



# Tenants Queensland Inc

Annual Report  
2019 – 2020



## Vision

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

## Values

We empower tenants

We show respect for all stakeholders

We act with integrity

We commit to furthering tenants' rights

We promote a culture of continuous improvement

We are accountable for our work

## Purpose

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

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# Convenor Report

This is really the year that no one expected, particularly the last quarter. The emergence of COVID-19 however, served only to consolidate a relatively internal looking year regarding the steering committee's priorities.

Throughout this year and despite the challenges hurled at us with the COVID-19 lockdown, the committee met monthly. The rapid need to change our meeting systems was successfully serviced by drawing on ICT for meeting platforms and document distribution.

In undertaking our work, the committee was supported by three sub-committees. Our Finance and Risk sub-committee met quarterly, the Constitution sub-committee met as needed and, late in the year, we established a People and Culture sub-committee.

During the year, we were fortunate to succeed in achieving a new five-year agreement with the Department of Justice and Attorney General, allowing a continuation of services provided through our Community Legal Services Program. The new contract commenced at the start of the 2020/21 year.

In our QSTARS program, we reviewed demand and need to inform new sub-contracts and internal resources distribution. We continue to work with all seven QSTARS service delivery partners who assist our reach to tenants across the state.

January saw the organisation sign off on an updated three-year Enterprise Agreement.

Of note, is the significant work we've achieved this year on the review of TQ's constitution. As the first in-depth review since our establishment in 1986, it's been quite a long process. However, at the time of writing this report, members will already have received notice of a general meeting where the draft constitution will be put forward for consideration.

This would not be a full report without mentioning the impact of COVID-19 on Queensland renters. So many tenants are adversely affected by COVID-19, with job losses resulting in an inability to pay rent and fear of eviction. The demand for advice has been great. Panic set during March, with some relief when National Cabinet announced an evictions moratorium on the 29th. Despite the mayhem and challenges to our internal operations, TQ has risen to the challenge. Whilst demand always exceeds our resources, our committed staff supported as many individual clients as possible. We used factsheets,

media and social media to get the word out to renters across the state on how to manage their situation and publicised outcomes, as they became known. There's more work to be done.

A number of law firms continue to provide pro bono support for TQ's operations. TQ deeply appreciates this generous assistance which is integral to our success. Our thanks extend to Minter Ellison, Colin Biggers & Paisley Lawyers, Allens Linklaters, and Clayton Utz.

The Committee, as always, would like to thank our staff and students, without whom we would not be able to provide any client services. Staff and students are the face and backbone of TQ. The Committee values the commitment and enthusiasm of TQ's staff, particularly given the king tide of need following the emergence of COVID-19.

The Committee acknowledges the hard work, dedication, and, effort, of the Senior Leadership Team - Penny, Anne-Maree, Chris, and Julie, as well as Alice who supports that team. Thanks also to Pat and Sherryn. The Senior Leadership team have provided significant time and energy to TQ and to the Committee.

To our QSTARS partner agencies - Community Plus +; Enhance Care; Suncoast Community Legal Service; Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre; Mackay Regional Community Legal Centre; Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services (IRASI); and TASC National - thank you for working alongside us.

To our funders - the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Department of Justice and Attorney General, and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women - we are grateful for your ongoing support for our work. We look forward to continuing our partnerships in the service of Queensland renters.

I'd like to thank all the members of the steering committee as well as Finance and Risk sub-committee member Georgia Voutsis for volunteering their time and commitment.

Finally, on behalf of the Committee I would most sincerely like to thank the members and the friends of TQ, all of whom believe in what we are attempting to achieve as an organisation, and, continue to support us.

On behalf of the Committee, I commend this annual report to you.



Rohan Tate

# CEO Report

If I had to summarise the year into three words I'd say unpredictable, unexpected and nimble.

The reporting year started as anticipated.

Following the QSTARS review with our funder, we revised our internal arrangements and updated our sub-contracted arrangements with the QSTARS partner agencies.

We celebrated an offer from the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women to run a second stage to our Domestic and Family Violence Sector Capacity Building Project then knuckled down and got on with it.

We also continued to work with the Make Renting Fair in Queensland Alliance to improve tenancy laws, welcoming the Palaszczuk government's very positive November-issued Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) by encouraging renters across the state to respond. By February, we were anxiously awaiting the government's response to the RIS consultation and the anticipated changes to tenancy law.

All seemed usual, and then, BAM, the world changed!

By March TQ was inundated with renters who'd lost their jobs overnight due to COVID-19, or were concerned they would. Everyone wanted advice and support, and direction on what they should do to pay the rent when they weren't earning any money to meet their living costs. The anxiety and fear of clients was heart wrenching. Much of this continues.

The pandemic required the whole organisation to be nimble and responsive; we worked simultaneously to enable TQ staff to work from home, developed policy in response to arising issues as articulated by Queensland renters and advocated loudly on how to protect tenants from having to move or become homeless during a public health crisis.

On the policy front, we worked nationally with our colleagues to try to influence decisions at National Cabinet.

This flowed through to our work with the state who were implementing the evictions moratorium announced by National Cabinet. The government initially announced strong protections.

Unfortunately, these were later watered down due to the strong influence of real estate lobby groups that, in my opinion, were not fulsome with the truth. Despite gaps and concerns, the COVID-19 protections have, in the main, been helpful. At the time of writing, the state government have announced (contrary to our advice) their intent to end the evictions moratorium for residential renters on September 29, 2020. At the same time, they've decided to extend it to the end of the year for commercial tenants. TQ will continue to raise this as an issue whilst working to advise and respond to the needs of Queensland renters.

During this year, I was fortunate to be appointed to the Domestic Violence Prevention Council. This work is immensely important and I'm humbled to be working with such dedicated and informed people as the Council approaches the middle of its ten-year strategy. The current Action Plan focusses on changing community attitudes and behaviours, integrating service responses, and strengthening justice system responses. Obviously, this complements TQ's own project work with DFV sector workers.

I acknowledge all the very hard-working TQ staff who tirelessly answer questions and support Queensland renters in a constantly changing environment. Their ability to pivot as needed, to comprehend and advise on policy changing overnight has served Queensland renters well.

I also want to thank the TQ steering committee for their support and hard work throughout the year. They're often unseen and receive little accolade for the time they volunteer and the important strategic and governance role they play.

Thank you also to our pro bono partners (see page 50) who never cease to amaze me with their professionalism as well as their support for TQ and our members.

Finally, thank you to our members. Without you, we are not an organisation! Since our recent introduction of online membership payments, we've welcomed many new members and many existing members have made long term commitments to us. Thank you all. You are the heart of Tenants Queensland.

  
Penny Carr







## Goal 1

# Provide high quality services to Queensland tenants

Tenants Queensland provides high quality, free, independent tenant advisory services to assist tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to renting in Queensland. The service aims to empower tenants to manage their own tenancy issues where they are able while providing additional support to tenants where necessary.

TQ delivers a range of tenant advisory services through the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP) and the Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS). Ultimately, TQ works to assist tenants to sustain, as far as possible, safe and secure tenancies.









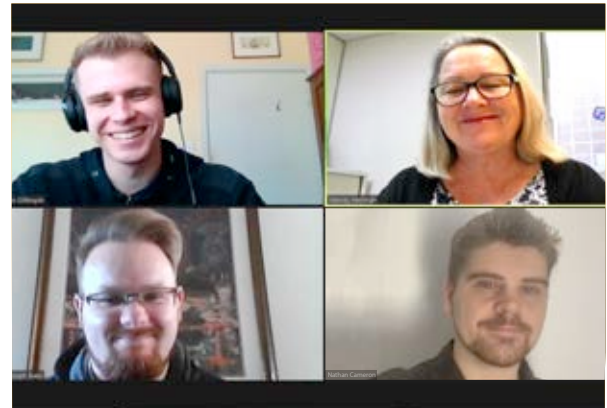
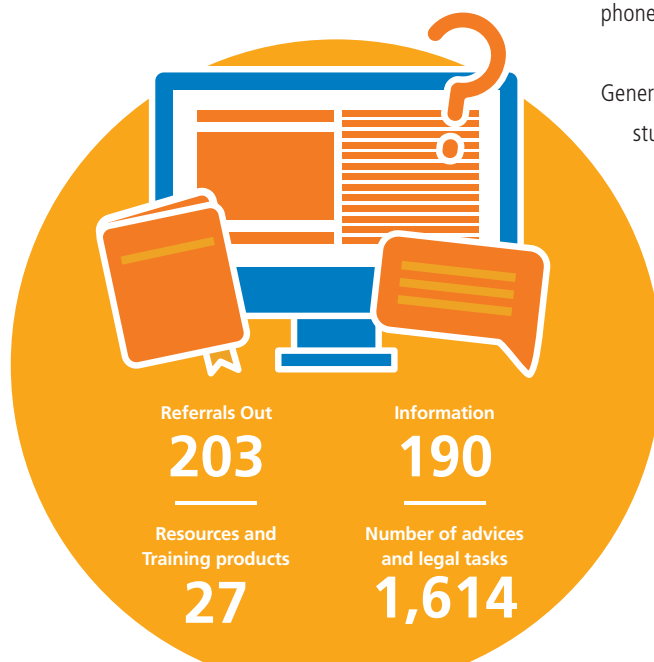
# Community Legal Services Program

The Community Legal Service Program (CLSP) provides case work in relation to complex tenancy law matters, often representing clients who face high levels of disadvantage. The CLSP also takes on strategic litigation where the outcome has the potential to advance tenants' rights or clarify the interpretation of tenancy laws.

Human Rights matters have been a focus during the first half of 2020 with the recent passing of the Human Rights Act in later 2019 which came into effect on 1 January 2020. TQ has assisted numerous clients with their Human Rights complaints against public entities and achieved beneficial outcomes for clients.

## Legal support and quality assurance

Our CLSP provides specialist legal support for TQ services ensuring the accuracy and consistency of advice provided by paralegals, community legal education products and publications, and TQ training materials. Additional resourcing of products for both workers and tenants was required following the introduction of the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 (Qld). TQ responded to the demand for information on the new regulations passed by the state government in response to the COVID-19 health emergency. Sector workers and tenants welcomed the valuable resources provided by TQ.



Wendy delivering the Clinic via ZOOM to James Gillespie (top), Christof Baer (bottom left) and Nathan Cameron (bottom right).

## Tenancy Law Clinic

Our CLSP supports and operates a Law Student Advice Clinic. The clinic runs in conjunction with the University of Queensland (UQ) pro-bono centre. As an elective subject the clinic provides a rare opportunity for three students, each semester, to work directly with clients vulnerable to legal problems related to their tenancies. Students work under TQ supervision. They learn the practical application of social justice principles and tenancy law with a diverse range of clients.

Six students undertook a 13 week placement through the Law Student Advice Clinic during 2019-2020 where students attend one day a week during semester to learn about tenancy law and provide advice and assistance to tenants.

Despite COVID 19 restrictions TQ successfully shifted to online learning and supervision via phone and web-based sessions and phone advice conference calls with clients.

Generally after six intensive weeks of training and observation students are able to assist tenants with supervised phone advice and legal tasks, such as drafting letters.

Participation in the Law Student Advice Clinic gives law students an understanding of the importance of housing and renting issues and an opportunity to put their legal knowledge and skills into practice in "real life" tenancy situations.



## Feedback from a client assisted by the students of the Law Clinic

I just want to say a big thank you to you and your students for assisting me with this matter. I feel a lot more comfortable now that I know what my options are.

## Students reflections on their experience and the service

In my time at the Tenants Queensland community legal centre, I have come to realise that the stereotype of the 'terrible tenant' does a major disservice to tenants everywhere. This hit home particularly well after our visit to the QCAT tenancy tribunal. There was a case where a woman had properly done a bond clean, and had receipts for carpet cleaning and the like. The lessor still tried to claim the woman's bond for uncleanliness, and damage to the walls and range-hood, which the woman had evidence had been there when she moved in.

As a renter myself, I felt I that had some prior experience with some of the challenges faced by tenants, but was utterly unprepared for the sheer volume of people needing advice on their tenancy issues.

The TQ clinic is a great experience to work on your client advice and interaction skills. It's the perfect learning opportunity to hone practical skills for people that want to help people and feel like they're contributing to improving access to justice for people that are otherwise very rarely represented or get advice in their area.

Tenants Queensland provides an invaluable service to the community. Tenants Queensland undertakes a key translating role between everyday Queenslanders and the language of tenancy law, helping others understand the application of the law to their situation.

## TQ online in the "Witness Box"

During the Law Student Clinic TQ participated in a "Witness Box" ZOOM interview with the UQ student Law Life and Well Being program. The video promoted the TQ clinic and tenancy law issues, and discussed the impact of COVID-19 on renters; especially international students who faced job loss and travel restrictions that impacted on their rental accommodation.

## Tenancy Law assistance through CLSP services

### *Landlord attempts to subvert six-month limitation period in the RTRA Act and loses*

TQ assisted a tenant to respond to an appeal application by the lessor to the District Court of Queensland. The lessor had originally filed a claim for \$5355.07 in the Brisbane Magistrates Court approximately four years after the tenant had vacated the premises. Tenants Queensland assisted the tenant to defend this claim and succeeded in having the matter of the original claim dismissed. The lessor had applied to the court outside the six-month limitation period contained in section 419(3) of the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008(Old) (RTRA Act 2008). Additionally, the lessor had failed to apply for dispute resolution as per the s416 of the RTRA Act 2008.

In his original application the lessor argued that his claim was in simple contract and relied upon section 10(1(a) of the Limitations of Actions Act 1974 (Qld) which imposes a six-year limitation period for breach of contract. Additionally, the applicant relied on the judgment of Carmody J in *Amos v Fett* [2016] QCAT 120 where Justice Carmody held that the Magistrates Court had concurrent jurisdiction to QCAT thus allowing an application to the Court by virtue of s4 of the RTRA Act 2008 which provides for rights and remedies of persons in addition to the RTRA Act 2008.

The tenant relied on the decision by Judge Botting of the District Court in *Delahoy & Grevell v Wuiske & Anor* [2006] QDC 276. The Magistrate accepted the view of Judge Botting in *Delahoy* and concluded that the "Act" covered the field in relation to residential tenancies matters and that the provisions in relation to mediation and the six-month time limit clearly applied therefore the application was dismissed. Effectively the Court held that QCAT had exclusive jurisdiction in residential tenancy matters under the value of \$25,000 by virtue of s516 of the RTRA Act 2008 which was not considered by Justice Carmody in *Amos v Fett*.

