much stronger position than at the end of the previous year.

The Palaszczuk ALP Government kept its election promise to tenants to establish a new program to provide them with independent advice and support following the closure of the former Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service Queensland (TAASQ) program by the then Coalition Government.

TQ invested an enormous amount of effort in successfully tendering for the newly established Queensland Statewide Tenant and Referral Service (QSTARS) program. Nothing was taken for granted and during this time TQ sought to understand the government's requirements and respond accordingly. With five separate service components up for tender including four regional services, TQ with the help of its partners - Community Plus; Enhance Care; Suncoast Community Legal Service; Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services; The Advocacy and Support Centre; Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre and Mackay Regional

Community Legal Centre won all five in September 2015. A key to the tender response was the close integration with TQ's community legal service arm which provides the foundation for a strong framework of quality control and the ability to obtain legal support in more complicated cases.

Since then the organisation has been flat out developing a comprehensive, regionally based service delivery model that includes a mixture of regional TQ offices, co-located offices with partners and community access points (CAPs) or outreach services to increase the reach to smaller centres where demand does not justify full-time services. As part of the establishment of QSTARS TQ has established seven new offices across Queensland. With the seven partner agencies, QSTARS services are delivered through a network of 14 offices across Queensland. Three TQ offices are operating in North Queensland at Mt Isa, Cairns, and

Townsville; one in Central Queensland at Rockhampton; and three in the Southern Region at Southport and Palm Beach on the Gold Coast and at Logan.

In amongst the start-up of the QSTARS program, the organisation had its second move in 18 months to its new premises in Spring Hill to cater for significant expansion of Brisbane services. It is a testament to the staff that this was managed to be achieved with the minimum of disruption to QSTARS services.

The past few years have been focussed on survival and responding to the unending demand for independent advice from tenants ringing TQ. After the successful QSTARS tender and implementation the organisation has been able to shift its focus to more strategic issues including that of policy and legislative reforms and ensuring that the organisation is well-positioned for the future.

Despite the size of the new program, the organisation is not flush with funds having had to use significant reserves to continue operations in the previous two financial years. This creates a challenge for achieving our broader goals including being less exposed to the vagaries of government funding.

The Steering Committee would like to thank the staff, volunteers and legal clinic students who have worked tirelessly and in a professional manner over the past year. Words like loyalty, commitment and passionate come to mind in describing their approach to their work. In particular, the Steering Committee would like to acknowledge the leadership of Penny Carr who was appointed as the inaugural chief executive officer after filling the role of Statewide Coordinator for more than 16 years. Penny's strength of character and commitment to the organisation has been critical to the organisation's achievements.

To our funders – the Department of Housing and Public Works, the State and Commonwealth Departments of Justice and Attorney General and the Sisters of Mercy – we're grateful for your ongoing support for our work. The organisation is acutely aware that it has been entrusted with public funds and strives to ensure high quality services are delivered and underpinned by strong corporate governance. We also thank the Ian Potter Foundation for their support through the UQ Pro Bono Centre.

We are also grateful for the support from Colin Biggers & Paisley Lawyers, and Clayton Utz who have provided pro bono (or free) legal advice and assistance with commercial leases and funding agreements.

Finally, the Steering Committee would like to thank the members and the friends of TQ. The past few years has been a challenging time and we believe that the organisation

has come through it stronger as a result of the support of its members, friends of all political persuasions and those who have accessed our services.

We look forward to the coming year and commend this annual report to you.



Peter See
Convener



Peter See



Damian Eckersley



Maria Leebeek



Narelle Sutherland



Catherine Laherty



Peter Young



Sally Watson



Rohan Tate

**Peter See
(Convenor)**

Peter See is a founding member of Tenants Queensland and was one of the early coordinators back in the early 1990s. Peter brings to the Steering Committee a wide background of experience in the not-for-profit, government and private sectors. Peter has a Graduate Certificate in Management and is currently the Chief Executive Officer for Kanyirninpa Jukurrpa (KJ), an Indigenous organisation that operates a range of programs in the Western Desert.

**Damian Eckersley
(Secretary)**

Damian Eckersley joined the Steering Committee of Tenants Queensland in 2002 to be involved in an organisation which furthers the rights of people who rent their home. He held the position of Convenor from 2003 to 2013 during a period of great growth in both the private rental market and in the

services that Tenants Queensland provides. Damian is an architect working in the private sector with a commitment to human rights. Damian has a Bachelor of Architecture and is a Registered Architect.

**Maria Leebeek
(Treasurer)**

Maria Leebeek has been a member of Tenants Queensland Steering Committee since 1999 and has held the Treasurer position since 2000. Maria has a range of experience in the human services sector from direct practice to organizational and program management. Maria is currently the Team Leader of the Coordinated Access and Referral Team at Micah Projects Inc. In her current role Maria is a member of the Queensland Government Housing Consultative Committee and on the Streetsmart Queensland Small Grants Committee. Maria has a Bachelor of Social Work and a Graduate Diploma in Business.

**Narelle Sutherland
(Member)**

Narelle Sutherland joined the Tenants Queensland Steering Committee in 2015. Previously Narelle has been involved with Tenants Queensland since 1994, working as the Coordinator of the Cairns office for six years. Narelle's involvement with tenancy rights in Queensland continued in her subsequent work in community legal centres. Narelle brings a solid knowledge of tenancy rights, affordable housing issues and funding requirements to the role of member of the Steering Committee. Narelle has qualifications in Social Work and Policy and works as Manager of the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program.

**Catherine Laherty
(Member)**

Catherine Laherty has been on the Tenants Queensland Steering Committee for three years. She has been a tenant in the private rental market for nearly 20 years and was a member of the board of directors of the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council for two years. Catherine has a Bachelor of Arts and works as a Consultant for Community Resource Unit Inc.

**Peter Young
(Member)**

Peter Young has been a member of the Tenants Queensland Steering Committee for the past year. Peter has had a long career in the social housing field, including Director of Strategic Policy and Research with the Queensland Department of Housing between 1998 and 2002. Peter brings his experience of corporate governance and strategic leadership to Tenants Queensland.

Peter completed a Master of Philosophy research degree in 2003 that examined the contribution that social housing makes in relation to non-shelter outcomes such as health, employment, and child well-being and development. Peter also holds a Bachelor of Social Work and a Master of Gestalt Therapy. He is currently a Lecturer in the School of Human Services and Social Work at Griffith University.

