

STTARS ANNUAL REPORT 2003



STARS

SURVIVORS OF TORTURE AND TRAUMA, ASSISTANCE AND REHABILITATION SERVICE



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Chairperson's Report

The twelfth year of operation of STTARS has been one of considerable improvement, achieved by the combined efforts of the Director, staff, volunteers and Board. We are providing a range of high quality services to a wide variety of people, and our highly skilled staff members make this possible.

Whatever their role in the organization, they are all committed to helping those who have survived torture and trauma to find meaning in those experiences and a sense of safety in the present, and we thank them for their dedicated work.

One of the ways that the Director and Board are able to provide support for staff and volunteers to work effectively is to ensure that their environment is as positive as possible. To this end great attention has been paid this year to improving our physical surroundings.

We are greatly indebted to our Director for her energies in bringing all the changes to fruition, as the physical environment, infrastructure and equipment are very important to the productivity and sense of well being of our staff and clients.

Governance issues have been a major focus of the Board throughout the year, and in addition to establishing the strategic directions of STTARS through development of the Strategic Plan, the Board has also been responsible for monitoring and reviewing performance, and the attainment of the set goals.

In July the authorities delegated to the Director and those retained by the Board were documented in order to provide clarity and certainty of responsibility for the various tasks and roles and to help improve management processes.

A comprehensive performance appraisal process was also established, with the Director's appraisal completed in August.

To help improve communication and the transmission of information between the Board and staff, a system of staff representation at Board Meetings was introduced during the year. The representative occupies the non-voting position for six months, and reports on staff work and activities and comments on other Board matters from the staff perspective. The system has worked very well, with greater openness and understanding resulting from the two-way flow of information.

Safety issues have been given a strong priority, and in July we engaged an Occupational Health and Safety consultant to conduct a safety audit. Although no major problems were noted, the audit has resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive policy and procedures manual, and the implementation of recommended improvements to procedures for staff and volunteers.

We are conscious of the need to raise awareness of STTARS and its work within the wider community, and to this end we recommenced publication of the STTARS newsletter, and commemorated the International Day for the Victims of Torture in June with a vigil and multifaith service at the Migration Museum.

We have also sought help from our members with advocacy on refugee issues, as well as the organization of social and fundraising activities, and various events are planned for the coming year. We are very grateful for the help of Ann Kelly in developing this program.

I thank all my colleagues on the Board for their hard work during the year and their contribution to the good governance of the organization and commitment to the work of STTARS. The Board is a very dedicated team who voluntarily and with great generosity bring their skills, expertise and time to the myriad of issues we have tackled over the year.

I should like to acknowledge in particular the dedication of the Treasurer Alan Lucas, and the meticulous attention he has given to ensuring that the finances of STTARS are in a sound and healthy state, and in helping to undertake the appraisal of the Director. David Shepherd has also been of invaluable assistance in many areas and has given unstintingly of his time in working on the Strategic Plan, the Director's appraisal, occupational health and safety issues, and the renewal of the telephone system. I also thank him for taking on the role of Acting Chairperson while I was away overseas for a few weeks.

Bernice Pfitzner has attracted some medical practitioners and psychologists to work with our service and we are very appreciative of her work in this area.

We are also indebted to Rouha Vojdani, Carol Irizarry and Bruce Stocks for organising the commemoration of the International Day for the Victims of Torture, and to Ann Court for her work as Minute Secretary.

While the Board has been very stable in its composition over the past twelve months, we welcomed Richard Piorowski as a new Board member in May. He brings his expertise and experience in obtaining funding for small organizations to the Board as well as a strong interest in refugee issues.

We are very sorry to lose our long-serving Board Member Carol Irizarry who will not be standing for re-election. We thank her for her contribution to STTARS and wish her well in the future.

This year people have helped STTARS in many different ways. We would like to thank all those who have assisted us by voluntarily giving their time and skills to the natural therapies and befriending programs as well as all who have helped with administrative tasks.

We also greatly appreciate the help we have received from our many generous donors and their monetary and in-kind contributions. Their participation and assistance greatly enhances the quality of our service.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Director, B McGrath for her role in all the dramatic improvements at STTARS over the past year. We feel this has been a considerable achievement.

Christie Stevens

Dr Christine Stevens



Director's Report

The brisk pace of change and growth at STTARS has continued unabated over the past 12 months.

For several months STTARS was in a state of complete disruption with very difficult working conditions as we re-painted, stripped and polished floorboards, had network cabling and a new telephone system installed, provided a computer and workstation for every staff member, built two new offices, refurbished the reception area and counselling room, created a new database, installed a new filing system and updated our website which was woefully out of date.

The new STTARS now works more efficiently, looks much fresher and feels as warm and welcoming as ever!

It has also been an exceptionally busy year in terms of client numbers. The number of Humanitarian Entrants increased substantially over the past 12 months and the high numbers are likely to continue.

As a result, we have increased the staff positions in our Early Health Intervention Team and where possible have selected caseworkers who come from new and emerging communities. This hopefully helps new arrival refugees to feel more at ease as they go through the difficult process of settling into a new country.

