

# POSITIVE FUTURES

## FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Annual



Report



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

WSMLEN acknowledges the following for their funding support:

- Horsham Sports and Community Club
- Horsham Rural City Council
- Centre for Participation
- Wimmera schools:
  - VET Cluster
  - Grampians Virtual School
  - Western Victorian Careers Expo

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Wimmera Southern Mallee  
 LLEN is supported by the  
 Victorian Government.



*As we move into another decade, I believe the work of the LLEN will become even more important as we work to address issues that are vital for the survival of our small rural communities.*



## From our President

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network (WSMLLEN) has one of the longest business names going around. It is quite a 'mouthful' for staff identifying the organisation when answering the phone and a challenge for anyone taking down the business name in a phone message. At times, I have heard suggestions that the name should be changed, but in spite of its cumbersome length, it is quite an accurate description of the nature of what we do at 'the LLEN'.

Firstly, the LLEN is local. This is one of our greatest strengths. Our staff and Committee of Management live locally and have a broad understanding of the issues in our local area so they are well able to develop programs and initiatives to address these local issues.

Secondly, the LLEN works in the areas of learning and employment. This is also a key area of focus, working to develop closer links between schools and local industries and businesses.

Over past years the LLEN has coordinated the Wimmera Southern Mallee Vocational Education and Training (WSMVET) cluster, providing opportunities for students to undertake a range of certificate courses during their secondary schooling. The LLEN has also facilitated the Structured Workplace Learning initiative,

working with businesses and schools to find work placements in local businesses for students undertaking VET courses. These initiatives have provided support for schools and have 'value added' to the work schools are doing to prepare the future workforce in our local area.

Thirdly, the LLEN is a network. Building networks and connections in our community is a vital part of the work of the LLEN, and is summed up in our mission statement, "To create partnerships between industry, education and the community that develop positive futures for our young people."

I believe the LLEN is aptly named. We operate locally, we work to link learning to employment through a strong community network.

As we move into another decade, I believe the work of the LLEN will become even more important as we work to address issues that are vital for the survival of our small rural communities.

It has been my privilege to be a part of this local learning and employment network.

*Wendy Bywaters*

Wendy Bywaters  
President



## From our Executive Officer

As we take time to reflect on the Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN (WSMMLLEN) achievements of 2019, our members can be proud of the ongoing successes and impact of our partnerships. It is only through partnerships that our relatively small organisation can touch thousands of lives across the Wimmera and Southern Mallee. Many of our successful partnerships have developed deep roots across the Wimmera Mallee plains and continue to grow and flourish for the benefit of our children and young people. We know a good education is a game changer and our ongoing focus of addressing disadvantage through improving literacy, increasing social connection, mentoring and building stronger school-industry relationships is changing young lives.

Our literacy initiatives, including Let's Read, Reading Buddies and Read to Me programs ensure that hundreds of children and families are getting the support, encouragement and resources to enable our children to develop the skills they need to succeed in education and life. Our MATES Mentoring, Jump Start and Community Connections programs provide positive role models and life experiences for many vulnerable children across the region. We continue to coordinate the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET cluster, the Grampians Virtual School and support the delivery of the Western Victorian Careers Expo for the benefit of our schools and students. We have built stronger relationships with local employers to enable more than 100 students to undertake work placements that support their study in VET, VCAL and VCE. The WSMMLLEN continues to strengthen our schools' connection with a wide range of organisations through our six Community Action Networks.

I thank our partners for their contribution to the achievements of 2019. Our schools, our volunteers, our community organisations and our local businesses are amazing and as you read through this report, you will realise that our

achievements are in fact, equally, our partners' achievements.

I would also like to thank our Committee of Management, ably led by Wendy Bywaters, Alethea Sedgman, Deb Nelson and Brendan Ryan. Our team is well supported by our volunteer Committee and we appreciate their support, guidance and expertise. A big thank you to our WSMMLLEN team, Lorraine Merton, Vanessa O'Loughlin, Sam Flaherty, Di Dent, Annie Mintern and Millie Kemp for their hard work, their passion and their commitment to improve the lives of our young people.

Our thanks, also, to the Department of Education and Training (DET) for their ongoing support for the 31 LLENs across Victoria. In 2020 and 2021, funding is provided to 31 LLENs across Victoria to develop partnerships which result in an increase in the number and range of school-employer engagement activities in local government areas. The activities will include facilitation and support for students to undertake structured workplace learning, work experience and school based apprenticeships and traineeships. LLENs will also support schools through arranging volunteer community work, industry tours, guest speakers from industry, mock interviews and work-readiness preparation.

Looking forward, we will continue to work with our partners to deliver the programs and the support our children need. We are working with four other LLENs to support Anglicare to deliver the Navigator program across the Wimmera South West region. Navigator provides disengaged young people the support they need to re-engage in education.

As we move into 2020, everyone's lives have changed due to the impact of the COVID19 pandemic across the world. Unemployment is rising, businesses are closing and social isolation and working from home have become the norm. Our education system has had to respond



quickly to the provision of online learning and home schooling. This challenging situation has been the catalyst for a greater community understanding and appreciation of the fantastic job our teachers and schools do in educating our children. The current situation refocuses our attention on the importance of education and the inequity that exists for many rural young people, especially those from disadvantaged families.

The COVID19 pandemic has provided everyone the opportunity to reflect on what is truly important in life; health, family, friends and looking after each other. It's also about being grateful and valuing those who serve the community, including our teachers, health workers, police, ambulance and emergency services workers.

It has been a tumultuous start to 2020. As we look forward to improving the lives and education outcomes of our young people, our mission to create partnerships between industry, education and the community that develop positive futures for our young people, has never been more important. On behalf of our team, thank you for your ongoing support.

*Tim Shaw*

Tim Shaw  
Executive Officer



# Fast Facts

## MATES Mentoring Program

### mates

Matching adult role models with young people in local schools. Mentors catch up with their mentee for 1 hour a fortnight

Winner of 2019 Volunteering Recognition Awards, People's Choice Award

Mentor of the Year: Janine Harfield and Bob Law (jointly awarded)

Mentoring Team of the Year: Warracknabeal Secondary College

Community Champion of the Year: Skillinvest

**545** mentors matched with mentees from the inception of the program until the end of 2019

Online MATES mentor training developed

Group mentoring established at Horsham College McKenzie Creek Campus

New mentoring program established at Holy Trinity Lutheran College

## Connecting the Service Puzzle

Facilitating the mentoring component of the Connecting the Service Puzzle, Crime Prevention Program in collaboration with local community organisations

Additional training developed for mentors working with young people with more complex needs.



