



Whitehorse Emergency Relief and Support Inc.

Annual Report

2024

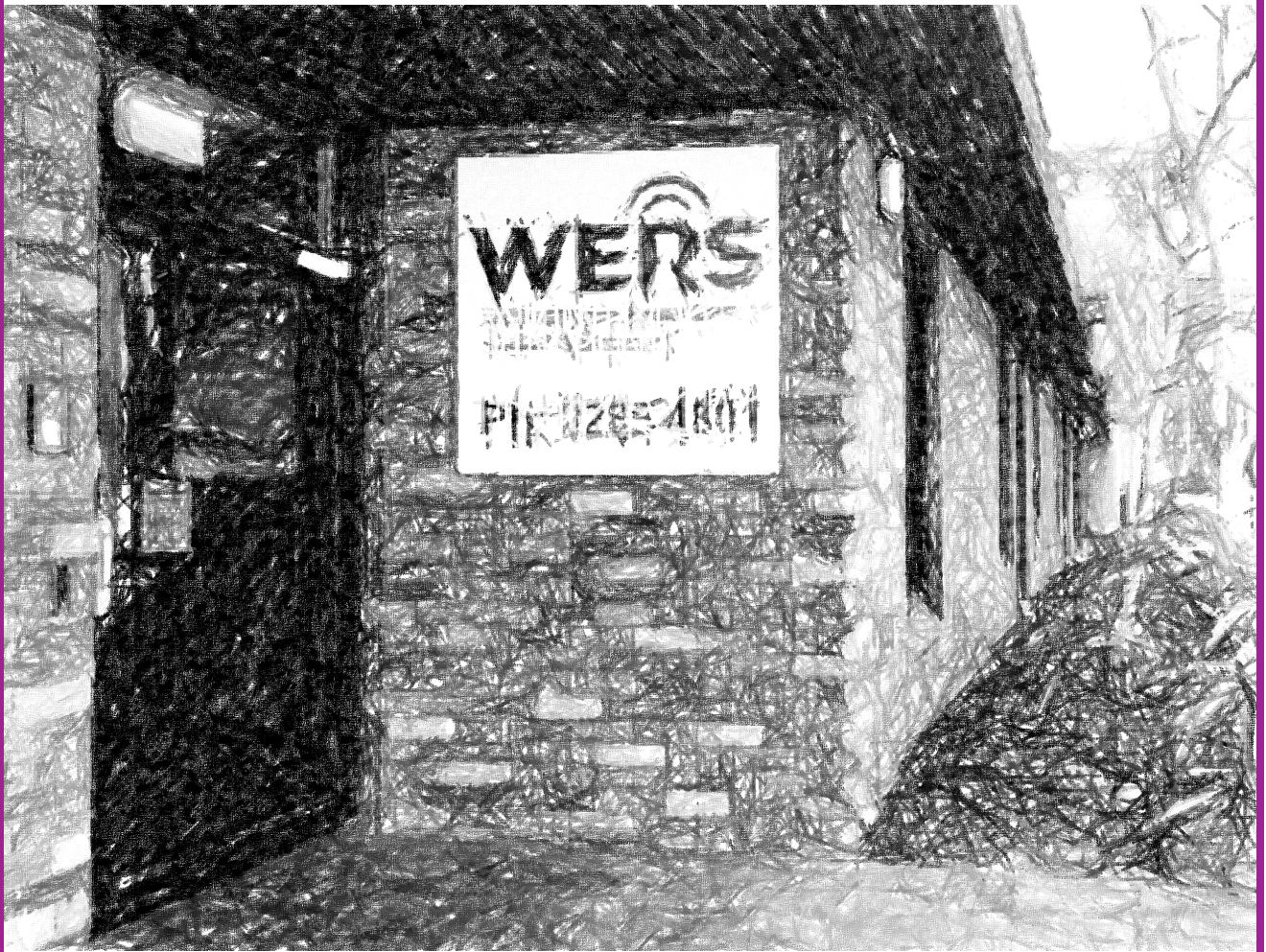


Table of Contents

Board members p.3

Board report p.4

Manager’s report p.6

Client demographics p.8

Treasurer’s report p.11

Financial report p.13

Board of Management 2023-24

President	David Selby Smith (<i>to Nov 23</i>); Sudharma (Sid) Hiremath (<i>from Nov 23</i>)
Vice President	<i>Vacant to Nov 23</i> ; Eva Patricia (Trish) Cole (<i>from Nov 23</i>)
Treasurer	Peter Grierson (<i>to Nov 23</i>); Devika Khatri (<i>from Nov 23</i>)
Secretary	Alex Salmon
Ordinary Members	Dilan De Silva (<i>to Nov 23</i>); David Selby-Smith; Judith Eadon (<i>from Nov 23</i>)

Board report

As we reflect on the past year, I am both humbled and inspired by the resilience and dedication demonstrated by our volunteers and supporters. Once again, Whitehorse Emergency Relief & Support (WERS) has risen to the challenge, providing critical emergency relief services to those in dire need.

In 2023-24, we responded to 355 individuals representing a total of 2715 household and family members affected by the ongoing inflation and rising cost of living across the City of Whitehorse. Under the leadership of our Manager, Alan Ritter, our volunteers have tirelessly provided emergency relief, food parcels, and vital information and referrals to those in our local community.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our volunteers, whose selflessness and commitment inspire us all. You are the heart of WERS, and your efforts impact the lives of those we serve. The commitment and professionalism of our volunteers have been extraordinary, showcasing their ability to mobilise resources effectively—a true testament to the training and preparation we prioritise at WERS.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank our former President, David Selby Smith for navigating our services during the challenging COVID period alongside Peter Grierson and Dilan De Silva whose terms on the Board ended in 2023.

I would also like to highlight a significant decision made by the Board in the past year regarding a proposal for a merger with a local not-for-profit organisation. After careful consideration, the previous Board decided against it, reaffirming our commitment to our current mission and structure.