The lessor proceeded to file an appeal in the District Court however the appeal failed as Judge Koppenol of the District Court determined that the Magistrate's decision that QCAT has exclusive jurisdiction in claims for less than \$25,000 was correct. The respondent was awarded costs.



### *Overpriced rental leads to difficulties for emigrant*

TQ assisted a tenant who had emigrated to Australia from England and rented a premises with little knowledge of the Australian private rental market. The tenant soon found that the premises was significantly overpriced when they had lost their employment and could no longer afford to rent the premises.

The tenant chose to terminate their tenancy three months into a fixed term agreement, then sought assistance from TQ when the lessor had filed a claim against them in the Magistrates Court. The tenant successfully argued to have the application dismissed due to lack of jurisdiction.

The lessor then applied to QCAT for an order however, the claim was dismissed by the Tribunal as the lessor had applied out of the requisite time limit outlined in s419 (six months). Additionally the lessor filed their application without applying for conciliation prior therefore the limitation period had lapsed and QCAT had no power to extend that limitation period.

### *Tenant wins case against lessor who attempts to claim general repairs and maintenance*

The Law student clinic assisted a tenant with submissions and preparation regarding a tenant's bond dispute through QCAT. The tenant was overwhelmed and afraid of the huge \$8,000 claim the lessor had filed against her. After her five-year tenancy ended her lessor was claiming \$8000 (including \$2000 to re-turf the yard and \$900 to install new blinds throughout the house!) The tenant had good evidence to show she had left the premises in the same conditions as it was at the start of the tenancy except for fair, wear and tear.

The QCAT member said the owner had rented the house for five years and did little if any maintenance and was now wanting the

tenant to pay for general repairs and maintenance the tenant was not responsible for.

At the hearing the Real Estate Agent said on top of the \$8000 claim they wanted to add an additional \$2000 to repolish all the wooden floors in the house.

The QCAT member said if the agent wanted to bring additional claims QCAT would have to adjourn the matter and parties would have to come back on another day. The QCAT member said the detailed agent comments on the exit condition report did not include any reference to the alleged floor damage that the agent now claimed needed to be fixed. Looking at the agent's entry and exit photos QCAT also said they could see very little difference.

The QCAT member comments suggested the new claims, like the original claims, simply related to lessor maintenance and renovations after a five-year tenancy.

The hearing proceeded on the basis of the original F2 claims, the QCAT member dismissed the claims and told the agent that tenants are not responsible for general maintenance and repairs.

The tenant managed to get most of her bond back, except for a couple of days rent and the final outstanding water bill.

## **Tenancy Law assistance for Human Rights Cases**

### *Mother experiencing domestic violence retains her right to housing*

TQ assisted a single mother and a victim of domestic violence. The Department of Housing and Public Works had sought to terminate her tenancy for a serious breach caused by her ex-partner who refused to leave the premises until the tenant sought support and obtained



a protection order against him. The tenant wanted to remain in her premises to enable her to reunite with her son. The alternative - a termination of the tenancy would most likely render her homeless or only allow her to obtain unstable housing options in share houses which would not assist in her reunification plan with child safety. TQ assisted the tenant draft a letter of complaint under the Human Rights Act and submissions in response to the Department of Housing application for termination. The matter did not proceed to a full hearing as QCAT permitted an adjournment which allowed the parties to negotiate a transfer of tenancy. The Department of Housing and Public Works withdrew the application for termination.

#### *Tenant's disability overlooked in overturned termination ruling*

TQ assisted a tenant who had been renting from a community housing provider for the past five years. The tenant faced a termination of tenancy due to objectionable behavior. The tenant had a mental health condition and high anxiety so much so that they lodged numerous complaints with the housing provider over the condition of the common areas. These complaints by the tenant escalated over time.

Due to the language used by the tenant in various emails the community housing provider sought to terminate the tenancy rather than address the tenant's disability and mental health issues and provide an alternative method of addressing concerns. TQ assisted the tenant in drafting a Human Rights complaint as the housing provider should have taken the tenants disability into account and afforded them an alternative way of communicating with the provider rather than seek to terminate the tenancy.

After ongoing negotiations with the community housing provider and the public health restrictions brought on by COVID-19 the provider

withdrew their application to terminate. The tenant is considering escalating their complaint to the QHRC for both Human Rights breaches and possible discriminatory conduct on the part of the housing provider.

#### *Application for termination dismissed and tenant remains housed*

TQ assisted a single mother, who was 7 months pregnant, respond to an application for termination brought against her by the Department of Housing and Public Works. The application for termination was due to a serious breach, based on the conduct of her ex-partner who was involved in alleged illegal activity. The tenant also was in the process of seeking reunification of children.

TQ assisted the tenant draft a letter of complaint under the Human Rights Act as the tenant obtained a protection order against the ex-partner, who remained incarcerated, and the termination order was not required as the behaviours had ceased.

TQ also filed an application to dismiss the application for termination on the grounds that the Department of Housing had missed the stated limitation period. The Department of Housing's application was dismissed due to lack of jurisdiction to proceed. The Department alleged that two neighbours had provided complaints against the tenant however they refused to provide the tenant with the statement which allegedly outlined the complaints.

A second application for termination was filed by the Department of Housing however the matter did not proceed as the Department had withdrawn their application for termination just prior to the hearing. The tenant remains in the premises with the Department of Housing.



# Projects

## Domestic & Family Violence Sector Capacity Building Project

Following the Keep Women Safe in their Homes Project undertaken by TQ in 2018-19, the Department of Child Safety Youth & Women funded TQ to deliver a second stage Sector Capacity Building Project. This project has a focus on building the capacity of workers who are supporting women with DFV and tenancy issues. Stage two builds on stage one that developed the DFV Tenancy Toolkit – both hard copy and web resources as well as establishment of a Helpdesk service to DFV workers who supported women with tenancy related DFV issues.

This year the DFV Sector Capacity Building Project expanded to include workers not only in DFV specific services but in other services such as homeless services, families and children support services, shelters, court support workers, multicultural services and more. The Project also proactively offered training and support to Indigenous DFV services.

During this year, the project:

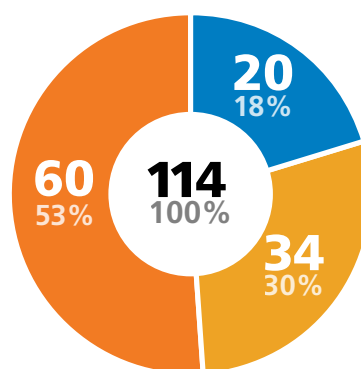
- Continued to develop resources and update the DFV Tenancy Toolkit online;
- Continued to provide helpdesk advice for DFV workers and related services; and
- Provided training for DFV workers and related services.

In April the Queensland Government introduced the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulation 2020 which included provisions about domestic and family violence. Tenants who no longer feel safe to continue to occupy the premises have a right to leave and end their lease. In response to the new protections TQ quickly updated all relevant products to reflect the changes.



## Helpdesk

An important service provided through the project is the DFV Project Helpdesk for DFV workers seeking specific DFV related tenancy advice. Over the year TQ provided 114 sessions of advice including phone advice and follow up email information. Enquiries focussed around starting, staying and leaving a tenancy.

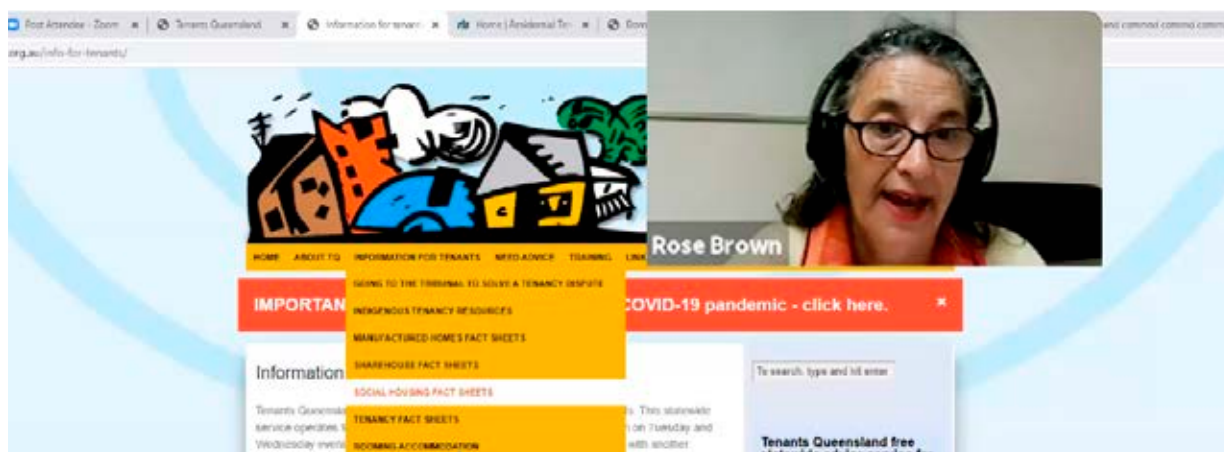


## Training

Over the year, 35 training events were delivered to 379 workers across 26 organisations and networks from Cooktown in the north to Cunnamulla in the west and to the Gold Coast in the south. Twenty-nine of the 35 sessions were delivered online in response to the COVID-19 restrictions. The services in receipt of the training are listed on the next page.

The training was well received with 78% of participants reporting the training had strengthened their skills and knowledge around tenancy law and domestic and family violence and 75.5% reporting it had improved their capacity to assist clients.

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Service, Mackay
- Brisbane Court Support Network
- Brisbane Youth Service
- Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service
- Centacare, Mt Isa
- Central Qld DFV Network, Rockhampton
- Charters Towers
- Churches of Christ, Caboolture
- Community Accommodation & Support Agency, Mackay
- Community Support Centre, Innisfail
- Cooktown District Community Centre & Mackay One Stop Youth Shop
- Cooktown Women's Shelter
- Family Emergency Accommodation, Townsville
- Family Intervention Service, Mackay
- HART 4000, Brisbane
- Kurbingui, Brisbane
- North Qld Domestic Violence Regional Service, Townsville & Mt Isa
- Prospect Community Services,
- Sera Women's Shelter, Townsville
- Sunshine Coast DFV Network
- The Women's Centre, Townsville
- Townsville Multicultural Support Group
- Whitsunday Counselling & Support Service, Proserpine
- Women's Centre FNQ, Cairns & Atherton
- Youth 7 Family Care, Innisfail



Rose Brown, DFV Capacity Building Project Worker delivering a ZOOM training session.

### Training participant feedback

I feel more confident in providing or finding the right information to better support clients not only in DFV situations but with any tenancy issue.

I really enjoyed the workshop. It gave me a wider understanding of how myself as a support worker could assist and direct our clients to the appropriate agencies to support them with their housing issue.

Excellent information and presentation. Fantastic news in regards to the recent legislation changes for victims of DV.

Suggestions for improvement have enhanced the delivery of training over the year with briefer introductions, the inclusion of case studies and discussion of real scenarios, as well as follow up sessions with an email to participants with links to resources and attachments provided.

### DFV project case studies


New Tenancy Regulations made a real difference for women leaving domestic and family violence situations.

#### *Jeanie left violence behind*

Jeanie and Barry were co-tenants on a lease together. When a very serious domestic violence incident occurred, the police were involved and issued a Police Protection Notice. Jeanie had support from several services and was staying at a women's shelter with her children. She wanted to get her name off the lease and was very concerned that Barry would find her.

In June, TQ's DFV Tenancy Helpdesk was contacted by a local family service supporting Jeanie. The new Regulations state that a tenant has a right to leave if they no longer feel safe to continue to occupy the premises because they are experiencing domestic family violence. The Project worker provided the local family service with information about this process and the requirement for the tenant to provide a Notice Ending Tenancy (NET) with 7





days' notice plus supporting documentation about the domestic violence. In this case the Police Protection Notice could be used as a supporting document. Jeanie was quite happy to provide a copy of this to the Real Estate Agent.

While Jeanie remained anxious that Barry would find her, she was able to leave the tenancy and was not responsible for rent after the NET expired, reletting fees or damage to the premises caused by domestic violence. The agent and lessor are obligated to treat the DFV information confidentially and cannot pass this information on to anyone else.

### *Jenny is supported to have her name removed from TICA*

Sherrie from the High Risk Team (HRT) at a Regional Domestic Violence Service contacted TQ's DFV Tenancy Helpdesk about Jenny's TICA listing.

Jenny had experienced serious domestic violence, including financial abuse where the tenancy agreement was in Jenny's name and therefore she was held responsible for damages to the premises. Sherrie was assisting Jenny to put in an application for social housing because she was listed on TICA and could not access the private rental market. Jenny had actually paid the debt to the real estate agent but her name was still listed.

TQ linked Sherrie to a local service that could access the TICA listing. Sherrie got a copy of the listing quickly with no cost. Jenny's listing was due to be removed in October 2020 however, Jenny was looking for accommodation in May and it was too long to wait.

TQ provided advice regarding the Residential Tenancies & Rooming Accommodation Act 2008. Section 461 allows a tenant to apply to the tribunal to have the listing removed because it is unjust under the circumstances. Domestic family violence is an example of an unjust listing.

TQ drafted an Application for Minor Civil Dispute for QCAT with an outline of submissions and suggested evidence, including a

draft letter of support from Sherrie to show the adverse effects of the TICA listing. The Application included the listing agent and TICA as Respondents so that when QCAT makes a decision, both respondents receive a copy of the order and are obliged to act on it.

Sherrie reported that she definitely felt more confident and would not have been able to do this without the support of TQ. When Jenny lodged the application with QCAT, the agent quickly contacted her and removed the listing without the need to attend the hearing.

### *Bella's case drags on*

The DFV Tenancy Helpdesk was contacted by a worker in a regional service who was assisting Bella who was staying in a women's refuge. Previously both Bella and her partner Bob, were named as co-tenants for the rental property. At the end of February Bella fled the situation for her own safety and obtained a Domestic Violence Order against Bob.

In early April, Bella put in an application to the tribunal to terminate her part of the tenancy due to domestic violence however the hearing was not held until the end of May. Because of COVID-19, the QCAT hearing was held via telephone. Bella was shocked, anxious and found it difficult to respond in the hearing as both the real estate agent and Bob, the perpetrator of violence, were on the line.

