



youth affairs network qld

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 2013

THEY MAY TAKE OUR FUNDS,
BUT NEVER OUR INTEGRITY



YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC.

Annual Report 2012 / 2013

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ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 2013

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30 Thomas Street, West End Qld 4101

Phone: +61 7 3844 7713

Email: admin@yanq.org.au

Web: www.yanq.org.au



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PARTNERSHIP BROKERS
YOUTH CONNECTIONS STATEWIDE
BRISBANE METRO NORTH MEDICARE LOCAL
DUSSELDORP SKILLS FORUM

YANQ extends its appreciation to Telstra for again donating 5000 \$5 Telstra cards for distribution to marginalised young people across Queensland.

YANQ would also like to thank all our members, all networks and communities that invited, hosted or worked with YANQ in various ways during past twelve months.

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Steve Skitmore

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Acknowledgement

We believe that the Traditional Custodians and primary Culture of Australia is Aboriginal.

We recognise that Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander and South Sea Islander peoples are three separate cultures. We recognise Aboriginal people as the permanent custodians of mainland Australia, including those areas of land on whose owners no longer live as a result of racist policies and acts. We use the term custodianship in the context of protection and care for the land.

YANQ is committed to respecting Murri communities and individuals. We seek to understand their responses to policies and issues affecting them. We are committed to learning about their understandings of the impact of decisions on them. YANQ apologises for the past and present social mistreatment of Murri and Islander people created by colonisation, and is committed to supporting the healing process.

Aboriginal Flag



The Aboriginal flag was designed by Harold Thomas in 1971, and first flown in Adelaide's Victoria Square.

The flag is widely recognised today as being the symbol of the Aboriginal people for the Aboriginal people.

The flag is made up of three colours -black, red and yellow. Black represents the Aboriginal people of this land, the red represents the earth we live and feed off and the yellow represents the sun, "the giver of life".

Torres Strait Island Flag



The Torres Strait Island flag was designed in 1992 by a 15 year old student, Bernard Namok of Thursday Island.

The green represents the land and the Deri is a symbol of all Torres Strait Islander people.

The black represents the people and their culture while the five pointed star symbolises the many island groups and represent peace. The flag also stands for unity and identity of all Torres Strait Island people.

About YANQ

The Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (YANQ) is the peak community youth affairs organisation in Queensland, representing individuals and organisations from Queensland's youth sector.

We promote the interests and well being of young people across the state by:

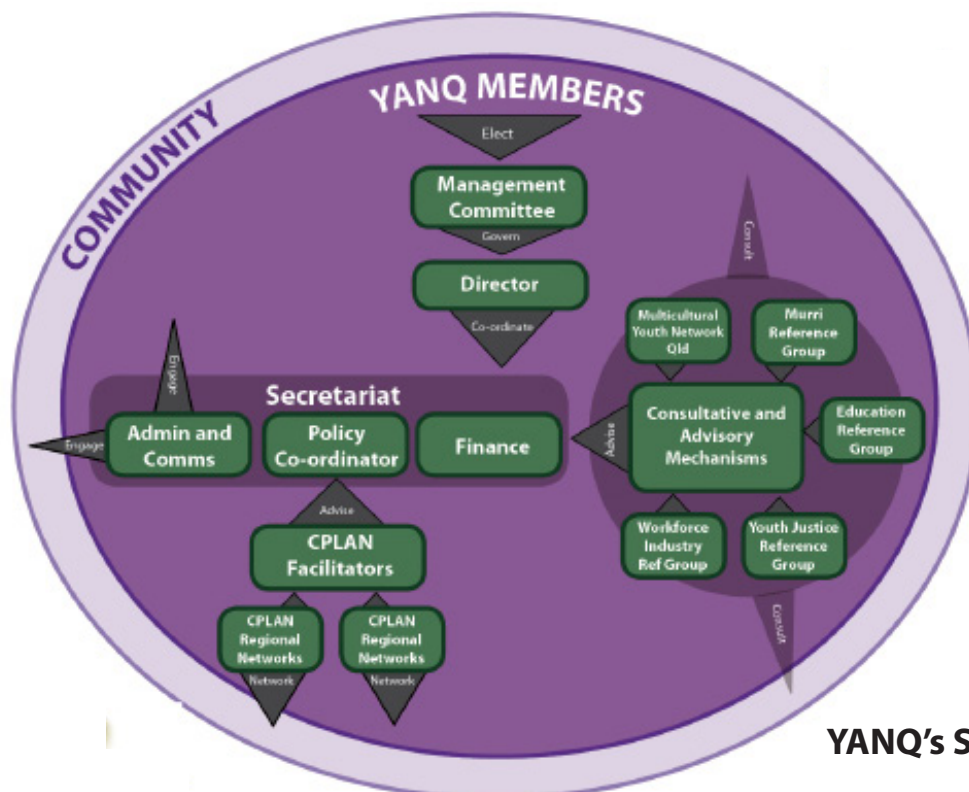
- disseminating information to members, the youth sector, and the broader community
- undertaking campaigns and lobbying
- making representations to government and other influential bodies
- resourcing regional and issues-based networks
- consulting and liaising with members and the field
- linking with key state and national bodies
- initiating projects
- hosting forums and conferences
- input into policy development
- enhancing the professional development of the youth sector

We advocate on behalf of young people in Queensland, especially disadvantaged young people, to government and the community.

We promote and support cultural diversity. We encourage the development of policies and programs that respond to the rights and needs of young people.

YANQ employs a small team in its Brisbane based secretariat and 10 CPLAN Regional Facilitators across Queensland.

The organisation is managed by a committee elected from our membership base.



YANQ's Structure

Summary of YANQ's Vision and Values

YANQ believes that the Traditional Custodians and primary Culture of Australia is Aboriginal.

We support the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to self determination, and recognise their capacity to generate their own solutions to the problems imposed on them by continuing colonisation and ongoing pressures to assimilate. We recognise the proven credentials of Aboriginal Traditional Owners and Custodians in connecting with and managing this Land. We value the wisdom and leadership Aboriginal cultures can bring to addressing the problems faced by Australian society.

We aspire to a world which recognises the interdependence of all species on this planet.

We envisage a future where Australia is in a position to benefit from Aboriginal Culture; where Australians collectively acknowledge the strengths of one of the world's oldest surviving cultures and embrace highly evolved Aboriginal tradition, Lore and practices. This would play a critical role in achieving a sustainable future for humankind.

