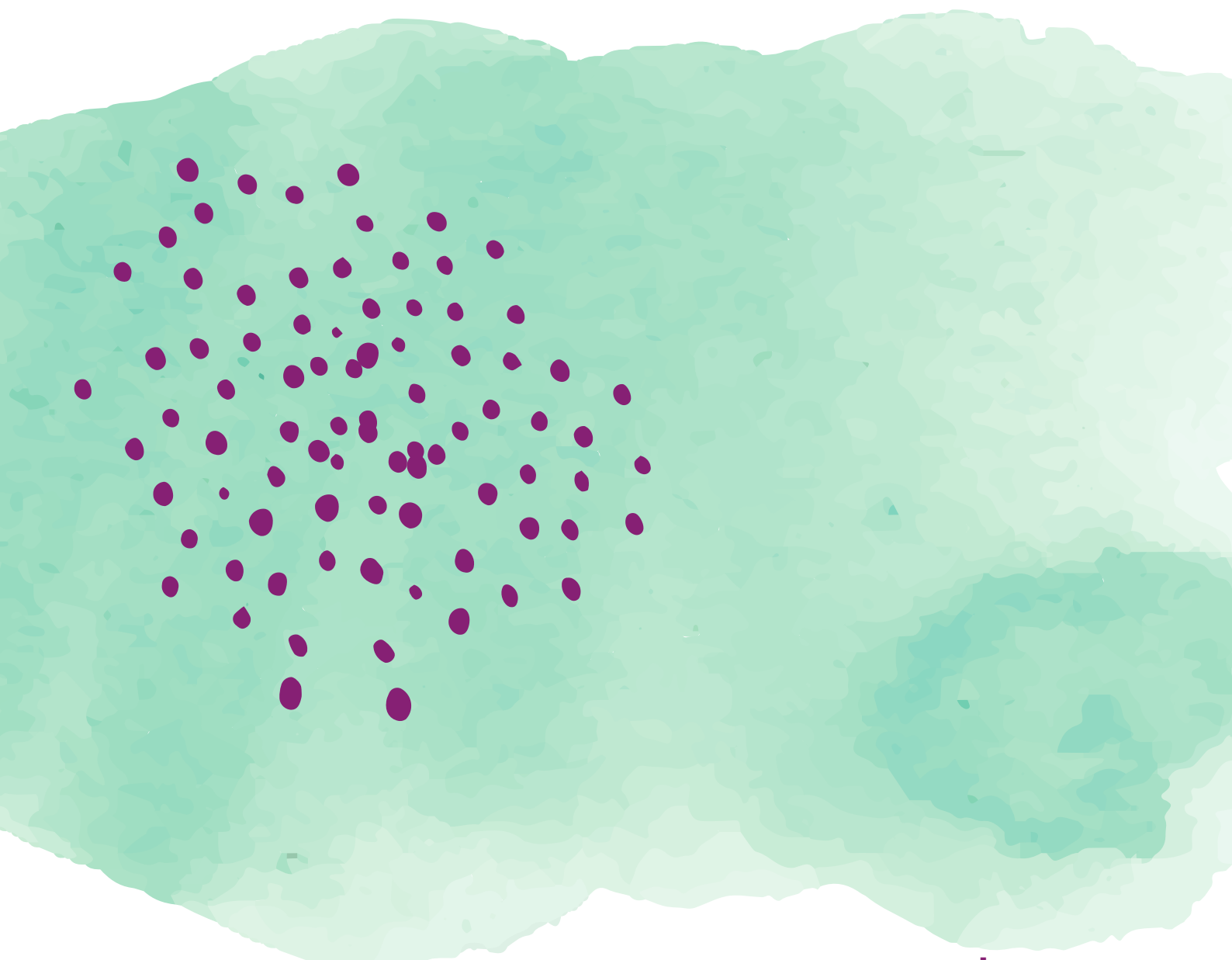


VANISH

Victorian Adoption Network for
Information and Self Help



Annual Report
2023-2024
Year 36

About VANISH

Acknowledgement of Country

VANISH is located in Naarm. We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

Our Vision

That the human right to genealogical connection and identity is recognised and supported in the broader community and in legislation, policy and practice.

Our Purpose

To empower and assist those who have experienced adoption, donor- assisted reproduction or other separation from family members, by providing a formal structure through which to deliver efficient and effective advice, search and support services, and advocacy.

Our Values

- Respect
- Empowerment
- Integrity
- Professionalism
- Inclusiveness
- Self help

Our Services

VANISH's services include:

- Specialist search assistance
- Evidence based information and resources, brief support and referral
- Facilitated support groups
- Counselling
- Referrals to other practitioners and services
- Training for professionals
- Public information sessions
- Advocacy and policy advice.

Our Service Users

We provide services to:

- People affected by separation and adoption (including de-facto adoption) - mothers, fathers, adopted persons and other family members
- People affected by donor conception - donor conceived persons, donor parents, natural parents and social parents
- Forgotten Australians/Care Leavers - former wards of state and/or people who were placed in institutional or foster care.

Chairperson's Report

Dear Members,

I am delighted to present to you VANISH's Annual Report for 2023-2024 Financial Year.



Adoption and family separation have lifelong impacts and over the past twelve months, demand for VANISH's services, including search assistance, counselling brokerage and support groups has been higher than ever.

I'd like to extend my thanks to the VANISH team, our volunteers and my fellow Committee of Management members for the contributions that they have made to VANISH over the past twelve months which have enabled us to continue to provide high quality services and support.

This past twelve months has been a period of change at VANISH. In March 2024 we said farewell to Charlotte Smith who ably led VANISH as Manager and then CEO from 2016. In her time at VANISH, Charlotte made an enormous contribution to increased recognition of the needs of Victorians impacted by adoption. We also farewelled Hana Crisp in December 2023 and in October 2024 wished Lorna Sleightholm well as she commenced her retirement.

