

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

employment options

WORK FOR YOU

Our Mission

Our mission is to contribute to equity and social justice in society by directly assisting disadvantaged people to achieve employment, education or training goals.

Our Vision

A team of passionate and innovative professionals delivering excellence in service provision

Our Values

Excellence
Leadership
Innovation
Integrity
Respect and Empathy
Empowerment

From The Chair

2013-14 has again been a period of challenge and frustration. The financial result this year was close to expectation, and was achieved in spite of tightening funding and program cuts, which required our managers and staff to watch costs closely and spend wisely. I congratulate and thank all staff for continuing to provide a high quality service to so many people across a range of programs under such trying conditions. Our continued success as an organisation is largely due to the hard work, professionalism and dedication of all involved with Employment Options.

The Board has continued to provide leadership to our organisation and I thank all members for their support at our Board and planning meetings. For many years now we have adopted a structured and demanding governance and strategic planning system. By its nature, it demands time, thought, commitment and courage. I know that the result of all this work is a further reason for our success.

Our decision to commit to Job Futures was an example of the Board being courageous and this decision is beginning to pay dividends. It was not an easy decision to make but I know it was the correct decision and I am totally confident the Board's courage will be rewarded. I look forward with great anticipation to attending the upcoming Job Futures CEOs and Chairs meeting in Melbourne where I hope to gain a wider appreciation and understanding of the benefits we will gain from our involvement. In particular, I hope to see firsthand details of Job Futures' Strategic Plan 2014-17 and what it will mean for us.

There is a huge year ahead with tenders for all our services being required, and then the setting up for new employment services contracts. Even though our membership of Job Futures assists with some of our tender work, I know Lesley has spent an inordinate amount of time preparing data and information for the submission of our application, and on the tenders for other services. On behalf of the Board I thank Lesley for this outstanding effort and feel confident that her efforts will result in Employment Options continuing to be the leader in employment services in the communities we serve.

In addition I pass on thanks to the management team and all staff at Employment Options. Without their continuing dedication and caring input, we would not have the successful organisation we have. I thank also the members of the Audit Committee for their ongoing input and dedication. The assistance of our auditor Graeme Rodda has been invaluable. I look forward to the challenges ahead and I know that the systems we have in place will continue to allow us to offer a service that is relevant and of the highest quality.

ANDREW WOOD

“...I look forward to the challenges ahead and I know that the systems we have in place will continue to allow us to offer a service that is relevant and of the highest quality.”

From The CEO

Among the many highlights and achievements of 2013-14 was the 25th anniversary of our founding and the start of our services in the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula, and Kangaroo Island; and more recently, to Adelaide and other parts of regional SA. The impact Employment Options has had in that time is significant, and we have planned celebrations of our history and achievements over coming months.

Other organisational highlights include:

- A pleasing financial result, with an 8% increase in total revenue,
- Participation as a volunteer in the Employment Services Quality Assurance Framework Pilot project. During the Pilot, a review of all our governance, planning, management and service delivery systems confirmed their essential robustness, and allowed us to identify ways to strengthen them further
- Strengthening the impact of our services through new partnerships- building on our participation in the Job Futures national network, while strengthening our links with local providers of a range of health and welfare services to better service our mutual clients has brought a range of innovations and enhancements to the way we work
- Providing even better facilities for our service users and staff, with site refurbishments and ITC infrastructure development

“Strengthening the impact of our services through new partnerships... has brought a range of innovations and enhancements to the way we work”

Changes in Government and policy have also impacted us this year, especially with the discontinuation of the widely respected Youth Connections program. As a provider, we delivered innovative learning and life skills programs, career development advice and support, and support to reconnect with services and ultimately with education to hundreds of young people who would otherwise have been left to navigate that complex path alone. We have been grateful and a little overwhelmed by the many messages of support and thanks from schools and youth agencies, I would like to pass on my own thanks to John, Linda, Gordon, Kris, Frances and Rachel for their dedication, professionalism and sheer hard work in making the program such a success, and to wish them all the best for their future careers.

My sincere thanks also to the Board, executive team, and to all the staff for your hard work and commitment to our organisation and to our clients.

