



# **CANBERRA REFUGEE SUPPORT**

## **GOVERNANCE AND PROCESS MANUAL**

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# **PROCESS AND GOVERNANCE MANUAL**

## **VOLUME TWO**

### **COMMITTEE DOCUMENTS**

## CHAPTER 6

### DUTY STATEMENTS

**Purpose.** These Duty Statements are a guide for Executive Committee members, ordinary Committee Members, and holders of appointments. The Committee may decide to reallocate duties to meet the requirements of the organisation, and specific duties may be picked up by Committee Members (sometimes co-opted) as required.

#### Executive Committee - Office Bearers

##### President

- Preside at Committee meetings and each General Meeting of the Group in accordance with the Constitution.
- Coordinate the activities of Committee Members, Coordinators and Members in accordance with the Constitution and decisions of the Committee and General Meetings.
- Represent CRS.
- As an elected member of the Executive Committee, contribute to formulation of policy and participate in decisions committing CRS to action or expenditure.

##### Vice President

- Represent and undertake the duties of the President in his/her absence.
- Represent the Executive committee on the Audit Committee.
- As an elected member of the Executive Committee, contribute to formulation of policy and participate in decisions committing CRS to action or expenditure.

##### Secretary

- Keep minutes of:
  - all elections and appointments of office bearers and ordinary committee members;
  - the names of members of the committee present at a committee meeting or a general meeting, and
  - all proceedings at committee meetings and general meetings.
- Keep in his or her custody or under his or her control all records, books, and other documents relating to the association other than those relating to the financial affairs of the association.
- As an elected member of the Executive Committee, contribute to formulation of policy and participate in decisions committing CRS to action or expenditure.
- In conjunction with the Public Officer, arrange the lodgement of advice to the ACT Registrar-General following the Annual General Meeting of executive appointments of the association (Form A9).

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### **Treasurer**

- Collect and receive all moneys due to the association and make all payments authorised by the association.
- Maintain Master Register of Financial Members in consultation with the Secretary.
- At least annually, and at least once within two months prior to the AGM, audit the financial members list, sending our renewal notices where applicable and where necessary archiving non-financial members.
- Keep correct accounts and books showing the financial affairs of the association with full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the association.
- Keep accounting records so that true and fair accounts may be prepared on an accrual basis to reflect the net worth of the association rather than the cash position.
- Keep in his or her custody or under his or her control all records, books, and other documents relating to the financial affairs of the association.
- As an elected member of the Executive Committee, contribute to formulation of policy and participate in decisions committing CRS to action or expenditure.
- Ensure that the audit of accounts is completed at least 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting
- After presentation of the records to the members at the AGM and within six months of the end of the association's financial year, in conjunction with the Public Officer, arrange the lodgement of a Statement (Form AR) and the audited accounts with the Registrar-General.
- 

### **Committee Members**

#### **Ordinary Committee Member**

- As an elected member of the Executive Committee, contribute to formulation of policy and participate in decisions committing CRS to action or expenditure.

### **Appointments**

#### **Public Officer**

- Act as the contact between the association and office of the ACT Registrar General
- Pass on relevant information from the Registrar General to the association (for example, newsletters and bulletins) and notify changes to legislation or procedures and the like affecting the association.

#### **Training Coordinator**

- Maintain register of training undertaken by members;
- Maintain training schedule;
- Arrange trainers for CRS courses;
- Program training for new members.

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### **Client Support Coordinator**

- Assume responsibility for assigned cases or tasks and progress them through to their conclusion.
  - Arrange a Leader for the team working on each case, conduct initial briefings and allocate tasks as required.
  - Confirm with the Team Leader the agreed aim of the case or task concerned including the proposed scope, and keep that guidance under review.
  - Agree the timings, reporting expectations, mentor arrangements and any resources available at the outset of the case or task.
  - Report (or arrange the Team Leader to do so) progress of a general nature to the membership on a regular basis and report to the committee at key points in the case including reporting an estimate of hours dedicated to the case or task on a monthly basis.
  - Use the Settlement Checklist.
  - Confirm the availability of funds with the Treasurer, and obtain Committee approval, prior to entering into any financial commitment.
  - Advise the membership when a case or task has been closed.
- Operate in accordance with the CRS Good Practice Guide

### **Assistant Client Support Coordinator**

- Represent and undertake the duties of the Client Support Coordinator in his/her absence.
- Assume responsibility for assigned cases or tasks and progress them through to their conclusion as specified in the duties of the Client Support Coordinator.
- Operate in accordance with the CRS Good Practice Guide

**CHAPTER 7**

Reserved



## CHAPTER 8

### CASE AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT

#### Purpose

The aim of CRS is to provide settlement support to asylum seekers and refugees in Canberra and to help them become as independent as possible as quickly as possible. Although it is important to promote client independence, the ability of clients to act independently will vary significantly depending upon their personal circumstance including the status of their request for protection.

Each case that CRS accepts will be unique, although many of the characteristics will be similar to other cases, such as trauma, cultural difference and financial hardship. The Team Leader will be responsible for ensuring that all aspects of each case are taken into account, if necessary be referring them to external providers such as health services, government agencies or Companion House. The processes described in the Chapter are a guide to the acceptance, management and finalisation of support to a client.

#### Support

The support offered to clients is “needs based” and the need is under periodic review. Indicative of the support CRS can provide is:

- we assist to provide the stability and security that many clients have been denied;
- linking clients with support services eg legal, education, sporting, religious, cultural, medical and counselling;
- support to enable clients to access education, employment or other services;
- access to a wide network of local citizens; and
- providing support, financial and in kind, to support basic welfare needs (clothing, housing, furniture, food, etc).

In the case of clients with Bridging or other temporary visas, and Community Detention (CD) clients, the process used by CRS is as outlined, noting that travel, education, domicile and work restrictions may apply.

#### Case and Task Management Process

The outline process used by CRS to provide support is:

- Conduct an interview (including a needs analysis) with the prospective client to establish the assistance that is being sought.
- Determine whether the appropriate resources are available from CRS.
- Appoint a support team leader and team members.
- Identify the CRS Committee Point of Contact (POC).
- Develop a Start-up Plan including:
  - the CRS Aim for the case; and
  - any restrictions or priorities.
- Gain the written permission of the client to provide support and exchange information with other agencies.

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- Conduct a Start-up Meeting for the CRS team.
- Contact the client and proceed to establish rapport and provide support.
- Review and report progress.

The decision process for case and task management is outlined at [Appendix 1](#).

### **Checklist**

A checklist for case management is at [Appendix 2](#) to this Chapter.

### **Settlement Coordinator**

The role of the Settlement Coordinator is detailed in Chapter 6. In the first instance, the Settlement Coordinator will assume responsibility for assigned cases or tasks and to progress them through to their conclusion. The Settlement Coordinator will arrange a Team Leader for the team working on each case, conduct initial briefings and allocate tasks as required.

