

Annual Report

2018 — 2019

Our vision

To reduce the incidence and impact of road trauma.

Our purpose

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) is a not-for-profit organisation contributing to the safety and wellbeing of Victorian road users. We provide counselling and support to people affected by road trauma, and address attitudes and behaviours of road users through education.

Our values

- Caring** — We are committed to serving our clients with empathy and compassion.
- Integrity** — We display integrity, respect and dignity in all our dealings with clients, stakeholders and members of our workforce.
- Quality** — Our focus is on the people we serve, and we strive for excellence in service delivery, evaluation and continuous improvement.
- Accountability** — We are accountable for our actions in working to deliver our services and our mission.

Our history

RTSSV was founded in 1994 by a small group of people whose lives had been directly impacted by road trauma. These people understood the need for a specialist service where support could be offered to those who, like them, were suffering because of the injury or loss of a loved one on the roads. They joined with professionals working in the area to provide counselling and support. From this humble beginning, RTSSV has grown to offer state-wide counselling and support to any Victorian affected by a road incident. RTSSV now comprises a team of staff and volunteers who provide support and education services to more than 3,000 people annually.

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Chairman's Report

This past year has been one of change and achievement. It is a pleasure to be part of a wonderful organisation that is contributing to the wellbeing of the Victorian community. As a board, we understand the importance of leading an organisation whose purpose is critical to the safety and wellbeing of many Victorians.

Our people are skilled and passionate about making a difference. Thanks to their dedication and professionalism, we have achieved so much over the past year. Our relationships have strengthened, and awareness of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) and our programs is more widely recognised than before.

I want to thank Cameron Sinclair for his dedication and contribution to Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) in his role as CEO. Cameron joined us during a period of uncertainty and was a pivotal contributor to the evolution of the organisation. He was able to bring stability and a focus on our key stakeholders.

We are excited to welcome Bernadette Nugent as the new CEO. Bernadette was previously the Counselling and Support Services Manager and is bringing many years of RTSSV and counselling experience to the role. Bernadette has strong relationships with our stakeholders and has already tackled a strategic plan, a budget and the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) contract renewal. We are delighted to have Bernadette lead RTSSV into the future.

On behalf of the board, I would like to acknowledge and thank our partners: the TAC, Magistrates' Courts of Victoria, Victoria Police and VicRoads. Their partnership and friendship are invaluable, and through them, our roads are safer, and the community's wellbeing is enhanced. We also acknowledge the valued assistance of our Shine a Light on Road Safety sponsors. Through them, our reach and efficacy are greatly enhanced. We are pleased with our achievements during the past year, which have included:

- 3,855 people supported through our counselling services
- 1,580 people attending our Road Trauma Awareness Seminars
- Our eighteenth Time for Remembering ceremony at Parliament House
- Strengthening and growing our partnerships
- Renewing our three-year TAC agreement
- Achieving a surplus, despite changes in the education services environment
- Our sixth Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign, which reached more than four million Victorians.

We continue to explore new and innovative responses to the needs of people impacted by road trauma.

Our financial position continues to remain healthy and stable despite a softening in the education services market.



This year we generated a \$36,353 surplus attributable to strong management, program diversity and active community and corporate engagement strategies. Our balance sheet and cash flow are also stable.

On behalf of the board, I thank our people who advance our mission in promoting road safety and enhancing the wellbeing of people impacted by road trauma. Your work is at times challenging; your dedication, professionalism and generosity; however, create safety and wellbeing for us all. I commend you and thank you for your tireless contributions and look forward to your ongoing support over the coming year. Thank you for all you do.

Justin Flynn
Chairman



Chief Executive's Report

Set against the backdrop of the tragic loss of lives and serious injuries on our roads, Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) has continued to provide valuable counselling and education services to Victorians. We aim to make a genuine difference to Victorians impacted by these tragic incidents as well as raise awareness to prevent further suffering.

The last six months have seen significant changes within the leadership team at RTSSV. This has prompted the organisation to focus on:

- consolidating our core services
- understanding where our niche is for supporting people impacted by trauma related to a transport incident
- looking forward with a clear vision and with confidence that our services make a difference.

This year we held our sixth Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign which saw more than six hundred people attend the walk at Albert Park Lake. We are confident that we achieved our goals, which were:

- to connect people impacted by transport trauma
- to raise awareness about the impact of transport trauma in our community
- to raise well-needed funds that assist us in maintaining our services.

With the support of the TAC, we continue to hold our annual Time for Remembering ceremony. This gathering offers people impacted by road trauma the opportunity to remember loved ones who have died on our roads, reflect on how road trauma has changed their lives and connect with others who have shared similar experiences.

The first six months of 2019 have been busy for staff across the organisation. In addition to our day to day responsibilities, and in conjunction with the board, we have all worked extremely hard to develop an interim

strategic plan as well as a new fundraising and partnership plan. These two documents will provide us with a framework to progress the organisation forward. The Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy is deliberate in its message that no Victorian should lose their life on our roads. RTSSV supports this strategy, and until this vision is realised, we aim to ensure that every person in Victoria who is impacted by a transportation incident, knows where to get assistance, and has access to our services.

We would like to sincerely thank the TAC for its ongoing support, both financial and in kind. The support we received for the Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign and the Time for Remembering ceremony, has ensured these events continue to be a success in engaging the community on the critical, often devastating issue of transport-related trauma. In addition to the funding provided for the counselling service, we genuinely appreciate the extent to which the TAC publicly supports the work we do.

Thank you also to our road safety partners VicRoads, Victoria Police, Magistrates' Courts of Victoria and emergency services for partnering with RTSSV in the pursuit of zero lives lost.

We are also very grateful for the support we received from our Shine a Light on Road Safety sponsors EastLink, Maurice Blackburn Lawyers, Henry Carus Lawyers, Transurban, Zaparus Lawyers and Narva. The support you provide contributes significantly to our ability to support people impacted by road trauma.

I want to take this opportunity to thank Cameron Sinclair, former CEO, for his seven years of service to the organisation. We acknowledge and appreciate Cameron's contribution to creating a stable and cohesive workplace and the leadership he showed in moving the organisation forward. We sincerely wish Cameron all the best for the future.

Thank you also to our board. The support, guidance and the confidence you have placed in me is much appreciated.

RTSSV would not be the organisation it is without our volunteers. Our speakers share their time and their personal stories with members of the community to save lives and facilitate a deeper understanding of the impact of road trauma. The volunteers who help at head office assist us with many tasks that make an enormous difference to our day to day workload. No matter what their role, volunteers are the cornerstone of our foundations. We thank you so very much.

It has been an honour and a privilege to be appointed as the new CEO. I feel confident that my previous seven years as Manager of Counselling and Support Services has provided me with a sound understanding of the work we do, and the community we serve. My appreciation of individual staff members across the organisation has grown since my appointment, as I had had the opportunity to gain deeper insight into their roles and responsibilities. I want to thank everyone in the RTSSV team for their expertise and support, and I acknowledge their dedication and commitment.

From here, we plan to continue to deliver valuable support and counselling services and to offer education programs that prompt people to look at their attitudes and behaviours on our roads. We are aiming to grow to further suit the needs of our community in collaboration with our strong partnerships with the TAC, Victoria Police, VicRoads, and the justice system. We look towards the future to new and emergent opportunities and to strengthen our capacity, reach and expertise for the benefit of the Victorian community.