This year, we welcomed four new directors to the WERS Board, bringing fresh perspectives that have already made a significant impact. Strategic planning has become a top priority, focusing on marketing, communications, relationship-building, and fundraising. These efforts aim to forge new partnerships with local businesses and community organisations, enabling us to enhance our service delivery and reach even more individuals in need. The new signage supports the Board's strategic direction to have greater visibility and accessibility for clients.



As we look toward 2024-25, we recognise that challenges remain. Ongoing high inflation amplifies the needs of our clients, the majority being on Centrelink benefits which are mismatched with rapidly increasing living costs, while some have no income at all. Our strategic plan emphasises enhancing our preparedness and response capabilities while advocating for policies that address the root causes of vulnerability in our communities.

To our donors, thank you for your unwavering support. Your belief in our mission empowers us to act swiftly and effectively when it matters most. Together, we are making a meaningful impact.

Thanks to the generous contributions from our community, we can provide targeted assistance, ensuring that those most affected receive the support they desperately need. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to every supporter—your generosity makes a profound difference.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to our peak body, Community Information and Support Victoria (CISVic) who on behalf of agencies such as WERS negotiates and distributes funding from the federal government, thank you for your exceptional support. Your leadership and unwavering advocacy for our sector make a tremendous difference, empowering us to serve our community with greater impact. Thank you for standing with us and championing our cause! While DSS funding is our main income source, our manager Alan continues to work hard seeking additional grants from state and local government as well philanthropic organisations and service clubs to support the needs of those who come through our doors.

In closing, I invite you all to continue this journey with us. As we face new challenges, let us stand united in our commitment to providing hope and assistance to those in need. Together, we can build a stronger, more resilient community.