**Sally Watson
(Member)**

Sally Watson was appointed to the Board of Tenants Queensland in 2015. She has extensive experience in housing and homelessness services across the public and not-for-profit sectors. Based in North Queensland, Sally is a lecturer in Social Work at James Cook University. Previously, she was North Queensland Coordinator for the Tenants' Union of Queensland and Executive Officer of Homelessness Australia. Sally holds a Bachelor of

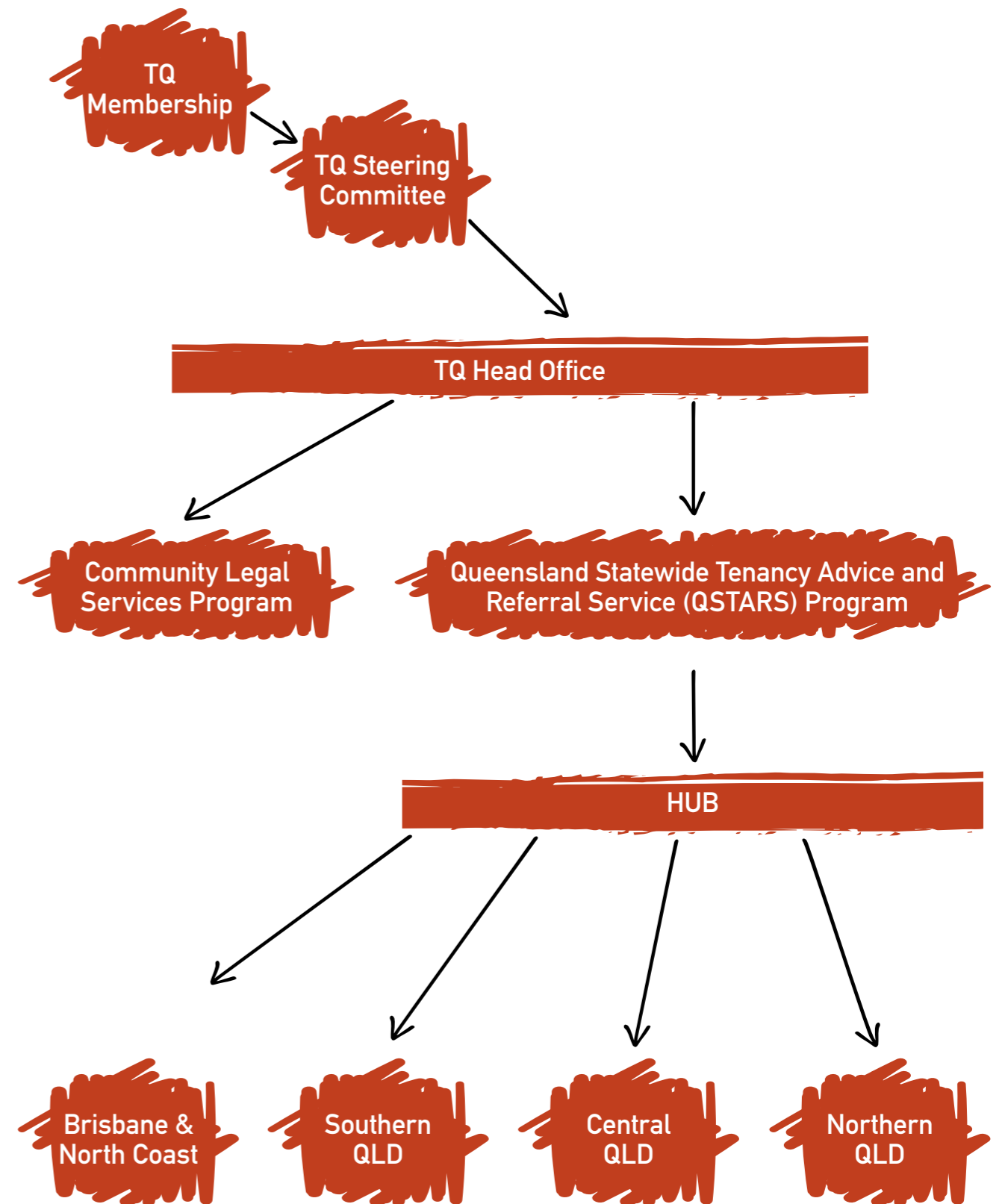
Social Work from the University of Queensland and a Master of Public Policy from the Australian National University.

**Rohan Tate
(Member)**

Rohan Tate has been a member of the Tenants Queensland Steering Committee since 2014. Rohan is committed to vigorously defending employee rights and brings his commitment to social justice with him to Tenants Queensland. Rohan is an Employment and Industrial Lawyer at Maurice Blackburn Lawyers. Rohan holds a Bachelor of Laws, a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Politics and History as well as an Honours in Politics. Rohan is admitted in both the Supreme Court of Queensland and the High Court of Australia.

A society where renting is a secure and respected housing tenure.

TQ Organisation Structure



This financial year saw a dramatic change in TQ's ability to meet the advice and support needs of Queensland renters.



Penny Carr - CEO

Where we started

The year started off with TQ continuing to deliver legal case-work services (under our long term Community Legal Services Program [CLSP] funding) as well the 'interim telephone advice service' (which commenced in the last month of the previous financial year).

The interim telephone advice service, funded by the Department of Housing and Public Works (DHPW) continued as planned until the end of September, enabling TQ

to provide three full time telephone advice lines and increase access six fold to renters seeking advice.

Building from the steps put in place by the end of the 2014/15 year, TQ worked to meet our new workforce needs. Additional hours were offered to then current staff whilst TQ also sought to offer extended and paid work to our loyal volunteers and previous students.

Community Legal Services Program work and support for expansion

TQ's CLSP funded legal service provides assistance in complex disputes which straddle tenancy and other law as well as matters resolved in higher jurisdictions. The legal service has always been fundamental to TQ's success (no more so than over the last few years) allowing us to support the use of volunteers, students and leverage pro bono assistance as required. Our CLSP funded legal

service provides the framework within which all our other services are delivered.

TQ's legal service's support for our delivery of quality and consistent services has been called upon throughout the year. Whilst delivering advice and casework services it has also supported a multitude of changes and rapid expansion brought about by the interim and Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS).

A new independent tenant advisory program

The tender response for the state government's proposed new Queensland Tenant Advice and Referral Services - an independent tenant advisory program - was delivered in early August and in late September TQ was informed of our success! Our determination to advocate the needs, as articulated by Queensland renters themselves,



The Director General, Liza Carroll, TQ staff and TQ QSTARs community partners celebrating the launch of QSTARs October 2015 L to R: Nancye McDonald (Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services) Janet Dunn (TQ), Julian Porter (Suncoast Community Legal Service), Pauline Peel (Community Plus+), Jude Clarkin (TQ), Julie Bartlett (TQ), Cherie O'Donnell (TQ), Frank Stinson (TQ), Penny Carr (TQ), Liza Carroll (Department of Housing and Public Works)

and provide the required services had paid off. After a difficult four years of funding insecurity, notification of our success was a welcome relief.

TQ is honoured to have vested in it the trust to commence a new program for Queensland renters. The news, however, has not come without challenges, albeit welcome ones. With less than two weeks' notice of start-up, TQ had to simultaneously focus on expanding service delivery, formalizing our sector partner relationships, recruitment, and the development of policy and procedure.

Establishing new offices along with recruiting and training staff took much of our focus in the second half of this year. It has been a unique challenge to simultaneously train such a large contingent of advisory staff (within both TQ and our partner organisations), a task we could not have undertaken without the support of our CLSP funded legal service.

Though there is still much work to do, TQ has remained focused on delivering to the service model outlined in our tender response; literally we've been building a program from the ground up. At

year close, we are now poised to weave together these cornerstone elements into a cohesive and integrated services system. TQ thanks all of our partner organisations for their collaboration and support.

