

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

**ANNUAL
REPORT
FOR
1987/88**

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1987/88

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COMMITTEE AND STAFF

Committee of Council:

Gray Sattler, President (from 10 February)

Don Baxter, President (to 10 February)

Levinia Crooks, Vice-President
(from 10 February)

David Buchanan, Vice-President
(to 10 February)

Stephen Auburn, Secretary

Steve McDonald, Treasurer

Phillip Black

Sharon Brown

Rolf Petherbridge

Bronwyn Ridgway

Lex Watson

Andrew Morgan (to 9 March)

David Edler (from 9 March)

Walter Fogarty (from 9 March)

Paul van Reyk (from 9 March)

Ron Cashmere

(Bobby Goldsmith Foundation)

John Goosen

(Community Support Network)

Brett Hughes

(Gay & Lesbian Counselling Service)

Staff of Council:

Bill Whittaker, Executive Director

Terry Batterham, Welfare
Services Manager

Don Baxter, Education Programs Manager

Kevin Golding, Administration Manager

Norman Boyle, Administrative Assistant

Ken Davis, Education Officer

Simon Donohoe, Information and
Resources Officer

Nicholas van Schalwyk, Telephone
Counsellor/Co-ordinator

Chas Stewart, Roster Co-ordinator

Tim Rigg, Community Care Trainer

Ross Duffin, Education Officer
(to 20 February)

Peter McCarthy, Community Care Trainer
(to 15 October)

Helen McCabe, Community Care Trainer
(to 9 March)

Project Staff:

John Godwin, Legal Research Officer

Geoffrey Fysh, Youth Peer Education Officer

Michael Lockhart, Rural AIDS
Education Officer

Hunter Region Branch:

Yvonne Gough, Co-ordinator

ROLE OF THE AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Introduction: The AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON) is a community based organisation funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments. The Council's activities include providing AIDS education to the community; providing counselling and support services for people affected by AIDS; and representing the interests of people affected by AIDS.

A number of community organisations are closely affiliated to the AIDS Council. These organisations include the Community Support Network Inc. (provides volunteer home caring and support for people with AIDS) and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (a charitable organisation which provides financial assistance to people with AIDS).

2. Formation and Membership: The AIDS Council was formed in 1985 at a public meeting, organised by members of Sydney's gay community, to discuss appropriate ways of responding to AIDS in New South Wales. The meeting subsequently resolved to form the AIDS Council, and adopted a constitution and elected a Committee to manage the affairs of the Council.

The Council now represents and provides services for all people affected by AIDS in New South Wales.

The AIDS Council and the Community Support Network have around 700 members throughout New South Wales. A Branch of the Council was established in Newcastle in 1988.

3. Management: The AIDS Council is incorporated under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act. Council has a detailed constitution and a comprehensive Management Plan to ensure efficient use of resources, clear lines of communication and efficient use of volunteers.

The Council is governed by an elected honorary Committee of 12 persons, which determines policy and accepts financial accountability. The Staff of Council carry out day to day administration and implement policy as determined by the Committee of Council.

The Community Support Network is managed by a Liaison Committee comprising members nominated by the AIDS Council and the Community Support Network (CSN). Staff of Council also assist in the operation of the Community Support Network, with the Executive Director of the Council also acting as Executive Director of CSN.

The AIDS Council Committee has a number of working groups and sub-committees to advise it and to develop policy. These working groups and sub-committees cover the areas of Education, Welfare, HIV Antibody Testing, Social Science Research & Ethics and Legal issues.

Membership of working groups and sub-committees is open to anyone willing to contribute to the work of the group.

4. Staff: The AIDS Council has eleven full-time staff and a number of other staff employed for short-term projects. The staff are divided into three management

units – education, welfare services and administration. The staff are responsible through Unit Managers to an Executive Director, who is in turn responsible to the Council Committee for all aspects of Council's operation.

5. Education Unit: This unit is headed by the Education Programs Manager and includes a Telephone Counsellor/Co-ordinator (responsible for Council's volunteer telephone counselling/information services), an Information/Resources Officer and an Education Officer.

The Education Unit is involved in educating the community about HIV and is particularly concerned with preventative education. The Council has been conducting preventative education programs for over three years. Many of Council's programs are also targeted to health professionals and service providers, as well as to the gay and general community.

The Education Unit has trained volunteers to assist in community AIDS education. This includes work with Council's telephone counselling/information service and Council's Speakers' Bureau.

6. Welfare Unit: This unit is headed by the Welfare Services Manager and includes a Community Care Trainer and a Roster Co-ordinator, who assist with the work of the Community Support Network.

The unit co-ordinates services for people affected by AIDS and works closely with health professionals, hospital social workers and other community organisations involved in helping people with AIDS. An important objective of the unit is to provide "one stop shopping" for people affected by AIDS who require assistance and information.

7. Administration Unit: This unit provides administrative and clerical support for the other Council units and for the Council Committee and working groups. The unit plays an important role in volunteer co-ordination.

8. Volunteer Participation: The AIDS Council and its affiliated organisations rely a great deal on the assistance of volunteers. Council actively encourages the involvement of its membership and the community in the organisation's activities.

Volunteers play a vital role in caring for people with AIDS in the home situation, assisting in the ACON office, providing telephone information and counselling and helping with educational programs and projects.

9. Conclusion: The AIDS Council's philosophy is to work closely with the State and Commonwealth Governments and with other relevant organisations. The AIDS Council and its affiliated organisations provide a very effective model of optimum community involvement in responding to AIDS in New South Wales.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1987/88 has been a year of substantial progress for the AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON). This is clearly demonstrated by the impressive range of programs and projects initiated to foster education about HIV transmission and AIDS and to provide services for people affected by AIDS.

Council has also continued to take a forceful role in advocating the rights and interests of people affected by AIDS; rights and interests so often threatened by prejudiced and uninformed sections of society. In this area, Council has acted aggressively through the media and co-operated with Governments and non-government bodies involved in AIDS.

The Council has continued the work commenced in 1987 in restructuring the organisation and establishing a professional base for its activities. This should enable the Council to more effectively fulfil its duties and responsibilities during the years ahead when New South Wales will, unfortunately, be faced with an even greater AIDS caseload.

The extent of the AIDS Council's involvement in HIV/AIDS education and services, both at the State and National level, is considerable. This is very clearly demonstrated in this annual report, which for the first time provides more information on Council's activities at both the State and National level, as well as discussing the work of ACON's affiliated organisations, working groups and sub-committees.

My report will highlight the broad areas of achievement and issues requiring special comment. More detailed comment on specific programs, projects and activities is provided elsewhere in the annual report.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

It is pleasing to report that the Council has been involved in many important initiatives during 1987/88, which we believe will assist in minimising the spread of HIV and provide better services and support for those already infected by the virus. Achievements which require particular mention are as follow:

Carers Pension: After many months of lobbying and negotiation by the AIDS Council and other concerned people, this issue was resolved in September 1987, and from February 1988, a Carers Pension is now available to any person who is providing full-time care and support for a person with AIDS in the home where they both live. Special thanks must go to David Wain, Craig Sahlin, Brian McGahen and Jeanette McHugh, MP for their work in obtaining a just solution to the carers pension issue.

Antiviral Drug AZT: Almost 12 months of very intensive work by ACON was rewarded in June 1988 with the announcement by the State Health Minister, Mr Peter Collins, that 9.4 million dollars would be provided for AZT supplies during 1988/89. NSW now leads the rest of Australia in ensuring adequate supplies of AZT for

people eligible to receive it.

Prior to the Health Minister's decision, AZT supplies were very uncertain in NSW and the drug was allocated on a piecemeal basis; a situation which caused considerable concern to people already on AZT and to those likely to need the drug in the near future.

ACON focused public attention on AZT funding when it organised a highly successful rally outside State Parliament in November 1988. This action resulted in the former Health Minister abandoning a very restrictive quota system for supply of the drug.

ACON has also had significant input into development of the informed consent document for the "high risk" trial of AZT being conducted in Australia. This is a welcome example of close co-operation between community organisations and the medical profession.

Media Profile: The public profile of the Council continued to increase significantly during 1987/88. The Council has made special efforts to brief journalists interested in AIDS, particularly medical reporters assigned to newspapers and electronic media.

By having a prominent public profile, the Council can more effectively represent people affected by AIDS and speak as an authoritative voice on HIV/AIDS issues.

Hunter Region Branch: The Hunter Region AIDS Forum, a community based group in the Hunter District, was successful in gaining funding from the Commonwealth Government for its activities. The group approached ACON in order to develop a working relationship and has become our first Regional Branch. This arrangement allows the Branch to benefit from ACON's experience and resources while strengthening our ability to speak for and represent all people affected by HIV in NSW.

The Branch recently opened a Resource Centre in Newcastle, which is staffed by the Branch Co-ordinator, Yvonne Gough.

ACON will continue to foster regional responses to AIDS during the forthcoming year and, where appropriate, to encourage the formation of Council Branches in regional areas. We will be working closely with organisations like the Community Support Network and Anka in pursuing these objectives.

Education Initiatives: Council developed an impressive range of educational material related to HIV transmission and AIDS during 1987/88, directed at both the gay and general community. These initiatives are discussed in more detail elsewhere in this report.

Special mention should be made, however, of the highly successful "Safe Sex Summer" campaign, directed at Sydney's gay community. The evaluation of this campaign highlighted its success in reaching those at risk, particularly those involved in relationships or drug and alcohol use.

