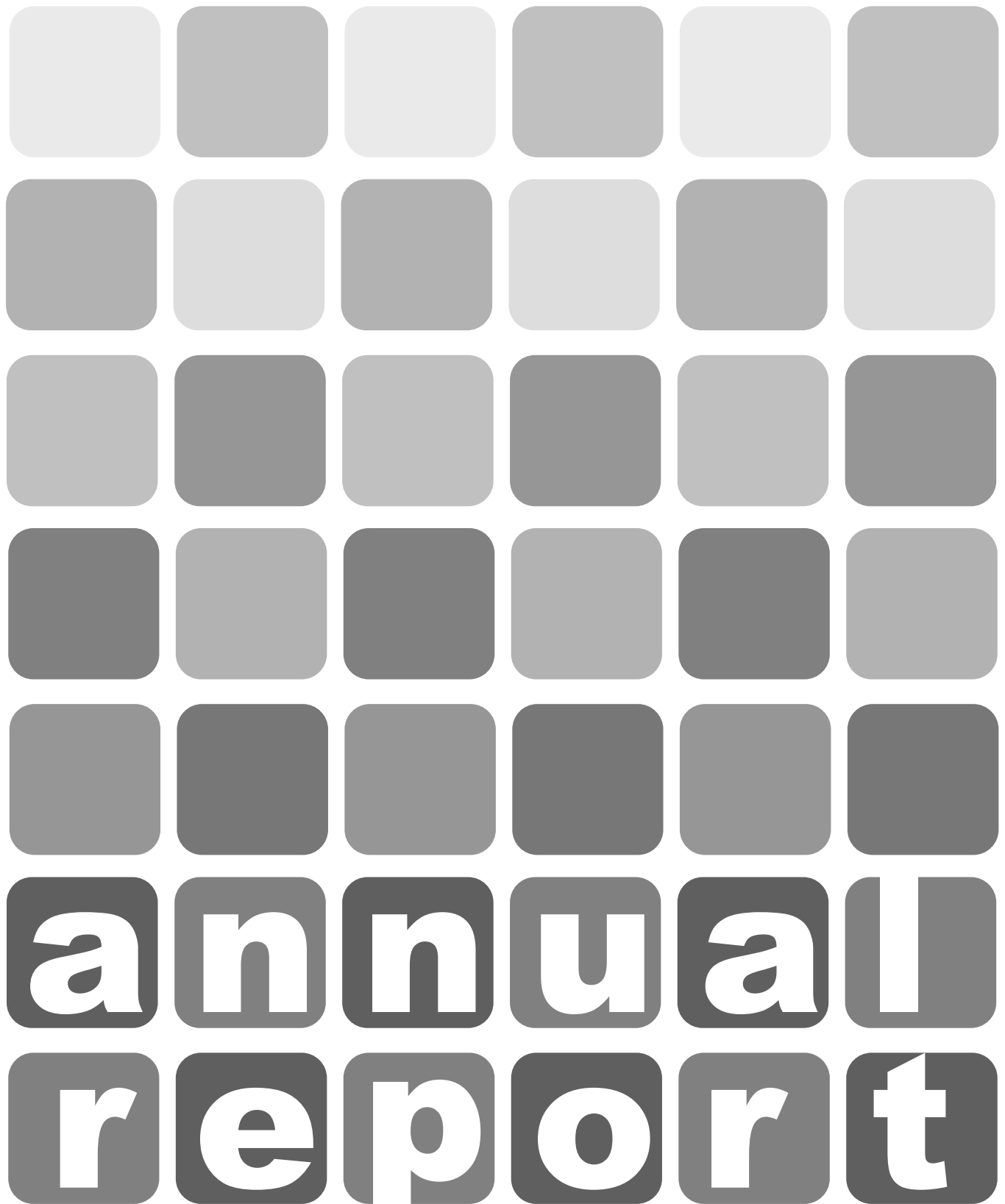


# Community Resource Unit Inc



**annual  
report**

**2010 - 2011**

# Overview of the Organisation

## The Association

The origins of Community Resource Unit (CRU) lie in a 1987 initiative of Queensland families, professionals and people with disabilities who recognised that legislative change was insufficient to support authentic change for people with disabilities and their families. CRU was developed to support grassroots change in Queensland. CRU has 139 members who include people with disabilities, families, and workers from the disability field. CRU is an Incorporated Association, it was incorporated on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 1988.