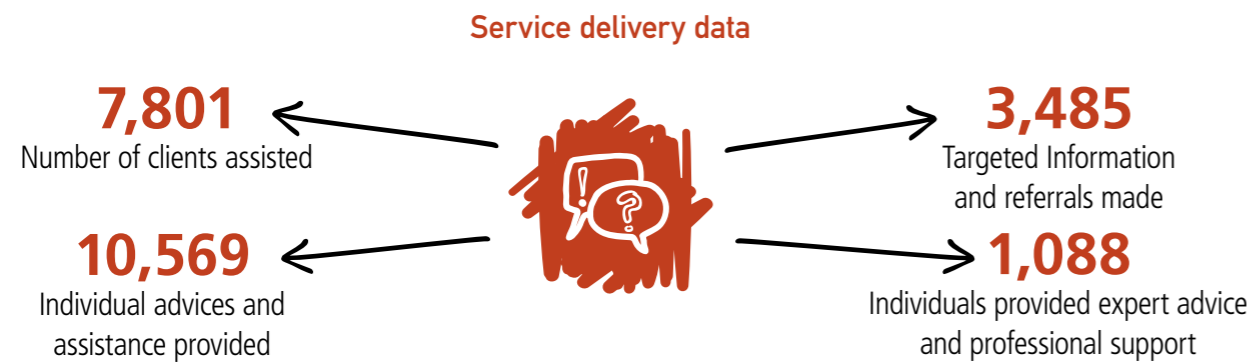
In rolling out the QSTARs program TQ has enjoyed the support of the Department of Housing and Public Works, meeting weekly or fortnightly since October. TQ thanks the Program area and individual staff for their help and insight.


Penny Carr
CEO

Tenants Queensland provides high quality, free, independent tenant advice services to assist tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities and sustain their tenancies.

TQ 's primary goal is to empower tenants to manage their own tenancy issues and provide additional support when this is not possible. The services TQ has offered over the past twelve months are described below.

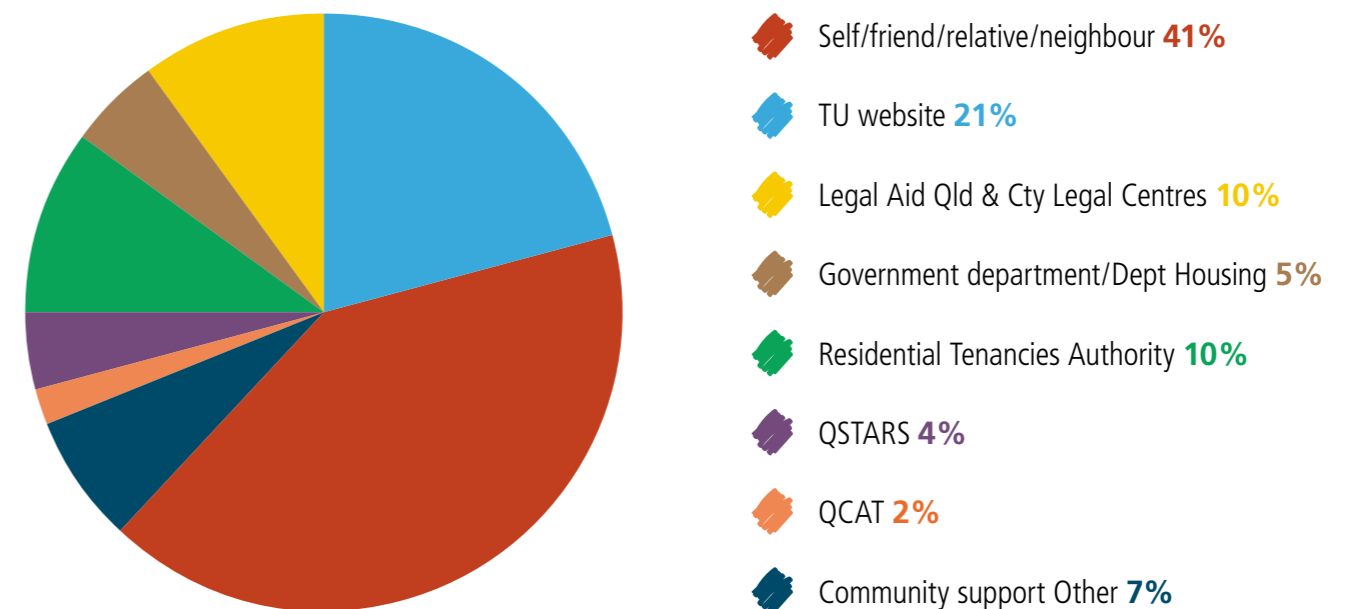
SERVICE	DESCRIPTION
Statewide phone advice service	- service entry point - tenancy law clinic - referral
Regional Support	- support for high needs
Casework	- QSTARS minor casework - Legal practice casework



Referral source

While almost half of advice callers heard about our service through family or friends, or found out about our service online, many callers were referred to the advice service for assistance by government agencies, legal services, or community services.

Origin of Referrals



Tenants sought advice about a range of issues regarding their rights and responsibilities, with most falling into the category of terminations, repairs and bond disputes.

The main presenting issues

Problem types 2015 - 2016

PROBLEM TYPE	ADVICES	% TOTAL
Tenancy general rights and responsibilities	3,140	19.4%
Tenancy bond	1,865	11.5%
Tenancy termination by lessor	1,535	9.5%
Tenancy repairs	1,477	9.1%
Tenancy termination by tenant	1,138	7.0%
Break lease	915	5.6%
QCAT Preparation	775	4.8%
Tenancy Databases	605	3.7%
Tenancy agreement	458	2.8%
Tenancy rent	401	2.5%
Rent Arrears	398	2.5%
Tenancy Disputes	394	2.4%
Sub Total (12 in total)	13,101	80.9%
Other Problem Types (25 in total)	3,095	19.1%
Total	16,196	100.0%

Future Strategies

Two key strategies that TQ will be implementing during the next 12 months are the development and implementation of a new client information management system (CIMS) and the development of a new evidence based service planning tool.

The new CIMS will:

- Record defined service activities from which the Tenant Advice Worker selects the identified type or level of service/s provided.
- Maintain confidential records of all individual advice, casework and assistance, including the attachment of and the accessing of key documents.
- Identify and plan for follow up assistance that is to be provided to tenants.
- Record tenant consent for data collection and information sharing under relevant privacy

laws and refer tenants to additional information in the TQ Privacy Notice.

- Support conflict of interest checking and risk management procedures in the provision of tenancy advisory services.
- Streamline performance reporting.

The service planning tool, currently under construction, will draw on a range of data sets, providing detailed information about client needs and indicators of their capacities to manage tenancy issues.



TQ Strategic Planning Day April 2016

Back row: Frank Stinson, Jude Clarkin, Julie Bartlett, Damien Eckersley, Penny Carr, Rohan Tate. Middle row: Wendy Herman, Alice Thompson, Maria Leebeek, Peter See, Chris Freney. Seated row: Narelle Sutherland, Pat Thomson, Sally Watson, Janet Dunn.



Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS) Program

TQ is the lead provider of the QSTARS Program in Queensland. The QSTARS program is delivered through a centralised HUB that is based in Brisbane. The HUB is connected to a network of regional service outlets across Queensland managed by both TQ and its Partners.

TQ is expanding the reach of QSTARS through the development of partnerships with a number of state based networks and the development of a network of Community Access Points based in regional and remote locations across Queensland.

QSTARS provides universal access to all tenants. A key feature of the program is the delivery of more intensive services and support to individuals who present with one

or more vulnerabilities or with complex circumstances. To this end, a high priority is given to preventing and reducing the risk of homelessness.