Group mentoring introduced in addition to one-on-one mentoring

## Vocational Education and Training (VET)

Coordinating the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET Cluster, supporting schools to provide VET courses for secondary students

**VET**

**13** VET courses delivered  
**239** Enrolments in first year VET courses  
**106** Enrolments in second year VET courses

## Community Connections

Community Connections provides sponsorship for students who, due to financial restraints, would not otherwise be able to participate in sports, community or cultural programs.



**83** Students sponsored in 2019

**10** Activity types

**13** Clubs or organisations

## Structured Workplace Learning

Delivering the SWL program across our region supporting students to find placements and supporting host employers who offer work placements

**11** schools accessed  
**109** SWL placements via the online portal



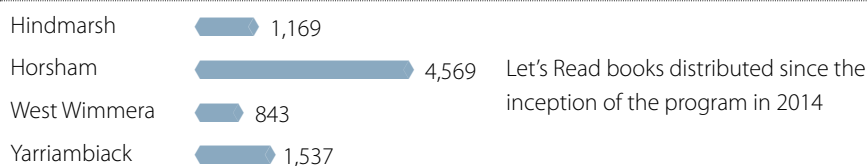
## Let's Read

Supporting children's literacy development by the distribution of books to preschool children across our four shires to raise parental awareness of the importance of reading to children from and early age



**1,365** Let's Read books delivered in 2019

**8,118** Lets Read books delivered since the inception of the program in 2014



## Reading Buddies

Volunteers listening to children read, one-on-one, in local primary schools to improve literacy



*'It is a really good program and to see the progress of the reading skills with the students is very rewarding.'*

*Quote from a reading buddy*

## Read to Me

Providing books for children aged 0 - 6 years in out-of-home care



*'On behalf of the child in my care, I just want to thank you for the beautiful bag of books she received—what a wonderful gift.'*

*Quote from a carer*

## Jump Start

Providing additional support for students at Horsham Primary School to improve oral language development, gross and fine motor skills, literacy development, social skills and social connection



Learning activities and support provided through:

- Balls and Ladders
- Garden Club
- Reading Buddies
- MATES Mentoring

## Grampians Virtual School

Coordination of the Grampians Virtual School enabling secondary colleges in our region to deliver and receive VCE subjects via online virtual classrooms

An initiative developed in the Wimmera region to extend the range of VCE subjects available to students in rural and remote schools



## Community Action Networks

Bringing together representatives from schools, organisations, businesses and the community to support young people in their local regions



**18** meetings were held across  
**6** communities bringing together  
**205** attendees to connect schools and young people with programs and services.

## Western Victorian Careers Expo

Rural Victoria's largest careers expo, attended by over 2,000 students from over 20 schools across Western Victoria



**100+** exhibitors  
**40** career seminar sessions  
**2,000+** students  
**20+** schools

## Mission

To create partnerships between industry, education and the community that develop positive futures for our young people.

## Objective

The Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network's objective is to assist young people to complete year 12 or its vocational equivalent. This includes traineeships and apprenticeships. A particular focus of our work is with young people from a disadvantaged background.

## Who we are

Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN is a not-for-profit organisation which works towards improving education outcomes for young people in the local community. WSMLEEN is funded by the State Government of Victoria and was established in 2002.

## We work with

Schools  
Local businesses  
Organisations  
Community  
Training providers

## Focus areas

Improving Literacy

Increasing school engagement and retention rates

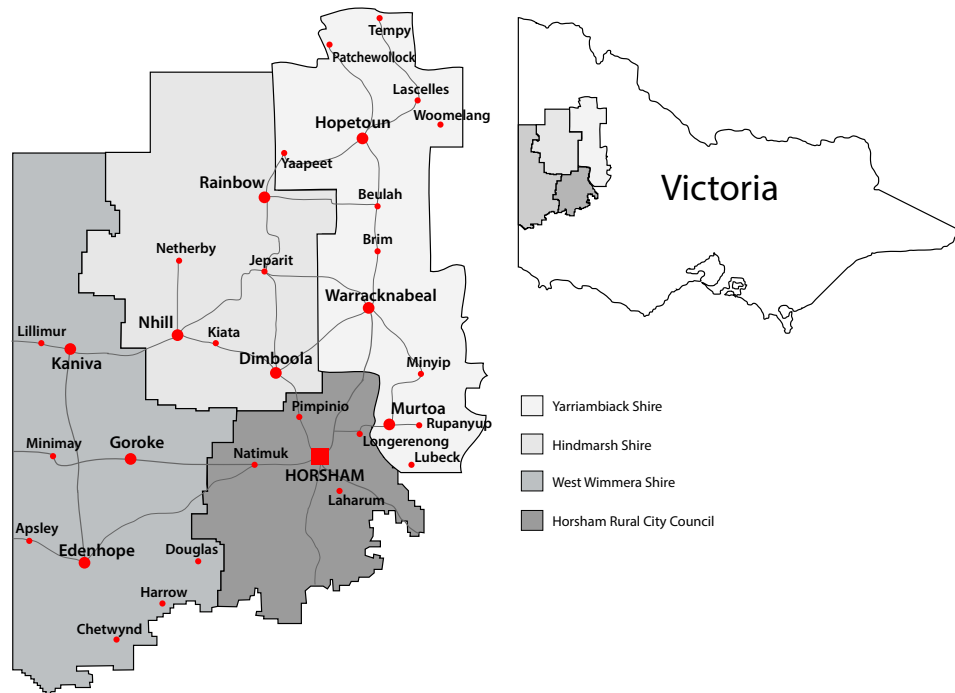
Raising educational aspirations

Improving outcomes for young people

Social inclusion



## Our Region



## Schools in our service region

Yarriambiack Shire Schools 13 Schools	Hindmarsh Shire Schools 8 Schools	West Wimmera Shire Schools 5 Schools	Horsham Rural City Schools 9 Schools
1. Beulah Primary School	1. Dimboola Primary School	1. Apsley Primary School	1. Holy Trinity Lutheran College (Horsham)
2. Hopetoun P-12 College	2. Dimboola Memorial Secondary College	2. Edenhope College	2. Horsham College
3. Minyip Primary School	3. Jeparit Primary School	3. Goroke P-12 College	3. Horsham Primary School
4. Murtoa College	4. Nhill College	4. Kaniva College	4. Horsham Special School
5. Our Lady Help of Christians School (Murtoa)	5. Nhill Lutheran School	5. St Malachy's Primary School (Edenhope)	5. Horsham West – Haven Primary School
6. Rupanyup Primary School	6. Rainbow P-12 College		6. Laharum Primary School
7. St Joseph's Primary School (Hopetoun)	7. St Patrick's School (Nhill)		7. Natimuk Primary School
8. St Mary's Primary School (Warracknabeal)	8. St Peter's Lutheran School (Dimboola)		8. St Brigid's College
9. Tempy Primary School			9. Ss Michael and John's Catholic Primary School (Horsham)
10. Warracknabeal Secondary College			
11. Warracknabeal Primary School			
12. Warracknabeal Special Developmental School			
13. Yaapeet Primary School			