Bernadette Nugent
Chief Executive

Counselling and Support Services

Every year, more than 7,500 Victorians are killed or seriously injured on our roads. The year 2018-2019 began on a sobering note for the counselling team, with the news that our longest-serving counsellor, Lynne Irving, had herself been involved (and seriously injured) in a major road collision. This was a powerful reminder of the vital work that we do at Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) which is to offer free counselling, support and information to all Victorians impacted by road trauma.

Our clients include injured people and their carers, bereaved families, friends and colleagues, drivers, motorbike riders and passengers, cyclists, rail, bus and tram users, pedestrians, witnesses and emergency services. Every one of us, as we drive to work or travel for business or leisure, face the possibility of experiencing a road incident. Most of us, thankfully, will arrive safely. However, for those who don't, the services offered by the counselling team are a unique and invaluable resource.

Year at a Glance

Despite operating on reduced staffing levels, our small but dedicated team managed a record 2,093 new referrals and provided 3,855 total interventions, including referral intakes and counselling contacts. A total of 1,880 client contacts were provided; including 1,119 telephone sessions, followed by 511 face-to-face sessions which were conducted predominantly at our Blackburn office. Sadly, December saw the temporary closure of our Geelong Office with the resignation of Christine Rawson.

Once again, the majority of referrals, totalling 1,647, were received directly from Victoria Police via their electronic referral (VPeR) system. In February, the aftermath of a significant incident in peak hour traffic on the Monash Freeway saw a spike in demand for our services, resulting in almost two hundred and fifty referrals received within one month. As a result, the team devised a new SMS response system. All new VPeR referrals are now sent an immediate text response advising the client of the referral and providing contact and crisis phone numbers until the team can make phone contact. This system has proven to be highly effective, both in providing a

timely response to each referral and in reducing stress on staff. Once engaged with the Counselling and Support Service, clients accessed on average 3.5 sessions.

Staffing

On the 18 June 2018, counsellor Lynne Irving and her husband were involved in a horrific road collision. Lynne sustained significant and severe injuries. I am pleased to be able to say that Lynne's health has improved, and she has been on a return to work program. This incident has had an enormous impact, obviously on Lynne and her family, but also on the RTSSV team. As Lynne's colleagues and friends, we have experienced shock and distress, knowing that someone close to us was so severely injured. We have also watched Lynne's struggles to regain her health and wellbeing. This horrible incident has undoubtedly highlighted the immediate and ongoing impact of road trauma.

Mustafa Koukklan joined the counselling team shortly after Lynne was injured. Mustafa has proved himself to be a dedicated practitioner and has become a valuable member of the team.

A further change was in store with the promotion of Bernadette Nugent from Manager of Counselling and Support Services to interim CEO of the organisation. Connie Ogan and Jane Phillips stepped up as Acting Managers until the position could be advertised. Bernadette was made permanent CEO of RTSSV in May, and we would like to congratulate her on her appointment. Bernadette will be an incredible asset to the organisation.

Lynne Irving returned to our team on a graduated return to work program. Connie Ogan recently resigned as she decided it was time to move on. Connie joined the organisation in 2016 and is a highly skilled practitioner. She will be missed by both clients and staff at RTSSV. A new manager has been appointed and will commence employment at the end of August. Jane Phillips will remain in the role of Acting Manager until that time and interviews are currently being conducted to fill the available four days per week position.

In summary, it has been a challenging year for the depleted team and an illustration of the ripple effect created by the experience of road trauma and sudden injury within a workplace. We are looking forward to the appointment of new staff and a full team complement in the coming months.

Our Programs

In addition to the provision of counselling, the Counselling and Support Services team are actively involved in many other aspects of the RTSSV organisation. Team members facilitate the monthly art therapy program, attend the annual Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign and participate in strategic planning and community education opportunities. The team also respond to media requests, provide secondary consultations, network with other agencies and attend the Time for Remembering ceremony in November.

A Final Word

The counselling team would like to thank the volunteers, our fantastic Office Manager, Virginia Cummings, the education team, all other staff, our CEO and members of the board for supporting us in the work that we do. It is no small feat for a not-for-profit agency of our size to provide a statewide service of such professional calibre. I am very proud to be a part of the RTSSV team.

A final word comes from the community of clients who utilise our service, with some anonymous quotes gleaned from Client Feedback Forms (2019)

"You provide an amazing service. Thank you very much".

"RTSSV provided a safe place to talk about the incident and try to come to terms with it all".

"My workplace offered no counselling, so I was very grateful that the police put me in contact with RTSSV".

"I can't put into words how grateful I am that this service exists".

Jane Phillips

Acting Manager, Counselling and Support Services

Art Therapy

This year the Art Therapy Group used sewing techniques to create a wall hanging and table runner for use at the Time for Remembering ceremony in November.

Using a simple Japanese stitching technique (shibori) with repeated patterns, participants in the group, found predictability and calmness as the rhythms of the patterning gradually spread across the fabric. White thread on dark blue cloth brought calm regularity to the task, and it was noted that the colours were tranquil.

Group members could work on their piece at home finding quiet thoughtful moments, yet knowing they were still part of a group. As people worked, they reflected on their feelings, and their words were later captured to form haiku poetry. The fabric panels were then stitched together onto a felt landscape, creating a collaborative piece that reflected the coming together of the Group.

The completed work was titled 'The Landscape of Loss.' This felt landscape with rising hills and a mountain represents the ups and downs of life after trauma.

Barbara Joyce

Art Therapist

“

I felt completely comfortable with the counsellor from our first contact. She gave some useful strategies to use and emailed important helpful information immediately after we finished a session. I have been very impressed and supported.

“

RTSSV gives me a place to talk objectively with no judgement or distraction and with people who truly understand what I am going through.

“

I would not have made it through everything without RTSSV help. Thank you.

“

Phone counselling was very professional, compassionate, and a key factor in faster and more complete recovery. Thank you!

“

I have found my time with RTSSV extremely helpful. Their knowledge and expertise around road trauma specifically have made me feel safe and secure exploring my feelings relating to the accident.

Jane Phillips

Acting Manager, Counselling and Support Services



“

In 1991, my father was involved in a serious road collision and sustained lifelong injuries. I wish RTSSV had been available to my family at that time and applaud the efforts of the people who founded the service.

A chance meeting with Bernadette Nugent at a 2014 regional grief training day in Shepparton has led to my current role as Counsellor and Acting Manager, Counselling and Support Services with Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV). I was so impressed by Bernadette's presentation and the service provided by RTSSV, that I filed her contact information away for future reference. Three years later, my husband and I made a tree change from Wangaratta to the Yarra Valley and to my absolute delight, a position became available with the RTSSV counselling team.

I have now been part of the counselling team for two years. I feel privileged every day to work within this very worthy and necessary organisation and to have provided information and support to hundreds of traumatised Victorians and their families. My nursing background, coupled with a degree in psychology and accreditation in grief counselling, has enabled me to provide specialised counselling in response to traumatic circumstances. I am grateful to my fellow counsellors, who bring a richness of experience and skill to the team and are a source of mutual support within a very challenging professional role.