## Purpose

CRU exists to support the development of leadership and authentic change that enhances the possibilities for people with disabilities to belong to, and participate in, community life. It aims to:

- Challenge ideas and practices that limit the lives of people with disabilities; and
- Inspire and encourage individuals and organisations to pursue better lives for people with disabilities.

## CRU's Objectives

The main objectives of CRU include:

- Working towards intended, positive change by identifying issues of strategic significance and by exploring and demonstrating new possibilities;
- Challenging, encouraging and contributing to the growth and development of people who are involved in change efforts by offering a range of educational and developmental opportunities, and leadership opportunities;
- Developing and safeguarding those elements that contribute to quality services by supporting the work of community agencies that are striving to be responsive to the needs of people with disabilities and their families;
- Drawing attention to key challenges in the disability field and providing information about them;
- Operating a viable and accountable organisation that reflects, in its operation, the values and beliefs underpinning its Mission.

## Management of CRU

The direction and management of Community Resource Unit is vested in the Committee of Management that is elected annually. The implementation of CRU programs is the responsibility of the Director and the staff team.

### CRU Management Committee 2009/2011

**President**

Matt Stone

**Secretary**

Margaret Geldard

**Treasurer**

Josh Callaghan

**Committee Members**

Lesley Chenoweth

Mike Duggan

Donna Duncan

Richard Warner

### CRU Staff during 2010 / 2011

**Director**

Margaret Rodgers

**Senior Consultant**

Lisa Bridle

**Consultant**

Suellen Welch

**Finance Officer**

Margaret MacDermott

**Administration Officer**

Matthew Bartlett (Jul-Mar)

Kim Jensen (Mar-Jun)

**Project Officer**

Bobby Noone

**Administration Support**

Kathleen Fleming

# President's Report

As chairperson of the CRU Management Committee, I am pleased to deliver the President's Report for this Annual General Meeting. This has been my first year in the role of chairperson and I thank the other committee members and staff for their support, patience and guidance. For those of you who do not know me, I live in northern NSW with my partner, I have a paid role in a small family-support service on the southern Gold Coast and I joined the CRU committee two years ago. The service I work for is auspiced by Centacare.

I have set out this report under just a few headings, as the Director's Report will discuss in more detail the work of CRU this past year.

## **Governance / Compliance:**

In February, CRU was successfully re-accredited under ISO 9001 following a two-day audit process. On behalf of the committee I would like to extend my thanks to Mary Kenny, Richard Warner, Lisa Bridle and Marg Rodgers for their hard work in preparing for the audit. The committee contributed to the audit via Richard's participation in a working group and through the review and ratification of Policy & Procedure. During the year we have worked closely with the Director to complete several policy reviews and will continue to work through the review cycle. My thanks also goes to Mike Duggan who met with the Auditors as a Management Committee representative.

Sadly, we will farewell several committee members at this AGM. CRU would not be in the good-shape it is in today without the dedication, commitment and good governance of Lesley Chenoweth, Donna Duncan & Josh Callaghan. I sincerely thank each of you for your hard work and support of CRU as committee members. Special thanks to Lesley, who lead the committee through the transition period, in what, I am sure, were sometimes difficult days.

## **CRU Staff:**

As CRU moves further beyond its recent transition period, it has entered what is becoming a period of consolidation, as referred to in Lesley's President's Report last year. The work of CRU staff continues to reaffirm CRU's place as a change-agent and bring our objectives to fruition. In the past 12 months the Committee is proud to have been associated with the work of CRU: Events organised; Conversations held; Guests hosted; Publications distributed; Partnerships formed; and Information shared.

The committee would like to thank the team of people who have worked for CRU this year: Margaret Rodgers, Lisa Bridle, Suellen Welch, Matt Bartlett, Margaret MacDermott, Bobby Noone, Kim Jensen and Kathleen Fleming.

