



From Then to Now

An overview of the Australian Community Support Organisation

Our History

- ACSO began 33 years ago by Stan McCormack, who – while he was serving his own sentence in prison - recognised the need for people to come to a safe and supported space when they were let out of prison
- The organisation began as a drop-in centre for people released from prison into the community, and quickly became supported accommodation for those in need – particularly those people who were usually turned away from other services (i.e. anyone who had a history of sex offences).
- ACSO grew slowly but surely and when the State Government of Victoria was looking for an assessment and treatment pathway for people with alcohol and other drug issues who were also involved in the criminal legal system, ACSO took on the program now known as COATS.
- In the meantime, the residential and supported accommodation services expanded its remit to include people from the forensic disability space.



Where are we now

- Reconnect program
 - An intensive reintegration services for people considered high risk and 'major offender' (VIC)
- On TRACC reintegration program
 - A social impact investment to reduce recidivism (NSW)
- Community Re-entry Services Team (CREST)
 - A pre and post-release and crisis services for people on Parole (South East QLD)
- Initial Transition Service (ITS)
 - Assertive referrals for people on Parole (NSW)

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- Community Offender Advice Treatment Service (COATS)
 - A forensic AOD assessment service (VIC)
- Forensic disability and mental health residential programs (VIC)
- Clinical programs
 - Behaviour support assessment and planning
 - Problematic Sexualised Behaviour Support and Assessment service
 - Occupational Therapy
 - Neuropsychology

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- Sexualised and major offender services
- Mental Health Assessment and Treatment Planning
- Disability Employment Services (DES)
 - A member of COACT in NSW and VIC
- Access Training and social enterprise café ACspresSO (VIC)
- Housing with Conviction; a registered housing provider.
- ReStart – transitioning out program for people on sentences of three months or less, or on remand
- Atrium Support and Accommodation Program for people on Bail

Underpinned at every level by:

- Our Consumer Advisory Group
- Our commitment to a community freed of crime and prisons
- Our belief in humanity

And

- Our commitment to creating another chance



THANK YOU

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