# Our Staff



Tim Shaw  
Executive Officer



Sam Flaherty  
MATES Mentoring  
Coordinator



Vanessa O'Loughlin  
Project Officer



Dian Dent  
VET and SWL Coordinator  
Commenced March 2019



Lorraine Merton  
Administration Officer



Annie Mintern  
Careers Expo  
Project Officer



Millie Kemp  
Administration Trainee  
Commenced January 2019

# Strategic Plan

## Objectives

## Strategies

### Goal 1

To improve the participation of vulnerable young people and their families in education

To increase the re-engagement of young people into programs leading to credentials

To ensure that young people remain engaged in education, training or employment

To provide support and opportunities to ensure that vulnerable young people achieve their full potential

To improve literacy as a foundation for educational success

1. Build on the work already underway to develop and improve early intervention literacy projects
2. Provide active coordination and support for the provision of flexible learning options
3. Support the delivery of the DET and DHHS plans for improving Koorie education outcomes
4. Further develop the Wimmera Sports Mentoring Program<sup>1</sup> to provide opportunities for vulnerable young people to participate in community and sports activities
5. Further develop a process and structure to facilitate effective advocacy for our community and its young people

### Goal 2

To increase our schools' engagement with stakeholders in their community to improve students' aspirations, education and transition outcomes

To build community capacity through our brokered and supported partnerships

1. Ensure the effectiveness of the Community Action Networks in strengthening relationships between schools and agencies working with 'at risk' young people and their families
2. Develop and implement a proactive industry engagement plan, and review the effectiveness of the plan on an annual basis
3. Maintain, support and develop the MATES mentoring program and document and celebrate its success

### Goal 3

To remain a sustainable, innovative and responsive organisation, focused on key outcomes

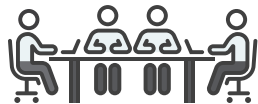
To practise sound and responsible governance

To ensure that the work of the LLEN will be responsive to needs and informed by evidence

To ensure that the LLEN is financially sustainable

1. Develop and implement a communication/marketing plan which communicates the unique value and purpose of the LLEN to all partners and to the general community
2. Undertake a review of the governance structures and processes of the LLEN, including composition, succession planning and options to include a voice of youth within the governance structure and processes
3. Develop a data-bank of locally derived data, case studies, research data and impact data to support informed decision making by the LLEN and partner agencies
4. Actively seek alternative revenue sources and funding models to support program development and delivery. Actively monitor a 3-year financial plan, to ensure that the LLEN is well-placed to make financially responsible decisions at the end of the current government funding cycle.

<sup>1</sup> The Wimmera Sports Mentoring Program was further developed and re-named in 2019 to become the 'Community Connections Program'.



# Committee of Management

President:  
Wendy Bywaters

Vice President:  
Alethea Gulvin

Treasurer:  
Debra Nelson

Secretary:  
Brendan Ryan

Committee Members:  
Joanna Day  
Peter Drummond (Resigned July 2019)  
Karen Fuller  
Anne Gawith  
Josh Koenig  
Liam Offer (Commenced July 2019)  
Melissa Twaddell (Commenced February 2019, resigned July 2019)  
Adam Ross (Resigned February 2019)  
Geoffrey Lord  
Craig Turvey (Commenced Sept 2019)  
Daniel Weller

## Our Members

### 1. Schools

- |  |                            |  |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Balmoral Community College          | 8. Horsham College         | 15. Rainbow P-12 College                       |
| 2. Beulah Primary School               | 9. Horsham Primary School  | 16. Rupanyup Primary School                    |
| 3. Dimboola Memorial Secondary College | 10. Horsham Special School | 17. St. Brigid's Secondary College             |
| 4. Edenhope College                    | 11. Kaniva College         | 18. Warracknabeal Secondary College            |
| 5. Goroke P-12 College                 | 12. Murtoa College         | 19. Warracknabeal Special Developmental School |
| 6. Holy Trinity Lutheran College       | 13. Nhill College          | 20. Yaapeet Primary School                     |
| 7. Hopetoun P12 College                | 14. Nhill Lutheran School  |  |

### 2. TAFE institutes or universities with TAFE sector

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Federation University | 2. Longerenong College |
|--------------------------|------------------------|

### 3. Adult community education organisations

- |                                    |  |   |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. Centre for Participation        | 4. Murtoa and District Neighbourhood House       | 6. Rainbow Community Learning Group & Neighbourhood House |
| 2. Gateway BEET                    | SLAAM Inc  |   |
| 3. Kaniva LINK Neighbourhood House | 5. Nhill Neighbourhood House Learning Centre Inc | 7. Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre  |

### 4. Other education and training organisations

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Community Axis | 2. Skillinvest |
|-------------------|----------------|

### 5. Trade Unions

No representative

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## 6. Employers, employer organisations, regional employer organisations and employment agencies.

3. Business Horsham	8. Horsham Real Estate	13. Warracknabeal AMCAL Pharmacy
4. Feet First Footwear	9. Horsham Regional Art Gallery	14. Warracknabeal Herald - North West Press
5. GWM Water	10. J & F May	15. Wimmera Mail Times
6. Hopetoun Courier	11. Luv-a-Duck	16. Woodbine Inc
7. Horsham Autoelectrical Services Pty Ltd	12. Morrow Motors	

## 7. Local government

1. Hindmarsh Shire Council	3. West Wimmera Shire Council	4. Yarriambiack Shire Council
2. Horsham Rural City Council		

## 8. Other community agencies and organisations

1. Art Is Festival	6. Leadership Wimmera	11. Wimmera Development Association
2. Department of Education and Training	7. Regional Development Victoria	12. Wimmera Primary Care Partnership
3. Department of Health and Human Services	8. SalvoConnect Western, Horsham	13. Wimmera Regional Library Corp.
4. Grampians Community Heath	9. Uniting Wimmera	14. Wimmera Regional Sports Assembly
5. Horsham Police	10. Wimmera Business Centre	