In 1991, my father was involved in a serious road collision and sustained lifelong injuries. I wish RTSSV had been available to my family at that time and applaud the efforts of the people who founded the service.

I am honoured to be able to provide ongoing information, counselling and support to other Victorians who have experienced the sudden chaos and distress created by the experience of road trauma. I am also proud to be a small part of the preventative and educative work provided by RTSSV, which aims to address the attitudes and behaviours of road users.

I look forward to a reduction in the road toll, to safer roads and communities and to the ongoing contribution of this wonderful, vibrant, not-for-profit organisation and the people who make it happen.

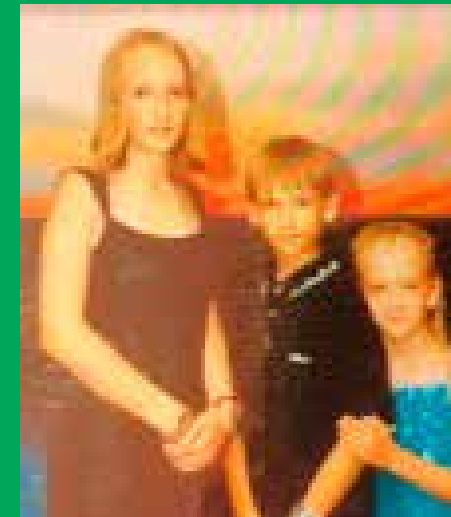
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The Art Therapy Group brings together people who have been impacted by road trauma and allows for creative self-expression in a safe and nurturing environment.



Pauline McLeod

Counselling Client



My grief journey began on 13 June 2003.

This was the day my world changed forever when my eldest daughter Jessica lost her life after the vehicle she was a passenger in lost control and collided with a tree. Jessica, in Year 11, had attended a classmate's funeral that day and after such a sad day sought company and distraction with her boyfriend and his mates that evening. While others were injured that night, she was the single fatality. She was sixteen years old.

I could not make sense of the world. It was not the order of things for a parent to outlive their child. As much as I wanted to cocoon myself away from the world with my memories and Jessica's things, I could not; my two younger children needed their mother to navigate our devastated world and new normal.

I did not become aware of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) until March 2008. I had previously contacted the TAC for assistance but was told to find a psychologist or counsellor myself. I tried that, but my experience was less than ideal as I was simply given medication and told that 'I would get over it' and 'time heals all wounds'. Eventually, in desperation, I did my own research, located RTSSV and saw Lynne Irving on 11 March 2008. I was dumbfounded to later learn that this organisation was affiliated with the TAC.

For the first three months I saw Lynne weekly, there was never judgement or expectation, simply empathy and understanding that our lives were changed forever. During our sessions together, Lynne became aware that in the time between Jessica's death and my first visit, the only thing that had given me any sense of release was writing, particularly poetry. Lynne encouraged me in this and later asked me to contribute to the Australian Centre for Grief and Bereavement's book of poetry Rememberings. In October 2008, I was fortunate enough to participate in filming Jessica's Story for the TAC's car crash display in Federation Square. The best thing to come from this was raising the profile of RTSSV and their incredible work.

My sessions became fortnightly then on an as-needed basis, usually around significant dates. During this time, I was also involved in planning and information sessions for bereaved parents and contributed another poem for the second edition of Rememberings.

On the tenth anniversary in 2013, the amazing support was still available. These sessions were invaluable and as though no time at all had passed. This was the year Fiona Reidy interviewed other bereaved mothers and myself for her book Weeping Woman.

It is significant that I am writing this piece now as I have again needed to speak with Lynne. I was overwhelmed on 13 June 2019 when I realised Jessica has been absent from our lives for as long as she was a part of us. She would have been thirty-two years old on 5 January 2019.

It is so important to know that RTSSV is available at all stages through the minefield that is this journey of grief. Their support takes many forms and is offered readily for as long and as often as each person's experience requires, as you can be sure that our journeys will not be the same. We are given the knowledge that others before us have survived. No, we don't recover, but the detour we have been forced to take on our life journey will eventually return us to a place that allows us to continue with some semblance of normality.

I am by no means an expert in this field, just another person forced in this direction by circumstances beyond my control. I have come to realise that I will survive, I will never be the same and I will always remember the daughter I have lost.

**This journey of grief
Is also a journey of me
I know I am no longer the
person I may once have been
My future will not be the one it
may once have been
But I can hold on to the
knowledge that my past will
always be what it was
This is the constant of my life
This is where you will always be**

Education Services

Sharing Stories for Cultural Change

“Tell me the facts and I’ll learn. Tell me the truth and I’ll believe. But tell me a story and it will live in my heart forever”. Native American proverb.

The goal with our education programs at Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) is to influence and motivate our participants to change attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and behaviour. We see this happen through the stories that are told and through these, the creation of memorable moments that last in the participants’ minds.

Stories give us an emotional, whole-brain experience that is different to hearing facts and statistics. We become connected at an emotional level, which is powerful because people can relate and empathise.

Our participants can put themselves in that situation, self-reflect and be empowered to change their own story. We see this ‘ah-ha’ moment during a session when the realisation becomes apparent; a story is shared and goes beyond the session. We often hear from parents, partners, sons, daughters and employers, of the impact a session has had on the attendee.

One such story involves a mother, who had picked up her son from a session said, ‘he couldn’t stop talking all the way home’; that on hearing the personal account of the volunteer, had a very different understanding of his behaviour and was going to change his impact statement as a result.

Road Trauma Awareness Seminar Program (RTAS) - turning stories into action

Participants in the RTAS program bring a diversity of backgrounds and offences, which creates conversations for learning, understanding of consequences and a sense of empathy, to motivate attitude and change behaviour. This feedback comes from participants during the RTAS sessions and via the program’s pre and post surveys and six-monthly follow up phone evaluations.

Volunteers who speak at the RTAS program want to make a difference by bringing meaning to a serious road incident that has impacted them. This restorative justice approach is unique to other programs being offered to traffic offenders across Victoria, in that it gives

the offending participants an insight into the potential impact and consequences to others of their driving behaviours.

After hearing the stories and the impact of road trauma, many participants begin to reveal their shame and guilt (the underlying causes of their behaviour) and start to build a clearer understanding of their responsibility to keep themselves and others safe on the roads.

The RTAS program assists participants, volunteer speakers and the community by educating participants to become safer and more responsible road users. By first giving them a good reason to change their attitudes, the program can then assist them in planning changes to their driving behaviours.

Updates from the Regions Barwon South West

“Nearly everyone I talk to firmly believes in our message of road safety awareness. We have to keep delivering that message, so it is heard. What I’m hoping for is that local drivers think about what they’re doing behind the wheel, every time they get behind the wheel.” Rhys Tate.

Some of the highlights from Barwon South West over the past year include:

- Integration of RTSSV into Victoria Polices’ Looking After Our Mates VCE road safety seminars (Warrnambool and Portland)
- One of our local volunteers featured in a Herald Sun road safety article, with lots of coverage also in The Warrnambool Standard
- Drive To Learn seminars were held at the Youth Justice Centre, Geelong
- A \$2,500 grant was received from the Rotary Club of Warrnambool East for road safety projects
- Integration with local (Victoria Police) SafePL8 Day and inclusion on the Planning Committee.

