

## Accreditation Status Report

### The Report

This report provides an overview of Banana Shire Emergency Accommodation and Support Centre Inc's performance in relation to the National Community Housing Standards.

Banana Shire Emergency Accommodation and Support Centre Inc is trading as Banana Shire Support Centre (BSSC).

The report consists of two main parts:

- Accreditation Status Report
- Accreditation Evaluation Report

#### Accreditation Status Report includes:

- Recommended / Current accreditation status
- Background information about the organisation's work and history
- An overview of the Evaluation team's assessment of the organisation's performance, identifying major achievements as well as major areas for improvement.
- Evaluation Team
- Methodology

***It is important to note that the Accreditation Status Report, for accredited organisations only, will be made publicly available on the CHSAU Website – <http://www.chsau.qld.gov.au>***

The Evaluation Team has assessed the organisation's performance by rating each Standard against a five-point scale, as outlined below:

Surpassed	Performance meets expectations in all of the three categories of evidence (documentation, processes, measuring outcomes), and at least one category has exceeded expectations
Met	Performance meets expectations in all of the three categories of evidence (documentation, processes, measuring outcomes)
Partially Met	Where there are no categories of evidence (documentation, processes, measuring outcomes) not met, and any of the three categories is partially met.
Not Met	Where there is a not met rating in any of the three categories of evidence (documentation, processes, measuring outcomes)
Not Applicable	The standard cannot be met by the organisation because external legislation, organisation definition or funding policy guidelines prevents them from doing so.

### Accreditation Status

Banana Shire Emergency Accommodation and Support Centre Inc has met the required standards and has been awarded full three year accreditation from 7 May 2009 to 6 May 2012.

## Summary of Feedback from Tenants and Other Stakeholders

The tenant of the Centre preferred to complete a written survey rather than be interviewed by the evaluation team.

The tenant reported that staff from the Centre worked well together and noted the good communication that had been experienced from the staff. The tenant reported that there were no barriers to participating or accessing services of the centre and had been provided with opportunities to participate.

The tenant reported that at the time of the allocation of the property information about the tenancy agreement and conditions of tenancy were provided. The tenant also reported that they received tenant's rights information at the beginning of their tenancy and that they had accessed the complaints process with a satisfactory outcome.

Staff from the other community agencies that were interviewed indicated they have a close working relationship with the Banana Shire Support Centre. Comments were made about the positive outcomes of the referral process between the agencies with both formal and informal referral. Staff from the other community agencies also advised that clients who had been referred to reported positive feedback about their dealings with the Centre.

Staff from the community agencies interviewed indicated that they had a good knowledge of Banana Shire Support Centre including the location of the services, eligibility criteria for the various programs, hours of operation and the complaints and appeals process. Staff from the agencies also reported regular contact with Banana Shire Support Centre staff at various local networking and other meetings.

## Overall Summary of Major Achievements including Areas of Excellence

Board and staff are active members of the Biloela community and the Centre are represented at interagency and other networking opportunities in the local and regional areas. The Centre has a good working relationship with both government and non-government organisations.

Banana Shire Support Centre's offices are located either side of an arcade and the layout of the offices have been designed to maximise functionality while providing a safe environment for clients who access the Centre.

Banana Shire Support Centre has produced a range of brochures to promote the services provided by the Centre and produces a column "Up Front" in the local newspaper to raise awareness in the community about the Centre.

Banana Shire Support Centre has well documented policies and procedures to provide guidance with service delivery, human resource management and the governance and management of the Centre.

Banana Shire Support Centre has demonstrated a strong commitment to sustaining tenancies by providing ongoing support to tenants both during their tenancy with the Centre and by the support provided when tenants move from housing managed by the Centre into public housing or private rental accommodation.

Interviews with the tenant and other community organisations indicated that is very well regarded by its tenant and the other organisations and provides opportunities for feedback about the Centre.

## Overall Summary of Strategic Recommendations

It is recommended that Banana Shire Support Centre review its policies and procedures to:

- ensure that it has a documented system for how it will respond to changes in tenants' needs
- require staff to inform clients how their information is collected, stored and used by the Centre
- require all requests for release of client's information be in writing when required by law to external agencies such as the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child safety
- provide guidance for staff in the release of client's information in an emergency without informed consent.
- the financial policies and procedures be reviewed and updated to provide for financial delegation limits for Board members and staff.

It is suggested that Banana Shire Support Centre:

- review its policies and procedures to include provision for formal exit interviews to assist in the review and improvement of its practices relating to ending tenancies
- consider the benefits of liaising with the department and QBuild to obtain all available assessment information, such as the asbestos status of the SHDL property, to be in a better position to monitor the progress of the department's asset management plan for the property.
- consider the benefits of having a person external to the organisation on the Recruitment Selection Panel.
- consider the benefits of formalising training opportunities by having a stand-alone training register for staff containing all of the identified staff training and development requirements within the one register.
- consider the benefits of providing the Centre Manager with access to external supervision, with a suitably qualified professional, to assist with issues such as the reviewing of work practices, further development of professional competence, debriefing, critical reflection and the self-monitoring of overall performance.

## 2002 Accreditation Evaluation Report

Biloela Emergency Accommodation Assoc Inc was accredited in June 2002 following an on site evaluation in December 2001.

Biloela Emergency Accommodation Assoc Inc developed a quality improvement plan after its re-accreditation in 2002 to implement the suggestions contained in the 2002 Accreditation Evaluation Report.

Biloela Emergency Accommodation Assoc Inc has implemented the recommendations and suggestions contained in the 2002 Accreditation Evaluation Report.