The Committee of Management were pleased to welcome Dr Michelle Blanchard as VANISH's new Chief Executive Officer in March 2024. Michelle comes to VANISH following a two-decade career in the mental health and suicide prevention reform and we're excited to have her onboard leading VANISH into the future.

Following a number of years of uncertainty, we are pleased to have secured a five-year funding commitment from the Department of Justice and Community Safety, including a \$530k uplift over the first two years to support the continuation of VANISH's Counselling Brokerage Program and to better resource our support groups. While this funding security is welcome, not-for-profit organisations are not immune from the rising cost of living and we know that it will be critical for us to diversify our revenue in the coming years to be able to meet the growing costs of delivering our services as well as expand our services to meet demand.

As an organisation which has long represented people impacted by adoption and family separation, we were pleased to see the establishment of the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme in 2024. This world first scheme is an important recognition of the harms that were endured by mothers who lost children to adoption. However, we are disappointed that the Victorian Government has not extended the scheme to adopted people at this time. VANISH remains committed to advocating for the needs of all people affected by adoption, including the importance of recognising the lifelong impacts on adopted people.

With a new CEO on board and a funding agreement secured, the Committee of Management is looking forward to working with the VANISH team and members on a refreshed vision for the future and a new Strategic Plan to guide VANISH's work, accelerating our impact.

Todd Dargan
Chairperson

CEO's Report

Dear VANISH Members,

Thank you for your warm welcome to the VANISH community. I am incredibly appreciative to each of you who have taken the opportunity to meet with me over the past few months and to share your experiences of adoption, family separation or donor conception.



I am very grateful to the VANISH Committee of Management for entrusting me to lead the organisation and to the VANISH Team who have navigated this period of change with grace and enthusiasm.

My first few months at VANISH feel like a bit of a whirlwind as I got to learn more about VANISH's history and work while also working with our colleagues at the Department of Justice and Community Safety to secure funding for VANISH's core services.

This funding will mean that VANISH will work closely with the Victorian Government's [Adoption Information Service](#) to continue to provide:

- general post-adoption information and support services via telephone, email, our website and social media channels
- family search guidance and support
- peer support groups for people affected by adoption
- support to individuals to assist them to access adoption sensitive counselling in the community.

I am excited that we will have the opportunity in the coming months to build on our specialist direct search and support service while testing out new ways of providing support to people embarking on a search – including those wishing to lead their own search, or who would benefit from VANISH playing an intermediary role. I am also looking forward to VANISH continuing to evolve our group programs and evaluating the benefits of peer-to-peer support, demonstrating how and why this approach can be so beneficial.

Since joining VANISH, I have been struck by the diversity and complexity of the impacts that adoption and family separation have had across people's lives; the power that acknowledging and redressing past harms can have and the need for more comprehensive, holistic and trauma-informed supports as people navigate different experiences.

Demand for our services has never been higher with more community conversations about adoption and the widespread uptake of commercial DNA testing meaning that many people are only now learning more about their family history and identity. At the same time, younger people impacted by adoption, including the children and grandchildren of adopted people are starting to reach out for support highlighting the intergenerational impacts of historical practices.

In 2025, VANISH will embark on a collaborative process to develop a refreshed vision and new Strategic Plan for the organisation. I am really excited about working with you all to understand how VANISH can build on its strong legacy of providing support and advocacy for people impacted by adoption and family separation and meet the new and emerging needs of the community we serve.

Dr Michelle Blanchard
Chief Executive Officer

Search and Support

VANISH's Search and Support service works with people impacted by adoption to search for and make contact with their natural relatives. Every experience of adoption or family separation is different, so people have different reasons and timing for searching.

Some people come to the decision after years of deliberation. Sometimes the decision is prompted by a specific event, such as the birth of a child or the death of a parent. Some people only discover that they are adopted later in life after completing a DNA test or learning more about their family history.

For individuals who would like to undertake a search, VANISH can assist by providing support and guidance throughout the process. VANISH's team of experienced search workers can respond to enquiries that people might have about undertaking a search as well as provide hands on assistance. This can include:

- Information about an individual's rights to information about their natural family – mother, father, donor, adult child, sibling, or other family member.
- Assistance with applying for adoption records, state wardship records, hospital records and other relevant documents.
- Help in searching for a relative. VANISH can do this on an individual's behalf, or can provide guidance as someone moves through the search process.
- Suggestions of how to make contact with a relative, or advice on how to register your contact details and/or preferences on the Adoption Information Register in case someone looks for them at a later date.
- Helping people to navigate the emotional impact of the search process.

VANISH also partners with Open Place to support people who were in care to search for their natural relatives.

The typical VANISH search and support service user is a 58 year old adopted person living in Victoria searching for a natural parent aged in their mid-eighties. Just over half of our service-users identify as female and about a quarter live in Melbourne.

New Searches Initiated

Between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024, 131 new service-users registered for VANISH's Search and Support Services and 195 new searches were initiated.

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of who the searches were undertaken on behalf of, while Figure 2 shows who they were searching for.