YANQ supports the human rights of all Australians. These include the necessities of survival; everyone's right to achieve their full potential; and their right to make choices about their lifestyle, and express their culture, without fear of penalty. Everyone has the right to meaningfully participate in their community and decisions that affect their lives.

We recognise that systemic issues contribute to a failure to meet young people's rights, and the social exclusion of groups of young people.

Most young people are disadvantaged – culturally, socially and/or economically. Major social systems continue to fail the majority of young people. Further, socially excluded young people face ongoing pressure to conform to dominant Anglo-Celtic values. This generates disharmony within and across communities, making them vulnerable to prejudice and discrimination. It is only when we recognise the cultures of our First Peoples as the basis for genuine multi-culturalism, and value the identities, contributions and rights of all Australians, that we can achieve social harmony.

Young people have the capacity to play an important part in their communities and the wider society. Young people's social role and contribution, both now and in the future, largely depends upon how they are treated. The greater the participation of young people in social decision-making, the healthier the community and society.

Community organisations provide a unique pathway to optimising young people's social participation.

They can facilitate genuine participatory democracy and respond to young people's needs in an alternate, holistic way. Young people are entitled to access services which respond to their rights and needs, and freely choose whether or not to use these services. Competent Youth Workers have the values, attitudes, knowledge and skills required to work effectively with young people and their communities, using a rights-driven approach.

Australian governments are obliged to meet young people's internationally-agreed human rights.

Governments should take full responsibility for meeting these obligations toward young people. Governments should value the expertise of community organisations in providing complementary services, and resource them to take the lead in addressing the rights and needs of young people within their particular community.

Ultimately, YANQ envisages a future where young people are seen as equal, active participants in Queensland society.

As a result, Queensland would be a fair, equitable diverse state; a bastion of human rights. It would be a healthy society in which individuals, families and communities are inter-connected; where a culture of mutual respect generates resilience and genuine social inclusion. Its thriving youth sector would enthusiastically stand alongside Aboriginal people and young people, to continue to improve the world. The powerful voice of YANQ would be seen as an invaluable social asset.

The YANQ Team from July 2012 to June 2013

Committee Executive



Jude Saldanha
President



Elijah Buol
Vice President



Matilda Alexander
Treasurer (2012)



Phil Dodds
Treasurer (2013) and Secretary

Committee Members



Yassmin
Abdel-Magied
(To Dec 2012)



Steve Fisher
(To Dec 2012)



Deb Kilroy
ex officio



Margaret Hornagold
(To Dec 2012)
ex officio



Mr Gavin Tyson



Siyavash Doostkhah
ex officio



Ricky Morgan



Anna Spencer
(To Dec 2012)



Dr Cheryl Livock
(To May 2013)



Whit Church
(From Jan 2013)



Miranda McReynolds
(From May 2013)

STAFF

Mr Siyavash Doostkhah
Director

Ms Trish Ferrier
Policy Coordinator

Mr Steve Skitmore
Administration & Communications

Ms Katrina Brink
Re-engagement Project Officer

Ms Sue McComber
Financial Officer

CPLAN Regional Facilitators

Ms Trish Ferrier (Metro)
Ms Amanda Wright (South-East)
Ms Rebecca Schroder (South-West)
Mr Howard Buckley (Sunshine)
Ms Nikki Hughes (Mid-North)
Ms Victoria Homer and
Ms Kaitlyn Dales (Central)
Ms Sheree Miller (Central-West)
Mr Sam Loy and
Mr Ray Caddies (North)
Mr Alvin Hava (North-West)
Mr Daniel Morris (Far-North)

CONSULTANTS

How Now Solutions
Dr Phil Crane, QUT
Dr Richard Hil
Liz Archer
Prof. Martin Mills, UQ
Dr Glenda McGregor, Griffith University
Suzi Quixley
Sarah Roberts

INTERNS

Jenny Marriott
Jacinta O'Keefe



President's Report

2012/2013 was a highly significant year for YANQ and the Queensland Youth Sector. For over 20 years successive governments had recognised and provided funding support to YANQ to fulfil its role as the peak body for the youth sector across the state. During the last 12 months, the LNP Government cut the entire funding of YANQ and many other similar organisations and reduced funding to the rest of the sector.

Further to these cuts, the Youth Sector has been targeted in the first phase of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Service's recommissioning process and has been thrown into uncertainty. In this environment, YANQ has had to undergo significant restructuring to ensure ongoing viability as well as supporting members, networks and the sector as a whole all under threat by the LNP government.

For YANQ it has been a return to our origins in the late 80's as an unfunded peak body. We have embraced the challenge

and with dedicated, staff, committee and members we will continue to be a strong voice for the youth sector and marginalised young people in Queensland.

The following report outlines YANQ's activities in the past 12 months. We encourage you to read this report and if you need any further information and/or clarification to contact our staff at YANQ office.

I would like to thank to all our members for supporting YANQ's work and for standing with us during these hard times. We believe that YANQ can continue being a strong voice for the rights of young people and the development of our sector and welcome working with you.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of our staff and my fellow Management Committee members for their hard work and dedication and especially to the Executive who have supported me in my role.

Finally, I hope that in the coming year we can continue to build on our strengths in partnership with the sector across Queensland and greatly look forward to working with you all.

Jude Saldanha
President
Youth Affairs Network Qld



Director's Report

The past 12 months in Queensland has been the worst year for the youth sector and young people in a quarter of a century. Not only for the short-sightedness of the State Government defunding YANQ and dismantling most of the successful youth programs that had taken decades to build, but also for the shameful cooperation of some NGOs with this same agenda.

We have seen the expansion of the Department of Health's 'gag clauses' into the community sector. Some organisations have already signed contracts with these clauses, and others are concerned that they will have them inserted into their contracts in the next round of funding. As you will know, the State Government is reintroducing these clauses

to, in their words, stop funds being used to fund political advocacy. This is an unfortunate, and unforgivable misunderstanding between party, political and structural advocacy. The latter of course is essential in creating evidence based policy that responds to the needs of the groups of people we work with.