## 9. Koorie organisations

1. Barengi Gadjin Land Council	2. Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative	3. Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECCG)
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## 10. Community members

1. John Ackland	9. Rob Gersch	17. Murray Robinson
2. Kim Boulton	10. Alethea Gulvin	18. Iain Sedgman
3. Steve Braybrook	11. Neil King	19. Kylie Smith
4. Wendy Bywaters	12. John Millington	20. Mandi Stewart
5. Russell Christie	13. Campbell Pallot	21. Margaret Stewart
6. Joanna Day	14. Gary Pilgrim	22. Mark Zimmermann
7. Hugh Delahunty	15. Sue Radford	
8. Kim Drummond	16. Dianne Richards	

# Structured Workplace Learning

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) staff in LLENs across Victoria work with schools and businesses to find work placement opportunities for students undertaking Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) courses during their secondary schooling. To streamline the process of finding work placements for students, the Victorian Department of Education and Training launched an online portal in 2017. The portal enables businesses and employers across the state of Victoria to post positions available for structured workplace learning or school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Students are able to search for and apply for work placement positions online. Applying for a SWL position simulates a real-life job application process. Each LLEN region is assigned certain targets to meet. In 2019, Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN's target was to find 133 positions and achieve an uptake of 106 positions filled by students. We exceeded our target by sourcing 192 positions with an uptake of 111 positions.

Uptake of SWL placements via the online portal		Number of schools accessing the SWL online portal	
2017	91	2017	8
2018	114	2018	8
2019	111	2019	11

Students are required to find work placements in an industry that relates to their particular VET course or VCAL subject. We worked with schools and employers to source workplace learning positions relevant to the VET courses delivered locally.

Throughout 2019, our WSMLEEN staff continued to build relationships with local employers to increase the number and variety of placements offered by local businesses and organisations. Meetings with industry proved to be very rewarding. Many local businesses who had not used the portal before, began making use of this new initiative.

Meetings with larger businesses and employers are proving fruitful. A number of these are using the portal for the first time as it provides a single point of contact for all students seeking placements and streamlines the application process.

We are extremely grateful to local businesses who host students on work placements. Their involvement reflects the high level of support in the local business community for our young people.

WSMLEEN developed an initiative in 2019 to support schools to improve student 'work-readiness'. WSMLEEN staff provide some training to prepare students for a work placement.

Students use the online portal to search for and apply for a work placement. Some employers are prepared to conduct a formal 'job interview' with the student to simulate a real-life job interview.

Where businesses are unable to conduct the interview, WSMLEEN staff conduct an interview on their behalf. This initiative enables students to complete some of the learning outcomes required in units of work in the VCAL curriculum.

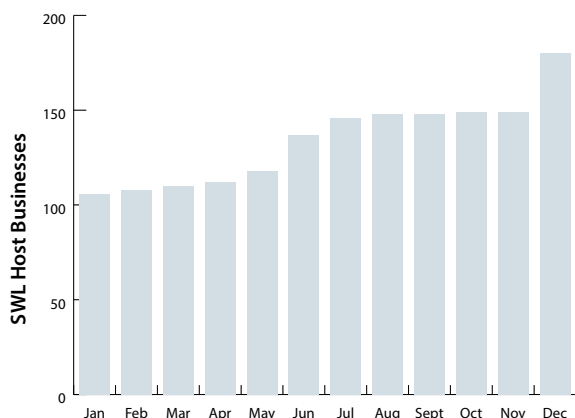
Some of the learning outcomes include:

- Use information and communication technology and other technology in relation to a work related activity
- Research information for a work-related activity
- Communicate information and ideas for a work-related activity
- Plan, organise and manage a work-related activity
- Plan and organise a complex project or activity
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills in the context of a complex project or activity
- Demonstrate self-management skills for goal achievement in the context of a project or activity
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills to communicate ideas and information
- Writing for self-expression
- Writing for practical purposes
- Writing for knowledge.

The local Careers Expo also proved to be a very useful resource for students, schools and industry alike. Comments made by students to researchers have indicated that our Expo has been instrumental in assisting students to find industry areas they are interested in pursuing.



*Dian Dent*  
VET and SWL Coordinator

**SWL Host Cumulative Growth in 2019**

### Increased use of the SWL Online Portal by Employers

During 2019, WSMLEEN staff continued to source Structured Workplace Learning placements for students. The figure (left) shows the growth the number of business/employers who have 'come on board' to list Structured Workplace Learning opportunities on the SWL online portal.

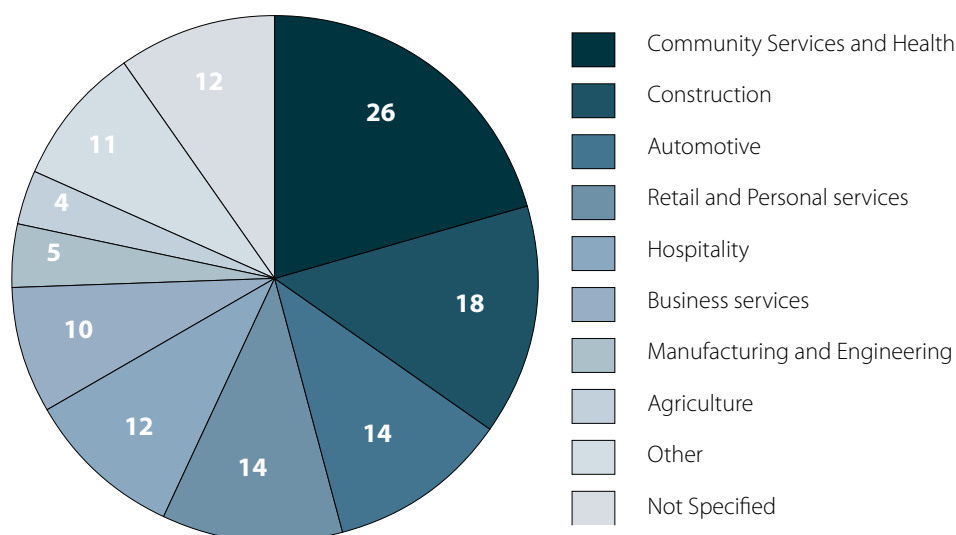
The increased number of employers offering work placements in December ensured adequate work placements for students seeking placements for the commencement of 2020.