The specialist Torture and Trauma Counselling Program has also experienced an increase in referrals and we now employ Robyn Smythe as our Intake and Assessment Worker to wrestle with the waiting list and provide short-term support to clients while they wait to see a counsellor.

Thankfully I was able to persuade Sandra Gault to return to counselling work at STTARS. She and Steve Thomson together with our sessional counsellors, continue to provide dedicated and high quality support to survivors.

Chris Rose is now responsible for managing both our volunteers and the Natural Therapies practitioners who provide such a vital service to clients free of charge. And last but not least, Lin Monash now holds the newly created position of Education and Training Coordinator representing our commitment to assisting mainstream health and other professionals to gain skills and confidence in responding to the needs of people from a refugee background.

Finding creative ways to expand services for clients and working on the premise that 'two heads are better than one', STTARS has successfully sought to develop partnerships with other agencies enabling us to develop some exciting new program initiatives. Of particular note is the Toy Library for use by therapists and counsellors in their work with refugee children that we created and funded in partnership with the Anglicare Loss and Grief Centre.

Building on the success of this partnership the two agencies collaborated to organise a Fun Day Out for Refugee Children. The event was open to all refugee families and participants were recruited from far and wide. The day was a resounding success with approximately 52 children and more than 20 parents attending a host of activities catering to all tastes.

We have also been closely involved in the development of the new Refugee Health Network and on their behalf organised the

printing and distribution of the South Australian version of the Desktop Guide to Caring for Refugee Patients; a useful resource for both doctors and other health professionals. Clearly there is a lot of interest amongst mainstream health professionals in working with refugees provided they have the information and support.

Over the past 12 months we have also made substantial progress in working with rural and regional communities. Several training sessions were delivered in Port Augusta and Fattaneh and Steve have done an amazing job in contributing to the support of the Afghani community in Murray Bridge, giving up their precious Saturday afternoons to do so.

My thanks go to the Board for the invaluable support they have provided to the staff and myself over the past year and the hard work they have put in to the service. A great success was the Vigil organised by Board members Rouha, Bruce and Carol to commemorate the International Day in Support of Survivors of Torture. Every aspect of it was beautifully arranged and the service itself drew quite a good crowd in spite of unresponsive media and horrible weather. We will need a bigger venue next year!

Many thanks must also go to our partners in providing services to refugees – the Migrant Health Service, Migrant Resource Centre, Anglicare and the Australian Refugee Association. I very much appreciate the efforts everyone has made over the past year towards working together.

And finally my thanks to all the staff and volunteers who make working at STTARS such a pleasure. It has been a very satisfying and productive year and I looking forward to continuing to work with them to create in STTARS a place for our clients that is caring, supportive and healing.



B McGrath



Reflections on Torture

"Death in a concentration camp requires no explanation. Survival does." - Hilda Blum.

The first signs may be the closing of borders, the imposition of curfews, the issuing of movement permits, road blocks, checkpoints and the increased presence of military personnel.

The arrest is abrupt and disorientating, occurring in your home at night. Family members threatened, property searched and destroyed. Passports and other personal papers are confiscated. Handcuffed and hooded, you are transferred to a prison.

You are forbidden to talk unless spoken to. You are deprived of sleep and food. Your connections to others are severed and your experiential world shrinks to the size of a darkened cell. In time it will contract from the blood stained walls to the lacerated and bruised skin of your own naked body.

There are interrogations and beatings. Somehow you suspect your responses are not important. It is the act of submission, the relinquishing of control, rather than the content of answers that matters here. You are forced to watch others beaten, to witness passively the suffering of others. You are unable to alleviate their pain. You feel impotent and guilty. In this hostile and cruel world, the sights, sounds and stench of the wounded and dying are everywhere. Your silence is complicity. Your inaction a kind of betrayal. The only enduring reality is pain and survival.

Torture is sanctioned by a State. It is a form of political oppression. The torturer is not some crazed, sadistic individual acting alone. He works in the name of an identified group, he serves the interests of an ideology and behind him a propaganda machine turns. Despite this, torture remains a public secret, there is a conspiracy of silence. There are no arrest warrants, no charges to be laid, no court appearance and possibly no release. Torture is a systematic violation of human rights. It is a dehumanizing ritual abuse designed to reduce a person to a disposable object. The torturer invades openings in your body, caresses or cuts your skin, annihilating all sense of intimacy or privacy. Well meaning assumptions about a safe world and the fundamental goodness or sanctity of human life are shattered. In these chambers of horror humanity is debased and trust destroyed. Dignity is reduced to shame and disgust.