### **The CRS Support Team Model**

The CRS model for providing support to a client is to form a support team with a nominated Support Team Leader, Team Members, a nominated Committee person as the team point of contact for access to the committee and some cases a Coach is appointed to assist the Team Leader.

This structure is designed to maximize the mutual support provided by working in a team and to facilitate mentoring.

The outline of a Start Up Plan is at [Appendix 4](#). This format can be modified as necessary to reflect the information gathered at the initial interview and any follow up meetings, and the decisions made on the support to be provided by CRS.

### **Role of Team Leader**

The role of the Team Leader is to assume responsibility for assigned cases or tasks and to progress them through to their conclusion.

The Team Leader is responsible to report monthly for each active client and forward it by email ([actrefugee@gmail.com](mailto:actrefugee@gmail.com)) to the Settlement Coordinator on or before the first day of each month using the form at [Appendix 5](#). Comments are required only where appropriate on any issues related to the work of the Support Team.

### **Committee Responsibility**

The Committee is responsible to provide support, guidance and resources to facilitate the work of the Settlement Coordinator and Team Leaders and team members. One person on the Committee will normally be the primary contact for each Team Leader.

### **Guidelines for Team Leaders**

The following are the general guidelines for Team Leaders:

- **Aim.** Confirm the agreed aim of the case or task concerned including the proposed scope and keep that under review.
- **Resources.** Agree the timings, reporting expectations, mentor arrangements and any resources available at the outset of the case or task.
- **Leadership.** Lead the team working on the case, conduct briefings and allocate tasks as required
- **Reporting.** Report progress of a general nature to the membership on a regular basis and report to the committee at key points in the case.
- **Guidance & Support.** Seek guidance and support from the Committee and other members.
- **Checklist.** Use the Settlement Checklist at [Appendix 2](#) to this Chapter as a guide.
- **Finance.** Confirm the availability of funds with the Treasurer prior to entering into any financial commitment and acquit any expenditure by providing receipts and essential information.
- **Hours.** Report an estimate of hours dedicated to the case or task as required.
- **Closure.** Follow ‘[Process For Retiring Clients to Inactive](#)’, outlined below. Advise the Settlement Coordinator when a case or task or has, been closed.

**Client Data.** A Client Data form is at [Appendix 3](#) to this Chapter.

### **Process for retiring CRS clients to inactive**

Many CRS clients continue to be supported for a period of many months or even years. Support needs may fluctuate over this time, but there comes a point where support needs become quite minimal and sporadic. While an informal relationship may continue between the clients and members of their support teams, the need to maintain formal reporting and monitoring through CRS may become redundant, serve no useful purpose, and become an unnecessary drain on CRS volunteer resources.

This process is intended to simply ensure that everyone involved is in agreement and aware of a status change from “active” to “inactive”. The following guidelines are designed to help ensure a consistent approach to ending formal CRS support for clients.

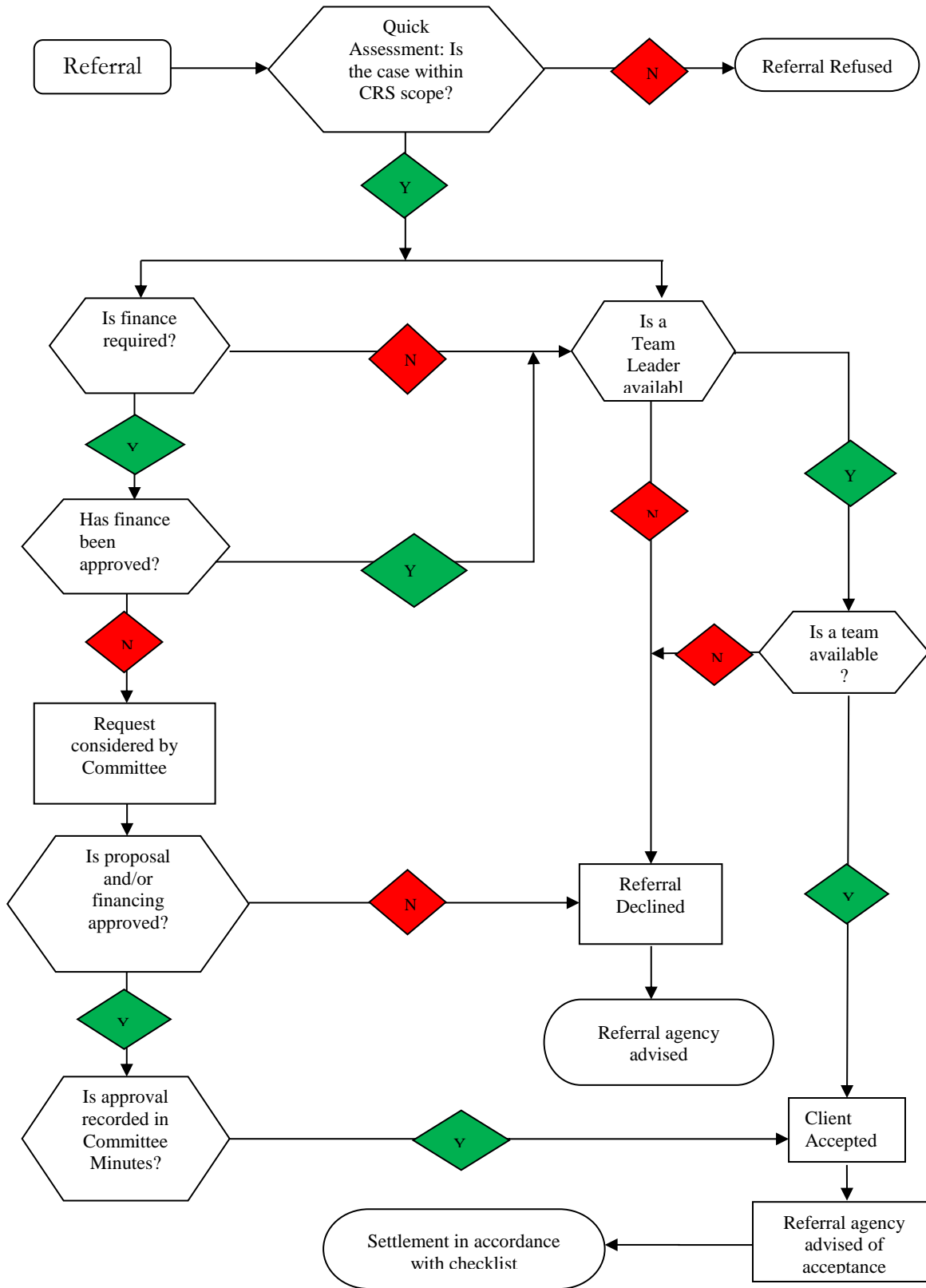
- Team leaders and/or CRS support coordinators may recommend that clients may be ready to be transitioned to inactive, based on the nature of support that is being identified and reported in the monthly reports.
- If, after relevant discussion/consultation it is agreed that this is the right decision, the CRS support coordinators will confirm the decision in an email to the support team leader and members, emphasising that any ongoing personal contact is, of course, encouraged but not required or expected.
- The support coordinators will report clients that have been transitioned to inactive to the committee in the monthly support report.
- The team leader will convey this to the clients in the most appropriate way, ensuring that the clients understand that should their circumstances change and they have new support needs, CRS can resume support for them.

