ACON ANNUAL REPORT 2003 - 2004

CONTENTS

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT	2
ORGANISATIONAL CHART	3
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE	4
CEO'S MESSAGE	5
2003 - 2004 YEAR IN REVIEW	6
ADVOCACY	8
HIV PREVENTION	9
GAY MEN'S HEALTH	10
LESBIAN HEALTH	11
HIV HEALTH PROMOTION	12
POSITIVE LIVING CENTRE (PLC)	13
COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK (CSN)	14
HOUSING, LEARNING CENTRE AND RECEPTION	15
COUNSELLING AND ENHANCED PRIMARY CARE	16
TREATMENTS, VITAMIN SERVICE AND FAMILY SUPPORT	17
LESBIAN & GAY ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)	18
SAME SEX DOMESTIC VIOLENCE	19
MATURE AGE GAYS (MAG)	20
YOUTH PROGRAMS	21
ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PROJECT	22
ASIAN PROJECT	23
WESTERN SYDNEY	24
ILLAWARRA	25
NORTHERN RIVERS	26
HUNTER AND MID NORTH COAST	27
SEX WORKERS OUTREACH PROJECT (SWOP)	28
ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE	29
EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING	30
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS	31
PARTNERS, SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS	32
FINANCIAL REPORT	35
CONTACTS	48

Acknowledgments

The Board and management of ACON would like to acknowledge and thank the many dedicated staff and volunteers of our organisation for their amazing commitment to our clients and to our communities. We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of our supporters and previous staff who passed away during the year, including our friends Ray Lackey and Marcus Cohen.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

ACON - community, health and action

ACON is a health promotion organisation based in the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities with a central focus on HIV/AIDS. We provide HIV prevention, health promotion, advocacy, care and support services to members of those communities including Indigenous people and injecting drug users, to sex workers and to all people living with HIV/AIDS. ACON has offices in Sydney, Western Sydney, Illawarra, Northern Rivers, Hunter and Mid North Coast, with an extensive range of outreach services. ACON is also home to the Community Support Network (CSN), the Positive Living Centre (PLC), the Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project (AVP) and the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP).

What we seek – our vision

- A strong, healthy and resilient gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.
- The health needs of our communities to be effectively addressed through all life stages.
- An end to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.
- A society that respects the basic link between health and social justice.

What we do – our mission

- Drawing our strength from a dynamic relationship with our communities, ACON plays a leading role in promoting health.
- We do this through education, advocacy, and service provision and in partnership with researchers, health care providers, governments, our community members and others.
- HIV/AIDS is a key priority for our organisation.

Our clients and communities

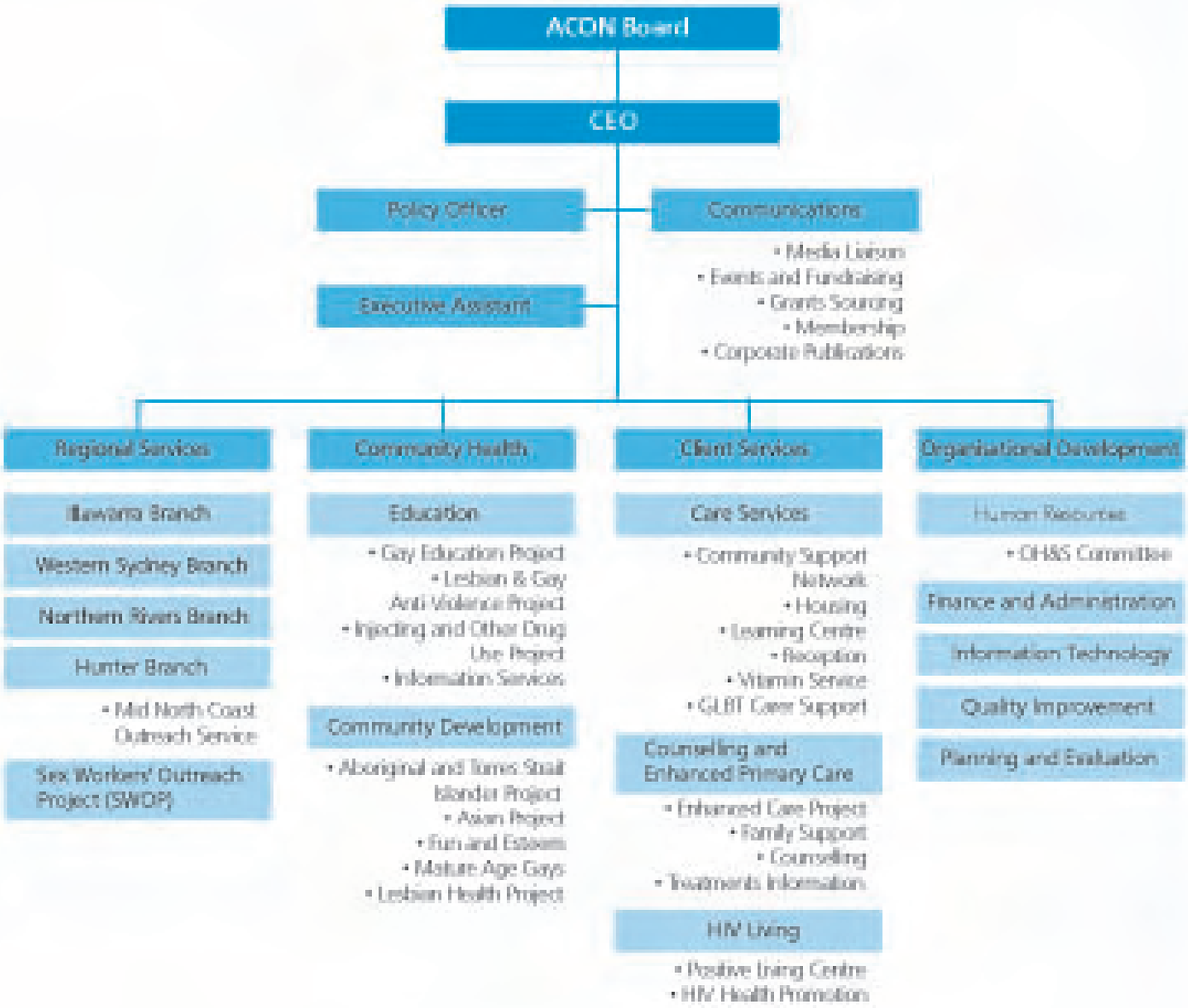
The gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities, sex workers and all people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. Consistent with our values statement, we commit to ensuring that our services and programs are culturally appropriate for people from a diverse range of backgrounds, including people from a non-English speaking background and Indigenous Australians. We also work with other people who interact with our communities but who don't necessarily identify as part of those communities, for example non-gay identifying homosexually active men.

What we believe in – our values

We believe the following are intrinsic to ACON and everything we do:

- Social justice
- Partnership
- Equity and access
- The centrality to any health response of those affected
- Professionalism, accountability and quality
- Creativity and innovation
- Inclusiveness, respect and self-determination
- Community based
- Sustainability

ORGANISATIONAL CHART



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

This Annual Report documents ACON's first year of progress against *Strategic Directions 2003-06*, as we build strong, healthy and resilient communities.

Central to our work this year has been responding to the rise in HIV in NSW. After some years of stability, it was alarming to see this increase and an even sharper and more sustained increase in other sexually transmissible infections. These increases led to a period of reflection, questioning, and talking to others about our work, which in turn has led to further improvement. With others, we have built a reinvigorated program of activities – including a comprehensive set of programs aimed at reducing the impact of sexually transmissible infections. These have reignited community discussion about HIV and about health, accurately informed gay men about the current state of play, and helped them in making decisions to support and build their own health. It appears that gay men have heeded messages about increased HIV prevalence and have begun to respond, with evidence that the increase in HIV infections has slowed.

However, there are many challenges ahead:

- Not simply slowing the increase in HIV infections, but reducing the rate of transmission below the previous lowest rate remains a major focus
- New patterns of treatment, testing, prophylaxis technologies and discussions about a possible vaccine make health promotion more complex
- Being vigilant that public policy continues to support rather than undermine our response to HIV. For example – support for NSPs; access to testing and treatment; and the impact of transmission laws
- It is critical that Australia's strategic framework on HIV/AIDS provides clear guidance on these issues and that government has the resolve to provide both the resources and leadership necessary

This year has reinforced the crucial link between HIV/AIDS and responding to broader community health issues which underpins ACON's evolution. In the case of STIs the link is direct but for some gay men, other issues such as the impact of drugs and alcohol, domestic violence and housing, or just 'doing it tough' mean they may be more vulnerable to harm.

In the following pages you will see the continuing development of our work across NSW. The enthusiasm and dedication of our staff and volunteers combined with some limited additional resources have supported our growth. For example we are incredibly proud of our Safe Sex Sluts and Drug Rovers who have delivered highly visible safe sex messages and drug safety services at parties and events. This is what ACON does best – mixing expert knowledge, innovative programming, and the passion and commitment of staff and volunteers from our community – to build our communities' health. At a time when the state of our health system is rarely off the front page such achievements underscore the importance of community-owned health services and the benefits delivered by partnerships. We have achieved much but much more is possible with increased emphasis by government.

Thanks to my fellow Board members, our CEO Stevie Clayton, and all of the incredible ACON staff and volunteers who work hard every day for our communities – this Annual Report is a reflection of their passion, commitment and skill.

Adrian Lovney

ACON BOARD MEMBERS 2003/04

Adrian Lovney, President
Kate Connors, Vice President
David Buchanan, Secretary
Tony Baca, Treasurer
Jackie Braw, Lunette Collins, Margaret Hansford, Rita Harding, Geoff Hornor, Hugh McLeod, Simon Moore, Garrett Prestage and Stevie Clayton (Ex Officio)
Staff Representatives - Tina Ziems (to Dec 2003) and Deb Broughton

CEO'S MESSAGE

This past year has been dominated by responding to increases in HIV and STI diagnoses, building new areas of work, and being frustrated in our efforts to take on other new areas of work by the refusal of funders to invest in the health of our communities.

Our response to the increase in HIV diagnoses was to examine available research and statistics, and to formulate an action plan including both social marketing and individual client services. The plan involved telling gay men what had changed so they could better assess their own risk and change their behaviour, together with targeting particular risk practices. Our response to increasing STIs has been more measured as we grapple with the right messages to use when STI prevention is not as amenable to the safe sex practices that prevent HIV transmission. Tackling STIs will be a major focus of our work in the new year. Services to HIV positive people range from social support through treatment information to counselling and housing. The challenge has been and remains to keep improving the quality of services and adapting them as the needs of people living with HIV/AIDS change.

Our move to broader GLBT health has also been measured as new funding becomes available, a process which has proven to be much slower and more difficult than we had originally anticipated. One of the new areas of work that has been successfully introduced this year is same sex domestic violence with both awareness raising campaigns and direct service provision.

Internally, we have continued the process of building and professionalising our infrastructure from faster financial reporting, through improved information technology to better planning and staff feedback on performance.

Regional services has also remained a focus for us. We continue to refine our programs to meet the needs of local communities not simply replicate Sydney services. How we meet the needs of community members outside of our branch areas continues to be a challenge for which we are yet to find the best solution, but in the interim, we have been providing grants to smaller agencies in rural and regional areas to meet some of the needs of local communities.

Drug and alcohol use are problems having a huge impact on some people in our communities and this is an area we have a strong commitment to addressing. We have had a particular emphasis on crystal meth use more recently but we must not forget the negative impacts of other problematic use. We have tried to draw attention to this area and open up avenues for funding of new programs through direct applications and submissions to inquiries such as the NSW Summit on Alcohol Abuse.

It remains disappointing that no policy or funding structures exist to address the specific health needs of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people, either federally or in NSW. But even more disappointing is that in the last year politics have taken precedence over public health in funding decisions which would have increased ACON's capacity to implement drug treatment programs for our communities. Nonetheless, we will continue to advocate for policy frameworks that support our communities' health and funding arrangements that can supplement our own capacity to deliver these programs, until we are successful in convincing governments that our communities matter beyond HIV.

Stevie Clayton

2003 - 2004 YEAR IN REVIEW

HIV infections in NSW rose by 6% during the calendar year 2003, well down on the 15% increase of the previous year showing that renewed and reinvigorated safe sex messages – properly funded and delivered in partnership – must be a central part of any response to the rise in infections. ACON worked as part of an interagency with NSW Health and Area Health Services along with PLWHA (NSW) and the Australasian Society of HIV Medicine (ASHM) to address this issue through a joint campaign highlighting the rise in HIV and promoting safe sex. The February 2004 Sydney Gay Community Periodic Survey indicated a high level of recognition by gay men of the campaign messages with a 65% recall rate. Towards the end of 2003/04 ACON finalised a *Gay Men's HIV/STI Prevention Strategy 2004-06* with a focus on new intervention strategies that take into account the changing rates of HIV infections.

Dionne Warwick took some time out from her Australian tour schedule to help raise awareness of the rise in HIV infections in NSW. She joined ACON's Bill and Ben the Positive Men, based on characters from David McDiarmid safe sex posters, to raise the visibility of positive people and HIV prevention. Our other condom reinforcement messages during the year included the second stage of the *Expose the Myth* campaign, Mardi Gras and Sleaze campaigns.

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras and Sleaze are busy times for ACON's Safe Sex Sluts who are a familiar presence around the various parties promoting use of condoms. ACON's volunteer Drug Rovers are an important initiative developed in response to GHB issues at major parties and now a familiar part of large dance parties, working with organisers and medical staff to support the health and safety of attendees.

The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras season is also a key time for ACON to focus on other issues affecting our community such as same sex domestic violence. We launched a major SSDV campaign developed with funding from the NSW Attorney-General's Department to raise awareness of this issue within our communities and to provide referral information. We hope to increase the understanding of domestic violence in the GLBT community and to dispel a number of myths.

Homophobic violence also generated considerable media interest in NSW with the release of the first statewide study by the NSW Attorney General's Department finding 85% of gay men and lesbians in NSW are subjected to homophobic abuse. ACON assisted in the Report on Homophobic Hostilities and Violence Against Gay Men and Lesbians in NSW and the results confirmed the high rates of homophobic violence that are reported to our Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project.

In health promotion we launched a new health and wellbeing resource *Opening the Window* for lesbians to promote greater self care. Our Positive Men's Health Promotion team ran a series of Healthy Life+ gym programs for HIV positive gay men around exercise, general health and diet. The program is run in conjunction with Gold's Gym Sydney who won an international award for 'most outstanding contribution to charity and community causes'.