The tribunal decision included an order that the tenancy was terminated on the day of the hearing which meant that Bella was required to pay rent up to that date even though she had not lived at the rental property for two months. She was very anxious and concerned that she would be held liable for further costs for cleaning and damage and it would be difficult for her to find another rental property. With a bit more support through Helpdesk for the local worker, Bella sorted out the bond issues and applied for other rental properties.

\*The names have been changed to protect our clients' privacy



# Queensland Statewide Tenant Advice and Referral Service (QSTARS)



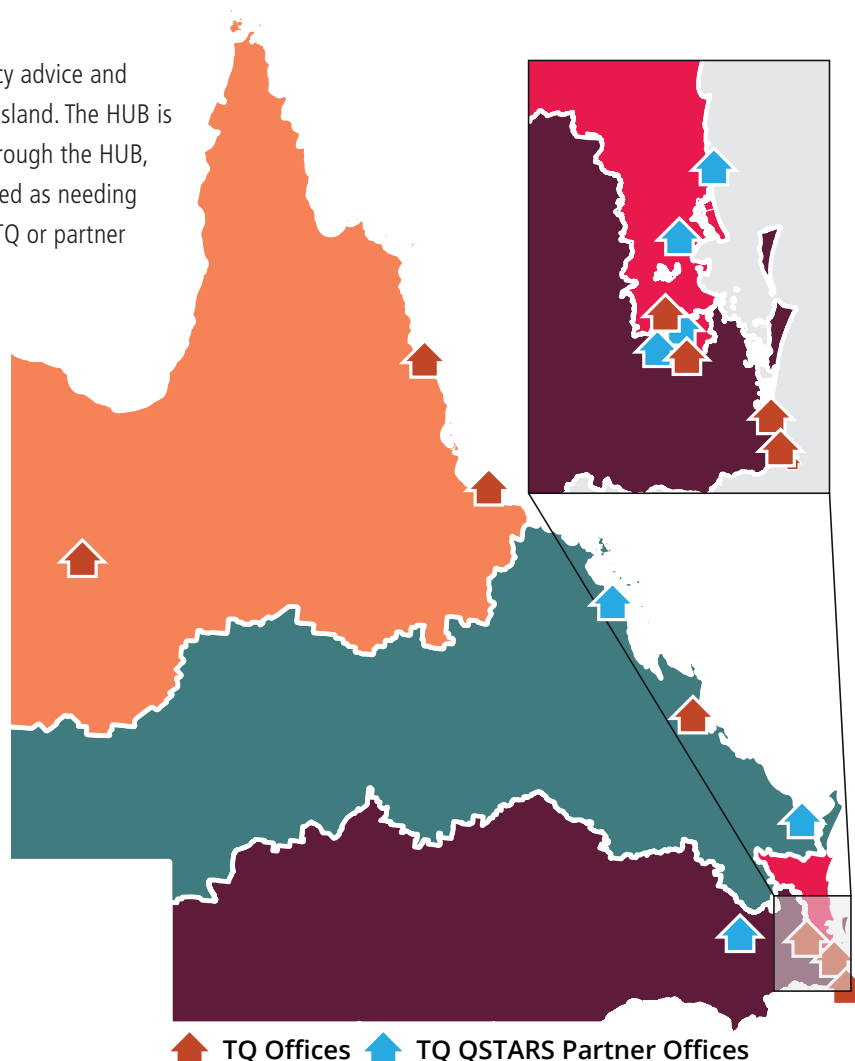
QSTARS is delivered across Queensland through TQ's eight offices and its seven partner offices. TQ's offices are in Spring Hill, Palm Beach and Southport on the Gold Coast, Logan, Rockhampton, Townsville, Cairns and Mt Isa. Partner agencies are Community Plus +, Yeronga; Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services (IRASI); TASC National, Toowoomba; Enhance Care, Caboolture; Suncoast Community Legal Service; Mackay Regional Community Legal Centre and Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre.

QSTARS provides high quality tenancy advice and information to tenants across Queensland. The HUB is the service entry point for clients. Through the HUB, callers are directly assisted or assessed as needing further assistance and referred to a TQ or partner regional office.

## QSTARS Target Achieved

The primary QSTARS performance indicators are the annual delivery of 62,500 output hours of tenancy information, expert support advice and other ancillary work (e.g. training and community education) to people who rent homes across Queensland. With the closing of the 2019 to 2020 financial year, TQ, with its QSTARS Partners, reached this milestone in tenancy service delivery on behalf of the DHPW.

With the start of the 2020/21 financial year, there is a renewed commitment from all QSTARS team members, both in TQ and in our QSTARS partner organisations, to rise to the challenge again to meet our targets as well as strive to deliver outstanding service to our clients.





## QSTARS Statistics



### Client Calls to the Hub

**23,501**  
Unique callers answered

**34,399**  
All calls answered



### Client Numbers

\*"all" includes TQ + partner agencies

**25,230**  
New (all)

**16,921**  
New (HUB ONLY)

**13,361**  
Repeat (all)

**3,438**  
Repeat (HUB ONLY)



### Client Characteristics

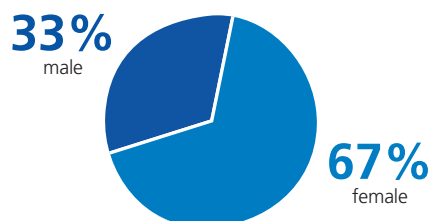
**18%**  
people on a low income  
(up to \$36,000)

**9%**  
people with a disability

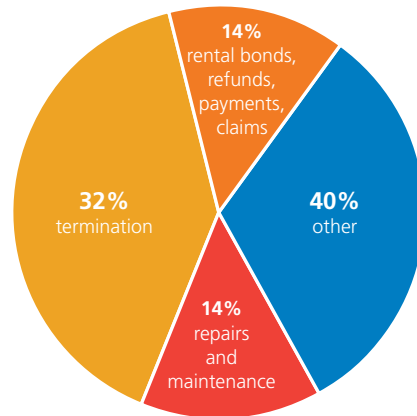
**12%**  
people at risk of  
homelessness

**4%**  
experiencing domestic  
and family violence

**2%**  
Aboriginal and  
Torres Strait Islander



## Presenting Issues



24%	terminating with grounds	78%	lessor obligations
21%	break lease	8%	tenant obligations
17%	terminating without grounds	11%	emergency repairs / H&S
17%	excessive hardship	2%	locks, keys, security
21%	other	21%	other



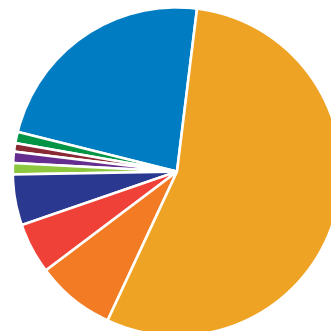
### Referrals

**5,282**  
Referrals from partner agencies

**4,199**  
TQ Offices

**9,481**  
Total referrals sent by HUB to  
Regional Service Providers

## Referral Sources



Self/friend	55%
Regional Service Providers	23%
Internet search	8%
Community Support Services	5%
RTA	5%
Department of Housing and other Government agencies	1%
QCAT	1%
Legal Aid Qld and other Community Legal Centres	1%
QPS	1%

## QSTARS Advice Services

Output	Sessions	Hours
Information only	22,664	4,610
Individual advice and assistance	93,205	42,769
Expert advice and professional support	11,965	11,980
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>127,834</b>	<b>59,359</b>

\*including QSTARS partner agencies

## QSTARS Key Activities

Activity	Hours
Regions and HUB advice	32,894
Community Education	4,893
Training	1,747
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39,534</b>

\*not including QSTARS partner agencies





Christof Baer, Jenny Newton and Cheryl Russell during their initial advice worker training

## Learning and Development

During 2019-2020 Learning and Development focused on addressing organisational competency and individual development needs. TQ continued to work towards implementing a centralised learning framework to record, store and retrieve learning data within TQ's client management system.

TQ commenced monthly knowledge sharing and information sessions for HUB workers providing a beneficial peer learning experience to frontline staff and one on one coaching and mentoring sessions have increased providing targeted training to individual staff.

Feedback mechanisms were undertaken to provide informed and targeted support in subsequent learning programs. The learning and development program received a 100% satisfaction result. Feedback also provided a means to capture future learning and development suggestions for advice workers. These suggestions were included where possible into the ongoing training schedule.

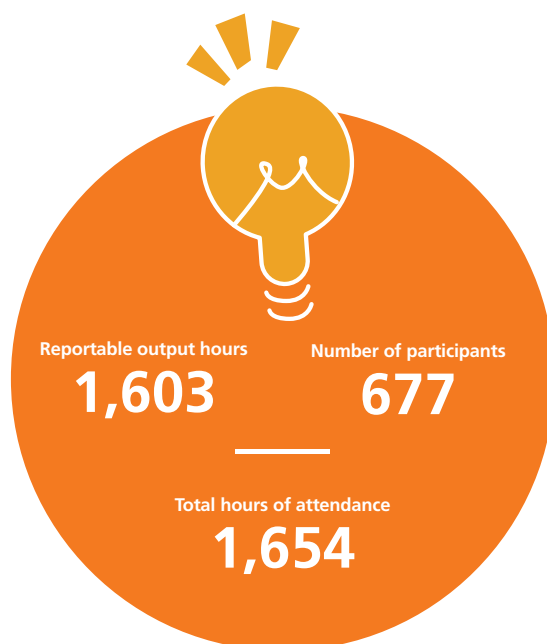
Learning and Development 2019/2020 achievements include:

- Finding and closing skills gaps by focusing on gaps identified during performance and supervision review sessions and assisting staff members to develop career

frameworks. This resulted in an increased engagement with learning programs.

- Implementing a gradual shift from instructor led training to online learning.
- Focusing on one on one coaching and mentoring programs.

During the 2019/2020 reporting period Learning and Development achieved the following outcomes.





## Community Access Points

The 15 offices across Queensland's four QSTARS regions are operated by TQ and its Partners. Each office develops and supports Community Access Points (CAPs) in its region and sub-region by collaborating with local community support agencies. The purpose of CAPs is to improve tenants' access to QSTARS services across Queensland providing an opportunity for clients to receive a service without necessarily attending a QSTARS office.

Examples of CAPs services include:

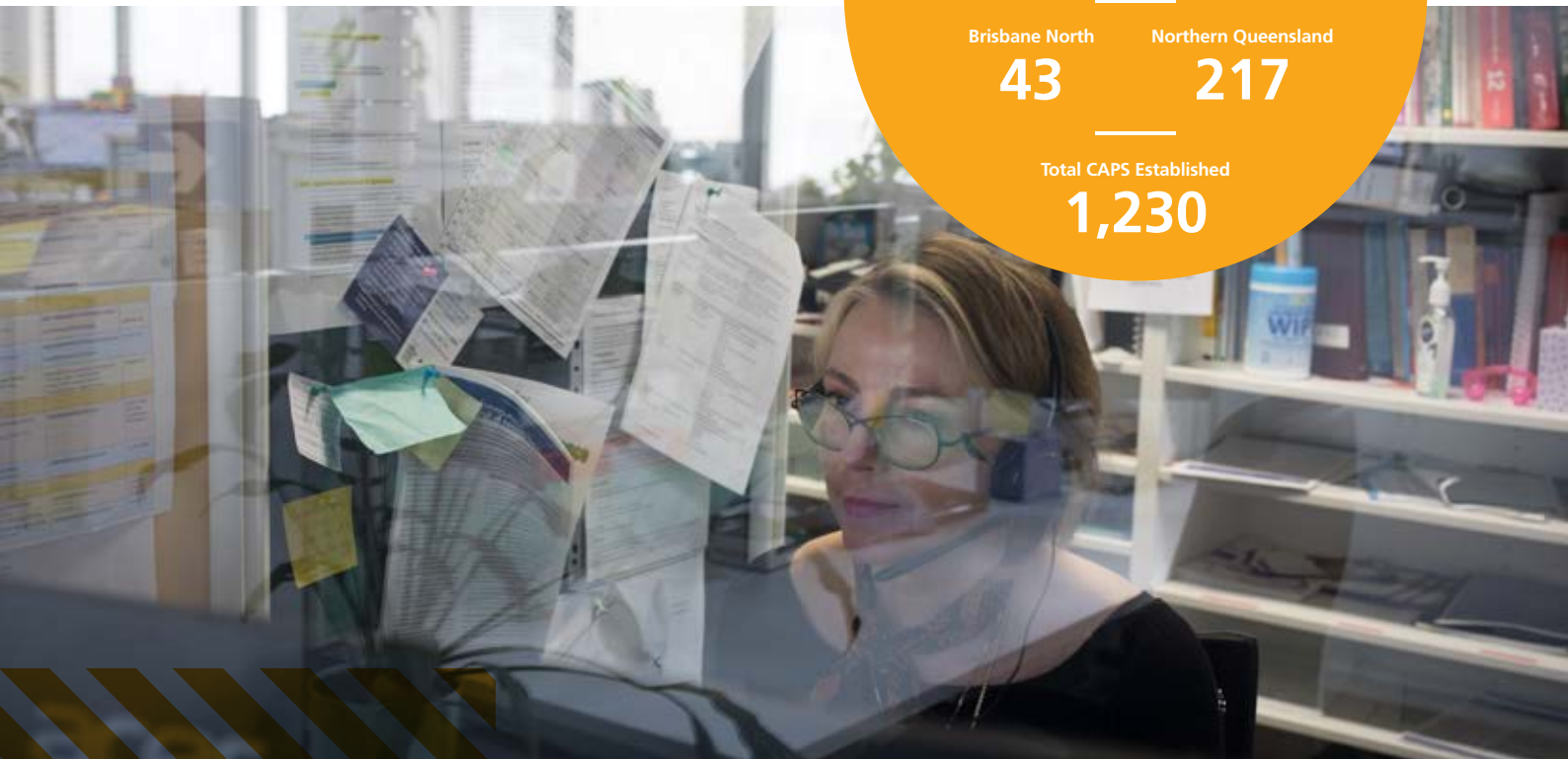
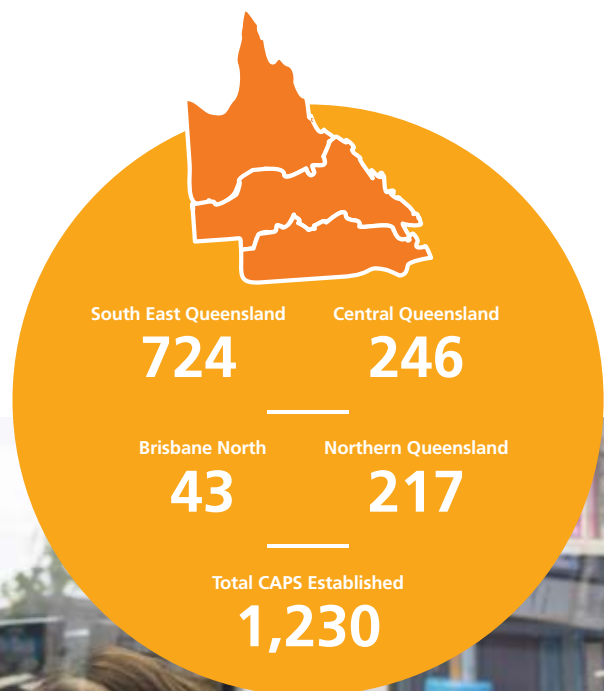
- Community Centres
- Neighbourhood Centres
- Not for Profit Community Agencies
- Federal, State and Local Government Politician Offices
- Tertiary Education Facilities
- Post Offices
- Government agencies e.g. courthouses, libraries, Centrelink, Medicare and other government service centres, police offices
- Community Legal Centres
- Lawyer and Solicitor offices

CAPs provide renters with local access to community education material, forms and information about the

QSTARS service. CAPs may also provide space and facilities for outreach services and/or telephone or video conferencing facilities for clients and staff. Practical issues such as visible signage to promote the CAP and fee-for-service arrangements are negotiated at the local level.