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- The CRS president will send an email to the team members, thanking them for the support they have provided to their clients and encouraging them to continue active involvement in CRS, perhaps by supporting new clients.
- The support coordinators will update the support spread-sheet to reflect the changed status. This involves moving the data for the clients in question, but retaining the history on the spread-sheet.

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Process for Case and Activity Management Decisions



## Settlement Checklist

**Purpose.** This Checklist is a guide to the types of support that can be provided. Each case is likely to be different and may not require all services – or may require others. The way that a referral is received by CRS is also likely to impact on the support required, particularly if the client has already had services or support provided by another agency or organisation.

### **Before Arrival** *(if applicable)*

- Check that, if necessary, appointments made for Bank, Centrelink, CIT & Companion House
- Check that initial accommodation is arranged
- Check that initial stock of food provided or available
- If necessary, arrange money for essential items
- Provide a Diary
- Provide a Map

### **On Arrival** *(if applicable)*

- Meet (at airport or other agreed location)
- Assess immediate health needs
- Assess immediate clothing requirements
- Determine any immediate concerns
- Provide orientation
- Confirm any security issues and arrange to mitigate them as required and as possible
- Arrange any urgent telephone calls
- Arrange Translation and Interpreter Service support if necessary
- Arrange Health Care Card or ACT Asylum Seeker Access Card

### **After Arrival or Start of Support (Week 1)**

- Assist with setting up contact or account with bank
- Assist with setting up contact or account with Centerlink
- Check clothing suitability
- Check accommodation arrangements (if required)
- Check access to telephone/mobile
- Check that client has access to retail outlets for essential items
- Assist client to determine priority of next activities (eg to find work or to start English classes)

### **Support (Week 2)**

- Visit Companion House as necessary (make prior contact with them)
- Assist with setting up contact or account with Medicare
- Assist with setting up contact with schools
- Assist with setting up contact for English classes
- Arrange CRS Visitors
- Start to look at long-term accommodation

**Support (Week 3)**

- Advise on the ACTION Bus Service
- Advise on shopping
- Assist with setting up ACT Housing Application
- Assist with setting up other living skills
- Regular visits
- Assist with setting up arrangements for longer term housing
- Assist with TFN
- Assist with home budgeting if required
- Connect with sporting, social or religious groups
- Introduce to Calvary Refugee Mentoring Program
- Assist access to TIS as necessary

### Client Data

(Client's name)
-----------------

Initial Contact	Referred by:
	Date:

Client Name		Religion:	DOB:
Client Address:			
Contact Phone:			
Contact Email:			
Family Composition in Canberra (Names, M/F, Age):	Adults:	Children:	
Family Composition in other locations (Names, M/F, Age):	Adults:	Children:	
Visa Sighted Y/N (Attach copy)	Visa Number:	Type:	Conditions:

Client's Request of Canberra Refugee Support: (eg Asylum/Settlement in Canberra/Legal Assistance/etc)	
Client's Request of CRS of an immediate or urgent nature (eg food, physical protection, accommodation)	
Country of Origin	
First Language	
Level of English	Spoken: <span style="float: right;">Written:</span>
Friends etc in Canberra	Contact Details:



**Checklist**

Medical		Phone Card	
Food		Bus Tickets	
Accommodation		Telephone	
Bank		Clothing	
Centrelink		School	
AMEP/ESL		Budgeting	
Social Support		Religious Organisations	
Medicare		Work	
Concession Card		Maps	
Legal		ACT Asylum Seeker Access Card	
Companion House		TIS	
Income & Allowances			

Summary of Current Situation:	
Proposed Support:	
Immediate Actions:	
I agree that Canberra Refugee Support can share my personal information with other agencies or individuals as appropriate:	
Signature:	Date:
Remarks:	
Signed:	Date:
Printed Name:	

### Start-up Plan (Outline)

Client Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

**Team Members:**

Name	Role	Mobile	Home	Work	Email
	Team Leader				
	Member				
	Member				
	Coach				
	Committee Oversight				

**Situation:**

XXXXX approached CRS on (Date) to ask for assistance with (detail nature of request, such as accommodation and general advice on his situation).

XXXXX states that (give details of his situation, such as that he comes from an activist background and is not safe in his homeland or he reports many instances of conflict over an extended period. Give family details such as he has a wife and three children in vvvvvvvvvv. Give details of any qualifications or skills such as he is trained as a teacher and actor.)

Assess as best you can his state of mind, such as (XXXXX is composed and logical. He seems to be exercising initiative and wants to retain control. )

CRS Aim (agreed details of support to be provided, such as):

- To support XXXXX while he waits for a decision on his protection claim;
- Later this might extend to assistance to sponsor his family to settle in Australia.

Actions initiated to date:

1. Appointment with Companion House on (date) to:
  - a) Confirm protection application is appropriate;
  - b) Ask DIBP for permission to work.
2. Report to Red Cross

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### Priorities

Serial	Issue	Action	Lead
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client Data &amp; Permission to share information</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>XXXXXX</li> </ul>
2.	Accommodation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACT Housing Application</li> <li>Application for Transitional House Program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare application &amp; Support Letters</li> <li>Refer to CRS Template</li> <li>Consult Companion House</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ACT Housing: XXX</li> <li>THP: XX</li> </ul>
		Companion House for XXXXX to go on the THP list.	
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Companion House</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend consultation</li> </ul>	
4.			
5.			

Some useful Contacts:

Centrelink:

Manager, Multicultural Support Officers/ Prison Services  
 Community Engagement and Relationships  
 Area South West NSW, Braddon  
 W: 02 6219 3244 spec no: 393244  
 M: 0488 293 223

Migration Agent:  
 XXX

Note: contact with IAAAS Migration Agents is normally via Glenn Flanagan at Companion House ([glenn.flanagan@companionhouse.org.au](mailto:glenn.flanagan@companionhouse.org.au) or 6251 4550)

ACT Housing: the pecking order is:

1. the case officer
2. a line manager)
3. XXXXX

Senior Manager  
 Gateway Services  
 Housing and Community Services  
 Ph: 6207 1401

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## SUPPORT TEAM LEADERS' MONTHLY REPORT

For the period ending \_\_\_\_\_

**Please compile this report for each active client and forward it by email ([actrefugee@gmail.com](mailto:actrefugee@gmail.com)) to the Settlement Coordinator on or before the first day of each month. Please comment on any issues related to the work of the Support Team. Please comment only where appropriate.**

### Client Information:

Client Name:			
Client Address:			
Phone:		Email:	
Family Composition in Canberra (Names, M/F, Age):	Adults:	Children:	
Visa Status:	Visa Number:	Type:	Conditions:

### Support Team Leaders' Monthly Report:

<b>Current Situation</b>	
<b>Upcoming Issues</b>	
<b>Urgent Action Required</b>	
<b>Points or Requests For CRS Committee</b>	
<b>Support Team Members Welfare</b>	
<b>Any Outstanding Issues</b>	
Signature:	Date:
Printed Name:	

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## CHAPTER 9

### SELF CARE GUIDE

#### **Purpose**

This Self Care Guide is intended to provide a point of reference and checklist for members of Canberra Refugee Support in their dealings with Asylum Seekers and Refugees. It is intended as a guide only; professional assistance should be sought if in any doubt.