Figure 1: Cohorts of people searching for relatives in FY24

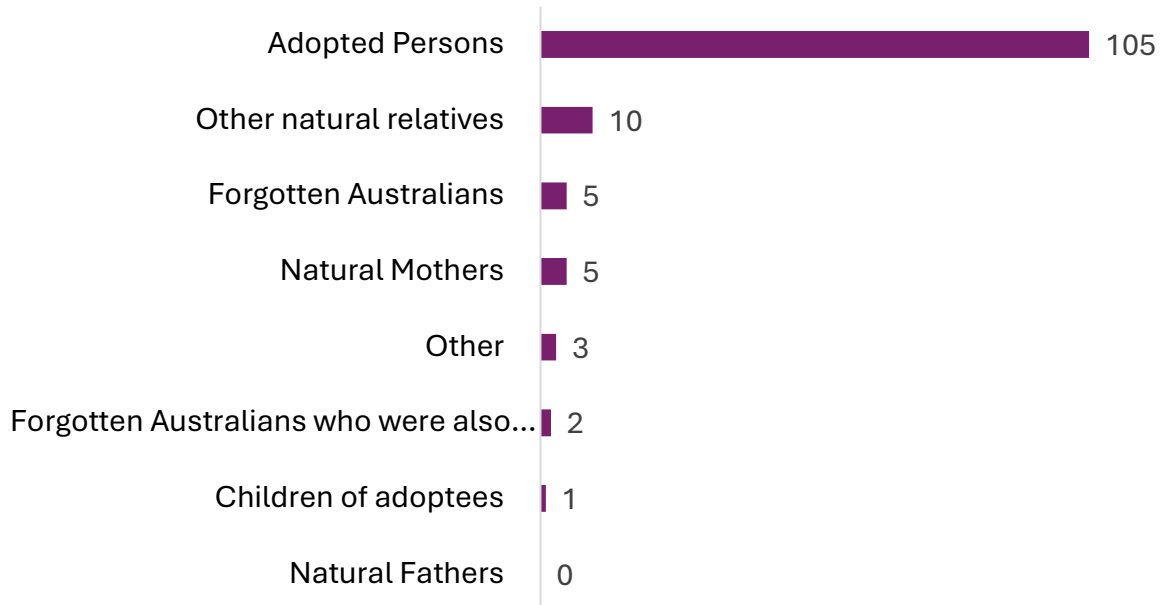
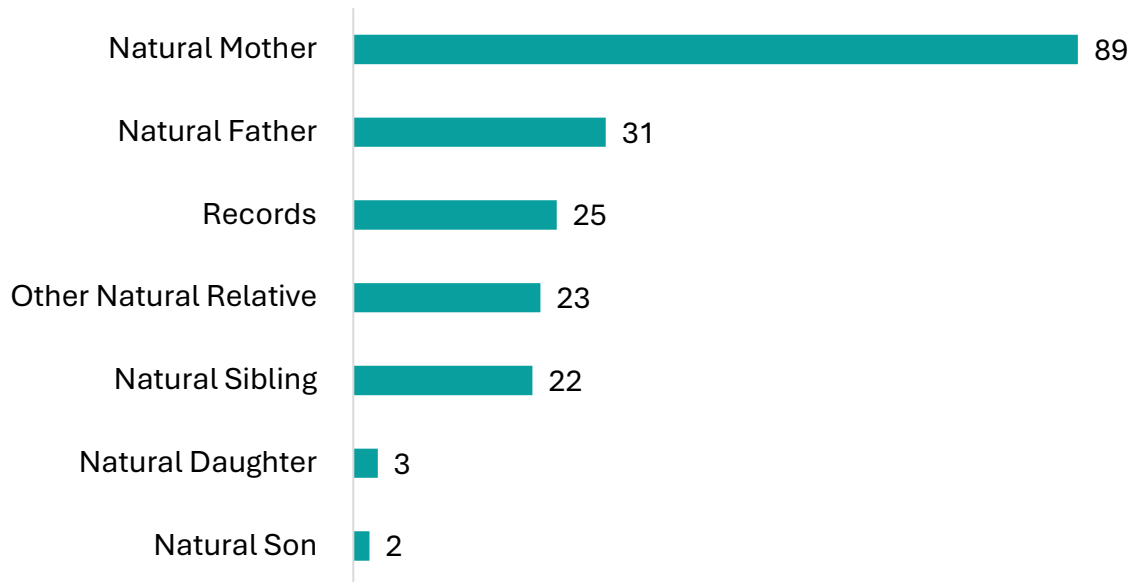


Figure 2: People being sought in FY24



The majority of registrants requested one search, 15.62% requested two searches, 3.91% requested three searches and 0.78% (1 registrant) requested four searches.

Completed Searches

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 June 2024, the VANISH team completed or closed 159 searches on behalf of 136 individual service-users. These completed searches were requested by both individuals and third-party agencies including Adoption Information Services, Open Place and Oranga Tamariki (New Zealand Ministry for Children). A breakdown is provided below.

Figure 3: Source of request to search

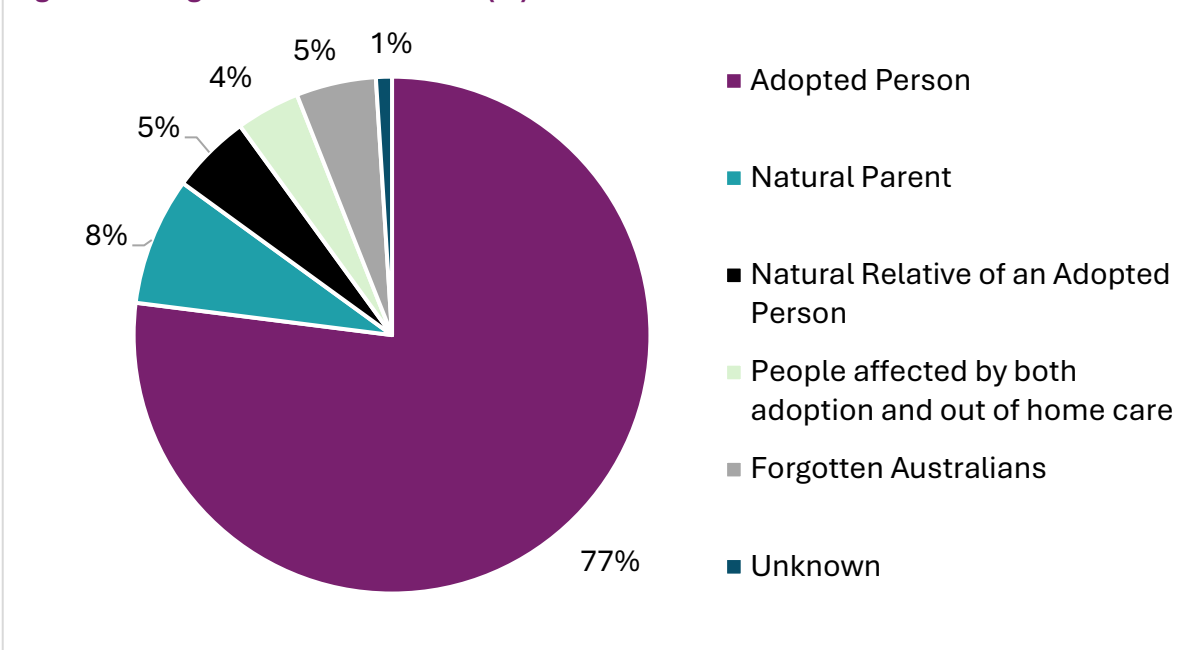
Individual	113
Adoption Information Services	7
Open Place	11
Oranga Tamariki	5
Total completed searches	136