With heartfelt appreciation,

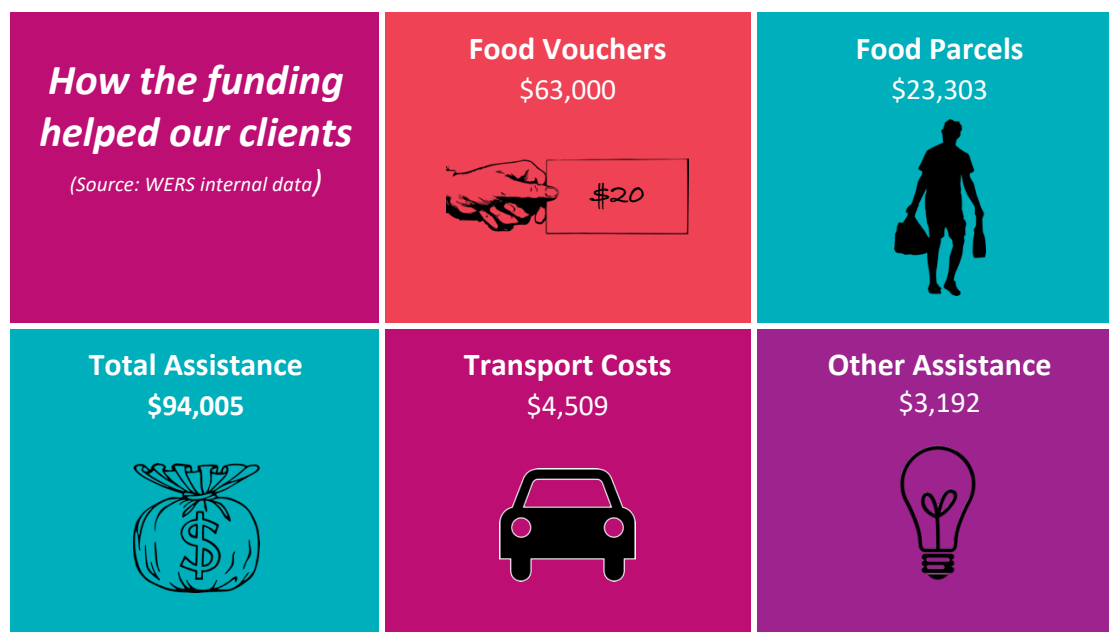
Sudharma Hiremath

President, Board of Directors
WERS

Manager's report

Whitehorse Emergency Relief and Support Inc. provides practical assistance to people living in the City of Whitehorse who are experiencing extreme financial distress. The intention is to help people overcome short term financial difficulties so that they can then get on with their lives.

Usually this support is in the form of food parcels and food vouchers but we also help in other ways. We can part-pay bills such as utility, phone, chemist and transport costs. Sometimes we part pay for car registration so that people can get to appointments or access job opportunities.



We also offer a referral service so people can locate the various agencies that can assist them in dealing with their issues. We refer people to organisations such as Community Housing, The Council for Single Mothers, Anglicare and Eastern Community Legal Centre.

During August 2023 we provided assistance to people trying to access the Power Saving Bonus. Various clients had difficulty understanding the process or didn't have access to the technology required to complete the applications. In association with CISVic we set up a stall in the local library where people could drop in and get the help they needed to apply for the bonus.

During the Financial Year we were pleased to receive additional financial assistance from a range of organisations including Metro Trains, Street Smart, Whitehorse City Council and the Valiant-Chrysler Car Club. These additional resources have meant we were able to largely keep up the same level of food assistance across the whole Financial Year. Some cutbacks were necessary during the second part of the year reducing the amount we paid for supports such as utility, phone and transport costs in order to prioritise food supports.

We are also grateful to the Box Hill Burwood Rotary Club for much-needed funding to upgrade our information and communication technology.

During 2023 - 2024 we assisted 355 clients over 1,288 client visits. Of those, 172 were new to the organisation. This is a change from previous years, the percentage of new clients accessing our services has increased as former clients stop coming in either because they have made positive changes in their lives and now don't need our assistance or possibly because they have left the area. Please refer to the client demographics section for more information on those who access our service.

We also assisted 1,570 dependent adults and 790 dependent children. This means we provided direct assistance to a total of 2,715 individuals (*Source: CISVic Portal Emergency Relief Demographics Report July 1 2023 - June 30 2024*).