#### **Reporting**

It is important that support teams and members are kept informed on issues and the general progress of those we support. All of the members of the group are encouraged to use email to keep everyone informed. We value the wellbeing of our members and need to look after one another. We all have a responsibility to look for the signs of exhaustion and over commitment in ourselves and in others. We need to mentor one another.

#### **How Much is Enough?**

When we assist with the settlement of clients we need to strive for a balance towards “independence” rather than “dependence”. A common example is that we should show a client how to use the local bus system rather than habitually offer to provide transport to appointments. Our success can be measured in part, by the degree of independence the client achieves. However, we should be aware that it may take longer for some clients to achieve the same level of independence as others, particularly due to trauma.

#### **Cultural Awareness**

We always respect and acknowledge the cultural preferences of the people we support. In addition, we inform them of the standards, laws and common practices that apply in Australia. We never endorse illegal activity even if it is common practice in the home culture of our supported families. We need to make sure that our clients are briefed by us on Australian expectations and customs especially concerning the privacy of information, care of children, the use of physical violence and schooling obligations.

Many of the people we support are the victims of torture and trauma. We encourage awareness of the issues related to this and offer access to professional support. Where there is reluctance on the part of our client to access professional support we must respect their decision.

## TRAUMA AND ITS SYMPTOMS

This section on **Trauma and its symptoms** is drawn from **the** Australian Psychological Society *Understanding and Managing Psychological Trauma* accessed at [http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip\\_sheets/trauma/](http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip_sheets/trauma/) on 8 April 2013.

### Introduction.

This information is intended only as a guide and members of CRS are strongly encouraged to seek help, either directly from a professional (doctor or psychologist) or through a member of the CRS committee if any of these symptoms appear as a result of working with CRS clients.

### What is a potentially traumatic event?

It is highly likely that clients of CRS (Refugees or Asylum Seekers) will have experienced traumatic events either in their home country, during their flight to Australia or while detained in Australia – and quite likely in all three situations.

Potentially traumatic events are powerful and upsetting incidents that intrude into daily life. They are usually defined as experiences which are life threatening, or where there is a significant threat to one's physical or psychological wellbeing.

The same event may have little impact on one person but cause severe distress in another individual. The impact that an event has may be related to the person's mental and physical health, level of available support at the time of the event, and past experience and coping skills.

Situations and events that can lead a person to experience psychological trauma might typically include:

- Acts of violence such as an armed robbery, war or terrorism
- Interpersonal violence such as rape, child abuse, or suicide of a family member or friend

Other less severe but still stressful situations can also trigger traumatic reactions in some people.

### What are the symptoms of psychological trauma?

Many people have strong emotional or physical reactions following experience of a traumatic event. For most, these reactions subside over a few days or weeks. For some, the symptoms may last longer and be more severe. This may be due to several factors such as the nature of the traumatic event, the level of available support, previous and current life stress, personality, and coping resources.

Symptoms of trauma can be described as physical, cognitive (thinking), behavioural (things we do) and emotional.

<b>Physical</b>	Excessive alertness, on the look-out for signs of danger Easily startled Fatigue/exhaustion Disturbed sleep General aches and pains
<b>Cognitive (thinking)</b>	Intrusive thoughts and memories of the event Visual images of the event Nightmares Poor concentration and memory Disorientation Confusion
<b>Behavioural</b>	Avoidance of places or activities that are reminders of the event Social withdrawal and isolation Loss of interest in normal activities
<b>Emotional</b>	Fear Numbness and detachment Depression Guilt Anger and irritability Anxiety and panic

## POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

PTSD is a clinical condition that may develop in some people following exposure to a traumatic event. PTSD involves three main groups of symptoms:

- Re-experiencing the trauma in the form of intrusive memories, nightmares or flashbacks
- Avoidance of reminders and numbing of emotional responsiveness
- Hyperarousal - feeling jumpy and on edge.

PTSD is very distressing and can lead to serious ongoing problems with social relationships and the ability to work or carry out normal daily activities. PTSD usually requires professional assistance as these problems tend not to resolve by themselves with the passage of time. Depression, anxiety disorders (such as panic, phobias, and general anxiety) and alcohol or drug disorders may also develop following trauma in some people. These conditions may occur with, or in the absence of, PTSD.

### Vicarious Trauma

This section on **Vicarious Trauma** was drawn from the Department of Defence's internet site at [http://www.defence.gov.au/health/DMH/SelfHelp/Documents/ES\\_Vicarious\\_Trauma.pdf](http://www.defence.gov.au/health/DMH/SelfHelp/Documents/ES_Vicarious_Trauma.pdf)

When you see clients who have been exposed to a traumatic event or disaster, you need to be aware of the potential for 'vicarious traumatisation'. Vicarious trauma causes you to question how safe you feel in the world, and with other people. It is normal to initially react strongly to the client's story, however the feelings should

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subside after a few weeks.

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### **What will cause you to be vicariously traumatised?**

Listening to a client's experience and feelings after witnessing or being involved in a traumatic event or disaster will expose you to images and emotions that challenge your understanding of the world. Sharing in the feelings of these stories can be emotionally draining. Your own past experiences of trauma and how you coped with those situations, as well as current life stresses and circumstances, will effect how you cope with the impact on your normal functioning.

There are a number of ways you may begin to experience symptoms of vicarious trauma, for example:

1. When you listen to your client you will be sharing the images and feelings of grief, horror, agony, rage, shame and terror about the event. Sharing the pain from these stories may cause you to question your own views and understanding of the world, humanity, and even yourself and the safety of your daily life. These questions are similar to those also being considered by your traumatised client.
2. As a member of CRS you are trying to help clients to restore their happiness and well-being. This can be particularly demanding with traumatised clients, and you may find it difficult to maintain professional boundaries. Despite your best intentions or commitment there may be no or little improvement for your client. This may cause you to question your understanding of yourself as a person who is able to help or provide for others.

### **How will I know if I'm vicariously traumatised?**

Symptoms of vicarious trauma will be just as different for each person as effects are on survivors of the initial trauma. The list below can give you an indication of feelings you may experience, and that are completely normal when they continue for a couple of weeks. If you experience any of these signs for prolonged periods, or more intensely than you expected, or if you have any concerns, you may consider professional help to cope with these feelings.