On 4th April 2012, YANQ proposed the development of an MOU between YANQ, QCOSS and a number of other peaks. We wanted to use the small window of opportunity we had before the LNP took the knife to the sector to position the sector as united and independent from government. We believed that peaks could have been a role model for the rest of the sector, encouraging collaboration and respect as opposed to competition and distrust. Unfortunately, QCOSS spearheaded the opposition to YANQ's proposal and stated the priority of QCOSS as being "getting a seat around the table".

It is very clear that the Government is trying to silence the voice of the sector by dismissing the historical knowledge

Director's Report

that YANQ and other sector organisations have gathered over decades. Rather, the Government has enlisted the support of QCOSS and LGAQ and has sidelined the legitimate peak body for the sector, YANQ, due to the outcomes of our independent advocacy and consultation processes.

Any further consultations and reports undertaken by QCOSS and LGAQ are being funded directly by the State Government and exist only as smokescreens to undermine the consultation work that the sector has already done. As mentioned above, YANQ proposed the signing of a MOU between key peak bodies in April 2012 that would have allowed for a framework of collaboration and non-competition between the peaks, and to role model this for the sector. QCOSS refused, and have continually denied that they have been working with the State Government to undermine the youth sector's independent processes.

It is with great sadness we now see QCOSS and LGAQ breaking their word and openly partnering with Government to silence the youth sector. It is telling that in all the communiqués on the recommissioning process released by QCOSS/LGAQ, there has not been one mention of YANQ, the existing consultation undertaken by the sector, or of the existing, recently published reports on the youth sector.

There are very concerning signs that marginalised people seem to be the group that are paying the heaviest price for Government's cost cutting measures. YANQ has been raising these concerns with other state peak bodies as well as the Futures Forum. We sought to form an alliance with other peaks and state-wide services to collectively lobby the Government and to demand an exemption of cost cutting for services to disadvantaged community members.

Unfortunately, community service leaders seemed shell-shocked, and not prepared to publicly make any demands on the Government and have chosen to remain silent during these critical times. A number of peak bodies have gone one step further and have signed contracts with the Government that formally gag them; not allowing them to undertake any advocacy on behalf of their members, nor even have links with other organisations which might undertake advocacy.

With the State Government due to review its relationship with peak bodies in the near future, it seems the NGO sector is voluntarily abdicating its critical role of advocacy. This could/should be seen as nothing short of treachery, selling out community values to big business and priming the sec-

tor for a take-over by large business-like organisations.

YANQ continues to be a values driven organisation and is looking for other alliances where people and organisations are not prepared to compromise what is best for the community to save their own job. There comes a time when we have to be honest with ourselves about our motives for "sitting around the table" with Government and ask if this is truly for the sake of the sector or if the motivation is self/organisational survival.

In this extremely hostile environment, YANQ has had to commence restructuring itself in order to remain viable not only in financial terms but also in the broader policy arena. There is a big responsibility on YANQ's shoulders as the representative body for youth workers in Queensland. The past 12 months has been extremely hard on youth sector members and this has been clearly communicated to YANQ in various ways.

Internally, YANQ has had to restructure our work and positions, and this had unfortunately meant that the Policy Offer position that Trish Ferrier has ably filled for the last several years has been made redundant. It was a difficult decision to make and is a great loss of expertise to YANQ, however, we are grateful that Trish is continuing with the CPLAN into the future.

I like to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals and organisations who have kindly supported me and the work of YANQ. Your support and encouragement as well as your advice and constructive criticism has allowed us to grow and take on the challenges ahead with more clarity.

I am hopeful that passionate grassroots youth work will continue in Queensland. The discussions we have had about the role of youth work over the past several years will no doubt assist us in ensuring youth work remains alive and healthy into the future, even if we have to take a few unwanted steps backwards.

I'm more than happy to discuss with YANQ members, in further detail, any item in this report if needed. I hope you find it an interesting read. I look forward to working with you in the coming year.

Siyavash Doostkhah
Director
Youth Affairs Network Qld

Youth Services “Recommissioning”

A major announcement by the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services outlined the LNP government's intention to 'recommission' youth service funding in Queensland. Many of you will have been involved in the Departmental consultations or the tag along QCOS/LGAQ meetings. While we have requested details from the Department regarding timeframes and Terms of Reference for the Review, these have not been forthcoming.

Meanwhile, many of you attended one of YANQ's 'Where to Next?' forums, which provided an opportunity for the sector to independently analyse sector issues and help YANQ develop a report for the Government about the challenges and needs of the sector.

The above-mentioned report documents the findings of consultations conducted by YANQ in late 2012. These consultations were designed to enable YANQ to produce a sector-driven, evidence-based response to the Queensland Youth Services Review. A total of 282 youth workers and youth service managers across Queensland participated in the statewide consultation process through either attendance at one of 7 regional face-to-face sessions, or through an online survey.

Key findings from this report include, effective youth work is an investment in young people's lifelong social engagement and participation. It is essential that the Youth Services Review enable workers and organisations with expertise in the needs of their particular communities to develop and maintain services, which will produce the best possible long term outcomes for young people. Given the varied nature of communities and services throughout Queensland, this will inevitably lead to different types of services, addressing different needs, in different regions across the state.

Based on these findings YANQ provided the following recommendations to the government:

Recommendation 1: That the Youth Services Review adopt a multi-faceted, flexible practice framework which enables service providers to respond to the particular needs of their constituency - including young people, their families and their communities.

Recommendation 2: That the Youth Services Review optimise the unique role and contribution of youth workers to service delivery.

Recommendation 3: That, wherever possible, the Queensland Government continue to invest in existing community-based local and regional youth service providers, rather than appointing organisations from outside the community to develop new programs and services.

Recommendation 4: That the Youth Services Review recognise the critical role of developmental activities when allocating funding - particularly organisational support and development; regional networking and collaboration; and sector-wide workforce development and research.

Recommendation 5: That the Youth Services Review propose that further work be undertaken to identify and respond to the needs of young people living in remote areas of Queensland.

Following the release of this report YANQ met with senior public servants as well as the Minister for Communities, tabling the report and discussing the key recommendations. It was very disappointing to see the focus of the Minister and her government being on recommendation 3 about maintaining funding to existing services. It was very clear coming out of these meetings that the "recommissioning" process is a smoke screen euphemism for the rationalisation of youth services in Queensland.

Therefore as the collective voice of the state's youth sector, YANQ demands that the Queensland Government cease removing funding from youth services that play such an important

role in the life of both young people and the broader Queensland community.