A breakdown of the status of each of these 136 service-users in relation to adoption or care is provided below.

Figure 4: Background of service-users

Status	Number of people
Adopted Person	105
Natural Parent	11
Natural Relative of an Adopted Person	6
People affected by both adoption and out of home care	5
Forgotten Australians	7
Unknown	2
Total people affected by Adoption	127
Total people affected by out of home care	12
Total unique service-users	136

Figure 5: Background of service-users (%)



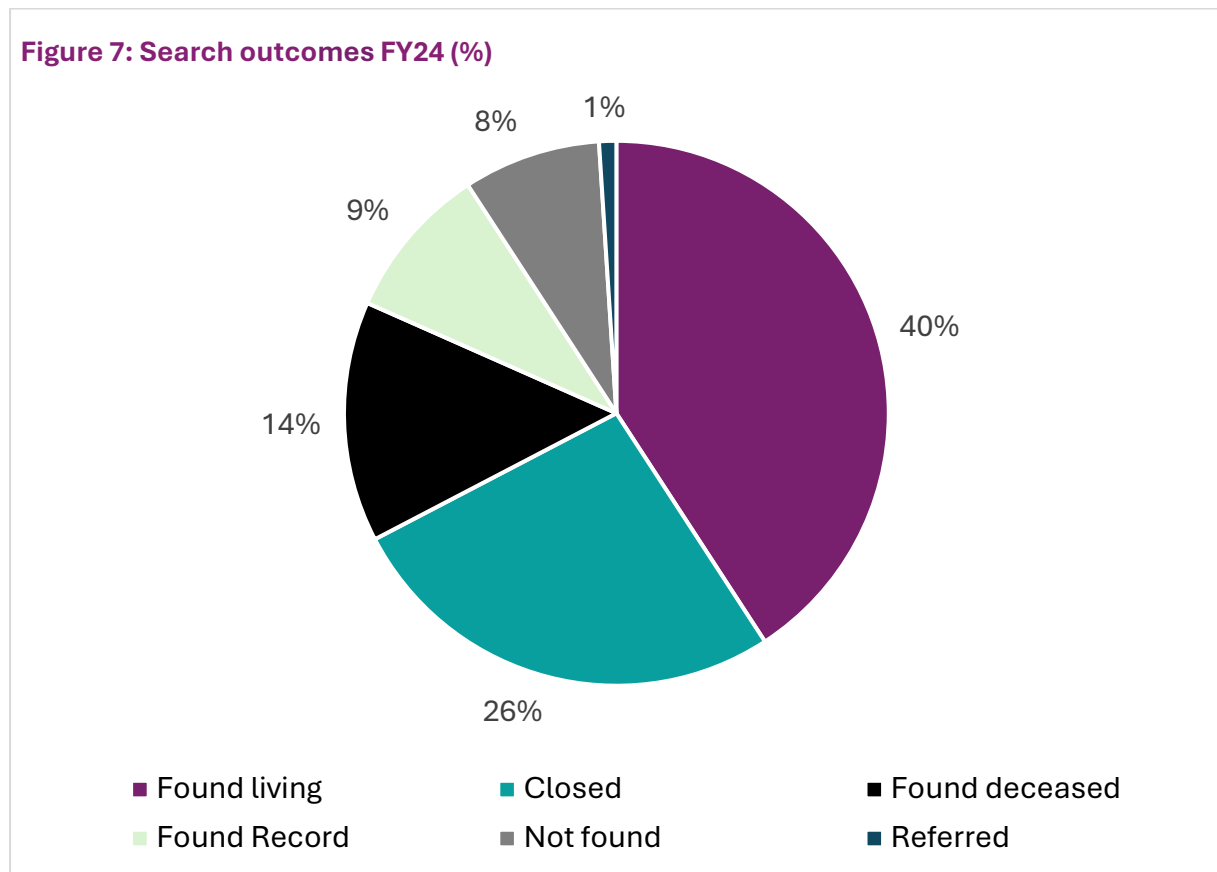
Almost half of the searches resulted in a living relative being found, with 14.5% sadly being found to be deceased. Only 7.5% of searches resulted in the person being sought being unable to be found.

The outcomes in the searches conducted on behalf of these 136 service-users are noted below.

Figure 6: Search outcomes FY24

Search Outcome	Number of People
Found living	65
Closed	42
Found deceased	23
Found Record	15
Not found	12
Referred to another service for further assistance	2
Grand Total	159

Figure 7: Search outcomes FY24 (%)



Closed searches, which can be opened again on request of the applicant, include searches put on pause by applicants, and searches solved by the applicant through social media, DNA or being contacted by a relative. The high number of closed searches also reflects that for some people, as they embark on the search process, they realise that they may not be ready or it's not the right time for them to undertake a search. If this is the case, service users can be reassured we can always re-open a search when the time is right.

Ongoing Searches

156 searches remained open at the end of the financial year. Of these 98 were active, 52 were at intake stage waiting for paperwork and 6 were on hold.