CAPs are an invaluable avenue through which TQ increases its reach across Queensland, particularly in regional and remote areas of Queensland. Tenants, who might otherwise struggle to address their tenancy issue are aided through CAPs.

During 2019-2020 TQ developed agreements with 251 new community organisations bringing the total number of CAPs to 1,230 since QSTARS commenced.





Morning tea and a trivia quiz at Community Plus. Phebe Wong, Brisbane North Community Education Worker leads the proceedings

## Community Education

TQ's Statewide Community Education workers provide information and education to services and community members across Queensland through the delivery of workshops and presentations and through participation in community events. Community education activities aim to increase individual and organisational understanding of tenancy issues; knowledge of tenancy rights and responsibilities and awareness of tenancy advice services with the ultimate goal of enhancing housing sustainability and preventing homelessness.

During 2019-2020 the Community Education team focused on engagement with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities through the TAFE Adult Migrant Education Program (AMEP) and TAFE English Language and Literacy Services (TELLS) providers. Community education has been delivered to over 1,200 AMEP and TELLs students across Queensland.

Community Education is delivered to a broad range of services targeting a range of issues including housing and homelessness, indigenous health, domestic and family violence, and employment. Community Education events that provide a rich arena to share information include Student Orientation Week, Homeless Connect, International Women's Week, Harmony Day, the National Aboriginal & Islander Day of Celebration (NAIDOC), International Tenants Day, Anti-Poverty Week, National Youth Week, Mental Health Week and National Close the Gap Day.

## 2019-20 Community Education sessions and events

	North Qld	Central Qld	Brisbane North	Southern Qld	HUB	TOTAL
Workshops and presentations	38	80	39	60	18	235
Community events	12	10	24	65	23	134

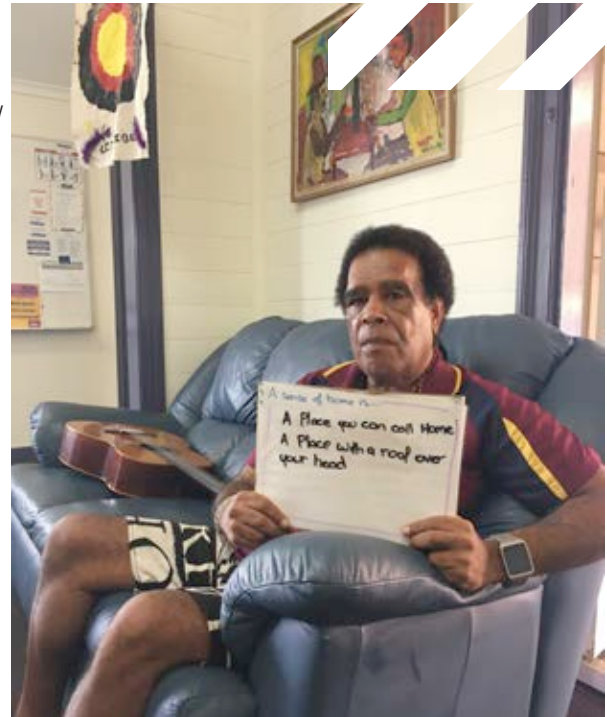


### International Tenants Day 2019

International Tenants Day (ITD) is an important event in TQ's community education calendar. Celebrated on the first Monday of October each year, the day is themed by the International Union of Tenants and is the focus for a range of community events locally and across many countries.

ITD has been celebrated on the first Monday in October since 1986, where the day first originated in France to promote and raise awareness of tenants rights across the world.

TQ conducted a photo competition themed on 'This Place, My Home' for ITD 2018-19. A range of events were held at TQ offices across the state including a Tenants Breakfast in Mt Isa, BBQ and entertainment in Brisbane, a sausage sizzle and information stall in Rockhampton, and a BBQ in Cairns. An important aspect of all events is a tenancy information stall with staff onsite to answer any questions.



Winner of the 2019 International tenants Day photo competition on what "a sense of home" means



Jenny Brown – Community Education Worker Northern Queensland and participants celebrate ITD at the Cairns Botanical Gardens.



## QSTARS Case Studies

### *Rob wins application to end his tenancy early.*

Rob had recently been diagnosed with a range of health issues which prevented him from continuing to run his business. By the time Rob received a notice of hearing at the tribunal after defaulting on rent repayments, he had cleared the arrears and had in fact paid one month's rent in advance as a result of his superannuation pension payments commencing.

Due to the change in Rob's health circumstances he could no longer afford to rent where he was and needed to leave the tenancy. Rob was supported at the tribunal hearing as his medical condition caused functional impairments in his speech, mobility and thinking. At the hearing Rob was successful in negotiating a consent order allowing him two months to terminate the tenancy.

### *Raising the bar on agency practice*

Beth and her husband sought advice from TQ after they received a Warrant of Possession (WoP). At the time of seeking assistance Beth was awaiting cancer surgery and was unable to self-advocate.

As a result of Beth's health circumstances, Beth and her husband were behind on their rent. They were issued a Notice to Remedy Breach followed by a Notice to Leave. Even though Beth and her husband had remedied their arrears, they had failed to do so by the required date. They were then issued a Notice to Leave but also failed to leave the premises by the handover date. Subsequently QCAT terminated the tenancy and issued a WoP.

TQ assisted the tenant by contacting the lessor and negotiated a stay of the WoP with the lessor ultimately agreeing to withdraw the warrant to prevent its execution by the police. This was a great relief for Beth and her husband.

However, unbeknown to the lessor, the real estate agency ignored the express request by the lessor to withdraw the WoP until TQ was able to inform the lessor that the warrant was still to be executed. The police were informed by the lessor at the last minute not to enforce the WoP against

Beth and her husband. The lessor subsequently withdrew management of his property from the real estate agency involved.

### *Local school gets schooled on bonds*

Harry was an employee of a prominent school who called TQ for advice about a bond dispute. Harry was a sub-tenant under the school's head tenancy agreement that was managed by a renting agent. As this matter unfolded it was discovered that Harry, as an employee of the school had paid a bond directly to his employer, in this case, the school.

In this unusual scenario, the bond Harry paid to the school was discovered to not have been lodged with the Residential Tenancies Authority as required under the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act. Instead the school held onto Harry's bond, calling it a 'security bond'. The school then paid a separate amount to the renting agent who then lodged the bond as required by the tenancy agreement between the school and the renting agent.

Investigating further into this matter TQ found that Harry was indirectly challenging the lessor's claim on the bond through his employer as he was their subtenant. The employer would then attempt to pass on information to the renting agent. Further discussions with the school revealed that over 50 other employees renting through the school were in a similar situation. In most of these cases bonds were lost as the school had a strict policy to give up on their own bond claims and simply draw from the employees 'security bonds' they held.

Because the bond had not been lodged with the RTA Harry could not take up the option set out in the Act to dispute a bond claim. Additionally, the school was having to become a middleman for disputes about how Harry or other staff in similar positions left the property.

TQ provided advocacy via written correspondence and was able to explain to the school that what they were doing was a breach of s 116 of the Act, which states that



a person receiving a rental bond must, within 10 days of receiving it pay it to the authority; and give the authority a notice, in the approved form, about the rental bond. An offence under this section carries a maximum penalty of 40 penalty units.

The school was quick to recognise that this was a significant breach of the Act and informed TQ they would take action immediately to change their policy in order to align with the Act. The school is now focused on ensuring that all the bonds paid to the renting agent are lodged

with the RTA. In the end Harry was able to pursue his bond dispute through the Tribunal.

\*The names have been changed to protect our clients' privacy.



## ! Goal 2

# A strong and effective voice for tenants

Throughout the year TQ has continued to raise awareness of the issues being faced by tenants, and advocated on their behalf with government, the media and the wider community.





# Stakeholder Engagement

TQ continues its active engagement with a broad range of community, industry and government stakeholders

TQ's CEO, Penny Carr was invited onto the Queensland Government's Domestic & Family Violence Council, a key body tasked with continuing to support the Queensland Government to achieve the outcomes of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026 through the implementation of the Third Action Plan 2019-20 to 2021-22.

Over the year TQ participated in a range of consultative forums and events including:

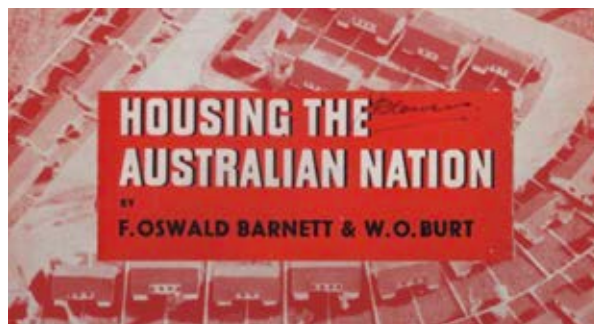
- Monthly Ministerial Housing Committee (MHC) and the MHC Housing Security Subcommittee
- Human Rights Act implementation workshop
- Monthly QCOSS Community Service Peaks Meeting
- Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA) Industry Forum
- Quarterly QCOSS Essential Services Consultative Group
- Hosted a 21-person consort of visiting Malaysian public housing and other delegates
- Regular meeting with the Residential Tenancies Authority
- Good Samaritan Initiative (DHPW)

2019-2020 Research collaborations:

- UQ – evictions research currently on hold due to COVID-19
- TQ is a partner organisation on an Australian Research Council funding application for a National Rental Vulnerability Index (RVI) project that will see the RVI developed by TQ in 2018 broadened across all jurisdictions. The application has been submitted by the City Futures Research Centre, UNSW
- Regulated Accommodation Sector COVID Group
- CLE Legal Assistance Forum

Presentations were delivered at the following forums during the year:

- AHURI National Housing Conference "Generation rent" panel
- Brisbane City Council "Reimagine Brisbane" event
- Interview with Peter Mares from ABC contributing to the "Housing the Australian Nation" broadcast series



- Interview on digital technology and housing with the University of Sydney
- Interview with City Futures Research Centre as part of the AHURI project on housing and homelessness policy responses to COVID-19.

TQ submitted responses to the following processes:

- 'A better renting future – Safety, security and certainty' Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (DHPW), Stage 1 Reforms
- Submission to Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic & Family Violence Prevention Committee on the Queensland Government's Response to COVID-19.

TQ continues to convene the National Association of Tenant Organisations (NATO) monthly meetings. NATO was active in relation to the COVID-19 tenancy protections advocating to the Senate Select Committee COVID-19's inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.



# Advocacy

## Make Renting Fair in Queensland (MRFQ)

The Make Renting Fair Campaign launched in late 2018 continued to advocate around the tenancy law reform processes being undertaken by the government throughout 2019. Following the government's OPEN DOORS to RENTING REFORM consultation in late 2018, it was November 2019 before the government released, and sought feedback on, "A better renting future – Safety, security and certainty" Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement (DHPW), Stage 1 Reforms.

To drive the debate during the consultation period in December 2019, the Make Renting Fair in Queensland Alliance hosted a tenancy law forum. The Forum was a very successful event with over 90 participants, including workers from the sector, tenants and representatives of the real estate industry. The discussion was mediated by Peter Mares from the ABC. There was a lively discussion and a diverse range of views were canvassed, with strong support for the reforms articulated by Alliance members.

TQ and a number of Alliance members submitted responses to the Regularity Impact Statement (RIS) and the Alliance facilitated the opportunity for tenants to respond to the RIS through an online submission process through the Make Renting Fair in Queensland website.

The Alliance also conducted a round of meetings with around 40 MPs over October and November 2019 and into January and February 2020.



Make Renting Fair QLD Tenancy Law Forum

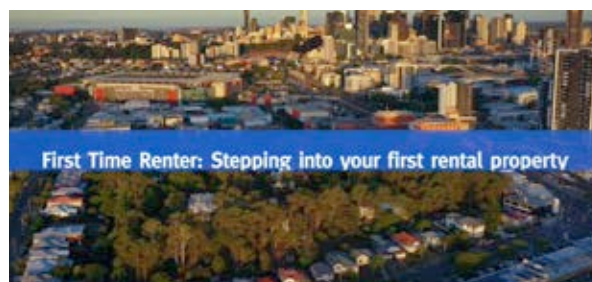
By early 2020, Make Renting Fair in Queensland had grown its list of supporters and sustained its lobbying through written submissions to government, visits with members, petitions and social media messaging. The Alliance released a series of short videos on each of the campaign asks and conducted two petitions on pets and ending tenancies fairly that attracted significant support. There was a buzz of media engagements at this time including the publication of an opinion piece by TQ outlining the importance of the reforms.



The Alliance was expecting a draft Bill early 2020 when COVID-19 struck and the tenancy law reform agenda was overtaken by the immediacy of the COVID-19 health crisis and the development and implementation of emergency tenancy protections. While the Make Renting Fair in Queensland Alliance continued to meet and play a strong supportive role in response to COVID-19 between March and June this year, the focus on broader tenancy law reform took a back seat. At the time of writing, the emergency protections had ceased and tenancy law reform remained on hold.

### First time renter project

A collaborative partnership between the Queensland Youth Housing Coalition, Community Living Association's Community Connections, the Youth Advocacy Centre and Tenants Queensland produced a series of videos and factsheets targeting young people and first time renters. The videos and factsheets are aimed at giving young people and vulnerable first time renters the information they need to access rental properties. The launch of the video will take place some time in the future.