Torture leaves deep scars on the body and the mind, scars which endure the passage of time. Initially the sensation of pain is attenuated by the release of endogenous opiates but with each episode of abuse the analgesic effect is diminished. Excruciating and prolonged pain draws the victim inwards, the background fades as the beam of consciousness narrows. All other experiences are pushed to the margins of awareness, until language itself is erased. Sentences topple into single words until all that remains are stifled sobs, muted screams, anguished groans, and inarticulate whispers. There is only a riveting focus on a terrifying threat and the endless struggle to survive. The body with its lacerations, torn ligaments, fractured bones, dislocated joints and missing teeth, is an overwhelming presence. It is at once, paradoxically, a harsh enemy and a sweet reminder of being alive. In this environment of complete emotional deprivation another paradox, the so called Stockholm syndrome, may emerge.

In this stark, heart rending wilderness the need for attachment, for some sustaining connection is intense and a dark emotional bond between victim and torturer may be forged. In this regressed, infantile state, the possibility of merging with a powerful though malignant other is invited. A traumatic bond, an obscene intimacy, is established. One "identifies with the aggressor".

Victims of torture may begin to seek solace in an imagined reality, eventually unable to reliably distinguish between the prompting of the external world and the stirrings of the inner realm. Absorbed increasingly in distractions, any meaningful organisation of experience collapses. There is only a profound sense of abandonment as a door opens into other subjective spaces.

To avoid experiencing unbearable pain consciousness fragments. Presence is obliterated. Identity itself is compromised. The need to remove oneself psychologically elicits dissociation. This is the point at which a coherent sense of self may begin to disintegrate causing intense angst. The contents of consciousness begin to separate and dissolve. There are approaching echoes of mortality. Winnicott speaks of a "phenomenal death".

In the concentration camps they were called Muselhammer. Bettelheim referred to them as "walking corpses". Levi observed these prisoners no longer tried to find food, no longer avoided the blows, no longer looked into the eyes of others. They fell into a state of abject helplessness, of complete surrender. There is no longer a felt existence, only the inevitable descent towards death.

Refugees are survivors. Their presence in our reception area is testimony to their considerable inner strength. It is this resourcefulness which is the engine of hope and healing. To move away from the lingering shadows of the past, to exorcise the ghosts, there is no substitute for courage. Survivors have a story to tell. A story that will reveal the trajectory of a life, the way certain events unfolded across time. Stories reveal the way we dig and create, the way we discover our own truths in conversations with others and begin to imagine better worlds.

Steven Thompson
Senior Counsellor
Program Assisting Survivors of Torture & Trauma

*"The war is still going on inside of me."
- A survivor of torture*

Introducing Slavica Dedijer

I was born and lived in Serbia until the age of 12, when my parents and I migrated to Australia in 1971.

I lived at first in Melbourne and then in Adelaide until 1976 and went to Croydon High School. In 1976 at the age of 17 I went back to live in Serbia where I finished high school and a Tourism and Hospitality TAFE Course in Belgrade.

I then worked as a Front Office Operations Manager until 1986 when I returned to Australia with my husband and daughter.

For the past 17 years in Australia I have worked in various positions which included: Reception work, Project Officer, Interpreter and now a Caseworker at STTARS.

Working with clients from different cultural backgrounds gives me great pleasure and a big sense of achievement. I am happy that I am given the opportunity to help someone take their first step in the new land.

During this time I have also observed that clients feel safe and secure and they know that they can count on support from the great professional team which is STTARS.

Introducing Farah Sobhanian

My name is Farah and I was born in Iran. I am currently working as a caseworker in the STTARS Early Health Intervention Team.

I came to Australia in 1995 under the Humanitarian Program. Being a refugee myself I understand the issues and difficulties that refugees experience. I can relate to the difficulty of learning a new language, starting a new life in a new country where culture, customs, and people are strange and unfamiliar.

Having said that I have also learned that the process of settling down in a new country and making that your home is a challenging and rewarding experience which I am happy to have had that.

After receiving my Psychology degree from the University of Adelaide I worked in Woomera Detention Centre. Watching small children and desperate adults behind the razor-wires made me realize that cruelty does not know any boundaries and it can happen in your own backyard.

Also, I learned that freedom can not be taken for granted and it is everyone's right. In 2003 I did my Honors degree in psychology and my thesis is about measuring the level of suicide and self-harm thoughts among the former refugee detainees from Woomera Detention Centre who are now living in the community.



*The Early Health Assessment and Intervention Service Team:
(l-r) Farah Sobhanian, Slavica Dedijer and Bisan Shahin. Absent: Anne Lovell*

STTARS and the Hazara community in Murray Bridge

In February this year Dr. Habib Wahedy left the small unit he was renting in Murray Bridge, wrapped a belt around his waist, scaled a nearby telegraph pole and hung himself from the overhead powerlines. He had not seen his wife and three young children in four years.

He was grieving the absence of loved ones who were unable to provide the support he so desperately needed.

His Temporary Protection Visa was due to expire in April and he had recently received a letter from the Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs inviting him to accept an offer to return to Afghanistan.

Terrified at the prospect of returning and fearful of being sent back to detention, this gentle, well educated and proud man succumbed to despair and took his own life. He was a refugee who felt he had exhausted all options and could no longer endure the pain he had lived with for so long.

