



Operation Newstart Victoria & Inc

Annual Report 2019

Writing this report in preparation for our delayed AGM in March 2020 is a big challenge, as it is composed in the sure knowledge that 2020 will no doubt be a testing one for all Operation Newstarters. It does however incite deeper reflections on the achievements of 2019, the program’s twenty-third year, and another very successful one as the following table graphically shows. These figures are not dissimilar to those of 2018. We are again close to capacity, with 162 entrants against a maximum potential of 164. Of these 94.4% graduated through our five programs. Of those who failed to graduate, we should keep an open mind, for there are many good reasons why some students are unable to complete a program.

Program	Schools	Grads	Male	Female	12 - 14	15 - 17	CALD	Indig	Disabled	LGBTI
ONG	12	32/36	21	15	16	20	2	8	2	2
ONSE	14	30	17	13	27	3	7	3	4	3
ONN	17	30	13	17	4	26	7	4	0	0
ONW	13	26	22	9	2	29	8	3	0	0
ONC	7	35	17	18	12	23	20	1	3	3
Total	62	153/162	90	72	61	101	44	19	9	8
Percent		94.4	55	44	38	62	27	12	6	5

I am asked on occasion when preparing grant applications: “How many beneficiaries there are to a program?” The quick answer is 162 as is shown here. In truth the real number is much more difficult to

quantify, but it will be considerably higher when considering the benefits to families, schools and the wider community. It is a useful exercise to re-examine the Program Logic Map on our website which was prepared some years ago and is a reminder of the short, medium and long-term benefits that we aim to provide to our charges, to their families, their schools and the Victorian community.

FUNDING:

The funding of Operation Newstart is indeed complex reflecting a variety of different models operating in different programs throughout Victoria. Operation Newstart Victoria and Operation Newstart Incorporated are the two entities that deliver a range of services in particular to funding – both sourcing and management - advocacy and co-ordination of the five programs. While these two entities had a combined revenue in 2019 of \$342,000.00, the real cost of providing services to students this year is estimated to be \$1,020,000.00 since the major salary component (program managers/lead facilitators) are provided directly by either the referring schools, the host schools, or Department of Education and Training (Regions). In most instances it is a combination of these. Put in another way, in 2019 an Operation Newstart program was nearly 70% funded by the Department of Education and Training, and a further 30% by Operation Newstart Victoria/Inc.

The various program models also provide their own complexities, with different programs managing program costs with charges on a per capita basis to schools who refer students into a Newstart program. It is important to note here again that no charges are imposed on participants or their families. Using the above figures, one can see that the cost per participant in 2019 was \$6,296.00, a significant reduction on the costs back in 2012 when Victoria Police provided 50% of personnel costs.

There are literally hundreds of organisations providing services to Operation Newstart on a pro-bono basis, enabling programs to respond effectively to constant demands to keep the costs of program delivery manageable. We thank each and every one of them sincerely and can assure them that their generosity is contributing enormously to the wonderful outcomes reflected in the chart above.

Our support from the *Engage!* Grants program has been ongoing in 2019 and will continue into 2020. Now headed by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Office of Youth), three youth workers are partially funded in three Operation Newstart programs - Casey, South Eastern and Northern. We have been fortunate to receive this support annually since 2015 and hope that it will continue beyond 2020. Thank you to Casie Maher from the Office for Youth for her patience, understanding and support as we complete our regular six-monthly reports.

This year we were fortunate to receive a major grant of \$225,000.00 payable over 2019 and 2020. The donor wishes to receive no publicity, and we respect that wish. This grant provides support for youth work in Operation Newstart Western, and Geelong. It also assures the financial viability of Operation Newstart Victoria for the coming two years. We are indebted to them for their generous grant.

The Give Where You Live Foundation have once again provided us with a grant of \$30,000.00 to support the employment of our youth worker in Geelong. The Percy Baxter Foundation (Perpetual) has also continued their invaluable support, since 2013 (\$31,500). Along with a contribution from the grant mentioned above it enables us to completely cover the salary of the youth worker engaged in Operation Newstart Geelong.

Operation Newstart Northern continues to receive financial support from several municipalities in the Local Government Areas which it services. The Cities of Yarra, Moreland, Nillumbik, Hume and Darebin are regular contributors to program overheads for which we are very grateful. Operation Newstart Northern also received a \$14,000 grant from TAC (Towards Zero) for its innovative Bike Safety initiative. Much of the credit for each of these rests with program manager Brendon Delaney.

Jimmy Seary (Operation Newstart Casey) was named Westfield Shopping Centre's *Local Hero*, for which a grant of \$10,000 was awarded. It is encouraging to see that many local organisations and service clubs continue to provide small grants in cash or kind to Newstarts in their respective areas.

AROUND THE PROGRAMS:

Operation Newstart Casey will become known in 2020 as Operation Newstart Casey/Cardinia as the program expands to ten (2019 six) the number of schools referring students into the program from two Local Government Areas. We are experimenting with a revised model which caters for schools of different sizes and different financial capacities to contribute. Under this model, the program will accept up to ten students per term in contrast to the usual eight that have characterised most programs since inception. It will be assessed at the end of 2020. Jimmy Seary and Ashley Scott have worked tirelessly this year to keep their program afloat. Special thanks also to Wayne Haworth (Hampton Park S.C.) and Ian Burrage (DET Southern Metropolitan Region) for their determination to maintain this great program.

Thank you to Matthew Flinders Girls Secondary College for its support for Operation Newstart Geelong since its founding. The college is retiring from hosting Operation Newstart after eight years, and the baton has passed in 2020 to Oberon College.

Work continued this year on establishing the Values Wheel, showing how Operation Newstart programs are providing outcomes related to the Victorian Curriculum. Declan Denny, lead facilitator of Operation Newstart South Eastern has dedicated many hours to documenting the Learning Sequence for his program, and this will no doubt provide a template of sorts for all programs to follow in the years ahead. Special thank you to Katie Watmough who has overseen the project with Declan, and to their Principal Susan Ogden (Dandenong High School) for her encouragement and support.

We have built a completely new website this year, thanks to the great work of Shane LeFevre (Operation Newstart Western) who has shown considerable skill in its development. The site is contemporary and attractive, and is already receiving many "hits" from all around the globe!. It can be viewed at www.onv.org.au.

As well as the Annual General Meeting, Operation Newstart Victoria and Inc. held four most productive Committee (ONV) and Board (ONI) meetings during the year. I would like to thank all Board members for their support, encouragement and goodwill. A special thank you to Dr Pam St Leger for agreeing to act as Chairman for the second year. Most members are from the education sector, and so bring enormous experience to some of the issues faced by our programs. It should be noted as it was in 2018 that most Board members are also members of other local, affiliated Operation Newstart committees. In particular, the Committees of Management of local Operation Newstart programs meet each term, and School Council meetings are held monthly. These COM's are the real drivers of their Operation Newstart programs.

As Executive Officer I want to thank all the individuals and organisations that have supported Operation Newstart, especially the wonderful facilitation teams of the five programs. Their great dedication produces such fantastic outcomes for so many. I can assure you your efforts are greatly appreciated and valued. I know without such generous assistance the program could not exist and it is my hope you will continue your support in the years to come.

Best wishes to all.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'P. Wheatley'.

Phil Wheatley OAM
Executive Director
Operation Newstart Inc.

5th April 2020.