### Tenants Queensland Factsheets

TQ plays an important role in responding to tenant information needs in times of natural disaster and crisis. During this year factsheets were developed for:

- Tenants affected by the Queensland fires during Summer 2019-2020;
- Tenants affected by COVID-19;
- Sharehouse tenants affected by COVID-19
- International students affected by COVID-19; and
- Renters affected by domestic and family violence during COVID-19

### Tenancy law and election signage

Queenslanders' right to political expression came under attack during the 2019 Federal Election as an increasing number of tenants were forced to remove election signage from their rental properties.

TQ received a number of enquiries from tenants issued with breach notices for having displayed election signage outside their rental properties. In some instances, the signage was removed by real estate agents and landlords without their consent.

In response, TQ put together a factsheet with information for tenants.



## International connections

Penny Carr, TQ's CEO attended the 21st International Union of Tenants World Congress in Vienna, Austria in October 2019. The IUT conference is a significant event that coincides with International Tenants Day each year.

The conference was a great opportunity for Penny to discover initiatives and learnings from other parts of the world, with an emphasis this year on strategies against skyrocketing rents; short term rental platforms; the financialisation of housing; and the importance of organisation of tenants.



## Media/social media

TQ has continued to use traditional and social media to raise the concerns of renters with the public. Common topics include the effects of domestic and family violence on tenants and tenancies; the impact of evictions without grounds; rent cost stability; and the rising number of renters in the state. TQ engages with the media in both proactive and reactive ways.



# QSTARS Case Studies

## *Unscrupulous lessor results in Sunita becoming homeless*

Sunita was a single mother with a four year daughter, Elly. The unit that she rented was in very poor condition. The stove didn't work, there was a leak in the bathroom that caused the back of the vanity to rot, and the tiles were about to come off the wall. Sunita was worried about the tiles being a hazard for Elly. The owner was overseas and was not interested in carrying out repairs however, instead just wanted to file an insurance claim to have the repairs carried out. The insurance company assessed that the problems were a maintenance issue and would not approve a claim for repairs.

Months went by and the vanity fell apart. Sunita decided to purchase a new vanity and re-instate the tiles to the best of her ability. However the water leak had not been addressed and had since caused damage to another bathroom cupboard. Finally the owner's daughter intervened. She organised a tradesperson and moved Sunita and her daughter into a motel for a week while the work was completed. However Sunita was still expected to pay rent, and when it became apparent that the repairs would take longer, Sunita was given a Notice to Remedy for malicious damage.

The dust from the repair work permeated the unit, the locks were changed and Sunita was prevented from returning to collect her affected belongings. Sunita and Elly became homeless all the while pleading with the agent to be able to return to the unit. The agent's response was to give Sunita an appointment time to collect her things. She had no one to help her move and nowhere to take her belongings.

Our caseworker established that Sunita had been evicted without a QCAT order for termination of the tenancy or a warrant of possession, making the action unlawful. Sunita lodged a claim for her bond and it was refunded in accordance with a QCAT order. A complaint was made to the RTA's Legal Investigations Unit and an application

against the lessor was lodged with QCAT for rent reduction (s94) and compensation (s419 and s420).

## *Shane's right for honest and fair treatment*

Shane and his family moved from Sydney to start a new life in South East Queensland. Several weeks after moving into their rental property they were perusing realestate.com and discovered that the house they were renting was on the market to be sold.

Shane contacted the agency who denied knowledge of the plan to sell. However Shane then received confirmation from the letting agent that the property was in fact for sale and that they were not required to advise tenants until such time as they were arranging inspections for prospective buyers. Shane and his family did not want to live in a house that was on the market and informed the agent that they wished to vacate. In response the agent advised that they would initiate a break lease process and calculated that rent owing to the end of the lease would be \$21,878.09.

Shane contacted TQ and it was established that, although Shane had not issued a Notice of Intention to Leave to the agent, they had emailed their intention to leave within the required two months and fourteen days allowed under the Act. TQ then contacted the agent and informed them of their obligation to issue a Form 10: Owners Intention to List the Property prior to showing any prospective purchasers the premises. Additionally, the tenant had validly exercised their right to terminate the tenancy and leave the property without penalty, given they had advised the agency within the prescribed time under the Act. Shane and his family left the property without any further financial liability.

\*The names have been changed to protect our clients' privacy.









Goal 3

# A well -managed sustainable organisation

TQ continues to build a strong and resilient organisation able to support the delivery of high quality services and tenants interests through advocacy and representation. With many processes and systems now well embedded, TQ was able to respond to the COVID-19 disruption nimbly and responsibly.

This year TQ has continued the review of its constitution which commenced in 2018.

A key milestone this year was the review and renewal of the Enterprise Agreement.





# Governance

## Steering Committee

The TQ Steering Committee (SC) meets on a monthly basis to consider TQ strategy, performance and compliance. In 2019-2020 the Steering Committee welcomed two new Committee members, Scott Pardey and Troy Spence, at its 2019 AGM.

During 2019-2020 the Steering Committee focussed on the review of the TQ constitution and undertook a review of staff engagement opportunities within TQ.

## 2019/20 Steering Committee and Subcommittee members

Rohan Tate Convenor / Constitutional review subcommittee (ongoing)  
Damian Eckersley Secretary

Maria Leebeek Treasurer / Finance and Risk subcommittee  
Penny Gillespie Ordinary Member  
Seleneah More Ordinary Member  
Bryony Walters Ordinary member  
Marg Barnes Staff representative  
Scott Pardey Ordinary Member (elected November 2019)  
Troy Spence Ordinary Member (elected November 2019)  
Georgia Voutsis Finance and Risk subcommittee  
Sally Watson Constitutional review subcommittee

The SC met eleven times and members attendance averaged 79% in 2019-2020.

Rohan Tate	Damian Eckersley	Maria Leebeek	Staff Rep – Frank Stinson/Marg Barnes	Paul Smithson
8 (of 11)	8 (of 11)	7 (of 11)	10 (of 11)	4 (of 5)
Bryony Walters	Penny Gillespie	Seleneah More	Troy Spence	Scott Pardey
7 (of 11)	10 (of 11)	11 (of 11)	3 (of 6)	6 (of 6)



Syani Linarto, Jude Clarkin, Penny Carr and Pat Morgan, with Peter Gesch and Vicky More from Haywards Chartered Accountants at the 2019 AGM





### **Finance and Risk Subcommittee**

The Finance and Risk subcommittee comprising the Treasurer, Maria Leebeek and independent representative, Ms Georgia Voutsis met on three occasions during 2019-20. Over the past year the subcommittee has focussed on implementing the reviewed business model agreed between TQ and the Department of Housing and Public Works during the 2018-2019 contract renegotiation.

### **Compliance and Audit**

Internal auditing is the responsibility of the Steering Committee and supported by TQ management. A rolling compliance schedule is maintained at the steering committee's monthly meetings. An external audit of all TQ's books of account occurs annually.

### **TQ Leadership Team**

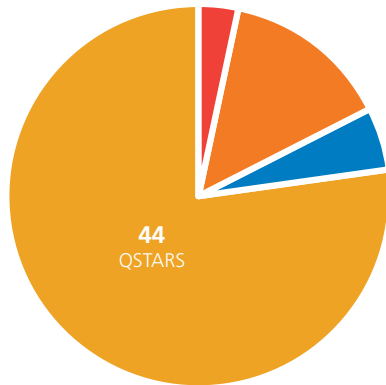
TQ's Leadership Team continued to meet weekly in the second half of 2019, shifting to fortnightly meetings in 2020. The focus of this forum is driven by the strategic plan and organisational KPIs operationalised through the leadership plan. The Joint Management Team meets on a quarterly basis and in alignment with the QSTARS quarterly performance review meetings held in conjunction with the DHPW.



# Staffing

## Structures

TQ's staff establishment plan is reviewed by the Steering Committee annually and TQ employs staff in accordance with approved budgets. As at June 2020 TQ employed 42.56 FTE's across 57 positions.



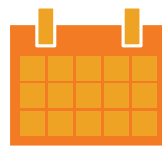
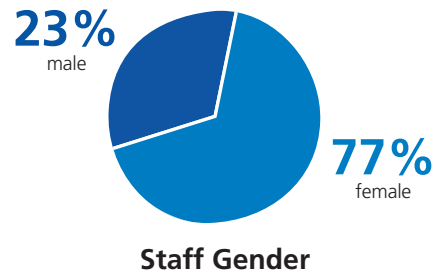
Corporate ..... 8  
DFV ..... 2  
Legal..... 3

## Renegotiation of TQ's Enterprise Agreement

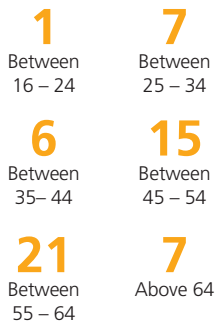
TQ finalised its review of the TQ Enterprise Agreement culminating in the new agreement approved by the Fair Work Commission on 24 January 2020. The review involved The Services Union and staff representatives meeting with management through a series of meetings. A key feature contained in the new agreement is the establishment of a Joint Consultative Committee.

## Staff Profile

At the end of the 2020 financial year 14 staff had been employed for 2-3 years and a further 20 staff had been employed for 4-5 years reflecting the stability of the workforce within TQ.



### Staff Age Range



### Years of Service



Chris Freney, Service Delivery Manager, Jude Clarkin, Finance Administrator and Wendy Clarke, Volunteer Coordinator and ASU Delegate scrutineer the EBA ballot.

# Planning

## Strategic Plan

TQ undertook its annual strategic planning event in May 2020. The planning was facilitated by an external consultant over a series of three ZOOM meetings culminating in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. The plan differed from previous plans and included a new and 4th strategic theme – “building resilience and readiness for the future”.

## Organisational Risk Management

TQ manages risk through its Risk Management plan. At the strategic level the Finance and Risk Subcommittee support the Steering Committee by considering high level risks and mitigation strategies proposed by management.

## Strategic themes

**A connected and influential voice for tenants**

**Delivery of quality services to Queenslanders**

**Building resilience and readiness for the future**

**A sustainable organisation**



LtoR Top row: Philippa Murray (Facilitator), Jayson (Southern Qld RSC), Frank (Brisbane North RSC), Marg (Staff Representative); Row 2: Chris (Service Delivery Manager) Karen (Central Qld RSC); Laurel (Northern QLD RSC); Scott Pardey (steering committee); Row 3: Rohan Tate (Convener); Penny Gillespie (steering committee); Julie (Principal Solicitor), Alice (EO); Bottom row: Penny (CEO); Sherryn (Business Manager); Bryony Walters (steering committee).



# Quality

## National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) Accreditation & Risk Management



Under the NACLC accreditation requirements TQ is required to comply with the Mandatory Standards of the Risk Management Guide. TQ is also required to undertake an annual cross-check review by a peer

organisation to ensure continuing compliance as part of NACLC risk management processes.

## Continuous Improvement

TQ continued its mandate to enhance the service through a focus on continuous improvement. Over 2019-2020 initiatives included:

- Refinement of TQ's key performance indicators;
- Update of TQ's Enterprise Agreement;
- Establishment of the Joint Consultative Committee;
- Review of TQ's policies and procedures to align with the introduction of the Human Rights Act 2019;
- Clarification of staff purchase and reimbursement procedures;
- Introduction of work from home policies and procedures during COVID-19;
- A review of TQ's advice work telephony system with a view to upgrading;
- Improvements to TQ's client management information system; and
- Establishment of the TQ Steering Committee and QSTARS Partner SharePoint Portals.

The TQ Leadership Team supports the quality system through a regular review of initiatives recorded on the continuous improvement register.

# Finances

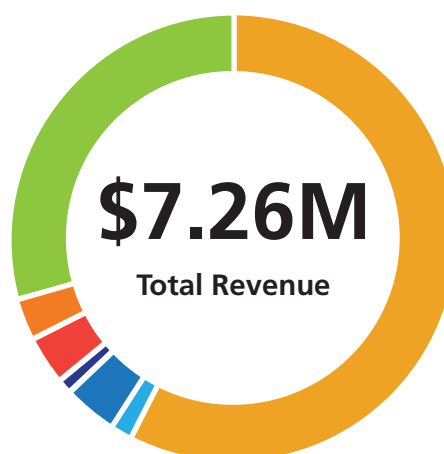
## Income and Expenditure statement

In the 2019-2020 year TQ and the Department of Housing and Public Works completed the review commenced in the previous financial year. Updated Program Requirements were agreed and key outcomes included the agreement of a business model and adjusted service delivery outputs. The current QSTARS contract runs to 2023 subject to an evaluation this year.

CLSP funding was renewed and a funding agreement of five years approved and signed in early 2020.

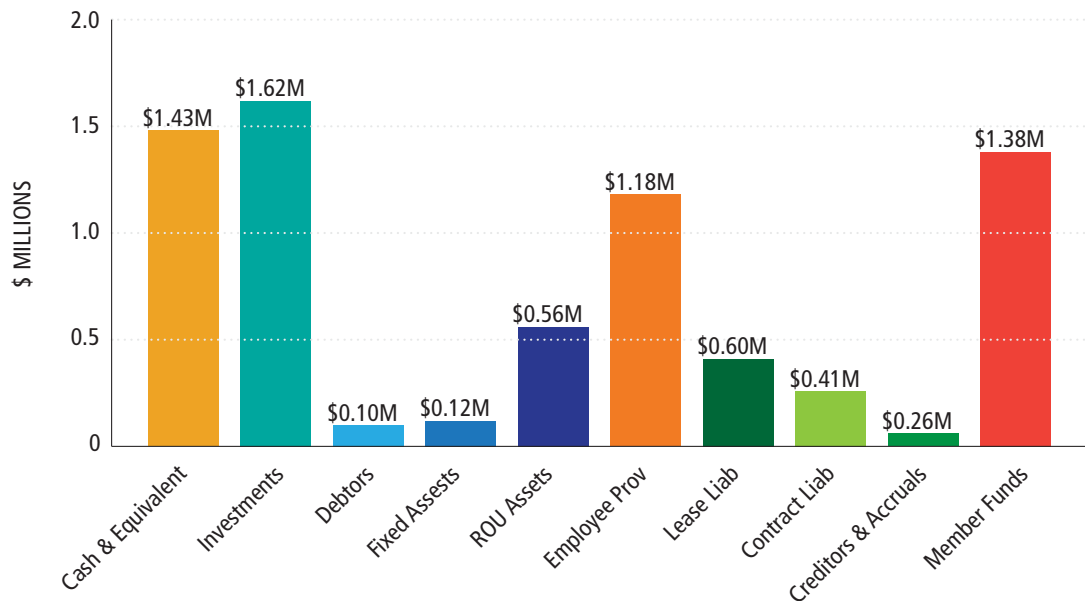
Salaries and entitlements remain the most significant expense, at approximately 80% of TQ's total expenditure. Other Operating Costs include supplies and external services, with 1/3rd of this relating to ICT services and equipment.