In recent times, we have seen a tidal wave of destruction break over the youth sector, with serious consequences for young people - particularly those living in rural areas with limited access to services, and disadvantaged young people throughout Queensland. Many highly successful youth programs have been defunded over the past 12 months. Those remaining, many of whom were already operating on shoestring budgets, have faced funding cuts. Coupled with cuts to frontline services more widely, this has put a great strain on youth services and reduced their capacity to respond to the growing demand for services by young people themselves and other service providers. As the sector's peak body, it is YANQ's responsibility to strongly resist the negative ramifications of these processes.

Small and medium size youth services have generally built strong connections to the local and regional communities they are part of, over many years. These services deserve acknowledgment and support from the Government for the tremendous work they do with such limited resources.

The Queensland Government has an opportunity to build on the work of existing effective community organisations. 'Rationalising' them into a smaller number of services is a false economy, which fails to recognise the VALUE component of "value for money". New organisations and services take many months, sometimes even years, to establish - particularly when they are "outsiders" to communities without pre-established networks and relationships. During this establishment phase, productivity is inevitably far less than could be achieved by an established service.

This rationalisation also devalues the achievements of existing services by imposing unrealistic efficiency meas-

ures and requiring narrower outcomes. This fails to recognise the need to build trusting relationships with young people as a prerequisite to effective service delivery, and the central role of responding to young people's own perception of their needs in service success. Denial of the importance of the less measurable aspects of youth work can only lead to service provision 'on paper', which has little or no sustained VALUE for young people and will not ultimately achieve government objectives.

In short, existing services are able to provide more efficient and effective services for young people than any business-driven model of service. The only priority of youth organisations is to provide quality services to their communities - they are unencumbered by the need to generate profit. Funding existing non-government, not-for-profit, community-based, youth organisations is the best way to achieve a coherent system of efficient and effective support for young people throughout Queensland.

Instead of providing such greatly needed support, the Queensland Government has dramatically reduced the available funds, and plans to 'redistribute' the few resources left in the Youth Portfolio. Despite the high levels of demand for their services, many organisations are now at risk of losing their funding completely, or at the very least, have their youth work positions subsumed within mainstream positions which will not have the specific skills necessary to work effectively with young people.

YANQ further demands that the Queensland Government listen to the voices of young people, youth workers and youth services from across Queensland as detailed in the Listening to Queensland's Youth Sector <<http://www.yanq.org.au/10/post/2013/03/listening-to-the-youth-sector-full-report.html>>

Based on extensive consultation with the youth sector in 2012, this report provides a clear alternate framework for effective and efficient youth service delivery. The proposed approach would strengthen existing youth organisations by creating regional 'youth sector hubs' which

can assist youth services in all parts of Queensland to network, share and enhance practice frameworks, and meet their workforce and professional development needs.

Building on the existing strengths of the youth sector would pay significant dividends to both young people themselves and government. Reinstatement of funding lost to the youth sector over the past 15 months, and development of these 'hubs' would make a major contribution to improving the sector's ability to achieve VALUE for money.

YANQ has also called on the Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS), which has recently partnered with the LNP Government in the re-commissioning of the youth sector, to declare their position on funding of existing youth services. The adversarial, competitive, open-tender system being proposed by the Government will inevitably undermine collaboration. We call on QCOSS to act in the interest of young people - Queensland's next generation - through actively supporting YANQ's sector-informed position.



Consultation session around the state in December 2012

Policy Co-ordinator

During the financial year of 2013, the work of the Policy Co-ordinator involved:

- Supporting the CPLAN initiative;
- Developing and implementing the Get Set for Work/ Skilling Queenslanders for Work campaign.
- Assisting with the Youth PHD project for the Metro North Medicare Local research.
- Participating in YANQ team meetings and organisational matters.

Supporting the CPLAN Initiative

As the Policy Coordinator, it was my role to support YANQ to coordinate the regional CPLAN facilitators, including the YANQ CPLAN initiatives, such as the Participatory Action Research, and the training being undertaken by the Metropolitan Institute of TAFE. During the year two CPLAN forums were organised by YANQ, and it was the responsibility of the Policy Coordinator to facilitate the development of the agenda with input from stakeholders and assist in the running of the forums.

The CPLAN forums were held in September 2012 and April/ May 2013.

Developing and implementing the Get Set for Work / Skilling Queenslanders for Work campaign

When the state government announced the defunding of the 'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' program as a part of its 'fiscal repair' measures, YANQ organised a campaign to bring attention to the state government that the 'Get Set for Work' program had been developed by them in response to its responsibility under their education and training legislation. As part of the campaign we sought legal advice to clarify the responsibilities of the state government to the learning outcomes for young people aged 15 – 17 years.

Seven youth organisations were keen to discuss with the government their concerns about the impact of the loss of the 'Get Set For Work' Program. We decided to write to the Minister of Education and Training and ask for a meeting to discuss the implications of their decision and their responsibility the education and training opportunities for young people aged 15 – 17 years.

The letter requested that the Minister meet with a delegation of youth agencies to discuss these matters. Board members from Deception Bay Community Youth Programs, Downs Industry Schools Co-op and Acacia Ridge Community Support Inc met with the Minister to discuss our concerns.

We obtained media about the issue by organising the 7.30 Report to do a story of the impact of the decision to defund the Skilling Queenslanders for Work and we spoke to ABC radio in Hervey Bay.



Trish Ferrier
YANQ Policy Co-ordinator

A letter was sent to all members of Parliament outlining our position that it was our view that the state government had a responsibility to provide employment preparation programs for young people 15 – 17 years, as set out in their legislation and requested that they continue to fund the 'Get Set for Work' Program for another year until the recommendations of the review of the 'Skilling Queenslanders for Work' Program undertaken by Deloitte be discussed with organisations providing the programs.

A petition to the Queensland Parliament was also prepared and presented to Parliament by Peter Wellington. In a two week period 1772 people signed the petition.

Unfortunately the Get Set for Work Program was defunded though in several communities the funding was rolled over to June 2013.

Youth PHD project

As part of the team that YANQ put together to undertake the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local Project, as Project Coordinator I was required to interrogate the 2011 Census data to provide the project with information on young people in the Metro North Brisbane region.