You may experience:

- Symptoms similar to the client's, such as anxiousness, irritability, being easily startled, or not feeling safe;
- Trouble getting to or staying asleep;
- Thinking about the trauma or the client for much of the time;
- Physiological arousal such as increased heart rate or perspiration;
- Avoiding or feeling anxious about certain situations or places that relate to the traumatic event;
- Difficulty relating to or being overly critical of others, particularly children. This may lead to avoiding spending time with others, and withdrawing from normal social activities or commitments;
- Difficulty regulating emotions (i.e. mood swings), or emotional exhaustion;
- Feeling depressed, hopeless or helpless;
- Over or under eating;
- Increased use of alcohol, caffeine or other drugs;



- Anger at the effect of the trauma on your life;
- Negative feelings, including irritation, frustration and guilt about the client;
- New or worsened health issues such as bowel or stomach problems, muscle pain and headaches;
- Feeling overwhelmed and wanting distance from stories of the trauma;
- Poor performance at work;
- Difficulty thinking clearly, concentrating, and remembering things, or having difficulty making decisions;
- Loss of sense of humour, motivation or energy;
- Having more accidents or making more mistakes than usual.

### **SELF CARE PLAN - WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU FEEL THIS WAY?**

These tips may help you to cope with or prevent the symptoms above from occurring:

- Maintain your role, and be clear about what you are able to do to support the client and when you need to refer to other services.
- Organise to have some supervision, or debriefs with colleagues;
- Acknowledge the difficulties or changes you are experiencing in your thoughts, emotions and attitudes. If you are concerned, discuss them with someone;
- Maintain a regular and healthy diet, and make time to exercise;
- Identify thoughts or beliefs that are meaningful to you or give you hope, and maintain a connection with them;
- Seek professional help for physical and/or mental health problems that you are experiencing;
- Maintain social and supportive relationships;
- Take time to do things you enjoy by yourself, like getting a massage;
- Write in a journal or diary;
- Find physical activities that are fun and/or spontaneous such as swimming, dancing, playing sports, singing or running;
- Allow someone else to take care of you (i.e. go somewhere you will be waited on);
- Revisit favourite books or movies;
- Find activities that allow you to express feelings such as anger, happiness, grief or sadness;
- Monitor and decrease any unnecessary stressors (i.e. say 'no' when you need to);
- Find places or people where you feel comfortable and relaxed, go there often.

### **SUICIDE**

This guidance has been prepared as guidance for CRS members who work with vulnerable clients who may encounter suicidal talk, tendencies or intent. It is vital that you remember that when we are concerned for the safety of our clients, CRS members can't fix the problem but need to get professional help. You may, however, be in a position to offer a 'first aid' role that can be critical.

The one thing that will save a human life is a human relationship. Although suicide remains a relatively uncommon event, it is still a tragic loss of life with devastating consequences for families, friends, and our members and in general.

It is possible to intervene and potentially prevent a person from acting on their thoughts of suicide or engaging in suicidal behaviour. Suicide is a difficult subject but it is everyone's business!

### **What makes a person engage in suicide behaviour(s)?**

ALMOST ANYTHING can lead to thoughts of suicide or to suicide related behaviour; it just depends upon HOW THE PERSON FEELS ABOUT IT!

Everyone has different levels of tolerance to stress and pain and we all try to cope as best we can during significant and sometimes painful changes in our lives. However, sometimes the burden of pain and suffering can be so overwhelming that a person's usually effective coping abilities do not help.

During these times, suicide or death may seem the best or only option. However, within that person there is also a desire and want to live. It is up to others around that person to know the risk factors of suicide, the signs which indicate that someone is thinking about suicide, and how they can help make that person's desire and will to live stronger.

### **Risk Factors**

While there is no 'typical' profile for someone who may contemplate suicide, there are some common risk factors. Many of these will be present in our clients. These risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Any perceived significant losses (e.g. death of a loved one, breakdown of a relationship or loss of job or income);
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness;
- Lack of current and accessible social supports that the person is willing to use;
- Mental health concerns;
- Past history of suicide related behaviour; and
- Emotional pain that does not seem to have an end.

### **Signs**

Signs may appear as changes in a person's situation, their behaviour/s, physical state, thoughts, and/or emotions/feelings. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Talking about or dropping hints of suicidal behaviour;
- Preoccupation with death;
- Giving away possessions;
- Isolation or withdrawal;
- Increased alcohol and/or drug use;
- Lack of interest in hobbies or appearance.

It's normal to be frightened if we see these signs, but it's vital to remember that signs may be an attempt by a person at risk of suicide to communicate that they are not coping and that they are overwhelmed by intense emotional pain. This pain is often associated with stressful events and/or loss. Remember that someone making jokes about suicide may be a disguised 'cry for help' and should be checked out to make sure there is not something more to it.

## What should I do?

**Ask the Question.** Risk factors and signs are simply those things that alert us to the possibility that someone may be thinking about suicide. They provide us with an important opportunity to ask if the person is thinking of suicide.

Research shows that asking does not increase the likelihood of suicide nor make the person consider it as an option if they were not previously considering it.

Asking questions like ‘you’re not thinking of doing anything stupid, are you?’ is not likely to help, as for the person at risk, the thought of suicide may not be stupid to them. On the other hand, having the courage to ask clearly and directly about suicide, despite how uncomfortable we may feel at the time, shows that we take the topic of suicide seriously and are willing to help. If you feel more comfortable doing so, you can mention any changes you may have noticed in their behaviour and any other risk factors you may have noticed, to support why you think they could be at risk of suicide.

## What to do if you think someone is thinking about suicide:

Provide **AID**

- A** ASK directly and don’t be afraid - ‘are you thinking of killing yourself?’
- I** INTERVENE immediately
- D** DON’T keep it a secret

Secure **LIFE**

- L** LOCATE HELP
- I** INFORM Team Leader and/or Committee representative
- F** FIND someone to stay with the person
- E** EXPEDITE getting help immediately (see ‘Where to Seek Help’)

## Where to seek help

**If life is in danger, ring 000**

**In an emergency call the CATT Mental Health Triage Service on 1800 629 354 (24 hour service) or (02) 6205 1065.**

In the ACT, the Crisis Assessment and Treatment Team (CATT) provides a 24-hour, seven day a week service used for assessment and treatment of mentally ill people in crisis situations.

**For crisis support and suicide prevention assistance,** Lifeline also offers 24/7 crisis support and suicide prevention services. To get help (or to get help for a client) call 13 11 14. More information is available at <http://www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help>

In either situation contact your Team Leader and/or the Committee Member who is your point of contact as soon as possible. Do not in any way feel that you have to handle these types of situation on your own.

In less critical situations, there are resources available. These include:

<http://www.healthinsite.gov.au/>

<http://www.health.gov.au/mentalhealth>

<http://beyondblue.org.au/index.aspx>

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## CHAPTER 10

### FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

**Purpose.** The purpose of this process is to provide guidance on the development and promulgation of CRS financial decisions.