ACON played a major role in the highly successful NACAIDS Working Group on Gay and Bi-sexual Men, which was convened by Don Baxter, our Education Programs Manager. The report from this Working Group

resulted in the Commonwealth Health Minister providing over \$500,000 for programs directed at gay and bi-sexual men throughout Australia.

ACON has also commenced planning some major initiatives to address the problem of HIV transmission and IV needle sharing. These will include establishing needle exchange facilities and publishing a range of information about needle sharing and HIV. The knowledge and skills developed and so successfully applied in the gay community will provide the framework for efforts in this area.

Support Service Initiatives: ACON has developed a much closer working relationship with the Community Support Network, following a decision by the membership of CSN that ACON and CSN should integrate further.

The establishment of a Joint CSN/ACON Liaison Committee to manage the CSN volunteer home care service has led to substantial improvements in the recruitment, training and support systems for volunteer carers. Hopefully, this will leave the CSN service better placed to meet future demands in Sydney and regional areas.

Closer links are being forged with other agencies and groups involved in providing health and support services, particularly church groups, community agencies and community workers. The objective is to achieve an expanded range of options for people affected by AIDS, while fostering a co-ordinated approach to service provision. This will help to maximise resources and minimise duplication of services.

Parliamentary Liaison Committee: ACON's recommendation that a Parliamentary Liaison Committee be formed in the NSW Parliament has recently been approved by the Health Minister, Mr Peter Collins. The Minister's initiative is very welcome and we believe that the Parliamentary Group will provide an excellent way of informing members of Parliament and their constituents about key AIDS issues, thereby encouraging more AIDS awareness and sensitivity of the needs of people affected by HIV.

"Know Your Rights" Pamphlet: ACON's Legal Working Group has recently completed this pamphlet for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. The pamphlet discusses how AIDS can affect our rights in many ways, particularly on issues concerning health care, legal responsibilities and discrimination. The pamphlet is a landmark publication in Australia which will be of great value to AIDS organisations, community groups, Government Departments and Agencies, and the general community.

HIV Antibody Position Paper: ACON has continued to make an important contribution towards the adoption of sensible policies on HIV antibody testing by Governments and other organisations and groups. ACON's Testing Sub-committee completed a detailed position paper on testing in September 1987, covering such issues as prisons, hospitals, prostitution, adoption and fostering, and psychiatric institutions. This position paper has been adopted as policy by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and distributed to many interested individuals and organisations throughout Australia.

Candlelight Memorial Procession and Vigil: The annual candlelight vigil was the most successful yet and

provided an important opportunity for the community and the media to focus on the human side of AIDS and remember all who have died of AIDS and are living with AIDS. A moving ceremony in the Pitt Street Uniting Church was held after the candlelight procession, with speakers including the Rev. Dorothy McMahon, Justice Michael Kirby, Mr Peter Collins, MP (State Minister for Health), Ms Clover Moore, MP (State Member for Bligh), Professor Ron Penny and Mr Andrew Refshauge (Opposition Spokesperson on Health).

AIDS Drug Treatments Forum: ACON organised two public forums on drug trials and drug treatments during 1987/88. Speakers included Dr David Cooper, Dr Julian Gold, and Adam Carr from the Victorian AIDS Council.

These forums provide an important opportunity for the community to hear the latest information about treatments for HIV infection and to ask questions about drugs and drug trials. ACON plans to continue to hold these type of meetings at regular intervals during the next 12 months.

STRUCTURE AND OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL

It is also pertinent to comment on the internal operation of the Council and its continued use of the ACON Resource Centre in Sophia Street, Surry Hills.

Re-organisation of the Council

A reorganisation of the Council's management structure was completed during 1987 and culminated in the adoption of a comprehensive Management Plan by the ACON Committee of Council.

The purpose of the Council's Management Plan is to provide clear information to all involved in ACON - from Committee members, volunteers, members, through to staff - on exactly how the Council operates; how the organisation communicates; what are the duties and responsibilities of office bearers, committee members, volunteers and staff; and how ACON relates to other organisations involved in the AIDS area. The Management Plan combines all those decisions and policies adopted by the Council into a single document which can be easily accessed by all involved in the organisation.

The adoption of a sound administrative and organisational structure has assisted the Council to become more involved in forward planning, rather than simply responding to needs and issues as they arise. A professionally managed and effective organisation also gives confidence to the State and Commonwealth Governments, who continue to provide much needed funding for our HIV/AIDS education and support programs.

Part of the re-organisation has involved the establishment of new working groups to assist Council to develop new policy and program initiatives. Examples of this are the creation of a Medical/Scientific Working Group and the formation of a Research and Ethics Working Group. Our system of working groups and sub-committees provide an excellent way of involving the skills of our members and of developing imaginative policy and programs.

ACON Resource Centre and Staff

During 1987/88, submissions to the State Government for additional staff resources resulted in the

appointment of a Telephone Counsellor/Co-ordinator; a second Education Officer; an Administration Manager; and two Education Officers to work in Sydney's outer suburbs.

The Commonwealth Government, through the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), has funded projects which has permitted us to employ a Rural AIDS Education Officer; two Peer Education Officers; and a Legal Research Officer.

Demands on the ACON Resource Centre in Surry Hills have dramatically increased during 1987/88, reflecting the growth of education and support programs and, unfortunately, the growth of the AIDS caseload in New South Wales. Accommodation on all floors is almost fully utilised, as a result of the growth in ACON staff from 7 at 30 June 1987 to 15 at 30 June 1988. Our meeting rooms and storage facilities are also approaching maximum use.

Our requests during 1987/88 for additional clerical/administrative positions were not successful and the absence of basic levels of administrative support for the organisation is currently a matter of great concern, which we shall be raising with the Government in the near future.

It is pleasing to report that the number of volunteers and people affected by AIDS utilising the resource centre has also increased substantially.

Internal renovations have been necessary to accommodate increasing staff and to provide secure areas for computer equipment and the Council's printed resources. However, this will provide only a temporary solution and it is likely that additional or alternate office and meeting accommodation will have to be found during 1988/89.

1987/88 has also seen a substantial increase in the costs of administration, particularly in the areas of telephone, postage, photocopying, advertising, printing and equipment. The level of requests from the general public for counselling, information and printed material has increased dramatically. All of these facts highlight the need for increased financial commitment from the Government during the next 12 months.

ONGOING ISSUES

While ACON has made excellent progress during 1987/88, there remains much to be done. We cannot be complacent about our achievements and we must recognise that further challenges are ahead as the AIDS caseload increases throughout our State.

In concluding this report, I would like to identify some of the more important issues that ACON will need to address during the next 12 months.

The first issue concerns options for treatment of AIDS and HIV infection. At present, people affected by HIV have limited options for treatment compared to other countries, particularly the USA. While ACON supports the use of AZT and further trials to establish its efficacy, we believe that other promising treatments such as AL721 and Dextran Sulphate should be evaluated. We will continue to urge that where evidence supports the need for trials of these and other promising treatments, these trials be undertaken as a matter of urgency to determine their efficacy.

The second issue concerns HIV antibody testing. We should recognise that with changing medical knowledge and the development of new treatment options and prophylactic measures, the issue of HIV antibody testing remains one where personal choice is critical. ACON will continue to make information

available to the community in order that members can make informed decisions on this issue. Our most effective weapon in preventing further spread of HIV is education, not HIV testing. Unfortunately, much of the debate about HIV infection often focuses on testing because people are attracted to what seems a simple solution to AIDS. Therefore, all the AIDS Councils need to develop sound policies on all aspects of testing to encourage rational discussion and policies on this complex issue. ACON should continue to be at the forefront of this work.

The third issue is the need for more strategic planning of the response to AIDS in New South Wales, both by Governments and by community organisations like the AIDS Council.

We believe that AIDS funding should be substantially increased to meet future service needs and to more effectively contain the spread of HIV throughout the State through AIDS education programs. At the same time we must utilise existing resources and programs effectively, avoiding duplication and waste.

ACON will be urging Governments - particularly the Commonwealth Government - to substantially increase AIDS funding during the current and next financial year. ACON itself will require increased funding to meet its responsibilities during the next 12 months, particularly if we are to minimise HIV transmission in outer urban and regional areas and among those still participating in high risk activities. Similarly, increased funding is vital if we are to continue to provide care and support for the current and future AIDS caseload.

The final issue concerns people infected with HIV themselves. More work needs to be done to provide support for people infected by HIV and to provide a more appropriate vehicle for their contribution and involvement in the work of community organisations like ACON. Perhaps the most moving and certainly the most powerful statement made at the recent National AIDS Conference in Hobart came from people with AIDS. These people, their friends and partners, demanded recognition and involvement in the fight against HIV.

ACON needs increased involvement and feedback from people with AIDS and people who are HIV antibody positive, so that we can respond to their needs more effectively. Meeting these important objectives will be a priority task for ACON during the next 12 months.

CONCLUSION

Our progress during the past 12 months would not have been possible without the considerable commitment of many ACON members, volunteers, committee members and staff. I warmly thank all these dedicated people for their enormous contributions to the work of the Council.

Our community organisation has effectively met many of the challenges presented by AIDS during 1987/88. During the next 12 months we shall face many more challenges as we pursue our objectives of minimising the further spread of HIV through education and providing the best possible care and support for people affected by AIDS.

I am confident that the AIDS Council of New South Wales is capable of meeting these challenges and will remain at the forefront of the fight against AIDS.