North West Metro

“It’s been a big twelve months with the team putting in a lot of hard work.” Karen Robinson

Over the last financial year, the North West Metro region has been very proactive in helping individuals and community groups appreciate the importance of road safety.

Through the Road Trauma Awareness Seminar education programs, presentations, community road safety forums and school presentations, our dedicated facilitators and volunteer speakers have been able to help people appreciate the impact road trauma has on all members of the community. In turn, the team’s expertise has grown and valuable relationships have developed between facilitators and the volunteer speakers who deliver RTAS. Thus, the facilitators are supported during the delivery of the programs but are also supporting participants in being able to rethink their driver behaviour.

Some of the standouts have been:

- Presenting at the Volunteering Victoria’s State Conference
- Meeting with Magistrates to inform them of our education programs and being part of the Melbourne Magistrate’s Court Open Day
- Participating in Hume City Council pop-up volunteering information events
- Road safety presentations on learners permits at St Albans Migrant Resource Centre for migrant groups
- Attendance at Moreland and Hume City Council Volunteer Coordinators meetings
- Presenting at Hume City Council’s Road Safety Forum for the Indian Cohort and at Coolaroo Justice Service Centre.

South East Metro

“Part of the reason I keep facilitating is in the hope that no person, family, emergency service worker, carer, doctor, counsellor or lawyer (the list goes on), will be affected by the aftermath of road trauma. When a participant who made a wrong choice with serious consequences, approaches me after a seminar and understands the full ramifications of his or her actions; when they have the very same hope, then I know we are touching people and creating that positive ripple.” Gillian Scaduto

The first part of 2019 commenced with regrouping of volunteers and staff with an informal BBQ. This provided an opportunity for volunteers to have some peer support within their region; to connect and share with the facilitators. Offering that space is paramount to the wellbeing of our volunteers and facilitators who provide support during and after Road Trauma Awareness Seminars.

A significant part of the RTAS program is to meet with volunteers and triage what area of volunteering best suits them. We need to ensure that they will benefit from every stage of the process.

Every one of our volunteers has a story of road trauma. One participant in an RTAS (who had caused a serious injury), approached us after a seminar to volunteer. He had connections within a soccer league and wished to assist with rolling out our message to the players and clubs. During the process, it became evident that it was not the right time for him and the project has been put on hold. He subsequently donated \$5,000 towards RTSSV to continue our valuable work within the community.

One highlight was being invited to be part of the IMPACT project through the Local Learning Employment Network and the Law Foundation. It was a different experience speaking with younger people who had just commenced driving or were about to begin. The Project offered us valuable input as an organisation, linking us to other partners. More importantly, we were able to deliver our road safety message to the broader community.

Looking Forward

I will continue to lead an inspiring team that is excitingly diverse and brings a comprehensive set of skills, experience and knowledge to each program and activity we deliver across Victoria. We do this with the many challenges that arise as a small not-for-profit with a significant geographical distance to cover.

Alongside our facilitators and volunteer speakers, we will continue to share compelling stories that lead and influence people in ways that help them to understand, enable them to remember and inspire them to act. Through storytelling, we will influence ongoing cultural change in our communities and create safer drivers.

I feel privileged working with such a dedicated, passionate and skilled team of professionals and volunteers who continue to inspire me daily. The courage to be vulnerable can alter the way we all think, feel and act, and this can create a significant change in people.

Chris Harrison
Manager, Education Services

“

Excellent course with lots of info and content - should be mandatory. Made me more aware of how I drive and the impact of my decisions on other people.

“

A real eye-opener - strongly believe that all kids should do this course before they drive. I wish I had done this seminar before I started driving.

“

The program brings home to you how serious incidents can happen so easily. Having all the stories and information in a condensed time really made me think.

“

Thank you. These seminars are beneficial and the follow-up phone calls need to occur every six months as a good reminder; keeps it fresh in the mind and brings awareness to the reason why I attended in the first place.

“

The seminar was excellent and should be mandated for all drivers - a huge eye-opener. I’d been to prison and had never attended a course prior and this; it is the best course that I have attended and I am 53.

Joff Van Ek

Volunteer



My journey with road trauma began when my father was killed in a vehicle collision seventeen years ago. It was the toughest thing I have ever had to deal with and as a teenager, I did not know where to turn for help. School life was tough and I found that most students and teachers had limited exposure and education on road trauma and how to deal with those affected by it.

After my dad's collision, it became clear to me what my career path was going to be. I was fortunate to become a firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) in Melbourne at the age of twenty. Now a Station Officer with the MFB, I have spent my whole adult life responding to road trauma in my road rescue and emergency medical response roles. Being on the frontline of many collisions is only a small part though. Through my job, I have had some fantastic opportunities to travel, to research and to experience how other countries are responding to vehicle collisions and how they are improving trauma patient outcomes.

Everyone has their unique way of dealing with the loss of a loved one and I chose to dedicate my life to helping others impacted by road trauma.

This, in turn, formed part of my healing process. For many years I wondered how members of the public dealt with road trauma and that's when I stumbled across Road Trauma Support Service Victoria (RTSSV) (after speaking with some of the Grampians volunteer emergency services speakers).

One of the things I have been most impressed with that has drawn me towards RTSSV, is the people and what they stand for. This is an organisation that strives on all levels to continually support those in our community who have suffered terrible loss or witnessed horrific events. To assist those in their time of need is one thing, but to educate those who have survived or who may have been the cause of a collision, is a noble gesture. It takes a fantastic group of humans to not be judgemental of individuals and their situation, instead focusing on helping them to not offend again. The can-do attitude and empathy of all the speakers are inspirational and should be commended.

In recent times I have seen a positive shift towards how the community tackles mental health; in particular, post-traumatic stress disorder.

This has been a significant development for both first responders and members of the public, in knowing they can reach out for help.

The work of RTSSV in this setting will continue to grow as the stigma of receiving help becomes lessened and people are supported.

The take-home road safety message I want individuals to have is this - it isn't just about you. The choices we make can have everlasting effects on families, friends, first responders and the community. Next time you get into a vehicle, take a few seconds to think about that and proceed to make good choices on our roads.

In the next year, I want to be involved more in promoting the great work of RTSSV. I want to look more closely at how we can engage different groups within the community; to educate and to reduce the level of road trauma.

Together we can grow, teach, understand and support RTSSV, to assist those in need should they ever be touched by road trauma.

Alex Eleftheriou

Volunteer



My name is Alex Paul Eleftheriou, and I am honoured to have been involved with such a great network like Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) for just under a year.

I had a motorcycle crash when I was seventeen years old, on the way home from a friend's place. I had decided to take a shortcut through a petrol station to avoid one red light. I was only 500metres from my home in West Sunshine, Melbourne and was collected by an oncoming vehicle that I failed to see. That has now left me a person with quadriplegia, paralysed from the neck down.

I remember after recovering from all my injuries, the overwhelming feeling of utter hopelessness was incomprehensible; simply due to the fact I was not changing physically. However, I had to come to terms with what could be the rest of my life as an individual in a wheelchair.