Key features of QSTARS service delivery are:

- A single entry point to the Program through the state-wide telephone advice service which provides advice, assessment and referral services;
- A client centred and flexible approach that considers the needs, ability and capacity of Eligible persons;
- A strongly connected network of services (TQ and our partner organisations) working together to deliver QSTARS program outcomes;
- Access to expert advice and support;
- Access to a range of service delivery outlets across Queensland and complemented by the

- development of Community Access Points throughout the state; and
- The provision of consistent and high quality services.

The Hub

QSTARS services revolve around a state-wide centralised phone advice service which provides the single entry point to all QSTARS services. It is one of a number of QSTARS HUB functions provided by TQ along with the development of community education and training delivery. The HUB provides high volume, high quality advice and support to tenants who have the capacity to understand and follow up on their chosen course of action. When a higher level of assistance is required, clients are referred to a regional service outlet for follow up. The HUB is located in the Head Office at Spring Hill.



Regional Service Outlets

There are 14 regional QSTARS service outlets across the state. Seven of these are run by TQ, with the other seven run by our sub-contracted partner organisations (see p.16). Work within this network is underpinned by a partnership framework and a cooperative ethos. TQ is supporting a coordinated and consistent delivery of QSTARS services through the network through:

- Coordinated training and development processes, activities and events to build tenancy law expertise;
- Coordination of regional service provider networks to support and enable sharing of resources and build capacity at a local, regional and state-wide level;
- A strong focus on the quality and consistency of services; and
- Co-design of program components including service delivery

evaluation process and community education resources.

State Based Networks

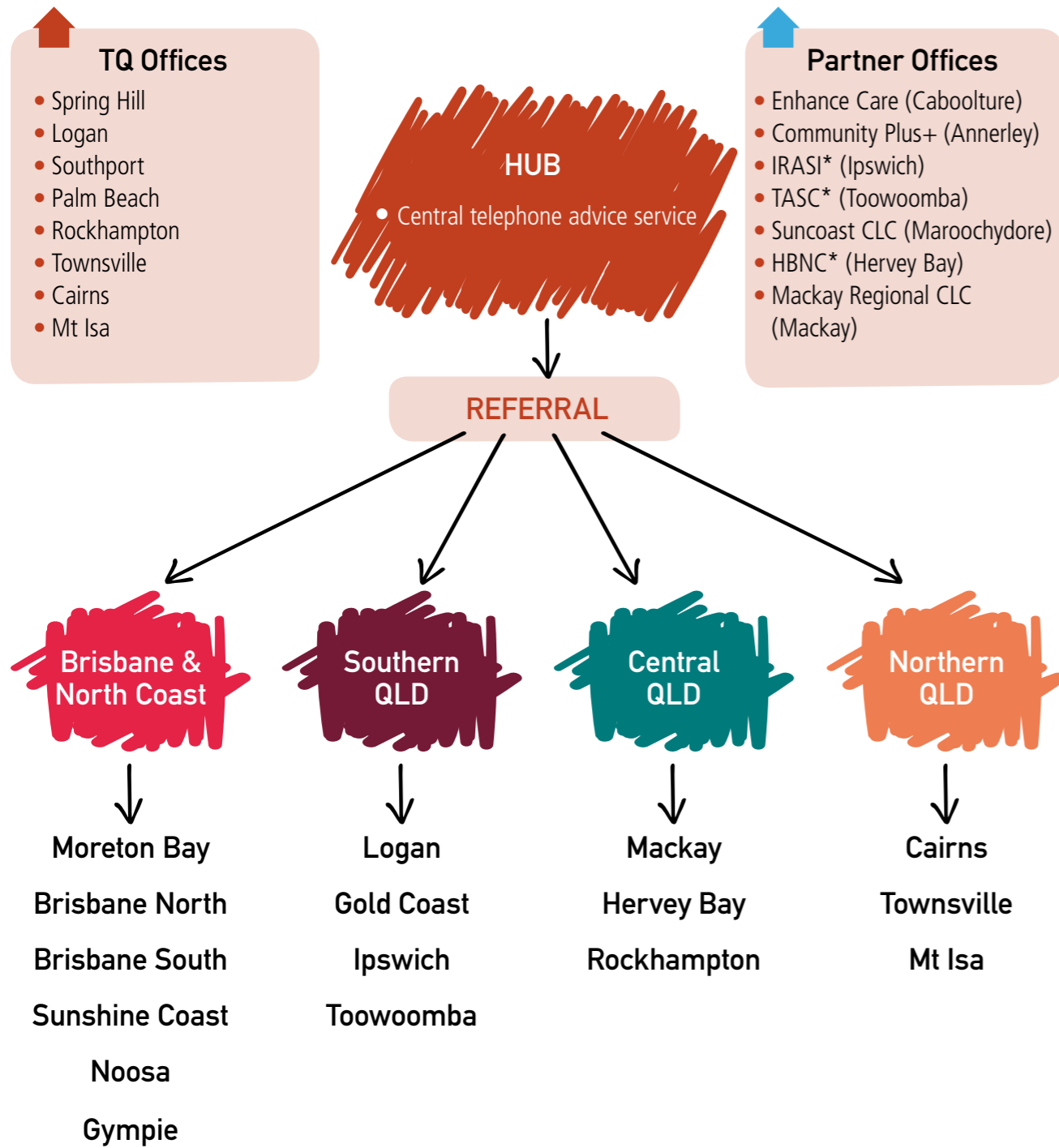
To support the delivery of effective, joined up and culturally appropriate services, TQ also has partnerships with the following organisations: the Multicultural Development Association, DV Connect, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service, Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia, Community Legal Centre Queensland and the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House.

Community Access Points (CAPs)

A key feature of TQ's delivery of the QSTARS program is the development of Community Access Points (CAPs). CAPs seek to draw on the support of local agencies (such as neighbourhood centres) to extend the coverage of services to areas

where there is no funded service outlet. They may provide access to community education material, forms, information about services or space and facilities for outreach services and/or telephone or video conferencing with clients. The further development of CAPs will be a key feature of the coming year.