Health promotion programs have attracted many new clients to our Positive Living Centre with the client base doubling in the past year. The PLC established a new catering project to provide training and potential income opportunities for positive people.

The Community Support Network (CSN) also increased client numbers with a new intake program in hospitals and wider eligibility criteria to provide services to a greater number of people in need of home care support. The CSN Transport Service expanded the area of reach for community transport options. ACON's Housing project expanded its reach with a new housing buddy program with volunteers assisting people living with HIV/AIDS through the process of finding housing. Funding was received from FaCS for a project to assess the impact of same sex domestic violence on homelessness in our community.

ACON's branches in Western Sydney, Illawarra, Northern Rivers, Hunter and Mid North Coast continued to provide quality outreach services to our clients and communities. Regional Services consolidated their work around HIV prevention and health promotion while expanding services in gay and lesbian health, particularly for same sex attracted youth. We established new partnerships and strengthened existing relationships during the year.

ACON's capacity to provide services and support to members of our community and our health promotion and HIV education projects is, of course, limited by our funding base. Like most non-government organisations we work hard to supplement this with fundraising and other income generation activities each year. We now have a strong focus on diversifying our funding base by locating new sources of funding with government departments and corporate or philanthropic organisations. We made a number of applications for funding throughout the year to support new and innovative work in GLBT health and services for people living with HIV/AIDS. ACON is continuing to source potential funding for our new work in alcohol and other drugs, lesbian health and youth programming.

ADVOCACY

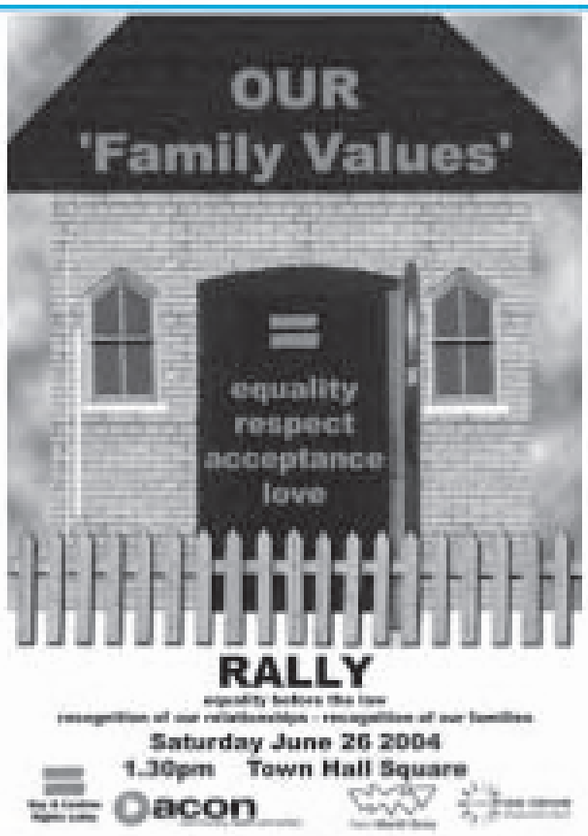
ACON plays a leading role in NSW advocating for public policy and a legislative and social environment which protects the rights of our communities including people living with HIV/AIDS, gay men, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people, sex workers, injecting and other drug users and all those directly affected by the epidemic.

As well as advocating on behalf of individual clients we address systemic advocacy by actively contributing to the national HIV/AIDS policy agenda through our membership of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) and in partnership with the National Association of People living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA). We also work closely with state lobby groups such as the NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS) on issues impacting on our clients and communities.

ACON's advocacy efforts with the Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby and FPA Health last year saw the introduction of an equal age of consent in NSW in August 2003. This move has helped reduce barriers for young gay men accessing sexual health services including information about HIV/AIDS and safe sex resources. We have worked this year to ensure our youth services are appropriate and accessible to young gay and bisexual men who can now legally access them.

We joined the Lobby again on another important issue this year alongside New Mardi Gras and Pride. In the face of political attacks around same sex marriage and Play School parents our four organisations came together at a public rally to send a strong message of support for the GLBT community with our demands for:

- Equality before the law
- Recognition of our relationships
- Recognition of our families



GLBT health issues were raised as a significant issue of concern at the NSW Summit on Alcohol Abuse with ACON's submission calling for more appropriate services to be available to our communities. We were successful in getting a number of recommendations passed at the Summit addressing these issues.

ACON also made several submissions to State and Federal Government agencies on issues relating to our communities and clients including:

- NSW Review of the Mental Health Act (Carers & Partners)
- NSW Ombudsman's Review of the Police Powers (Drug houses and move on powers) Act
- NSW Ombudsman's Review of the Police Powers (Drug Detection Dogs) Act
- Disability Discrimination Act amendments
- Marriage Act amendments
- Review of 4th National HIV/AIDS Strategy
- Charity Bill

HIV PREVENTION

HIV prevention has always been a key focus of ACON and 2003/04 was no exception as we worked closely with a number of agencies to address rising HIV infections including:

- NSW Health Department
- Area Health Services
- PLWHA (NSW)
- Australasian Society of HIV Medicine (ASHM)

The interagency jointly developed an HIV/AIDS Sector Action Plan with a new HIV prevention campaign specifically targeting Sydney gay men. A series of posters, press advertisements, web banners and drink coasters were produced to help spread the message across the state.

This campaign complemented ACON's other HIV prevention work in reinvigorating the safe sex message and promotion of condoms and lube.

In 2002 NSW saw an increase of 15% - the first in a decade. HIV notifications in NSW rose by 6% during the 2003 calendar year with 412 people diagnosed. Although this increase was well down on the previous year, it was still an increase and therefore of critical importance.

In the first six months of 2003 we saw an 18% increase over the same period in the previous calendar year. However, statistics on HIV infections for the whole of 2003 showed the increase in infections for the 12 month period was 6% due to a dramatic change in the rates of infection for the last six months of that year.

We hope that this reduction in new diagnoses in the second half of the year is a sign of the return of a safe sex culture in Sydney with more gay men consistently using condoms.

Gay men in Sydney appear to have reacted more quickly than in other comparable cities worldwide. Nonetheless, ACON will continue to focus on HIV prevention with a range of strategies to:

- **Reinforce the return of a safe sex culture** which has at its heart the consistent use of condoms as the best and safest way to prevent HIV infection
- **Return to a pattern of regular STI/HIV testing** with all gay men having a check up annually, or more often if they are particularly sexually active
- **Start talking again about safe sex in the context of relationships.** Between one-quarter and one-third of all new infections occur in the context of a relationship – 90% of those within the first 12 months
- **Address wider issues of vulnerability.** For some gay men, other issues such as the impact of drugs and alcohol, domestic violence or housing issues, mean that they may be less able to make healthy decisions and are more vulnerable to harm

A slowing of the rate of increase from 15% to 6% suggests that gay men have heeded messages about increased HIV prevalence and have begun to respond. Our challenge is to keep these efforts going until HIV rates to drop even lower than before the recent increase.

GAY MEN'S HEALTH

ACON's HIV prevention work was supported by a range of HIV/STI prevention strategies in Gay Men's Health. Our strong relationships with licensed and sex on premises venues kept education resources and safe sex equipment well supplied for community members. The venues delivery service ensured all of these locations were stocked with ACON's HIV/STI printed resources including booklets, pamphlets and posters.

We also provided safe sex packs and education resources to major gay and lesbian parties including Mardi Gras, Sleaze, Pride NYE, Big Queer Nation, Toybox and Inquisition.

Our work this year in reinforcing the safe sex culture among gay men in NSW also encouraged greater testing rates for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. A new resource *Last night I picked up someone…and something* was widely distributed across the state through ACON branches, sexual and community health centres as well as sex on premises venues. The booklet includes information on HIV/AIDS and STI testing, safe sex and condoms, self examination techniques and the importance of regular sexual health testing. *Last night…* was also adopted by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) as a national resource and it was distributed across Australia through other state AIDS Councils.

ACON's second series of the *Expose the Myth* campaign was released during the Mardi Gras Season. This stage of the campaign promoted safe sex and safe injecting messages with posters and cruise cards. The myths series covered issues around:

- Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)
- HIV viral load
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Safe injecting practice

We worked with a large number of sex on premises venues to ensure they met a range of standards as set out in our Sex on Premises Venues (SOPV) Code of Practice. These standards include access to condoms and lube in all areas where sex occurs, adequate levels of lighting to find condoms, staff training and displaying ACON's HIV/AIDS and other education material. To support the Code of Practice, ACON continues to update the manual given to all SOPVs with information on cleaning, STIs, drug use, dealing with overdoses and supplying HIV/AIDS information especially in light of the rise in infections.

ACON is a member of the Sexually Transmissible Infections in Gay Men Action Group (STIGMA) which this year reported an alarming 400% increase in cases of syphilis in Sydney gay men over the past two years. Total cases of syphilis in South Eastern Sydney and Central Sydney areas rose from 31 in 2001 to 160 in 2003. Almost all new cases were in gay men who acquired the infection in Australia and many of the cases were in HIV positive men with a number being hospitalised as a result of complications from untreated syphilis infection. ACON urged all gay men, particularly those with HIV, to test for syphilis. Through STIGMA we worked closely with Area Health Services to develop new materials and resources to encourage greater rates of testing for syphilis and to promote early treatment.

LESBIAN HEALTH

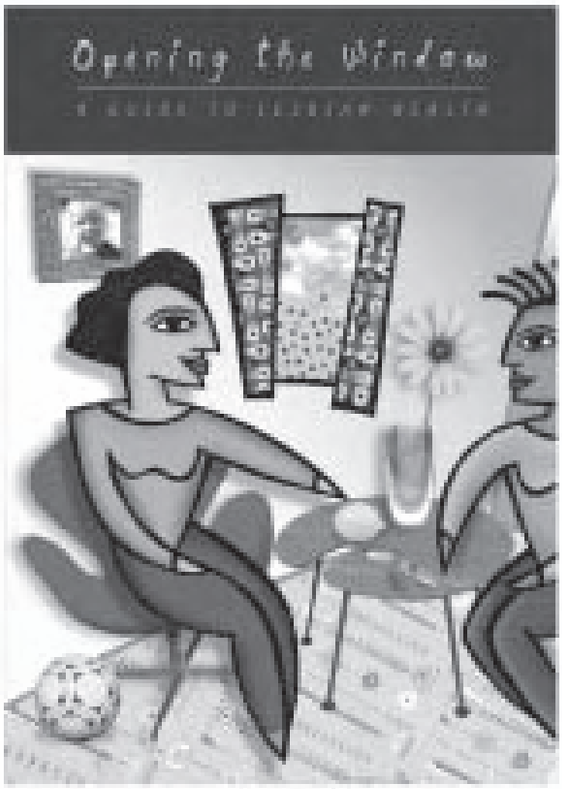
ACON's Lesbian Health Project launched a new health information resource to promote greater self-care around general health and wellbeing. *Opening the Window* was produced to help guide lesbians through the health care maze, equipping them with information on looking for the right health care providers and tips on maintaining good health.

This resource provides information, referral and helpful hints on finding the best health care and service providers on a range of issues including:

- Pap tests
- Breast check ups
- Sexual health
- HIV
- Safe sex
- Parenting
- Alcohol, smoking and other drugs
- Gambling
- Relationships
- Violence
- Emotional and mental health

Opening the Window was developed with other health care and community service providers to provide information on a wide range of issues impacting on lesbian health. The pocket-sized booklet was distributed across NSW through ACON branches, women's health centres, general practice surgeries, counselling services, sexual health centres and at gay and lesbian community events.

To support our general messages around sexual health for lesbians, ACON also developed safe sex packs specifically for women. These safe sex resources were widely distributed at a number of events and venues. The packs with safe sex equipment are designed to help prevent the transmission of STIs and increase the level of awareness around STIs in the lesbian community.



27UP

Sexual health was also a hot topic for discussion with the 40 lesbians who participated in a series of six-week workshops exploring sexual health issues and sexuality issues for women 27 years and up. The 27UP workshops were facilitated and presented in partnership with Sydney Sexual Health and have now been running for two years.

ACON donated $4,000 from our Lesbian Health Project and Big Queer Nation funds to Twenty 10 so that we can jointly run a young same sex attracted women project next year.

Stir It Up Speaker Series

ACON's Lesbian Health Speaker Series - Stir It Up - continued to be an enormously popular forum for discussion and debate. A forum held as a Mardi Gras Festival event tackled the issue of 'lesbian bed death' and attracted 35 women on the night. Lesbian and gay parenting proved to be a timely issue for many in the community with more than 90 people coming along to a forum on Pink Parenting as part of the Stir It Up series.

HIV HEALTH PROMOTION

In our HIV Positive Men's Health Promotion Team, gay men living with HIV/AIDS play an important role not only as clients but also as providers of services to others living with HIV/AIDS. A range of social and support activities were organised for and with HIV positive gay men throughout the year including:

Genesis. A weekend workshop for newly diagnosed men with peer based health promotion interventions. Four Genesis workshops were held during the year with 64 men addressing a range of psycho-social issues. Most participants were referred to Genesis by their GPs within six months of sero-conversion. The workshop structure delivers complex health promotion messages in an environment that is emotionally and socially supportive.

After Hours. This new discussion group provides ongoing social and educational support to newly diagnosed men, many of whom have already attended Genesis. Attendees share their experiences and thoughts on topics like disclosure, relationships, employment, stress and treatments.

Positive Express. Another new information session for HIV positive men involved guest speakers at monthly forums. Issues addressed included travel, sex and relationships, drug use, budgeting, stress and responsible sexuality.

Breakfast Club. Catching up together before work has become a popular opportunity for positive men who are in full time employment. This social support group gives the men an opportunity to discuss relevant issues over a coffee or breakfast.

Healthy Life. This 12 week gym program is provided twice a year for HIV positive gay men. About 30 participants this year learnt and shared their experiences of key health issues such as weight loss through HIV progression, side effects associated with combination therapy including lipodystrophy, and social isolation. The program offers anaerobic exercises and information on nutrition, relaxation, stress and goal setting.

Planet Positive. This regular social night for HIV positive gay men and their friends is a partnership project between the Positive Living Centre and PLWHA(NSW). Six Planet Positives were held during the year, attracting between 80 and 120 people to each event.

Retreat. A weekend retreat at Mangrove Mountain on the Central Coast was held for 16 Genesis participants. This retreat provided an opportunity for recently diagnosed gay men to share their lived experience and to gain valuable social connections, to relax, and to engage in leisure activities.