## Profit & Loss 2019-20



Employee Exp	\$4.12M
Property Exp	\$0.09M
ICT	\$0.28M
Travel & Training	\$0.08M
Depreciation	\$0.27M
Other Operating Exp	\$0.20M
QSTARS Partners	\$2.11M

### Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2020



#### Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2020 TQ held \$412k of unspent program funds. These funds are shown as a liability at 30 June as these are considered a reciprocal transaction for which revenue is recognised as services are performed.

## Communication and Engagement

#### TQ Communication Strategy

During 2019-2020 TQ undertook a review with a view to develop a communications plan. The review included a survey of external stakeholders as well as staff to garner views and perspectives. A Stakeholder Engagement and Communication Plan 2020-2021 was developed and the first step to implementation, recruiting a Communications Worker was endorsed by the TQ Steering Committee.

#### Staff, QSTARS Partner and Member Newsletters

TQ uses a suite of communication strategies including quarterly newsletters, regular team meetings, and bulletins to share information about service delivery and organisational development. TQ produces a bi-annual member newsletter to update TQ's members about our work and circulates a newsletter to its QSTARS partners on a quarterly basis.

#### Lunchbox sessions

TQ initiated a new staff well-being activity in the form of lunchbox sessions during 2019-2020. The intention is to seek staff input on potential topics in the future. This year's topics were on superannuation and the other on salary sacrifice.



## The COVID-19 journey for Queensland renters

The lead up to determining the Queensland evictions moratorium and other COVID regulations was a particularly challenging time. On top of volumes of anxious renters seeking advice, we were engaged in both national and state policy debates over 'fair' COVID rules.

### Policy debates

On 22nd of April 2020 the Queensland government enacted the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 (Qld). This provided the head of power for making the Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Regulations 2020 - where the details sit - on April 24th.

These measures were introduced to protect renters following the Prime Minister's (PM) much anticipated announcement on behalf of National Cabinet on March 29 this year. He said: "Now, the National Cabinet also considered this evening issues relating to commercial tenancies as well as residential tenancies and they agreed to a series of principles which are released through the statement. But the most significant of those is that states and territories will be moving to put a moratorium on evictions of persons as a result of financial distress if they are unable to meet their commitments. And so there will be a moratorium on evictions for the next six months under those rental arrangements."





Renters across Australia breathed a collective sigh of relief and then awaited further detail.

After a long wait by anxious tenants, nine days later on April 7 - again following National Cabinet - the PM announced a mandatory code for commercial tenancies, requiring rent reductions proportional to the reduction in the business turnover. Despite the expectation across the country, no such guidance was provided for residential tenancies and it became clear that National Cabinet had no more to say on the topic.

TQ was already talking to the state government about needed protections. The Queensland government in turn announced its early intent to deliver clear and strong protections for affected renters (though in the end the changes were not everything TQ expected or hoped for) and moved quicker than other jurisdictions to bed down new COVID renting rules.

On April 1, Premier Palaszczuk announced rental grants to assist tenants unable to pay their rent between losing jobs and income due to COVID-19 and accessing JobKeeper or JobSeeker payments. Whilst targeted to those with limited saving, they were a welcome relief for stressed renters.

By April 9, Queensland's Deputy Premier and Housing Minister announced the establishment of the COVID-19 Rental Hub for all things residential tenancy, as well as their intent to regulate the following COVID-19 tenancy rules:

- Compulsory conciliation for COVID tenancy disputes,
- A freeze on evictions for those who could not pay their rent due to COVID (retrospective to the PM's announcement on March 29),
- Additional protections for renters experiencing domestic and family violence,
- A requirement to extend leases by six months if they ended during the crisis, and,
- Re-emphasized tenants' responsibility to maintain their homes in accordance with the tenancy agreement.

The announcement was well supported by TQ, other advocates and renters across the state. TQ also pushed for the inclusion of rooming accommodation residents in the protections, prohibition on the listing of COVID

affected renters on a tenancy database, and for issues around entries to properties for immune compromised renters be addressed.

The real estate lobby did not like the government's proposals. In the lead up to parliament sitting to address the proposals, the Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) mounted a well-funded campaign targeting agents and landlords with (in TQ's view) fearmongering and alarmist information. By April 16, the Housing Minister issued a press release stating the government 'continues to listen' and by the 19th had significantly watered down and changed the proposal to reflect a new 'middle ground'. The powerful real estate industry lobby were successful in their campaign and the expected protections were watered down at the last minute, and just before the regulations were made.

In their final form, the COVID-19 regulations provided some positive protections but fell short of expectations.

### **Positive protections**

The regulations protected most renters from eviction for unpaid rent resulting from COVID-related income and employment loss (at least until they ended on September 29). They also allowed people with health concerns the ability to prevent most entries, keeping them safe during the pandemic.

In addition, most of the regulations extended to people living in rooming accommodation which is particularly important. The protections allowed people to end a tenancy quickly if they were experiencing domestic and family violence, and provided protection from database listings for COVID-related rent arrears.

### **A home is the first line of defense**

Across Australia, tenant advocates called for a broad and genuine evictions moratorium, arguing that keeping people housed and reducing movement in the community should be the primary goal. People's homes are their first line of defense during a pandemic. Unfortunately countrywide (with the exception of Tasmania), renters unaffected by COVID can still be given a without grounds notice to leave.

### Queensland shortfalls

Worse still, the Queensland 'protections' included new grounds for lessors to end tenancies. These grounds were not restricted to lessors who were impacted by COVID-19 and they applied despite the tenant being so. One such ground allowed for the ending of a fixed term agreement during the term of the agreement, something not seen before and deeply disappointing. It's unclear why the real estate industry was given such influence, but the outcome was gaps and inequities in the regulations.

An additional short coming was leaving rent dispute negotiations between tenants and landlords without an enforceable framework to guide them. An enforceable endpoint which the Tribunal could have applied on the papers, would encourage inflexible agents and landlords to participate in negotiations in good faith. Tenants were already required to show their hardship, but lessors were not.

This was an issue across the country, though at least Queensland's protections included an express ability for the Tribunal to make any order it thought appropriate about rent.

The lack of direction on rent reduction vs rent deferral, which started with the National Cabinet failing to apply the commercial tenancy mandatory code and ended up in the state based regulations, was a further short coming. Queensland industry players continue to push for rent deferrals over reductions, leaving many tenants in protracted disputes or at risk of crippling future debts. Tenants unable to meet future repayments will be left vulnerable to eventual eviction and homelessness.

In addition, whilst the regulations allow a tenant to end their agreement early due to COVID income impacts, the threshold is so high it's of limited use. Tenants must have less than \$5,000 in savings and have lost 75% of their income.

### Sharing the burden

National Cabinet turned out to be a lost opportunity.

Many of the principles outlined by the PM in the mandatory code of conduct for commercial rents could have been applied to residential tenancies, providing immediate clarity for rent disputes. National Cabinet could also have pushed lenders to play their part by requiring broad relief from residential mortgage costs - in particular capitalisation of interest - and remove a key barrier to rent reductions for tenants. Despite this, most landlords have access to mortgage relief.

### Monitoring the impact of COVID-19 on Queensland renters

Following the introduction of the regulations, the state government appointed a Housing Security sub-committee, comprising TQ, the Department of Housing and Public Works, the Residential Tenancies Authority, Queensland Council of Social Service, QShelter and the REIQ to monitor the implementation of the regulations and their impact on tenants and lessors.

TQ has been successful in securing funding to conduct a short project which will support tenants affected by COVID-19, as well as collating and analysing TQ's data on COVID-19 related tenant inquiries.

In the coming financial year we'll keep focused on supporting renters, particularly those impacted by COVID, and to expose and manage the arising issues. We're very conscious of the risk that renters, through no fault of their own, will be left carrying the burden of COVID-19 if they're saddled with crippling debts. TQ will be advocating that everyone, including renters, share the equal opportunities to emerge from COVID-19 economic impacts.

## Service Delivery

Despite and alongside the policy debates over COVID protections, TQ got on with the job of supporting Queensland renters.

With the regulations taking immediate effect once made on Friday, April 24, TQ responded quickly, finally able to give anxious renters definitive information. Materials were developed over the weekend. By the following Monday morning frontline staff were provided the necessary training to advise tenants, and new COVID tenancy information materials were produced.

A specific COVID-19 section was established on our websites and included targeted factsheets, commonly required letters, links to new RTA forms, as well as information on rental grants and other financial, personal and legal supports.

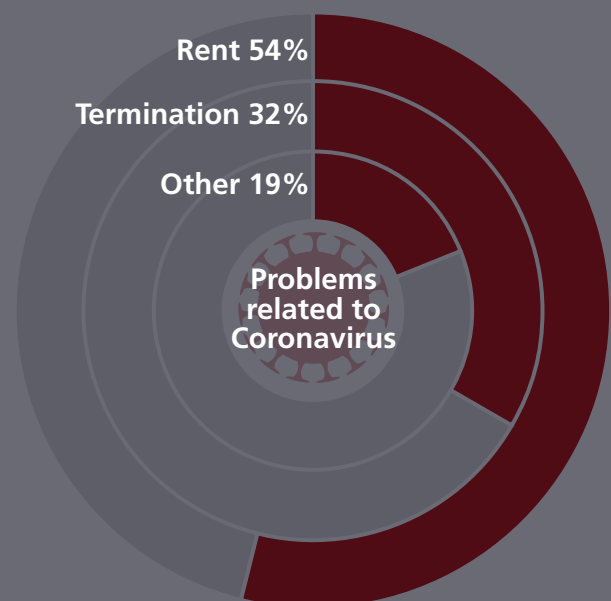
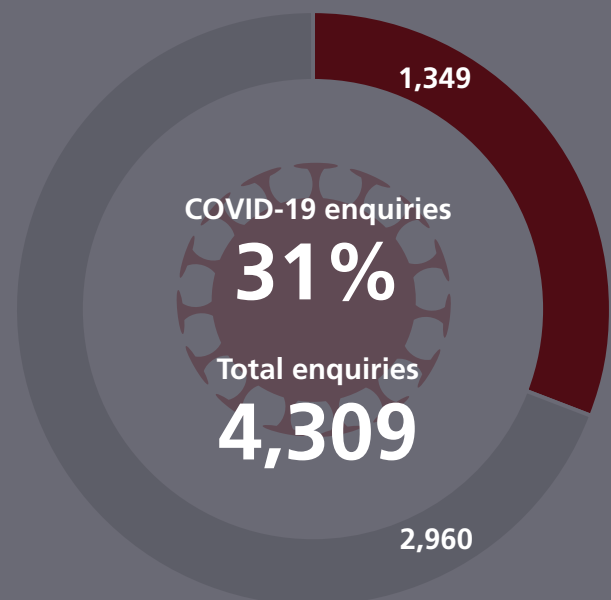
The traffic to the website was phenomenal and assisted TQ to manage the huge demand from tenants to understand the new rules and manage their situation.

In the background, TQ worked hard to develop the capacity for staff to work from home (with some choosing to remain in the workplace).

### COVID-19 tenancy advice enquiries

During May and June TQ's HUB advice service responded to 634 (34%) COVID-19 related enquiries from a total of 1,890 enquiries.

Not surprisingly the majority of enquiries relating to COVID-19 were concerned with rent (56%) followed by termination (33%).



Tenancy advice enquiries  
23 March 2020 to 30 June 2020





Artist: Maureen O'Regan

## COVID case studies

### *David\* evicted during a pandemic*

In March of this year, David was unable to work because of COVID-19 restrictions. With two young children to care for, David's priority was keeping a roof over their heads. He asked for a rent reduction, but his request was denied. So instead he gave almost every cent he had to his real estate agent, and caught up on his payments with the small lump sum he received from the government. But despite his best efforts, David felt bullied and targeted for falling behind on his rent in the first place. By April he was issued a notice to leave without grounds.

With the support of a tenant advice service, David lodged a request for dispute resolution with the Residential Tenancies Authority (RTA). He knew he met the criteria for protection under the evictions moratorium and had provided that information to his agent. He had nowhere to move to with his young children, and he needed a safe home for them all. He depended on the moratorium to protect his family.

The RTA discussed with David and the agent that he qualified for protection, and could not be evicted during

the emergency period unless he damaged the property or the owner needed to move in. Later that same day, David's agent gave him a new notice to leave, this time stating the owner was moving in.

Considering it unfair for the agent to use the new laws against him, David took his dispute to QCAT.

"I'm not asking for any favours," says David. "I don't want a rent reduction, and I've caught up on my payments. I just need an extension on this notice to leave until September 30, when the moratorium ends. That will give me time to prepare financially and to find a new house. I met all the criteria, but everything was denied. I have no place to go with my kids if we are evicted."

Unfortunately David lost his QCAT hearing, where he asked for the Notice to Leave for the owner moving in to be overturned. He's been left with the distinct feeling that those new grounds to end a tenancy have been used maliciously against him.

(\*The tenants' name has been changed to protect their identity)

### **COVID-19 affected family wins genuine rent reduction in QCAT!**

Lucy\* contacted us and let us know of her family's win after utilising the factsheets and other information on our website. It's a case worth sharing!

Since changes by the state government to our tenancy laws for the COVID-19 emergency period, tenants seeking rent reductions were left to negotiate with their agent or lessor. When agreement couldn't be reached, the dispute continued to RTA conciliation, and if not resolved there, could be decided in QCAT.

Lucy lives with her husband and small baby in a rental they've called home for ten years. Until COVID-19, the tenancy was unremarkable. They've never been in arrears, never had to go to QCAT, and late last year welcomed their first child into their home.

However, when COVID struck, Lucy's husband was stood down from work and warned of a possible redundancy. With an uncertain family income and Lucy on maternity leave, she asked her agent for a rent reduction as soon as the Queensland COVID tenancy laws were made.

The agent said a rent reduction was not an available option because of the landlord's financial position.