Number of Client Visits Per Month Including Visitor & Phone Calls to the Centre 2023 – 24											
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
145	159	170	171	144	147	186	167	193	148	223	161
Total Value of Assistance Provided											
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
\$5,672	\$8,459	\$9,040	\$7,705	\$7,456	\$8,012	\$1,107	\$9,520	\$10,956	\$9,465	\$12,391	\$9,080

During the Financial Year several of our volunteers left the organisation to move onto other things. Rachael Mc Alavey, Mary Connors and June Anderson left us after giving much valuable assistance to people in the community. I would like to place on record my thanks for their contributions to our organisation and for their friendly, supportive approach to me personally.

We advertise extensively for additional volunteers through Seek and Eastern Volunteers with limited success. We had few applications however late in the Financial Year we were able to appoint two excellent new volunteers, Meredith Masterman and Jeanette Wong who were in training at the end of June 2024.

I would like to thank all the volunteers and the Board of Management for their support and the work they have done through the year. WERS is not only an important contributor to community wellbeing, but also a good place to work. The good natured, friendly approach demonstrated by everyone involved is critical in the work we do. It has been especially pleasing that the new Board of Management which took office towards the end of 2023 has worked well and made a positive contribution to the whole organisation.

Alan Ritter

Manager
WERS

Client demographics 2023-24

Year	Number of Clients Assisted	Number of Homeless Clients Assisted (percent)	Number of Relief Visits (average/client)	Total Value of Assistance Provided	Value of Food and Vouchers Provided (% of total)
2023-24	355	98 (27.6%)	1288 (3.2)	\$94,005.14	\$86,303.20 (92%)
2022 - 23	407	135 (33%)	1573 (3.9)	\$108,778.68	\$98,257.70 ((90%)
2021 - 22	320	115 (36%)	1238 (3.9)	\$77,224.94	\$70,848.86 (92%)
2020 - 21	259	102 (39%)	980 (3.8)	\$53,633.30	\$51,65.90 (96%)
2019 - 20	325	137 (39%)	1342 (4.1)	\$49,164.65	\$32,921.70 (67%)

Source: CISVIC Portal Emergency Relief Statistics

Client Needs

The main reasons clients give when asking for assistance are: Rent, Utility Costs, Family Breakdown and Transport Expenses. Note there can be more than one reason per client visit.

Reasons for Seeking Assistance	Total	Percentage
Housing - Rent	756	14.73 %
Utility / phone	739	14.40 %
Family Breakdown	640	12.47 %
Transport Expenses	612	11.93 %
No Income - Not eligible for Centrelink	318	6.20 %
Loan Repayments	265	5.16 %
Alcohol and Drugs	243	4.74 %
Family Violence	225	4.39 %
Other	211	4.11 %
Medical Expenses	191	3.72 %
Housing - Homelessness	178	3.47 %
No Income - Other	164	3.20 %
No Income - Asylum Seeker	129	2.51 %
Housing - Relocation costs	65	1.27 %
Infringement / Legal Expenses	58	1.13 %
Sudden decrease in income	54	1.05 %
Education Expenses	52	1.01 %
Social participation	50	0.97 %
Health - Mental	37	0.72 %
Housing - Mortgage stress	27	0.53 %
No Income - Waiting for payment	25	0.49 %
Animal / pet costs	23	0.45 %
Material Aid - Household Goods	23	0.45 %
Gambling	17	0.33 %
Material Aid - Clothing	9	0.18 %
No Income - Breached	8	0.16 %
No Income - Seasonal / casual work	6	0.12 %
Total	5131	100.01 %

Outgoing Referrals

In addition to the financial support we provide, we also provide a large number of referrals. We refer clients on to specific agencies that can help them address their longer-term issues. We maintain links with a wide variety of agencies that offer practical support to those in difficulty