Women, HIV and Health Promotion

The major focus of our health promotion work around HIV positive women this year has been on individual support and referral. The project also provided education and support for women living with HIV through a speaker series exploring issues such as:

- sex and sexuality
- HIV/AIDS and families
- women and late diagnosis
- women, HIV and legal issues

The Activate speaker series was held in the inner city, Western Sydney and other branches of ACON, combining positive women's stories with HIV specialist speakers. Up to 40 people attended each of the forums.

POSITIVE LIVING CENTRE (PLC)

The Positive Living Centre (PLC) in Surry Hills is a centre where all people living with HIV/AIDS can feel safe, relax and socialise, and get access to a range of support services and complementary therapies. The PLC is a program of ACON in partnership with BGF, The Luncheon Club, PLWHA (NSW), Positive Heterosexuals and St Vincent's Community Health.

People living with HIV/AIDS can access massage, acupuncture, and a range of complementary therapies; get advice with housing or financial planning; take their pets to a vet clinic; attend social events and regular lunches; or do classes in cooking, languages and art. We provide clients with a high quality of service that incorporates the chance to meet others, build better networks and find support, or maybe just take time out with other positive people.

Over the past year we have attracted an additional 140 new clients regularly accessing the service, with a significant increase in the number of new clients between 20 and 30 years of age and an increase in the number of heterosexual clients.

During 2003/04 there were more than 8,660 occasions of service including:

Complementary therapies. An increase in the number of free complementary therapies provided – 1,339 compared to 725 in the 2002/03 year. PLC provided the equivalent of $57,700 worth of complementary therapies to people with HIV/AIDS - at no cost to centre clients.

Skills building activities. Increased participation in PLC courses and skills building activities – 885 during 2003/04, compared with 754 during 2002/03, including the introduction of a nine week accredited TAFE Food Preparation Course.

Care coordination. The development and provision of client care coordination meetings and Individual Program Plans (IPP).

Free services. A significant increase in the number of clients accessing PLC free services including outings, shopping excursions, Internet and PC access, haircuts and pool facilities. Occasions of service increased from 1,140 during 2002/03 to 2,730 during 2003/04.

Meal service. The PLC saw an increase in the number of clients accessing the Saturday breakfast service and many clients also attended a Friday lunch.

This year we introduced PLC Catering, a self-funded re-employment and skills building program for people living with HIV/AIDS. The catering service was created by a number of volunteers involved in the preparation of the Friday social lunch and food for in-house events, such as Planet Positive. A number of ACON projects and other organisations commented favourably on the quality of food being prepared for in-house workshops or events and a volunteer program was designed to share professional knowledge and experience amongst volunteers. Areas of knowledge sharing included food preparation and presentation, organisational, marketing and administrative skills, food delivery, set-up and waiter service if needed. The new PLC Catering service returned a modest profit for the year.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK (CSN)

For two decades the Community Support Network (CSN) and ACON have worked in close partnership to provide practical home care support and transport services for people living with HIV/AIDS. CSN staff, volunteers and the Carers' Representative Committee work together to assist people to live independently. At the end of the 2003/04 period we had an active caseload of 131 clients and 134 carers in Sydney with three volunteer carer orientation training programs held during the year. Client eligibility criteria was remodelled during the year to match new and current needs of people with HIV/AIDS, and to make it easier for clients to get quick and effective service. CSN hosts a monthly interagency meeting for community workers, Area Health Services, hospital and hospice staff to meet and discuss important issues in client access and service provision.

ACON branches in Western Sydney, Illawarra, Hunter and Mid North Coast also provide community care services to their local communities.

Home Care

CSN provides community home care assistance to people living with HIV/AIDS. Our volunteer carers provide a range of care and support services in the homes of CSN clients and during the year provided more than 5,500 occasions of service. This reflects a 43% increase on the previous year with volunteers offering services including:

- Personal care such as bathing, feeding, lifting and dressing
- Respite care for live-in partners, family members and friends of clients
- Cooking for clients who are unable to cook for themselves
- Escorting clients to hospital appointments
- Housework and shopping
- Transport assistance for social, medical or other appointments
- Blitz clean team for clients who have been hospitalised or incapacitated
- Brokering care and assisting with new service providers

Walking the floor

CSN began a pilot project with Ward 8 North at St Vincent's Hospital during the year which saw CSN staff walking the ward with the HIV social worker and offering CSN assessment to patients. This program involves a partnership between CSN, the Nursing Unit Manager and the Social Work Team at the hospital. Walking the floor has been highly successful in bringing community care services to patients of St Vincent's who might otherwise have 'fallen through the gaps'. CSN is planning to expand this initiative to other hospitals including Royal Prince Alfred, St George and the Prince of Wales Hospitals.

Transport Services

The CSN transport service provides clients with transportation to and from medical and allied health appointments. During 2003 we provided transport services on 4,650 occasions and worked to increase the transport options for CSN clients through brokerage with Community Transport Organisations. We provided training to the staff and volunteers of these agencies on HIV/AIDS, HIV sensitivity and awareness. All CSN transport clients are now registered with their local CTO and have expressed a high level of satisfaction in surveys about this initiative.

HOUSING, LEARNING CENTRE AND RECEPTION

Housing Project

ACON's Housing Project supports people living with HIV/AIDS facing homelessness, accessing short term accommodation, public or community housing as well as those experiencing discrimination or problems in the private rental market. During the 2003/04 period we assisted 365 clients with a range of issues.

Many clients presented during the year requesting support with finances, physical disability related to HIV/AIDS, alcohol and drug use, harassment and discrimination, and domestic violence or abusive relationships.

During the year we introduced a new housing volunteer support service to assist clients navigate the social housing maze. We trained a number of volunteers to help clients with making applications to the Department of Housing for priority housing, SAS/S, transfers or providing moral support when clients are attending the Tenancy Tribunal. Volunteers also assisted frail clients who were moving house to orient them to their new surroundings and local services.

Learning Centre

ACON'S Sydney office is home to a community library and electronic resource centre for clients, volunteers, staff and community members. The Learning Centre offers research facilities, resources on relevant groups and issues as well as a community Internet and computer service. During the year we saw a steady increase in client and staff use of the Learning Centre's facilities with more than 200 people using the centre each month.

The ACON Learning Centre now has four community access computers with Internet facilities. The service is free and is utilised by clients who want to look for work or search on health and treatment issues, and by students studying HIV/AIDS and sexuality-related issues.

Reception

Our reception staff in the Sydney office provide a professional front of house support and switchboard service to ACON's communities and staff. Reception staff refer callers to ACON projects throughout the state and assist community groups seeking access to meeting spaces or resources.

The friendly faces in the reception area also help coordinate ACON's vitamin service and are trained to meet the needs of clients of the needle and syringe program when the NSP office is closed.

COUNSELLING AND ENHANCED PRIMARY CARE

Counselling

ACON provides professional psychological counselling, short term solution focused interventions as well as information and referral support. Our fully qualified team also provides an intake and assessment service to assist access to clinical services. The service acts as a primary care entry point for psychosocial services for HIV positive people and other members of ACON communities.

All clients presenting to ACON's Counselling Service are assessed and, where we are unable to meet their needs in a reasonable time frame, referred to other appropriate services. The majority of our counselling clients are men aged between 26 and 45 years and people living with HIV/AIDS represent just over half of our clients.

Enhanced Care

The Enhanced Primary Care Project provides support for five major GP services in the inner Sydney area, all with a high caseload of HIV positive patients, people at risk of HIV and people from the GLBT communities. The project endeavours to support GPs and assist GP integration with other services providing a flexible and prompt care response. We assist doctors in the development and review of patient care plans, care coordination, the referral of patients to other health care services and brief short term interventions to support the patient in managing their health needs.

The majority of clients accessing Enhanced Primary Care this year were gay men although roughly 17% of patients were heterosexual. The number of Hepatitis C presentations rose from 19% to 25% this year while people living with HIV/AIDS represented 68% of clients.

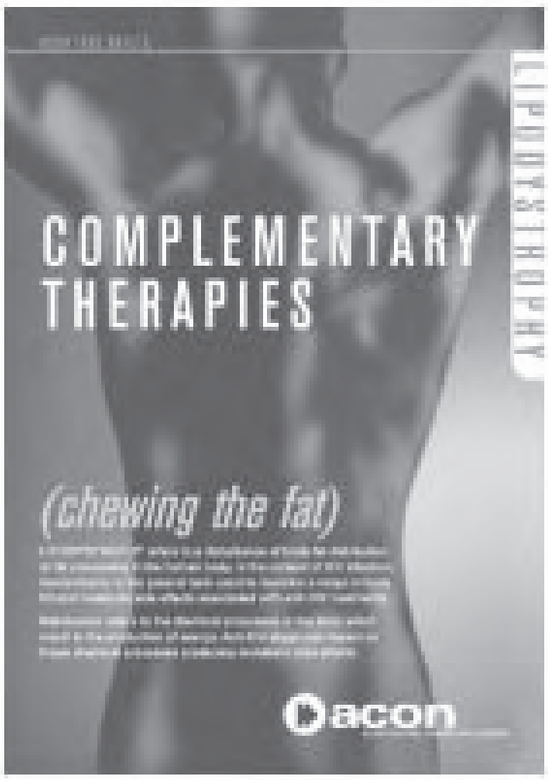
Following initial funding by the Commonwealth, the Enhanced Primary Care Project continued through a one off grant from NSW Health for 18 months, from September 2002 to January 2004. The project has now been incorporated into ACON's core funding, reflecting the importance of the project and our commitment to improving equitable access through providing services at a range of access points – in this case primary care GPs with a high HIV caseload.

A consultation with key participating GPs, staff and a sample of clients was also conducted by an independent consultant during the year. The consultation found a high degree of satisfaction with the service amongst GPs and those clients interviewed, and a strongly expressed desire on the part of GPs that the project continue.

TREATMENTS, VITAMIN SERVICE AND FAMILY SUPPORT

Treatments

The Treatments Information project works to meet the treatment related needs of HIV positive people by providing information, education, support, decision making opportunities, referral assistance and other resources. The project also conducts information sessions for community members and other service providers. During the year we provided support to hundreds of HIV positive people, those affected by HIV and service providers seeking support and information on behalf of their clients. ACON also coordinated 14 information sessions with a combined attendance of 251 people. The proportion of female clients has grown from 2.5% in the previous year to 9% in this year. Complementary therapies make up about a fifth of information requests to the Treatments Project. In response to this growing demand we produced a series of three information sheets on the use of complementary therapies to assist in the management of common and debilitating treatment related side effects including diarrhoea, lipodystrophy and peripheral neuropathy.



Vitamin Service

The ACON Vitamin Service functions as an independent cooperative to provide vitamin and food supplements to people living with HIV/AIDS. Close to 5,000 vitamin products were purchased by clients throughout the year. This non-profit service aims to provide quality vitamins and nutritional supplements with a product list based on advice from dieticians, HIV/AIDS practitioners and naturopaths and ACON's Complementary Therapies Advisory Group.

Family Support Project

ACON offers support to people living with HIV/AIDS who are also caring for families, or families with a HIV positive child. During the year we assisted a number of families with critical needs and multiple issues such as urgent housing, respite, DOCS intervention, immigration advice, socio-legal information, support for new diagnosis, late diagnosis during pregnancy, advocacy services while in prison and financial assistance. The typical client profile of the Family Support Project is an HIV positive mother between the ages of 26 and 45, living in the Inner West or Western Suburbs, most likely from a culturally and linguistically diverse background and identifying as heterosexual. Practical issues such as transport, peer connection and knowledge about services, especially services which can meet the needs of people from CALD backgrounds, and rights of access are some of the obstacles needing to be negotiated by families affected by HIV. The Family Support Project also held family social events during school holidays to link families by engaging in social activities rather than focusing on the pathology of their medical issues.

LESBIAN & GAY ANTI-VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)

The AVP provided support, advocacy and/or referrals to more than 130 victims of violence, harassment and abuse during the year. We also advocated for victims of homophobic violence at a number of forums including the Attorney General's GLBT Community Advisory Committee, the Anti-Discrimination Board's Gay and Lesbian Consultation and the Attorney General's Department Victims of Crime Interagency.

The AVP participated as a key partner in the NSW Anti-Homophobia Interagency (AHI) with professional development roundtables for educators, parents and youth workers around issues of gender construction, and creating safe and supportive environments in schools. The two metropolitan roundtables saw more than 70 in attendance and the regional roundtable in Lismore attracted 50 participants.

After a number of reports of violence and harassment on Oxford Street the AVP devised a comprehensive strategy to combat homophobic violence around the Surry Hills/Darlinghurst precinct. The objectives of the strategy are to develop a better understanding of homophobic violence in the area, increase GLBT community awareness of safety issues, increase the community's capacity to respond to homophobic violence and work in collaboration with a range of community and government agencies.

We also ran six self-defence workshops for members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities. Topics covered in the workshops included strategies to avoid violence, assertiveness and techniques to fend off physical attacks, group attacks and sexual assault.

The Safe Place Program was expanded through metropolitan Sydney and a number of regions. Safe Place works like the safe house program by providing a range of locations where members of the gay and lesbian community who are experiencing harassment or violence can seek help. There are more than 200 businesses enrolled in the program including many in South Sydney, Sydney City, Marrickville, Newtown, Bankstown, Wollongong, Rockdale, Hurstville, Newcastle and Lismore.

The AVP worked with the City of Sydney Council to train amateur photographers from the GLBT community in the art of photography and digital enhancement as a community building exercise. Participants were asked to document their perceptions of fear and safety toward spaces real and imagined in the city with disposable cameras and their photographs were showcased in an exhibition during the 2004 Mardi Gras Festival.

SAME SEX DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

ACON launched Australia's first comprehensive campaign on same sex domestic violence at the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day thanks to a $50,000 grant from the NSW Attorney General's Department. This campaign targeted the GLBT community as well as service providers to put a focus on information and referrals for people who may be victims of domestic violence.

SSDV has been an issue of concern for ACON in recent years with an increasing number of clients approaching us for assistance and having problems accessing appropriate services. Our Counselling Service, Housing Project, Enhanced Care Project, Lesbian & Gay Anti-Violence Project and others regularly come into contact with people who have issues related to same sex domestic violence.

ACON is a member of the Same Sex Domestic Violence Interagency and we work to ensure mainstream services better cater for gay men and lesbians who are victims of domestic violence. Other members of the SSDV Working Group include:

- NSW Attorney General's Department
- NSW Police
- St Vincent's Community Health at Darlinghurst and Waverley
- St Vincent's Accident and Emergency
- Social Workers in AIDS
- South East Sydney Area Health Service
- Inner City Legal Centre

This SSDV Working Group helped ACON develop a campaign to raise awareness within our communities of domestic violence in same sex relationships and to provide a range of referral information. We hope to increase the understanding of domestic violence in the gay and lesbian community and to dispel a number of myths surrounding it.