Lucy met several requests from the agent to provide details and evidence, including completing the agent's checklist. When the agent made a further request to see financial records of savings Lucy drew the line. She considered, having proved she is in 'excessive hardship due to COVID', she should not be required to disclose additional information. On that basis, the agent decided it was not a formal rent reduction request.

The next day Lucy sent her request for dispute resolution to the RTA (Form 16a) along with evidence of the family's loss of income from COVID-19.

The RTA was quick to begin conciliation, during which time Lucy increased her rent offer from 25% to 30% of the family's income.

Throughout negotiation – before, during and after conciliation with the RTA – the landlord only ever offered a rent deferral. That is, any amount the rent was reduced now was to be paid back after the emergency was over. The landlord's offers only varied the length of time to pay the monies off. At one point they were offered an early termination of their agreement, something Lucy's family felt was unreasonable given their long tenure.

Lucy also considered the failure to offer any real rent reduction unfair. Despite proving they were in excessive hardship due to COVID-19, their only option if they accepted the landlord's offer, meant they would be saddled with future debt.

Lucy decided she would take her matter to QCAT for final resolution.

At QCAT, Lucy retold her story, including the landlord's refusal to negotiate a rent reduction on the basis they were not in a position to. No evidence of hardship was presented by the agent who appeared for the landlord.

Lucy's perseverance was rewarded. QCAT ordered a genuine rent reduction (not deferral), backdated to the QCAT application date, setting their rent at 30% of their little family's income. The order was in place until the family's income improved or to the end of the emergency period.

No two circumstances are the same, so QCAT orders will always rely on the circumstances and evidence put to it.

Good evidence of the family's changed employment and income circumstances helped QCAT come to its decision as well as Lucy's evidence of attempts to negotiate a reasonable outcome. Of note, the RTA conciliation took only three days.

# Feedback from clients and others about TQ's staff and services

"We rarely get feedback on people we advise but I thought I should pass on this feedback from a Tenant you advised about a dispute re entry about coming in to do major repairs when the tenancy was almost over. The tenant argued that it was not a reasonable time for entry. It ended with the Agency Principal coming out and filming the tenant (and him filming them with his phone). The upshot was that they agreed that entry to do the work was unreasonable and that they would wait until they had vacated. This was a huge victory for the tenant.

Sometime later the tenant contacted TQ with a new issue and said that as a service "we totally rock and that she is grateful that we are here".

*HUB*

"...she still reached me with great patience, to help me analyse my case, answer my questions and more importantly release my anxiety. I cannot say enough thanks to her. I am really touched by her care of every tenant who needs help...

*Palm Beach office, Southern Queensland.*

"I am writing this email to praise one of your employees. We cannot sing the praise of your [Advice Worker], we feel she went far beyond her duties to assist us in our matter with QCAT. The result of her assistance was we were successful in dealing with our matter.

*Logan office, Southern Queensland*

"I met [client's friend] while I was doing outreach yesterday at the Southport Library... When she spotted my QSTARS stand she asked if I worked with [Advice Worker] and then went on to tell me of the wonderful service [her friend had received saying] she was amazed at how efficient and on-point your advice was. She said you arrived on the steps of the Court House like an angel, and provided great insight

and reassurance.

*Logan office, Southern Queensland*

"[Thank-you] for your understanding, kindness and compassion and your great work. You are amazing.

*Logan Office, Southern Queensland*

**I want to send you my sincere thanks for the excellent job you've done supporting me through this tenancy issue and with the QCAT application. Thank you again for everything and for your professionalism. You've made my experience much better and I hope you know how much you make a difference in people's lives.**

*Logan Office, Southern Queensland*

"We have been in regular contact with [RSC] recently regarding a range of issues with our tenancy. She has consistently been a fountain of knowledge with regard to all things tenant related... [she] is patient, compassionate and a true expert in her field. Her advice has really helped to level the playing field.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*

"...helped me with a matter some months ago and was absolutely fabulous. She scores 10 out of 10 in my rating and is a credit to your organization. I would definitely use her again, and I would recommend her to anyone in need of assistance.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*

"Thanks again for all your assistance. It is good to know that there is an organisation that is willing to stick up for the tenants! You and your colleagues get a thumbs up, and a huge recommendation to my family and friends by me.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*



...have had an excellent result. We have now signed a new lease (3 months) and I have developed a good rapport with the Real Estate Agent. A good result for Christmas. Would not have been able to do it without you. It was a scary time for myself and my family.... My sincerest thanks for your sound advice and effective support. It is great and valuable work that you do.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*

I have rather severe anxiety normally and the anxiety was starting to become overwhelming and was affecting my health. Without your help I know this would have taken so much longer to resolve. I cannot thank you enough for your help. I am so very happy with the outcome today.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*

Good morning

Since we last spoke, no communication has come to us from the Agent. The feeling of less harassment and torment from them has been refreshing. We wait now until this time next week to see if a protest will be placed on our refund of Bond. I will let you know the outcome and hope it goes smoothly.

In the mean time, I don't believe we have thanked you enough for all your offering of options and support throughout this horrendous episode. As you know, we are not young people who are either physically or mentally able to "fight" battles like this without help. I scoured the Internet and came upon Tenants Qld and spoke to a gentleman there who assured me someone would contact me as soon as possible. With being under a lot of stress following the behaviour of our Property Manager, I was feeling let down that I couldn't get advice quickly. On Monday, I received a call from you and after explaining the facts of the whole nightmare we were then living through with our rental, you listened to my overflowing explanation, didn't offer advice, informed me of the points we needed to know about the regulations and offered options for my husband and I to consider.

You and Tenants Qld gave us hope that we could do something positive to stop this woman from

treating us like "2nd Class Citizens" just because we are renters.

Even though it's taken what seems to be an eternity for us, we are on the last legs of our dealings with this Property Manager's inept grasp of the regulations and we have you and your office to thank for that. This journey would have been so much worse without your knowledge of the Act and your regular support to fall back on. We so appreciate what you have offered us since 1 July. Our holding it together through all of this has been possible because of you.

We hope that Tenants Qld is around forever to give the same support to so many other renters who are being treated badly by their Property Managers/ Agents. It shouldn't happen - but it does. With your understanding, patience and support Karen, we have come out sane.

I wish for you and Tenants Qld the very best and can never thank you enough for making our lives more bearable over the past several months.

Take care and have a wonderful day.

*Rockhampton Office, Central Queensland*

# Acknowledgements

The Steering Committee would like to thank members & supporters, our funders and supporting pro bono agencies and our QSTARS partners for their support and contribution to TQ's ongoing work. With the combined support of all agencies and individuals, TQ is better able to achieve its goals and ultimately better the lives of tenants across Queensland.

## Our funders

Department of Housing and Public Works  
Department of Justice and Attorney General  
Department of Child Safety, Youth & Women

## Pro Bono Support

Tenants Queensland sincerely thanks the skilled staff for the pro bono work undertaken with Tenants Queensland. It is very important for TQ to have the benefit of pro bono interest and legal expertise. Each contribution has enhanced TQ's ability to continually improve our services to vulnerable tenants in Queensland. In particular TQ would like to thank the following staff from the pro bono agencies.

Nicole Gordon and DJ Alexandra from Minter Ellison for their detailed work on TQ's constitution review.

Jon Meadmore, Joshua Waters and Karen Iles from Colin Biggers & Paisley in reviewing and drafting updated QSTARS Partner sub-contracts.

Claire Watson, Sarah Griffin and Alf Pappalardo from Allens Linklaters for their assistance in developing and delivering training to TQ's staff on the Human Rights Act.

Mark Mackay from Clayton Utz for their contributions on vicarious liability and the Townville office lease.

Colin Stewart has volunteered at TQ, one day per week since the beginning of 2020, and has done an amazing job with managing the Make Renting Fair in Qld Alliance. His work is invaluable.

## Our QSTARS Partners



## Community Access Points

TQ would like to acknowledge the collaboration of many community based organisations across Queensland who have helped increase the geographical reach of the tenancy advice services, in particular those agencies in rural and remote regions.

A person wearing a red shirt is shown from the side, flipping through a large, thick financial report. The report is white with some text and numbers visible on the pages. In the background, a computer monitor and keyboard are partially visible. The overall scene is set in an office environment.

# Financial Report



# Treasurer's Report

A reflection on TQ's finances for 2019-2020

The financial statements for the period ending the 30th June 2020 have been prepared to meet the requirements of the Tenants Queensland Inc (TQ) 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 2019-2020 year has seen TQ continue to deliver the QSTARS program and the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP). As well TQ has continued to deliver the Tenancy law capability building – supporting domestic and family violence and related services project under contract to the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women. The Keeping Women Safe in their Homes project, also funded by the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women has now been completed in 2019-2020.

Additionally we received other smaller grants:

- A grant from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to upgrade IT equipment
- A grant from the Department of Housing and Public Works to develop Resources for Tenant Groups and Networks.
- A grant from the Cairns City Council for the Renter Award Program and International Tenants Day

The QSTARS program is delivered with local partners through a formal arrangements to provide place-based responses. This service delivery model was supported by financial accountability measures to provide transparency and accountability for all stakeholders. The Partners contracts were renewed in January 2020 with a focus on increased Quality Assurance and Compliance measures.

TQ was also very happy to receive a new 5 year contract to continue the delivery of legal services through Legal Aid Qld as a Community Legal Centre. The CLSP contract now runs to June 2025.

TQ continues to maintain the highest financial controls ensuring the effective management of the funds entrusted to TQ. The

Finance and Risk Sub-committee met four times during the year. The committee's role includes oversight of TQ's financial control environment and the financial reporting system. The committee would like to thank Georgia Voutsis for providing her ongoing expert assistance. Matters considered by the sub-Committee during the year include:

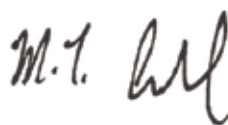
- A review of audit services for TQ
- Development of a sustainability paper
- Strategic risk management planning
- Procurement and preferred supplier arrangements
- Review and update of the Financial and Human Resources Delegations policy and practice.
- Compliance schedules and reporting
- Budgeting methodology

The Steering Committee would like to acknowledge and thank Syani Linarto, Jude Clarkin, Pat Morgan, Sherryn West and Penny Carr for their hard work during the year, and the ongoing diligence in providing timely monthly reports and provision of information to the TQ governance committees.

I would like to acknowledge the Department of Housing and Public Works and the Department of Justice and the Attorney General for their commitment to tenancy advice services.

The financial results for 2019-2020 provide an operating surplus of \$117,256 (\$117,857 2018-2019) with member funds at year end increasing to \$1,382,584 (\$1,265,328 at 30 June 2019). This is largely held as Cash and Investments of \$3,051,158 (\$2,661,661 at 30 June 2019). \$412,338 of Cash and Investments represents grant funds received and unexpended at 30 June 2020 (\$353,419 at 30 June 2019).

I would like to recommend the appointment of Haywards Chartered Accountants to audit TQ accounts for the 2020-2021 financial year.



Maria Leebeek

**TQ Treasurer**

## TQ FINANCIAL REPORT | 1

### STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2020

	Note	2020	2019
Revenue	2	7,173,379	7,463,765
Other Income	2	88,857	35,279
Employee benefits expense		( 4,119,853)	(4,250,921)
Auspiced QSTARS expenses		(2,106,246)	(2,063,702)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(266,805)	(45,581)
Insurance		(14,158)	(13,985)
Motor vehicle and travel expenses		(13,322)	(30,146)
Property expenses		(89,299)	(304,541)
Staff training and development expenses		(22,514)	(34,434)
Audit, legal and consultancy fees		((97,045)	(27,568)
Client support services expense		(45,602)	(29,879)
Other operating costs		(370,136)	(580,430)
<b>Current year surplus before income tax</b>		<u>117,256</u>	<u>117,857</u>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<u>117,256</u>	<u>117,857</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity</b>		<u><u>\$117,256</u></u>	<u><u>\$117,857</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

	Note	2020	2019
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	3	1,431,649	2,052,151
Investments	4	1,619,509	609,510
Debtors & Prepayments		92,270	74,503
Deposits		6,533	4,200
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>3,149,961</b>	<b>2,740,364</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Right of Use Assets	7	562,656	-
Property, Plant & Equipment	5	119,352	98,010
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>682,008</b>	<b>98,010</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>\$3,831,969</b>	<b>\$2,838,374</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Creditors & Accruals		260,912	211,657
Employee Provisions		1,000,624	891,476
Income Received & Unexpended		-	353,419
Contract Liability		412,338	-
Lease Liability		236,518	-
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>1,910,392</b>	<b>1,456,552</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
Employee Provisions		177,470	116,494
Lease liability		361,524	-
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>538,994</b>	<b>116,494</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>\$2,449,386</b>	<b>\$1,573,046</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>\$1,382,583</b>	<b>\$1,265,328</b>
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>			
Retained Surplus		1,382,584	1,265,328
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS</b>		<b>\$1,382,584</b>	<b>\$1,265,328</b>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



	Retained Surplus	Total
<b>Balance at 1 July 2018</b>	<u>\$1,147,471</u>	<u>\$1,147,471</u>
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus for the year attributable to members of the entity	<u>\$117,857</u>	<u>\$117,857</u>
<b>Total comprehensive Income attributable to members of the entity</b>	<u>\$117,857</u>	<u>\$117,857</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2019</b>	<u>\$1,265,328</u>	<u>\$1,265,328</u>
<b>Balance at 1 July 2019</b>	<u>\$1,265,328</u>	<u>\$1,265,328</u>
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Surplus for the year attributable to members of the entity	<u>\$117,256</u>	<u>\$117,256</u>
<b>Total comprehensive Income attributable to members of the entity</b>	<u>\$117,256</u>	<u>\$117,256</u>
<b>Balance at 30 June 2020</b>	<u>\$1,382,584</u>	<u>\$1,382,584</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

	2020	2019
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>		
Government Grants	7,192,728	7,099,593
Interest	27,792	52,061
Other Income	98,728	34,074
<b>Payments</b>		
Auspice Payments	(2,123,495)	(2,067,702)
Wages & Salaries	(3,887,349)	(4,097,349)
Other	(646,720)	(1,059,245)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<u>\$661,684</u>	<u>\$(38,569)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payment for purchase of plant & equipment	(60,514)	-
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities</b>	<u>\$(60,514)</u>	<u>\$NIL</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES</b>		
Repayment of Lease Liabilities	(211,673)	-
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) financing activities</b>	<u>\$(211,673)</u>	<u>\$NIL</u>
Net Increase/(decrease) in cash held	389,497	(38,569)
Cash at beginning of the reporting period	2,661,661	2,700,230
<b>Cash at end of the reporting period</b>	<u>\$3,051,158</u>	<u>\$2,661,661</u>
<b>Reconciliation of Net Surplus/Deficit to Net Cash Provided by (Used in) Operating Activities</b>		
Operating Result	117,256	117,857
- Depreciation	266,805	45,581
- Interest on Right of use asset	19,425	-
- Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	49,255	(60,542)
- Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	170,124	176,186
- (Increase)/Decrease in Deposits & Debtors	(20,100)	(14,537)
- Increase/(Decrease) in Grants Unexpended	58,919	(303,114)
<b>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</b>	<u>\$661,684</u>	<u>\$(38,569)</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

**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) and Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012. 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) Revenue and Other Income**

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable after taking into account any trade discounts and volume rebates allowed. For this purpose, deferred consideration is not discounted to present values when recognising revenue.