As part of this project, I also supported the project team by working with youth organisations which supported young people in the Metro North Brisbane region to enable them to consult with young people on matters concerning their health and health services that fall under the responsibility of the Medicare Local organisations.

The following organisations participated in the project and organised groups of young people and youth workers across the region to contribute to the research:

- Deception Bay Community Youth Programs
- Indigenous Youth Health Service
- Multicultural Development Association
- Young Parents Program
- Brisbane Youth Service
- Community Living Program
- Open Doors



Steve Skitmore
YANQ Admin and Comms Officer

Communications and Admin

Many changes have occurred on the communications and administration front in the past 12 months; some furthering our work developing YANQ's online systems and cloud based operations, and others increasing the automation and efficiency of our organizational processes in light of staffing restructures.

Network Noise

In sad news, due to a lack of operational funds and a refocusing of our priorities, after 21 years, YANQ's magazine Network Noise had its final (online only) edition in June 2013. Whilst we are sad to see the magazine go, we are excited to instead use the finances and energy freed from this decision to build our social media presence and online community. What newsletters were to the 20th century, Facebook et al. are to the 21st! All back copies of Network Noise will remain available online via the YANQ website for your use.

Website and Social Media

After several years of consideration, YANQ decided to update our old website in June 2012. Unfortunately, the process was long and arduous, with the contractor completing the job poorly. This meant we had significant security loopholes in the site's software, and required an almost immediate rebuild. After several expensive quotes,

the decision was made to rebuild the site in-house, which was finalized in early 2013. In launching the new site, we made sure that we offered scanned and electronic copies of all publications YANQ has produced throughout our history and this has been of great assistance to our copyright income for the period. In June 2013, we began thinking about further increasing our capacity for online campaign work and will be trialling NationBuilder software for membership and database management in 2014.

Our social media presence has been maintained throughout the last 12 months on Facebook and Twitter, as well as a few campaign specific pages on Facebook. Social media is becoming an increasingly important part of our communications arsenal.

Membership

YANQ's membership has grown significantly over 2012-13, with participants at our consultations being offered a free 12-month membership for the period. In mid-2013, in an effort to reduce time spent on membership renewal servicing, YANQ moved over to using Paypal for online renewals. This system is still a little clunky and we are looking to further refine and automate this system in the coming year.



CPLAN YANQ'S REGIONAL NETWORKS



CPLAN
Communities of Practice
Leaders Action Networks

The CPLAN initiative continued to gain momentum late last year.

YANQ initiatives

YANQ worked with facilitators in the regions to support YANQ initiatives, including the 'What is Youth Work Consultations' and the development of Regional Workforce Plans.

CPLAN Forums

Two forums were held in the year including one in September 2012 and one at the end of April 2013.

The forums provide the opportunity for regional facilitators and co-facilitators to come together with YANQ staff and YANQ CPLAN partners to discuss the initiative, and to plan for the next six months. It provided an opportunity for Metropolitan Institute of TAFE to continue their assessment of participants as part of the four modules of the Diploma of Community Development. And it provided an opportunity for Queensland University of Technology to touch base with participants in regard to their case studies and to discuss the final report.

All participants get a lot from these gatherings as it is the only opportunity across the state for the youth sector to gather, share information about changes to government policy and the impacts across the state. It also provides an excellent opportunity for peer mentoring and support of the CPLAN participants, as well as training.

In November 2012 YANQ presented the CPLAN initiative to the Youthipedia Conference, organised by the Local Government Association.

Training

The Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE continued to support the accredited training aspect of the CPLAN initiative. They finalised the accreditation for 4 modules from the Diploma of Community Development and supported CPLAN participants in the commencement of another 4 modules of the Diploma of Community Development.

Participatory Action Research

The PAR component of the CPLAN initiative was supported by the Queensland University of Technology. They supported participants to complete their case studies to inform the work in the regions. During the year the participants continued to write up their experiences of working with CPLAN in their region.

Achievements of the CPLAN regions

Much of the work undertaken by the regions in the CPLAN initiative was impacted by the change of state government and consequent impact on the youth sector. There was uncertainty about staff cuts, cuts to organisational funding and a poor understanding on how to navigate the new funding environment.

Metro CPLAN

This group continued to meet in 2012 and 2013 to reflect on the success of their April 2012 Can of Young Worms event and to write up their case study for the Participatory Action Research component of CPLAN.

As the impacts of the funding cuts and policy changes impacted on the youth organisations that participated in CPLAN, their capacity to contribute to new initiatives was reduced.

Given that many of the participants are Managers of youth organisations, their capacity to attend meetings and start new initiatives declined, given they were trying to reorient their organisations following the funding cuts and policy changes. Many of these organisations lost their Get Set for Work Funding and participated in the YANQ campaign to draw to the attention of the new government the importance of this program.

By the end of the financial year the METRO CPLAN regrouped to organise an initiative to assist youth organisations to find alternative sources of funding. The concept of youth organisations organising themselves into an Alliance, where members contribute to a fund to assist in the branding and marketing of the Alliance to assist in fundraising was developed and continues to be developed by this group.

Sunshine

Engaged with local TAFEs and QUT to discuss the document 'Integrity in Our Practice' that was developed by the members of the Sunshine CPLAN group. The aim was to have this document integrated into the training modules for youth work in their region. All of the institutions were supportive of these discussions, which included an improved 'student placement' process.

During the year the Sunshine CPLAN experimented with ways of extending their activities beyond the southern end of the region. The CPLAN facilitator met with potential participants from the Sunshine Coast region and the Bundaberg region to discuss possible options for their involvement in CPLAN. This work is still ongoing. The CPLAN group also finalised their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research component of the CPLAN initiative.



North Queensland

The North Queensland CPLAN undertook a training with ATODS as workers identified that they needed access to appropriate training. Whilst Queensland Health were providing training, it was often unavailable to youth workers due to delivery model and timing. The collaboration between the CPLAN and Queensland Health meant that youth workers had access to important information on drugs and alcohol.

This CPLAN reported on youth services being impacted by funding and policy changes which reduce organisational capacity to collaborate.

The CPLAN group also finalised their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research component of the CPLAN initiative.

South East Queensland

The South East Queensland CPLAN focuses mainly on youth services on the Gold Coast. Due to low morale in the youth sector due to changes in funding and policy, this CPLAN has had difficulty in engaging youth workers in the work of the CPLAN.