Gray Sattler
President

STATE RELATIONS AND INITIATIVES

The AIDS Council has enjoyed a good working relationship with the NSW Department of Health during 1987/88 and with many other Government Departments, Government agencies and organisations and groups involved in AIDS. Developing a close working relationship with other agencies is an important philosophy of the AIDS Council: it is vital that Government and non-government organisations work closely together to maximise resources and provide the best possible level of services to people affected by HIV.

CEIDA (Centre for Education and Information on Drugs and Alcohol):

With the appointment of Rigmor Berg as AIDS/TVDU Education Co-ordinator an Advisory Sub-Committee was constituted, including ACON representation. The Project has recently received supplementary funding to undertake a program of training drug treatment workers who have direct contact with intravenous drug users. The aim of the program is to provide workers with the information and skills necessary to educate clients about safe sex and safe drug use practices.

Day Care Centre for People Affected by AIDS:

ACON strongly supports the establishment of a permanent, five day per week, day care facility for people with AIDS in Sydney's inner city area. ACON has endeavoured to co-operate fully with the management committee of the current day care facility, which operates on Wednesday and Friday of each week. ACON has assisted with lobbying for funding and we have assisted with the establishment and operation of the day centre management committee.

East Sydney Community Services - Hostel Project:

This project aims to provide temporary accommodation for certain people affected by AIDS, particularly in the inner city area of Sydney. ACON is represented on the Management Committee for this project by Terry Batterham (Welfare Services Manager).

Home Care Service of NSW:

Both the AIDS Council and the Community Support Network work closely with the Home Care Service, which provides home support services to people with AIDS. ACON's Welfare Services Manager, Terry Batterham, has been involved in a review of services for people with AIDS being conducted by the Home Care Service.

New South Wales Department of Health:

Relations with the NSW Department of Health continue to be good. ACON fully supports the continuation of the Department's AIDS Bureau and we have reiterated our view to the Department and to the Minister for Health that the Bureau must be properly resourced so that it can fulfil its role in helping to co-ordinate the NSW response to AIDS. ACON also considers it important that the AIDS Bureau continue to retain substantial autonomy within the Department, consistent with its vital role in responding to the AIDS pandemic in New South Wales.

Primary School AIDS Education Project:

Ken Davis, ACON's Education Officer, has been involved in a Steering Committee overseeing the development of AIDS information for primary school children in a Commonwealth funded pilot project based at the Inner City Education Service.

State Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS Policy (MAC):

This Committee is responsible for advising the State Minister for Health and the NSW Government on all aspects of AIDS in New South Wales. Membership of the Committee is drawn from experts on medical, scientific, social, educational, policy and administrative areas relating to AIDS.

Council's Executive Director, Bill Whittaker, has been a member of the Ministerial Advisory Committee since its formation in 1987.

ACON has made a number of important contributions to the work of the Ministerial Advisory Committee. For example, Lex Watson and Bill Whittaker participated in a sub-committee established to review the unworkable HIV surveillance procedures operating in NSW. This review has resulted in the introduction of a laboratory based surveillance system, with HIV antibody test results being notified on an aggregate basis, rather than individually: this work should alleviate many concerns about confidentiality and provide a more secure environment for people to be tested if they wish to do so.

ACON is also participating in a current MAC sub-committee on HIV Antibody Testing and Surgery Patients.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee has established sub-committees to advise it on Education, Community Services and Medical/Scientific issues. ACON is represented on these sub-committees by Don Baxter (Education Sub-committee), Terry Batterham (Community Services Sub-committee) and John Godwin (Community Services Sub-committee).

Sydney AIDS Intravenous Drug User Study Group (SAIDS):

This group was formed recently to co-ordinate and oversee research in Sydney into the IV drug using/AIDS area. The group is convened by Professor Ron Penny. ACON is represented on the group by Gray Sattler, ACON President.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS AND INITIATIVES

The AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON) is involved in a number of important activities at the national level, which contribute towards an effective response to AIDS in Australia.

AFAO (Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations):

AFAO is a national body responsible for negotiating with the Commonwealth Government and other national organisations on behalf of the Australian AIDS Councils. AFAO is governed by a National Committee, comprising delegates from each State and Territory AIDS Council. In between the annual AFAO National Committee Meeting, an elected four person Executive is responsible for managing AFAO.

ACON is represented on the AFAO National Committee by Bill Whittaker and Gray Sattler, with Bill Whittaker serving as AFAO Vice-President. Don Baxter served as AFAO Vice-President until April 1988.

The AIDS Council participated in various AFAO working groups and workshops during 1987/88, including the IV Drug Working Group, AIDS Education Workshop, AIDS Support Services Workshop, and the National Information Clearinghouse Working Group. All these workshops and groups have made an important contribution towards improving Australia's response to AIDS.

Bill Whittaker played a key role in drafting Organisational Guidelines for AFAO, which were adopted at the AFAO Committee Meeting in April 1988. He also provided advice on management and organisational issues to various AIDS Councils during 1988, again through visits auspiced by AFAO.

ACON also suggested the forthcoming AFAO Workshop on Volunteer Involvement in AIDS Organisations. This workshop is being held to assist AIDS Councils to improve their techniques for recruiting, co-ordinating, training, managing and supporting volunteer workers. It is expected that the workshop will be held late 1988 or early 1989.

AIDS Research Review Committee:

This Committee is currently responsible to the Australian National Council on AIDS (ANCA). AFAO is represented on the Committee through ACON by Lex Watson.

The Committee was asked to be an independent monitor of AIDS drug trials and to consider both the results and efficacy of such trials, including side effects from use of drugs being trialed and ethical issues arising from drug trials. To date, the Committee has been hampered by lack of access to results of AZT trials and rather narrow terms of reference. It is currently proposing to ANCA that its terms of reference be widened.

AIDS Trust of Australia:

The Trust is a national charitable trust, founded by the Governor-General in April 1987. During the formative

period of the Trust, the AIDS Council has provided office space and access to office facilities for the Trust's Sydney based Fundraising Director.

Bill Whittaker is an AFAO nominated Trustee of the AIDS Trust.

ANCA (Australian National Council on AIDS) and NACAIDS:

ANCA (formerly known as NACAIDS and the AIDS Task Force) is the Commonwealth Health Minister's principal advisory body on AIDS.

Don Baxter, ACON's Education Programs Manager, is a current member of ANCA. Don represented ANCA at the International AIDS Conference held in Stockholm in June 1988.

Don Baxter also served as Convenor of the NACAIDS/ANCA Working Group on Gay and Bi-sexual Men (membership of which included Bill Whittaker from ACON). Many of the recommendations from this very successful working group were adopted by the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health, with over \$500,000 being allocated during 1988/89 for AIDS education programs directed at gay and bi-sexual men throughout Australia.

ANCA/NACAIDS Insurance Working Group:

This working group was established in 1986 to look at the issue of AIDS and life insurance. The group was chaired by Professor Marcia Neave and had extensive liaison with both the Life Insurance Federation of Australia (LIFA) and the Commonwealth Public Service.

The Insurance Working Group produced a major report on life insurance in mid 1987 which was subject to extensive debate within the insurance industry and the community. In practical terms, the outcome was a voluntary Code of Ethics for insurers dealing with AIDS and HIV infection. This Code was drafted by a working group of four consisting of two people from LIFA, one from Commonwealth Health Department and one community representative. The Code was endorsed and adopted by LIFA, Commonwealth Health and the Insurance Working Group.

Lex Watson, a member of the ACON Committee, has served on both the Insurance Working Group and the Code drafting committee.

The Insurance Working Group has an ongoing interest in establishing some form of insurance ombudsman to monitor queries and complaints. There is also an informal commitment to continue liaison as necessary and to review the situation and Code in the light of future developments and information.

Condom Project and Condom Standards Committee:

The Condom Project is a Commonwealth AIDS Research Grants (CARG) funded project established early in 1988. Two proposals were submitted for condom research, one by Lex Watson on behalf of ACON and another by Dr Basil Donovan and Dr John Gerofi. CARG agreed to fund

the two proposals jointly, and a Condom Project team was established, based in the School of Public Health at the University of Sydney.

The Project aims to investigate the quality of condoms on the Australian market, the monitoring of standards for condoms, the reasons for breakages in use, the incidence of breakage in use and the appropriateness or otherwise of the present Australian condom standard, AS 1919.

The project is funded for two years and first results are expected to be released late 1988.

Lex Watson also represents AFAO on the Standards Association of Australia Condoms Standards Committee (CS/9). The Committee is responsible for advising the Standards Association on possible changes to the Australian condom standard, AS 1919. The Committee also monitors overseas and international condom standards.

Wollongong AIDS Research Project:

The Project is funded by the Commonwealth AIDS Research Grants Committee and the NSW Department of Health. The Project is concerned with the development and evaluation of counselling and support for people who are HIV antibody positive and volunteer carers.

Two counsellors are employed on the project: Kerri Allwood, who has been very active in AIDS, especially with CSN volunteers, and Larry Stillson, who is working out of ACON.

The AIDS Council has provided space to the project throughout 1988. With further funding from the Commonwealth in 1989 the project will hopefully expand to offer support to all new CSN volunteer carers.

World Health Organisation:

The World Health Organisation arranged a number of visits to the AIDS Council's Resource Centre during 1987/88. These visitors included overseas politicians, medical practitioners, health administrators and community workers. The visits enabled the AIDS Council to share its experiences in developing a community response to AIDS with other countries, particularly in AIDS education and providing support and services for people affected by AIDS.