I soon came to understand my situation and what it meant to be a quadriplegic and along with the many hurdles that would come with the territory. However, no matter what, I knew I would prosper as a public speaker and so my occupational therapist linked me up with RTSSV.

I remember first meeting up with Karen Robinson from RTSSV at my local café, not knowing what to expect. All I knew was that my destiny was aligning with the stars as she told me her personal story of loss, but also her triumph. Immediately I saw myself doing the same; I had found an avenue in which I could now give back; still at such a young age (twenty-three); and so my journey began.

My first experience with RTSSV was to sit in a seminar and overlook the proceedings that took place. I was immediately hooked as I listened to the volunteer speakers share their stories. To see the offenders' ears perk up and listen to every word that was being said; from the most serious of offenders to first-timers; led me to know this is what I wanted to do to; even me saying a few words at the end of the seminar.

A highlight with RTSSV would have to be appearing in front of the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) alongside Bernadette Nugent, CEO not only to represent RTSSV but also to speak to the government body that has been supporting me since I was seventeen. I love two birds with one stone, as that's precisely what it was and was an absolute honour.

Road safety is of utmost importance as we get further into the year. Since getting involved with RTSSV, I now keep an eye on the statistics. It's so sad to see the road toll not decrease, but do the exact opposite and only increase; a higher percentage being motorcyclists. This is something that resonates very closely with me, so my message for all is "be careful, be cautious, be alert and ultra-aware; be attentive both behind the wheel and throttle, but most of all be SAFE!"

I plan to be involved with RTSSV for the long run. I know at my young age, both RTSSV and I are going to achieve great things. We are also going to impact many lives, changing them one at a time. I live for the work we do and I love every seminar I attend, hopeful that I can change someone's, if not all the attendee's perspective, to create a better, safer future for all those behind both wheel and throttle.

Lyn Bennett

Regional Coordinator

I am privileged being in the role of Gippsland Regional Coordinator of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) where I am provided with the opportunity to meet a vast range of people, including:

- State and local government representatives
- First responders such as the SES, CFA, Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria
- Road safety committees members
- Mentors in the L2P program
- VicRoads staff
- Regional Roads Victoria staff
- Community Corrections officers
- Magistrates
- Court registrars and legal practitioners.

However, central to my role is working with our volunteers. They demonstrate fantastic strength and courage to share their stories with traffic offenders and the broader community, in the hope they will be able to prevent other families from enduring what they are going through.

This vast network of individuals and organisations has a common goal – to reduce road trauma.

This is not an easy task. The size of Gippsland with its vast natural attractions encompasses a geographical area of 41,556 square kilometres and extends from the NSW border to the rapidly growing population of Greater Melbourne. Travel is a constant in this role and can quickly eat up my time. However, it is worthwhile, as nothing replaces meeting people face-to-face and spreading the word of the services that RTSSV provides.



One such meeting resulted in a large donation from the Leongatha and District Community Foundation, which will make a massive difference in the local area as it will enable more people to connect with RTSSV.

The people I meet reinforces the reasons that first attracted me to working for RTSSV - I wanted to make a difference. I had been a careers counsellor working with young people and it is devastating to go to a Year 11 or Year 12 student's funeral. My job was to help them to transition into their careers, not to attend their funeral. At RTSSV, we talk about the ripple effect and how road trauma impacts so many people; it goes on and on. I was part of that ripple effect.

There were times when I would be advising a young person of their post VCE options, knowing full well that they were heading to incarceration as a result of culpable driving. In this role, I can do my bit to try to make young people realise that tragedy can strike anyone. You don't have to be a bad person. It is a matter of making the wrong choice at that particular time, whether it be choosing to drink and drive, choosing to speed, or choosing to use the phone while driving.

This year I have facilitated Road Trauma Awareness Seminars (RTAS) at Phillip Island and have had the support of Marisca Seinen who facilitated RTAS in Traralgon and Bairnsdale. I wish Marisca all the best in her future endeavours. Bruce Mapperson has joined RTSSV as a facilitator and has recently delivered RTAS in Traralgon and Bairnsdale, as well as Yallourn North Junior Football and Netball Club.

The Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign, started in tragedy in the Bass Coast area with the fatality of a young man and serious injury to his brother. They were on their way to play in a football match. Bass Coast Shire Council was incredibly supportive, and we were able to work together to assist the community. Although it occurred in my local area, the impact has rippled across junior sporting clubs throughout Gippsland.

I am now connected to many local Facebook groups and use them as a way of informing the community of our counselling and education services. Facebook is also a way for people to message me directly and has led to new contacts, including first responders and volunteers.

As we move into the new year, my road safety message is to stay alert. It is simple but covers so many areas. Stay alert to the road conditions; whether a large truck is coming towards you, suddenly coming across a farmer's slow tractor, travelling on unfamiliar roads, listening to podcasts, taking Bluetooth phone calls, or merely taking in the view.

I look forward to developing further programs across the region and can see significant opportunities to connect with people in a wide range of community settings.



Peter Carolan

Facilitator

700 faces going places; a reflection from a Road Trauma Awareness Seminar (RTAS) program facilitator.

For me (pictured here in my work-gear as a recent retiree) the transition from a career in health promotion to a RTAS facilitator in 2013, has involved navigating through many highs and lows.

These are etched in the 700 faces of the participants attending RTAS (Moorabbin area) over six years. Some are repeat traffic offenders who at arrival, their body-language shouts they do not wish to be 'here'. Some are on court orders and as reluctant conscripts, have begrudgingly surrendered two and a half hours of their day to attend. As the RTAS commences, there can be an air of bad grace about the place. For me, this is indeed a worry; very much a low point. Even at the early stage of the RTAS, one often feels the concern of those participants who are weighed down with guilt. What is going through my mind, is how best can we all move ahead and try something beautiful with our lives?

Therefore, a facilitator must dig deep to develop and convey a palpable sense of mutual trust within the group. I think it is our task to gradually reveal to each individual our honest belief in them, a fervent belief in their potential to change. I hope that through a personal welcome, each individual will recognise that the two and a half hours ahead is about teamwork; about sharing our weaknesses and confronting the consequences. Inevitably the unexpected happens (the absolute dread of all facilitators), like the recent occasion when I discovered a non-English speaking couple with their interpreter in attendance.

It was necessary to find a way to keep everyone engaged, at the same time ensuring the non-English speaking person (who had brought along his wife for extra support) felt welcome and understood the importance of being involved.

Fortunately, the RTAS format is cleverly designed. There is enough flexibility for a little ad-hoc role-play to ensure participants fully grasp the implications of personal choices and decisions. The variety of group activities is what makes RTAS a unique learning experience and so often an enjoyable one, despite the seriousness of the subject.

To help steer the RTAS group in the right direction, on this occasion, I used role-play and appointed the non-English speaking person as chef of a Chinese restaurant, with the interpreter and wife his apprentices. The remainder of the participants assumed roles as customers who had to choose a quick takeaway from the chef's simple menu of:

1. fried rice
2. sweet and sour pork
3. dumplings.

In this way, an impromptu exercise created a sense of togetherness, gently opening a door for each participant to explore in some detail his or her recent journey. Involved were a range of choices and decisions, including the identification of bad on-the-road choices.