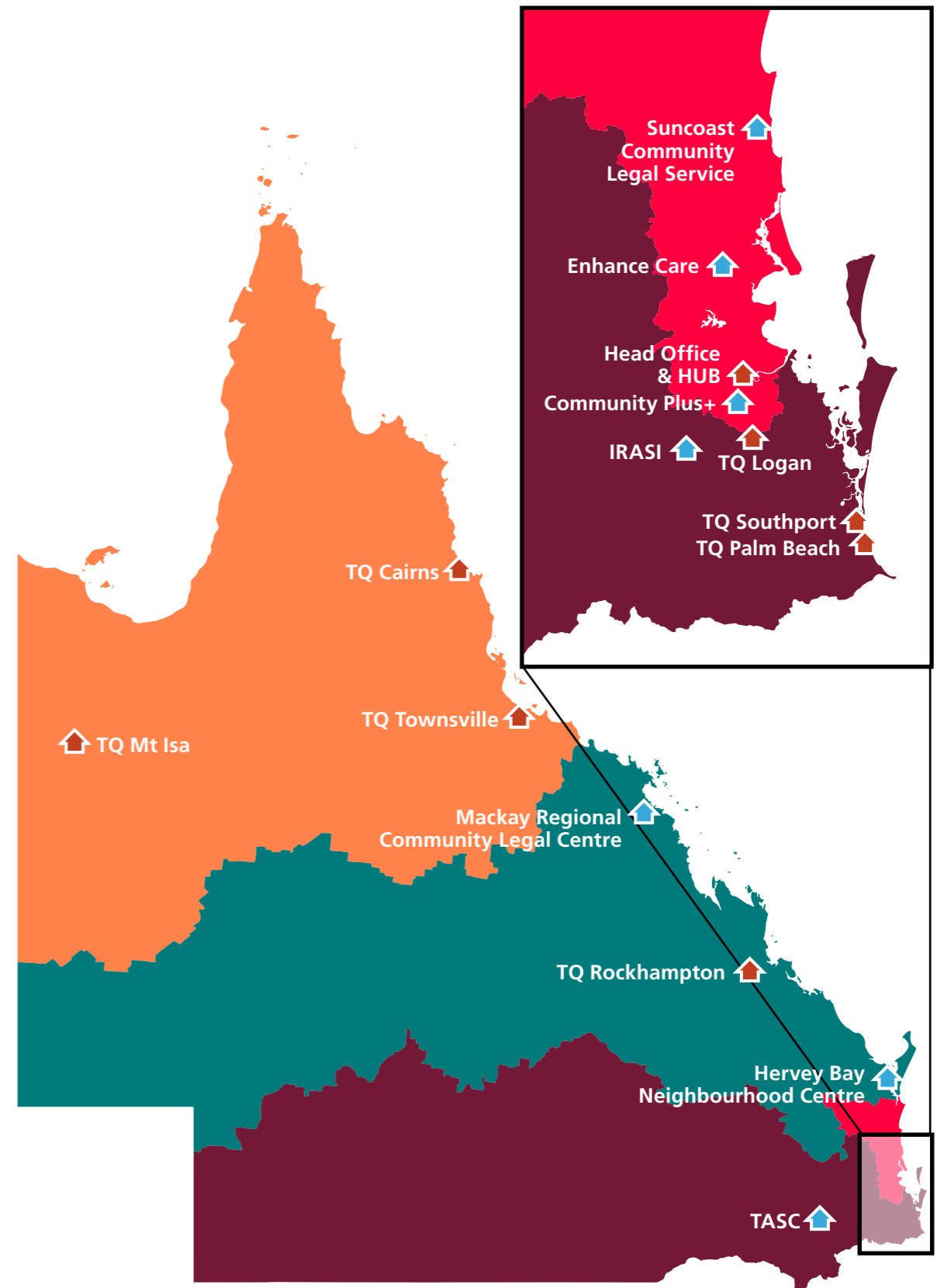
QSTARS Regions



* (IRASI) Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services Inc
 * (TASC) The Advocacy and Support Centre
 * (HBNC) Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre

Queensland map with QSTARS regions and TQ and TQ QSTARS Partner office locations.

- Legend:**
- ◆ Brisbane & North Coast
 - ◆ Northern Queensland
 - ◆ TQ Offices
 - ◆ Central Queensland
 - ◆ Southern Queensland
 - ◆ TQ QSTARS Partner offices



Legal services

Key Casework Achievements

In 2015-2016 the legal service has:



CLC Legal Service

The Legal Service undertakes case work for tenancy matters that meet the TQ casework guidelines, where tenants face considerable disadvantage or test cases where the outcome has potential to advance tenants' rights or clarify aspects of tenancy law.

During the year 22 complex matters were managed by the Principal Solicitor through our legal casework service.

The Legal Service also provides specialized legal support to TQ's advice, education and training services including quality assurance checks of advices, TQ publications and training products to ensure they are consistent and in compliance with tenancy laws.

The legal service will continue to provide a quality legal service for Queensland tenants.

Tenancy Law Clinic

TQ has been partnering with the University of Queensland's Pro Bono Centre to provide a Tenancy Law Clinic (TLC) which commenced in February 2015. The clinic is funded by the Ian Potter Community Wellbeing grant and will run for three years or six semesters, with six students. The TLC has a target of 50 to 80 individual contacts and advice achieved per semester.

Tenancy law has direct relevance to the lives of many students and

offers a lived experience of how the law impacts and affects their community. Law students benefit by gaining legal practice experience in tenancy law and this will help them to develop important skills needed for legal practice that are not easily developed in the classroom.

TQ thanks both the Ian Potter foundation and the UQ Pro Bono centre for their support.



Legal Clinic students – 2nd semester 2015

Left to right: Onjawli Chakravarty, Daniel Maggacis, Katherine Blood, Neraj Saluwadana, Isabel Griffiths, and Bogart Phillips.

A single mother of a child with autism, sought assistance in responding to an application for a Warrant of Possession. The mother believed that the agent wanted to evict her due to a neighbour complaining about the vocalisations made by her son, whilst playing in the back yard. The agent breached the tenant for paying her water bill one day late (i.e. in 8 days instead of the requested 7 days). The agent then proceeded to issue a Notice to Leave for an unremedied breach. TQ CLC drafted a response to the agent's application for termination and a Warrant of Possession, seeking an order to dismiss on the grounds that the breach notice and the subsequent Notice to Leave were issued contrary to the provisions of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. The agent was required to provide the tenant 30 days to pay the water bill rather than seven days. The Tribunal refused to grant the order for termination and warrant.

TQ CLC assisted a tenant with submissions and documents for a compensation claim against a lessor regarding water damage to furniture and possessions. The lessor failed to attend to a plumbing failure, the tenant's unit was flooded and their furniture and other items were damaged extensively by water.

Additionally, the tenant sustained an injury due to the defective work carried out by the carpet installation company. The tenant was awarded compensation in his favour for the amount of \$7,500.00. The tenant has also engaged a private solicitor to assist with his Personal Injuries action. The lessor sold the rental premises then moved interstate and failed to provide the tenant or QCAT with a forwarding address. TQ assisted the tenant with legal advice regarding locating the lessor and the enforcement process in the Magistrates Court Jurisdiction.

A tenant sought assistance from TQ in drafting a complaint to the RTA's Legal Investigations Unit regarding a breach of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act. The agent had unlawfully used photographs of the tenant's furniture and possessions in advertisements for the sale of several units in the same building he had previously occupied. The photographs remained on the internet for several months after the tenant requested their removal.

The RTA Legal Investigations Unit had found that an offence did occur as the agent had not sought the tenant's written consent prior to using the photographs and failed to remove the photographs after the tenant had requested they be removed.

Client Feedback

Thank you very much for taking the time to email me all the information and forms regarding my father's rent matter. We did not know anything about the bond claim procedure and our right as a tenant. We completely trusted [our] housing provider which is community housing for the low income people. I deeply appreciate everything you've done. I want to express my deepest gratitude to you and the officer I've talked this afternoon and your organisation for the great advice and support to the tenants.

I just want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for listening to our case and your invaluable tenancy advice – both with the legal process and emotionally. It's been a hard few months and having you around gave us a sense of peace and restored our faith that there are good people out there! We truly cannot express how important your input has been and don't know what we would have done without you.



Joan Sheriff (TQ Member), Peter Murphy (Senior Advice Worker), Rose Brown (Trainer)



Ted Jones (TQ Member)

Learning and Development

The quality of TQ's tenant advice services is underpinned by a comprehensive training and development program. Training and development was delivered during the time TQ was providing an interim telephone advice service and was significantly expanded with the implementation of QSTARS.

Between January and June 2016, this expansion included the delivery of nineteen separate training sessions varying between a half day and three-day duration. In total 2,720 hours or 282 instances of training were delivered to 42 TQ staff and 28 staff working in TQ QSTARS Partner organisations.