Outgoing Referral	Total	Percentage
\$250 Power Saving Bonus	21	3.25 %
After Hours Mental Health Nurse Support Service	3	0.46 %
Anglicare	26	4.02 %
Box Hill Library	1	0.15 %
CAMCARE	4	0.62 %
Centrelink	28	4.33 %
Centrepay	1	0.15 %
Cheap and Free Meals	1	0.15 %
Child Support Services Australia	2	0.31 %
Chinese Community Social Service	2	0.31 %
Community Housing Services	56	8.66 %
Council of Single Mothers and their children	24	3.71 %
Darebin Information, Volunteer & Resource Centre	1	0.15 %
Disability Resource Centre	1	0.15 %
Doncare CAB	5	0.77 %
EACH Refuge Health Clinic	1	0.15 %
Eastern Community Legal Center	29	4.48 %
Federal Member for Chilsholm	1	0.15 %
Fine Fixer	1	0.15 %
Food Relief in Whitehorse	9	1.39 %
Free Cheap Meals	15	2.32 %
Having Trouble Paying Your Energy Bills	11	1.70 %
Health Ability	31	4.79 %
Housing Victoria	1	0.15 %
Housing Victoria Crises and Emergency Contacts	1	0.15 %
In Touch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence	3	0.46 %
Indian Care	3	0.46 %
Internal Case Manager	6	0.93 %
Total	647	99.88 %

Identified Disability

Disability Category	Total	Percentage
Psychiatric	168	53.33 %
Physical/diverse	97	30.79 %
Intellectual learning	34	10.79 %
Not stated/Inadequately described	13	4.13 %
Sensory/speech	3	0.95 %
Total	315	99.99 %

Note: Each percentage is of the total clients

Clients by Main Source of Income

Income Source	Total	Percentage
Government benefit/pension	308	86.76 %
No income	22	6.20 %
Wages - Part time	9	2.54 %
Other	8	2.25 %
Wages - Full time	2	0.56 %
Work Cover	2	0.56 %
No means of support (asylum seeker)	1	0.28 %
Not Stated/Inadequately described	1	0.28 %
Wages - Casual	1	0.28 %
Wages - Seasonal	1	0.28 %
Total	355	99.99 %

Most of our clients are on Centrelink benefits (86 %) but 6% of clients are not eligible for Centrelink support.

Of those on Centrelink, half are on Jobseeker and almost a quarter are on the Disability Support Pension.

Accommodation Type & Household Composition

Most of our clients are paying rent. Rent increases have impacted badly on people already at the margins. 30% are in private rental, 16% are in public rental and 14% are in shared rental.

One third of our clients are classified as homeless. This includes those in Boarding Houses, those staying temporarily in other lodgings and those in supported accommodation. Almost 7% of clients are living rough or in improvised dwellings.

Accommodation Type	Total	Percentage
Private rental	387	30.05 %
Public rental	209	16.23 %
Shared rental	179	13.90 %
Homeless - living in boarding/rooming houses	125	9.70 %
Homeless - staying temporarily with other	108	8.39 %
Homeless - living in improvised dwelling, tents or	95	7.38 %
Homeless - living in supported accommodation for	37	2.87 %
Transitional Housing	36	2.80 %
Homeless - living temporarily in other lodgings	32	2.48 %
Mortgaged	31	2.41 %
Rent free – staying with friends/family	17	1.32 %
Supported accommodation	15	1.16 %
Owner (not mortgaged)	14	1.09 %
Not stated/inadequately described	2	0.16 %
Caravan park	1	0.08 %
Total	1288	100.02 %

Half our clients are single people living alone, 1 in 5 are sole parents with dependents.

Household Composition	Total	Percentage
Single (person living alone)	180	50.70 %
Sole parent with dependant(s)	74	20.85 %
Group (unrelated adults)	29	8.17 %
Group (related adults)	21	5.92 %
Couple with dependant(s)	20	5.63 %
Couple	18	5.07 %
Homeless/No household	13	3.66 %
Total	355	100.00 %

Clients by Country of Birth

70% of clients were born in Australia. The next largest groups are from China 5%, then Malaysia 3% and New Zealand approx. 3%..

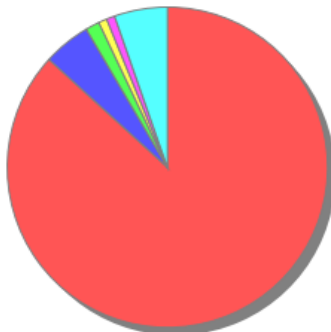
Country	Total	Percentage
Australia	250	70.42 %
China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)	19	5.35 %
Malaysia	11	3.10 %
New Zealand	10	2.82 %
England	6	1.69 %
Myanmar, The Republic of the Union of	5	1.41 %
India	4	1.13 %



● Australia
 ● China (excludes SARs and Taiwan)
 ● Malaysia
 ● New Zealand
 ● England
 ● Other

Clients by Main Language Spoken at Home

87% of clients say the main language spoken at home is English while almost 5% speak Mandarin at home.