The group identified as key issues for their CPLAN, the need for peer mentoring, training on Maori and Pacific Islander cultures, and workforce development.

Their CPLAN has been integrated into the Gold Coast Youth Network, by holding meetings prior to each network meeting, to enable workers to only have to travel once a month to attend both meetings. The CPLAN was still considering options for building links with the other sections of the region.

Central

The Central CPLAN had a new Co Facilitator, who was keen to support the facilitator throughout 2012. In late 2012 the facilitator resigned and the Co Facilitator agreed to become the Facilitator for the region in 2013. The CPLAN group explored ways of

connecting beyond Rockhampton to include workers in regional areas. There was difficulty in maintaining connection due to the pressures from funding and policy changes in the youth sector. The CPLAN were looking at options for peer mentoring, as a way of supporting isolated workers. A survey was sent to youth workers in the region to identify issues and ways of connecting. The group were looking at options of using technology for communication and discussions were underway with the University of Central Queensland. Another initiative being explored by the group was a Youth Council for the region.

The CPLAN group also finalised their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research component of the CPLAN initiative.

Mid North

CPLAN is embedded in the Mackay Youth Network and discussions in the network inform the work of the CPLAN. The cuts to funding had impact in the region and the sector was feeling the disruption caused by these cuts, and the impact on workers in the region. The group finalised its case study for the Participatory Action Research component of CPLAN.

Collaboration continues to be an ongoing issue for the network, and it was why the group decided to undertake its case study on integrated case management in the region.

South West

The south west region has changed its focus from the South West Inter-agency Network to a more Toowoomba focus, and it is now embedded in the Toowoomba Youth Network. This is a result of the changeover of staff in the region, and the capacity of the facilitator to connect with the new youth workers across this large region. There have been some changes in the sector which have impacted on the capacity of the Co Facilitators to participate – due the policy and funding changes of the state government.

The Youth Network is looking at opportunities for speakers to attend their network meetings, such as LGBTQ, technology, etc.

The CPLAN group also finalised their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research component of the CPLAN initiative.

Central West

Reports from Central West indicated that the rollover of youth workers in the region had been reduced and the sector in their region was relatively stable, given that most of the youth workers are residents from the region. They organised a Youth Worker Form to provide training, networking and peer mentoring for youth workers. CPLAN is embedded in the operations of the Youth Development Network in the region.

The Central West CPLAN group completed their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research initiative of CPLAN.

North West

During the year the Co Facilitator changed. The CPLAN is embedded into the Youth Network in Mt Isa and the business of the CPLAN became more project focused group. An activity was held which included the eight youth agencies and they are looking to continue with this collaborative approach. Other activities included collecting data on homelessness and developing a NAIDOC week activity and looking at how they can support ATODS in their activities.

The CPLAN group also finalised their case study as part of the Participatory Action Research component of the CPLAN initiative.

Research and Advocacy

Defining 'Youth Work'

In early 2009, YANQ began a major youth sector workforce development project, designed to develop a sustainable and vibrant youth sector workforce in Queensland which protects and promotes young people's rights. During this process, the lack of a commonly held definition of Youth Work was identified as a major obstacle to ensuring that Youth Work remains a clearly identified and valued occupation within the broader sector.

In 2012, a series of consultations were undertaken with the sector and with young people to gauge support for the draft definition. The results of these were collated in *Are We There Yet? Findings from consultations around developing a working definition of youth work in Queensland and in We are Here: Young People's opinions on Youth Work*. Consultations were held in four different regions with approximately half the participants identifying as Murri or other First Nation peoples working with young Murris. The consultations also included a majority of regional and rural perspectives.

The current working definition, *What is Youth Work?* Defining a Sector has now been released and YANQ will be promoting the definition in our work in the state and nationally to protect youth work as an independent practice within the sector.

Get Set for Work Program Defunding

In late 2012, YANQ conducted an extensive lobbying and advocacy campaign around the defunding of the Get Set for Work Program (as part of a wider defunding of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work Initiative). Legal advice suggested that the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 placed an obligation on the State Government to ensure that 'employment skills development programs' were provided, and that this defunding was contrary to state laws. YANQ organised a high-profile Parliamentary petition, extensive letter writing campaign and meetings with state and federal members to discuss the future of education and training support for young people.

Youth Support Coordinator (YSC) Initiative Defunding Advocacy

One of the low points of 2013 was the announcement that the State Government was effectively dismantling the Youth Support Coordinator Initiative (YSCI), one of Queensland's most successful youth programs. The YSCI was originally funded in 1997 as a response to research which showed strong connections between homelessness and early school leaving. From day one, the development of the YSC program was based upon the assumption that services located in the community are well positioned to fulfill a coordination and school-community linking role at the client and local community level.

This has been consistently confirmed through several reviews of the program over the past 10 years.

In 2011-12, the YSCI (managed by the Department of Communities) was allocated a total of approximately \$16 million - \$11 million from the Education Department and \$5 million from the Department of Communities. In 2012-13, the Department of Communities' \$5 million was returned to Treasury, and the Education Department's contribution was reduced to \$7.4 million. Moreover, this \$7.4 million is not allocated to the existing YSCI - the Minister has reallocated these funds to schools to use at their own discretion, with no guarantee that the funds will assist young people who are disengaged from learning.

YANQ has strongly condemned the recklessness of dismantling this program, the incompetence of the Minister for Communities for allowing such significant funding for the youth portfolio to disappear and QCOSS commentary on the defunding, which lacks any analysis or understanding of the significance of this loss to the youth sector and young people in Queensland.

Impact of State Government Cuts

In light of no Government data and apparent lack of defunding model, in late 2012, YANQ conducted a survey of the sector to determine the extent of Government defunding on Youth Service provision and impact on young people



Youth Justice in Queensland.

Brought to you by the



**Queensland
Government**

Research and Advocacy (cont.)

across the State. We also ran a parallel survey to capture the mental health issues brought about by the uncertainty of the process. Both of these reports were used to advocate for a more structured process for youth reform, and were sent to every State Member of Parliament along with a Christmas card, reminding them of the impacts of their actions.

Also at the end of 2012, YANQ conducted a series of seven consultations across the State in lieu of any planned Government process on the future of the sector (read more about this in the Recommissioning section of the Annual Report). The outcome of these consultations have been the basis of our advocacy to Government on the future structure of the sector.