This campaign included a number of resources such as posters, advertisements and pamphlets distributed throughout NSW. We have also developed a website on same sex domestic violence with funding from South East Sydney Area Health Service – http://ssdv.acon.org.au

An increasing number of clients presenting to ACON's Housing Project have issues around domestic violence and abusive family relationships. To address this concern we successfully applied for funding from the Department of Family and Community Services for a project to assess the impact of same sex domestic violence on homelessness in our communities.

MATURE AGE GAYS (MAG)

Mature Age Gays (MAG) is recognised as one of the largest peer support groups for gay men in Australia and celebrated its 12th birthday this year. MAG provides a safe and friendly venue to meet, socialise and become informed on a range of issues that impact on mature age gay and bisexual men. Its members come from all walks of life with many working and retired men involved.

This popular group offers regular fortnightly meetings and, depending on the topic or theme of the night, as many as 200 people may attend. Although promoted as a social support group MAG meetings are also an opportunity to provide information on a range of issues, as well as consulting members regarding their needs.

MAG often has guest speakers from a range of service providers and other organisations, and prominent figures like Justice Michael Kirby.

Topics presented at MAG meetings this year have included:

- Ageing: a form of invisibility in the gay community
- Ageing and disability issues
- Discrimination and knowing your legal rights

This project provides telephone support and referral to between 30 and 40 men each week. Calls are received from mature persons locally and in areas geographically distanced from central Sydney.

MAGnet is a weekly social night for MAG members and friends. The members meet at a local inner city venue, providing an alternative to meeting in the ACON building.

This new social night was introduced last year to encourage new membership targeting a slightly younger age group of men between 40 and 50 years of age. Each of these weekly events can attract up to 40 people.

MAG has more than 50 volunteers who support the project and other ACON services. Many of these members are part of our volunteer packing teams who put together thousands of safe sex packs, safe injecting packs and resources for distribution each year.

A key service run by MAG volunteers is the 'MAGIC Is' project providing support and assistance to MAG members who are experiencing ill health either in hospital or at home. MAG volunteers also collect soft toys throughout the year to give to the Sydney Children's Hospital HIV/AIDS unit.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

An equal age of consent was introduced in NSW this year after extensive lobbying from ACON and other key groups like the Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby and FPA Health. An equal age of consent will help reduce barriers for young gay men accessing sexual health services including information about HIV/AIDS and safe sex resources. ACON's focus on youth services this year ensured our services are appropriate and accessible to young gay and bisexual men who can now legally access them.

ACON's key youth project – Fun & Esteem - underwent a major internal evaluation of its programs and services leading to a significant change in programming as well as an overhaul of the Start Making Sense workshops.

The Fun & Esteem project provides assessment and referral for its client group with individual support and referral. More than 800 young gay and bisexual men contacted the project for support during the year.

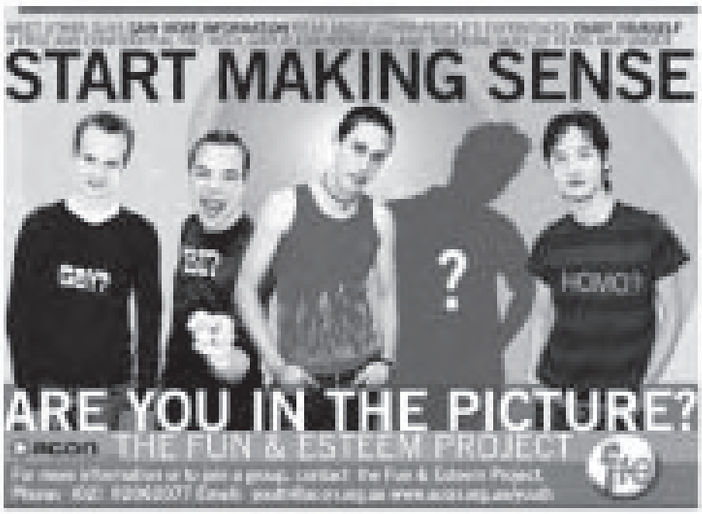
During the evaluation of Fun & Esteem this year the project continued to provide the following services to its growing client group:

Start Making Sense. These workshops assist young gay and bisexual men through their coming out process and provide important information to enable them to look after their health and wellbeing. Information in the workshops includes negotiation, relationships, safe sex and the prevention of STIs and HIV. The workshops are facilitated by two trained peer volunteers and each group runs for four weeks. A total of 80 young men attended the 11 workshops held throughout the year.

Wednesday Night Group. This monthly peer based drop-in night for young gay and bisexual men has a health promotion based framework and provides a setting for discussion, guest speakers and group led activities. Health topics discussed included safe sex, HIV/AIDS, general sexual health, anti–discrimination, homophobia and anti–violence. A total of 180 young gay and bisexual men attended in 2003/04.

Thursday Afternoon Group (TAG). This drop-in group is structured to meet the needs of under 18-year-olds who are still attending school. The weekly group provides a safe forum for discussion, interactive activities and topics that address safe sex, STI/HIV risk and homophobia. A total of 350 young men attended during the year.

ACON also completed our Facilitator Training Program this year for informal peer leaders and youth workers in gay and lesbian youth services across NSW. This project was funded through the NSW Health HIV/AIDS Health Promotion Plan and was a partnership with the Queer Facilitators Interagency (QFI). The program was piloted in Sydney, the Illawarra and the Hunter with groups of young people who were provided with leadership and peer support skills.



ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PROJECT

ACON provides considerable individual assessment, support and referral for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through our Sydney based project. More than 600 occasions of service were recorded during the year.

A monthly support group provides an opportunity for gay, lesbian and sistergirl identifying people to come together and discuss issues of concern in a safe and confidential environment. These meetings are structured and alternate between a social night and educational sessions. On average between 20 and 30 people attend the regular meetings.

A community awareness and fundraising event 'Black Pearls' attracted more than 200 people to raise funds for a retreat for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders living with HIV/AIDS. The fundraising event was a popular evening of education, entertainment and information. A second Black Pearls night is planned for next year.

The educational video produced last year, *Sistergirls – Stories from Indigenous Australian Sistergirls*, continued to be in high demand with service providers across the country. More than 150 copies of the resource were distributed during the year in NSW and other Australian states. A number of educational, community and sexuality workshops as well as cultural awareness programs benefited from the video raising awareness of the challenges transgender Aboriginal women (sistergirls) face.

The Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander project was involved with a number of community and service provider workshops including:

- Cultural Awareness & HIV/AIDS workshop for Pacific Islander Peer Educators at the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine
- Communities at Risk Workshop presented to General Practitioners and other health professionals at the ASHM conference
- Combined workshop with Twenty10 Youth Services – presented to 'Koori Youth' on issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the GLBT community
- HIV/AIDS Awareness workshop presented to the Department of Housing
- Safe Sex and STI workshop presented to young men involved with the Young Offenders Probation and Parole Program at the Settlement, Redfern
- Safe Sex Practice, HIV/AIDS and Sexual Diversity presented in partnership with the Sex Workers Outreach Project and Twenty10 at the Gender Fair
- Visibility and Community Engagement, held in Kings Cross during NAIDOC week

ASIAN PROJECT

ACON's Asian Project was awarded the 2003 Pride Week Award for 'Outstanding Contribution by a Community Group' – the second year in a row that the project has been acknowledged with this award.

The Asian Project is well known for the Asian Marching Boys and social support groups for Asian gay men with Silk Road and the newly introduced Asia Plus for HIV positive Asian men.

The Asian Project provides a range of services to its client group including support groups, newsletters and information resources as well as individual client support and referral. We recorded 800 occasions of service this year.

Silk Road is a monthly peer support group attracting around 30 to 40 participants at each meeting. The meetings provide support and information addressing a range of issues including:

- sexual health
- HIV/AIDS prevention
- anti-discrimination
- anti-violence

Asia Plus is a monthly support group for HIV positive Asian gay men which provides peer based social support and information. The majority of meetings are held in social settings with a 'social yum cha' theme. The Asia Plus groups have had regular numbers of between 6 and 12 people in attendance. This support group also provides HIV information and 'living well' resources.

The Asian Project's regular newsletter is distributed via email to more than 500 Asian gay men and the many service providers who work with them. This newsletter provides information on all aspects of the Asian Project and other ACON programs and events.

ACON projects, particularly in Community Development, work in partnership with a range of other organisations and service providers. The Asian Project works collaboratively with the Multicultural HIV/AIDS Service and provides support to a number of social groups including:

- Long Yang Club
- Gaysha
- Kantana Club
- Asian Marching Boys

WESTERN SYDNEY

ACON's Western Sydney branch in Wentworthville offers outreach activities to groups and venues in the area, providing services and support for people living with HIV/AIDS and the GLBT community. We also provide a range of support, resources and practical assistance to other GLBT social and support groups.

ACON West works closely with a number of service providers in the area to increase awareness of sexual diversity within their programs. Our work during the year to strengthen partnerships and raise awareness of issues that impact on our communities has included:

Lesbian Health Forums. Three information forums were held in the Blue Mountains, Parramatta and Liverpool regions. These forums covered a wide variety of issues relevant to lesbian health and wellbeing and were well attended by health and community workers. We also conducted two presentations in Blacktown and the Blue Mountains on domestic violence in lesbian relationships.

HIV/AIDS Strategic Plan. In partnership with Western Sydney, Wentworth and South Western Sydney Area Health Services as well as a local PLWHA service provider, an HIV Strategic Plan was developed and implemented locally to address rising HIV infections and the changing needs of HIV positive people.

Anti-Homophobia Forums. Two forums attracting 150 participants were held with the Anti-Homophobia Interagency for workers and students in education settings. These forums addressed a range of issues to help in the prevention of homophobia and related discrimination in their environments.

ACON West's partnership with the Holy Family Emerton Gardens management committee continues to support a popular community garden project. A tree planting remembrance ceremony and afternoon tea has become an annual World AIDS Day event.

CSN West continues to provide care and support services for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Greater Western Sydney area. In conjunction with the ACON Family Support Project we have also established a family lunch social group for local families affected by HIV/AIDS.

ACON's Prisons Project is also based out of ACON West providing regular information distribution to inmates across the state. This project helps keep inmates up to date with relevant treatments information and support options allowing them to better manage their own health and wellbeing more effectively.

Western Sydney is home to two sex on premises venues which are now accredited with the ACON Code of Conduct for SOPVs. ACON West worked closely with the venues to ensure they were providing a safer environment, both in terms of amenities and safe sex resources for their clients.

ILLAWARRA

The ACON Illawarra office in Wollongong provides an important space for community groups to come together at regular social events and information forums to discuss a range of issues and to build a greater sense of community. We have established a number of support groups that meet at ACON Illawarra, or at other sites, for HIV positive people, members of the GLBT community and same sex attracted youth.

People living with HIV in the Illawarra region have access to regular support group meetings hosted by ACON Illawarra. Our Wollongong group meets with peers monthly and the Nowra group meets twice monthly for social support and a chance to discuss issues in a safe environment.

Last year saw the establishment of a new meeting group – Café Q – for members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities in the Illawarra. These coffee discussion forums have proved to be very popular in the region and eight Café Q's were held during 2003/04 with strong attendance from the local community.

For young same sex attracted youth in the Illawarra, ACON continues to support the local Young and Proud group. This group is run in conjunction with other key agencies including Wollongong Youth Services, Wollongong Women's Centre, Warilla Women's Centre, CHAIN, Southern Youth and Family Services, and Shellharbour Youth Services. Young and Proud meets fortnightly and continues to attract growing numbers of young people to the peer education and support meetings. ACON Illawarra assisted the group to develop a magazine with contributions written by local youth.

Young and Proud hosted their first parents and carers night this year with more than 40 people attending the special event. A number of parents and carers expressed an interest in becoming members of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) and plans are underway for other similar events. A new independent youth group has also been established in Nowra called Label Free Youth and ACON is providing support with the establishment of a steering committee and ongoing management.

Young people were also a focus for the advocacy work of ACON Illawarra this year with a number of forums held in local schools around anti-homophobia issues to help raise awareness of homophobic violence and possible reduction initiatives. Eight Crossroads forums were held at schools in the south coast to tackle these and other issues relevant to the GLBT community. We also conducted information workshops for service providers on same sex domestic violence.

ACON Illawarra continues to act as a central contact point for gay men, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people as well as HIV positive people seeking referral to appropriate services in the health and community sector. We maintain a network of referral pathways to counselling and drug treatment programs, for example, which have the capacity to deal appropriately with clients from our communities.

NORTHERN RIVERS

Gay men, lesbians, bisexual and transgender people in the Northern Rivers have been able to come together and build a better sense of community with new networks and forums established by ACON this year. Out and About, a community networking opportunity, allows members of the local GLBT community to meet on a regular basis and maintain a sense of connection. Out and About meets quarterly with up to 80 people attending each function with guest speakers and other involvement from existing social networks.

ACON Northern Rivers developed a series of Rainbow Roundtables for peer led education around issues including GLBT relationships, sex, mental health, homophobia, internalised homophobia, youth suicide, self esteem and ageing.

Information forums were also run for specific groups within our communities including:

Lesbian Health Speaker Series. Shake it Up events covered topics such as Avoiding Messy Endings: Ethics and Relationships, Monogamy or Not Monogamy, and Healthy Ageing in the Rainbow Region.

Gay Men's Speaker's Series. Men @ Work events covered topics such as Gay Men's Relationships and Faerie Bread, Obsessed with Sex, and community consultations on the rising rates of HIV infections.

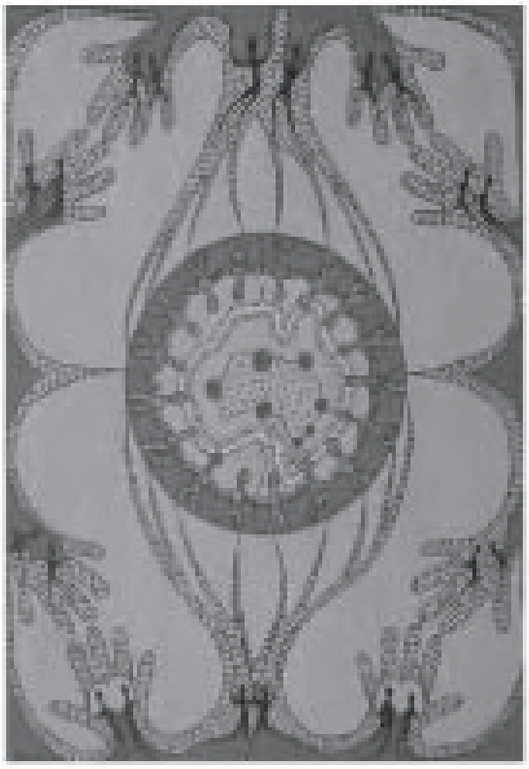
HIV+ Series. 'Let's keep it positive' events covered issues such as Re-engaging with Life, Bare-backing and Nail-biting, Treatments by the Sea, Peer Support monthly drop in nights, HIV+ Gay Men's Health Retreat and an Activate forum for HIV+ women.