Habib was a warm, compassionate man and a leading figure in the small Hazara community living peacefully in Murray Bridge. He worked hard alongside his Afghani friends at the local abattoirs boning meat carcasses. The Hazaras are an ethnic minority in Afghanistan and have been subjected to centuries of brutal persecution and warring conflict. Habib's tragic death cast a long shadow across the Hazara community in Murray Bridge and Adelaide. These men are all confronting the same uncertain future, tormented by the absence of close family and plagued by guilt. They fled their small farms when armed Taliban fighters broke into their homes in search of money, weapons and young male recruits.

STTARS was invited to Murray Bridge by volunteers and staff from Lutheran Community Care who were teaching English to some fifty Hazara men. Initially the men were reluctant to talk about Habib's suicide and their own crippling despair, anxious not to burden others with their own suffering. In time they realised that unendurable psychological pain can lead us to

question the value of our own life and even contemplate suicide. At these times our engagement and hold on the world becomes tenuous and our capacity for happiness and fulfillment can seem remote. It may feel as if nothing of worth can be salvaged from the ruins.

Those who knew Habib were aware that he had become increasingly withdrawn and isolated from others. The pressures on him were cumulative, a knot had tightened around his depleted world until he was finally swept away by a flood of despair and isolation. He had given away some personal belongings and even recorded a tape for his family and friends. Reading the transcript of this tape was profoundly moving. Here is a man sinking beneath a swelling burden of frustration and sadness. He can see no other choice, as if all possibilities have collapsed under the weight of his suffering and death rises like a dark refuge. Tragically, he is unable to find the inner resource that might offer redemption and nourish hope.

In our group work we spoke about the importance of trusting our deepest concerns for others and finding the courage to make an approach rather than hoping they will cope. Perhaps by reaching out and offering our support we will evoke a fond memory, strengthen the life force and confront the encroaching darkness. We challenged these men to cultivate optimism in the face of despair, to find a place within which is not consumed by loss, a place which is open to others and the hope of a happier future.

There are many possible explanations for Habib's death. We can speculate but we may in the end have to accept that many of our questions remain unanswered. The death of Habib, like all suicides is a tragedy. He chose to die, to leave behind his loved ones and to sever his ties with friends and his community. He was an asylum seeker. He fled a violent society, a world terrorized by the Taliban and he died violently. In Australia he was greeted with suspicion, resentment and incarceration. He did not anticipate such rejection. He escaped one hostile rule

to confront another, this time armed with ignorance, intolerance and fear. Perhaps we are all implicated in his death.

He did not find sanctuary. We failed to protect him.

Rather than blaming Habib we must search in our hearts to find the compassion and understanding which will enable us to touch those lives that have been devastated by a war and cruelty. We cannot afford as a community to neglect those who suffer or to ignore the plight of refugees.

Steve Thompson



The Counselling Team: (l-r) Sandra Gault, Robyn Smythe and Steve Thompson.

Natural Therapies Program

The Natural Therapies program continued to address the needs of our clients through the work of a number of excellent volunteer therapists who made themselves available for clients and by developing relationships of trust through relaxation massage and other therapies help clients achieve a space for inner awareness and healing.



Clients also benefited from Remedial Therapies to ease pain and other somatic symptoms. We warmly and gratefully thank all our volunteer therapists and students, and especially welcome new therapists for the year 2003-2004
- Lesley Morgan and Veronica Martin.

An unavoidable consequence of volunteer-based programs is high staff turnover. We tried to keep client waiting lists down by recruiting student therapists to work with clients with less challenging health problems. Unfortunately for us most of the students started full-time work within three months of graduating and so have been unable to continue as volunteers. Nevertheless we are proud to have been able to contribute to their training and grateful for their willingness to assist us. However one of many positive changes this year has been an increase in co-operation with the School of Physiotherapy at University of SA. The Natural Therapies Program provided supervision to a total of three 4th year undergraduate physiotherapy students for six-week Community Placements at STTARS. It was an excellent opportunity for us to ensure that some physiotherapists complete their course with improved knowledge and abilities to address the complex issues involved in working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse clients, both migrants and refugees. They have been a very useful resource for both staff and clients and were well worth the time that was devoted to their supervision. The students provided health education sessions to clients and to the Women's Group, produced health education materials and massage sessions for one client. We will be offering two placements in the coming year. We are also now able to refer clients to the University of SA student clinic - which offers low-cost physiotherapy treatment with high levels of careful attention.



Training & Education Program

Sadness and excitement would best describe my feelings over the past few weeks as I have been extremely busy with the dual tasks of closing and referring on my not inconsiderable EHAIS caseload, in conjunction with the preparations for moving into the newly created Training Education Program coordinator role.



My direct work with so many people from such a diversity of backgrounds over the past 21/2 years has been enormously rewarding, and it is with sadness that I relinquish my active client work to take on the challenge of a broader advocacy and educative role within STTARS.

Over the years of STTARS existence our diverse, committed and highly skilled staff team, engaged across every program, have all contributed to ongoing education and training functions.