### Industry Work Placements

The aim of education in schools is to prepare students for the workforce or further study. Courses provided by the WSMVET Cluster aim to address local industry shortages. LLEN SWL staff have sourced SWL work placements in key industries in our local region to match local industry skill shortages.

See figure right

**SWL Hosts By industry**  
**Wimmera Southern Mallee Region**



*To increase our schools' engagement with stakeholders in their community to improve students' aspirations, education and transition outcomes*

A significant component of the Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) program involves visiting local businesses to promote the benefits of hosting a structured workplace learning student.

When businesses decide to offer a SWL placement, assistance is provided to list the opportunity on the SWL online portal.

Our SWL staff provide training for school staff and students on the process involved in accessing and applying for a work placement via the online portal.

An Employers Guide to Student Work Placements is provided for businesses, along with individual support on a needs basis.



# Vocational Education and Training (VET)

WSMLLEN coordinates the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET Cluster which provides Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses for schools across the region. VET courses are undertaken by students as part of their secondary schooling. These courses allow students to complete a VET Certificate I, II or III qualification while still at school. Courses are conducted on Wednesdays at Federation University, Longerenong College, Centre for Participation and Horsham College with students travelling from Birchip, Dimboola, Edenhope, Goroke, Hopetoun, Kaniva, Murtoa, Nhill, Rainbow and Warracknabeal to join with students from Horsham. Of the seventeen courses on offer in 2019, thirteen were delivered. (Four courses offered did not receive sufficient enrolments and did not go ahead.) See page 17 for a breakdown of enrolments by course. In addition to the seventeen accredited courses offered, a non-accredited short course, 'Ready for Work', was also delivered.

## Try VET Day

Two hundred and eighty students attended the 2019 Try VET Day in Horsham in August to investigate courses on offer in 2020. Eighteen VET courses were offered for 2020. Try VET Day assists students to choose a Vocational Education and Training course. Certificate II in Health Support Services was offered by Federation University and received sufficient enrolments to run for the first time. This course aims to provide pathways into employment in the health sector, which is a sector experiencing skills shortages in our region.

*(Pictured Right: Students attending the Health Support Services, Try VET Day session )*



## VET Induction Day

Secondary students from across the Wimmera converged on Horsham in October for VET Induction Day.

Approximately 330 students enrolled to undertake a VET (Vocational Education and Training) course in 2020 as part of their secondary schooling.

The Wimmera Southern Mallee VET Cluster offered eighteen courses for 2020, with sufficient enrolments for fifteen of these to run.

*Pictured below: students participating in orientation for Kitchen Operations, Dance and Engineering (including filling out paperwork ready for the commencement of their course in 2020.)*

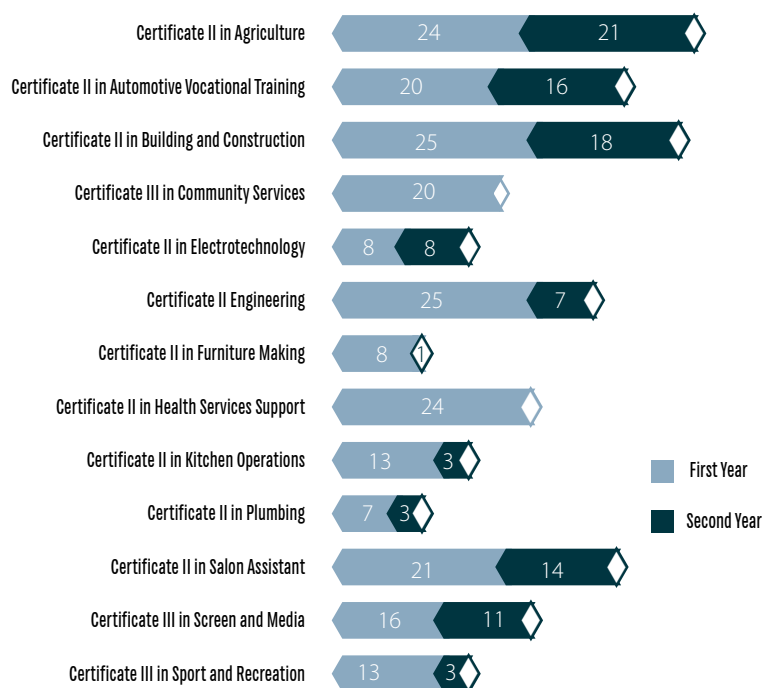




# VET Enrolments 2019

## Student enrolments by course 2019

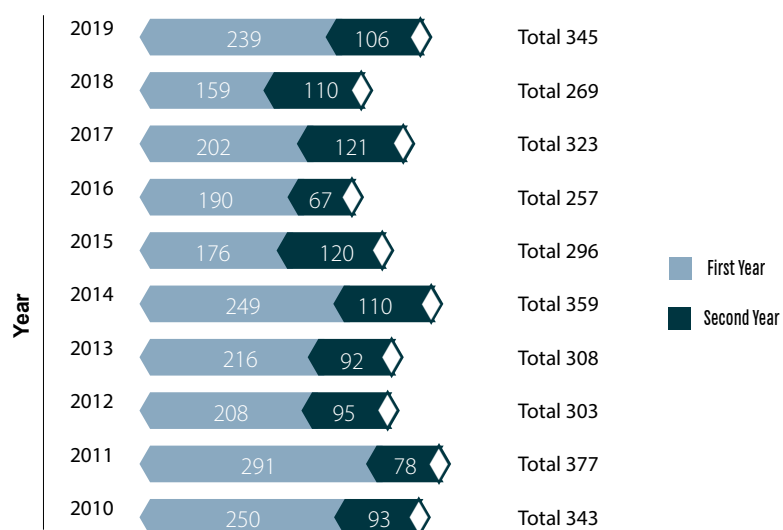
Accredited courses facilitated by the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET Cluster



# VET Enrolment History

## Student enrolments by year

Courses facilitated by the Wimmera Southern Mallee VET Cluster



\*Enrolment data is based on the number of students who were enrolled at the commencement of the school year and does not take into account, the number of students who subsequently withdrew or did not complete the course.

# Community Action Networks

## The Story

The first Community Action Network (CAN) meeting facilitated by Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN was held on 6 March, 2010 in Warracknabeal. Feedback from that meeting included some positive comments from attendees:

*'A great opportunity to meet other providers one-to-one and establish lines of communication and determine how we can work together.'*

*'Great opportunity to make a difference.'*

Since that first meeting, we have established a further six networks and facilitated 179 CAN meetings across our region to bring communities together to support young people in their local area.