Queer Health in the Northern Rivers. Forums for service providers covered HIV/AIDS updates and anti-homophobia training for youth services.

Our work around lesbian health in the Northern Rivers also involved the development of resources to assist lesbians in increasing their knowledge of referral pathways and services around same sex domestic violence.

A Young and Proud group was established in the Northern Rivers as a support and education group for young same sex attracted youth. In partnership with Twenty10 we ran a popular Youth Forum and a Coming Out Workshop. ACON Northern Rivers is also a member of a newly formed Youth Interagency.

In partnership with the Northern Rivers Area Health Service, ACON helped create new and culturally appropriate HIV resources for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We continue to work to improve and develop education programs for these members of our community especially in partnership with other service providers such as NRAHS and the Aboriginal Medical Services in the area.



HUNTER AND MID NORTH COAST

People living with HIV/AIDS in the Hunter region are able to access a range of services and support through the local ACON branch in Newcastle. Our HUGS (HIV Understanding Group Support) group continues to be enormously popular and we provide advocacy within the welfare sector and referral to and from services such as counselling, homecare, Centrelink, and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.

The Positive Living Project, a partnership between ACON, Hunter Area Health Service and Karumah, offered a range of positive living training programs throughout the year. Workshops were held on topics such as writing, computer training, Internet and web design. During 2003/04 ACON Hunter held regular Positive Health Forums covering issues such as quit smoking, nutrition, dental health, mental health, sun protection, treatments, alcohol use and fitness.

HIV positive women in the Hunter also attended an Activate forum as part of the Women, HIV and Health Promotion Project speaker series exploring issues for women living with HIV/AIDS and service providers.

ACON Hunter established two new youth groups for young people to come together in a safe environment to discuss important issues and to build their social networks. Q<18 for GLBQ youth 16 to 18 is run in collaboration with Newcastle Youth Service and Palais Youth Centre. Q<25 for GBQ men 18 to 25 is run with a focus on social outings as an alternative to pubs and clubs. We also conducted anti-homophobia workshops in five local high schools and two TAFE campuses.

The branch supports a Hunter Transgender Project with the NEON group meeting monthly for social and support services. A Transgender Social Night was well attended by transgender clients and their families during the year. Men who have sex with men but do not identify as gay (MSMs) were targeted by a joint web based project of ACON Hunter, the Hunter Centre for Population Health and the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS). A new website was developed for local gay men and MSMs to access health and HIV/STI campaigns and to discuss relevant local issues online.

Mid North Coast

Our Port Macquarie based Mid North Coast Outreach Service in partnership with the Mid North Coast Area Health Service established a new project for couples where one partner is HIV positive. The HIV Serodiscordant Relationship Project was designed to help shape relevant health promotion programs for the local area and improve existing health services for people living with HIV/AIDS. Support for GLBT youth 'coming out' in the mid North Coast area was provided in conjunction with local high schools, tertiary campuses and sexual health clinics. The Mid North Coast Outreach Service also coordinated a two day workshop for people working with Indigenous youth around sexual health issues. A local group for HIV positive women – CHAPLINS – worked with ACON to help coordinate a health and beauty day for a number of clients. This office also coordinated the Mid North Coast HIV Community Support Fund offering financial support for organisations and community groups providing services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

SEX WORKERS OUTREACH PROJECT (SWOP)

More than 13,000 occasions of peer education service were provided to individuals in the sex industry by SWOP this year. A range of issues were covered in these contacts including safer sex and working safely, STIs, HIV, Hepatitis A, B and C, negotiation issues, occupational health and safety in sex industry settings, violence, sexual health, contraception, safe injecting, access to appropriate services and referrals, industrial rights as well as regulatory and legal issues.

SWOP staff outreach to the sex industry providing health information, support and referrals on site at the place of work. Resources and safe sex equipment are distributed, and peer education interactions are facilitated. Workplaces include brothels, massage parlours, escort agencies, street work locations and private sex worker settings.

SWOP outreach workers contacted over 6,000 individuals this year. The team of 14 outreach workers provided regular outreach to sex workers in a number of areas covered by ACON branches including Sydney, Western Sydney, Northern Rivers, Illawarra, Hunter and Mid North Coast areas, and targeting specific sub-groups including multicultural and Aboriginal sex workers.

Outreach services provide safe sex and safe injecting equipment, information and resources, peer based sexual health education and support, as well as referrals. Approximately 50% of SWOP outreach targets high need or at risk sex workers in street work locations.

SWOP's Outreach services include:

Male Sex Worker Project. Delivering more than 50 outreach sessions to brothels, escorts, private and street based male sex workers during the year.

Transgender Sex Worker Project. Providing fortnightly outreach services and one-to-one peer based information, support and referral service to more than 100 individuals.

Multicultural Thai and Chinese speaking staff were engaged in this service, with over 120 sessions of outreach conducted.

Aboriginal Sex Worker Project. Providing outreach peer education services to Indigenous people working in the sex industry. More than 40 sessions of outreach were conducted in both Sydney and regional centres.

SWOP's Cabramatta Street Sex Workers project reached more than 80 women this year. This peer interaction and facilitation brought these women into more intensive contact with sexual health clinics, drug and alcohol services, welfare and housing agencies. Six babies were born to participants during the project and fortnightly outreach continues.

SWOP was also a strong voice on the Sex Services Premises Planning Advisory Panel with local and state government and sex industry representatives, dealing with a range of planning issues this year.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

ACON welcomed a number of recommendations from this year's NSW Summit on Alcohol Abuse with specific recommendations for the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities. Our submission to the Summit raised a number of issues around the impact of alcohol use and related problems for our communities.

Our submission called for more appropriate services to be developed, or expanded, to better cater for the needs of same sex attracted people experiencing problems with alcohol dependence. The Summit recommended prevention strategies be tailored to the specific needs of GLBT communities, that services be culturally sensitive and responsive for individuals and groups from the GLBT communities, and that an integrated service delivery model be developed to assist GLBT people affected by alcohol misuse and domestic violence.

The NSW Government took up a number of these recommendations in its response, including a further commitment to resource a study of the scope and impact of party drugs on the GLBT communities.

While research is lacking on alcohol use and the GLBT community, what is available shows us this is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed. The GLBT community is affected by a range of behaviours that are alcohol related including hate-related violence, drink spiking and domestic violence in same sex relationships. ACON is already working closely with a number of key service partners to address the range of issues we have identified in our own *Drug and Alcohol Strategy* released late last year.

ACON's Injecting and Other Drug Use Project operates a needle and syringe program (NSP) with close to 3,700 occasions of service recorded for the financial year. The Project also works in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross on a new Save a Mate (SAM) training project providing first aid training for people who may come in contact with persons overdosing.

SAM training has been offered to most of our Drug Rovers who form part of the ACON volunteer team at major gay and lesbian dance parties. The Rovers keep an eye on partygoers throughout the night for anyone in need of medical assistance. We also work in partnership with the NSW Ambulance Service to deliver training sessions to gay and lesbian licensed venue and SOPV staff on dealing with drug overdoses.

ACON continues to seek funding from different sources to expand our work around alcohol and other drug use, particularly in relation to methamphetamines and the increasing impact it is having on our communities.

EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING

The Communications Unit organised a number of successful fundraising events during the year. With a presence at many community events we worked to raise the profile of ACON and raise much needed funds for ACON's services and projects.

The 2003 Red Ribbon Appeal raised more than $100,000 for services in HIV prevention and for people living with HIV/AIDS. Hundreds of volunteers helped sell ribbons and rattle buckets at special events for this appeal. Oz Showbiz Cares/Equity Fights AIDS raised $10,000 at a number of theatres on World AIDS Day. The annual Candlelight AIDS Memorial was held on World AIDS Day in Green Park with hundreds of people coming together to remember the friends and loved ones we have lost to HIV/AIDS.

The 2004 Mardi Gras Season saw a number of ACON events in the Festival including:

- The Great Debate 'Monogamy is Monotony' with Jean Kittson, David Marr, Sue-Ann Post, Bruce Meagher, Gary Scale and Craig Hassall
- The Art of Condoms Exhibition exploring gay men's relationships with sex, condoms and HIV
- Visions Positive Art Exhibition paintings and sculptures created by people living with HIV/AIDS attending art workshops with the PLC
- Seven Deadly Sins lesbian dance party
- Stir It Up Lesbian Health Speaker Series 'Lesbian Bed Death'
- Walking the Same Streets Photographic Exhibition joint project with the City of Sydney Council with exhibition images around street safety

ACON had a high profile at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Fair Day and in the Mardi Gras Parade with a colourful float carrying messages around the increase in HIV infections. Once again we provided a large party service at Mardi Gras, Sleaze, Pride and other gay and lesbian dance parties to ensure the health and safety of our community. The Communications Unit works closely with the Injecting and Other Drug Use project to coordinate volunteer teams of Drug Rovers and Safe Sex Sluts at these events.

Bingay, hosted by the truly amazing Mitzi Macintosh and Naomi Palmer, continued to be a big fundraiser for ACON. Bingay has been running every Tuesday night at the Imperial Hotel for four years, and during 2003/04 raised $70,000. This year we held the first Big Bingay with a special night held at Paddington RSL bringing in $11,000 and several Big Bingays are planned for next year.

This year saw the return of the winter dance party as a fundraiser for ACON with Queer Nation putting on Big Queer Nation at Fox Studios on the Queens Birthday Long Weekend to help raise $33,950. Many thanks to Queer Nation for this new partnership and we look forward to BQN 2005. In Hand in Hand tradition ACON handed out $15,000 in community disbursements to small organisations from the proceeds of BQN.

Our Safe Sex Sluts distributed thousands of safe sex packs during the year at many community events and parties. A number of venues continued to be incredibly supportive of ACON with fundraising events – in particular many thanks to Arq, Stonewall, Midnight Shift, home nightclub, the Imperial and Oxford Hotels as well as the organisers of the Taylor Square T-Party. ACON also received considerable support during the year from DIVA (Drag Industry Variety Awards) with more than $9,000 in donations.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Cath Adams, Nicola Addison, Brent Allan, Stewart Allan, Glenn Archibald, Simone Awramenko, Helen Babbington, Tony Baca, Gavin Bambry, Jayson Barry-Cotter, Jill Barwick, Ben Bavinton, Ruth Bearpark, Lisa-Anne Bennetto, Scott Berry, Zoe Bishop, Nigel Blackwood, Eli Braga, Jackie Braw, Rosemary Bristow, Barrie Brockwell, Alan Brotherton, Deb Broughton, Cadence Brown, Kooncha Brown, Alison Brundle, David Buchanan, Chris Bull, Shane Burgess, Ryan Burrett, John Byrne

Julie Callaghan, Dale Campbell, Donna Campbell, Susie Carr, Lara Casser, Jules Cassidy, Peggy Chan, Anthony Chaplin, Jason Chatwin, Jum Chimkit, Stevie Clayton, Teresa Clonan, Bec Coleman, Linette Collins, Crellyn Collison, Kate Connors, Mark Connolly, Stuart Crofts, Luke Cutler, John Daly, Ron Davis, Jari De Medeiros, Kate DeMaere, Colin Dent, Roy Devellerez, Sarah Dickson, Gerrand Ding, John Dixon, Lee Doherty, Nerissa Dowling, Alan Dun, James De Vere, Evelyn Dwyer, Kristin Elliott, Gerard Farmer, Garry Fathers, Lance Feeney, Kate Fisher, Bernard Flannery, Michael Flinn, Cherie Flowers, Harry Fransen, Denis Fuelling

Stephen Gallagher, Danny Gallant, Tony Gardner, Craig Gee, Aaron George, Somali Cerise, Gareth Gilham, Susan Gilroy, Rian Gledson, Lara Goulding, Brad Gray, Richard Green, Brett Greenwood, Kent Gryphon, Mark Hallen, Derya Han, Denise Hanlon, Margaret Hansford, Rita Harding, Barrie Harrison, Linda Hayes, Tony Head, Kim Heap, Will Heckmann, Barbara Hickson, Joanna Holden, Patricia Holton, Geoff Honnor, Matthew Hua, Mitchell Hughes, Stacey Hughes, Charles Hunter, Peter Irons, Detlev Jackson, Dean Johnston, Cindy Jones, Laurie Keane, Julie Kim, Nicole Klar, Carl Kneipp, Ron Knight

Sandra Ladd, Chris Lawrence, Julie Lawrence, David Lee, Kay Lewis, Jayne Liddy, Olivia Lolohea, Adrian Lovney, Jane Lowe, Dane Lyddiard, Xiuyun Ma, Daniel Madeddu, Annette Maie, Litza Malamoo, Dusan Marjanovic, Chantell Martin, Leigh Matthews, norrie May-welby, Tony Maynard, Rima Mazloum, Lisa McCann, David McGuigan, Hugh McLeod, Maria McMahon, Dennis Meijer, Karen Michael, Jan Mietinen, Phillip Moore, Robbie Moore, Simon Moore, Jefferson Moreira, Maggie Moylan, Ziedni Muhamad, Alison Murray, Colin McGrath, Nellie Nahlos, Michael Newcombe, Sandro Nocentini, Graham Norton, David Novella, Sean O'Rourke, Adrian Oakley, Kevin Orrell, Steve Ostrow

Antonio Pangallo, Bruce Parker, Fiona Parker, Wendy Parsons, Guy Pascoe, Kevin Paton, Robert Pearson, Sandi Peel, Wesley Peters, Erin Peterson, Jo Piggott, Sera Pinwill, Carl Piraino, Anita Plesko, Garret Prestage, Ty Power, Remy Pudlowski, Suriya Raphajittikul, Greg Reading, Tom Robertson, Kenn Robinson, Marian Robinson, Sue Rodda, Maureen Rogers, Lisa Ronneberg, Katy Roy, Jen Rudland, Felicity Ryan, Chompol Saengchuangchot, Alfeo Salcedo, Ray Sarsin, Mary Anne Saunders, Stephen Scott, Rock Shipton, Shân Short, Geoff Sloman, Natasha Smithies, Alanna Somers, Geoffrey Spinks, Billy St Jon, Greg Staples, Scott Steward, Jonathan Street, Marina Suarez, John Sullivan, Rob Sutherland, Chritopher Suttenfield