As educators, consultants, guest speakers, community network members, student supervisors, advocates and mediators, STTARS staff have met a very clear need for education and awareness raising on behalf of our clients. However, with the volume of requests for STTARS training input escalating, the evolution of a distinct Training Education Program emerged as a somewhat natural outcome.

The STTARS aims of improving access equity for trauma survivors and improving mainstream services responsiveness underpin the new Training and Education program. Over the past few weeks, training sessions focussing on children and trauma have been provided to a number of primary school teaching staff, both general and those engaged in new arrival programs.

Training has also been provided to the SA Police and it is intended that STTARS input will eventually be expanded to include all Police Cadet Training programs. Training sessions with Family Youth Services, Child Youth health Services, Centacare, Catholic Education Services, the SA Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and Shopfront youth are pending.

I am also the current convener of the Training and Education Working Group for the SA Refugee health network targeting the needs of general and allied health practitioners. Finally, the needs of rural, regional and remote communities is an area of acknowledged need and we are currently extending our training and education to service providers in Pt Augusta, Murray Bridge, the Riverland and the South East.

I am very much looking forward to developing the STTARS Training Education Program and preparing a number of specialist and generic training modules in readiness for tailoring to the specific needs of each agency.

Members of the Refugee Women's Group are pictured with (at left) volunteer Nicola Wright and student on placement Gunjan Arora (second from left) and staff member Anne Lovell (far right).



Client Statistics

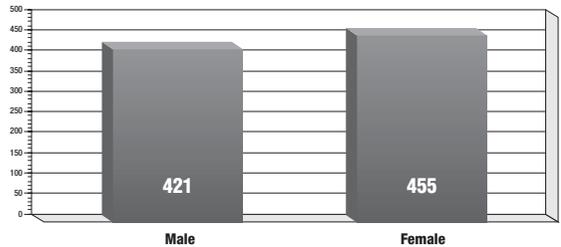
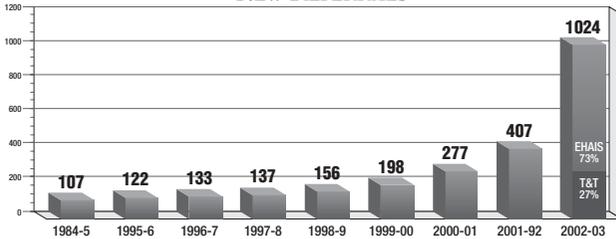
In 2002/03 STTARS provided assistance to a total of 1,024 clients with a 115% increase in the number of new referrals.

During the period of this report 73% of our new clients received EHAIS assistance and 27% received Torture and Trauma Counselling.

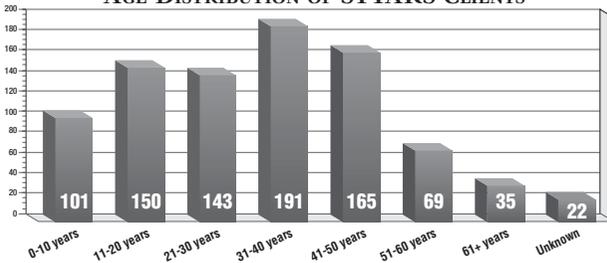
In 2002/03, STTARS worked with three times as many clients from Africa, with this group making up 28% of our new clients. A further 36% of new clients came from the Middle East, with 31% from the Former Yugoslavia and 5% from Asia and South America.

The majority of our clients are under 50 years of age.

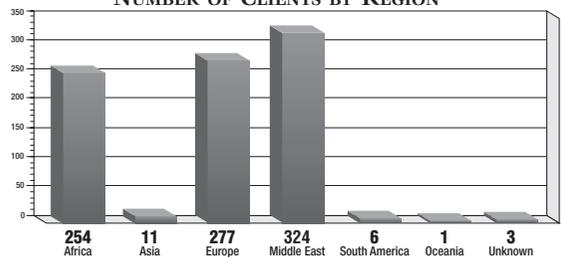
NEW REFERRALS



AGE DISTRIBUTION OF STTARS CLIENTS



NUMBER OF CLIENTS BY REGION



Many Thanks

Funding Bodies

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing
Commonwealth Department of Immigration,
Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
South Australian Department of Human Services

Organisations and Agencies

ABC International Translating and Interpreting Service
Adelaide Bank Charitable Foundation
Adelaide Central Community Health Service
Adelaide Dancer's Boutique
Adelaide Secondary School of English
Adelaide Western Division of General Practice
Amnesty International
Anglicare
Anglican Parish of Mary Magdalene
Anglican Parish of Parkside
ARA Jobs Pty Ltd
Australian Red Cross
Australian Refugee Association Inc
A.V. Central: Electronic Concept
Baker's Delight
BeeCOS Web Design
Bowden Brompton Community Centre
CD Consultancy Services
City of Charles Sturt Council
Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service
Community Benefit SA
Department of Education and Children's Services
Economic Outlook
English Language Service
Foodland
Forum of Australian Services for
the Survivors of Torture and Trauma
Mr John French
Jewish Community
Katron Creative
Ms Ann Kelly
Lions International
LM Training
Loreto Sisters
Langmeil Wines
Lutheran Community Care
McDonalds
Migrant Health Service
Migrant Resource Centre
Migration Museum