The coming year is set to yet again be stimulating, exciting and rewarding, with firstly, tender processes for all Employment Services programs, and then the challenges of adapting to a very different landscape in late 2014-15. I have every confidence that with its sound foundations and the dedication of its people, Employment Options will make the transition successfully, and that we will continue to make a relevant and significant contribution.

LESLEY KENNEDY

Events and Highlights

1796 people *helped*

774 *sustained periods of* **employment**

112 *disengaged young people returned to*
education

103 *people studied business, then* **started**
their own businesses

25 Years of Impact

From humble beginnings in 1989, Employment Options has become a respected provider of quality employment, youth, small business support, work experience and training services for people who are disadvantaged in access to employment or education.

With support from Commonwealth, State and Local government, and our communities, we have:

- provided employment services programs continuously for 25 years, assisting more than 35,000 people with job referrals and placements, help to retain employment, vocational training, support to enhance employability skills, and referral to health and welfare services
- supported nearly 5000 young people over 20 years to return to or stay in education or training, to learn life skills and plan career pathways, and/or to deal with complex personal, mental health or family issues
- over 20 years, provided accredited small business management training, then assisted and supported the establishment of 1405 new small businesses by jobless people. The combination of training and support with mentoring during business establishment, enabled most of those businesses to last long-term- for example, 83% of businesses started in the last 5 years were still operating successfully 12 months later
- arranged and supported more than 2000 work experience placements in community organisations and government agencies over 20 years, to help young people, and others without employment to build their vocational and employability skills. The work experience placements helped hosting agencies to provide extra services and to complete all kinds of projects, including restoring historic buildings, building and landscaping community facilities, building floats for the Christmas pageant, refurbishing computers for community groups and disadvantaged people, an archaeological excavation, and revegetation, environmental and wildlife conservation projects.



Our foundations are in our strong connections with community, and over the last 25 years Employment Options has also been a key contributor to a range of community networks, committees and planning groups across our service regions.

We look forward to many more years of contribution and positive impact.

Food Processing Pilot

After consulting the food processing industry, The Food Tourism & Hospitality (FTH) Skills Council partnered with Employment Options to deliver a Pilot Program to develop a 'White Card' – core competency training and certification- for the food industry. With funding through PIRSA, the Pilot was run in the Adelaide Hills. It provided participants with accredited training modules and site visits to food processing facilities to enable job seekers to watch and experience a typical food business in operation and allow them to apply and consolidate their skills in an actual workplace environment.

FDFFS1001A Follow work procedures to maintain food safety
SITXFSA201 Participate in safe food handling practices
FDFFS2001A Implement the food safety program and procedures
FDFOHS1001A Work Safely
FDFOHS2001A Participate in OHS processes

Employers who supported the program include Beerenberg, Skara Smallgoods, Millie's Bakery and Woodside Cheese Wrights.

The feedback from employers, job seekers and the FTH Skills Council has been excellent and the Pilot has led to paid employment opportunities to some participants and to others in the future.



“The tours of the facilities were an eye opener. They showed us what goes into the practical side of the industry.”

Industry Tour

In 2013 the Youth Team conducted a successful pilot Industry Tour in the Fleurieu Peninsula. Due to that success two more Industry Tours were organised and run in 2013-14: *Hit the Mark* (Hills), and *FIT for Work* (Fleurieu). To plan and run the tours, our Youth Team worked in collaboration with the Department of Employment, Partnerships Brokers Community Partnerships @ Work and AITEC; the Mayor of Victor Harbor Council; Victor Harbor High School; and Adelaide Hills Vocational College.

The Industry Tour concept is to take groups of disengaged young people to a range of industries and organisations to help them understand the variety of employment opportunities available within their own community while providing an opportunity to hear from employers on their expectations of their employees and how to best access their industry. The support we received from the local business community was outstanding with a range of different industries visited over the 2 tours.

34 young people who participated over the 2 tours, with 4 young people offered employment as well as work experience opportunities made available by some of the organisations. The young people said the tour provided an opportunity to meet employers and their worksites and to gain career ideas.



A big thank you to the host organisations:

- Hillgrove Resources
- Beerenberg
- Bird in Hand Winery
- Adelaide Hills Toyota
- Bailey Homes
- Shaw Family Vintages
- Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority
- McIlroy Motors

“It was such a great experience. The tour gave me a good outlook on different jobs that I would never get to experience.”