Themistos Themistou, Shaun Thornton, Melisa Thorp, Heidi Tillotson, Gerard Tobin, Kon Tournazos, Tracey Treleaven, Ron Tripp, Jules Truong, John Tsioulos, Ronnie Turner, James Urban, Sharon Valks, Andrew Van-Twist, Hans Vandyk, Louise Vesovic, Jose Vulcao, John Wang, Tanya Warr, Raymond Webb, Jacqui Webber, Sky Wells, Steve Wheatley, Michelle Wickham, David Wilkins, Darrell Williams, Ebony Williams, Sonny Williams, Terry Wills, Lucky Wirajaya, Rachel Wotton, Julie Wylie, Craig Yeates, Tess Ziems

Special thanks to all the people who volunteered this year with:

- Community Service Network (CSN)
- Positive Living Centre (PLC)
- Red Ribbon Appeal
- Safe Sex Sluts
- Drug Rovers
- Packing Teams

PARTNERS, SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS 2004

407 Doctors,
AAA Computers,
Abbott Australasia,
ABC Illawarra,
Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council (AHMRC),
Access Systems,
Aged Care Rights Service,
AIDS Council of Social Seniors (ACOSS),
AIDS Council of South Australia,
AIDS Council of the ACT,
AIDS Dementia and HIV Psychiatry Team (ADAHPT),
AIDS Trust of Australia,
Albion Street Centre,
Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS),
Alborts (University of Wollongong),
Ankali,
Ansell,
Arq,
Arrows / MC's,
Aurora,
Aussie Boys,
Australian College of Applied Psychology,
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO),
Australian Federation of Homelessness Organisations (AFHO),
Australian Injecting & Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL),
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare,
Australian Lesbian Medical Association (ALMA),
Australian Red Cross,
Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society (ARCSHS),
Australian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM),
Bacardi Breezer,
Baskin Robbins Newcastle,
Beaumont Street Butchery,
Beauty 93,
Bent Magazine,
Big Boy's Café,
Bigge Park Centre,
Bingay - Mitzi Macintosh & Naomi Palmer,
Black Pan,
Blacktown Women's and Girls Health Centre
Blockbuster Newtown,
Bloxham and Chambers,
Blue Mountains Women's Health Centre,
Blue Sisters Softball Team,
BMG Australia,
Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF),
Bodyline,
Boehringer Ingelheim,
Bondi Youth,
Bookshop Darlinghurst,
Break Thru Employment Agency,
The Bridge,
Bristol Myers Squibb,
Bruce Pollack Publicity,
Buena Vista International,
Byrne House
Byrongay.com,
Cafe Abercrombie,
Canterbury Bankstown Gay & Lesbian Social Group Inc,
Carslink,
Carers NSW,
Cellblock Youth Services,
Central Coast Area Health Service (CCAHS),
Central Station Records Newcastle,
Central Sydney Area Health Service (CSAHS),
Central Sydney Community Transport,
Centrecare,
Centrelink,
CHAIN,
Charles Sturt University,
CIO Magazine,
City of Sydney Council,
Clinic 145,
Clinic 16,
Columbian Hotel,
Combined Pensioners and Superannuants Association,
Come-In Centre,
Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing,
Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services,
Community Health for Adolescents in Need (CHAIN),
Community Housing Federation of Australia,
Community Options (COPS),
Community Support Network,
Carer's Representative Committee,
Computerworld,
Consumers Health Forum (CHF),
CONTACT,
Corrections Health,
Cornelis Café,
Council for Civil Liberties,
CRC Justice Support,
Croatian Wickham Sports Club,
Crossroads,
Darcy House,
Darlinghurst Community Health Centre,
Daruk Aboriginal Medical Service,
Deli Women and Children's Centre,
Dendy Cinemas,
Des Kilkeary Lodge,
DISC Cabramatta,
Disney,
DIVA,
DNA Magazine,
Do Hair,
Doctor Earth Newtown,
Domestic Violence Advocacy Service,
Domestic Violence Line,
Donkey.com.au,
Dr Ben Hanson and Associates,
East Nowra Neighbourhood Centre,
Eastern Suburbs Division of General Practice,
Exit Café,
Family Drug Support,
First Step,
Fit X Gym,
Fitness First,
Floral Decorator,
Foley House,
Food Distribution Network,
Foundation for Young Australians
Foxtel,
FPA Health NSW,
Gateway Hotel,
Gay & Lesbian Immigration Task Force (GLITF),
Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby (GLRL),
Gay & Lesbian Counselling Service (GLCS),
Gay & Married Men's Group (GAMMA),
Gay Men's Domestic Violence Counselling Service,
GAYSHA,
Gender Centre,
Gilead Sciences,
Glaxo Smith Kline,
Glyde,

Ground Zero Medical Practice,
Habitat,
Hamilton Flower Shop,
Harbour City Bears,
HATSOS,
Haymarket Foundation,
Headquarters,
Healthy Cities Illawarra,
Hepatitis C Council,
HIV/AIDS Library Network (HALN),
HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC),
Holdsworth House General Practice,
Holy Family Community
Education Centre,
home nightclub,
Home and Community Care (HACC),
Homecare NSW,
Homelessness NSW/ACT,
House of Priscilla,
Human Rights and Equal
Opportunity Commission,
Hume Phoenix Inc,
Hunter Area Health Service (HAHS),
Hunter Centre for Population Health,
Hunter Women's Centre,
IDC,
IDG and their associates,
IGA Darlinghurst,
Ihug,
Illawarra Area Health Service (IAHS),
Illawarra Division of General Practice,
Illawarra Legal Centre,
Illawarra Migrant Resource Centre,
Illawarra Sexual Health Service,
Illawarra Women's Health Centre,
Immigrant Women Speakout,
Imperial Hotel,
Impotence Australia,
Independent Distillers,
Inner City Council on
Regional Development,
Inner City Legal Centre,
Inner South-West Community
Development Organisation,
Inner Sydney Regional Council
for Social Development,
Inner West Community Transport,
Jansen Newman Institute,
John Miller Galleries,
Karumah,
Karuna Clinic,
Kens of Kensington,
King Street Chemist,
Kings Cross CDAT,
Kingstearn,
Kingswood Neighbourhood Centre,
Kirketon Road Centre,
L J Hooker Newtown,
Langton Centre,
Learn to Include,
Legal Aid,
Leichhardt Community Transport,
Leichhardt Women's Health Centre,
Lemon Sundaes,
Lesbian Health Interagency
Network (LHIN),
Lesbians on Air (2GLF),
Lesbians on the Loose (LOTL),
Lesbians Incorporated (LINC),
Linking Lesbians in Newcastle (LLINC),
LISA,
Lismore and Districts
Women's Health Centre,
Liverpool Hospital,
Local Government and
Shires Association,
Lower North Shore
Community Transport,
Luncheon Club,
Maitland Women's Centre,
Mannaccom Pty Ltd,
Mardi Gras Medical,
Massage Therapy Erskineville,
MCC 'Out of the closet' emporium,
Meals on Wheels,
Medically Supervised
Injecting Centre (MSIC),
Medicines Australia,
Mental Health Coordinating Council,
Merck Sharpe & Dohme,
Metropolitan Community Church,
Midnight Shift Hotel,
Mid North Coast Area Health
Service (MNCAHS),
Mid Western Area Health
Service (MWAHS),
Mission Australia,
Moryua Community Health,
Multi-cultural HIV/AIDS &
Hepatitis C Service,
National Association of People
Living with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA),
National Centre in HIV Epidemiology
and Clinical Research (NCHECR),
National Centre in HIV Social
Research (NCHSR),
National Drug and Alcohol
Research Centre (NDARC),
Nepean Hospital,
NESB Women's Housing,
Network of Alcohol & Drug
Agencies (NADA),
New Mardi Gras,
Newcastle City Council,
Newcastle Civic Theatre,
Newcastle University Queer Collective,
Newcastle Youth Service,
NorthAIDS,
Northern Rivers Area Health
Service (NRAHS),
Northern Rivers Community
Legal Centre,
Northern Rivers Gay & Lesbian Choir,
Northern Rivers Social
Development Council,
Northern Sydney Area
Health Service (NSAHS),
Northern Territory AIDS Council,
NSW Anti Homophobia Interagency,
NSW Anti-Discrimination Board,
NSW Attorney-Generals Department,
NSW Council of Social
Services (NCOSS),
NSW Department for Women,
NSW Department of
Aboriginal Affairs,
NSW Department of Ageing,
Disability and Home Care,
NSW Department of
Community Services,
NSW Department of
Corrective Services,
NSW Department of Family
and Community Services,
NSW Department of Housing,
NSW Federation of
Housing Associations,
NSW Health,
NSW Law Society,
NSW Nurses Association,
NSW Ombudsman's Office,
NSW Police Service,
NSW Privacy Commission,
NSW Tenants Association,
NSW Users and AIDS
Association (NUAA),
Octapod Association,
Office of Community Housing,
Opera Australia,
Our Lady of the Sacred
Heart at Bowral,
Our Pathways Inc (OPI),

PARTNERS, SPONSORS AND SUPPORTERS 2004

Outfielders Softball Team,
Oxford Hotel,
Ozigay.com,
Palais Youth Centre,
Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) ,
Parramatta City Council,
Parramatta Club,
Parramatta Sexual Health Clinic,
Pets Are Wonderful Support (PAWS),
PC World,
Penrith Women's Health Centre,
People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWH/A (NSW)),
People With Disabilities,
Petersham RSL,
Pine Street Studios,
Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers (GLLO's),
Pooch & Pussy Pet Care,
Positive Central,
Positive Heterosexuals,
Positive Support Network Gosford,
PoxConnections,
Pride,
Prince of Wales Hospital,
Private Workers Alliance,
Psychologists & Counsellors in HIV/AIDS,
Queer Arts Collective,
Queer Nation,
Queer Out West,
Quiver,
Radio 2Vox FM,
Rainbow Visions,
Randwick Information & Community Centre,
Randwick/Waverley Community Transport,
Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service
Redfern Community Health Centre 'Positive Central',
Refresh Magazine,
Relationships Australia,
REPIDU Redfern,
RMIT Publishing,
Roche Pharmaceuticals,
Rough Edges,
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners,
Royal Botanic Gardens,
Royal North Shore Hospital,
Royal Prince Alfred Hospital,
Sacred Heart Services,
Salar Café,
Sanctuary,
Scarlet Alliance,
School of Nursing, Southern Cross University,
Second Life Bookshop,
Sexual Health Services in NSW,
SHAIDS,
Shellharbour City Council,
Shellharbour Youth Services,
Shelter NSW,
Shopfront Youth Legal Service,
Showcase Cinema,
Signal,
Social Workers in AIDS (SWAIDS),
South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service,
South Sydney City Council,
South Sydney Community Transport,
South West Inner Sydney Housing Co-op (SWISH),
South Western Sydney Area Health Service,
Southern Cross University,
Southern Youth & Family Services,
St George Community Transport
St George Hospital,
St Vincent de Paul Society,
St Vincent's Community Health Centre,
St Vincent's Hospital,
St Xavier's Cathedral,
Stanford House,
Stonewall Hotel,
Striptease Artists Union,
Student Representative Council of Southern Cross University,
Suki Hair
Suncity
Sutherland Community Transport
SX News,
Sydney Children's Hospital,
Sydney City Steam,
Sydney Hospital
Sydney Sexual Health Centre,
Sydney Star Observer,
Sydney University,
TAFE - Dapto,
Tasmanian Council on AIDS and Related Diseases
Taxi Club,
Taylor Square Private Clinic,
Tender Loving Cuisine,
Theatre 4A,
Thrifty Car Rental, Lismore/Ballina/Byron,
Token Artists Pty Ltd,
Tooheys,
Toolshed,
Touching Base,
Toy Box Parties,
Transfusion Related AIDS (TRAIDS),
Transport NSW,
Traxside,
Tree of Hope,
Trimagic Software P/L,
Tropical Fruits,
Twenty10,
Unity,
University of NSW,
University of Technology Sydney,
Urunga House,
Victims Compensation Tribunal,
Victims Support Line,
Victorian AIDS Council/GMHC,
View Factory Café,
Vinicare,
Vitaman Mens Face Products,
Voluntary Euthanasia Society,
Warehouse Youth Health Centre (FPA Health),
Wayside Chapel,
Wentworth Area Health Service (WAHS),
Wesley Uniting Church on the Mall,
Western Australian AIDS Council,
Western Suburbs Haven,
Western Sydney Area Health Service (WSAHS),
Westmead Hospital,
Wollongong City Council,
Wollongong City Gallery,
Wollongong Women's Centre,
Wollongong Youth Services,
Women's Legal Resource Centre,
Women's Refuge Resource Centre,
Women's Refuge Working Party,
Woodrising Neighbourhood Centre,
WOW,
Young Pride,
Youth Accommodation Association,
Zomba Music

Many thanks to our major funder NSW Health as well as our pro-bono legal advisors Freehills and our auditors PriceWaterhouseCoopers

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2004

Treasurer's Report for the Year ended 30 June 2004

It is with pleasure that I present the accounts for the 2003-04 financial year which indicate that ACON has once again finished the year in a strong and healthy financial position.

We finished the year with an operating deficit of $272,411. However, due to a change in accounting policy for grant revenue, grants in advance of $456,473 were recognised as income. Therefore we are showing a surplus of $184,062 for the year, compared to the budgeted deficit of $260,852. At the same time we have ensured that we retain sufficient reserves to ensure the long term financial security of ACON. The retained surplus at the end of the financial year was $1,266,241.

The original budget deficit was to enable us to continue to build programs in lesbian health and drug and alcohol use pending finding new funding sources.

The Financial Statements show a substantial amount of cash on hand at 30 June 2004 of $2,060,181. This is primarily made up of grant income provided in advance, and provision for employee entitlements, guaranteeing the organisation's ability to pay such entitlements when required. There have been no borrowings this financial year.

This was the third year of our rolling three year asset replacement program for IT equipment. This will improve the technology available to staff throughout the organisation.

We continue to consolidate improvements made in financial accountability. The timing of release of the monthly financial reports to management has greatly improved this financial year, enabling managers to be more pro-active in controlling their project expenditure.

In summary, these statements reflect the high standard of financial management within ACON, and a continued focus on both short-term service provision and long-term financial security.