The association has applied AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers (AASB 15) and AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities (AASB 1058) using the cumulative effective method of initially applying AASB 15 and AASB 1058 as an adjustment to the opening balance of equity at 1 July 2019. Therefore, the comparative information has not been restated.

*Operating Grants/ Donations and Bequests*

When the association receives operating grant revenue, donations or bequests, it assesses whether the contract is enforceable and has sufficiently specific performance obligations in accordance with AASB 15.

*Capital Grant*

When the association receives a capital grant, it recognises a liability for the excess of the initial carrying amount of the financial asset received over any related amounts (being contributions by owners, lease liability, financial instruments, provisions, revenue or contract liability arising from a contract with a customer) recognised under other Australian Accounting Standards.

The association recognises income in profit or loss when or as the association satisfies its obligations under the terms of the grant.

*Interest Income*

Interest income is recognised using the effective interest method.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

*In the comparative period*

Non-reciprocal grant revenue was recognised in profit or loss when the association obtained control of the grant and It was probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant would flow to the Entity and the amount of the grant could be measured reliably.

If conditions were attached to the grant which must be satisfied before the association was eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue was deferred until those conditions were satisfied.

When grant revenue was received whereby the association Incurred an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this was considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue was recognised in the statement of financial position as a liability until the service had been delivered to the contributor; otherwise the grant was recognised as Income on receipt.

**(b) Operating expenses**

Operating expenses are recognised in profit or loss upon utilisation of the service or at the date of their origin.

**(c) Property, Plant and Equipment****Plant and Equipment**

Plant and equipment (comprising computers, furniture and motor vehicles) are Initially recognised at acquisition cost, including any costs directly attributable to bringing the assets to the location and condition necessary for It to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

Plant and equipment are subsequently measured using the cost model, cost less subsequent depreciation or amortisation.

**Depreciation**

Depreciation and amortisation is recognised on a straight-line basis to write down the cost less estimated residual value of equipment. The following depreciation rates are applied:

<u>Class of Fixed Asset</u>	<u>Depreciation Rate</u>
Plant and equipment	20%
Leasehold improvements	20%
Computer equipment	20%
Office equipment	20%

**(d) Impairment testing of assets**

At the end of each reporting period, the entity assesses whether there Is any indication that an asset may be impaired. If such an indication exists, an Impairment test Is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess



of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised immediately in profit or loss, unless the asset is carried at a revalued amount in accordance with another Standard (eg in accordance with the revaluation model in MSB 116). Any impairment loss of a revalued asset is treated as a revaluation decrease in accordance with that other Standard.

**(e) Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and in the bank including short-term fixed deposits.

**(f) Leases****The Entity as lessee**

At inception of a contract, the entity assesses if the contract contains or is a lease. If there is a lease present, a right-of-use asset and a corresponding lease liability is recognised by the Entity where the Entity is a lessee. However, all contracts that are classified as short-term leases (lease with remaining lease term of 12 months or less) and leases of low value assets are recognised as an operating expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Initially the lease liability is measured at the present value of the lease payments still to be paid at commencement date. The lease payments are discounted at the interest rate implicit in the lease. If this rate cannot be readily determined, the Entity uses the incremental borrowing rate.

Lease payments included in the measurement of the lease liability are as follows:

- fixed lease payments less any lease incentives;
- variable lease payments that depend on an index or rate, initially measured using the index or rate at the commencement date;
- the amount expected to be payable by the lessee under residual value guarantees;
- the exercise price of purchase options, if the lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options;
- lease payments under extension options if lessee is reasonably certain to exercise the options; and
- payments of penalties for terminating the lease, if the lease term reflects the exercise of an option to terminate the lease.

The right-of-use assets comprise the initial measurement of the corresponding lease liability as mentioned above, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date as well as any initial direct costs. The subsequent measurement of the right-of-use assets is at cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated over the lease term or useful life of the underlying asset whichever is the shortest. Where a lease transfers ownership of the underlying asset or the cost of the right-of-use asset reflects that the Entity anticipates to exercise a purchase option, the specific asset is depreciated over the useful life of the underlying asset.

**Concessionary Leases**

For leases that have significantly below-market terms and conditions principally to enable the Entity to further its objectives (commonly known as peppercorn/concessionary leases), the Entity has adopted the temporary relief under AASB 2018-8.

**(g) Retained Earnings**

Retained earnings include all current and prior period retained surpluses.

**(h) Deferred Income**

The liability for deferred income is the unutilised amounts of grants received on the condition that specified services are delivered or conditions are fulfilled. The services are usually provided or the conditions usually fulfilled within twelve (12) months of receipt of the grant.

**(i) Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST. Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST components of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

**(j) 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.

**(k) 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.

**(l) Economic Dependence**

Tenants Queensland Inc is dependent 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 organization. Tenants Queensland Inc has a contract with the State Government for the provision of services that runs until 30 June 2023. As at the date of these financial statements Tenants Queensland Inc is in compliance with all terms and conditions of this agreement and there is no indication of future non-compliance.

**(m) Significant management judgement in applying accounting policies**

The committee evaluate estimates and judgements Incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current Information. Estimates assume reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the company.

**(n) New and Amended Accounting Policies Adopted by the Entity****Initial application of AASB 16**

The Entity has adopted MSB 16 Leases retrospectively with the cumulative effect of initially applying AASB 16 recognised at 1 July 2019. In accordance with AASB 16 the comparatives for the 2019 reporting period have not been restated.

The Entity has recognised a lease liability and right-of-use asset for all leases (with the exception of short term and low value leases) recognised as operating leases under AASB 117 Leases where the Entity Is the lessee. The lease liabilities are measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments. The Entity's incremental borrowing rate as at 1 July 2019 was used to discount the lease payments.

The right of use assets for equipment was measured at its' carrying amount as if AASB 16: Leases had been applied since the commencement date, but discounted using the Entity's weighted average incremental borrowing rate on 1 July 2019.

The following practical expedients have been used by the Entity in applying AASB 16 for the first time:

- for a portfolio of leases that have reasonably similar characteristics, a single discount rate has been applied
- leases that have remaining lease term of less than 12 months as at 1 July 2019 have been accounted for in the same way as short-term leases
- the use of hindsight to determine lease terms on contracts that have options to extend or terminate.

**Initial application of AASB 15 and AASB 1058**

The Entity has applied AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers and AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities using the cumulative effective method of Initially applying AASB 15 and AASB 1058 as an adjustment to the opening balance of equity at 1 July 2019. Therefore, the comparative Information has not been restated and continues to be presented under AASB 118: Revenue and AASB 1004: Contributions.

The table below provides details of the significant changes and quantitative impact of these changes on Initial date of application 1 July 2019.

	As previously presented on 30 June 2019 \$	Application Impact of AASB 15 and AASB 1058 \$	As presented at 1 July 2019 \$
Statement of financial position			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Grant Received and Unexpended	\$353,419	(\$353,419)	-
Contract liability	-	\$353,419	\$353,419
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained surplus		-	-



	2020	2019
<b>2. REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>		
<b>Revenue</b>		
<b>Revenue from Government Grants</b>		
Department of Housing and Public Works - QSTARS	6,609,688	6,652,620
Department of Housing and Public Works - Manufactured Homes	-	273,677
Department of Housing and Public Works - Resource Tenant Groups	5,343	-
Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women	19,429	-
Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services	87,624	146,293
Department of Justice and Attorney-General	393,138	332,858
	<u>7,115,222</u>	<u>7,405,448</u>
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
Non-Recurrent Funding	16,000	6,059
Interest	42,157	52,258
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<u>7,173,379</u>	<u>7,463,765</u>
<b>Other Income</b>		
Donations	3,449	1,864
Memberships	1,247	814
Sundry Income	84,161	32,601
<b>TOTAL OTHER INCOME</b>	<u>88,857</u>	<u>35,279</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>	<u>\$7,262,236</u>	<u>\$7,499,044</u>

**3. CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS**

General Account	680,573	519,604
TU Maximiser Account	116,127	116,023
Charitable Donations Account	6,694	5,959
Charitable Maximiser Account	20,701	20,682
ME Bank Online Saver Account	607,385	1,389,714
Petty Cash	168	168
	<u>\$1,431,649</u>	<u>\$2,052,151</u>

**4. INVESTMENTS**

ME Bank Term Deposit	1,000,000	-
National Bank Term Deposit - Staff Liabilities	70,432	69,285
National Bank Term Deposit - Tenants Queensland Inc	549,077	540,225
	<u>\$1,619,509</u>	<u>\$609,510</u>

	2020	2019
<b>5. FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Office Equipment - at Cost	255,253	194,739
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(188,604)</u>	<u>(180,417)</u>
	66,649	14,322
 Furniture & Fittings - at Cost	 197,528	 197,528
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(144,825)</u>	<u>(131,178)</u>
	52,703	66,350
 Motor Vehicles - at Cost	 71,823	 71,823
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(71,823)</u>	<u>(54,485)</u>
	-	17,337
	<u>\$119,352</u>	<u>\$98,010</u>
 <b>7. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Tenants Queensland Inc has in place facility backed bank guarantees in relation to rental premises.		
 Bank Guarantees	 <u>\$33,674</u>	 <u>\$33,674</u>

**7. RIGHT -OF-USE ASSET**

The Organisation has one head office, and seven regional offices. The lease terms are between one year and 5 years.

The Organisation has five motor vehicle leases for terms between forty-three and fifty-one months.

i) AASB 16 related amounts recognised In the Balance Sheet:

	<b>2020</b>
<b>RIGHT-OF-USE ASSETS</b>	
Leased Buildings	724,575
Accumulated Depreciation	(212,985)
	<hr/> 511,590
 Motor Vehicles	 65,715
Accumulated Depreciation	(14,649)
	<hr/> 51,066
 <b>TOTAL RIGHT-OF-USE ASSETS</b>	 <b><u><u>\$562,656</u></u></b>


ii) AASB 16 related amounts recognised In the Statement of Profit or Loss:

Depreciation Charge related to Right-Of-Use Assets	227,634
Interest Expense on Lease Liabilities	19,425

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.

1. In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 11 are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and:
  - (a) Comply with the Australian Accounting Standards applicable to the entity; and
  - (b) Give a true and fair view of the associations financial position as at 30 June 2020 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements;
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 Declaration is signed in accordance with Subs 60.15(2) of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013.



Rohan Tate  
Chairperson



Maria Leebeek  
Treasurer

20<sup>th</sup> November 2020

Date



**Report on the Audit of the Financial Report*****Opinion***

We have audited the financial report of Tenants Queensland Inc., which comprises the Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2020, the Statement of Profit & Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Then Ended, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Tenants Queensland Inc. has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD):

- 1) Giving a true and fair view of the associations financial position as at 30 June 2020 and of its performance for the year then ended; and
- 2) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Regulation 2013.

***Basis for Opinion***

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the association in accordance with the Auditor Independence Requirements of the ACNC Act and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES110: code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

***Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting***

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Australian Charities and Notfor- Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

***Responsibilities of the Committee for the Financial Report***

The committee is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission Act 2012 and the Associations Incorporation Act (QLD) and for such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

***Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report***

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of

assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the association's activities to express an opinion on the financial report. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the association's audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



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Peter Gesch

HAYWARDS CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

Level 1/488 Lutwyche Road

LUTVVYCHE QLD 4030

Dated this 28<sup>th</sup> day of October 2020

Rent decrease?  
Parties  
could  
negotiate  
and agree  
interim  
rent decrease

RTA issue  
NURD  
Conciliation  
number.

Apply QCAT  
non-urg.  
6-10 weeks  
wait.

Breach of  
Agreement  
s 419  
(3) 6 mths to  
PPG QCAT.

non-urg  
s. 94 Rent  
decrease  
(2) (a) loss serv  
(b) reduced  
amenity  
(3) QCAT can order  
decrease

Compo \$  
relocation  
costs if T  
has to move due  
to breach contract

\$ 30 pw.  
rent decrease

H'over  
Keys  
copy Exit CR  
they have 3  
days to inspect &  
return

s 419  
QCAT can

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# Tenants Queensland Inc

## TQ and Partner Offices

### BRISBANE HEAD OFFICE AND HUB

Level 1/87 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill, 4000

### BRISBANE NORTH COAST

#### BNC

Level 1/87 Wickham Terrace, Spring Hill 4000

#### Community Plus +

26 Devon St, Yeronga 4104

#### Enhance Care

Suite 2/77 King St, Caboolture 4510

#### Suncoast Community Legal Service

The TAFE Bldg., 170 Horton Parade, Maroochydore 4558

### CENTRAL QUEENSLAND

#### Rockhampton

240 Quay St, Rockhampton 4700

#### Hervey Bay Neighbourhood Centre

22 Charles St, Pialba 4655

#### Mackay Regional Community Legal Centre

Suite 9, The Dome, 134 Victoria St, Mackay 4740

### SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

#### Southport

34 Railway St, Southport 4215

#### Palm Beach

4/1051 Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach 4221

#### Logan

Youth and Family Service, 2-4 Rowan St, Slacks Creek 4127

#### Ipswich Regional Advocacy Services (IRASI)

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

#### TASC National

223 Hume St, Toowoomba 4350

### NORTHERN QUEENSLAND

#### Cairns

208 McLeod St, Cairns 4870

#### Townsville

Tenancy 1, 181 Sturt St, Townsville 4810

#### Mt Isa

72 Marin St, Mount Isa 4825

(C/O Mount Isa Family Support Service  
& Neighbourhood Centre)

For more information visit our website at [www.tenantsqld.org.au](http://www.tenantsqld.org.au)

For tenancy advice call 1300 744 263



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