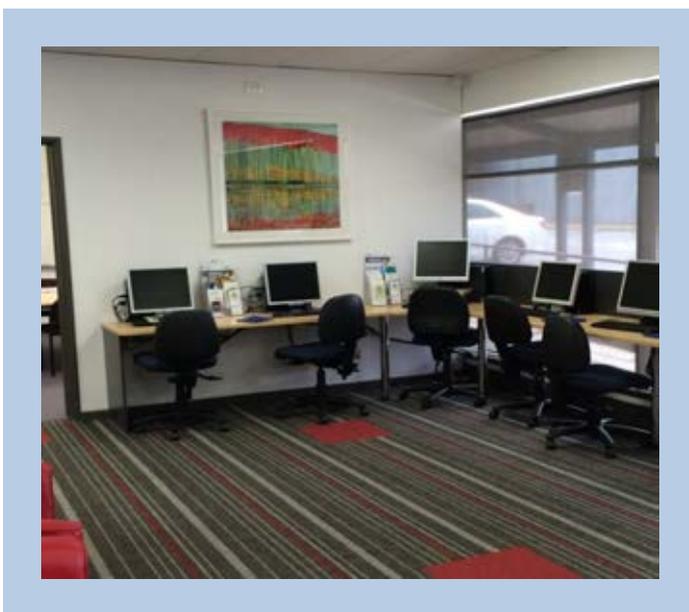
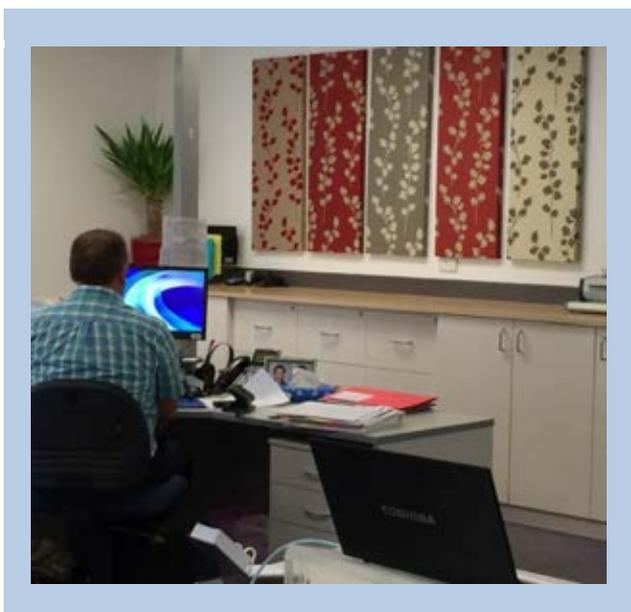
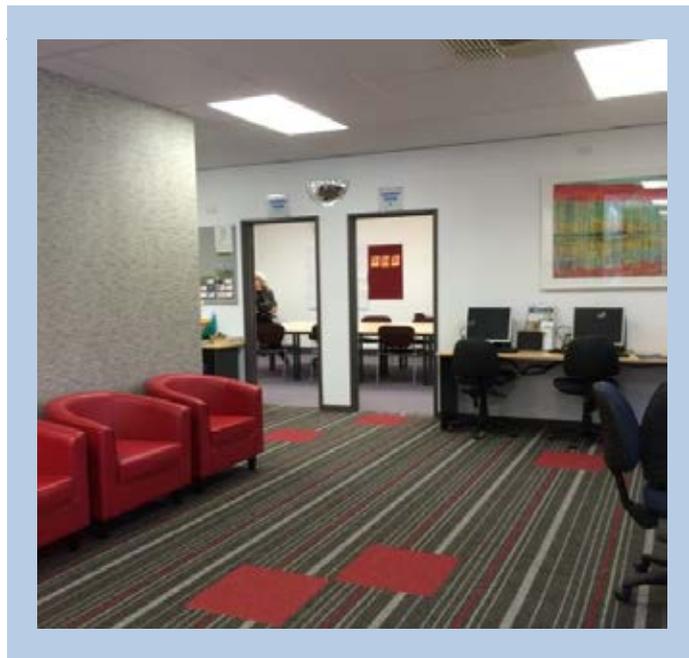
Youth Connections State and National Network

Our Community Programs Manager, John Coates has continued as Chair for the South Australian Youth Connections Providers Network as well as the State Representative for the Youth Connections National Network during 2013-14. This position has provided Employment Options with the opportunity to build stronger relationships with key stakeholders nationally and contribute to youth policy direction.