Emerging issues and trends in searching for family

Over the past twelve months, there has been a continued trend in the increasing complexity of searches being requested by service-users and undertaken by VANISH. This complexity is influenced by a number of factors including the length of time since the adoption took place, the age of those being sought and gaps in the records available.

The more widespread uptake of commercial DNA testing has also led to an increase in the number of late discovery adoptees searching for family. It has also brought people back to VANISH after many years as new information has come to light about the identity of their family.

Support Services






Enquiries, Information and Referral

For many people, reaching out to VANISH for information can be the first step in a long journey to understanding who they are and where they come from.

The VANISH team are available Monday to Friday from 9am and 5pm to respond to phone calls, emails, website enquiries and visitors looking for information, advice and brief support.

From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, the team received 769 new enquiries, the vast majority of these being received via telephone.

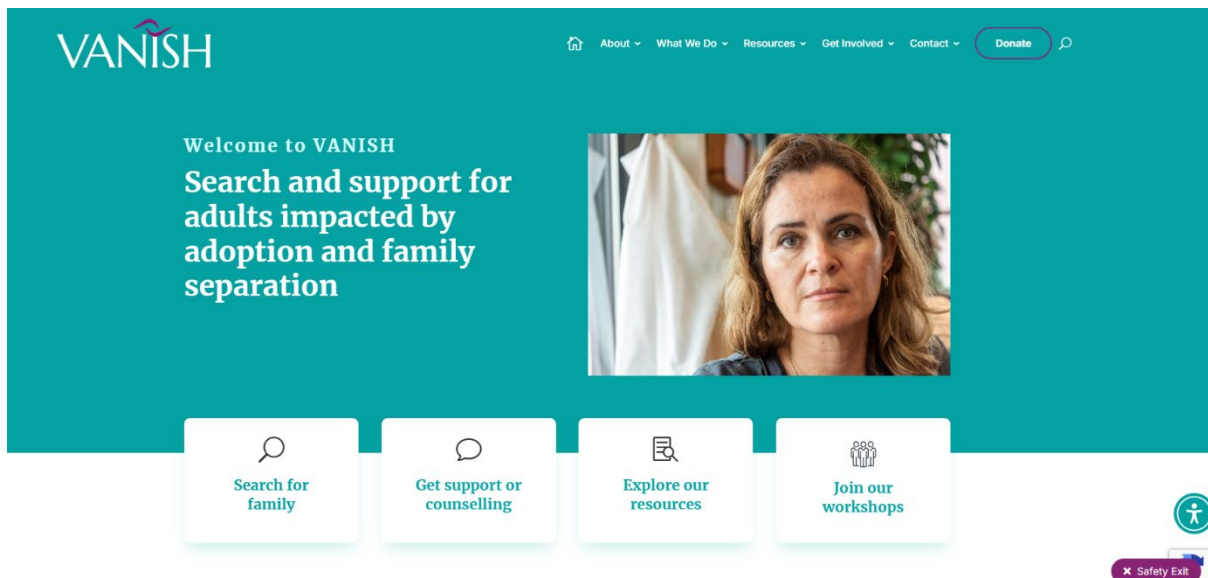
Figure 8: Enquiry Channels FY24

-  **Phone:** 73.1%
-  **Email:** 19.7%
-  **Website:** 11.0%
-  **In Person:** 0.4%
-  **Post:** 0.3%

Common enquiries we received in the past twelve months have included requests for:

- Advice on how to access records relating to an adoption
- Information about the Victorian Government's Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme
- Support in advocating to decision-makers for redress and improved supports for adopted people
- Referrals to counsellors specialising in issues relating to adoption, family separation or donor conception
- Information about VANISH's services including our search and support services, counselling brokerage program and support groups.

VANISH Website Redevelopment



The refreshed **vanish.org.au** website marks a significant enhancement in VANISH’s ability to serve the community. The new website offers a refreshed, user-friendly experience, making it easier for people to access both information and VANISH services.

The site is designed to provide visitors with a clear understanding of VANISH’s mission and how we can help, as well as access key information and resources as they navigate issues relating to adoption and family separation.

A key feature of the site is the improved navigation, enabling users to find out more about support options such as counselling, peer support groups and our search services more readily.

With an emphasis on a responsive design, the VANISH website is now optimised for use across all devices, ensuring that people can engage with VANISH’s services whether they are on a smartphone, tablet or desktop.

The site enhances our capacity to provide timely updates to our community and we plan to continue to enhance the website’s content and functionality in the coming months as part of our commitment to supporting individuals impacted by adoption and family separation in a more accessible and inclusive way.

We’re very grateful to the team at Blick Creative who built our website and to the entire VANISH team, including Charlotte Smith and Hana Crisp, who led this work.

In addition to our website redevelopment, we have also increased our presence on social media to include a presence on Instagram, LinkedIn and Threads alongside our existing Facebook, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter) accounts. Over time, this will enable us to reach new audiences – including health professionals, policymakers and younger people impacted by adoption and family separation - to increase awareness of the lifelong impacts of adoption and family separation, provide evidence-based information and resources and advocate for improved services and supports for the community we serve.

Counselling Brokerage Program

VANISH's Counselling Brokerage Program recognises the importance of increasing access to adoption sensitive counselling to help people affected by adoption to navigate the lifelong impacts of adoption. For many participants, previous attempts at seeking help through counselling haven't been effective because service providers have not necessarily understood the context of adoption and family separation.

I reached out to VANISH ***“To be amongst people who have experienced adoption the same as me to gain more understanding of adoption and the way it affects me in everyday life”***.
(Quote from Long, M and Frederico, M (2024). VANISH Counselling Brokerage Program Evaluation)

The program provides eligible participants with funding for up to ten sessions of counselling with a private practitioner in the community who has a sound understanding of the context and impacts of adoption.

“My experience with the staff was wonderful, they took the time to listen and seemed to understand my situation. VANISH gave me the profiles of three or four counsellors. I was able to discuss my choice of counsellor with a VANISH team member. I felt fully supported”.