● English
 ● Mandarin
 ● Tamil
 ● Vietnamese
 ● Arabic
 ● Other

Source: CISVic Portal Emergency Relief Demographics Report July 1 2023 - June 30 2024

Treasurer's report

We are pleased to report our Financial Statements for the 2023/2024 financial year.

As per our Contract with CISVic for the Financial Year we received a DSS grant of \$51,148, but we also received an additional \$32,184 of which \$5170 is for the 2024/2025 year.

In addition to that we received \$10,000 Felton Bequest Grant to be used by 31st March 2025.

Our Emergency Relief expenditure was \$86,350 and General Expenses being \$14,029.

Our Net Profit for the year was \$11,222, as compared to previous year's deficit of \$42,625, an increase of \$53,848.

We have \$30,171 in the Bank an increase from last year due to the additional grants from DSS and Felton Bequest. We hold a Reserve of \$19,037 to meet future commitments or shortfalls.

Our Net Asset of \$59,353, an increase from \$48,100 from 2022/2023

To ensure that our Profit and Loss Statement reflect clarity and transparency, we have separated the General and Emergency Relief Expenses.

Our Financial Reports have been prepared on a Cash Accounting basis.

We are pleased to say we are in a healthy financial position going forward.

Devika Khatri

Treasurer
WERS Board

Appendix A- Financial Report

See Financial Statements below.

Balance sheet report

Cash mode
30 Jun 2024

	Total			
	Actual	Last Year	Variance \$	Variance %
1-0000 Asset				
1-0001 Banking				
1-1000 General Account	29,460.04	14,359.66	15,100.38	105
1-1200 Master Card	670.93	1,629.58	(958.65)	-59
1-1300 Petty Cash On Hand	39.75	55.25	(15.50)	-28
Total Banking	30,170.72	16,044.49	14,126.23	88.04%
1-0002 Current Assets				
1-1400 Reserve Account	19,036.77	18,763.23	273.54	1
1-2100 \$10 Food Voucher	360.00	320.00	40.00	12
1-2200 \$20 Food Voucher	950.00	1,500.00	(550.00)	-37
1-2300 \$50 Food Voucher	6,850.00	6,050.00	800.00	13
Total Current Assets	27,196.77	26,633.23	563.54	2.12%
1-0003 Fixed Assets				
1-3000 Furniture & fittings	9,257.64	9,257.64	0.00	0
1-3010 Accum.Depr.Furniture	(8,761.16)	(7,835.39)	(925.77)	12
1-3200 Office equipment & computers	13,484.09	12,305.00	1,179.09	10
1-3210 Accum.Depr.Office Equipment	(11,528.06)	(10,262.03)	(1,266.03)	12
1-3400 Low value Pool	3,808.25	3,808.26	(0.01)	0
1-3410 Accum.Depr.Low Value Pool	(3,808.25)	(3,808.25)	0.00	0
Total Fixed Assets	2,452.51	3,465.23	(1,012.72)	-29.23%
Total Asset	59,820.00	46,142.95	13,677.05	29.64%
2-0000 Liability				
2-0001 Current Liabilities				
2-2200 GST collected	3,303.63	759.88	2,543.75	335
2-2400 GST paid	(2,836.58)	(2,747.53)	(89.05)	3
Total Current Liabilities	467.05	(1,987.65)	2,454.70	-123.50%
Total Liability	467.05	(1,987.65)	2,454.70	-123.50%
Net Assets	59,352.95	48,130.60	11,222.35	23
3-0001 Equity				
3-0000 Prior Years Surplus/Deficit	49,901.17	49,901.17	0.00	0
3-0002 Current Earnings				
3-1800 Current year earnings	11,222.35	(42,625.25)	53,847.60	-126
Total Current Earnings	11,222.35	(42,625.25)	53,847.60	-126.33%
3-0003 Retained Earnings				
3-1600 Retained earnings	(25,955.47)	16,669.78	(42,625.25)	-256
Total Retained Earnings	(25,955.47)	16,669.78	(42,625.25)	-255.70%
3-1000 Fund Balance Of Previous Year	24,183.90	24,183.90	0.00	0
3-2000 Historical Balancing	1.00	1.00	0.00	0
Total Equity	59,352.95	48,130.60	11,222.35	23.32%