Morialta Charitable Trust Inc
Multicultural Mental Health Access Program
Northern Metropolitan Community Health Service
Office of Multicultural And International Affairs
Pfitzner Wines
Pulteney Grammar School
Refugee Advocacy Service (SA)
South Australian Council of Churches
South Australian Housing Trust
St Augustine's Anglican Church
'Spanktheboss'
Star Bear Camp
Thebarton Senior College
The Otherway Centre
TIS (Translating and Interpreting Service)
Wat Preah Put Meanchey
Wendys

With Special Thanks:

- *to our interpreters without whom communication would be near impossible and whose skills, empathy and cheerful co-operation make our work so much easier and*
- *to our Natural Therapies Volunteers who give so much with such dedication to our clients and make providing this important service possible.*



Adolescent Girls Group participants Amira and Mary.

STTARS Board Members 2002/03

Chair - Dr Christine Stevens

Dr Stevens was born in England and came to Australia as a child. A social worker and geographer, she has worked primarily in the fields of health and housing. She has undertaken research on refugee resettlement and has published widely in international and national journals on immigration issues. Dr Stevens worked with the Cambodian community in South Australia for many years, and is currently Vice President of the Australian Refugee Association.

Deputy Chair - Dr Bernice Pfitzner

Dr Bernice Pfitzner is the Managing Director of a wine export company which exports family-owned Adelaide Hills Pfitzner wines. She was the first Asian to have been a member of State Parliament in South Australia and is also the Immediate Past-Chairperson of the Council for Women of Diverse Cultural Background and Vice-President of the Asian Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Her basic training is as a medical doctor. She has worked at the Woomera Detention Centre, where she had concerns for the health of the detainees. Presently she is on several Boards related to health and multiculturalism, and is also working as a G.P. at a Clinic that has a significant proportion of patients who are Aborigines, newly arrived migrants and homeless people.

Treasurer - Mr Alan Lucas

Mr Alan Lucas migrated to Australia from England with his family in 1951. He studied economics at Adelaide University and is a qualified accountant (CPA). He worked for Mobile Oil, Amscol, the Holland Group, and had his own Accounting practice for many years.

Secretary - Mrs Ann Court

An Experienced ESL teacher at Burton Reception to Year 7 School, Mrs Court has worked primarily with Cambodian Students and their families in a teaching capacity and as community liaison person helping with settlement issues. She has been active in multicultural education concerns for many years. She is now an active flower farmer.

Mr Dilip Chirmuley

I came to Australia to do a post-grad degree in Sanitary engineering in 1966. After completion of that I joined the Design branch of the Sydney Water Board as an Engineer. In 1970 I joined Caulfield Institute of Technology in Victoria as a lecturer. I came to South Australia in 1973, with my wife and son to take up a lecturer's position with the Institute of Technology, and have also taught at Flinders and Adelaide Universities. I retired from teaching at the end of 2000. I was a member of the SA Ethnic Affairs Commission for three years from 1985-1988. I have been President of the Indian Australian Association of SA and The Hindu Society of SA. Since 1999 I have served on the Executive of the Multicultural Communities Council of SA and currently I am also on the Executive of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.

Dr Carol Irizarry

Canadian by birth, Dr Irizarry has lived in Australia for many years and is heavily committed to social justice and welfare, and is currently Deputy Chair of Anglicare. Dr Irizarry is helping Anglicare to develop a Loss and Grief Centre with a special interest in migrants. She is a Senior Lecturer in Social Work at Flinders University.



STTARS Board of Management ~ (clockwise from left) Mr Alan Lucas, Dr Christine Stevens, Mrs Ann Court, Dr Bernice Pfitzner, Ms Rouha Vojdani, Rev'd Bruce Stocks, Mr Richard Piorkowski and Dr Carol Irizarry. Absent: Mr Dilip Chirmuley and Mr David Shepherd.

Mr Richard Piorkowski

Over the last twenty-three years Richard has worked in human and community services as a service provider and in management roles. Currently the Projects Director with the Northern Area Community and Youth Services Inc, he brings a range of relevant skills and experience to the Board. Richard's interest in STTARS arises from the refugee experience of his own parents and from a personal commitment to social activism.

Mr David Shepherd

Mr Shepherd is recently retired after a long career as an engineer and manager in the telecommunications industry. As a General Manager with Telstra he was responsible for achievement of business and financial goals, staff management, revenue generation and profitability for a Telstra Business Unit. He has a keen interest in other cultures and is widely travelled, including over two years in Malaysia as an Australian Volunteer Abroad and one year in Venezuela as a telecommunications Technical Expert under a United Nations development program. A founding member of the Indo-China Refugee Association he and his wife Martha welcomed and hosted many families from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia during the nineteen seventies and eighties and maintain a strong sympathy for the plight of refugees.