I wish to extend my personal thanks to Margaret Rodgers, CRU Director, for her support and encouragement as well as her extraordinary networking skills that continue to bring great benefits to CRU. Thanks Margie.

## **Strategic Planning:**

The committee and staff worked together to review the last Strategic Plan and develop a revised Strategic Plan for the period 2011 – 2014. It is never an easy task to plan for the future whilst attempting to consider all the threats and barriers that may get in your way. However, under the experienced facilitation of Marg Endicott, we were encouraged to THINK BIG and imagine all sorts of possibilities for CRU. The result is a Plan that speaks of influence, leadership, person-centred and person-directed responses, information and good governance. I am looking forward to putting this plan into action.

## **Future:**

In the coming year it is anticipated the Management Committee will undertake some work in a couple of exciting areas. These are:

1. CRU website – the website will continue to develop and in time do more exciting things, like on-line registrations for workshops.

2. Workforce: We are likely to develop CRU's workforce to its optimal size. As CRU is continuing to grow and consolidate, it is important we have the right number of staff with the right skill set to execute our Strategic and Operational plans
3. Stewardship Group - is a new item for the Committee's agenda. Some early thoughts on this group revolve around bringing CRU supporters together to assist in setting direction and ensuring CRU remains true to its objectives

**Matt Stone**  
**CRU President 2010 - 2011**

# Treasurer's Report

The following report provides an overview of the audited financial position of the Community Resource Unit for the financial year ending June 2011. It is with mixed emotions that I present this as it will be the last report that I will have the privilege to deliver on behalf of CRU. I am happy to be leaving CRU in a solid financial position that will allow them to continue to grow and impact the sector positively.

A continued focus on delivering effective workshops has led to another year of strong income. Our total year income was \$844,137. 74% of this total came from state government grants which have allowed CRU to deliver on a number of our strategic objectives which are detailed in the director's report.

CRU has again ended the year with a surplus of \$147,753. This is in part due to allocating some key expenses throughout the year against previous surpluses. Discussions on how to best use this money are currently underway within the management committee with the initial plan being to increase the staff numbers at CRU in order to handle the increasing workload. The surpluses of the past two years are seen to be due to unique circumstances and are not expected to continue into the future, therefore the committee wants to ensure the sector gets the most benefit from them.

With regard to the accounts, we have chosen to adopt the Standard Chart of Accounts for the recording and reporting of our operations. By doing this we hope to achieve a more transparent financial reporting standard for our committee and members to engage with. During this period we have also sought to refine our processes to better record and report at a project level. We have also begun to segregate the three core parts of our business being; recurrent funding, non-recurrent funding and CRU's own activities. By doing this CRU will be able to better manage and measure the financial effectiveness of their activities to ensure the sustainability of our programs and to better forecast how our funds can be used.

Our 2010/11 financial statements have been audited by Peter Hallahan (Hallahan & Co) Chartered Accountant and are available on request at any time.

Again, it has been a great pleasure to work with the committee members and staff at CRU. I am excited to see the organisation continue to extend the positive impact they have in the sector. The committee members, staff and community around CRU represent an exceptional group of people whose values and commitment to see positive change is inspiring. I cherish the friendships I have made over the past 2 years and look forward to hearing more about what CRU will achieve for many years to come.

**Josh Callahan**  
**Treasurer 2010 - 2011**

# Director's Report

## 2010-2011

The 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 found CRU in its new office at Peel Street, South Brisbane still surrounded by a few boxes from our move in mid June, and with a very small team. By the end of July, Lisa Bridle had joined CRU as Senior Consultant with responsibility for Leadership Development and Suellen Welch had joined as a Consultant. Suellen's role assists with the goal of promoting, supporting and safeguarding person-centred and directed responses. A total change of staff during the 2010 Calendar year had a big impact on CRU and time and energy had to be devoted to orientation, induction, planning and team building. There were occasional desperate phone calls to previous CRU staff and a few, shall we say, interesting surprises. We celebrated the move in early September with an open house in partnership with our neighbors QAI.