Tony Baca
Treasurer

FINANCIAL REPORT

Directors' Report

The Board of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated submits its Report on the Association for the year ended 30 June 2004.

1 The principal activities of the Association during the year were the provision of education, health promotion, advocacy, care and support services to members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities, including indigenous people and injecting drug users, sex workers and to all people living with HIV/AIDS.

2 After providing $nil for income tax, operations for the year ended 30 June 2004, resulted in a net surplus of $184,062 [2002/2003 deficit $72,640] compared to budget deficit of ($260,852). The current year result includes grants in advance, recognised as income for the first time, of $456,473. Refer note 1(a) to the financial statements for details of the change in accounting policy.

3 Gifts of Works of Art valued at $102,850 were not re-valued this financial year.

4 The Association is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 (NSW) and is restricted from declaring any dividends.

5 During the year ended 30 June 2004, there was no significant change in the state of affairs of the Association other than those referred to in the above review or financial statements.

6 There have not been any matters or circumstances that have arisen since the end of the financial period, other than those referred to in the review or financial statements, that have significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in subsequent years.

7 Members of the Board at 30 June 2004

Name Qualifications	Experience	Special Responsibilities
Adrian Lovney LLB(Hons)	14 years' experience at governance level in HIV/AIDS organisations, and in public sector program and policy analysis/advice. Currently a General Manager in the financial services industry.	President
Kate Connors BA, LLB (Hons)	7 years experience in public sector policy advice and analysis. Currently employed as a lawyer with the Australian Law Reform Commission.	Vice President
Tony Baca	Senior Clinical Research Associate at PPD Development. Monitor for pharmaceutical and government sponsored clinical trials. Experience includes treatments for Alzheimers's Disease, Schizophrenia,HIV and vaccines for Meningitis, Pertussis, Anthrax and HIV.	Treasurer
David Buchanan SC	Barrister	Secretary
Simon Moore B.A. (Comms)	Presently General Manager of graphic design company. Involved in politics for five years.	
Garrett Prestage BA(Hons),PhD.	Research Fellow at National Centre in HIV Epidemiology & Clinical Research, two decades experience researching gay and lesbian community and health issues.	
Stevie Clayton	3.5 years as Deputy Executive Officer of ACON & 3 years as CEO; Member of Equal Opportunity Division, Administrative Decisions Tribunal. Long history of involvement in community based organisations.	Chief Executive Officer
Linette Collins Dip. Soc Studs, MPH (Hons)	Currently conducts research into drug use. Has a background in health services management, public policy and public health.	
Hugh MacLeod	General practitioner working in a high HIV caseload general medical practice.	
Geoff Honnor	Extensive background in health administration and management together with policy development and leadership experience within the HIV sector. Currently Executive Director of PLWHIVA (NSW).	
Deb Broughton Dip Frontline Mgmt; Cert III Community Services	ACON employee since 1997. Previously worked and volunteered in CSN. Currently ACON Housing Coordinator as well as Organisational Health Committee member and First Aid Officer. Past Quality Improvement Committee member.	ACON Staff Representative

8 Attendances by Members of the Board who held office during the year at meetings of the Board during the year ended 30 June 2004 were as follows. Elections for the elected Board Members were held in December 2003.

Elected Members and Ex Officio	Meetings held	Meetings attended
Adrian Lovney	9	9
Margaret Hansford [to May 2004]	8	5
David Buchanan	9	8
Linette Collins	9	5
Rita Harding [to June 2004]	8	6
Garrett Prestage	9	7
Simon Moore	9	8
Jackie Brow	8	7
Hugh MacLeod	8	6
Tony Baca	8	7
Kate Connors [from Feb 2004]	4	3
Geoff Honnor [from Feb 2004]	4	4
Tess Ziems [to Dec 2003]	4	2
Deb Broughton [from Dec 2003]	5	4
Stevie Clayton [CEO]	9	9

9 Other than Staff Representatives and the Chief Executive Officer, no Member of the Board has received or has become entitled to receive, during or since the financial year, a benefit because of a contract made by the Association with the member, a firm of which the member is a member or an entity in which the member has a substantial financial interest.

10 There are no significant environmental regulations which affect the Association's operations.

11 The Association has paid a premium of $3,180 [2002/2003: $3,175] to insure certain officers of the Association. The officers of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated covered by the insurance policy include the Members of the Board.
The liabilities insured include costs and expenses that may be incurred in defending civil or criminal proceedings that may be brought against officers of the Association.

12 The net surplus obtained from fundraising activities was applied to the purposes of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated as set out in Note 1 above.

13 PricewaterhouseCoopers continues in office as auditors to the AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated in accordance with section 327 of the Corporations Act 2001.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board.

Dated at Sydney this Third Day of November 2004

Adrian Lovney
President

Kate Connors
Vice-President

FINANCIAL REPORT

Statement of Financial Performance for the year ended 30 June 2004

	Notes	2004 $	2003 $
Revenue from Ordinary Activities			
Grants:			
Grants In Advance		456,473	-
Grants Rolled Over Prior Year		404,642	-
NSW Department of Health		6,392,608	6,680,778
NSW Department of Community Services		85,065	109,017
NSW Department for Women		-	6,319
NSW Attorney General's Department		-	5,978
Commonwealth Dept of Health & Aged Care		25,155	82,311
Area Health Services		534,282	706,970
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations		-	10,886
AIDS Trust of Australia		37,223	37,223
NSW Users & AIDS Association		-	3,985
Other grants		20,529	97,467
Fundraising	21	276,281	223,468
Interest received/receivable		122,535	141,417
Membership		3,362	1,962
Rent received		53,350	30,511
Sale of Vitamins		78,509	80,684
Sale of Materials		95,526	97,714
Registration Fees		4,931	45,656
Other Income		60,804	48,572
Total Revenue from Ordinary Activities		**8,651,295**	**8,410,918**
Expenditure			
Salaries & Associated Costs		5,544,732	5,179,717
Programs and Services		478,474	649,168
Rent and Rates		224,393	203,006
Depreciation – Plant & Equipment		164,912	139,640
Building Maintenance		279,264	422,552
Communications		309,515	275,962
Travel and Representation		314,667	318,292
Donations given		21,281	22,495
Publicity and Promotion		178,571	132,257
Events and Activities		75,630	89,201
Administrative costs		804,357	978,252
Borrowing Costs		-	-
Cost of goods sold		71,417	78,016
Total Expenditure		**8,467,213**	**8,488,558**
Surplus/(Deficit) from Ordinary Activities	3	**184,062**	**(77,640)**

The above Statement of Financial Performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2004

	Notes	2004 $	2003 $
Current Assets:			
Cash	4	2,060,181	2,356,375
Receivables	6	198,110	236,198
Inventories	7	14,384	7,771
Other	8	26,114	103,734
Total Current Assets		**2,298,789**	**2,704,078**
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant & Equipment	9	331,512	355,747
Deposits, Bonds	10	1,600	1,600
Total Non-Current Assets		**333,112**	**357,347**
Total Assets		**2,631,901**	**3,061,425**
Current Liabilities			
Accounts Payable	11	800,053	664,855
Employee Entitlements	12	350,002	369,079
Grants in Advance		-	739,199
Total Current Liabilities		**1,150,055**	**1,778,133**
Non-current Liabilities			
Employee Entitlements	13	210,605	201,113
Total Non-current Liabilities		**210,605**	**201,113**
Total Liabilities		**1,360,660**	**1,979,246**
Net Assets		**1,271,241**	**1,082,179**
Members' Funds			
Retained Surplus at beginning of the Year		1,082,179	1,159,819
Current Year Surplus (deficit)		184,062	(77,640)
Retained Surplus at the end of the Year	25	**1,266,241**	**1,082,179**
Revaluation Reserve	24	5,000	5,000
Total Members' Funds		**1,271,241**	**1,082,179**

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2004

	Notes	2004 $	2003 $
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Receipts from customers, granting bodies and fundraising (inclusive of GST)		8,536,013	8,961,027
Payments to suppliers and employees (inclusive of goods and services tax		(8,813,385)	(9,404,905)
		(277,372)	**(443,878)**
Interest received		121,855	131,250
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	**5**	**(155,517)**	**(312,628)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payment for plant and equipment		(140,677)	(126,838)
Net cash outflow from investing activities		**(140,677)**	**(126,838)**
Net (decrease) in cash held		**(296,194)**	**(439,466)**
Cash at beginning of the financial year	4	2,356,375	2,795,841
Cash at end of the financial year	**4**	**2,060,181**	**2,356,375**

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This general purpose report has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements, other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, Urgent Issues Group consensus views, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 (NSW), the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW), and the Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW).

It is prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention on an accruals basis, except for certain assets which, as noted, are at valuation.

Unless otherwise stated, the accounting policies are consistent with those of the previous year.

The Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) is adopting International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) for application to reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005. The AASB has issued Australian equivalents to IFRS, and the Urgent Issues Group has issued interpretations corresponding to IASB interpretations originated by the International Financial Reporting Interpretations Committee or the former Standing Interpretations Committee. The adoption of Australian equivalents to IFRS will be first reflected in the entity's financial statements for the year ending 30 June 2006. Information about how the transition to Australian equivalents to IFRS is being managed, and the key differences in accounting policies that are expected to arise, is set out in note 1(n).

(a) Grant Revenue

Grant revenue received is brought to account when received or receivable.

Change in accounting policy for the recognition of revenue

The policy of recognition of government funding on receipt of the funding was adopted with effect from 1 July 2003 to comply with AASB 1004 - Revenue. The previous policy was to recognise grant income in accordance with each specific grant's contractual obligation. When monies were received for a specific charitable purpose but not expended at balance date these grants were re-classified as current liabilities and taken to income in future periods when the related expenditure was incurred.

The change in accounting policy would have had the following impact had it always been applied:

- Opening equity at 1 July 2002 would have increased by $948,904, being the adjustment for periods prior to 30 June 2002.
- Revenue for the year ended 30 June 2003 would have decreased by $209,705.
- Payables at 30 June 2003 would have decreased by $739,199.
- The revenue and surplus for the year ended 30 June 2004 would have decreased by $739,199.

The pro forma statements below show the impact on the 2003 and 2004 accounts;

	2004 $	2003 $
Reported surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	**184,062**	**(77,640)**
Adjustment for change in accounting policy	(739,199)	(209,705)
Restated net (deficit) for the year	(555,137)	(287,345)
Payables		
Previously reported carrying amount	-	739,199
Adjustment for change in accounting policy	-	(739,199)
Restated carrying amount at the end of the financial year	-	-
Total members' funds balance		
Previously reported opening balance of members' funds	1,087,179	1,164,819
Adjustment for change in accounting policy	739,199	948,904
Restated opening balance	1,826,378	2,113,723
Restated net surplus/(deficit) for the year	(555,137)	(287,345)
Restated carrying amount at the end of the financial year	**1,271,241**	**1,826,378**

(b) Receivables

Trade receivables are recognised at the amounts receivable as they are due for settlement no more than 30 days from the date of recognition.

Collectability of trade debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts which are known to be uncollectable are written off. A provision for doubtful debts is raised where some doubt as to collection exists.

(c) Inventories

Inventories are represented by vitamin stock and are stated at the lower of cost or net realisable value on the basis of first in first out.

(d) Recoverable Amount of Non-Current Assets

The recoverable amount of an asset is the net amount expected to be recovered through the cash inflows and outflows arising from its continued use and subsequent disposal.

Where the carrying amount of a non-current asset is greater than its recoverable amount, the asset is written down to its recoverable amount. Where net cash inflows are derived from a group of assets working together, the recoverable amount is determined on the basis of the relevant group of assets. The decrement in the carrying amount is recognised as an expense in net profit or loss in the reporting period in which the recoverable amount write-down occurs.

(e) Revaluation of Non-Current Assets

The Association is gifted works of art from time to time. Works gifted are valued at the time of the gift and are capitalised at that amount.

Works of Art are valued at three yearly intervals. Revaluations reflect independent assessments of the fair market value of works of art.

Revaluation increments are credited directly to the asset revaluation reserve, unless they are reversing a previous decrement charged to the statement of financial performance, in which case the increment is credited to the statement of financial performance.

Revaluation decrements are recognised as expenses in the statement of financial performance, unless they are reversing revaluation increments previously credited to, and still included in the balance of, the asset revaluation reserve in respect of that same class of assets, in which case they are debited directly to the asset revaluation reserve.

Revaluation increments and decrements are offset against one another within a class of non-current assets, but not otherwise.

Potential capital gains tax is not taken into account in determining revaluation amounts unless it is expected that a liability for such tax will crystallise.

Revaluations do not result in the carrying value of Works of Art exceeding their recoverable amount.

(f) Depreciation of Plant & Equipment

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis so as to write off the net cost of each depreciable non-current asset over its expected useful life to the Association. Estimates of remaining useful lives are made on a regular basis for all assets, with annual reassessments for major items. The expected useful lives are as follows - Plant and Equipment, Office Equipment, Equipment under lease: 2-5 years. Works of Art are not depreciated.

(g) Leasehold Improvements

A lease for premises at 9-25 Commonwealth Street, Darlinghurst exists between the Association and the NSW State Government, terminating on 30 September 2005. The costs of Leasehold Improvements relating to this property will be amortised over the remaining period of the lease, or the estimated useful life to the Association, whichever is shorter. Leasehold Improvements held at the reporting date are being amortised over the remaining life of the lease.

(h) Leased Non-Current Assets

A distinction is made between finance leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of leased non-current assets, and operating leases under which the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Finance leases are capitalised. A lease asset and liability are established at the present value of minimum lease payments. Lease payments are allocated between the principal component of the lease liability and the interest expense.

The lease asset is amortised on a straight line basis over the term of the lease, or where it is likely that the Association will obtain ownership of the asset, the life of the asset. Lease assets held at the reporting date are being amortised over 5 years.

Incentives received on entering into operating leases are recognised as liabilities. Lease payments are allocated between interest (calculated by applying the interest rate implicit in the lease to the outstanding amount of the liability) rental expense and reduction of the liability.

Other operating lease payments are charged to the statement of financial performance in the periods in which they are incurred, as this represents the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

(i) Trade and Other Creditors

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the Association prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

(j) Web Site Costs

Costs in relation to the web site controlled by the Association are charged as expenses in the period in which they are incurred unless they relate to the acquisition of an asset, in which case they are capitalised and amortised over their period of expected benefit.

Generally, costs in relation to feasibility studies during the planning phase of the web site, and ongoing costs of maintenance during the operating phase, are considered to be expenses. Costs incurred in building or enhancing the

web site, to the extent that they represent probable future economic benefits controlled by the Association that can be reliably measured, are capitalised as an asset and amortised over the period of the expected benefits which vary from 2 to 5 years.