Juvenile Justice Reforms

In early 2013, we saw the Attorney General continue the new Government's attacks on the rights of young people in Queensland. We have seen the scrapping of Youth Justice Conferencing and special circumstances courts, the implementation of a Boot Camp model of retributive justice, removal of the principle of detention as a last resort and the automatic transfer of 17 year olds to adult prisons. These changes have been supported by a hysterical media reaction fuelled by Government propaganda in contrast to the reality of a reducing youth crime rate.

YANQ has been dismayed at the extent of the injustice of these changes and has been fighting back in the media, via petitions and by mobilizing the community to respond to the Attorney General's online survey, the only consultation process offered before these changes were implemented (!).

Youth Primary Health Development Project (Youth PHD)

The main piece of research conducted by YANQ in 2012-13 was our contribution to the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local's environmental scan of different population groups' primary health care needs in the state. The year-long project undertook a literature review and collected extensive data from the region to inform a regional perspective on key issues for young people's primary health care needs. We consulted with young people and the youth sector, including young people surveying their peers and youth focus groups at seven youth services in the region. We also attended Medicare Local planning charettes and other public events to promote the research's findings. The final report has been well received by Medicare Local and we look forward to contributing to their planning processes in the future. The final report is available on the YANQ website.

Re-Engagement in Education Project

The YANQ Re-engagement Project remained strong in 2012, with Project Officer Katrina Brink working hard to pull together funding support. In 2013, we sadly said goodbye to Katrina who moved with her young family to the USA. Analysis of the surveys from the Marginalised Students: enhancing life choices through engaging educational policies and practices project is ongoing with support from UQ and Griffith Universities. In 2013, YANQ was awarded a grant from the Dusseldorp Skills Forum to commence a film project, Building Young People's Voices, documenting the experiences of young people in three alternative education sites in South East Queensland.

Sexual Health Research Report

Marginalised young people have been consistently identified as a high risk group in relation to sexual health. In 2012, YANQ released our final report on a piece of research conducted exploring impacts on youth workers' ability to provide effective interventions around sexual health and what knowledge, skills, resources, value and ethics, training and support is available to them. The workforce development recommendations of the report are aimed at increasing the effectiveness and capacity of the youth sector to support marginalised young people's sexual health development and the prevention of blood borne viruses and Sexually Transmitted Infections. The report is available on the YANQ website.

Where to next for Multiculturalism in Queensland

In mid-2012, YANQ sought the views of the Queensland youth sector, State Government Departments and national peak bodies in relation to updating and refreshing its approach to advocating advancement of multiculturalism. Project Office Hamza Viyani conducted in-depth interviews with several youth organisations and also a survey of the sector. The consultation process has sought to capture and be informed by sector views, requirements for support and to develop an approach for coordinating advocacy with other key stakeholders at state and national levels.

Engaging Young People through Social Media Research

Commissioned by the previous Queensland Government, YANQ supported their inquiry into effective methods of service promotion and information delivery to young people, particularly those most disengaged, through the use of social media. The project aimed to identify key policy and practice issues which can enhance the use of social media by disengaged or “at risk” young people, including examples of effective policy and service implementation by organisations, and develop an evidence base underpinning the key success factors contributing to use of social media by disengaged or “at risk” young people.

Collaboration and Integration Research

YANQ was also funded to examine examples of good practice in integrated service delivery in the sector. Research projects were undertaken with the Queensland youth service sector with specific focus on two localities; Gold Coast and Townsville. The report is a reflection of current practices (as of 2011-12) in collaboration and integration service delivery practices and explores the critical ingredients required for good practice to exist.

Research into “Risk”

Jacinta O’Keefe interned at YANQ in late 2012, working with Dr Richard Hil to complete a literature review and gathering information from workers in Inala on the discourse of “risk” and how it has been applied in practice. The purpose was to critically analyse risk and develop an alter-

native approach that is inclusive, empowering and focused on the human rights of young people. We are now excited to see a shift occurring away from the concept of “risk”, even amongst early proponents of the term.

Submission to Strengthening Community Associations Review

YANQ welcomed the opportunity to discuss much needed legislative reform of eligibility for incorporated associations’ management committees. We believe that the removal of discriminatory and arbitrary barriers to participation in society can be the basis for successful rehabilitation of people who have been in prison and can benefit the community more broadly. The suggested reforms give association members greater freedom and responsibility in the management of their organisation. Submission to the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry.

YANQ’s submission to the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry received wide media attention, with reports in The Australian, Brisbane Times, National Indigenous Television and SBS. Our submission covered the prevalence of ‘ADHD’ diagnosis and ‘targeted stimulant’ prescriptions in children and young people in state care.

This evidence contradicts strong recommendations by the Royal Australasian College of Physicians that pharmacological treatment of the alleged ‘disorder’ is not appropriate for children under the age of six. The recommendation confirms the need for caution in the prescription of stimulant

medication amongst moderate ‘ADHD’ supporters.

Changes to the Youth Work packages endorsed

On 25th June the National Skills Standards Council formally announced the endorsement of the revised Children’s and Youth Services qualifications (CHC Release 1.0). The new training package and the Companion Volumes are now available on the national register (training.gov.au).

In addition, the Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council will be holding a series of national implementation workshops to support the transition to the new qualifications during August and September. Registration for these sessions is also open and can be made through <http://www.cshisc.com.au/>

For the past 18 months YANQ has assisted the Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council with the development of the new packages. In our capacity as Industry Reference Group member as well as our membership on the Experts Writing Group, YANQ had significant input to the development of the new packages. We would like to thank all YANQ members who assisted YANQ on this initiative and in particular Sarah Roberts and the Metro South Institute of TAFE who brought significant expertise to the process.

voted to create the position of co-chair for the Forum, as the Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS) had assumed the role of permanent chair. Later in 2011, YANQ was voted in by the Forum to the position of co-chair. The majority of Forum members who had voted for YANQ had high expectations from YANQ to bring a level of transparency and collective decision-making to the Forum.

Over the past year, YANQ has acted on this responsibility vested in us by the community sector in Queensland. In particular, YANQ has strived to be a strong advocacy voice in the Futures Forum for small organisations, and since the March Queensland election, a strong advocate for collective action by the Futures Forum against cuts to the sector.