ACON's Welfare Services Manager, Terry Batterham, provided consultancy services to the World Health Organisation during 1987, which included the development of an AIDS program for Tonga.

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS AND SUB-COMMITTEES

EDUCATION WORKING GROUP

The Education Working Group is responsible for helping to plan activities and programmes to promote AIDS education in the gay and general community and for assisting with the development of ACON's education policies.

The EWG hears reports from ACON working groups in the education area, and seeks to facilitate these groups working productively within a unified education strategy. Where appropriate, the EWG fosters the establishment of new groups.

The Group also seeks to assist the staff of the Education Unit in setting priorities, and in developing a coherent education strategy.

The Group reviews educational materials being considered for production by ACON, with members often contributing to the actual production. The Group also monitors and responds critically to materials produced outside of ACON in the area of AIDS education.

In December 1987 the Working Group held a very successful two-day education conference 'AIDS Education for Gay and Bisexual Men'. Four new working groups were formed out of that conference - youth, antibody positive support, intravenous drug users, and one targeted at work with gay men outside the inner city gay community.

As a result of the development of these working groups, the EWG undertook a revision of its charter towards that of co-ordination and strategic planning. In March 1988 the EWG and the Education Unit engaged in its first short-term planning exercise aimed at identifying existing and proposed education programmes, assessing the resources needed for the programmes, and either allocating existing resources or developing submissions for additional resources. Pleased with the success of this, the EWG will conduct a second planning session in October.

Safe Sex Sluts

Throughout the year the Super Secret Society of Simply Stunning Safe Sex Sluts has indefatigably continued its outreach work taking the message of safe sex and condom use to the bars, the streets, and dance parties. Appearing one moment in WAAP outfits for ANZAC day revels, then next reincarnated as check-out staff at the ACON Safe Sex Ball, and somewhere along the way managing to make it up to Lawson to win a talent quest, the Sluts have become very much a part of ACON's education and outreach. Much of the credit for the success of the Sluts falls to Barry Fitzgerald who has given generously of his time, energy, and creativity.

Gay Youth Working Group

This working group was formed at the ACON conference 'AIDS Education for Gay and Bisexual Men' held in December 1987, in response to the urgent need for greater and more appropriate AIDS education for young people. As expressed in the group's charter, our

objectives are to:

- assist in the development of strategies and production of education materials specifically for young gays
- organise and promote information forums regarding safe sex and safe needles use for young gays
- assist the education unit and make recommendations where appropriate

In the last 6 months, the group has met some of these objectives. We attended a recording of the ABC's 'Blah Blah Blah' programme on AIDS, conducted a successful and popular safe sex seminar at the Network '88 conference, held information stalls at Sydney's three main university campuses during this year's orientation week, placed letters and articles in university student newspapers addressing AIDS as an issue of special concern to young people, and placed a submission to the Department of Health for funding for a pamphlet and related education material for young people.

It is anticipated that close collaboration with the Youth Peer Education Officer will help integrate and expand the group's activities in line with the growing education strategies of the Council.

Speakers Project

The Speakers Project was established in June 1987. As at 11 August 1988, 168 presentations on the basic facts of the AIDS pandemic had been delivered by staff and volunteers. We have addressed schools, service clubs, welfare agencies, religious groups, colleges, ethnic communities, workplaces, prisons, womens meetings, and other community organisations.

Speaking at these venues is an important part of our education outreach. Often being able to ask questions of a speaker is the only way people can check their understanding of AIDS and how it is transmitted; relying on the media or pamphlets alone can leave people confused. Through these presentations we can reach not only the general public, but also those who engage in unsafe sex and unsafe injection practices who do not identify with messages targeted at the gay community or "drug addicts".

In workplaces, schools, welfare and community organisations, our presentations are often the first step towards the adoption of corporate policy and planning on how to respond to the AIDS pandemic.

For ACON, these speaking engagements give us valuable feedback on how the community views AIDS and safe sex. For the dozens of people who have volunteered for training and assignments with this project, these experiences in AIDS education and dialogue have proven very rewarding.

Intravenous Drug Users Working Group

As a result of the growing recognition that the transmission of HIV through unsafe intravenous needle using practices represented the same threat to our

community as unsafe sexual practices, ACON constituted an IVDU Working Group in 1988.

This group actively encourages the participation of individuals with personal as well as professional experience in the area, believing that the skills and experience developed by ACON in the area of community education and safe sex can similarly be applied to safe drug using practices through the participation of those who represent the IV drug using members of our community.

The group has been successful in receiving funding for a pilot project aimed at IV drug users not in contact with drug and alcohol agencies. The project, to take the form of a 'private communication' using cartoons placed in appropriate magazines, will inform these users about HIV transmission and AIDS, safe drug use, and safe sex. A submission has been made under the Community Education Project Grants of the Australian National Council on AIDS addressing the need for further resources targeted at safe drug use among gay/lesbian couples and recreational users.

In March 1988, ACON resolved that as a part of its overall strategy to reduce the spread of AIDS, it would develop a needle exchange program. A draft policy and strategies paper is in preparation and work on establishing a pilot exchange should be underway in early September.

Paul van Reyk
Convenor

EVENTS/FUNDRAISING WORKING GROUP

This Working Group was created in 1987 to co-ordinate ACON community events and to raise funds for Council programs and projects. The Group works closely with the Education Working Group to maximise the impact of appropriate educational messages. In doing so it has been particularly effective in reinforcing the "safe sex" message.

Major Projects:

1988 Sydney Gay Mardi Gras Parade: This was the first attempt by ACON in constructing a major parade entry. The concept was the "temple of safe sex" which was achieved by using Hindu Indian images and dance movements. The crowd reaction on the night was extremely enthusiastic with our float going on to win the Mardi Gras Award for Best Safe Sex Promotion. This project was successful in other areas - notably the way in which it involved many volunteers by fostering their artistic skills.

Candlelight Rally: Monday May 30 saw Sydney's third candlelight memorial rally for people who have died from AIDS, marking this city's involvement in a worldwide event. About 1500 people participated this year including many community and political leaders: to show care and concern for people with AIDS and to remember friends, companions and loved ones who have died. This year the rally commenced at Taylor Square and moved to the Pitt Street Uniting Church where the ceremony incorporated speeches and musical interludes. The number and variety of those attending the rally and meeting showed how AIDS is affecting the lives of so many in the community.

Safe Sex Ball: The inaugural Safe Sex Ball was the major fund-raiser for 1987/88, raising around \$8000. The concept was a "supermarket of safe sex" with the Safe Sex Sluts employed as check-out attendants for the night. Nearly 1000 people danced the night away in an ambience of safe sex created by artist David McDiarmid. His artistic skills were complemented by the lighting of Robert Lake and music of Bill Morley and Robert Rasie. The night was made the epitome of glamour by Miss 3-D, Cindy Pastel and Twistie. The group is extremely grateful to all of these people for their dedication and excellence.

The Events Fundraising Group welcomes people with skills and enthusiasm. We are planning an even more creative program during 1988/89.

Stephen Auburn
Convenor



LEGAL WORKING GROUP

The Legal Working Group (LWG) continues to be the only AIDS law group in Australia either at community or government level. As such it has experienced increasing requests for advice and information, and has increasingly had to adopt a national focus covering all State and territory law as well as Commonwealth law.

In the last year, the LWG has undertaken two major projects, the *AIDS and Your Rights* pamphlet and the AIDS Law and Civil Liberties Project.

AIDS and Your Rights

This is a 25 page guide to legal issues, primarily for PWAs, people who are HIV Ab+, their friends, family and everyone working in the AIDS field. Drafted by the LWG, it has been adopted by AFAO, and cost of printing 20,000 copies has been borne by the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health.

The pamphlet was launched during the Third National Conference on AIDS by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissioner, Brian Burdekin.

It is hoped that funds will be available for a revised edition in early 1989.

AIDS Law and Civil Liberties Project

Funding for this project, initially to employ a Legal Research Officer for six months, was provided by the Commonwealth late in 1987, to ACON via AFAO. John Godwin was employed as LRO starting at the end of February.

In excess of 40 areas of law have now been identified for research. They range from public health, notification and virus transmission laws through doctors' and patients' rights, to condom laws, insurance laws, sex education and censorship.

The project is national in scope. It aims to detail the statute law, case law, monitor legislative and judicial developments, both national and international, consider policy implications and philosophies and to be of assistance to individuals and governments in developing appropriate regulatory frameworks for AIDS policy.

To date the project has largely completed 12 of its topic areas so far as the law goes. Work has been started on numerous other areas, and on some policy issues. It is hoped that funding will be available in 1988-89 to continue the project and develop a permanent legal resource available to people in the AIDS field.

Already the project is receiving a steady flow of enquiries from both individuals and groups and organisations. Subject to resources, these have been met. However while information and advice can be given, at this stage the project cannot act formally as a legal representation centre. Such a development may be needed in the near future, as demand increases.

Partly as a result of the project, partly because of the unique resource of the LWG generally, the group, the project and their individual members have been involved in numerous activities.

These activities included:

- monitoring insurance problems and responding to requests for insurance related advice from individuals in several States.
- participating in formulating insurance policy and a Code of Practice for life insurers. Lex Watson is a member of the NACAIDS/ANCA Insurance Working Group.
- monitoring proposals for testing of police, prisoners

and surgery patients and sentinel testing of other groups in the community.