CAN meetings have now gained the reputation of being a forum where community organisations and service providers in the youth space can connect with schools to address local issues.

## The Outcomes

This connection leads to organisations listening to the needs of the local school community and facilitating support.

Over the years there have been many initiatives that have grown out of the CAN meetings.

Some examples include:

- The establishment of the Let's Read program across all four shires in our region. (Read the full story on page 30)
- The establishment of Hands On Learning programs in schools across our region
- The establishment of the KOOKAS (Koorie Kids after School) Club, supporting Koorie young people in our community, providing learning activities and social inclusion
- Schools Health and Well-being Network—a closed online forum on the Yammer platform for school well-being staff and local service providers to share information and resources
- Ongoing support for MATES mentoring programs in schools
- Promotion of the Community Connections program.



*Dimboola Memorial Secondary College, Hands On Learning project 2019*

*A great opportunity to meet other providers one-to-one and establish lines of communication and determine how we can work together*

Dimboola

Edenhope

Horsham

Koorie

Murtoa

Warracknabeal

# Community Action Networks Connecting our Community

Through CAN meetings, schools have been connected with services and programs delivered by:

- Federation University
- Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative
- Headspace
- Red Cross
- Centre for Participation
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Grampians Community Health
- Wimmera Health Care Group
- Uniting Wimmera
- Victoria Police
- Horsham Rural City Council
- West Wimmera Shire Council
- Yarriambiack Shire Council
- Wimmera Drug Action Taskforce
- Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc.
- Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

*As a result of the Community Action Network, we have increased the number of services we have been able to access in our school.*



# MATES Mentoring Program

The MATES Mentoring program had its beginnings in 2010 when Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN partnered with Dimboola Memorial Secondary College and the Hindmarsh Shire to deliver a pilot mentoring program. The pilot mentoring program was further developed by Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN in 2011 and became known as the MATES Mentoring Program.

The program was gradually established in other schools as they saw its value in addressing the needs of their students.

The MATES program has been implemented in 19 schools across the Wimmera and Southern Mallee—Holy Trinity Lutheran College being the most recent to implement the program with an initial six mentors being matched with students in 2019.

In 2018, the MATES program partnered with Connecting the Service Puzzle, a crime prevention program, to address

the increasing crime rates among young people in the Horsham region. The MATES program provided a mentoring component to Connecting the Service Puzzle. Additional training was developed to support mentors who work with young people with more complex needs. This additional training was made available to all MATES mentors and to members of the wider community.

Mentoring with Connecting the Service Puzzle took on a new mode of delivery. In addition to one-on-one mentoring, group mentoring sessions were conducted. Mentors and mentees met at Horsham College's McKenzie Creek Campus to work on a range of projects which allowed mentoring to happen in a group setting.

In 2019, MATES mentor training was made available online, giving the mentors who are unable to attend the face-to-face training, an alternative training option.



*Sam Flaherty,  
MATES Mentoring  
Coordinator*



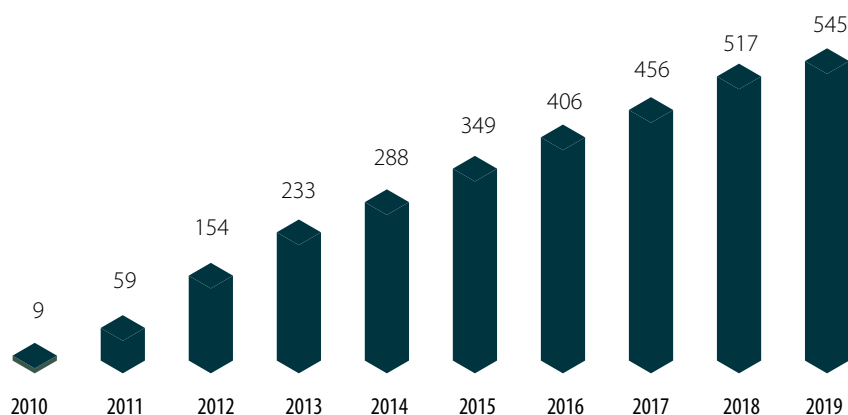
*Vanessa O'Loughlin  
MATES Mentoring Systems  
and Development*

## Social Return

By the end of 2019, the total number of mentors matched with mentees over the 10 years since the inception of the program reached 545 (an average of 60 new mentors each year after the pilot program).

In 2016, a review of the MATES program was conducted by an independent agency, Regional Advance. Their report estimated the social return on the MATES Mentoring Program to be between \$18 - \$23 for every dollar invested in the program. The report valued volunteer's time at \$21.61 per hour. Assuming that each mentor gave 24 hours to the program each year, the social return in dollar value for the MATES program over 10 years is estimated to be between \$5 million and \$6.5 million.

## Cumulative Total of MATES Mentors by Year





## 2019 Mentoring Awards

The 2019 Mentor of the Year Award was awarded jointly to two recipients, Bob Law from Apsley and Janine Harfield from Horsham.

Both recipients showed a high level of commitment to their mentees and the mentoring program. Warracknabeal Secondary College received the award for Mentoring Team of the Year. The team, under the leadership of Helen Dillon, invested a great deal of energy into their MATES Mentoring Program, developing best practice volunteering protocols and working with the community to recruit mentors, expanding their program to almost 20 mentors.

Awards were presented at a regional 'MATES on the Green' event in Horsham with mentors and mentees from across the region attending.

The award for the 2019 Community Champion of the Year was presented to Skillinvest. To support the MATES Mentoring Program, Skillinvest invited the LLEN team to speak to all staff and supported several staff to mentor young people. The Skillinvest team was so impressed with MATES mentoring that they made a staff-initiated financial donation towards MATES Mentoring Program, which helped develop the online training as well as provide MATES games boxes for schools.

*Pictured Left: Award recipients and attendees at the 'MATES on the Green' event, November 2019*

*Having a mentor has made high school a lot easier because I can talk to my mentor for help and guidance and it has made me more sociable and more comfortable around people and able to be myself.*

*From a MATES mentee*

## People's Choice Award

The MATES Mentoring Program was the winner of the People's Choice Award at the Centre for Participation 2019 Volunteering Recognition Awards. The award was presented by Nathan Smith, Bendigo Bank Senior Branch Manager, Wimmera.