The National Network worked with the Commonwealth Department of Education to develop a Future Policy Paper. The paper *‘Outside the School Gate, a National Youth Activation & Transition Service’* was released in November 2013. The Network lobbied key Politicians prior to the Federal Budget release regarding the need to continue funding a program for disadvantaged youth. Unfortunately there was no funding allocated in the budget for a specific youth program. The Youth Connections program will now conclude on 31 December 2014.

Improved Facilities for Service Users

Our Mt Barker Service centre was upgraded this year to provide a modern, refreshing and lighter environment for both clients and consultants. The upgrade has improved client training and ICT facilities as well as the job search area.



*“The area looks a lot brighter and more welcoming”
“Looks very inviting and gives you an uplift”*

Maximising Jobs and Training Access

To achieve our mission of helping disadvantaged people to achieve employment education and training goals, Employment Options delivered 4 government programs during 2013-14.

Job Services Australia

Individual help to plan and navigate a pathway to employment

This year 1440 people participated in JSA. Help given included referral to jobs and employers, placement into employment and up to 26 weeks of Post Placement Support to retain employment; referral and support to access services in the community to overcome barriers to employment; accredited training courses and a wide range of work experience places including Work for the Dole programs.

During 2013/2014 we have developed many new partnerships with community, industry and business to increase opportunities for job seekers to secure sustainable employment. Industry Skills Councils, Registered Training Organisations and key employers have worked with us to prepare our job seekers to assist them to be job-ready and trained so that they meet the needs of local businesses. Participants particularly value the variety and choice we offer in work experience and training sourced from the 200 plus community and training organisations we work with.

“This Work for the Dole placement has broadened my scope. I now want a career that will include the artistic and practical skills I’m learning here. I love it.”



“I am keen to impart my skills to job seekers and see them develop career pathways as a result of their work experience placement here.”



“The site visits were the most beneficial to enable networking and gain an appreciation of what is involved at that specific workplace.”

New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

Individual help to plan and navigate a pathway to self employment

Now in its 21st year, our NEIS program has assisted more than 1400 new business start-ups. Department of Employment Labour Market Assistance Outcomes as at March 2014 show that there are positive outcomes of 86.6%. This year, the program again attracted strong interest, with 662 enquiries about the program, 263 prospective clients attending information sessions, and 141 people participating in NEIS training.

21 Years

**1400 +
New Business
Start Ups**

**Over 5 years, 83%
still in business 1
year later**

Help given included initial training in identifying a market and researching market opportunities for a business idea; for those with potentially viable business proposals, accredited training in Certificate III in Micro Business Operations or Certificate IV in Small Business Management; help to develop a business plan; assistance during start-up and the first 12 months of business operation, including mentoring and income support through the Department of Employment.

New student numbers increased by 14.6% this year, and during the year, 103 new businesses were established.

Participants said:

“The NEIS Program showed me the ropes of small business, the manuals and assignments made me do the hard yards and the trainer and coordinator pushed me beyond my comfort zone to help me achieve what I was potentially capable of...and that was more.”

Each week in class I could see the results and that drove and motivated me to continue to study hard and complete the course. With a trainer by your side and guiding your progress how can you not be motivated to achieve in starting your small business with NEIS.

The NEIS Team offers great support if you're thinking of starting your small business. Don't wait to get started sign up and get started because it is the best feeling achieving and smashing your goals!”



“The first step is the hardest but when NEIS gets you there, there is no end to what you truly are capable of!”

William Collins Jnr.

Be Fit to Live - Personal Training

Youth Connections

Help for young people to reengage with education and employment pathways

Youth Connections reaches out to young people who are disengaged from education and employment and provides group activities, learning opportunities and individual case management to help each person to minimise the barriers they face in returning to education/training. Each young person is helped to plan a pathway and to take the first steps of the journey. Success in the program is measured by the number of participants who moved back into education or training.

In 2013-14, 200 young people across the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island participated in Youth Connections. 112 young people returned to education or training over the year.