- pressing for amendment to the NSW Proclaimed Diseases legislation, and proposing a new test result surveillance system that is more effective and fully protects anonymity.
- pressing for amendments to the Anti-discrimination Act to unambiguously include HIV status and presumed HIV status.
- commenting on the draft of the Commonwealth's Green Paper on AIDS. David Buchanan and Lex Watson assisted in drafting sections.
- making submissions in response to:
 - the NSW Committee on Adoption's paper concerning adoption and fostering of HIV infected children
 - the NSW Government Violence Against Women and Children Law Reform Task Force's consultation paper
 - the NACAIDS Discrimination Working Group Report
 - the Victorian Law Reform Commission's discussion paper on Informed Consent to Medical Treatment
 - NSW Legislative Council Select Committee on proposals to limit the Ombudsman's powers of investigations into complaints against police, with specific reference to the implications for people with HIV

the Victorian Health Department's Infectious Diseases discussion paper

- investigating and advising on the law relating to display of condoms for retail, and advising the University of Sydney based Condom Project on laws on condom standards, availability and advertising.
- advising ACON on the legal implications and requirements for establishing a needle exchange service.
- assisting ACON in the drafting of a confidentiality agreement for volunteers and employees of ACON.
- monitoring developments in new and proposed legislation, such as the Anti-discrimination (Amendment) Bill 1987 NSW on vilification of minority groups, the Health (General Amendment) Act 1988 Vic, and amendments to the NSW Prison Regulations.
- monitoring AIDS related issues which have arisen in recent court cases regarding developments in such areas as the law of confidentiality, liability consequent upon HIV infection through blood transfusion, mitigation of prison sentences of prisoners with HIV, and the availability of the defence of honest and reasonable mistake to the Crimes Act offence of inciting homosexual intercourse with a male under 18.
- initiating formal links with the NSW Department of Health's Complaints Unit.
- providing assistance to a person seeking to bring proceedings in the Equal Opportunity Tribunal against a surgeon who allegedly refused to operate on the person on the grounds of their homosexuality. This is a test case for discrimination and compulsory testing.

Subject to the availability of funds for which application has been made, the LWG hopes in the next year to hold an AIDS Law seminar in Sydney, to publish the research of the AIDS Law and Civil Liberties Project, to establish a computerised law and AIDS data base, and other projects.

Lex Watson
Convener

MEDIA WORKING GROUP

Established in April 1987, the Media Working Group has seen a period of evolution and is currently looking at proposals for change in the forthcoming year. The aims of the groups have been to -

1. improve the image of the AIDS Council to the gay and general community and assist affiliate groups, when requested, in the promotion of their work.
2. ensure that the Council maintains a unified public image through its media and advertising.
3. liaise with other working groups and affiliates in the promotion of ACON activities.

Initially, the major thrust of the group was to target the general media, particularly newspapers and to be involved in the production of press releases responding to negative or misinformed reporting. On a weekly basis, the need to do this was high or low, depending on the mood of the media. Now much of the working group's activities in this area have been incorporated into the daily routine of Council's Executive Director.

In September 1987, the Council approved the production of a bi-monthly membership newsletter to keep Council members better informed of Council's work and with AIDS issues generally. Because of fluctuations in membership of the working group and the Council's increasing workload, only one issue has been published to date. The working group is currently looking at combining the newsletter concept with Council's monthly information newsletter *Frontline*, with the object of producing one expanded information source for Council members and the many other groups and individuals who receive *Frontline*.

The need for the media working group to work more closely with those involved in publishing Council material has resulted in discussions to amalgamate the Media Working Group with the Education Working Group.

Phillip Black
Convenor



"AIDS and Your Rights". Produced by ACON for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

MEDICAL/CLINICAL WORKING GROUP

The Medical/Clinical Working Group was responsible for a number of worthwhile achievements in the past year. These included -

1. Preparing the position paper on AZT for ACON, subsequently adopted by AFAO, as their position paper.
2. Keeping the ACON committee informed of research and therapy developments related to HIV infection and associated opportunistic illnesses.
3. Negotiating with St. Vincent's and the NH&MRC about the conduct of the "High risk" AZT trial. These negotiations resulted in fourteen changes to the "Informed consent document", most importantly, the complete removal of the "Liability-exclusion clause", a significant tightening of the confidentiality provisions, and guarantees to volunteers who progress to AIDS while on the trial that they will be provided with AZT therapy for the duration of the trial.
4. Attending NH&MRC research seminars to represent ACON and raise ACON's profile within the research community.
5. Beginning the production of a series of "Facts sheets" to give infected persons the basic understanding they need to make informed decisions about their health care. The first of these "AZT for Beginners" has met with Australia-wide demand and topics to follow are "Deciding on experimental drug therapies", "Interpretation of T-cell results", "Avoiding opportunistic illnesses" and "Vaccinations and the HIV-infected".
6. Beginning negotiations with the Albion St. Centre regarding the small scale trialling of possible anti-HIV agents whose potential has essentially been ignored because they are not financially rewarding. Priorities here are AL721 and Dextran sulphate.
7. Providing a major input into the ACON/AFAO publication *"Know Your Health Status ... Advice for people who may be at risk of AIDS"*.
8. Providing medical/scientific information necessary to the deliberations of the HIV testing sub-committee.
9. Organising the June 1988 public meeting on "AIDS drug trials".

Overall I believe that in the past year we have achieved a position of respect in the medical/scientific community which will help to ensure that ACON's opinions and interests receive the consideration they deserve.

The working group has not met formally since the end of 1987, largely because of the difficulty of finding a mutually convenient time for the heavily committed persons involved. I have tried to get around this difficulty by canvassing the issues individually with all the persons concerned, but I acknowledge that this system has serious shortcomings and I am committed to seeing the group meet on a regular basis in the coming year, if necessary by appointing another convenor. There is much to be done and I encourage any member who thinks that their talents may be utilized by the working group to contact the convenor.

Rolf Petherbridge
Convenor

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH & ETHICS WORKING GROUP

The Social Science Research and Ethics Working Group was established in October 1987 to increase the profile of ACON and its affiliates in all aspects of social research. The Working Group saw two main aims -

- monitoring social research the Council was asked to promote and participate in.
- participating in the development and implementation of social research.

The Working Group is reliant on volunteers who have an interest in research; both people participating in research and those involved in conducting projects.

The Working Group advised on submissions to the Commonwealth AIDS Research Grants Committee, and participated in discussions with AIDS Councils in other States in the formation of their proposals.

Recognising that many students and staff of tertiary institutions are developing an interest in AIDS, the Working Group will be preparing and circulating guidelines to these bodies. These guidelines will provide prospective researchers with limits and restrictions which would have to be met prior to the Council supporting proposals. This initiative will increase the Council's profile in research and will assist in setting official standards to protect the rights of people affected by the AIDS crisis.

Levinia Crooks
Convenor

WELFARE WORKING GROUP

The Welfare Working Group has been in a resting mode since early 1988. The Welfare Services Manager has been intensely involved with the formation of the CSN/ACON Liaison committee and other areas to do with support services for people living with AIDS.

The decision to reactivate the Welfare Working Group has coincided with the departure from ACON of Terry Batterham, Welfare Services Manager. With the imminent appointment of a new Welfare Services Manager it would seem advisable to wait for a brief settling period, before embarking on new formats or projects.

The area of supporting people living with AIDS and ensuring that a high quality of life is maintained is a vitally important one. Issues such as housing, access to support services and social security etc., are complex and urgent. The Welfare Services Manager needs practical support and input of information. I see this as being the main role of the Welfare Working Group.

Anybody interested in providing this support or having input could contact the Welfare Services Manager or myself through the ACON offices at Sophia Street.

David Edler
Convenor

HIV ANTIBODY TESTING SUB-COMMITTEE

The purpose of this sub-committee is to develop policy on the often difficult and complex issue of HIV antibody testing.

Council's HIV Antibody Testing Sub-committee continues to be the only sub-committee of its kind operating in Australia. Membership of the sub-committee is drawn from members and staff of the Council, with outside experts frequently being invited to join the sub-committee when policy is being developed in a specific area, for example in the case of people being cared for in psychiatric institutions.

The sub-committee works closely with other Australian AIDS Councils and with the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO).

The major project of the sub-committee during 1987/88 was the development of a Position Paper on HIV Testing for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. This comprehensive document covers all aspects of HIV Testing, including testing issues affecting health care workers, prisoners, life insurance, pregnant women or women intending pregnancy, prostitutes, and hospital patients. The Position Paper is the first document of its kind produced in Australia.

Because the testing issue is one of the most complex in AIDS and more and more issues are emerging, the sub-committee is currently working on a second edition of the Position Paper, which it intends to complete by the end of 1988.

The HIV Testing Sub-committee has also reviewed the AIDS Council's General Policy on Antibody Testing. This has resulted in Council recognising that availability of antiviral treatments and prophylactic measures are additional arguments to be considered by people when deciding whether or not to be tested, or how frequently they should monitor their health status if they have been tested already.

The sub-committee has recently produced a pamphlet *"Know Your Health Status ... Advice for people who may be at risk of AIDS"*, for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. The pamphlet is designed to further assist people in making an informed decision about antibody testing and monitoring their health status.

Bill Whittaker
Convenor

**Know
Your
Health
Status...**

*advice for people
who may be at
risk of AIDS*

STAFF UNIT REPORTS

ADMINISTRATION UNIT

The Administration Unit provides the administrative and financial framework to allow the AIDS Council of NSW to conduct its activities. It consists of two full-time staff – Administration Manager and Administration Assistant.

