

Why another report?



RBA Report
Card

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FamS has adopted Results Based Accountability (RBA). Within this framework our Strategic Plan (due for revision in October 2009) is summarised below:

POPULATION RESULTS

Conditions of wellbeing for families and children in NSW

SAFE CHILDREN

STRONG FAMILIES

SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

We support State Plan Priorities – Building Harmonious Communities, Delivering Better Services, Strengthening Aboriginal Services, Early intervention. Our guiding principle for over 20 years has been *Strengthening Families Strengthening NSW*.

We contribute to the Population Results by supporting our members to:

- Make a difference in the lives of vulnerable families and children
- Operate as well governed and managed organisations
- Maintain and acquire adequate resources.

So how do you do that?



- By constantly developing and improving communication/contact with members
- * By establishing realistic priorities and timelines for our work
- By becoming deeply aware of the evidence base that supports and informs family support work
- By being actively involved in strategies and forums that inform and influence Government, funding bodies and the sector as a whole
- By identifying and maintaining partnerships that facilitate and reinforce our work
- By measuring our performance and achievements
- By collecting data that supports our capacity to answer the three fundamental RBA questions:

- 1. How much did we do?**
- 2. How well did we do it?**
- 3. Is anybody better off?**

The members surveyed are very typical family support services.

What do you mean?

How did you do that?



In order to collect data that we can use to track our performance over the next three years, in May 2008 we undertook a survey of a randomly chosen proportion of our membership. We gathered data about:

Our efforts

- Number and % of organisations that access FamS' resources and services.
- Number and % of organisations who report that FamS' resources were useful.

The effects

Number of % of organisations who report FamS helps them do better work.

Fifty members were chosen randomly and interviewed by phone. The profile of this group shows:

- 98% offer referral services**
- 94% provide centre based individual support**
- 92% run parenting groups**
- 90% do home visits**
- 84% run support groups**
- 78% run playgroups**
- 76% offer counselling sessions**
- 31% run children's groups**
- 82% provide services and support to over 100 families a year**
- 72% employed less than 5 FTE family workers**
- 20% employed less than 10 FTE**
- 48% do not belong to any other Peak body**
- 80% have been members for over 10 years.**

The work involves case management and integrated service delivery with families who are very vulnerable and have complex needs. It is about change!

The organisations were mainly small, community based and managed services.

These organisations have a knowledge of our services and therefore well placed to comment.

So what did they think of your efforts?

What else did you do?



The services used

MOST were

Newsletter	98%
e-Weekly update	94%
Policy Guidelines	88%
Website	80%

The services used

LEAST were

Training	54%
Workshops	50%
Advice	24%

Satisfaction Ratings

e-Weekly update	78%
Policy Guidelines	70%
Telephone calls	62%
Publications	52%
Website	40%

Rated 8, 9 or 10 on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the most satisfied.

We are proud that we have a stable group of members who have stuck with us through a lot of change.

As well as the survey we also collected internal data that measured workload ratio (*1 FamS staff member per 49 member organisations!*), membership histories, financial health and census data.

Some things we are pleased about...

97.3% of our members renewed their membership. (We claim this as a proxy for general satisfaction).

We are financially healthy

WHAT'S IN THE BANK?

Operating	(20,883)
Investment	346,302
Total	325,419
Money owed to us	10,941
Money we owe	6,613
Total	329,748

KEY INDICATORS

Reserves to Expenditure	37%
Working Capital Ratio	2.9
Cash Reserves (weeks)	19.8

Key Indicators

Reserves to Expenditure Ratio: Gives an indication of how large a financial 'buffer' an organisation has. The larger the buffer, the better the chance of weathering unexpected financial stress. A ratio of greater than 18% is considered good.

Working Capital Ratio: Gives an indication of how well you are placed to pay your debts as they fall due. It is a measure of how much you have against how much you owe, ie. current assets divided by current liabilities. A ratio of more than 2 is good, 1 to 2 is OK and less than 1 is not so good.

Cash Reserves: Measures the number of weeks an organisation could operate if all income was ceased immediately. It is calculated as cash (less grants in Advance) divided by average weekly expenditure. Cash reserves of greater than 10 weeks is considered healthy.

80% of members surveyed had been members for over 10 years

The services that were used most were those to do with INFORMATION (80-90%)

(This is reassuring because this is where we put a lot of thought, energy and resources).

78% were satisfied with our Policy Guidelines

(We are thrilled that people have found these so useful – we put a lot of time into developing them and worried that they might be sitting on shelves!).