TQ training covers a range of topics including an introduction to tenancy law; introduction to QCAT;

advice worker refresher training and training on tenancy databases that followed the legislative amendments to tenancy database legislation.

Intensive Advice Worker training was provided to newly appointed TQ QSTARS advice workers as part of the rigorous advice worker in-service training. Eight staff participated in 359 hours of direct supervision while working towards providing independent tenancy advice and referral services.

Training also included the components of organisation induction in response to the intensive recruitment processes associated with the establishment of the QSTARS program.

What participants liked about the training:

"The interaction of the group led through thoughtful discussion. This communication really assisted in putting the context in practical scenarios which assisted in the learning"

"In depth discussions and practical application of the Act"

"The pace was not pressured. The facilitator regularly checked in with participants about how they were feeling with the load of the content"



QSTARS Partners staff training

L to R: Birthe Griffiths (IRASI), Simone Butschle (Mackay CLC) Lorraine Seymour (Enhance Care), and Scott Green (Enhance Care)

TQ tenancy publications and community education activities aim to help tenants understand their tenancy rights and responsibilities and assist tenants to exercise their rights.

TQ publications and online fact sheets, videos and referral information ensures information is widely available for tenants. These resources also support the TQ and QSTARS advice service when providing tenancy law advice to callers. TQ also seeks opportunities to provide targeted information to high need tenant groups through outreach activities, specific projects, building network referral pathways, and distribution of resources.

A primary focus in 2015-2016 has been updating TQ tenancy fact sheets and developing a new website and promotion materials following the implementation of the QSTARS program.

TQ reviewed and rewrote its Tenancy Facts information sheets and updated this content for both our own and the new QSTARS website. TQ also reviewed and updated its tenancy database fact sheet following legislative amendments to the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act.

TQ has continued to provide information stalls and workshop presentations for tenants. TQ also delivered professional development on tenancy law issues for community and legal workers stakeholder and policy forums.

TQ undertook a range of community education activities during 2015-2016 including:

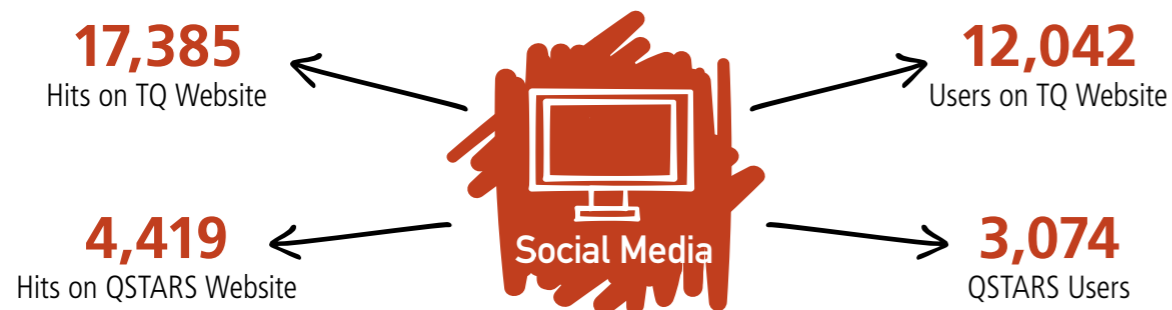
- Tenancy information stall at NAIDOC week;
- Tenancy law information for migrant and refugee communities in Toowoomba and Logan;
- Domestic violence and tenancy law workshop;
- Tenancy law presentation for community workers at QPILCH workshop;
- Development of a QSTARS identity, referral posters, brochures and new fact sheets;
- Presentation at community housing tenant participation forum;
- Participation at Queensland

Legal Assistance Community Legal Education (CLE) forums.

Future directions

In 2016-2016 TQ will be undertaking statewide distribution of the QSTARS tenancy fact sheets. TQ also plans to develop translated referral information and fact sheets in 10 languages and to provide translated factsheets on the TQ and QSTARS websites.

TQ also plans to update its indigenous fact sheets and to collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service to deliver a series of tenancy law workshops for indigenous community members. This focus is made possible through a Legal Aid Queensland Community Legal Education grant.



TQ has continued to advocate the views and needs of tenants to both the public and government.

TQ has continued to advocate the views and needs of tenants to both the public and government. This work however is constrained by funding. Whilst successful in the QSTARS tender, these funds are for direct service delivery and TQ is not currently funded for policy and law reform work. Despite this TQ continues to engage in policy and law reform work as best we can.

TQ participated in consultation meetings with state government on the (then) proposed new independent tenant advice program. TQ also provided written input.

Over 2015-2016 TQ has been represented on a range of government and community forums and reference groups including on or in the:

- Residential Tenancies Authority Industry Forum;
- Ministerial Housing Consultative Committee;
- Advisory Taskforce on the Residential Transition for Ageing Queenslanders;
- Housing Affordability Expert Reference Panel;

- Industry Development Engagement Project.

A new 10-year housing strategy

During the year the Minister of the Department of Housing and Public Works has been consulting on a new 10-year strategy for housing in Queensland. This has formed the core work of the Ministerial Housing Consultative Committee and TQ has keenly supported the consultation process.

The Department of Housing and Public Works invited TQ to participate in the housing strategy consultation by facilitating four tenant focus groups enabling tenant feedback on the discussion paper and ultimately input into the development of the housing strategy. Responses from these groups were provided to the DHPW along with TQ's own views about tenancy law and housing policy reforms.



TQ Members with Ron Whittington (Senior Advice Worker) From left to right: Maria Axelsen, Judith Newman, Betty Crow, Paul Cooper, Ron Whittington, Jean Meagher, Hazel Holman, and Ray Perrin.



Peter See (TQ Convenor), Lurline Comerford (Advice Worker), Janet Dunn (Administrator)

Tenants in social and affordable housing are amongst the most vulnerable in our community and TQ believes it is essential that these tenants have a voice.

During 2015-2016 TQ received two grants through the Sisters of Mercy that are assisting TQ to develop its work in the area of tenant participation. With the help of these grants TQ is developing innovative services and products that it aims to pilot in partnership with tenants and community housing providers. The services and products will support best practice strategies for the promotion of tenant information, engagement and participation of tenants in social and affordable housing.

Stage 1 of the Leading the Way Project included a literature review and the delivery of a series of seven workshops involving tenants; staff and board members from the participating community housing providers and TQ staff. Following each workshop, a "Harvest of Outcomes" captured the Tenant Engagement and Participation (TEP) practice achieved. An example of a 'Harvest of Outcomes' is provided below. Following each workshop an agreed path forward or 'next wise steps' was developed.

Stage 2 of the Leading the Way Project has involved establishing a Tenant Engagement and Participation (TEP) Project Working Party comprising TQ, Mangrove Housing, INCH Housing Inc., Winnam Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation and Connected Communities, Brisbane City Council and the Department of Housing and Public Works. The TEP Working Party aims to advance the outcomes of Stage 1 to develop and implement TEP good practice tools and products across the social housing sector.

Tenants Queensland Inc. financial statements



Leading the Way Project workshop "Harvest of Outcomes"

The financial statements for the period ending the 30th June 2016 have been prepared to meet the requirements of the Tenants Queensland Inc. under the Associations Incorporations Act QLD, and have been audited by Hayward's Chartered Accountants and declared to be in accordance with current accounting standards.