YOUTH CENTRES

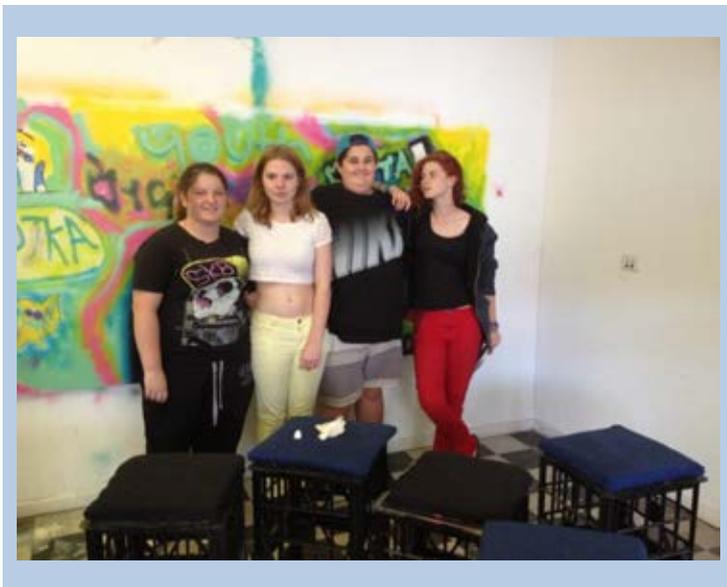
Employment Options provides dedicated Youth Centres in Mt Barker and Victor Harbor, offering a range of engaging activities, including 'hang out' days where young people can use the youth centre to socialise, while accessing the support of professional youth workers.

A core activity within the Youth Centres is a Life Skills program, designed and delivered by our youth team.

The Life Skills program has been very successful in assisting disengaged young people to build their social skills, self-esteem, confidence, and motivation. On average 8 young people attend the Youth Centres weekly.



*Cameron
Winner of the
Youth Connections National
iPod Competition*



Employment Options has taken a lead role in supporting a Youth Outreach Program. This is a concept organised by a group of specialist providers to ensure young people who live in areas where transport and services are minimal can gain access to professional services on a regular basis. The Youth Outreach Program offers professional help in; Mental Health and Wellbeing; Aboriginal Youth Support; Young Parents Group; Sexual Health; Counselling and Referral; Youth Support and links to other related services.

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Through this SA Government Program, we have continued to help young people who were struggling to stay at school by providing individual case management services. These services are provided at 3 Adelaide Hills Schools.