I feel strongly that a successful RTAS is only possible after each participant agrees to take ownership of his or her choices and accepts responsibility for the consequences. Without any feeling or expression of responsibility towards others on the road, there is no reason for RTAS participants to work harmoniously to a common goal, e.g., towards zero.

Despite the early air of bad grace about the place, things do improve, and I am convinced of the reason. There is another face in each RTAS; the face of the volunteer, with a distinctive air of good grace. Here was a person who had been impacted through road trauma with the loss of a loved one. Additionally, someone from emergency services was also present to share their story as a first responder for road rescue and recovery.

We had reached the pivotal moment of impact; RTAS delivered one final and compelling message which touched the hearts of all those present. In spite of all the personal grief and chaos, here was a special person, loving and humble, willing not to judge or condemn but simply to share. This is humanity's high point; it demands an honest response from everyone present.

In public health, it is recognised that a strong sense of belonging is a crucial indicator for a healthy society. I believe there is an opportunity for every road-user to foster this sense of belonging on our roads. A good start for me in the coming year might be to acknowledge others for giving way as necessary, e.g., the bus driver who retains grip of the steering wheel but signals to the driver who slowed to give way; or the truckie who gestures 'thanks' to the P-plater who enables a timely lane change manoeuvre; or the child, without releasing the clutch of the handlebars, manages a nod of the head or raises one hand to thank the motorist who braked at the pedestrian crossing.

These tiny gestures might give me a sense of calm and help create a sense of belonging in a crowded space; a space which is not mine nor yours, but ours.

The wave can be encouraged by community leaders and embraced by road-users: it could become a tangible sign of our entire community now appreciating this unique public space, our road.

The wave may prove itself to be a potent antidote against the horrors of aggression and result in a healthy sense of belonging for all of us in 2020: it may remind us all about the TAC's "Towards Zero", with 700 faces now happily going different places.

Padhraic Stone

Volunteer

I was involved in a road collision in Queensland in October 2010. After the trauma, I suffered alone physically and mentally with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It was a horrific, isolating experience.

Since my involvement in trauma, I've always wanted to do something in this area and be of help to others in whatever capacity I can, so they don't have to go through what I did. I've also wanted to do some volunteering with a not-for-profit as a way to give back to the community. So when I was actively looking for a volunteering role and found an ad for Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV), it was a perfect fit for me.

A more accurate identifying terminology of "car accident" is road trauma - car accident minimises the impact it has on those who are affected. Working with RTSSV has meant a lot to me; it has given me another perspective on road trauma and its impact. Meeting people who have also suffered from road trauma was great for me; they understand what it's like and they can relate in a way a person who hasn't suffered trauma can't.

It's also great to know that the work I have done and taken part in has helped reach people who may not have known about RTSSV.

My achievements working with RTSSV for the year have been; getting Google analytics set up on the RTSSV website, securing Google ads grants and being involved in and supporting Bronwyn Saville, Marketing and Communications Coordinator and the team in their Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign.

My highlight was seeing my suggestion of getting Jane's son, Max and partner Lee, to plug RTSSV's Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign on their Youtube channel Max and Lee. The post reached an audience of over 250,000, for the price of two t-shirts; which was fantastic.

It's a weird thing to say, but I always knew I was fortunate with my road trauma, in that everyone lived and I walked away. Working with RTSSV and meeting others made me realise at a deeper level, just how incredibly lucky I am.



Volunteer Services



Volunteer services also extend to fundraising, marketing and administration support, including governance as board members. Our volunteers are our most valuable resource and come from all walks of life.



This year we celebrate 25 years as an organisation focused on road safety and supporting those impacted by road trauma.

One of the keys to our success over the past year and the past 25 years is the contribution of our volunteers. Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) would cease to exist without the commitment and generosity of our volunteers.

Why do people volunteer? They volunteer to make a difference. Volunteering builds bonds, creates friendships and embraces passions. Volunteers all have one thing in common - they are passionate about reducing the impact and incidence of road trauma.

The primary role of our volunteers has been through speaking engagements at our Road Trauma Awareness Seminars (RTAS).

Our volunteers provide an incredibly powerful interaction with their audience, talking personally about how road trauma has impacted their lives. Their presence lends power and reality that facts and figures alone could not achieve.

Volunteer services also extend to fundraising, marketing and administration support, including governance as board members. Our volunteers are our most valuable resource and come from all walks of life.

Thank you. You are remarkable; you are courageous. We are privileged that you have chosen us. We are very proud to have you with us, and Victorian roads are safer because of you.

Virginia Cummings
Office Manager

Volunteers

Irene Ackland — Peter Aldersea — Xander Alpherts — Yeksan Altun — Danny Anderson — Matthew Armour — Christian Ashby — Roger Astell — Joyce Ball — Richard Ballard — Samantha Barker — Alistair Barrett — Kerry Bayliss — Les Beechey — Phillip Behan — Adrian Benson — Diana Billingsley — Kellie Bishop — Barb Bleicher — Leigh Booth — Narelle Bowden — Robin Bowerman — Wendy Bowler — Andy Calder — Robert Carter — Mark Cartledge — Carolyn Cole—Sinclair — Natasha Cook — Leonie Cooke — Simon Coverley — Darryl Crowley — Luke Cupitt — Sam Curry — Francine Davy — Jan Dilworth — Melinda Dine — Andrew Downs — Rosalie Dows — John Dows — Kate Drain-Parkin — Glenn Dunn — Kajol Kate Eagle — Alex Eleftheriou — Robert Ewing — Cathy Farrelly — Cristine Feely — Wilma Felton — Melissa Felton — Sandra Fenske — Lorraine Ferguson — Justin Flynn — Roni Forai — Kristy French — Gary Frost — Victor Gartside — Adrian Gervasoni — Tracey Gervasoni — Lynne Glennon — Jessica Glew — Donna Grace — Catherine Gracias — Robyn Greening — Susan Hansford — Gemma Hargreaves — Maria Harkins — Geraldine Harley — Russell Harley — Irene Harrington OAM — Michael Hellwege — Merryn Henderson — Jayson Hirt — Bill Hodges — Ashleigh Hoekstra — Paul Illman — Shane Jayasinghe — Anthony Johns — Rosie Johnston — Jo Keep — Paul Kefford — Melanie King — Anna Kirpichnikov — Andrew Knowles — Kat Kranz — Stefanie Krikis — Tanya Lando — Christine Latimer — Stuart Le Grand — Caitlin Little — Christine Mair — Manny Marchesin — Dale McIvor — Julie Anne Metaxotos — Sally Millar — Graham Milner — Troy Milner — Stuart Morris — Mark Musgrave — Naghmeh Nasiri — Jason Naumann — Tim Nolan — Gail Noonan — Kerry Ann Norton — Elodie Nugent — Angela Nuss — Carmel O'Brien — Paul O'Dwyer — Alicia Omoigui — Karina Osgood — Kristine Papworth — Chris Parkin — Donna Parsons — Graeme Petrie — Kevin Pettit — Ulrike Pfisterer — Amanda Pollard — Matthew Pope — Lynda Pottage — Rebbecca Power — Sherry Pratt — Ghadir Razuki — Daniel Reader — Teathloach Mach Reath — Carole Reid — Coral Robertson — Karen Robinson — Mark Robinson — Paul Sabo — Denise Sandford — Sabrina Sedano — Giovanna Sica — Karen Smith — Bernie Stanley — Natalie Stanway — Tara Stark — Padhraic Stone — Reg Stott — Jeanette Suhr OAM — Damian Sumner — Katrina Sumner — Rhys Thomas — Joel Thompson — James Thompson — Peter Thomson — Jessica Todd — Ben Trotter — Vincent Tu — Fiona Umbers — Yvonne Upton — Merryn Wallace — Richard Watkins — Ingrid Williams — Martin Wrangle — Vaughan Wright.