Despite the change of premises and staff, CRU's vision has remained unchanged since the mid 1990s. CRU exists to support the development of leadership and authentic change which enhances the possibilities for people with disabilities to belong to and participate in community life.

CRU's Strategic Plan 2008-2011 outlined four strategic goals. They are to:

1. Increase our influence through building strategic alliances.
2. Develop and deliver comprehensive leadership and mentoring strategies
3. Promote, support and safeguard person centred and directed responses
4. Develop a sustainable relevant organization.

Our strategies for meeting these goals have also been guided by the fact that we are predominantly funded as an information service.

It has been particularly clear during this year that CRU is much more than the small team of paid staff located here in South Brisbane. Each year, our management committee members make a huge voluntary contribution as they take responsibility for CRU's governance. CRU would not be able to function as it does, without the contribution of our members and supporters who agree to be presenters, writers or local collaborators; to sit on recruitment panels and who have stepped forward to assist us when our capacity has been low. I want to acknowledge this critical part of CRU and thank each one of those people for their part in the continued running of this organization.

I will report on our activities and achievements for 2010 – 2011 against our stated objectives.

## **Objective 1**

***Working towards intended, positive change by identifying issues of strategic significance and by exploring and demonstrating new possibilities.***

### **The Succession Project**

Between 2004 and 2009, CRU had used this particular funding source to assist people with disabilities and their families to develop individually or family governed collectives. For a number of reasons, CRU had begun to question whether the work with the collectives was the most useful contribution we could make to the promotion and safeguarding of person centred practice at this time. In the previous year, CRU had begun internal discussions and discussions with Disability Services about the importance of ascertaining what would be most useful and relevant; rather than just continuing with the original agreement.

In early October 2010 CRU convened and facilitated a discussion with representatives of seven family governed or individually governed initiatives or organizations from the southeast corner of Queensland. This session reinforced the importance of this approach and identified a variety of gaps in its development and safeguarding. CRU could identify a potential future role in a number of the identified gaps. In early December, CRU met with Parent to Parent, Pave the Way and Disability

Services to discuss this and to ensure that, if CRU changed direction, there would be no overlap with the other groups in receipt of this particular funding. During 2011 these groups have collaborated on a report on this funding stream and have made recommendations for further development in the sector. This area is now more commonly known as Lifelong Planning. As a result of these discussions and in negotiation with Disability Services, CRU will use this resource to focus on the skill development of more person centred facilitators for the sector. If a group approaches CRU who wishes to form a collective, we would still be very open to doing that work if we had the capacity and still see that as very valuable. What I am saying here is that we are moving away from devoting a project worker and these resources to that strategy.

**Follow up to Optimal Individual Service Design (OISD) – Emergency and Crisis initiative.**

Between September and December 2009, the Department of Communities Disability Services engaged Dr Michael Kendrick to run ten-day OISD courses in Brisbane and Maryborough to focus on the most highly funded people in Queensland. These people were all supported in non-government organizations. Sixty people from the government and non-government sectors, who were engaged in the support of people receiving Emergency and Crisis funding, participated in the training course. Twenty people with disability were invited to be focus people for the course. CRU was invited by the Department to follow up with these 20 people and assist them and the people who supported them to translate the ideas from a visionary proposal, developed in the course, into a plan for moving forward. We accepted this one-year contract for 2010 because we believed that this was a very important issue in Queensland. The majority of available funding in the State was being directed to crisis and emergency responses leaving no resources and little hope for funding for people who were not in that category. Most of the people receiving large amounts of funding had very poor quality of life, by any measure. After the initial planning phase, CRU then undertook to support the implementation of the plans with six of these people. These six were chosen because of their interest in and readiness to explore further options. The nature of the work was largely informal network development, providing a sounding board and planning.