The overwhelming challenge for this Unit during this year was grappling with the dramatic growth of the AIDS Council. This is evidenced by staff numbers increasing from 9 to 15, income nearly trebling, expenditure doubling, and the number of grants quadrupling from 4 to 15. As well the Council opened a branch in Newcastle. All of these developments impacted significantly on the work of this Unit.

Consequently the role of this Unit has been to ensure that the AIDS Council continues to operate efficiently and effectively in a period of rapid expansion. This has meant an ongoing review of administrative, personnel and financial systems so they assist rather than hinder obtaining organisational objectives.

Summary of Activities in 1987/88

1. Financial: Significant changes were made to improve the financial management of the organisation with the overall goal of providing financial information in a more effective and timely manner. Firstly conversion took place from manual cash accounting to a computerised system with full accrual accounting. The system becomes fully operational with the 1988/89 financial year. Now financial information can be easily obtained to facilitate effective budget and grant management, and accurate estimates of project costs in new submissions. The days of the guestimates are over with forecasting based on historical and industry data.

Secondly, the introduction of a purchase order system saw the launch of a financial procedures manual, sections of which are being progressively implemented. This will enable financial responsibilities to be shared by all Units particularly those incurring expenditure. Training sessions will be instigated to familiarise staff with procedures and guidelines.

2. Personnel: Payroll system was automated decimating time taken to prepare wages, monthly PAYE tax payments and group certificates. Detailed management reporting is provided on wage costs.

Staff Flex system was revised in keeping with actual work practices. Attendance records were simplified eliminating duplication.

Work will continue on a comprehensive review of personnel policies and procedures including terms and conditions, salary scales and other related issues. Of some concern is that very few positions are linked to industry awards.

3. Administrative: The most important issue here was the incorporation of the Hunter Region Branch into the existing administrative framework. This appears to have worked successfully with the Sydney office maintaining financial and personnel records on behalf of the Hunter Region Branch.

The Unit also directly provides resources to several working groups and sub-committees notably the

Events Working Group. Consequently this Unit helped organise many of this group's projects particularly the Candlelight Rally and Safe Sex Ball.

4. Vitamin Sales: The Vitamin Service was set up in 1986 to supply vitamins, and mineral and herbal supplements to people with HIV infection, selling them at near cost price which is usually half the normal retail price. The products are sold on the recommendation of AIDS Practitioners Group. This is an ad-hoc group which meets monthly comprising of representatives from conventional and alternative medical fields.

The Administration Unit is responsible for the day to day operation of the Vitamin Service through ordering of supplies, handling sales and liaising with the practitioners. A small administrative loading is added to the wholesale price to cover these costs. Whilst the financial statements show a small operating surplus of approximately 2%, this hardly covers the administrative overheads borne by the AIDS Council.

5. Consultancy to other Organisations: The AIDS Council of NSW has provided consultancy in administrative and financial systems to other AIDS Councils throughout Australia as well as to other community organisations within Sydney.

Conclusion

The workload of this Unit will continue to increase as the Council expands. However the changes made this year will allow the unit to improve its productivity and thus keep administrative overheads in control. In conclusion, thanks to all the members and volunteers who assisted in some of the more routine clerical tasks. A special thanks must also go to Norman Boyle for his help in creating the Unit.

Kevin Golding
Administration Manager

EDUCATION UNIT

The Council maintained and expanded its vigorous safe sex and support programs directed at the gay and general community through 1987/88. Our programs continue to be sex-positive and gay-positive: guiding our programs is the principle of establishing safe sex as the community standard.

Ongoing indicators – ano-rectal gonorrhoea rates, reported HIV-infection cases, and data from our evaluation research – strongly suggest our programs are heading in a successful direction. It was pleasing to see recommendations at both the Stockholm and Boston International Aids conferences that community programs move away from "personalizing the epidemic individually" to emphasising the building and maintenance of safe sex as the community norm, including strengthening of individuals' connections to the gay community and their self-esteem in being gay.

Our education programs are planned and

reviewed by the Education Working Group (see separate report), involving both volunteers and staff. Programs are developed by working parties and resourced by staff from the Education Unit. Expansion of the Unit staff – Nicholas van Schalwyk as Telephone Counsellor and, late in the year, Geoffrey Fysh as Youth Peer Education Officer and Michael Lockhart as Rural Education Officer – has made some expansion of programs possible. The Unit remains grossly understaffed at clerical levels.

Safe Sex Summer Campaign

The most innovative project of the Council was the planning, development and implementation of the Safe Sex Summer Campaign over the 1987/88 summer period. Primarily the conception of (then) Education Officer Ross Duffin, the integrated campaign used nine different elements (from posters to Mardi Gras floats to video ads) in a comprehensive Aids awareness campaign over the potentially higher risk summer period, addressing in particular, sex and the use of alcohol and recreational drugs and sex within relationships.

A thorough evaluation commissioned by the Council from Answers Action Research Limited, proved the success of this campaign, and it will provide a model for future education projects. Considerable interest in this program model has been expressed by overseas organizations.

Community Outreach Programs

While the Safe Sex Summer campaign was our major high-profile project in the gay community, we have been able to develop a series of more specialized programs.

Gay venue staff: sex venue attendants, bar staff and entertainers, are in a potentially key position to initiate and reinforce messages about HIV transmission and safe sex. The Unit organized a successful seminar for this group in September: the information exchanged both ways made this a particularly valuable exercise.

The Unit has maintained contact with all venues, with regular updating of our educational materials dispenser racks, posters, and *Frontline*.

Specialized workshops have also been held with the deaf gay community, in association with the Waratah Deaf Association, and a pilot workshop with non-English background gay men and their partners, in association with the Gay & Lesbian Immigration Task Force.

In June 1988 the Council received funding for two programs through the NACAIDS funded AFAO Education Program. The appointment of Michael Lockhart as Rural Education Officer will allow us to develop the first systematic Aids prevention programs outside metropolitan Sydney and Newcastle.

Geoffrey Fysh's appointment as Youth Peer Education Officer is allowing us to develop an effective peer support program for gay men. One peer education officer for a gay population the size of Sydney necessarily means concentrating on particular groups, and the Council resolved the position should concentrate on higher risk youth in the first instance.

The Education Unit has also assisted with the planning, presentation and resourcing of the CSN/ACON Volunteer evenings, held monthly since May.

Public Meetings

The Council continues its series of public forums on current issues. Through the year four well-attended meetings were held: AZT and the Sydney Aids Prospective Study (Dr D. Cooper and Brett Tindall) in October; Social Aspects of the Prevention of Aids

(ACON/Macquarie) Research Project and the Wollongong Aids Research Project (L. Crooks) in February; AIDS Drug Trials (D. Cooper, R. Kitchen, J. Gold) in June; and Michael Callen (PWA Coalition, New York) in August.

Information Materials Production/Distribution

The Council has continued a comprehensive information materials production program. Safe Sex Summer campaign elements included a poster, pamphlet, condom match-covers, T-shirts and Healthy Gift envelopes.

Other posters produced: Love Him Safely... Everytime, addressing sex within relationships, using non-Anglo images in an erotic setting, and Even Dickheads Play It Safe, a humorous condom promotion poster, proving very popular among both gay and non-gay organizations. You'll Never Forget the Feeling of Safe Sex was reprinted in view of continued demand, now primarily from outside the gay community.

Other print resources included How to Use Condoms wallet-sized cards, Safe Sex Safety Pin Symbol cards and pins, a Healthy Lifestyles leaflet, and a Safe Sex Always beat and venue fluorescent sticker. A reprint run of 100,000 of our Safe Sex & Aids pamphlet is now nearing exhaustion.

The Education Unit assisted the Clinical Working Group in the production and distribution of AZT For Beginners, the first of a planned series of broadsheets on Aids treatments and drug trials.

The Unit is also organizing distribution of Aids and Your Rights, produced by the ACON/AFAO Legal project.

Frontline, our newsletter and bar flyer has been produced regularly through the year (5000 copies per issue), with an expanding distribution list, particularly among health agencies, for which it provides quick access to Aids news and information materials availability.

The Council continues to expand its distribution of materials produced by other Aids Councils and health agencies to a wide range of people and agencies requesting information. These materials include Women & Aids poster and pamphlet (from ACSA), materials for the hearing-impaired (from VAC), various IV-user materials (CEIDA and others), and general Aids materials from government departments. In addition to print materials the Council provides speakers to requesting organizations (see separate Speakers Bureau report).

Condom Promotion

The vigorous condom promotion program has been maintained, particularly through the efforts of the Safe Sex Sluts (see separate report). All major gay community parties have had a highly visible safe sex reminder with condom availability. Over 50,000 condoms, all with instructions on proper use, were distributed through the year.

Program Planning

In October 1987, NACAIDS sponsored a national workshop on research and education for gay and bisexual men's prevention education programs. The outcome, a suite of nine programs making up a comprehensive national preventive program for HIV transmission among gay and bisexual men, is a world leader, and led to an invitation to present a paper at the International Aids Conference in Stockholm.

ACON hosted the second and third days of this

workshop, and a large part of its success was due to the intensive pre-planning by Ross Duffin and Bruce Parnell (VAC), and post-workshop compilation by Don Baxter. The two new positions described earlier are funded directly from this workshop's recommendations.