Rev'd Bruce Stocks

Reverend Stocks is a Priest in the Anglican Church. Bruce has worked in the community sector in South Australia for the past 22 years. He has been actively involved in social justice initiatives with young people, disadvantaged communities, indigenous peoples, and refugee communities. He has an interest in the mix between spirituality, community care, and redressing social injustice. He is a founding member of the New Settler Support Group of the West.

Ms Rouha Vojdani

My family and I migrated to Australia from Iran via America in 1981. I studied science at Teheran University. I lived and widely travelled through Europe, USA, Asia, the Far East and South Africa. I gained my degree in Social work at the University of South Australia, and have worked in the area of child protection with the Dept. of Human Services for 11 years. Due to my special interest and strong sympathy for refugees and immigrants I have been working with TPV minors from Afghanistan since 2000, which has been a worthwhile and enriching experience for me. My motto is "the earth is but one country and the people its citizens."

STTARS Staff & Volunteers 2002/03

Director

Ms B McGrath

Specialist Counselling Team

Ms Robyn Smythe (Intake and Assessment)

Ms Sandra Gault

Mr Steve Thompson

Early Health Assessment and Intervention Team

Ms Anne Lovell

Ms Slavica Dedijer (from August 2003)

Ms Bisan Shahin

Ms Farah Sobhanian (from September 2003)

Sessional Counsellors

Dr Michael Lee

Dr Rick Curnow

Dr Mary O'Neill

Ms Roxanne Hewitt

Natural Therapies and Volunteers Coordinator

Ms Chris Rose

Education and Training Coordinator

Ms Lin Monash

Administration

Ms Alica Varesanovic

Ms Anat Lavy

Ms Sallyanne Schofield

Natural Therapies Volunteers

Ms Estelle Dagnall

Ms Arna Dinham

Ms Georgina Halliday

Mr Colin Litchfield

Ms Lesley Morgan

Ms Esma Morrissey

Mr Peter Morton

Mr Lawrence Muzzatti

Mr Thomas Pile

Ms Karen Schmid

Mr Ray Shepherd

Ms Billy-Joe Starr

Ms Pam Taylor

Ms Meryl Thompson

Ms Athina Vlahos

Ms Nancyliita Wayne

General Volunteers

Ms Jeanette Birdsey

Ms Sandy Boyce

Ms Shayne Brennan

Ms Sue Dutton

Mr Kris Hanna

Mr Peter Hanna

Mr John Hegarty

Ms Helen Hobbs

Mr Michael Irwin

Mr Ibrahim Isic

Mr Ali Jafar

Ms Beth Mylius

Mr Ray Mylius

Ms Jenny Norris-Green

Ms Regina Jalosjos-Ondo

Mr Khaled Pededar

Ms Virginia Rawlinson

Ms Emma Salter

Mr Stephen Sokvari

Mr Atte Warrke

Ms Nicola Wright

Many thanks to the following staff who left us during the last year:

Ms Marija Podnieks

Ms Corinna Friebel

Mr John Hegarty

Ms Fattaneh Scott

Ms Snjezana Stankov



Director B McGrath (centre) with STTARS' Administrative Team: Alica Varesanovic (left) and Anat Lavy. Absent: Sallyanne Schofield

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS
YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2003**



Scope of the Audit

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, comprising the Income & Expenditure Statement, Balance Sheet, Notes to the Financial Report, and Statement and Report by the Board, of the Survivors of Torture & Trauma Assistance & Rehabilitation Service Inc. (STTARS) for the year ended 30th June 2003.

The Board is responsible for the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used and described in Note 1 to the Accounts are appropriate to meet the requirements of the Association Incorporation Act and the needs of members.

We have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used are appropriate to the needs of members. Our audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents a true and fair view of the financial position and results of operations of STTARS for the year.

Dated this 24th day of October 2003

**PETER HALL
PETER HALL & CO
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
Registered Company Auditor**

Statement and Report by the Board

The Board has determined that the Survivors of Torture & Trauma Assistance & Rehabilitation Service Inc. (STTARS) is not a reporting entity.

The Board has determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the members of the Board the financial report comprising the Income and Expenditure Statements, Balance Sheet and Notes to and forming part of the financial report:

- (a) Present fairly the financial position of STTARS as at 30 June 2003 and its performance for the year ended on that date;
- (b) At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that STTARS will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

During the financial year ended 30 June 2003:

- (a) No officer of STTARS, a firm of which an officer a member or a body corporate in which an officer has a substantial financial interest, has received or become entitled to receive a benefit as a result of a contract between the office, firm or body corporate and STTARS;
- (b) No officer of STTARS has received directly or indirectly from the association any payment or other benefit of a pecuniary value.