In 2010-2011, Jane Sherwin, Christine Douglas and Kris Pinkard were engaged to different degrees to carry out this work. I want to thank them for their hard work, commitment and tenacity during the year as we continued to struggle with how CRU could best contribute to the lives of these people. Disability Services senior staff met with Dr Kendrick and CRU in August 2010 to review progress. In October, CRU undertook a small survey of the 60 course participants to ascertain their implementation of the training. About half the participants responded with most reporting that the course had been very helpful; that they would recommend it to others; and that it had had significant impact in their approach to the people with disabilities they support. In October, we offered workshops in Hervey Bay and Brisbane based on the themes that had emerged during the process. These were not well attended by people associated with the courses and so that strategy was discontinued. In 2011 four of the individuals and their families were not ready for CRU to withdraw so CRU committed to provide a small amount of support from the organisation's resources. This project has strongly reinforced our belief that funding alone will never be enough to provide a good life for people with disability. In hindsight, the project needed to run for much longer to address the layers of issues that typically faced this group of people, their families and the organisations that supported them. We will continue to discuss the importance of an external evaluation of this strategy with Disability Services.

**Baillie Henderson Project.** Queensland Advocacy Incorporated instigated a Wasted Lives Campaign in 2010 to highlight the needs of people with disability housed in Queensland Health facilities. As a result of this campaign, Disability Services approached CRU and Michael Kendrick to do individual planning with 35 people who reside at the Baillie Henderson Hospital in Toowoomba. All of these people have a single diagnosis of intellectual disability. CRU took up this offer because we believe that people need to be given options apart from institutional living. Between mid October 2010 and January 2011 CRU, in conjunction with Dr Kendrick, designed a two-year project to plan with each person; to build capacity of potential supporters in the region and to resource other stakeholders around implementation of the plans. Disability Services agreed to fund this project in early January but unfortunately the floods the following week meant that everything was put on hold. We resumed negotiations in mid March and then visited Toowoomba for a week in mid May. Following this scoping visit a report with a number of recommendations was presented to Disability Services. This work has not proceeded since then.

## **Objective 2**

### **Challenging, encouraging and contributing to the growth and development of people who are involved in change efforts by offering a range of educational and developmental opportunities and leadership opportunities.**

CRU conducted 12 events between July 2010 and June 2011. These ranged in length from a few hours to ten days and three of these were held outside Brisbane. Details over the page:

The two day leadership event in March had a focus on new and emerging leaders. As well as an international presenter, Dennis Harkins, from In Control Wisconsin, participants heard from local presenters, Jane Sherwin and Dave Andrews and from a panel of experienced local leaders. CRU has had a long-term concern with how to build a new generation of leaders and how to strengthen networks and supports for both existing and emerging leaders. The panel discussion with leaders on the Friday afternoon and dinner on the Friday evening was therefore opened up to another 20 existing leaders as a way of building connections and relationships.

The Leadership Styles workshop with Margaret Endicott, like the March event, attracted a diverse audience with people with disability, family members and workers attending. The interest in both events was an encouraging sign that CRU's focus on leadership development remains relevant to our members and constituency. These two events don't yet reflect the amount of thinking and reflecting that Lisa has done since taking up this role a year ago. We see Leadership development as critical for the future and I thank Lisa for keeping CRU focused on this amongst the many other demands that can appear more urgent in the short term.

We were also pleased to be able to offer a version of Social Role Valorisation to families in a two-day workshop in May. This was a change from CRU's usual practice of offering workshops and gatherings to people with disabilities, families and workers together. We wanted people with disabilities and families to have access to this information first hand and delivered in an environment where they felt comfortable. We engaged Darcy Elks from Pennsylvania who is a parent and senior trainer in SRV to run the event. The feedback about this strategy was very positive and it is our intention to repeat this in 2012. We really appreciated the contribution from organisations around the State who financially subsidized and assisted families to attend.

We were disappointed to offer so few workshops outside Brisbane in 2010- 2011. This was due in part to the fact that we had offered a number of workshops regionally in the first half of 2010 and have others planned for the second half of 2011. Natural disasters in the early part of 2011 delayed some workshops proposed for earlier in the calendar year. There were regional participants at each of the Brisbane workshops during the year. Some of these were self-funded and some were supported by CRU.