Following this model, ACON held a successful state-based workshop in December, described in the Education Working Group report.

Government Liaison

Considerable energy and resources are devoted to policy planning and advice with government agencies. The Education Officer represents ACON on the State Aids Education Sub-committee of the Ministerial Advisory Committee, and Don Baxter is a member of the Australian National Council on Aids and on its Education Committee, the Gay and Bisexual Working Group of which he is the Convenor.

With Aids issues arising in many sectors of society, the Council is frequently asked to advise and assist with policy planning for an ever wider range of organizations.

Don Baxter
Education Programs Manager

TELEPHONE COUNSELLING & INFORMATION SERVICE

ACON was provided with funding for a telephone counselling service during the National AIDS Education Campaign conducted in the first half of 1987.

With the expiration of Commonwealth funding for the telephone counselling service, the volume of requests for information and counselling did not, as expected, significantly decrease as the initial impact of the National AIDS Education Campaign dissipated.

Instead we experienced continued media coverage of AIDS and this, together with increased education programs by the Commonwealth, State and community organisations, ensured a consistent demand for AIDS information and professional telephone counselling, particularly during office hours. Consequently, ACON was successful in obtaining State Government funding for a full-time Telephone Counsellor/Co-ordinator in late 1987.

Telephone calls requesting information and counselling received during 1987/88 indicate a changing profile of people using the service. Heterosexual men and women, requesting information on a very wide range of aspects relating to HIV infection, now represent the largest group of callers. Telephone information is usually followed up with mailed educational material.

Calls from gay men indicate an increasing demand for information about support networks, treatment alternatives and other information relating to HIV infection. This implies the assimilation of primary AIDS educational material by this segment of the population and a new focus on living with HIV infection.

Volunteers remain crucial to the efficient running of the ACON counselling and information service. A volunteer roster of telephone operators is currently in place. These operators do not counsel, yet are trained to provide basic information to callers, with detailed counselling being provided by professional staff in the ACON Education Unit.

Nicholas van Schalwyk
Counsellor/Co-ordinator

WELFARE SERVICES UNIT

The AIDS Council's Welfare Unit consists of three staff. Two staff work specifically to expand and maintain the Community Support Network, which provides home caring for people with AIDS, with the Welfare Services Manager managing the welfare unit staff, developing and co-ordinating Council policy on welfare issues and providing counselling and referral for people affected by AIDS.

The Welfare Unit, the Community Support Network and the CSN/ACON Liaison Committee have worked hard to improve welfare/support service delivery over the last 12 months. The CSN/ACON Liaison Committee is working well thanks to contributions from its members and specifically from Judith Rosonakis, of the Haemophilia Centre, and Gabrielle Messenger, AIDS Community Nurse with the Maroubra Community Health Centre.

There have been 5 CSN Training Courses during the past 12 months. However, since April this year we have been running monthly courses. One of those just completed was at Westmead Hospital in Sydney's western suburbs. The CSN service is working well; however we still have some problems obtaining sufficient carers for day shifts and more work will need to be done to correct this situation in the next few months.

There have been considerable pressures during the past 12 months in forming a Welfare Service Unit of the Council and in creating an effective role for the new position of Welfare Services Manager. I have been able to establish excellent networks with professionals and policy makers in the field. I have been able to represent the Council's interests and concerns on a number of AIDS committees and to the State and Commonwealth Government. It is pleasing to report that, particularly during the past 12 months, ACON has become respected and acknowledged in the welfare field.

ACON has been successful in having a camouflage make-up service for people with Kaposi's Sarcoma operate from Waverley Community Health Centre, with the assistance of the Red Cross.

Unfortunately we are still in a situation where there are no nursing homes who will accept referral of a PWA. However, there are a number of nursing homes close to offering their facilities. Pressure must be maintained in this area, so that this facility can be utilised by people infected with HIV.

ACON has been following a philosophy of not necessarily creating new services, where possible, but rather attempting to have existing welfare services expand and extend their services to people with HIV. We believe that general health and welfare agencies should offer their services to those infected with HIV and, where relevant, compliment any new community based services for HIV infected people.

Terry Batterham
Welfare Services Manager

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

ACON/MACQUARIE RESEARCH PROJECT

The **Social Aspects of the Prevention of AIDS Project** began in early 1986 with funds initially from the Commonwealth Department of Health and later from the NSW State Department of Health. The project has 2 parts: Study A, a cross-sectional survey of 535 gay and bisexual men; and Study B, an in-depth study of the sexual and social dimensions of gay and bisexual men's responses to AIDS and its impact on their sexual lives. The Study A survey, co-ordinated by Rigmor Berg, was carried out from September 1986 until March 1987 by a team of 30 interviewers. Volunteers were recruited, by various means, from Sydney, Wollongong, the Blue Mountains, Canberra, and the Bathurst-Orange and Northern Rivers regions.

Analysis of the survey data began in May 1987 and is still underway. An early paper was presented at the Public Health Association of Australia and New Zealand Conference at Sydney University in August 1987, and working papers on sections of the analysis were presented at the NACAIDS Seminar on AIDS and Gay and Bisexual Men, held at the Belvoir Street Theatre in Sydney, and at an Albion Street Clinic Epidemiology seminar, both in late 1987. A further presentation, at the YWCA during the Gay Mardi Gras Festival in February 1988, provided the first opportunity for the project team to report back to the Sydney gay community and the volunteers who took part in the survey.

In addition to the first paper on preliminary data, 3 reports have been published by the project so far. These are:

- Report No. 1 - *Method and Sample*;
- Report No. 2 - *Information About AIDS: The accuracy of knowledge possessed by gay and bisexual men*;
- Report No. 3 - *Facing the Epidemic: Changes in the sexual and social lives of gay and bisexual men in response to the AIDS crisis, and their implications for AIDS prevention strategies*.

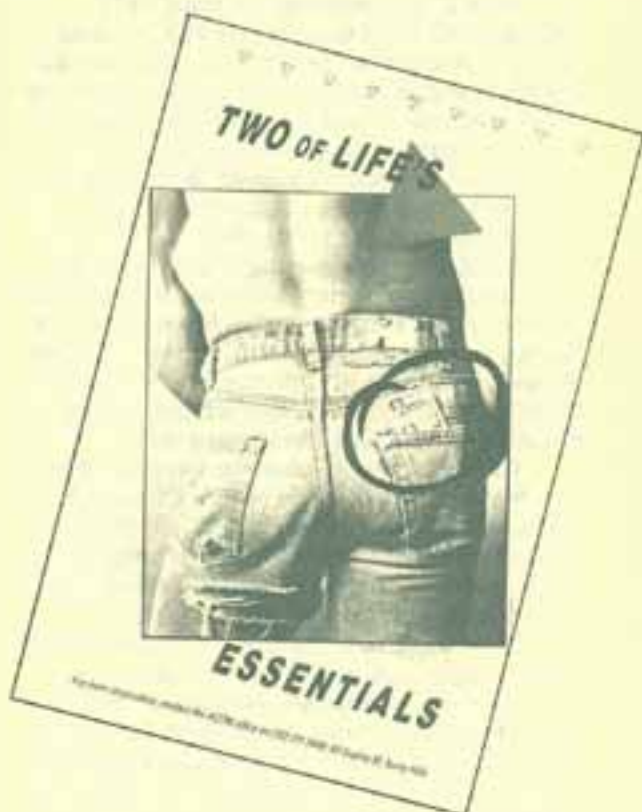
These reports were released by Macquarie University's Vice-Chancellor, Professor Di Yerbury, at ACON, in early July this year. Perhaps the most important feature of the reports is that they provide solid statistical evidence of the success of ACON's strategies in educating gay and bisexual men about AIDS and safe sex, while pointing to areas of difficulty for some groups of men in dealing with AIDS, and to the need for more specific, safe-sex education. Further reports in progress look at the nature and extent of sexual practices among gay and bisexual men, the meaning of 'gay community' and 'gay identity', the importance of HIV-antibody testing, condom usage and problems, bisexual men's sexual practices with women, and drug use.

SAPA Study B commenced planning in August 1987, after issues for investigation began emerging from the Study A analysis, and started its field work just before Christmas. Participants have been drawn from the 88% of Study A volunteers who agreed to take part

in Study B. 30 men will eventually be chosen for these intensive, audio-recorded interviews. At June 30th 1988, interviews with 7 men and initial analysis of 4 has been completed. Written case studies (about 10,000 words in length) have been analysed by the project group, and further volunteers are currently being selected, based on the new directions emerging from those discussions. A working paper on safe-sex rule information and breakage, intended for distribution to AIDS-education workers, is in preparation. At this stage we envisage that the interviews and their transcription and 60% of the case study work will be completed by January 1989. The project expects to complete the series of working papers for wider distribution and a final report by August 1989.

The steering committee would like to note particularly the contribution of June Crawford (consulting statistician) from Macquarie University, Glenn Bond (Study B research assistant), Vikki Sinnott (Study A computing research assistant) and thank the staff of ACON for their ever-helpful assistance during the last year. Copies of the reports of the project are available from the ACON resource collection.

Gary Dowsett
Project Co-ordinator



COMMUNITY SUPPORT NETWORK INC

The Community Support Network has had an extremely busy year providing voluntary care for people with AIDS in their homes.

Not only have we experienced an increase in the number of clients to be cared for, but we have also formed a closer working arrangement with the AIDS Council of NSW.

A CSN/ACON Liaison Committee was formed in December 1987 to manage the CSN home caring service and to plan the expansion of the service as our State caseload rises.