(Quote from Long, M and Frederico, M (2024). VANISH Counselling Brokerage Program Evaluation)

In the 2023-2024 Financial Year, the counselling program was available to adopted persons and natural parents whose adoption experience took place in Victoria or who now reside in Victoria. The counselling program was fully subscribed by March 2024 and all subsequent requests for counselling were placed on a waiting list.

At 30 June 2024, we had:

- Committed 494 sessions to 56 clients
- Delivered 223 sessions, with the remaining sessions to be delivered in the new financial year. The funds to deliver these sessions is represented in the 'deferred income' section of the FY24 Financial Statements enclosed in this Annual Report.
- Referred clients to 22 unique counsellors with professional backgrounds in psychology, psychotherapy, counselling and social work.

Counselling brokerage program participants included 77% adopted people and 23% mothers.

In 2024, we partnered with Associate Professor Maureen Long and Professor Margarita Federico from Latrobe University to conduct an evaluation of Phase One of the Counselling Brokerage Program. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine if the counselling program was effective in meeting its intended aims, to identify the elements that proved most effective such as number of sessions, the approach the counsellor applied and how the counselling addressed the person affected by past adoption practices' needs. This mixed method evaluation included surveying and conducted in-depth interviews with both people accessing the program and counsellors. The evaluation found that:

- 85.7% of participants described the referral process as excellent or very good
- 71.4% of participants described their counsellor's knowledge as excellent or very good.

Participants were asked to rate their emotional wellbeing before and after their participation in the counselling brokerage program. Their responses demonstrated perceived improvements in

emotional wellbeing. Prior to the program, 84% rated their wellbeing at three or less on a ten point scale. Afterwards, 57% rated themselves between 7-10, whilst 14% wrote ‘excellent’ and ‘much better.’

As one participant described, participating in the program “*Definitely gave me insight into my trauma and the gift of enlightenment around my experiences & how to regulate and consider these aspects in an alternative light*” (Quote from Long, M and Frederico, M (2024). VANISH Counselling Brokerage Program Evaluation).

VANISH is committed to continuing to evaluate the effectiveness of this in-demand program.

Support Groups

VANISH support groups are for adults affected by adoption to meet and share with others who have had similar experiences. These groups offer a confidential, non-judgmental space where attendees can talk about what’s on their mind and how they are feeling. Almost all of our facilitators are staff or volunteers with a lived experience of adoption.

Our Support Groups are held:

- On the fourth Tuesday of the month in Melbourne
- On the second Wednesday of the month online
- Monthly on Saturdays in Albury-Wodonga, alternating between a mixed group which includes both natural mothers and adopted people and a group for adopted people.
- Monthly on Saturdays in Ballarat.

Between 1 July 2023 and 30 June 2024, we held 37 support groups across these four locations.

Figure 9: Support Group Attendance FY24

Location	No. of groups	No. of attendees	Adopted Persons	Natural Mothers	Other	Average
Regional	19	114	98	12	0	6.0
Metro	18	174	174	0	0	9.7
Total	37	288	272	12	0	7.8

Demand for VANISH’s Support Groups has grown steadily over the past five years with average attendance at our regional groups growing from just 2 people per group in 2018-2019 to 6 in 2023-2024. Metropolitan group attendance, either online or in-person has also grown from an average of 7 per group in 2018-2019 to almost 10 per group in 2023-2024.

The support groups provide a space for connection and often deep and rich discussions about a range of issues experienced by those impacted by adoption. Common issues explored include:

- Diversity of people’s experiences of searching for family
- Challenges of reunion and maintaining relationships
- Anger and disappointment at lack of recognition for adopted people
- The impact of adoption on other aspects of a person’s life including their interpersonal relationships.

I belong and I can be myself: A Support Group Attendee's Experience

"I am not one that has ever felt comfortable in groups it could be a sports group or other interest group. I would join and then after a few months I would move on, I would ask myself why am I not staying and not loving it like everyone else and I always came up with the same answer I don't belong and it just doesn't feel right.

I then heard about an adoptee support group in the rural town where I lived. I had some unanswered questions about my adoption so thought why not give it a go. From my previous experience of groups my expectation was not high.

It was great to be in a room where people listened and understood what I was saying over some months I began to feel I belonged even though I was often the only male. I attended the monthly group when I could and it helped me explore and reflect on some personal issues. My life then took a left turn and I had to move to the city the thought of not attending group worried me. I mentioned this and was reminded that VANISH ran a monthly support group in the North Melbourne office. A sigh of relief.

The transition to the North Melbourne group was easy and even though I knew no-one I still felt I belonged and the conversations as valuable. I also wasn't the only male which was great. I reflect that I am still attending the group and I feel as if I belong. There is no need to leave and feel lost. I have learnt so much one being I don't have to give advice and the power of hearing others stories. The other is that I belong and can be myself 100% at the group and I feel alive and myself when I leave.

Having a VANISH group in the rural town and in the city has been such a great thing for me"

Redress Support

In early 2024, the Victorian Government established the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme to provide support to mothers who were forcibly separated from their babies before 1990.

The world first Redress Scheme offers:

- A one-off financial payment of \$30,000
- Access to counselling and psychological support
- Apology processes.

In the lead up to the establishment of the scheme, VANISH supported mothers impacted by forced adoption who were experiencing exceptional circumstances such as terminal or critical illness to access the Exceptional Circumstances Fund which provided one-off discretionary payments to mothers.

Since the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme opened in March 2024, VANISH has been supporting a small cohort of mothers who previously received funding from the Exceptional Circumstances Fund to apply to the redress scheme by acting as nominee, liaising with the redress team on their behalf. We have also provided information and brief support to other women considering or currently applying to the scheme.

Redress processes such as this are incredibly important in recognising the harm of past practices. However, it's important we don't underestimate how difficult they can be for those applying as they recall the hurt and loss they experienced. Re-engaging with government systems and processes can also be distressing for people from whom these systems took so much.