*(Pictured below L-R: Nathan Smith with Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN MATES team: Vanessa O'Loughlin, Sam Flaherty and Tim Shaw)*





# Connecting the Service Puzzle

Connecting the Service Puzzle is a multi-agency community approach to supporting our most vulnerable and at-risk young people aged 10 - 24 years. Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN facilitated the mentoring component of Connecting the Service Puzzle Crime Prevention Program providing positive role models for young people who are at most risk of offending. The program matches young people (mentees) with a volunteer (mentor) from the local community. Mentors and mentees catch

up for one hour, once a fortnight for one year. By providing a mentor to each participating child or young adult, the program aims to promote positive change.

In addition to one-on-one mentoring, some young people in this program participated in group mentoring activities, working on projects to increase social engagement and individual achievement.

## Program partners:

Centre for Participation  
Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Cooperative  
Grampians Community Health  
Headspace  
Horsham College - Alternate Programs  
Horsham Rural City Council  
The Wimmera Drug Action Taskforce  
Wimmera Primary Care Partnership  
Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN  
Uniting Wimmera



The Connecting the Service Puzzle Program launched an art exhibition in August at the Horsham Regional Art Gallery to promote work done by Horsham College's McKenzie Creek Campus students. The launch was attended by over 40 people including family members and representatives of community organisations.

The Deckheads project provided group mentoring activities to support students in developing goals and representing their goals in unique artworks.

The aim of the project was to enable students to identify the positive aspects of their lives and envision their ideal future prospects and aspirations. To do this, participants were asked to design a unique skateboard deck with the theme, 'What makes me happy'.

On one side of the deck, students represented current happiness, and on the other side, they depicted what they imagined would make them happy in the future. Depicting their future was an exercise in goal setting which will potentially assist mentors in helping them achieve these goals. The artists also wrote short descriptions of their works

which were displayed with their work in an exhibition at the Horsham Town Hall.

Involvement in the project provided increased opportunity for engagement, collaboration with adult mentors and investment in positive thinking and aspiration for the students. The highly individualised nature of this project encouraged students to take ownership and guide the direction of their interaction with the adult mentors involved through the 'Connecting the Service Puzzle' program. Sam Flaherty from the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network said, 'The project shows us the talent of the young people we have in our community and how, having an additional positive role model and mentor, can help jump-start positive ideas and pathways. It was amazing to see so many people come and support the students at the launch.

The Connecting the Service Puzzle Program offers young people case management and assists in supporting them in engaging with services to identify and reduce risk-taking behaviour.

# Western Victorian Careers Expo

## Expo Theme—The Arts

The focus of the 2019 Western Victorian Careers Expo was on 'The Arts'. The field of the arts is wide and varied, with many career opportunities being presented in performing arts, music and creative design.

The keynote speaker, Tom Ballard, well known stand-up comedian, spoke about his journey into his career. There were live music performances by up-and-coming band, Loose Moose, and karaoke sessions provided by Horsham College band where visitors were able to display their talent.

Although the focus was on the arts, there was also the usual wide range of exhibitors from many fields presenting information on study and career options.



*Western Victorian Careers Expo keynote speaker, Tom Ballard*



*Lunch time at the 2019 Western Victorian Careers Expo*

An estimated 2,000 students from more than 25 schools across Western Victoria attended the 2019 Western Victorian Careers Expo. This event is regional Victoria's largest careers expo and attracts exhibitors from right across Victoria and interstate. With over 100 exhibitors, visitors had a wide range of career and study options to investigate to assist with finding pathways into a chosen profession. A feature of the expo is the hands-on element of the try-a-trade exhibits. Attendees have a chance to talk to a wide range of advisors on a one-to-one basis. The expo delivers a wide range of seminars on the day. Forty seminar sessions were presented by exhibitors, allowing attendees to select to attend sessions in their areas of interest. Seminars were delivered in 10 separate seminar areas with up to ten seminars running concurrently. Approximately a quarter of the seminars were delivered by local employers and training organisations. Tertiary institutions from Victoria and South Australia were well represented, giving ample opportunity for students to explore future courses and study options.



*Marcus Oldham exhibit at the 2019 Western Victorian Careers Expo*

# Early Years Literacy

Developing good literacy in the early years improves the educational outcomes for students as they progress to secondary schooling. Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN supports a range of early-years initiatives that improve literacy as a foundation for educational success.

## Trees Tell Tall Tales

The Art Is... Festival developed an outdoors activity for children and families which has a literacy focus. An adventure trail was established along the Wimmera River in Horsham where trees 'read' children's stories and provide information about the surrounding environment.

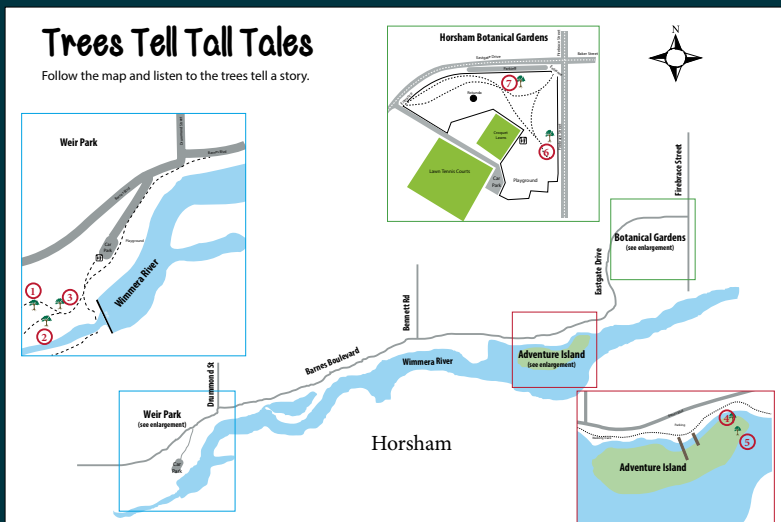
This activity was a joint project between Art Is..., Wimmera Regional Library, Wimmera Catchment Management Authority and Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN.

The activity involves using a map to identify several trees along the Wimmera River and, with the aid of a smart phone, listening to a recorded story read by guest readers as the 'trees tell tall tales'.

Guest readers were: Dale Baker, Mary Dalglish, Peter Clarke, Judy Harrington, Emma Kealy (Member for Lowan), Cassy Kelly, Sarah Natali, Mark Radford (Mayor of Horsham Rural City) and Rae Talbot.

During the Art Is... Festival children were able to enter a competition which involved correctly identifying four secret animals on signs along the adventure trail. The first 200 entrants to correctly complete the activity received a free children's book by presenting their entry to the Wimmera Regional Library in Horsham.

The adventure trail will remain a permanent feature along the Wimmera River.