Profit and loss report

Cash mode

01 Jul 2023 - 30 Jun 2024

	Total
4-0000 Income	
4-1000 Grants	
4-1100 Grant Income-DSS	83,331.87
4-1200 Grant Income -WCC	6,545.45
4-1400 Grant Income - Other	20,287.26
Total Grants	110,164.58
4-2000 Donations	
4-2100 Donations Income	
4-2102 Donations Other	800.00
Total Donations Income	800.00
Total Donations	800.00
Total Income	110,964.58
Gross Profit	110,964.58
6-0000 Expense	
6-1000 General Expenses	
6-1010 Sundry - Office	245.73
6-1020 Staff Amenities	185.30
6-1040 Security	704.19
6-1050 Insurance - General	430.37
6-1060 Rent	4,155.19
6-1090 Equipment < \$1,000	
6-1091 Computer equipment < \$1,000	1,000.42
6-1093 Equipment Miscellaneous < \$1,000	323.64
Total Equipment < \$1,000	1,324.06
6-1110 Information & Communication Technology (ICT)	
6-1111 Internet, Email & Website	221.46
6-1114 Software - Renewable License/Subscription	216.20
Total Information & Communication Technology (ICT)	437.66
6-1120 Postage	12.50
6-1130 Stationery	684.17
6-1150 Advertising & Promotion	640.00
6-1160 Fees & Permits	
6-1161 Criminal history/WWC checks	45.45
Total Fees & Permits	45.45
6-1170 Memberships	1,775.05
6-1210 Bank charges	39.00
6-1300 Visitor Parking	18.18
6-1320 Volunteer Costs	
6-1322 Volunteer Recognition	1,108.45
Total Volunteer Costs	1,108.45

	Total
6-1900 Telephone	31.82
Total General Expenses	11,837.12
6-4001 Depreciation-furniture	925.77
6-4002 Depreciation-Office Equipment	1,266.03
6-4003 Depreciation-Low Value Pool	0.01
6-5000 Emergency Relief Expenses - Direct	
6-5010 Food & Petrol Vouchers (before discount)	65,510.00
6-5020 Discounts Received	(3,290.00)
6-5030 Food Bank	2,924.23
6-5040 Food & Groceries for clients	14,778.31
6-5070 Chemist & Medical for Clients	1,389.84
6-5080 Other Financial Assistance for Clients	
6-5081 Utilities	1,449.84
Total Other Financial Assistance for Clients	1,449.84
Total Emergency Relief Expenses - Direct	82,762.22
6-7000 Emergency Relief Expenses - Indirect	
6-7010 Transport For Food	2,952.93
6-7020 Repairs & Maintenance - Food Storage	
6-7021 Repairs & Maintenance - Fridges/Freezers	635.00
Total Repairs & Maintenance - Food Storage	635.00
Total Emergency Relief Expenses - Indirect	3,587.93
Total Expense	100,379.08
Operating Profit	10,585.50
8-0000 Other Income	
8-1200 Interest income	276.85
8-1400 Other income	360.00
Total Other Income	636.85
Net Profit	11,222.35

Schedule 1
Regulations 18, 19 and 20
Form 1

Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012

Sections 94(2)(b), 97(2)(b) and 100(2)(b)

Annual statements give true and fair view of financial position of incorporated association

We, Devika Khatri and Alexandra Salmon, being members of the Committee of the Whitehorse Community Information and Support Inc., certify that –

The statements attached to this certificate give a true and fair view of the financial position of the Whitehorse Community Information and Support Inc. during and at the end of the financial year of the association ending on 30/06/2024.

Signed: D. Khatri

Dated: 16/10/24

Signed: ASalmon

Dated: 16/10/24