**Optimal Individual Service Design Course** – CRU offered this course twice in the past year. The course, which was developed by and continues to be led by Dr Michael Kendrick is also known as Deep Quality. CRU offers this ten-day intensive course, involving both theory and practicum, because of our interest in deep quality in lifestyle development and service provision for people. We were fortunate to be able to partner with Disability Services for the first course and to utilize unspent funds for the second course, thereby making the fees more affordable for families and service providers. The course was held in Brisbane in August and September 2010 with 30 participants from around the state and 10 focus people from Brisbane and at the Gold Coast in March with 19 participants and 7 focus people. The numbers were reduced at the Gold Coast as a result of the floods and cyclone. The focus people generously donate their time and open their lives for the students to learn and in return the students develop a proposal outlining possible future directions. CRU has offered further planning to the focus people it had nominated for the Brisbane course. Gold Coast organizations, who partnered with CRU to run the course, have agreed that some planning and assistance with implementation will be available for the focus people from the Gold Coast course.

During the year CRU convened two meetings with other organizations that offer development and training opportunities for Queensland families in a bid to work together better. Pave the Way, Inspirit, Down Syndrome Association, Queensland Parents for People with a Disability, Parent to Parent and



Workforce Council all accepted our invitation and this has already reduced duplication and strengthened connections.

Events Offered in 2010/2011								
Date	Workshop Name & Presenter	Region	No of Days	People with Disability	Family & Friends	Workers	*Total Participants	*Totals include Regional Participants
September 2010	<b>Ambitious Visioning</b> with Hope Leet Dittmeier	BRISBANE	1	3	7	28	38	(4)
September 2010	<b>Optimal Individual Service Design</b> with Michael Kendrick, Hope Leet Dittmeier and Lorna Sullivan	BRISBANE	10	0	3	27	30	(7)
September 2010	<b>Optimal Individual Service Design – theory only</b>	BRISBANE	5	0	2	8	10	
October 2010	<b>“Fanning the Flame”</b> Jane Sherwin, Jill Hole and Ann Greer	HERVEY BAY	1	1	10	4	15	
October 2010	<b>Responding well to challenging behaviour</b> with Ann Greer	BRISBANE	1	0	14	21	35	(5)
November 2010	<b>Crucial conversation</b> with Lesley Chenoweth	BRISBANE	2 hrs				16	
February 2011	<b>Crucial Conversation</b> with Mike Duggan, Ann O'Brien and Yeshe Khadre	BRISBANE	2 hrs				35	
March 2011	<b>Optimal Individual Service Design</b> with Michael Kendrick and Dennis Harkins	GOLD COAST	10	0	6	13	19	
March 2011	<b>Optimal Individual Service Design – theory only</b>	GOLD COAST	5	2	3	6	11	
March 2011	<b>Leadership Event &amp; Leadership Panel &amp; Dinner</b>	BRISBANE	2	4	11	21	36* *+ Panel & Dinner (20)	(17)
April 2011	<b>Person Centred Planning is good but not enough</b> with Ric Thompson	BRISBANE	1	1	11	58	70	(10)
May 2011	<b>Creating an Inclusive Lifestyle – SRV for families</b> with Darcy Elks	BRISBANE	2	0	25	0	25	(7)
June 2011	<b>Finding my Place</b> with Jill Hole, Matt Lys, Carmel Lys and Margaret Rodgers	MT ISA	1	2	5	6	13	
June 2011	<b>Leadership Styles</b> with Margaret Endicott	BRISBANE	1	1	5	14	20	(3)

### **Objective 3**

#### **Developing and safeguarding those elements that contribute to quality services by supporting the work of community agencies that are striving to be responsive to the needs of people with disabilities and their families.**

In the course of the year, CRU staff have been involved in many informal or semi formal conversations or meetings with community organizations. This is a role that ranges from being a sounding board, generating ideas, connecting people or lending a meeting room.

Some of the more formal expressions of this work have been:

CRU continues to meet with the Queensland SRV Safeguarding Group. These occasional meetings are invaluable for a combined approach to promoting and safeguarding this thinking across the state.