It is this collective advocacy spearheaded by the Futures Forum that QCOSS has been hindering and YANQ believes there are moves by QCOSS and a number of other organisations to kill off the Futures Forum altogether and to devolve the advocacy role to QCOSS and the sector development work to a yet to be established 'industry body'. QCOSS and a handful of organisations with financial support from large organisations have commissioned Field Consulting to develop a business plan for the establishment of an 'industry body'.

At one of the Futures Forum meeting, YANQ asked a number of questions, including:

- How would an industry body representing small and large NGOs who are competing for funds ensure equitable services?
- Why are we duplicating the Community Council for Australia in Queensland?

Unfortunately, these and other questions were left unanswered.

YANQ is concerned that an 'industry body' could be forced on the sector - while at the same time the Futures Forum, which brought the largest 52 peaks and statewide services under one umbrella, will be sidelined.

The strength of our sector is in our diversity and collectiveness, and any attempt to undermine the diversity or collective potential of the sector will be strongly resisted by YANQ.

During the year YANQ had to write the following letter to members of the Futures Forum but unfortunately did not receive sufficient support to act on it.

Dear Futures Forum members,

I am taking this extraordinary measure to write to you as the Co-Chair of the Futures Forum. As many of you are aware, since the election of LNP in March this year I have been repeatedly raising the need for collective advocacy and representation of the NGO sector and marginalised people.

In meeting with a number of peak bodies I proposed that we should develop an MOU amongst peaks which articulates our commitment towards working collaboratively as well as respecting the autonomy of each peak body and valuing the diversity of the sector reflected in the work of various peak bodies. This could be achieved by collaboration rather than competition, with each member driven peak body committing to decline funding previously committed for a specific role elsewhere.

I proposed this before the LNP released information about cuts to peaks and potential rationalisation of peaks. I have also been calling for a collaborative approach to give the sector a whole

and strong united voice demanding an exemption from budget cuts for services to marginalised community members.

Unfortunately so far on both fronts my suggestions have been dismissed and some Futures Forum members have been open about their priority for survival and it seems maintaining silence has been adopted as a key strategy.

We are facing very tough times and although I understand we all are trying our best to survive and play a role in the future, the sector and the services to some of Queensland's most marginalised people are being savaged and there is no collective voice opposing this. Clearly the union's focus has been on the public sector job cuts and the NGO's are left to fend for themselves.

I believe that in recent times the Futures Forum has been compromised. There was an attempt during the recent strategic planning sessions to change the Futures Forum into an Industry Body, a move which would have stripped the Forum of most the roles currently agreed upon. I also believe that some members of the Forum have been unwilling to speak out at Future Forum meetings due to a lack of trust.

The purpose of this letter is to see if there are any Future Forum members who believe in the need for strong collective advocacy during these adverse times. With the future of the sector clearly in jeopardy there is an urgent need to clarify our roles and identify how to best bring the sector together and to give marginalised people a voice to shape the future of the sector.

YANQ in the news



Teens hurt in control detention

Daryl Passmore

Investigation has been made by staff at the centres. In another case, a young person diagnosed with autism suffered a fractured forearm after physical intervention by three staff without any verbal warnings.

Commissioner Elizabeth Fraser's report found that while training emphasised the use of non-physical strategies, staff were too quick to resort to physical force.

In reality, the specific incidents reviewed under the investigation would appear to indicate that 'pain management/compliance' techniques are frequently used more frequently than communication and negotiation skills.

Commissioner Elizabeth Fraser

Recipe ripe for crime

Daryl Passmore

Cutbacks to 'haunt' state

Young people who are troubled, homeless and marginalised young people will be in a high risk of committing crime, according to a report by the Queensland Police Service.

The report, which was released last week, found that young people who are homeless, have mental health issues, and are involved in the criminal justice system are at a high risk of committing crime.

The report also found that young people who are involved in the criminal justice system are at a high risk of committing crime.

The report also found that young people who are involved in the criminal justice system are at a high risk of committing crime.

Gag orders on public servants a return to bad old days

Sounds of silence

Daryl Passmore

When the organisation receives 80% or more of its total funding from Queensland Health and other Government agencies the organisation must not advocate for State or Federal legislative change.

Executive Director Stephen Donohue has criticised the Government's gag orders on public servants, saying they are a return to bad old days.

Donohue said that the gag orders are a return to bad old days, when public servants were not allowed to speak out on issues that affected the public.

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Treasurer's Report

The past financial year has been an extremely challenging one for YANQ as a result of having lost our operational funding halfway through the year. Unfortunately we have had to undergo some level of restructuring of positions and activities of YANQ.

We believe that we have positioned YANQ in a way that it could explore a number of options for ongoing sustainability. YANQ had been under threat of defunding for a number of years, which made us operate in a very tight fiscal manner. This allowed us to make necessary savings and investments that are assisting us now.

We hope that with the support of the sector and timely investments we are able to continue operating well into the future.

There are plans for further restructuring of YANQ to allow for additional savings. We hope as much as possible these do not impact on key operations of YANQ.

I have pleasure in presenting the independent auditor's report for the year ending 30th June 2013.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our members and subscribers for their financial contribution to YANQ. I also would like to thank our funding bodies and donors for their contribution.

If you require any further information in regards to the audit report please contact our office.

Phil Dodds
Treasurer
Youth Affairs Network of Qld



Hayes Knight
Accountants, Advisors & Auditors

Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd
ABN 49 115 261 722
Registered Audit Company 299289
Level 19, 127 Creek Street, Brisbane Qld 4000
GPO Box 1189, Brisbane Qld 4001
T: +61 7 32292022 F: +61 7 32293277
E: email@hayesknighqld.com.au
www.hayesknight.com.au

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS NETWORK OF QUEENSLAND INC

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc (the association), which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2013, the income statement and statement of cashflows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the management committee.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc is responsible for the preparation of the financial report, and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, 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. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

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Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc as at 30 June 2013 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981*

Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Youth Affairs Network of Queensland Inc to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (Qld) 1981*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty.Ltd.

Hayes Knight Audit (Qld) Pty Ltd

Robertson.

AM Robertson
Director

Level 19, 127 Creek Street,
Brisbane, QLD, 4000

Date: 20 November 2013



youth affairs network qld

ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 2013

30 Thomas Street, West End Q 4101
ph 07 3844 7713
email admin@yanq.org.au

www.yanq.org.au