Shine a Light on Road Safety

Shine a Light on Road Safety 2019 took place over six days from Sunday 5 to Friday 10 May 2019, successfully bringing the community together to advocate for safer roads; letting people know about our services and raising funds to support those impacted by road trauma.

The campaign achieved:

- An estimated overall reach of four million people
- Two million people engaged through social media
- Two million + motorists reached via roadside Visual Messaging System (VMS)
- 600+ people at the Albert Park Lake community walk
- 250k reach via corporate involvement

Our Community

"We all want zero road deaths."

People are at the heart of our Shine a Light on Road Safety campaign. Every year thousands of Victorians devote personal and professional time to shining a light on why road safety is so important. We are incredibly thankful to all our supporters and volunteers who bravely speak up about road safety; their stories motivate us to continue to work towards zero.

Walking Together

"It's a comfort to know that I'm not alone."

More than six hundred people attended our annual community walk at Albert Park Lake on Sunday, 5 May 2019. The Minister for Roads and Minister for Road Safety and the TAC Jaala Pulford attended, as did Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner Stephen Leane, who led the walk around the lake.

It was great to see people at the walk, but it's tragic to know that road trauma has impacted such a large community. We know that it makes a difference being part of a community who cares, and we're very grateful to everyone who reached out to support each other.

Our Supporters

We recognise and thank our sponsors for their ongoing support of our work, including:

- EastLink
- Maurice Blackburn Lawyers
- Henry Carus Lawyers
- Narva
- Transurban
- Zaparas Lawyers

We are also very grateful for the support of the Victorian Government, Victoria Police, the Transport Accident Commission, VicRoads, Ambulance Victoria, CFA, MFB and the SES.

Social Engagement

Our social media resources enable individuals and organisations to get involved at little to no cost. Through social media platforms, we have created a toolkit that encourages the community to spread road safety messages and to speak up about why road safety matters.

We produced 48 social media posts to highlight various road safety issues during the campaign. These, along with other visual resources, were shared extensively via Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. Our most popular post had 100,000 impressions.

Headlights

"Together, we can make a difference."

On Friday 10 May 2019 more than two million motorists saw the message to turn on their headlights for road safety along major VicRoads, Linkt and EastLink roads and tollways.

Illuminations

Shine a Light on Road Safety is part of National Road Safety Week and the United Nations Week of Road Safety.

In the first week of May each year, significant landmarks around the world are illuminated in yellow for road safety. Victoria landmarks illuminated for road safety included:

- Archie Graham Community Centre, Warrnambool
- Ballarat Town Hall, City of Ballarat
- Bolte Bridge and sound tube, Linkt
- Box Hill Town Hall, City of Whitehorse
- Catenary lighting at the intersection of Moorabool and Malop Streets, City of Geelong
- CBD Water Tower in Wodonga
- Clocktower Moonee Ponds, Moonee Valley City Council
- Fletcher Jones Silver Ball, Warrnambool
- Flytower, Frankston Arts Centre
- GrainCorp, Donald
- M80 Ring Road and M2 Tullamarine Freeway Interchange Wall
- Malvern Town Hall, City of Stonnington
- Melbourne Star
- Melbourne Town Hall, City of Melbourne
- Royal Exhibition Buildings
- The Transport Accident Commission building, Geelong.

Road Safety Wishes

Every year we ask Victorians to tell us their road safety wishes. In 2019 we received hundreds of responses. Thank you to everyone who took the time to send us a message, your thoughts and ideas are appreciated.

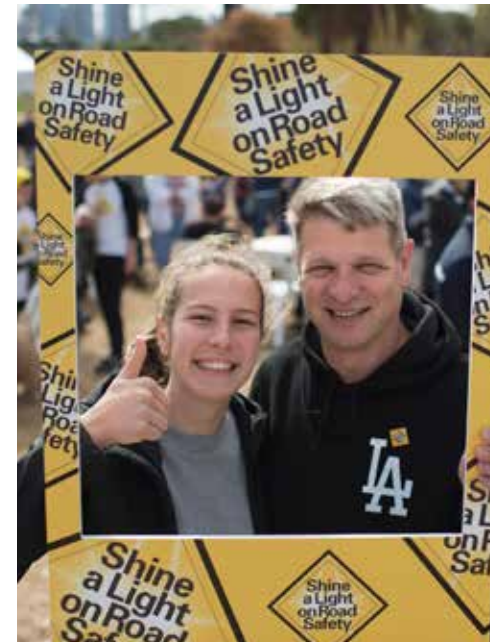
Fundraising

As a registered charity, we rely on community support to continue our work. This year the campaign raised \$45,846; a fantastic amount that will go a long way in helping us support people impacted by road trauma.

Dates for 2020

- Walk: Albert Park Lake, Sunday 3 May 2020
- Headlights: Friday 8 May 2020
- Illuminations: Monday 4 May - Sunday 10 May 2020.





Time for Remembering

This year was our eighteenth annual Time for Remembering ceremony. Held on the third Sunday in November in Queen’s Hall at Parliament House, Melbourne, Time for Remembering coincides with the United Nations World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims. It is an occasion where people can come together to commemorate the lives of loved ones lost and those injured on our roads; a day to give thanks for those who survived and to pay tribute to all who work tirelessly to reduce the road toll.

Jeanette Suhr OAM (one of the founders of RTSSV), opened the ceremony by lighting a candle of remembrance. The Hon. Luke Donnellan shared a message on behalf of the government, and we thank the Transport Accident Commission for its ongoing support of our Time for Remembering ceremony. Melinda Dine bravely shared her personal road trauma story.

We are very grateful to everyone who participated in this important event and thank:

- Reverend Andy Calder, Disability Inclusion, Uniting Church Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
- Chief Magistrate Peter Lauritsen, Magistrates’ Court of Victoria
- Detective Inspector Stuart McGregor, Victoria Police
- Joanne van Berkel, Senior Manager: Trauma, Lodgement and Early Support, Transport Accident Commission
- Connie Ogan, Counsellor, RTSSV
- Dr Christine Durham, RTSSV Supporter
- Rebecca Paton, RTSSV Volunteer
- Barbara Joyce and the Art Therapy Group
- The Organised Water Choir
- Michael Johnson.

Give comfort and peace to those who are separated from loved ones.

May the ache in their hearts be the strengthening of their hearts.

May their longing bring resolve to their lives, conviction and purity to their love.

Teach them to embrace their sadness lest it turn to despair.

Transform their yearning into wisdom. Let their hearts grow fonder.

Michael Leunig

I think it’s brave that you get up in the morning even if your soul is weary and your bones ache.

I think it’s brave that you keep on living even if you don’t know how to anymore.