Preparations began for the Social Role Valorisation International Conference in Canberra in September 2011. CRU committee and staff saw this conference as important to support and attend as Social Role Valorisation theory (SRV) has shaped and influenced CRUs development. The theme "Getting the Good Life: from Ideas to Actions." fitted well with the investment that CRU and others have made in teaching SRV over the past 20 years and the subsequent initiatives, steeped in this work, that have developed as a result of this investment. In preparation for this conference, which was being held for the first time in Australia, CRU along with Values in Action hosted a meeting in late November 2010 with a view to ensuring Queenslanders had the encouragement and support they needed to submit abstracts. CRU also committed to sending three staff and making a bursary fund available to support people with disabilities, families and workers who would not otherwise be able to go.

Membership of the Pave the Way Reference Group kept CRU connected to the issue of long term planning for families. This reference group was disbanded in March as Pave the Way changed its governance structure.

Lisa Bridle supervised a Masters of Social Work student, Angela von Berky at CRU from late July til late October 2010. Under Lisa's supervision Angela conducted part of her placement in a small agency that would not otherwise have had capacity to supervise her.

From time to time we have visitors from interstate and overseas who come to share with us what they do and hear what is happening in Queensland. This year we have had visits from the following international presenters: Wendy McDonald and Robin Acton (AAACL, Alberta) Hope Leet Dittmeier (Realizations, Kentucky) Dennis Harkins (In-Control, Wisconsin) and Darcy Elks (Pennsylvania). We also had visitors from the Philippines who were studying at QUT; the New Zealand Disability Minister's staff; Nancy Fitzsimons (Uni of Minnesota) and Rosemary Woodward (DSC, Western Australia). CRU played a role in introducing and linking some of these visitors to various individuals and organisations in Queensland who had similar interests or expertise.

CRU still has some decisions to make about how to make the best use of the Resource Collection. Some people contact us seeking resources and we continue to respond to these requests but we have not had the capacity to develop or promote the collection for some time.

During the year there was a steady stream of requests for information via phone calls, emails and visits to the CRU office, with an average of 10 per month.

CRU staff also accepted invitations to present to staff groups, family groups and student groups. Lisa and Suellen delivered presentations to students in the schools of Medicine, Social Work and Early Childhood at QUT and UQ and Lisa, Suellen and Marg were all involved in training for Local Area Co-ordinators in May.

### **Objective 4**

#### **Drawing attention to key challenges in the disability field and providing information about them.**

CRU has continued to be a member of the Community Safeguards Coalition during 2010-2011 but has not been as active as in previous years due to capacity. This coalition of individuals and agencies is concerned about the rights, interests and lives of people with disability with particular focus on people's right to choose their living arrangements.

CRU has been a member of the Community Living Initiative Reference group and is also a member of the associated Enablers Reference group, which met every six weeks this year. We acknowledge that this funding initiative is not suitable for everyone but CRU supports this positive move away from the crisis response.

CRU attends meetings of the Disability Services Act Review working group.

One edition of the periodical, CRUcial Times was published during 2010-2011 with a theme of Practical Leadership. My thanks to Gemma Scott for bringing this edition to completion in September. Our goal is to publish more often but this has not been possible due to staff capacity at CRU this year.

CRU continues to offer its own publications for sale and an additional 13 publications, mostly from international writers. This is a small piece of our work that continues to be appreciated and well received as people seek to learn from the experience of others. In 2010-2011 CRU sold a total of 200 books. This has taken a step forward with the introduction of Paypal and a new website with an online bookstore. The international focus on our last book "Letting in the Light" by Michael Kendrick has meant increased international sales of all our books.

### **Objective 5**

#### **Operating a viable and accountable organization that reflects in its operation, the values and beliefs underpinning its mission.**

The total staff turnover mentioned at the beginning of this report has of course had a big impact on the knowledge, relationships and capacity of CRU in the 2010-2011 year.

I want to thank all staff who have been employed by CRU during 2010-2011 namely Matt Bartlett, Bobby Noone, Lisa Bridle, Suellen Welch, Margaret MacDermott and Kim Jensen.

In addition to the employees of CRU there are a number of other people who helped keep CRU running during 2010-2011. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Ross Pacey, Paul Hebing, Rebecca Johnston, Vicky Leary, Stephen Tonge, Joy Lane, Peter Hallahan, Margaret Endicott, Dave Drinkall, Angela von Berky and Mary Kenny for their commitment to CRU in the 2010-2011 year. This band of people provided their services as consultants or on a contract basis and while often working in the background formed a critical part of the CRU team.

