

# Strategic Plan 2008 - 2013



The Board has identified four strategies for the Mission.

**Distinctiveness:** Complementing not competing with other provision, either externally or internally. In the community sector, competing is usually for funder support (and associated, restricted, client communities). Competing wastes resources, restricts diversity of supply (as it is focussed by funder interests), challenges financial viability (as it lowers the “price”), and produces services structured around a top-down view of individuals, communities and society.

Distinctiveness requires that we develop and maintain a sound organisational structure, grouping service management and provision into specialist clusters, and that we protect and build our ability (funds) to continue to provide independent services.

Distinctive opportunities, however, are not easily identified or resourced, and it is expected that ideas from staff in existing services, and income from the Mission’s own investments will be required to support this strategy.

**Client Alignment:** Working with people, from the place that they are, to the place they want to go next. This is a “catch and release” strategy, and requires flexibility in service delivery. Our current Community & Social Services’ Manager’s 1:1 advocacy and support service is acknowledged as the leader for this modality within the Mission.

However, many others achieve aspects of this requirement. Where our pre-designed projects and programmes meet this requirement it is not due to anything inherent to the programme, but happens because of the enormous effort and skill of staff, often in spite of funder requirements.

Generally, it is expected that services meeting this strategy will generate existential outcomes (recorded in narratives), not easy to measure numerical outputs; identifying targets with clients on a person-by-person basis, rather than having to incorporate targets pre-set by contract.

A wholly client-aligned service will struggle, however, to “catch” people to work with, and to secure resourcing. It is expected that income from the Mission’s own investments will be required to support this strategy.

**Community Alignment:** Anticipating changing needs and leading community responses. This requires strong and coordinated information flows, able and supported staff to feed the incubation of responses.

We anticipate this strategy will drive a higher media presence, as well as a more conscious development of new service elements.

This “breed and release” of new programmes or projects will create some that may be integrated into the Mission, some which will fail, the rest of which will leave to stand alone or be incorporated into another organisation with which they have a better fit.

Development of new projects and programmes requires that the Mission have the capability and means to manage the continuous development of new projects. These projects will be likely be closely associated with staff at working at the point of client engagement, relying upon their specific and individual skill set and the opportunities they encounter.

However over time, the placement of the programme or project may no longer be best fit with where it was created (staff movement, nature of project, other factors), and a mechanism for regular review of programmes and projects for internal placement and/or “release”, will be required.

It is expected that income from the Mission's own investments will be required to support this strategy. However, it is an investment-heavy strategy, and demands the protection and development of our investment-income base.

**Balance:** Between stability and change; financial security and financial risk. To sustain the ability of the Mission to do its work. To maintain sufficient community presence (the "create"); ensure client entrance (the "catch"); and provide for stable internal processes and economies necessary to sustain overall viability, the Mission relies upon its "front end".

We acknowledge the distinctiveness and client-alignment already slotted in and around the edges of our contract-compliant services through the outstanding commitment of staff; it represents the desire of all at the Mission to put the people we work with front and centre in our service delivery.

The "front end" will be the self-funding (contract-compliant) services that provide the stability, opportunity, viability, skills, awareness and connection so critical to our independent services; the "back end".

Our front-end services therefore will be characterised as:

- Semi permanent, evolving programmes and projects to remain stable and viable
- Externally, fully, and reliably funded (supporting all infrastructure costs)
- Reliable and regular to manage (the compliance issues present sufficient challenge)
- Supported in delivery by our back-end services, free of the burden of meeting the Mission's extra pastoral care expectations

The magic, the place where we are not just good at what we do, but exceptional as an organisation; will occur in the marriage of the two ends.

The Board notes that front end services are subject to changes in regulation and compliance requirements that can render them uneconomic. The Board is willing to support services through their start up period, and, if necessary, "recovery" periods when viability is unexpectedly, unusually, and temporarily threatened.