While the Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Scheme rightfully recognises the harm that past adoption practices caused to so many mothers, we know that the issue of redress for adopted people remains a priority for many VANISH members.

We were disappointed to learn in April 2024 that that the Victorian Government have decided not implement two of the recommendations from the Inquiry into Responses to Historical Forced Adoption including conducting further research into the impacts of forced adoption on adopted people and exploring the establishment of an equivalent Redress Scheme for adopted people. We have written to the Attorney-General to express our concern about this decision and will continue to advocate for improved understand, recognition and support for adopted people.

Counsellor Training

VANISH held another highly successful Counsellor Training workshop on 12-13 November 2024.

The workshop, led by Dr Sue Green, was attended by almost 50 counsellors, psychologists, psychotherapists and social workers from Victoria, as well as interstate and Overseas over two days. A number of attendees from Adoption Information Services and Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria also participated.

Our Team

Committee of Management 2023-24

VANISH is an Incorporated Association governed by a volunteer Committee of Management all of whom have a relevant lived experience. The Committee of Management guides the organisation to achieve its mission, purpose and goals while remaining sustainable and managing risks.

Members	Role	Membership Category	Term
Todd Dargan	Chair	Offspring – Adopted Person	2018-
Hannah Spanswick	Vice-Chair	Natural Parent	2020-
Jon Phillips	Treasurer	Offspring – Adopted Person	2021-
Anne Donnellan	Secretary	Offspring – Adopted Person	2023-
Amy Clarke	Member	Natural Relative – Child of an Adopted Person	2022-2024
Claudia Lassetter	Member	Offspring – Adopted Person	2023-
Simon Pryor	Member	Offspring – Adopted Person	2017-
Aimee Shackleton	Member	Offspring – Donor Conceived Person	2021-
Charlotte Smith	Ex-Officio	Chief Executive Officer	2016 – 2024
Dr Michelle Blanchard	Ex-Officio	Chief Executive Officer	2024-

VANISH Team

Name	Title	Term
Dr Michelle Blanchard	Chief Executive Officer (from March 2024)	March 2024 -
Charlotte Smith	Chief Executive Officer (to March 2024)	May 2016 – March 2024
Gail Holstock	Support Services Coordinator	November 2020-
SallyRose Carbines	Regional Search and Support Worker	March 2021-
Adelaide Tapper	Search and Support Worker	June 2023-
Patricia Navaretti	Search and Support Worker	June 2018-
Tracey Hudson	Search and Support Worker	August 2019-
Lorna Sleightholm	Administrator/Receptionist	September 2018-August 2024
Kerri Licheni	Bookkeeper (Contractor)	April 2011-
Peter Drinan	Accountant (Contractor)	June 2023-
Hana Crisp	Program Support Officer	January 2023-December 2023
Rose Overberg	DNA Research Consultant	June 2021-
Dianne Fox	DNA Research Consultant	November 2023-

Support Group Facilitators

Melbourne	Michele Hutchins, Trish Harty, Cheyne Bull, Gail Holstock, Hana Crisp and Mandy Candlish
Ballarat	SallyRose Carbines
Albury	Dr Rosie Saxton and Vicky Graham
Zoom	SallyRose Carbines, Gail Holstock, David Cross and Michaela Hart

Financial Report

Committee's Report for the year ended 30 June 2024

Your Committee members submit the financial accounts of VANISH Inc for the financial year ending 30 June 2024.

Committee Members

The names of the Committee members at the date of this report are:

- Todd Dargan (Chair)
- Hannah Spanswick (Vice Chair)
- Anne Donnellan (Secretary)
- Jon Phillips (Treasurer)
- Claudia Lassetter
- Simon Pryor
- Aimee Shackleton

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were: search, counselling and support services for people affected by adoption, state wardship, donor assisted reproduction or other separation from family, as outlined in the Rules of VANISH Inc.

Operating Result

The profit from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to:

Year ended	Year ended
30 June 2024	30 June 2023
(143,811)	\$21,640

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the committee and signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Jon Phillips (Treasurer)



Todd Dargan (Chair)

Summary of Financial Performance (Profit and Loss) Statement for the Year Ending 30 June 2024

	FY24	FY23
	\$	\$
Income		
Victorian Government Funding		
DJCS Adoption Services	514,612	502,060
DJCS Adoption Services Review	0	90,909
DJCS Counselling Brokerage - Phase One	9,871	(9,871)
DJCS Counselling Brokerage - Phase Two	54,371	0
DJCS Counsellor Training Funding	9,000	0
Exceptional Circumstances Fund	0	36,364
Redress Nominee Support	4,136	0
Other Grants and Partnerships		
Open Place MOU	50,597	47,846
RAV Small Grants	11,465	16,089
Other Income		
Donations and Bequests	1,454	51,694
Counsellor Training Revenue	12,609	0
Search Fees Reimbursed by Service-Users	1,888	716
Interest Income	22,827	13,054
Sundry Income	0	485
Total Income	692,831	749,346
Operating Expenses		
Administration	15,001	17,637
Communications	6,481	6,644
Depreciation	6,152	2,882
Employment	621,626	604,527
Finance Expenses	14,179	15,052
Reimbursement & Legal Expense Provision	0	(40,162)
Governance & Compliance	3,636	7,153
Information Technology	23,950	12,444
Professional Development & Staff Supervision	6,865	8,272
Property	56,656	58,755
Service Expenses	72,662	6,648
Stakeholder Engagement	4,929	3,433
Utilities	4,369	4,422
Other	0	20,000
Total Operating Expenses	836,505	727,706
Net Profit	(143,811)	21,640

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the attached Audit Report.