A culture of learning and leadership

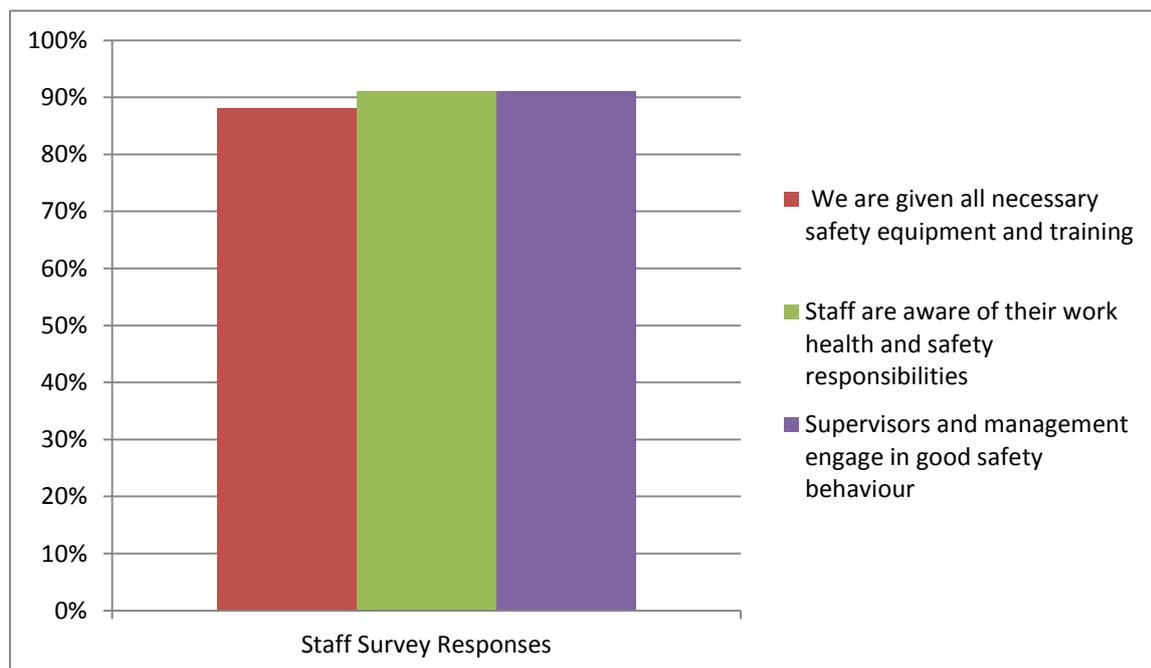
Prioritising Health and Safety

During 2013-14, Employment Options has upgraded its work health and safety management system to ensure all staff and clients are safe in our workplaces.

The system includes proactive engagement with staff on Workplace Health & Safety matters. We have done this through providing opportunities to contribute to policy and procedure development during the implementation phase and conducting regular health and safety in-services. The range of topics is varied, and examples include:

- De-escalating aggressive client behaviour
- Critical Incident Drills
- Manual task safety
- Accident and Incident Reporting
- First Aid Induction
- Fire safety
- Office workstation checks
- Safe food handling

Our staff have responded positively towards the increased health and safety focus which is reflected in the positive responses from the annual staff survey.



Increasing service quality and agility through technology

This year was a consolidation on the major project undertaken in the first half of 2013 to upgrade our main ICT infrastructure. The upgraded IT servers and associated equipment has resulted in a more reliable and stable network offering to staff and clients, in large part due to simplification of the network architecture.

The proliferation of mobile computing devices, including laptop computers, tablets and smart phones, has increased over the last year. Twenty one laptops were purchased as replacements for obsolete desktop computers, with all staff now having access to some form of mobile communications device when required.

Following the successful introduction of updated audio/visual facilities at Victor Harbor, the main training rooms at Cameron Road and the meeting room at Hack Street were also upgraded by the installation of large flat screen monitors. These have proven to be more efficient to set up and use than the cumbersome overhead projector facilities previously used.