Development of our marketing tool, which has had rave reviews, even from America

“Just wanted to congratulate you on the promotion book – the photographs are stunning and powerful images, beautifully integrated with the text. It is a really good resource – can we purchase extra copies?”

Andrea, Pauline, Else and Geoff at Far South Coast FSS.

“I thought it was wonderfully enriching and set the most supportive tone”

Elizabeth S. “BJ” McConnell,
Deputy Director for Education, DARE America

“I just gave out your wonderful report to the Nurses for Newborns Foundation yesterday and the entire board and management team were oohing and aahing over it. They said “We need to step up to this level of professionalism”. They couldn’t believe that this was a first effort!”

Carol Weisman, Director, Board Builders

Salvaged a compelling analysis of the 06/07 Census Data after the near collapse of the technology for our first online census collection *(thanks everyone).*

Maintained the interest of our RBA pilots in a context of changing priorities at DoCS *(thanks Mike).*

Distributed Members booklets twice a year *(thanks Sylvia)*

Developed a reputation for superb organisations *(thanks to Robbie and all in Corporate Services).*

Continued development of corporate image badging *(thanks to Robbie and Melinda).*

Board remained focussed following election of new President and some changes in membership *(thanks to Vivienne and all Board members).*

Kept the work flowing while recruiting to replace Rhondda Shaw and having Beth Stockton on maternity leave *(thanks to Rhondda for leaving clear instructions, to Beth for staying in touch and doing some work from home and Teresa for stepping in to pick up particular projects).*

Thanks everyone!

Some things we are not so pleased about (but are not surprised either)...

Only 40% of the organisations are satisfied with the website (*wait until the revamped model is launched at the AGM!*).

Only 52% are satisfied with the publications (*we will concentrate on upgrading and updating next year*).

Only 76% thought we were effective in representing their needs, challenges and views to Government (*as one respondent so eloquently put it “8 for effort – 2 for result”*).

FamS is seldom asked for ‘advice’ (*below 30% of respondents used this service – is this because they don’t think they can ask, or because they don’t think we can answer?*).

So there are clearly areas where we can make improvements.

BUT

In answering the most important question “Are FamS members better off because of the work we do” the survey showed the following: **96% of those interviewed said YES** when asked if using FamS’ services had improved the way the organisation worked

AND

78% said YES when asked if using FamS’ services had improved the way they personally worked.

So we believe we can claim that if we are helping organisations and individuals to do their work better,

we are contributing to our population result of safe children, strong families and supportive communities.

What about next year and the years after?



RBA encourages the development of Policy, Data Development and Research Agendas to guide and improve our future work. Here are ours as they currently stand.

Policy agenda

- CSGP Maintenance of Effort funds to all existing services NOW
- CSGP Business Case funded with 8% growth funding per year + CPI
- National Agenda for Child Protection endorsed by Commonwealth Government using RBA Framework
- FamS to influence policy as a national level
- Re-funding of Learning and Development project (full time/permanent) with brokerage funds
- Development of FamS Funding Policy
- Climate Change Impact Policy.

Research agenda

- Impact of RBA on Family Work results (early negotiations with Notre Dame University)
- Australian Evidence Base for RBA (commissioned Carolyn Quinn)
- Benefit Estimate Data modelling (commissioned UnitingCare Burnside)
- % NSW not serviced or underserved by Family Support Services (negotiating with Matrix on Board)
- Membership Satisfaction Survey (annual)
- Correlation between international research and FamS Principles (commissioned Liz Reimer early 2009)
- Correlation between Principles in Practice and Good Practice Guidelines (commissioned Bronwen Elliott).

Data agenda

- Analysis of census for significant baselines (negotiating Matrix on Board)
- Health of members (% carry reserves; % who play leadership role in planning and developing community services; % who have difficulty recruiting skilled staff; % who have funds available for professional development/training)
- Unit cost (FSS funding/FamS funding)
- Contact with members (site visits).

Potential future activities

- Fund Raising (FamS and members)
- Collect and publish 'magic' stories
- Develop 'how to' booklet for implementing RBA
- Develop Standards combining Good Practice Guidelines and Principles in Practice
- Investigate mentoring network
- Maintain upgrade of website
- Produce a brochure that informs current and new members what we do and what they can expect
- Develop and implement a marketing plan for current and new publications
- Develop a challenging but realistic Strategic Plan. Don't take the easy way out.
- Implement Results Based Accountability across all our activities (let's turn some curves).



So, it's obvious FamS tried very hard... but we know that isn't good enough! They've done some things well but they could do better. I'll keep my eye on them but I am confident they can do it!