## Background information about the organisation

### ***History, location and community served***

Biloela Emergency Accommodation was established in 1991 and received funding from Department of Family Services and A&TSI Affairs in December the next year. The

unincorporated body was first auspiced by a Careforce sub-committee until the organisation became an incorporated association in July 1993.

The Biloela Emergency Accommodation Association Inc changed its name to the Banana Shire Emergency Accommodation and Support Centre in 2003 and commenced trading as Banana Shire Support Centre in 2005.

### ***Services provided by the Organisation***

The Banana Shire Support Centre has grown considerably and now provides:

- Crisis Accommodation Program Properties
- Secure Accommodation facility for women and children
- Youth Property
- Emergency Relief
- Counselling Services
- Court Support
- Housing Applications
- Lending Library
- Personal Development Programs
- Community Legal Centre

The Banana Shire Support Centre enables clients to make informed life choices to meet identified needs through quality intervention.

### ***Number of staff employed listing job titles and identifying the hours allocated to these positions***

- **Centre Manager** – a full time position - responsible for ensuring that the Board have the information needed to perform their role; the operational management of the organisation; after hours contact for police, DV Connect and critical/crisis incidents
- **Counselling and Court Support Worker** – job share position filled by two workers - provision of counselling and court support services to women and children affected by domestic violence (individual or group environment); community awareness and community engagement activities (e.g. Coordinated Community Response Group; DV prevention month; Reclaim the Night).
- **Administration Officer** – part time position - administration duties associated including front counter reception and administration of the emergency relief funds under supervision from the Centre Manager
- **Housing Officer** – part time position - provision of housing assistance, tenancy and property management, identifying support needs and following up with appropriate information and referrals
- **Contract Bookkeeper-** bookkeeping and payroll duties.
- **Lawyer** – at the time of the accreditation visit this position was vacant - the Centre was granted recurrent funding to establish a Community Legal Centre.

### ***Property Portfolio***

Banana Shire Support Centre has one property subject to the accreditation process.

- 1 three bedroom property located in Biloela and funded under the Same House Different Landlord Program and leased from the Department of Housing.

**Other properties leased from the Department of Housing:**

- 1 secure refuge facility with a maximum of 6 tenants
- 1 youth accommodation shared facility with a maximum of 4 tenants
- 3 three bedroom Crisis Accommodation Program properties.

**Geographical location of other properties:**

- 1 Crisis Accommodation Program property located in Moura
- 4 other properties located in Biloela

**Target groups****Identified target groups:**

- Individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

**Target groups under special programs and agreements**

- Women and children escaping domestic and family violence
- Youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- Individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness

**Number of tenancies managed**

One subject to the accreditation process and 15 other tenancies

**Income sources**

Banana Shire Support Centre receives funding from the Department of Housing, the Department of Communities and the Department Justice and Attorney General.

**Management/Governance structure**

The Board of management of Banana Shire Support Centre supervises the operations of the service and consists of a Chairperson, a vice-Chairperson, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

The Board is responsible for policy development and the strategic direction of the organisation and has delegated the day-to-day operational management of the organisation to the Centre Manager.

The role of the Chairperson includes ensuring the Board provides leadership for the Centre, chairing meetings, ensuring the legal responsibilities of the Centre are met, ensuring there is effective participation and decision-making at Board meetings and signing off the minutes after they have been endorsed and ensuring that the Board commences an annual review and planning process.

The role of the Vice-Chairperson includes support of the Chairperson and to stand-in for the Chairperson as required

The role of the Secretary includes ensuring adequate Board papers are prepared and circulated prior to the Board meetings, ensuring accurate minutes are taken of Board meetings, receiving and submitting to the Board all applications for membership, meeting statutory reporting requirements in accordance with relevant legislation.

The Treasurer is responsible for overseeing the Centre's finances and budget. The Treasurer provides supervision to the Bookkeeper and is responsible for over seeing that adequate books of account are kept, the budget, the Board receives appropriate financial reporting and for the annual financial audit.

### ***Key issues over the past 12 months***

Banana Shire Support Centre advised that key issues over the past 12 months included:

- increasing the profile of the organisation
- strategic planning
- streamlining services to provide a more efficient and effective service within budget constraints
- increasing the property portfolio including Community Managed Studio Apartments
- providing input to the One Social Housing System changes and actively participating in the consultations
- securing increase funding with priorities to increase wages, provision of an outreach service, half-time administration to full-time administration and a motor vehicle
- securing nomination as a site for the pilot program Rural Service Access Centre and nomination as the 'growth provider' for the Shire
- assessing future consolidation and partnering opportunities
- preparation for accreditation.

### **The Evaluation Team**

**Coordinator:** Mike Munsie (Standards and Accreditation Unit)

**Trainee Accreditation Officer:** Pat Rickard (Standards and Accreditation Unit)

**Peer Evaluator:** Kai Dahl (Toowoomba Community Housing Service)

### **Methodology**

Prior to the evaluation the service had evaluated its own performance by the use of a Self-study Report. The Evaluation team then visited the organisation. The process of external evaluation involved an intensive process of information gathering. Information gathered may have included:

- reviewing the pre-evaluation questionnaire and other documentation of various kinds
- conducting a range of interviews with management members and staff
- inspection of office facilities and equipment
- assessing policies and procedures
- reviewing the tenancy and property record audit reports
- interviewing tenants
- review of reports of tenant and other organisation questionnaires undertaken by organisation
- interviews with key referral organisations and the funding body.