**Process.** All financial decisions by CRS must undergo a rigorous and open decision making process that is transparent and recorded.

Decisions may be made outside of a Committee meeting but each decision must meet the following criteria:

- Each individual reply by Committee members(either for or against) must be viewed by, or be advised to, all Committee members;
- A clear majority of Committee members must agree (that is, more than half of the Committee members voting);
- No reply is to be taken as abstaining;
- A quorum is as defined in the Constitution;
- In a split decision, the President (or whomever is acting in that role) has a casting vote.
- Decisions made outside formal Committee meetings (for example, through agreement by email) must be ratified at the next Committee meeting.

The process for CRS financial decisions is outlined at [Appendix 1](#).

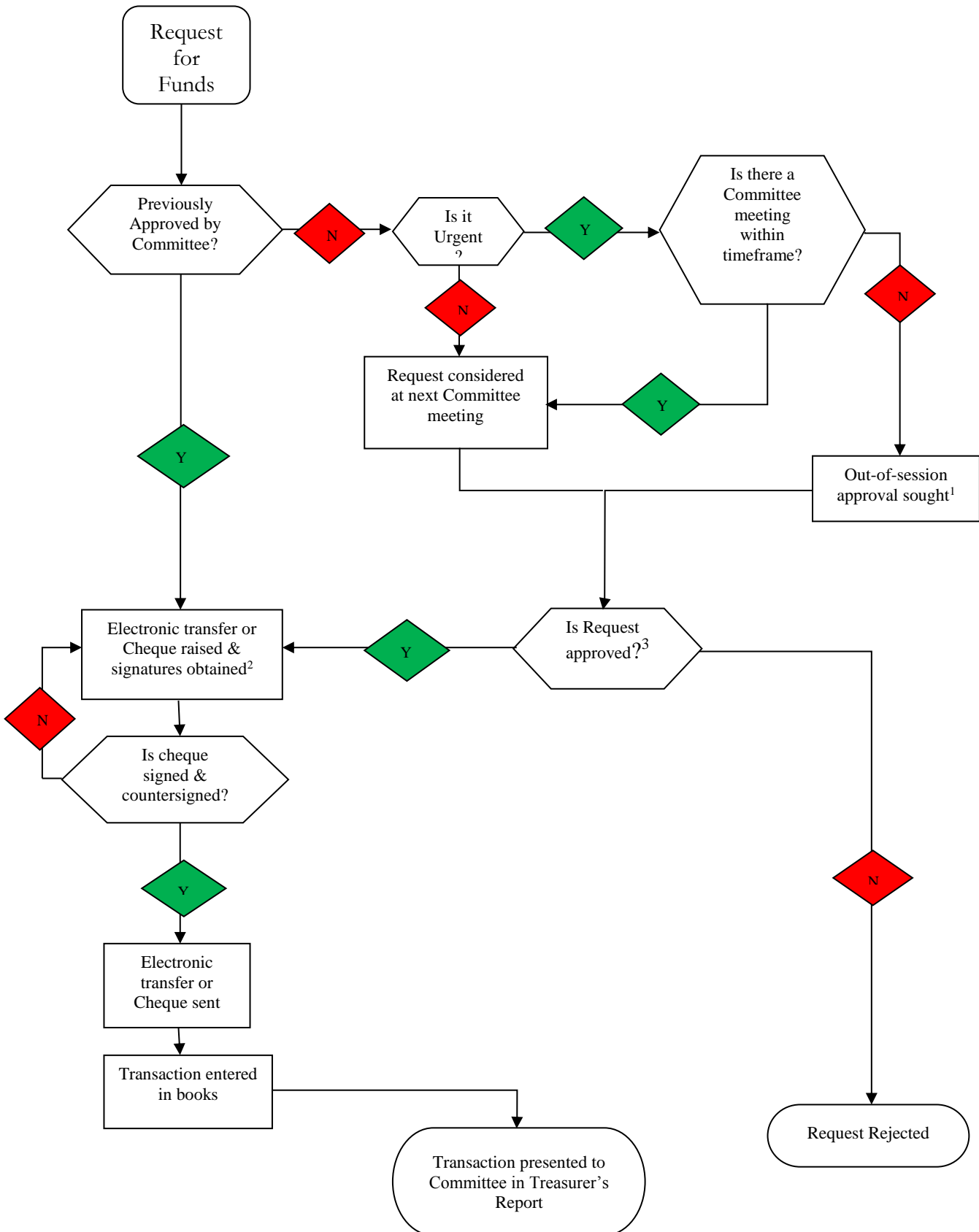
#### **Fund Raising Sub-Committee**

A Fund Raising Sub Committee may be formed as determined by the Committee to investigate and develop activities to raise funds for either general purposes or to meet a specific requirement.

#### **Fund Raising Activities Organising Group**

An ad hoc group may be formed as required to organise, promote and conduct fundraising events or activities as determined by the Committee.

Process for Financial Decisions



Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Requires approval of majority of Committee members

<sup>2</sup> Transactions will usually be by electronic transfer but on occasion may be by cheque,

<sup>3</sup> Approval requires inclusion in the Minutes of a Committee meeting. Out-of-session approvals are to be endorsed by next Committee meeting and included in Minutes.