The CSN/ACON Liaison Committee has addressed many outstanding problems and has reviewed all aspects of the CSN service. Consequently, we have seen an increase in the membership of CSN, as well as being able to care for many more clients.

CSN cared for 78 clients during 1987/88, with a total of 3284 shifts undertaken by our carers. This averages out at 62 shifts per week, with the total number of hours of caring provided by CSN being 15,096 during 1987/88.

At the recent National AIDS Conference in Hobart, it was pleasing to note that CSN provided considerably more volunteer care for people with AIDS than any other similar organisation in Australia. Further, it was evident that CSN is providing a very high standard of care.

Our success is due to the work of everyone, from committee members through to our carers past and present. This is an achievement we can all feel proud of.

I hope that the CSN/ACON integration agreement continues, as it has shown that we can and must work together to provide the best levels of care for people with AIDS.

The committee wishes to thank all our carers for their dedication and love given to all our clients during 1987/88.

Graeme Flavel
CSN Chairman

HUNTER REGION BRANCH

The Hunter Region Branch of ACON was established with a grant of \$48,900 under the Commonwealth Government's AIDS Program.

The aims and objectives of the Branch are to establish and provide -

- 1) an easily accessible and relatively anonymous point for AIDS education and information in the Hunter Region;
- 2) a more acceptable non-institutional setting for counselling; and
- 3) a link between consumer and health services.

The Branch's Resource Centre at 70 Maitland Road, Islington, Newcastle, is operated by the Branch Management Committee, which includes members of the Royal Newcastle Hospital and the local gay support group.

The Centre is staffed by one full-time Co-ordinator (Mrs Yvonne Gough). The Co-ordinator began work at the Centre on 6 June, 1988, and the Centre became fully operational on 1 July, when it was officially opened by Mr Allan Morris, MP. The opening ceremony was attended by representatives from the local council, church representatives, members of the gay community, and representatives from the Royal Newcastle Hospital, University of Newcastle and the Sydney office of the AIDS Council of NSW.

A face to face counselling service is provided from the Branch by the AIDS Counsellor from the Royal Newcastle Hospital (Mrs Ann Bissett), as well as telephone counselling and safer sex education.

A recruitment drive for volunteers has begun using the "community noticeboard" on local radio and television, the University of Newcastle (OPUS Magazine), Hunter Institute of Higher Education, local community centres and local community groups.

Three general meetings have been held recently. The first was for Community Support Network trained volunteers. The second for people who have completed the "make today count" course (a palliative care course). The third general meeting was held at the Newcastle Family Planning Centre.

Everyone attending these meetings was supplied with an information package which included two questionnaires developed at the Branch Resource Centre. These questionnaires enable the Branch Committee to determine people's level of knowledge about AIDS as well as assisting the Branch with screening intending volunteers.

It is envisaged that volunteers will be available to assist at the Centre during evenings. This will extend the operating hours of the Centre, as well as providing services when the Co-ordinator is unavailable.

The Centre intends to provide AIDS education and information to the wider community. We are also planning AIDS education packages for employers, employees, teachers and schools.

An HIV antibody testing service, for those who wish to be tested, is planned to be provided at the Centre in the future. This service will enable clients to have antibody tests with the utmost confidentiality, as no names will be given to laboratories undertaking the tests.

Yvonne Gough
Co-ordinator

FINANCIAL REPORTS

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

The role of the Finance Sub-committee is to examine Council's financial systems and procedures, to recommend improvements and to advise the ACON Committee of Council on all matters relating to the finances of the organisation.

The Finance Sub-committee has had a busy year, resulting in a number of significant improvements to the administration of Council's finances. These include:

- Obtaining sales tax exemption and obtaining tax deductibility for donations above \$2.
- Purchased an accounting software package and computerised the ACON accounts, including the development of a chart of accounts.
- Established credit card facilities for membership fees, donations and sales from the vitamin service.
- Introduced new systems for authorising the purchase of goods and services, as part of the development of a Financial Procedures Manual.
- Created a formal process for the annual review of salaries for all ACON staff, when appropriate.

The conversion from manual cash accounting to a system of accrual accounting has created an extraordinary surplus of \$106,983 (refer financial statements), due to the necessity of showing all income received and earned during 1987/88. This has meant that a State Government Grant payment of \$78,300 for the final quarter of 1986/87 has been included in the 1987/88 financial year.

Kevin Golding
Convenor

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 1988

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting standards issued by the Australian Accounting bodies and with the disclosure requirements of the Companies (N.S.W.) Code, with the exceptions where noted.

(a) Basis of Preparation:

The accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis and on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(b) Depreciation:

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.

(c) Fixed Assets:

Fixed assets are included at cost or at independent valuation and are depreciated over the estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(d) Leased Assets:

Equipment acquired on lease has been included as part of fixed assets at its full cost value and is depreciated over the life of the lease on a straight basis.

NOTE 2: LEASE LIABILITY

(a) The lease liability comprises the acquisition of Rank Xerox photocopier and Commander telephone system.

(b) Lease Commitments:

	1988	1987
1. Not later than one year	5,812	2,600
2. Later than one year and not later than two years	5,812	5,200
	\$11,624	\$7,800

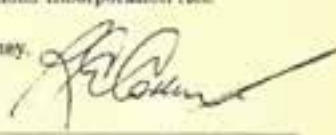
AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.

I have audited the Income and Expenditure Statement and Balance Sheet of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. for the year ended 30th June 1988.

In my opinion the accounts of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. are properly drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. as at 30th June 1988 and of the results of that organisation for the year ended on that date. The accounting records of the organisation have been kept in accordance with the provisions of the Associations Incorporation Act.

Level 1, 125 York Street, Sydney.

Dated: 26th August 1988


Robert E Corben AASA, CPA, FCIS
Registered under the Companies
Code.

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. (ACON)
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30th June 1988

1987		Year to Date	
\$		\$	\$
INCOME:			
266726	Grants Received – State	552550	
17989	Grants Received – Commonwealth	57982	
3119	Membership Fees	3150	
19539	Donations	4855	
13663	Interest Received	10706	
13612	Sales of Vitamins – Gross Proceeds	67076	
3735	Fundraising Events	25470	
	Other Income	13809	
338383	Total Income		735598
EXPENDITURE:			
1728	Audit Fees	3000	
818	Bank Charges	1367	
905	Board & Council Expenses	3704	
	Building Security	1325	
4430	Casual Relief Staff	5075	
1005	Cleaning & Garbage	2692	
	Commissions on Sales	25	
	Computer Supplies	1793	
1778	Conferences & Courses	1490	
100	Courier Costs	2797	
23384	Depreciation & Amortisation Costs	38948	
	Educational Materials	17457	
2671	Electricity	4068	
	Facsimile Services	763	
	Fundraising Costs	18418	
5885	General Expenses	4512	
	Incidental Purchases	1471	
4794	Insurance	5465	
	Interest Paid	314	
2600	Leasing	1243	
	Losses on Disposal of Assets	3322	
1431	Maintenance & Repairs	6772	
7120	Postage	10923	
22979	Posters	12514	
15409	Printing & Stationery	10096	
4128	Programmes & Services	23893	
33646	Publicity & Promotion	32451	
	Radio Pages	223	
	Recruitment Costs	5834	
36161	Rent	41503	
	Staff Development & Training	100	
12790	Telephone	6331	
3615	Travel Expenses	4785	
	Services to Other Organisations	2034	
15294	Purchases – Vitamins	65529	
144592	Wages	286059	
347263	Total Expenditure		628296
\$(8880)	Excess of Income over Expenditure		\$107302

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc. (ACON)
BALANCE SHEET AS 30th June 1988

1987		Year to Date	
\$		\$	\$
	Accumulated Funds		
226186	Accumulated Funds B/Forward	217306	
-8880	Surplus (Deficit) for Period	107302	
0	Prior Year Adjustments	1116	
217306	Accumulated Funds C/Forward		325724
	Represented by:		
	Current Assets		
27247	Cash at Bank	12089	
0	Hunter Region Imprest	610	
300	Cash Floats	1100	
91949	Investment Accounts	368972	
3968	Accounts Receivable	10840	
0	Deposits - Utilities	100	
1154	Inventory - Vitamins	4085	
0	Prepaid Expenses	1301	
124618	Total Current Assets		399097
	Non Current Assets		
	Fixed Assets		
26847	Furniture and Fittings	25913	
-7309	Less Accumulated Depreciation	10421	
19538			15492
20135	Office Equipment	28552	
-2839	Less Accumulated Depreciation	13940	
17296			14612
0	Library		2747
75881	Leasehold Improvements	89852	
-15176	Less Accumulated Amortisation	32946	
60705			56906
0	Equipment Lease - at Cost	21507	
0	Less Accumulated Depreciation	3634	
0			17873
97539	Total Non-Current Assets		107630
222157	Total Assets		506727
	Current Liabilities		
0	Accrued Expenses	11382	
251	Trade Creditors	10547	
4600	Lease Liability	5812	
0	Grants in Advance	147450	
4851	Total Current Liabilities		175191
	Non-Current Liabilities		
0	Lease Liability		5812
\$217306	Net Assets		\$325724



Candlelight Memorial Vigil, 1988



Candlelight Memorial Vigil, 1988

NOTES

AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.
P.O. Box 350, Darlinghurst, N.S.W. 2010. Ph: (02) 211 0499 Fax: (02) 281 3867