Summary Balance Sheet at 30 June 2024

	FY24	FY23
Assets		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	433,395	597,395
Accounts Receivable	4,955	488
Prepayments	759	0
Total Current Assets	439,109	597,883
Non Current Assets		
Security Deposit - Howard Street	10,000	10,000
Property, Plant and Equipment	9,506	13,170
Intangible Assets (Website and database redevelopment)	19,940	6,688
Total Non-Current Assets	39,446	29,858
Total Assets	478,555	627,741
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Trade Creditors and Accruals	28,119	36,198
Deferred Grant Income	0	21,336
Deferred Grant Income (Counselling Brokerage)	42,129	0
GST Liability	10,029	10,228
Payroll Liabilities	18,048	15,659
Provisions	49,288	63,569
Rounding	0	0
Total Current Liabilities	147,614	146,990
Non-current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	7,100	13,100
Total Non-current Liabilities	7,100	13,100
Total Liabilities	154,714	160,090
Net Assets	323,841	467,652
Equity		
Opening Balance - Retained Earnings from Previous Year	467,652	414,398
Cash Reserves	0	31,614
Current Year Earnings	(143,811)	21,640
Total Equity	323,977	467,652

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the attached Audit Report.

Summary Statement of Cash Flow for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

	FY24	FY23
Cash flow from Operating Activities		
Receipts from Operating Activities	686,330	719,323
Payments to suppliers and employees	(857,417)	(752,163)
Interest received from investments	22,827	13,054
Net Cash Flows from Operating Activities	(148,260)	(19,787)
Investing Activities		
Payment for property, plant and equipment/Intangibles	(15,740)	(14,300)
Net Cash Flows from Investing Activities	(15,740)	(14,300)
Financing Activities		
Other cash items from financing activities	0	0
Net Cash Flows from Financing Activities	0	0
Net cash flow	(164,000)	(34,087)
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of period	597,395	631,482
Net change in cash and cash equivalents for period	(164,000)	(34,087)
Cash and cash equivalents at end of period	433,395	597,395

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements. These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the attached Audit Report.

Financial Declaration by Members of the Committee for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 2 to the financial statements.

Per section 60.15 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013

The Responsible Persons declare that in the Responsible Persons' opinion:

- a) there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- b) the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.



Jon Phillips (Treasurer)



Todd Dargan (Chair)

Notes to the Accounts for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

The functional and presentation currency of VANISH Inc. is Australian dollars.

1. Basis of Accounting

In the opinion of the Committee of Management, the Association is not a reporting entity since there are unlikely to exist users of the financial report who are not able to command the preparation of reports tailored so as to satisfy specifically all of their information needs. These special purpose financial statements have been prepared to meet the reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. VANISH Inc. is a not-for-profit entity as required by Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements of the Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements AASB 107 Statement of Cash Flows AASB 108 Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors, AASB 120 Accounting for Government Grants and Disclosure of Government Assistance, AASB 1048 Interpretation of Standards , AASB 1054 Australian Additional Disclosures and AASB 1058.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs modified, where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities.

Significant accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and are consistent with prior reporting periods unless otherwise stated.

2. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value. Bank overdrafts also form part of cash equivalents and presented within current liabilities on the balance sheet.

(b) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

(c) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Employee benefits expected to be settled more than twelve months after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

Employee benefits are presented as current liabilities in the balance sheet if the Association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date regardless of the classification of the liability for measurement purposes under AASB 119

(d) Property, Plant and Equipment

Plant and equipment are carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment of losses.

Plant and equipment are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

(e) Revenue and Other Income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the Association and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied. Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

Interest Revenue

Interest is recognised using the effective interest method.

Rendering of Services

Revenue in relation to rendering of services is recognised depending on whether the outcome of the services can be estimated reliably. If the outcome can be estimated reliably then the stage of completion of the services is used to determine the appropriate level of revenue to be recognised in the period. If the outcome cannot be reliably estimated then revenue is recognised to the extent of expenses recognised that are recoverable.

Grant Revenue

Government grants are recognised at fair value where there is reasonable assurance that the grant will be received and all grant conditions will be met. Grants relating to expense items are recognised as income over the periods necessary to match the grant to the costs they are compensating. Grants relating to assets are credited to deferred income at fair value and are credited to income over the expected useful life of the asset on a straight-line basis

(f) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the balance sheet.

Auditor's Report

Independent Auditors Report

Vanish Inc.

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Vanish Inc. which comprises the financial position as at 30th June 2024, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including summary of significant accounting policies and managements assertion statement and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Vanish Inc. as of 30th June 2024, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012.

Independence

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Vanish Inc. to meet the requirements of Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the applicable legislation and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken based on this financial report.



Lionel R Arnold Chartered Accountant
Dated 17th September 2024
J L Collyer & Partners
Unit 7 603 Boronia Road Wantirna Victoria

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Acknowledgements

VANISH would like to sincerely thank everyone who has supported our work over the past twelve months. In particular, we would like to recognise:

- Adoption Services, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria.
- Forced Adoption Inquiry Implementation team, Department of Justice and Community Safety, Victoria
- Historical Forced Adoptions Redress Team
- Open Place
- Relationships Australia Victoria
- ARMS Victoria
- Counsellors who accept referrals through our Counselling Brokerage Program
- WebRes
- Blick Creative
- Kilfinan Australia
- Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences
- Volunteers including Mandy Candlish, Badis Sai and Shayan Chander
- Members and Friends who have made financial or in-kind contributions to VANISH this year, including those who make a regular donation to VANISH or have chosen to remember VANISH in their will
- VANISH service users who have trusted VANISH to assist and support them in a deeply personal and profoundly important area of their lives.

“Please continue with adoption counselling services and support as there is nothing that even comes close to this – the counsellors I have experienced through VANISH have literally saved my life.

They are exceptional human beings who offer their knowledge and empathy without bias and have a full understanding of the debilitating and enduring effects that adoption has inflicted both psychologically and physically.”

Quote from
Long, M and Frederico, M (2024).

VANISH Counselling Brokerage Program Evaluation. Latrobe University, Melbourne.

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