## CHAPTER 11

### POLICY PROCESS

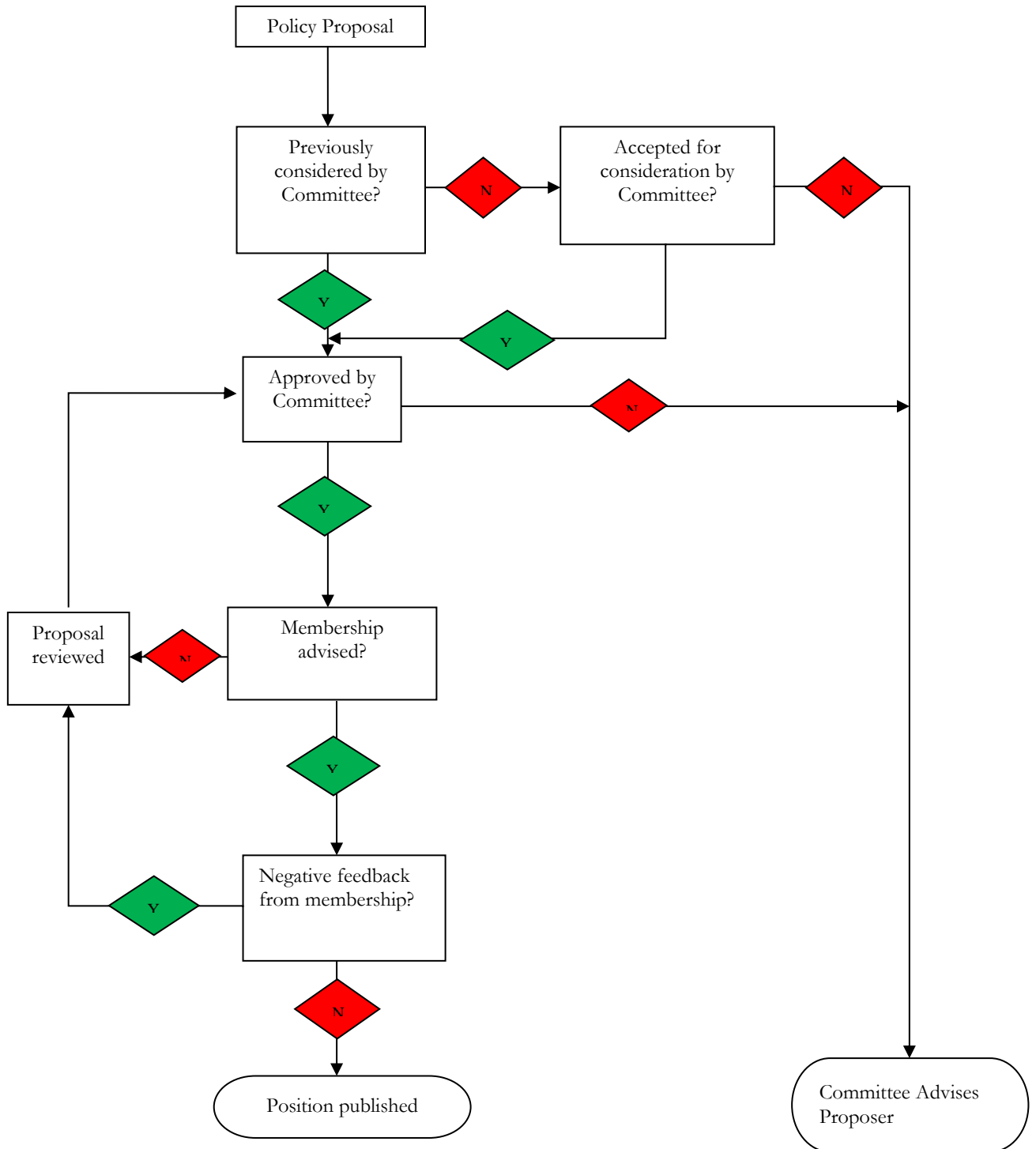
**Purpose.** The purpose of this process is to provide guidance on the development and promulgation of CRS policy decisions.

**Process.** All policy positions adopted by CRS must undergo a rigorous and open decision making process that allows all members to provide input. Based on this advice and guidance, the CRS Committee will formally adopt policy processes and positions.

The process for CRS policy decisions is outlined at [Appendix 1](#).



Process for Policy Decisions



## CHAPTER 12

### SCHOLARSHIPS

#### Purpose

The purpose of Canberra Refugee Support (CRS) Scholarships is to recognise meritorious performance and to encourage and support outstanding refugee and asylum seeker students in the pursuit of their personal development goals.

#### Oversight

CRS Committee has oversight of the Scholarships Program, which is managed by a Scholarships Working Group made up of two to three Committee members, a Fund-Raising Coordinator, a Program Coordinator and other members as required.

#### Scholarships

Each year in conjunction with World Refugee Day (20 June), Canberra Refugee Support offers scholarships to students, or prospective students, with a refugee or asylum seeker background in:

- primary education, attending ACT Government Introductory English Centres, valued normally at \$250 each;
- secondary or college education, attending ACT Government Introductory English Centres, valued normally at \$500 each; and
- in tertiary, or other adult, education, valued normally at \$1000.

**Selection Criteria.** Scholarships are awarded not just to recognise academic achievement alone, but meritorious performance more broadly, and to encourage and support outstanding students in the pursuit of their personal development goals.

#### Scholarship Fund-Raising

The Fund-raising Coordinator is to seek donations for scholarships from the Canberra community as by the Committee. The number of scholarships and their individual value is decided by Canberra Refugee Support based on the total funds available. Canberra Refugee Support is unable to guarantee any number or value of scholarships in advance.

#### Donors

Each year the Program is funded from donations provided from the community or organisations. There is no presumption that donations for the Program will be repeated. Each annual round is treated separately and the amount of money available is dependent upon donations in that year.

## **Nominations**

Nominations for refugee scholarships may be made by refugee settlement organisations in the ACT. The nominating organisations include, the ACT Directorate of Education and Training, Companion House, Red Cross, the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), the provider of the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) in Canberra and CRS. In all cases, nominations should be made using the Canberra Refugee Support nomination form at Appendix 1. A cut-off date for nominations will be advised each year by CRS.

## **Selection**

Selection of scholarship winners is by a panel from Canberra Refugee Support which will advise the scholarship winners via their nominator. As far as is reasonably possible, all funds raised specifically for scholarships for a particular year will be spent in that year.

## **Presentation**

Most scholarships will be awarded at a public ceremony on or close to World Refugee Day. A distinguished guest is invited each year to make the presentations and to address the ceremony. Private ceremonies can normally be arranged and conducted by a CRS Committee member for those recipients unable to attend the public ceremony.

Scholarship winners, their family and friends, representatives of nominating organisations, donors and prominent and other interested community members will be invited to attend the presentation ceremony.

## **Award Documentation**

Each scholarship recipient will receive a framed signed Certificate to mark the award and, where relevant, acknowledge the funding donor, a letter explaining the award and any issues relating to the funds provided, and a cheque.

## **Conditions**

Scholarships can be used for fees, course requisites or other purposes in support of their studies. No follow-up reporting by the Scholarship winner is required.

As the awards ceremony is a public event, and some details will be posted on the CRS website, all scholarship winners are requested to indicate:

- whether they are able to attend the presentation ceremony; and
- whether they give permission for their photograph, name and award details to be published.

## **Media**

The Program Coordinator is to send media releases to local media outlets, including ABC Local Radio (666), Artsound FM 92.7, WIN Television, The Chronicle and The Canberra Times.

## Acknowledgement of Donors

All donors and sponsors are to be thanked for their contributions and advised of the scholarships made possible by their assistance.

## Review

At the conclusion of each year's scholarship round, the Scholarships Working Group is to review the Program and report back to the next convenient Committee meeting. The review should assess all aspects of the Program, noting where matters or issues went well and where there could be improvements. As part of this review, in conjunction with advice from the Treasurer, a financial reconciliation should be presented, including what funds, if any, are to be carried over to the next year. At this point, the Committee should confirm appointments for the positions of Fund Raising Coordinator and Program Coordinator for the next year.

The following should be canvassed as part of this review and planning process:

- A target date for the awards presentation for the following year, subject to consultation with relevant stakeholders;
- The venue;
- Who to invite to be MC;
- Possible speakers; and
- Official guests.