Christine Stevens
Chair

Alan Lucas
Treasurer



**THE SURVIVORS OF TORTURE & TRAUMA
ASSISTANCE & REHABILITATION SERVICE INC. (STARS)**

**BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30TH JUNE 2003**

	2002	2003
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Cheque Account	-	17,172
Cash Management Account	202,514	190,950
Emergency Fund Account	93	27
Petty Cash Fund	300	300
Accounts Receivable	116	22,402
GST Paid	520	4,664
	<u>203,543</u>	<u>235,515</u>
NON CURRENT		
Plant & Equipment - at cost	67,186	101,996
Accumulated Depreciation	(43,652)	(46,706)
Motor Vehicles - at cost	55,406	22,936
Accumulated Depreciation	(14,977)	(12,098)
	<u>63,963</u>	<u>66,128</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>267,506</u>	<u>301,643</u>
LESS: LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Bank Overdraft	9,858	-
Pay Clearing Account	2,970	3,618
Accounts Payable	61,848	20,279
GST Collected	11,334	19,928
Income Received in Advance	39,300	39,893
Provision for Annual Leave	20,600	20,400
Provision for Long Service Leave	22,500	16,900
	<u>168,410</u>	<u>121,018</u>
NON CURRENT		
Loan Ex. St George Bank	32,013	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>200,423</u>	<u>121,018</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>\$67,083</u>	<u>\$180,625</u>
REPRESENTED BY MEMBER FUNDS		
Balance B/F Previous Year	51,119	67,083
Prior Year Adjustment	4,553	(11,932)
Plus: Surplus for the Year	11,411	125,474
	<u>67,083</u>	<u>180,625</u>

**THE SURVIVORS OF TORTURE & TRAUMA
ASSISTANCE & REHABILITATION SERVICE INC. (STTARS)**

**STATEMENT OF INCOME & EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2003**

	2002	2003
	\$	\$
INCOME		
GRANTS		
DHAC Annual Grant	135,109	141,456
DHS Grants	111,738	109,300
CBSA Grants	34,749	6,045
EHAIS Grants	270,803	463,547
FACS Emergency Relief Grant	1,060	2,055
SAHT Toy Grant	-	1,818
Toy Resource Grant	-	1,061
	<u>553,459</u>	<u>725,282</u>
OTHER		
Bank Interest	6,236	5,419
Donations	4,896	5,144
Fundraising	-	986
Hire Fees	711	-
Subscriptions	1,086	773
Sundry Income	411	7,740
Training & Workshop Fees	1,950	409
	<u>15,290</u>	<u>20,471</u>
TOTAL INCOME	<u>568,749</u>	<u>745,753</u>
LESS EXPENSES		
Audit Expenses (The Auditors did not receive any other benefits)	1,100	1,100
Advertising	7,968	77
Bank Charges	1,424	2,446
Cleaning Expenses	3,621	3,978
Consultancy Fees	13,994	6,856
Computing Expenses	2,348	1,130
Depreciation	16,903	12,884
Insurance	2,850	1,209
Interest Paid	2,418	3,678
Internet Expenses	369	284
Interpreting Costs	34,715	31,374
Light & Power	2,174	2,639
Loss on disposal of assets	-	13,434
Long Service Leave	10,565	3,496
Motor Vehicle Expenses	20,350	21,666



	2002	2003
	\$	\$
LESS EXPENSES CONTINUED		
Payline Expenses	1,890	1,977
Postage	2,091	1,602
Printing & Stationery	7,152	9,170
Projects	6,005	11,119
Rent, Rates & Taxes	6,850	6,986
Repairs & Maintenance	2,659	2,568
Salaries & Wages	346,344	407,370
Security	338	283
Staff Amenities	1,581	1,234
Subscriptions	322	802
Sundry Expenses	10,812	11,501
Superannuation	25,197	34,977
Telephone	10,517	12,459
Training & Development	5,597	1,893
Travel & Accommodation	2,239	2,022
WorkCover	6,945	8,065
	<u>557,338</u>	<u>620,279</u>
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR	<u>\$11,411</u>	<u>\$125,474</u>



**THE SURVIVORS OF TORTURE & TRAUMA
ASSISTANCE & REHABILITATION SERVICE INC. (STTARS)**

Notes to and forming part of the financial report as at 30 June 2003

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the annual financial reporting requirements of the Survivors of Torture & Trauma Assistance & Rehabilitation Service Inc. (STTARS).

The Board has determined that STTARS is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following applicable Accounting Standards:

AAS 1:	Profit and Loss Accounts
AAS 5:	Materiality
AAS 6:	Accounting Policies
AAS 8:	Events Occurring After Balance Date

No other applicable Accounting Standard, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative announcement of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on the basis of historical cost and does not take into account changing money values or current valuations of non-current assets. Comparative information is reclassified where appropriate to enhance comparability.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Income Tax

STTARS is exempt from income tax under the provisions of Section 50-40 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(b) Plant & Equipment

The depreciable amount of all Plant & Equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to STTARS commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(c) Employee Entitlements

Provision is made for STTARS liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date.

(d) Inventories

Inventories consist of publications and are measured at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

(e) Revenue

For the year ended 30 June 2003, government and other grants are brought to account as income by STTARS to reflect the extent to which they have been earned. Amounts which have been received but which are not yet due to STTARS are recorded as a current liability "Income Received in Advance".



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