I think it’s brave that you push away the waves rolling in every day and you decide to fight.

I know there are days when you feel like giving up but I think it’s brave that you never do.

Lana Rafael



“

Time for Remembering shows that road trauma is an ongoing thing. Grief doesn’t go away.

Board Members



Justin Flynn
Chairman



Ingrid Williams
Deputy Chairman



Mark Musgrave
Treasurer



Richard Watkins
Secretary/Public Office



Xander Alpherts



Robin Bowerman



Robert Ewing



Sue Hansford



Stuart LeGrand



Merryn Wallace



Treasurer's Report



This year has been one of transition, with Bernadette Nugent appointed as Road Trauma Support Services Victoria's (RTSSV) new CEO following a period of acting in the role. During this transitional period, Bernadette's position as the Manager of Counselling and Support Services was not backfilled, resulting in lower than anticipated salary costs for the year. The board would like to acknowledge the additional load that this has placed on Bernadette and the entire team, and provide our sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed to making this transition seamless.

2018-2019 has produced a satisfactory profit of \$36,350 against a projected budget of \$21,620. This is despite experiencing a significant decrease in income from the Road Trauma Awareness Seminar (RTAS) program of more than nine per cent from \$548,000 last year to \$498,000 this year. We have surveyed our main RTAS referrers, Magistrates, to understand why referrals have declined year on year. Once we have the survey findings, we will develop a strategy to grow RTAS revenue, as well as establish other opportunities to diversify our revenue base further.

Focusing on key variances to the budget, lower than anticipated RTAS program revenue was offset by higher-than-budget donation revenue of \$85,000 (\$35,000 more) and lower than budget salary costs of \$901,000 (\$40,000 less). Our balance sheet as at 30 June 2019 has strengthened, resulting in total members' equity of \$305,769. Our cash at the bank has also increased by approximately \$50,000 compared with the same time last year, which is an essential measure of the improving financial health of the organisation.

We will continue to explore opportunities to broaden the range of services we provide to the TAC in line with the TAC's strategic objectives, including the Towards Zero vision. The board sees this as particularly important in the context of the fifty per cent increase in transport fatalities this year; up from 116 in 2018 to 174 in 2019 (for the period up to 3 August 2019).

We hope to be able to establish new services focused on preventative initiatives, including building on the learnings from our RTAS program, which is designed to provide training and behavioural change.

We want to thank our auditors, LDAssurance, for their services and Theresa Cocking, our Accountant, who has done an excellent job. On behalf of the board, I would also like to thank the subcommittee for its ongoing support and dedication.

We look forward to another successful year where we can continue to make a valuable contribution to transport safety in Victoria.

Mark Musgrave
Treasurer

Auditor's Report

Independent auditor's report to the members of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria (RTSSV) incorporated.

Opinion

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria Incorporated ('the Association'), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2019, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and statement by members of the board.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria Inc. has been prepared in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and *Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2019 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- complying with 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 as 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 Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *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 for the purpose of fulfilling the Association financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. 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 board for the Financial Report

The board is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Australian Accounting Standards*, the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The board's responsibility also includes such internal control as it determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial report, the board is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the board either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have 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 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 the 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 board.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the board'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.

We communicate with the board 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.

LDAssurance Chartered Accountants

Stephen O'Kane Partner
Dated: 27 August 2019

Financial Report

Income	2019	2018
Fees and charges	516,732	557,276
Grants	533,862	519,000
Fundraising	77,405	45,858
Donations	84,950	42,633
Interest	10,039	12,101
Other income	39,012	3,743
Total	1,262,000	1,180,611
Expenses	2019	2018
Advertising, branding and business development	3,628	7,788
Accounting and audit fees	4,200	3,000
Bank charges	6,519	6,437
Cleaning	3,153	3,414
Minor equipment, service and maintenance	36,515	27,965
Client support projects	5,020	4,966
Postage and stationery	26,402	30,875
Depreciation	9,105	9,081
Entertainment and gifts	1,087	1,517
Fundraising expenses and commissions	7,788	8,220
Security and insurance	9,378	8,646
Office/business consultancy expenses	12,667	15,154
HR recruitment, meeting and other expenses	40,346	5,738
Rent and venue education	65,494	72,523
Salaries and wages	828,086	801,250
Time for Remembering	10,626	9,440
Superannuation	72,640	69,166
Support groups and memberships	3,395	2,314
Telephone and communication	18,932	17,734
Training and development	3,369	5,554
Travel, accommodation, parking and motor vehicle expenses	22,254	23,422
Volunteer expenses	6,274	4,626
Utilities and permits	11,587	13,225
Work cover	17,182	16,964
Loss on disposal	-	8,463
Total	1,225,647	1,177,482
Profit/(loss) for the year	36,353	3,129
Other comprehensive income	N/A	N/A
Total comprehensive income for the year	36,353	3,129

Current assets	2019	2018
Cash and cash equivalents	462,403	411,323
Trade and other receivables	21,542	17,121
Other assets	13,370	16,447
Total current assets	497,315	444,891
Non-current assets	2019	2018
Property, plant and equipment	19,954	29,059
Total non-current assets	19,954	29,059
Total assets	517,269	473,950
Liabilities	2019	2018
Trade and other payables	70,868	69,892
Provisions	129,419	101,717
Total current liabilities	200,287	171,609
Non-current liabilities	2019	2018
Provisions	11,213	32,925
Total non-current liabilities	11,213	32,925
Total liabilities	211,500	204,534
Net assets	305,769	269,416
Accumulated funds	2019	2018
Retained earnings	305,769	269,416
Total accumulated funds	305,769	269,416

Supporters

We are very grateful to the Transport Accident Commission who have supported our services since 1999.

We thank our generous supporters who raise funds and awareness to help us reduce the impact and incidence of road trauma. We are especially grateful to those who have supported our work in memory of a loved one – your kindness and generosity has touched the lives of many others.



Brad Gilham at the inaugural Gillo Nobber Cup – T20 Cricket Match. Brad and his family and friends raised more than \$16,000 to support our work.

Our major donors

Barb Bleicher in memory of John Wilson — CRUDE Ultimate Driving Education — Eva Szymanski, family and friends in memory of Benjamin Clegg — Fines and Enforcement Services Social Club — Iain McHaffie in memory of Margaret — Interrogate Films — Jan Bainbridge and Lee Scott in memory of Sam Scott — Jane Phillips, Laura Bidstrup and family in memory of John Cameron Begg — Rod Trebilco in memory of Wayne Trebilco — Sarah Dee and Melissa Murray in memory of Caleb Murray — Simon Bolles in memory of Wayne Trebilco — The Alpherts Family in memory of Freya — The Gilham/Gibson family and friends, in memory of Jason Gilham — The Marchesin family in memory of Claude and Jack — The Martini family in memory of Alex — Williamstown and St. John's Cricket Clubs on behalf of Jason Gilham and Brad Dobney — Brighton Grammar.

Our road safety partners and supporters

Community Corrections — Magistrates' Court of Victoria — The Transport Accident Commission — The Victorian Government — VicRoads — Victoria Police.

Our major corporate partners

EastLink — Henry Carus Lawyers — Maurice Blackburn Lawyers — Narva — Transurban — Zaparas Lawyers.

Supporters

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