## Tasks, Timeline and Responsibilities

Date	Activity	Responsibility	Remarks
July	Scholarships Working Group to review scholarship round just ended	Program & Fund-Raising Coordinators	
August	Submit WG review and recommended changes to CRS Committee.  CRS Committee to decide future of Program and, as appropriate, nominate the coming year's coordinators and WG members.	Coordinators  CRS Committee	
Mid-Late August	Scholarships WG meets to confirm responsibilities, allocate tasks and map plan for coming year	Coordinators	
Early September	Scholarships WG reports to CRS Committee on coming year's plan for Program.	Coordinators	Plan to be ratified by Committee
Mid-September to late October	Book Venue & start process of identifying & informally approaching key people & organisations for coming year	Coordinators, other WG members & President as necessary	May include MC, speakers, potential sponsors & contacts in nominating organisations
November	Progress report on coming year's program to Committee	Coordinators	Committee to note progress & endorse intended action
Early February	Initiate formal contact with nominating and other organisations where necessary	Program Coordinator	
Mid-February	WG to review progress	Coordinators	

Mid-Late February	Ask nominating organisations for nominations for award of scholarships	Program Coordinator	
Early March	Up-date CRS Committee on Program and Fund-raising progress.	Coordinators	CRS Committee to note progress & endorse intended action
Mid-March	Invite CRS members to both nominate possible awardees, and donate for the current year's Program.	Committee representative on Scholarships Working Group	
Late March	Initial approach to media	Program Coordinator	To clarify timing of media events & provision of material
Mid-April	Invitations sent to CRS members, donors, local politicians and all those on 'Friends of CRS' list.	Program Coordinator & CRS Committee Working Group representative	
Late April	Advise nominators of No and value of scholarships	Program Coordinator	
Late April–early May	Identify possible CRS members to help with preparations and running of Awards Ceremony.	Working Group	
Early May	Deadline for submission of nominations	Program Coordinator	Chase up as necessary
First week May	Report Program & Fund-raising progress to CRS Committee	Coordinators	CRS Committee to note progress
Second week May	Collate list of proposed scholarship awardees.  Allocate Ceremony tasks among WG & other CRS member volunteers.	Working Group	Fund Raising Coordinator to confirm funding matches awards. List subject to confirmation by CRS Committee.
Third week May	Email list of proposed awardees to CRS Committee for emailed response.	Program Coordinator	Committee to respond within week if possible
Late May	CRS Committee to Confirm Awardees	CRS Committee	Out of Session by 31 May.
Late May	Finalise Ceremony program & certificates for printing	Program Coordinator	
First week June	Advise nominators/awardees. Arrange for presentation of awards in private ceremonies as necessary.	Program Coordinator	
First week June	Submit certificates & ceremony program for printing	Program Coordinator	
Second week June	Check all ceremony arrangements (set up, signposting, seating, banners, catering, etc) are in place.	Working Group	
1st / 2 <sup>nd</sup> week June	Pick up Certificates & ceremony program from Printer	Program Coordinator	
Second week June	Signing of certificates, letters and cheques	President CRS Treasurer CRS	
In Week before Awards Presentation	Distribute Media release	Program Coordinator	
In Week before Awards Presentation	Confirm arrangements with venue: Access time Sound equipment, podium, lectern, seating, kitchen, etc	Program Coordinator	

Monday in week of 20 June	Awards Ceremony	Program Coordinator	World Refugee Day 20 June – preferred date subject to other commitments/events
Last week June	Write to donors & sponsors informing them of the outcome of the scholarship round and thanking them once again	Coordinators	
July	Scholarships Working Group to review scholarship round just ended	Program & Fund- Raising Coordinators	

## Appendix 1 to Chapter 12

### **Canberra Refugee Support Inc**

ABN 60 865 321 324

PO Box 3444

Weston Creek ACT 2611

Email: [loywil@gmail.com](mailto:loywil@gmail.com)

### **Canberra Refugee Support** **2016 Refugee Scholarship** **Nomination Form**

#### **Nominator Details**

I,..... (printed name)

nominate the Asylum Seeker or Refugee below for a 2016 CRS Refugee Scholarship. I acknowledge that:

- scholarships are awarded to recognise meritorious performance and to encourage and support outstanding refugee students in the pursuit of their personal development goals; and
- they are awarded on the basis of meritorious performance rather than academic results alone.

#### **My contact details are:**

Telephone:	
Mobile:	
Email:	
Organisation:	
Position in organisation:	
Relationship to nominee:	
Signature of Nominator:	Date:

#### **Nominee Contact Details**

Name:
Phonetic pronunciation of Name:
Preferred Name:
Sex:
Age (only if under 18 years):
Current Course or Class or Area of study:
Current Education Institution:

Proposed course or area of study:
Proposed Education institution:
Proposed <b>Citation</b> to be read out at the presentation ceremony and on the certificate to be given to successful nominees (eg: where nominee has come from, when they arrived in Canberra, aspirations, reason for nomination). Attach additional information if required:

**Agreement**

- I,..... (printed name of nominee) agree to be nominated for a 2016 CRS Refugee Scholarship.
- I acknowledge that I will be considered but might not receive a scholarship.
- If I am selected to receive a scholarship I:
  - will/will not be able to attend the presentation ceremony;
  - do/do not give permission to be photographed;
  - do/do not give permission for my name to be published; and
  - do/do not give permission for my citation to be published.

.....(signature of nominee, parent or guardian as appropriate)

.....(printed name of nominee, parent or guardian as appropriate)

.....(date)

**Contact details of Nominee (or parent or guardian if under 18 years):**

Telephone:
Mobile:
Email:

Note: All nominations must be received by Canberra Refugee Support by email at [loywil@gmail.com](mailto:loywil@gmail.com) by COB Friday, 6 May, 2016. They will be reviewed and a response will be provided to the nominator by Thursday, 9 June 2016.

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## CHAPTER 13

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## CHAPTER 14

Reserved

## CHAPTER 15

### INDUCTION AND TRAINING

#### Orientation

All members of CRS are required to attend an Induction and Training session prior to active involvement with clients. It is usually the case that new members have attended a session prior to joining CRS, but this is not always so.

Topics covered in the Induction and Training session are:

1. Refugees and Asylum Seekers
2. Canberra Refugee Support
3. The Organisation
  - What we do and how we do it?
  - Our Aim
  - The Membership
  - Some Statistics
  - The Committee
4. Privacy & Confidentiality
5. Fundraising
6. Communication with Members
7. Good Practice Guide
8. Teams and Their Management
9. Other Agencies in Canberra
10. Useful Resources
11. Projects

#### Share what you know workshops.

Purpose. Share what you know workshops will be conducted up to three times per year, depending on need, with the aim of imparting knowledge, often held in member's heads, which may assist team leaders/ members in supporting our clients.

The workshop takes the form of a discussion group where members can raise issues and seek solutions. It works on the principle that most problems encountered have already been experienced by the organisation, and there are generally solutions known to members.

The workshop will usually be based on one or two case studies which often highlight issues that supporting teams have experienced, and it starts the discussion to identify how to resolve those issues in the most expedient way. Where issues cannot be resolved in the meeting, action is taken to research and provide an answer as soon as possible.

A record of the outcomes of each workshop is taken and published in the CRS Newsletter.