We undertook a variety of quality system improvements during the 2010-2011 year. This included the development of new quality policies; the continuous improvement of quality auditing and monitoring processes, refinement of staff appraisal and supervision documentation, development of agreements for external contactors and improvement to our document control, storage and archiving processes. New policies on complaints were developed and information on this was placed on our website. The Quality Systems Audit was conducted by Health and Disability Auditing Association in February 2011. CRU met the requirements of ISO9001 and achieved accreditation for another 3 years. I wish to thank Mary Kenny for her assistance with this process up until she became ill in October 2010. Her experience and assistance was invaluable and while we are disappointed that she no longer has the capacity to work with us, we are grateful for the huge contribution she made to CRU. Lisa Bridle and Richard Warner were very active members of the quality sub-committee in the lead up to the audit this year. I am grateful to both of them for their willingness to take on this role.

Significant attention has been given to collating and analysing workshop feedback in order for this to feed into our planning and quality review.

A number of CRU's procedures were identified as requiring review and, given the substantial changes to CRU's operations and key policies over the last 18 months, a decision was made to complete a full review of CRU's documented procedures. There is a project plan in place to guide the overhaul of these procedures in the coming year.

This year we updated our Information technology and have installed new server, computers and photocopier. We have also designed and launched a new website and have installed Paypal for secure payments.

We have also begun a restructure of our electronic filing system. This restructure is not yet complete.

At the end of June we signed a new one-year output based service agreement with the Department of Communities – Disability services.

Our strategic plan, which was developed in CRU's year of transition, runs until 2011. CRU Committee and staff began a strategic planning process in June. CRU's external audit identified the need for us to more clearly identify key performance criteria in planning documents and this was a focus of our planning and will continue to be refined across all plans, job descriptions and appraisal processes.

During the 07/08 and 08/09 financial years CRU had not expended all of their grants. We were able to secure them for use in the 2010/11 year to fund bursaries for people with disabilities and family members to attend events and additional travel for CRU staff to reconnect with people in regional Queensland. It was also used to subsidise two Leadership development events and an Optimal Individual Service Design course with Michael Kendrick on the Gold Coast in March 2011.

In 2010 –2011 due to illness or injury of staff members or their close family members, we did not manage to achieve a full complement of staff from October to June. Three staff were unable to return to their roles. This has meant that some of the things we had hoped to achieve have been delayed as new staff were recruited, dealt with the backlog and learnt the ropes. The positive side of this difficult year has been the preparedness of staff to support each other and to do what ever was required to keep CRU running. I want to thank Lisa, Suellen, Bobby, Kim, Matt and Margaret for their personal commitment that has, when needed, gone above and beyond their role at CRU. It has been a pleasure to work with this team of people. We appreciated that some of CRU's friends also stepped forward to help at some of the difficult times, when our capacity was low.

#### **In conclusion:**

In her book, "Free Thinking" Stephanie Dowrick recounts a story told by Roberto Assagioli about three stonecutters building a cathedral in medieval times. "Picture these men: hot, tired, hard at work on this Mediterranean afternoon as they would be hard at work on almost every day of their lives. The first stonecutter was asked what he was doing. "As you can see" he said with some contempt for the stupidity of the question, "I am cutting stones."

The second stonecutter was asked the same question. His reply came more slowly: "I am providing a living for my family."

The third stonecutter was asked the same question. He stopped work for a few moments, put down his tools, wiped his brow, looked his questioner in the face and smiled broadly, "I am building a great cathedral."

If you come to a CRU event somewhere in Queensland, or you call into the office you will see our small team, busy with such tasks as organising name tags, introducing speakers, selling books, checking the oven – it would be easy to think that's what CRU does – they put on workshops. At times, like the second stonecutter, we are just grateful that we can do something to meet the immediate needs of others. However, we also seek those opportunities to stop and remember, and to remind others, that our small contributions are also building something great, as we work to change the world and make it a more welcoming place for people who live with disability.

**Margaret Rodgers**

**20 October 2011**