*Pictured Left: Children's Author Dale Baker, reading his book, Arty Farty Marty at the Horsham Library as part of the Art Is... Festival's launch of Trees Tell Tall Tales.*



## Let's Read—Early Years Award

The Let's Read program has continued to provide support for families with young children across the Wimmera and Southern Mallee. Through the generous support from sponsors, every child in the four shires of Hindmarsh, West Wimmera, Yarriambiack and Horsham Rural City, receives a free book when they visit their local Maternal Child and Health Centre for their 3-month, 12-month, 18-month and 3½ year visits. A total of 8,118 books have been distributed to families across the Wimmera since the inception of the program in 2014. The Let's Read Wimmera program was a finalist in the 2019 Victorian Early Years Awards.



*Representatives from the Let's Read Wimmera program receiving their award for being a finalist in the category of 'Creating collaborative community partnerships' at the 2019 Victorian Early Years Awards.*

## Read to Me

The WSMLEN led a project with the Department of Education and Training, Department of Health and Human Services, Uniting Wimmera, Goolum Goolum and other partners to implement the Read to Me project. The project was developed by the Raising Literacy Australia Foundation and is delivered to all South Australian children in care. The objective of the program is to ensure that all pre-school children in out-of-home care receive a regular supply of books to build their own personal library. The children receive a ten-book 'start-up' pack and then receive three books every quarter. There are also literacy resources and games included in the program. There is training available for the carers to support them to support the children's literacy development. We thank Raising Literacy Australia for their support of our delivery of this program. This is the first time the Read to Me program has been delivered in Victoria.

## Reading Buddies

The Reading Buddies program supports schools to find and train volunteers to listen to children read on a regular basis. Wimmera Southern Mallee LLEN advertises and promotes the Reading Buddies program to recruit volunteers and to match them to local schools. Training is provided to volunteers to assist them to support children in their literacy development, develop positive relationships with young readers and to make reading a positive experience. Many children miss out on this special reading time with an adult. This is one of the reasons why we have a Reading Buddies Program in schools. It gives reluctant little readers a positive experience with an adult where books are no longer a threat but a source of enjoyment.

## **Independent Audit Report**

### ***To the members of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network***

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 31 December 2019, and the Statement of Profit and Loss for the year then ended, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and the Statement by Members of the Committee Declaration.

### ***Committee of Management responsibility for the Financial Report***

The Committee of Management of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012 and for such internal control as Committee of Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

### ***Auditor's responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report whether due to fraud or error. In making those assessment, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Associations preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by Committee of Management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### ***Independence***

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.



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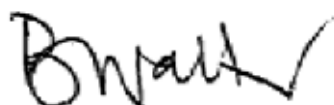
***Electronic publication of the audited financial report***

It is our understanding that the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network intends to electronically present the audited financial report and auditor's report on its internet website.

Responsibility for the electronic presentation of the financial report on the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network website is that of Committee of Management of the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network. The security and controls over information on the website should be addressed by the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network to maintain the integrity of the data presented. The examination of the controls over the electronic presentation of audited financial report(s) on the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network website is beyond the scope of the audit of the financial report.

**Opinion**

In our opinion, the financial report of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network presents fairly, in all material respects the Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network financial position as at 31 December 2019, and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012.




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BRIAN WATTS  
 Certified Practicing Accountant

3 / 4 / 2020

Watts Price Accountants  
 44 Wilson Street  
 HORSHAM VIC 3400



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## STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS

## WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT AND LOSS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
Revenue	507,999	506,709
Advertising and promotion expense	2,965	6,039
Depreciation and amortisation expense	8,565	10,890
Employee expenses	338,292	349,619
Employee provisions expense	616	2,838
Motor Vehicle expenses	9,761	8,714
Other expenses	64,955	60,722
Project expenses	82,588	51,235
Rental expense	10,309	10,309
<b>Net current year surplus</b>	<b>(10,053)</b>	<b>6,343</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>(10,053)</b>	<b>6,343</b>
Net current year surplus attributable to members of the entity	(10,053)	6,343
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the entity	(10,053)	6,343

# STATEMENT OF PROFIT FINANCIAL POSITION

## WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC.

### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash on hand	732,024	494,622
Accounts receivable and other debtors	52,332	128,949
Prepayments	4,037	4,357
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>788,393</b>	<b>627,928</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Property, Plant and Equipment	24,696	33,395
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>24,696</b>	<b>33,395</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>813,089</b>	<b>661,323</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts payable and other payables	36,129	21,899
Provisions	40,294	39,189
Income received in advance	324,897	200,572
Current tax liabilities	28,825	5,620
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>430,145</b>	<b>267,280</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	4,590	5,636
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>4,590</b>	<b>5,636</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>434,735</b>	<b>272,917</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>378,352</b>	<b>388,406</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained surplus	378,354	388,406
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>378,354</b>	<b>388,406</b>

# STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

## WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC.

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Retained Surplus 2019 \$	Retained Surplus 2018 \$
Balance at 1 January	388,406	382,062
<b>Comprehensive Income</b>		
Net Surplus for the year	(10,053)	6,343
<b>Total Comprehensive Income attributable to members of the entity</b>	<u>(10,053)</u>	<u>6,343</u>
<b>Balance at 31 December</b>	<u><u>378,354</u></u>	<u><u>388,406</u></u>

# STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS

## WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC.

### STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS

#### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019	2018
	\$	\$
<b>CASHFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Grants (state) operating received	587,055	384,139
Non Government Funded Projects funds received	109,815	96,466
Payments to suppliers and employees	(471,720)	(503,674)
Interest received	12,071	8,887
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>237,221</u>	<u>(14,182)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment	181	-
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	<u>-</u>	<u>1,892</u>
Net cash used in investing activities	<u>181</u>	<u>(1,892)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	237,402	(16,073)
Cash on hand at beginning of financial year	<u>494,622</u>	<u>510,695</u>
Cash on hand at end of financial year	<u>732,024</u>	<u>494,622</u>

# STATEMENT BY COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

## WIMMERA SOUTHERN MALLEE LOCAL LEARNING AND EMPLOYMENT NETWORK INC.

### STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network Inc., the members of the committee declare that the financial statements as set out:

- present a true and fair view of the financial position of Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network Inc. As at 31 December 2019 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including Australian Accounting Interpretations) of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act (Vic) 2012; and
- at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Wimmera Southern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

The statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:

Chair:

Wendy Bywaters

Wendy Bywaters  
Chair's Name

Treasurer:

Debra Nelson

Debra Nelson  
Treasurer's Name

Dated this .....second..... Day of .....April..... 2020.





