



superintendent's report

When I look at people I recognise that they are more than just the circumstances of their lives. I see individuals, whole people, who have hopes and dreams and talents just as real as the problems and weaknesses that beset them.

Jesus reached out to people in love, meeting them at their point of need.

Circumstances are changing constantly, but people still yearn for the security that comes from knowing that they matter. This is how people grow.

A picture of growth

Our dominant culture is adept at overlooking those it would like to forget. Wesley Mission is called to be counter-cultural and to stand alongside the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalised. Like us, they were created in God's image. We seek to help them to appreciate the family resemblance we all share.

Reading through the 2007-08 year in the life of Wesley Mission, you will encounter many reasons to rejoice in great accomplishments and remarkable outcomes. At the same time you will recognise the tragedy of needs that were not fully addressed, not because of a lack of commitment, but arising from a lack of physical and financial resources.

This Annual Review can give only a snapshot of our work and cannot hope to record every notable aspect of the past year. The full account of everything achieved through the work of Wesley Mission would fill a library with significant progress in Employment Services, Family and Community Services, Ageing and Disability Services, Health, Counselling and Accommodation Services and Business Services.

During the year, we have seen a change of Commonwealth Government. For Wesley Mission this brings new challenges as we seek to respond with fresh approaches to our ongoing work. Our strategic organising concept, 'Joined Up Thinking and Practice', remains at the centre, and is a positive factor in tackling opportunities in mission and care.

Depth and breadth

In every sector, services have expanded geographically or in depth and breadth. In Ageing and Disability Services, Community Support gained new funding allowing for 48 new Community Aged Care Packages, expanding into the St George area, and for 12 new Extended Aged Care in the Home (EACH) packages with a new EACH program established in the Sutherland Shire.

Family and Community Services is moving toward more holistic care, with Customer Service Coordinators facilitating access to services within an exciting Community Hub model. Projects in Riverstone, Rouse Hill and Marayong support families with young children through 'one stop shops', assisting parents with social networks, parenting skills, information and referrals to local services.

Partners in the work

Partnerships with other service providers, government agencies and other areas of Wesley Mission have produced growth and innovation. Within Health, Counselling and Accommodation Services, State and Commonwealth Government funding increases for Financial Counselling Services fully recognise the serious financial stress experienced by many Australians.

Commitment, clear goals and determination have led to great improvement and the promise of further successes in the year to come. In Employment Services the Personal Support Program was recognised as one of the most effective, ranking number one in 8 of the 12 areas in which we operate in Federal Government reviews. Likewise the Community Work Coordinator program rated most effective in 12 of the 19 areas in which we work.

Since 1973, principally under the management of the late Harold S Cottee, the Cottee Orchard enterprise has returned in excess of \$3m to Wesley Mission's Family and Community Services.



diversity

Celebrating life

I was pleased to share with Lifeline Sydney, which opened its doors and telephone lines in 1963, as it reached its 45th anniversary. Lifeline is an international organisation offering hope. We are grateful to God that the work begun in Wesley Mission has had a worldwide impact. We still have responsibility for the work in the City of Sydney and the Sutherland Shire.

A clear conviction has been to ensure that our work is properly researched so as to build meaningful strategies, with an evidentially proven base. This past year we have published *Living with Mental Illness: Attitudes, experiences and challenges* and *Beyond Adversity: Giving kids a chance to shine*. Both reports received strong media coverage, as did our Easter Mission, indicating a growing interest in our work.

conviction

commitment

challenge

Challenges ahead

Successes have been tempered with setbacks, with the closure of worthy programs, such as the Pacific Education Resource Exchange (PERX), due to loss of funding. Insufficient resources have resulted in significant unmet needs across Family Accommodation, Independent Living Programs and Creditline, where 5530 eligible referrals were received during the year. Of these, 2877 (52%) were turned away.

support

innovation

Performance

As a stakeholder in Wesley Mission, you will be keen to look at our performance. We set a deficit budget of \$3m, a significant improvement on 2007. I am pleased to report that our result is a deficit figure of \$2.2m, almost a million dollars better than budget. The coming year will have its challenges as we seek to further improve our position.

responsibility

With thanks

During the year, we said goodbye and thank you to Christine Morgan, who had served us well in senior executive management, and were glad to promote Graham Harris to General Manager Human Resources and Sustainability.

Let me express personal thanks to my Board, the Wesley Mission Council and my Senior Executive Leadership Team. Together the devoted staff team, volunteers and supporters who make up Wesley Mission have demonstrated Christlike servanthood and care for people in many ways. What a privilege it is to serve alongside every one of you! We anticipate the future, the ideas and initiatives yet to emerge, the fresh challenges that are bound to come, the encouragements that God will surely give us.

Warmly yours in Christ

Keith Garner
Superintendent / Chief Executive Officer