(k) Employee Entitlements

Wages and salaries, annual leave and sick leave
Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and accumulating sick leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date and are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. Liabilities for non-accumulating sick leave are recognised when the leave is taken and measured at the rates paid or payable.

Long Service Leave
The liability for long service leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and is measured in accordance with the policy above. The liability for long service leave expected to be settled more than 12 months from the reporting date is recognised in the provision for employee benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on national government bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

Superannuation
Contributions are made by the Association to several managed employee superannuation funds of choice and are charged as expenses when incurred.

(l) Borrowing Costs

Borrowing costs are recognised as expenses in the period in which they are incurred.

(m) Cash

For purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes deposits at call which are readily convertible to cash on hand and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

(n) International Financial Reporting Standards

Entities complying with Australian equivalents to IFRS for the first time will be required to restate their comparative financial statements to amounts reflecting the application of IFRS to that comparative period. Most adjustments required on transition to IFRS will be made, retrospectively, against opening retained earnings as at 1 July 2004.

The Finance team in ACON has carried out necessary training of staff and made internal systems and control changes, in order to gather all the required financial information to manage the transition to Australian equivalents to IFRS.

These changes have been analysed to determine the most appropriate accounting policy for ACON. To date, there are no significant accounting policy changes that affect ACON's financial report.

2 Operating Deficit

Operating deficit from ordinary activities includes the following specific net gains and expenses:

(a) Net gains and expenses:	2004 $	2003 $
Cost of Goods Sold	71,417	78,016
Depreciation Plant & Equipment	164,912	139,640
Donations Given	21,281	22,495
Bad and Doubtful Debts	2,616	680
Provision for Employee Entitlements	(9,584)	79,200
Rental expense relating to operating leases	134,774	119,848

3 Income Tax

The AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated as a public benevolent institution is exempt from paying income tax.

	2004 $	2003 $
4 Current Assets - Cash		
Cash on hand	4,150	5,600
Cash at bank:		
Cheque account - Operations	531,759	826,906
Deposits	1,524,272	1,523,869
	2,060,181	**2,356,375**

5 Reconciliation of Operating Surplus/Deficit to Net Cash Provided by Operating Activities

Operating Surplus/Deficit	184,062	(72,640)
Depreciation and Amortisation	164,912	139,640
Changes in Operating Assets and Liabilities:		
Increase/(Decrease) in Provision for Employee Entitlements	(9,584)	79,200
Increase/(Decrease) in Grants in Advance	(739,199)	(209,705)
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	38,088	(25,491)
(Increase)/Decrease in Other Current Assets	77,620	(9,927)
(Increase)/Decrease in Inventory	(6,613)	(2,033)
(Increase)/Decrease in other Non-Current Assets	-	867
Increase/(Decrease) in Creditors	135,197	(202,539)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	**(155,517)**	**(312,628)**

6 Current Assets - Receivables

Accounts Receivable	116,689	155,051
Accrued Income	81,421	81,147
	198,110	**236,198**

	2004 $	2003 $

7 Current Assets - Inventories

Finished Goods (Vitamins) at cost	14,384	2,771
	14,384	**2,771**

8 Current Assets - Other

Prepaid Goods & Services Tax	160	88,350
Prepaid expenses	25,954	15,384
	26,114	**103,734**

9 Non-Current Assets - Plant & Equipment

Furniture & Fittings, at cost	1,231,442	1,229,395
less: Accumulated Depreciation	(1,207,970)	(1,156,497)
	23,472	**72,898**
Office Equipment, at cost	639,230	515,795
less: Accumulated Depreciation	(456,057)	(357,677)
	183,173	**158,118**
Equipment Under Lease, at cost	48,116	48,116
less: Accumulated Depreciation	(48,116)	(48,116)
	-	**-**
Library Resources	3,663	3,663
Gifts of Works of Art	102,850	102,850
	106,513	**106,513**
Leasehold Improvements	40,766	25,570
less: Accumulated Depreciation	(22,412)	(7,352)
	18,354	**18,218**
Total Plant & Equipment	**331,512**	**355,747**

Reconciliations

Reconciliations of the carrying amounts of each class of plant and equipment at the beginning and end of the current financial year are set out below.

Fittings	Furniture & Equip-	Office ment ment	Equip- Works Under Lease	Library Improve- of Art	Leasehold ments	Totals
	$	$	$	$	$	$
Carrying amount at 1 July 2003	72,898	158,118	-	106,513	18,218	355,747
Additions	2,047	123,434	-	-	15,196	140,677
Depreciation expense	(51,473)	(98,379)	-	-	(15,060)	(164,912)
Carrying amount at 30 June 2004	**23,472**	**183,173**	**-**	**106,513**	**18,354**	**331,512**

	2004 $	2003 $

10 Deposits, Bonds

Deposits, Bonds	1,600	1,600

11 Current Liabilities – Accounts Payable

Accrued Goods & Services Tax	164,141	65,378
Trade Creditors	524,058	557,095
Accrued Expenses	111,854	42,382
	800,053	**664,855**

	2004 $	2003 $

12 Current Liabilities – Employee Entitlements

Provision for Annual Leave	350,002	369,079
	350,002	**369,079**
Employee Numbers	Number	Number
Number of employees at reporting date	**91**	**110**

13 Non-Current Liabilities – Employee Entitlements

Provision for Long Service Leave	210,605	201,113
	210,605	**201,113**

14 Financial Instruments

(a) Credit Risk Exposures
The credit risk on financial assets of the Association is the carrying value, net of any provision for doubtful debts.

(b) Interest Rate Risk Exposures
The Association's exposure to interest rate risk and the interest rate for each class of financial assets and liabilities are set below.

Interest Rate Risk Exposures

2004	Note	Fixed Interest Maturing in: Floating Interest Rate $	1 year or less $	over 1 to 5 years $	Non-Interest bearing $	Total $
Financial Assets:						
Cash and deposits	4	431,873	1,524,272	-	104,036	2,060,181
Receivables	6	-	-	-	198,110	198,110
Other	10	-	-	-	1,600	1,600
		431,873	1,524,272	-	303,746	2,259,891
Weighted average interest rate			3.70%	4.15%		
Financial Liabilities:						
Trade and other creditors	11	-	-	-	800,053	800,053
		-	-	-	800,053	800,053
Net financial assets/ (liabilities)		431,873	1,524,272	-	(496,307)	1,459,838

2003	Note	Fixed Interest Maturing in: Floating Interest Rate $	1 year or less $	over 1 to 5 years $	Non-Interest bearing $	Total $
Financial Assets:						
Cash and deposits	4	732,398	1,523,869	-	95,108	2,356,375
Receivables	6	-	-	-	236,198	236,198
Other	10	-	-	-	1,600	1,600
		732,398	1,523,869	-	332,906	2,594,173
Weighted average interest rate			3.70%	4.12%		
Financial Liabilities:						
Trade and other creditors	11	-	-	-	664,855	664,855
Grants in advance		-	-	-	739,199	739,199
		-	-	-	1,404,054	1,404,054
Net financial assets/ (liabilities)		732,398	1,523,869	-	(1,071,148)	1,190,119

	2004 $	2003 $
Reconciliation of Net Financial Assets to Net Assets		
Net financial assets as above	1,459,838	1,190,119
Non-financial assets and liabilities:		
Inventories	14,384	2,771
Property, plant & equipment	331,512	355,747
Other financial assets	26,114	103,734
Provisions	(560,607)	(570,192)
	1,271,241	1,082,179

(c) Net Fair Value of Financial Assets and Liabilities
Financial assets and liabilities comprise cash and borrowings. The net fair value of financial assets and liabilities approximates their carrying value.

15 Remuneration of Members of the Board

Members of the Board serve the Association in a voluntary capacity. Staff representatives and CEO who serve on ACON Board provide their time for this activity on a voluntary basis as well.

Amounts received or due and receivable from the Association and related corporations by members of the Board.

	2004 $	2003 $
	Nil	Nil

16 Remuneration of Auditors

Remuneration for audit and review of the Association's Financial report - PricewaterhouseCoopers	30,000	30,000
Remuneration for other services - PricewaterhouseCoopers	5,100	1,650
	35,100	31,650

17 Segments

The principal activities of the Association during the year were the provision of education, health promotion, advocacy, care and support service to members of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender communities, including Indigenous people and injecting drug users, to sex workers and to all people living with HIV/AIDS. The Association operates predominantly in one geographical area, being New South Wales, Australia.

18 Share Capital

The Association is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 (NSW) and as such does not have authorised or issued capital.

The liability of a member of the Association to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the Association or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the Association is limited to the amount, if any, of unpaid annual fees by the member in respect of membership of the Association.

19 Economic Dependency

The major source of funding for the Association is an annual grant from the NSW Health Department. The Association has negotiated a triennial funding agreement with the Department for the period 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2005. The Department continues to provide quarterly funding based on the annualised grant approved for 2003/2004.

20 Related Parties

There were no transactions with related parties during the year ended 30 June 2004.

21 Charitable Fundraising Act 1991

The AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated was re-issued with an authority to fundraise by the Office of Charities on 4 April 2001.

Information and declarations to be furnished under the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991.

(a) Details of aggregate gross income and total expenses of fundraising appeals

	2004 $	2003 $
Gross proceeds from fundraising:		
Red Ribbon World AIDS Day Appeal	100,555	83,388
Other including Donations & Sponsorship	175,726	140,080
Total gross income from fundraising	**276,281**	**223,468**
less total costs of fundraising		
Red Ribbon World AIDS Day Appeal	27,630	10,585
Other	104,711	88,813
Total costs of fundraising	**132,341**	**99,398**
Net surplus obtained from fundraising appeals	**143,940**	**123,070**

(b) Forms of fundraising appeals conducted during the period covered by these financial statements were: Dance Parties, Appeals, Bingo, Dinners and Special Nights at Venues.

(c) Comparative Ratios

Ratio of costs to gross proceeds	48%	45%
Ratio of net surplus to gross proceeds	52%	55%
Ratio of total cost of services to total expenditure	2%	1%
Ratio of total cost of services to total income	2%	1%

In the view of the Board, all expenses incurred by the AIDS Council of New South Wales Incorporated contribute to the delivery of its programs and services.

22 Contingent Liabilities

Bank guarantees in respect of office leases, ($8,450) and electronic funds payroll ($150,000) and credit card facility ($6,000) were held at 30 June 2004. No material losses are expected in respect of any of the above contingent liabilities.

23 Commitments for Expenditure

Lease Commitments

Operating Leases

Commitments for minimum lease payments in relation to non-cancellable operating leases contracted for at the reporting date but not recognised as liabilities, payable:

	2004 $	2003 $
Within one year	82,869	78,214
Later than one year but not later than 5 years	66,756	66,911

24 Reserves

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve is used to record increments and decrements on the revaluation of non-current assets as described in Note 1(e).

25 Retained Surplus

Included in the retained surplus is an amount of $456,473, which is restricted in its use. This relates to grants received not yet expended for the purpose for which it was intended. These amounts were previously recorded as liabilities. Refer Note 1(a).

Declaration by the Board for the year ended 30 June 2004

The Members of the Board declare that the financial statements and notes set out on pages 35 - 44

(a) comply with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements; and

(b) give a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2004 and of its performance, as represented by the results of its operations and its cash flows, for the financial year ended on that date.

In the Board's opinion:

(a) the financial statements and notes are in accordance with the Associations Incorporation Act 1984 (NSW) the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and the Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW);

(b) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable;

(c) the provisions of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and the regulations under this Act and the conditions attached to the authority to fundraise have been complied with; and

(d) the internal controls exercised by the Association are appropriate and effective in accounting for all income received.

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

Adrian Lowney	Kate Connors
President	Vice-president

Dated at Sydney this Third Day of November 2004

PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS

Independent audit report to the members of The AIDS Council of NSW

Audit opinion

In our opinion,

1 the financial report of The AIDS Council of NSW:
   - gives a true and fair view, as required by the Corporations Act 2001 in Australia, of the financial position of The AIDS Council of NSW as at 30 June 2004, and of its performance for the year ended on that date;
   - is presented in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, Accounting Standards and other mandatory financial reporting requirements in Australia, and the Corporations Regulations 2001;
   - presents a true and fair view as required by the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) of the financial result of fundraising appeals for the financial year ended 30 June 2004;

2 its associated records have been properly kept in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and the Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993(NSW) for the financial year ended 30 June 2004;

3 money received as a result of fundraising appeals conducted by The AIDS Council of NSW during the year ended 30 June 2004 has been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and the Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW); and

4 there are reasonable grounds to believe that The AIDS Council of NSW will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This opinion must be read in conjunction with the rest of our audit report.

Scope

The financial report and directors' responsibility

The financial report comprises the statement of financial position, statement of financial performance, statement of cash flows, accompanying notes to the financial statements, and the directors' declaration for The AIDS Council of NSW (the company), for the year ended 30 June 2004.

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW). This includes responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial report.

Audit approach

We conducted an independent audit in order to express an opinion to the members of the company. Our audit was conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, in order to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. The nature of an audit is influenced by factors such as the use of professional judgement, selective testing, the inherent limitations of internal control, and the availability of persuasive rather than conclusive evidence. Therefore, an audit cannot guarantee that all material misstatements have been detected.

We performed procedures to assess whether in all material respects the financial report presents fairly, in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001, Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW), Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW), accounting standards and other mandatory financial reporting requirements in Australia, a view which is consistent with our understanding of the company's financial position, and its performance as represented by the results of its operations and cash flows.

We formed our audit opinion on the basis of these procedures, which included:

- examining, on a test basis, information to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial report,
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the directors, and
- obtaining an understanding of the internal control structure for fundraising appeal activities and examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting compliance with the accounting and associated record keeping requirements for fundraising appeal activities pursuant to the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991 (NSW) and Charitable Fundraising Regulations 1993 (NSW).

When this audit report is included in a document containing the directors' report, our procedures include reading the directors' report to determine whether it contains any material inconsistencies with the financial report.

While we considered the effectiveness of management's internal controls over financial reporting when determining the nature and extent of our procedures, our audit was not designed to provide assurance on internal controls.

Our audit did not involve an analysis of the prudence of business decisions made by directors or management.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements and the Corporations Act 2001.

PricewaterhouseCoopers

PricewaterhouseCoopers
Sydney 11 November 2004

S. Humphries

Stephen Humphries
Partner

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Photographs in the Annual Report taken by Donna Campbell, Jamie Dunbar and ACON staff.