The 2015 – 2016 year has seen Tenants Queensland commence the full implementation of the QSTARS program. To assist in a successful rollout has required that the financial controls are in place for effective management of the funds entrusted to Tenants Queensland. An added complexity to the financial management was our commitment to having local partners and this required that we implemented financial accountability measures to provide transparency and accountability for all stakeholders.


As a community legal centre we continue to receive vital funding for our legal services through Legal Aid. The legal service provides the backbone of the organization and we remain committed to the provision of a quality service. I would like to acknowledge and thank Jude Clarkin, Pat Thompson and Penny Carr for their hard work in budget preparation, monthly reports and timely provision of information as we progressed

through the implementation stages of QSTARS and to embed sustainable and robust financial controls. I would like to acknowledge the Department of Housing and Public Works for their commitment to tenancy advice services especially in a very tight housing market. The State government, through the State Department of Justice and the Attorney General, continues to acknowledge the importance of providing legal support for tenants and TQ continues to receive funding from the joint state and federally funded Community Legal Centres Program.

The member funds have been utilized over the year as we were committed to maintaining a service for tenants. I think this was money well spent.

Appointment of Auditor 2015-2016

I would like to recommend the appointment of Hayward's Chartered Accountants to audit TQ accounts for the 2016 – 2017 financial year. The Financial Reports for the 2015 – 2016 demonstrate that TQ remains both accountable and proficient at its capacity to manage financial matters and pressures presented to it.



Maria Leebeek
Treasurer

**Income And Expenditure Statement
For The Year Ended 30 June 2016**

INCOME	2016	2015
Department of Communities		
Unexpended Grant Previous Year	8,135.25	9,979.53
Less Unexpended Grant	(8,135.25)	(8,135.25)
	-	1,844.28
Department of Communities		
Unexpended Grant Previous Year	21,258.24	77,306.47
Less Unexpended Grant	-	(21,258.24)
	21,258.24	56,048.23
Department of Housing and Public Works (Enhance Care)		
Unexpended Grant Previous Year	76,279.25	
Grant Received - Recurrent		76,279.25
Less Unexpended Grant		(76,279.25)
	76,279.25	-
Department of Housing and Public Works - QSTARS		
Grant Received - Recurrent	5,484,503.00	-
Less Unexpended Grant	(1,683,929.28)	-
	3,800,573.72	-
Legal Aid Office		
Grant Received	289,073.00	280,234.00
Less Unexpended Grant	(16,605.31)	-
	272,467.69	280,234.00
Grant - Office of Liquor and Gaming Registration		
Unexpended Grant Previous Year	-	4,579.78
Grant - Catholic Religious Australia		
Unexpended Grant Previous Year	8,468.42	-
Grant Received	10,000.00	9,975.00
Less Unexpended Grant	(12,885.77)	(8,468.42)
	5,582.65	1,506.58
Donations	658.79	4,523.81
Fees Received	-	240.00
Interest	41,107.98	31,675.94
Memberships	1,233.00	1,677.00
Sundry Income	5,080.17	290.91
Workshop Fees	20,758.00	16,414.54
	68,837.94	54,822.20
	4,244,999.49	399,035.07
LESS EXPENDITURE		
Total Expenditure - Schedule Attached	3,981,335.19	560,509.31
NET PROFIT FOR YEAR	\$263,664.30	\$(161,474.24)

Expenditure Statement For The Year Ended 30 June 2016

LESS EXPENDITURE	2016	2015
Audit & Accountancy	12,000.00	5,000.00
Auspiced Net Enhancement Expenses	-	25,375.00
Auspiced QSTARS Expenses	1,294,446.85	-
Bank Charges	688.24	653.52
Cleaning	1,451.60	687.45
Computer Expenses	48,745.46	6,418.91
Conferences & Workshops	3,090.70	321.32
Consultancy Fees	66,546.05	1,325.00
Depreciation	116,248.24	3,887.00
Electricity	9,857.11	3,002.49
Insurance	3,711.05	2,173.42
Marketing and Promotion	39,122.03	-
Meeting Costs	19,084.37	3,907.16
Minor Equipment	162,049.90	1,729.18
Printing, Postage & Stationery	23,228.84	6,331.45
Project Expenses	145,035.00	2,955.40
Relocation Costs	34,269.75	8,286.84
Rent	118,161.38	37,842.46
Resources and Materials	3,800.68	2,377.55
Security	1,730.69	812.69
Staff Recruitment	49,321.64	115.00
Subscriptions & Memberships	7,035.22	7,014.55
Sundry Expenses	1,431.77	964.31
Superannuation	133,642.03	36,947.76
Telephone	49,725.07	20,111.34
Training	27,685.88	1,277.97
Travel	4,488.74	345.30
Wages & Salaries	1,602,235.81	377,795.67
Workers' Compensation	2,501.09	2,850.57
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$3,981,335.19	\$560,509.31

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

Assets And Liabilities Statement As At 30 June 2016

CURRENT ASSETS	2016	2015
Cash on Hand	168.25	168.25
Cash at Bank (Note 2)	1,030,559.17	146,288.43
Debtors & Prepayments	277,084.62	9,342.41
Deposits	71,946.50	30,835.00
	1,379,758.54	186,634.09
INVESTMENTS (Note 3)	2016	2015
	1,721,855.11	781,473.18
	3,101,613.65	968,107.27
FIXED ASSETS (Note 4)	2016	2015
	156,132.77	23,768.07
	\$3,257,746.42	\$991,875.34
CURRENT LIABILITIES	2016	2015
Creditors & Accruals	241,109.38	37,049.89
Grants Received & Unexpended (Note 5)	1,721,555.61	114,141.16
Provisions	391,968.57	201,235.73
	2,354,633.56	352,426.78
NET ASSETS	2016	2015
	\$903,112.86	\$639,448.56
MEMBERS' FUNDS	2016	2015
Balance 1 July 2015	639,448.56	800,922.80
Net Surplus for Year	263,664.30	(161,474.24)
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS	\$903,112.86	\$639,448.56

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

Income And Expenditure Statement For The Year Ended 30 June 2016

CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	2016	2015
Receipts		
Legal Aid Queensland	289,073.00	280,234.00
Dept of Housing & Public Works Grants - Commonwealth	5,484,503.00	76,279.25
Catholic Religious Australia	10,000.00	9,975.00
Interest	38,685.89	33,546.01
Other Income	41,428.46	17,086.26
Payments		
Auspice Payments	1,548,710.14	25,375.00
Wages & Salaries	1,418,240.12	392,611.30
Other	782,362.98	150,416.43
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	2,114,377.11	(151,282.21)

CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES	2016	2015
Payment for purchase of plant & equipment	248,612.94	26,361.78
Payment of Rental Guarantee	41,111.50	30,635.00
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	\$289,724.44	56,996.78

CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	2016	2015
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	1,824,652.67	(208,278.99)
Cash at beginning of the reporting period	927,929.86	1,136,208.85
Cash at end of the reporting period	\$2,752,582.53	\$927,929.86

Reconciliation of Net Surplus/Deficit to Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities Receipts	2016	2015
Operating Result	263,664.30	(161,474.24)
Depreciation	116,248.24	3,887.00
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	204,059.49	15,248.31
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	190,732.84	(27,028.73)
(Increase)/Decrease in Deposits & Debtors	(267,742.21)	(4,189.93)
Increase/(Decrease) in Grants Unexpended	1,607,414.45	22,275.38
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	\$2,114,377.11	\$(151,282.21)

The accompanying notes form part of the financial statements.

Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements For The Period Ended 30 June 2016

1. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirement of the Associations Incorporated Act (Qld). The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The report is also prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

a. Fixed Assets - Depreciation

Depreciation is charged on all Fixed Assets on the prime cost method and is brought to account over the estimated economic lives of all Assets.

b. Employee Entitlements

Liabilities for Wages & Salaries and Annual Leave are recognised and are measured as the amount unpaid at the reporting date at current pay rates in respect of employees' services up to that date. Other employee entitlements payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those entitlements. Contributions are made by the

association to an employee superannuation fund and are charged as expenses when incurred.

c. Comparative Figures

Comparative figures, where necessary, have been reclassified in order to comply with the presentation adopted in the figures reported for the current financial year.

d. Economic Dependence

The Tenants Queensland Inc is dependant on government funding to operate. As at the date of the report the committee has no reason to believe the government will not continue to support the organisation.

Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 30 June 2016

2. CASH AT BANK	2016	2015
General Account	45,193.20	119,434.29
TU Maximiser Account	960,156.01	2,119.04
Charitable Donations Account	4,853.29	4,645.42
Charitable Maximiser Account	20,356.67	20,089.68
	\$1,030,559.17	\$146,288.43

3. INVESTMENTS	2016	2015
National Bank Term Deposit - Staff Liabilities	64,449.27	152,071.65
National Bank Term Deposit - Tenants Union	1,657,405.84	629,401.53
	\$1,721,855.11	\$781,473.18

4. FIXED ASSETS	2016	2015
Office Equipment - at Cost	186,017.25	94,792.22
Less Accumulated Depreciation	155,794.81	94,129.11
	30,222.44	663.11
Furniture & Fittings - at Cost	193,289.13	35,901.22
Less Accumulated Depreciation	67,378.80	12,796.26
	125,910.33	23,104.96
	\$156,132.77	\$23,768.07

Notes To And Forming Part Of The Financial Statements For The Year Ended 30 June 2016

5. GRANTS RECEIVED & UNEXPENDED	2016	2015
Department of Communities - TAAS Reform	8,135.25	8,135.25
Department of Housing and Public Works	-	97,537.49
Department of Housing and Public Works - QSTARS	1,683,929.28	-
Legal Aid Queensland	16,605.31	-
Catholic Religious Australia	12,885.77	8,468.42
	\$1,721,555.61	\$114,141.16

6. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES	2016	2015
Tenants Queensland Inc has in place facility backed bank guarantees in relation to rental premises.		
Bank Guarantees	\$71,946.50	\$30,835.00


TENANTS QUEENSLAND INC.
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 7.

1. Presents fairly the financial position of Tenants Queensland Inc. as at 30 June 2016 and its performance for the year ended of that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Tenants Queensland Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

President 

Treasurer 

Dated this 21st day of October 2016.



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EMAIL: admin@haywards.net.au

PARTNERS: GREG DORGE
PETER GESCH
PHIL ROBINSON

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
TENANTS QUEENSLAND INC.

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Tenants Queensland Inc. which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2016, and the income and expenditure statement, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, which form part of the financial report, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibilities also include such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

LIABILITY LIMITED BY A SCHEME APPROVED UNDER PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS LEGISLATION

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the committee's financial reporting under the Associations Incorporation Act. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.


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

Independence


In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Tenants Queensland Inc. presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Tenants Queensland Inc. as of 30 June 2016 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporations ACT (Qld).



HAYWARDS CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS



PETER GESCH - PARTNER

21 OCTOBER 2016
BRISBANE

TQ staff

BRISBANE

Head Office

Penny Carr

Chief Executive Officer

Chris Freney

Service Delivery Manager

Pat Thomson

Business Manager

Jude Clarkin

Finance Administrator

Julie Bartlett

Solicitor

Janet Dunn

Administrator

Alice Thompson

Executive Officer

Evania Johns

Advice Worker

Margaret Barnes

Learning Development Worker

Wendy Herman

Volunteer Coordinator

Alison Lovall

Legal Officer

HUB

Bill Darling

Expert Support Worker

Ron Whittington

Senior Advice Worker

Janice McDonald

Senior Advice Worker

Jacinta Arnold

Advice Worker

Simon Dilly

Advice Worker

Kate Fenwick

Advice Worker

Jesse Rutherford

Advice Worker

Brisbane North Coast

Frank Stinson

Regional Services Coordinator

Peter Murphy

Senior Advice Worker

Tracey Lewis

Advice Worker

Lurline Comerford

Advice Worker

Lisa Murr

Advice Worker

Hannah Bowcock

Advice Worker

Mandy Hillyar

Advice Worker

Caitlyn Scantlebury

Advice Worker

SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Southport

Sheree Harris

Senior Advice Worker

Adrienne Bydeveltdt

Advice Worker

Palm Beach

Cherie O'Donnell

Regional Services Coordinator

Helen Whittle

Expert Support Worker

Eleanor Gardner

Advice Worker

Wendy Curtis

Advice Worker

Logan

Anna McCormack

Advice Worker

Sushil Sami

Advice Worker

Tamblyn Stephenson

Advice Worker

NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

Cairns

Bryony Walters

Regional Services Coordinator

Alby-Bunting-Alexander

Senior Advice Worker

Liz Dearman-McLaren

Advice Worker

Nelson Lee

Advice Worker

Hayley Holland

Advice Worker

Townsville

Jenny King

Advice Worker

Warren Rowles

Advice Worker

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Rockhampton

Karen Butler

Regional Services Coordinator

Debra Willebrand

Advice Worker

Casual assistance was provided through the year by; **Jess Dunn, Liisa Kuru, Tess Beck, Phillip Dowsett, Rose Brown, Ros Connor, Rebecca Lister, Eric Greensill and Sharon Nicoll.**



Tenants Queensland Inc

BRISBANE HEAD OFFICE AND HUB



Level 1, 87 Wickham Tce
Spring Hill 4000



For tenancy advice call
1300 744 263

BRISBANE & NORTH COAST

Brisbane City (North):

Level 1, 87 Wickham Tce Spring Hill 4000

Community Plus+:

556 Ipswich Rd, Annerley 4103

Enhance Care:

Suite 2, 77 King St, Caboolture 4510

Suncoast Community Legal Service:

The TAFE Bldg., 170 Horton Pde,
Maroochydore 4558

SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Southport:

2/18 Bay St, Southport 4215

Palm Beach:

4/1051 Gold Coast Highway,
Palm Beach 4221

Logan:

376 Kingston Rd, Slacks Creek 4127
(C/O YFS - Youth and Family Service)

Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services Inc (IRASI):

Ground Level, IGIC Bldg., 40 South St,
Ipswich 4305

The Advocacy and Support Centre (TASC):

223 Hume St, Toowoomba 4350

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

Rockhampton:

240 Quay St, Rockhampton 4700

Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre:

22 Charles St, Pialba, 4655

Mackay Regional Community legal Centre:

Suite 4, 80 Victoria St, Mackay 4740

NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

Cairns:

Suites 25 & 26 Virginia House, 68 Abbott St,
Cairns 4870

Townsville:

3/95 Denham St, Townsville 4810

Mt Isa:

72 Marian Street, Mount Isa 4825
(C/O Mount Isa Family Support Service &
Neighbourhood Centre Inc.)



for more information visit our website at www.tenantsqld.org.au