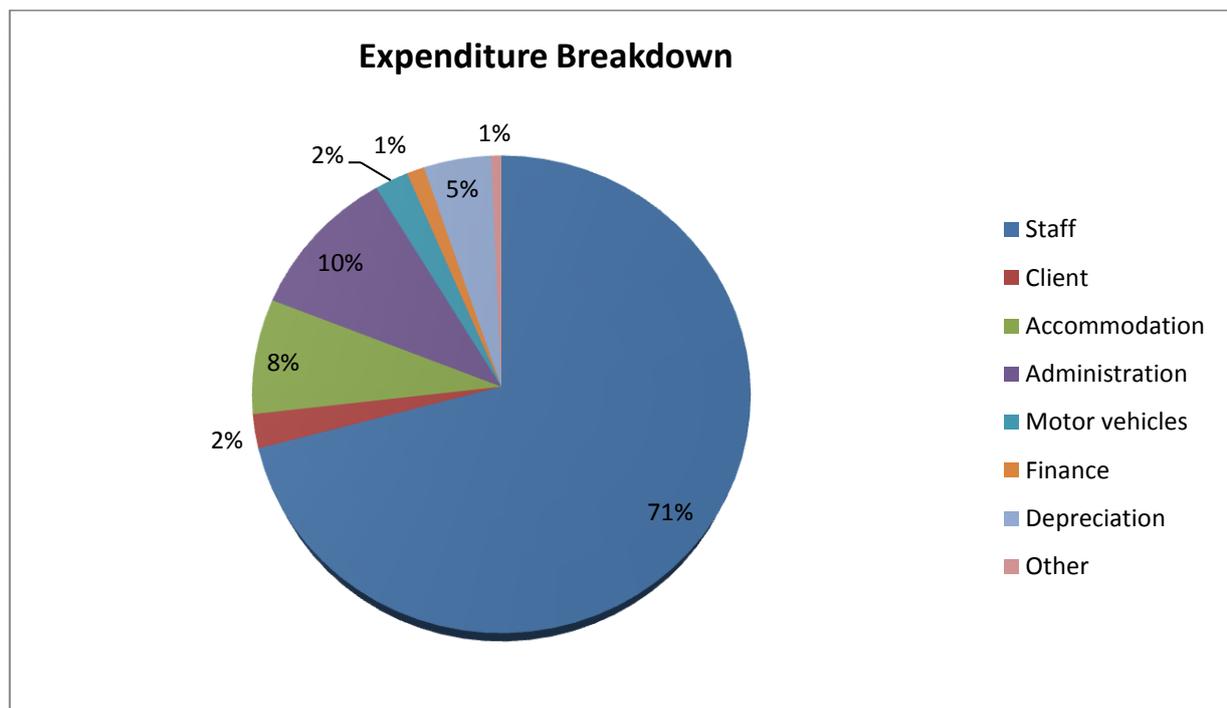
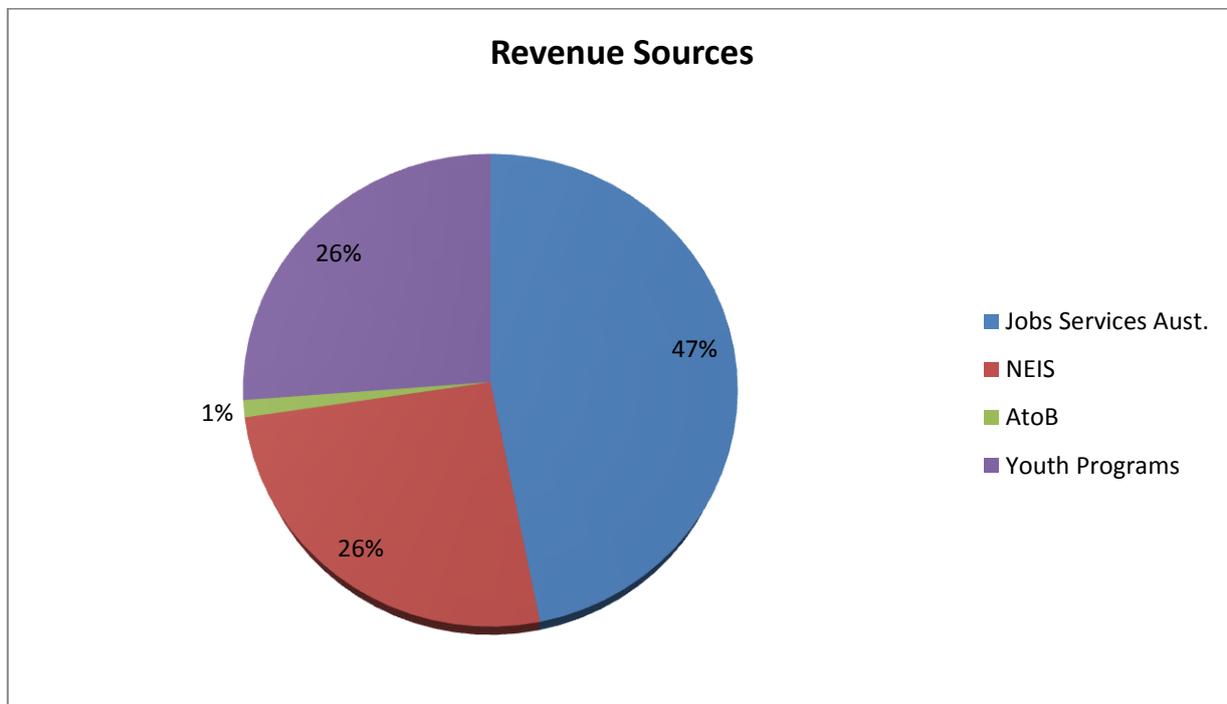
Use of our new on-line learning site using Moodle, initially used for service delivery in the NEIS program, has been expanded to include Human Resources training and induction modules.



“The new flat screen provides a better viewing platform for clients while the internet connection allows me to deliver up to date information, and to show Job Seekers how to use Job Search to upload their Profiles, Resume and search for positions correctly and in a more structured way.”



Revenue and Expenditure



Board Members

2013-14

Chairperson:	Andrew Wood
Deputy Chairperson:	Michael Coulson
Treasurer:	Trish Crosby
Public Officer:	Trish Crosby
Members:	Vivienne Barker
	Heather Trenorden
	Lesley Kennedy