

**Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd**

***“...Where the heart is...”***

**Cultural Audit 2007**

**(Confidential to the CEO)**

***“Nothing stops an organisation faster than people who believe that the way they worked yesterday is the best way to work tomorrow.”***

**– Jon Madonna KPMG**

**Peter McLean**

2007

## ***“Culture really matters...”***

*‘The manager’s primary tasks are to understand and manage the culture, develop people and get results’ - Peter Drucker*

A compelling cause creates a strong culture in which the effort and energy of everyone in the organisation is aligned.

High trust, client needs being met and a dedicated and committed group of employees all *‘singing from the same song sheet’* are the hallmarks of Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd.

The culture of Loddon mallee Housing Services is clearly defined by a strong commitment to the value base as spelled out in the Mission, Vision and Values of the organisation.

This culture is what sets Loddon Mallee Housing Services apart as a high performing entity and differentiates it within the service sector that it operates.

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## **BACKGROUND**

This cultural snapshot is the second audit conducted within LMHS.

We conduct this audit to ensure that our culture is being understood, monitored and managed effectively and that the right elements are being addressed to increase overall organisational health and to maintain and sustain high performance.

Hopefully, this understanding and the interpretation afforded it, along with the conversations that are stimulated by what is discussed in this document helps the Board and the CEO in making informed and effective decisions as we come to terms with the strategic nature and direction of our business.

Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd. has unique and distinctive dynamic characteristics that set it apart from other organisations. The more that is known about the essence of what constitutes Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd., the more likely it is that we can come to terms with what it means for us and for the people we are here to serve.

The greater the clarity we gain about our ethos, the more ably we are able to address and develop the elements which will improve our organisational effectiveness and performance and compensate for and manage our areas of potential weakness.

## **PURPOSE**

The intention of the cultural audit is to provide insights and recommendations in the following areas:

- Managing and dealing with change
- Identifying cultural shifts
- Identifying our organisational development needs
- Developing mechanisms to compensate for and/or overcome our weaknesses and gaps
- Building on our strengths
- Determining our future directions.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge at the outset the generous contribution made by all of the Board members, the CEO and the staff members of Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd. in compiling this report and would like to thank everyone for the time and effort that they put into this particular project.

I would also like to thank Fred Beach for his help on this project. He kindly conducted the staff interviews.

## THE CULTURAL AUDIT PROCESS

The audit process incorporated a number of data gathering methods. These included:

- Staff interviews
- The use of the Organisational Character Index
- Other organisational data including - CPI data; MBTI data; Simon Heap Excellence DNA surveys.

### **Staff Interviews:**

Eight formal structured interviews with individual support staff were conducted and the insights gleaned from these form a valuable contribution in informing the discussion and the analysis.

### **Organisational Character Index:**

41 questionnaires were returned by Board and staff members. This questionnaire (the Organisational Character Index, created by William Bridges) was used to survey the constituent's current attitudes and beliefs about the organisation and its operations.

The data gathered through this instrument provides an assessment of the organisation's type from the perspective of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator.

### **Other organisational data used in this report:**

#### **Individual Myers Briggs Type Indicator® Expanded Interpretive Reports:**

Non identifying information from these reports is used to assist in understanding people's individual preferences, within the work place, and the implications of these preferences as they affect and relate to the work functions of the various teams within the organization. In this audit data from 58 individual Expanded Interpretive Reports has been invaluable in assisting in the interpretation.

#### **CPI® client feed back reports:**

35 CPI reports have been generated in the recruitment of new staff since their introduction in 2006. These reports deliver a consistent profile of the people being recruited into the organisation.

This 'ideal' profile serves as a benchmark for the ongoing recruitment process and sets the agenda for the development needs of staff right from the outset when new people are employed by Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd. Inline with our Mission, Vision and Values

#### **Other organisational data referenced in this report includes**

Simon Heap Excellence DNA Evaluation used as background information only

## HOW TO USE THIS REPORT

This confidential report is for the CEO only and the insights, results and recommendations coming out of this exercise are documented for implementation entirely at his discretion.

I would like to point out a key issue associated with using this report.

It is critical to maintain the proper perspective when understanding and interpreting this report. My role in analyzing the data was to identify and present the experience, concerns and issues of the organisation's constituents, as they perceive the current culture.

It is irrelevant if these issues and concerns are "right" or "wrong". They are the experience of the people in the organisation and, as such, the key to understanding how meaning is created in our organisation, particularly in the area of the organisation's immediate key issues and goals.

It is essential not to judge, deny or justify these experiences, but rather to search for ways in which the desired meaning could be generated and experienced by the culture's members and what if anything should be done about it in managing the organization toward higher performance and improved effectiveness.

## THE METAPHOR OF ADULT 2003

In 2003 I described the significant metaphorical shift within the organisational culture as moving from that of 'Parent - Child' in 2000 to 'Adult - Adult' in 2003.

This change was supported by the interpretation of the data coming out of the Organisational Character Index survey of 2003. The then newly appointed Housing Manager at the Board Retreat of that same year expressed it thus:

*"...Where the heart is..."* remains the core understanding within the agency. The Housing Manager, Kerry Ashley, described the agency as having a big heart (Feeling). Alongside of this imagery though she described the agency as having a brain (Thinking) that keeps the head where the heart is. This is reflected in the language printed on the mirrors that are installed in and around the agency's facilities *"...Behind this face is the brain that ensures LMHS remains...where the heart is..."*

Taking personal responsibility and being accountable as employees within LMHS was a reality in 2003.

The metaphor for 2003 was one heart, one head and moving toward one body was up to each and every one of us stepping up to the plate and making this happen.

## **ALL SINGING FROM THE SAME SONGSHEET**

A further shift in this direction has occurred over the ensuing years from 2003- 2007. The metaphor of adult has developed into the further integration of the heart and mind into the reality of being one body.

The emphasis on Mission, Vision and Values has ensured the building of a solid value base that underpins all the organizations activities.

The 'one body' notion has been further cemented through the close collaboration and cooperation between the organisation's constituents.

This has been required in the development of innovative projects particularly evidenced with the rollout of the Affordable Housing Association across the region and beyond.

I believe that the reinforcement of our Mission, Vision and values aligned to our business planning, leadership development and the adoption of practice anchors have all contributed positively in binding the culture together as one.

This push has had a significant impact on the identity of the organization and its constituents and has propelled it long the sigmoid curve rapidly toward becoming more corporate.

*"We are all in this together"* has been underpinned and enhanced by the development of policy, processes, procedures and measures as part of the implementation of the roll out of the HASS standards for instance.

The high scores attained in the HACC audit and the growing systematization surrounding OH&S the requirements of The Registrar of The Office of Housing and the range of corporate training opportunities are also indicative of closer ties between the different sections of the organisation.

The supervision and support meetings, the development of the digital tool box, cross team training and coaching are also evidence of closer working relationships between all the parts of the organization in 2006/07.

The establishment of the Client Centre and the new phone system in the Bendigo office has been significant in building the one body concept.

## **PERCEIVED DISCONNECT**

We still have some perception issues in the regional offices between 2003 and 2007. People in these locations have always perceived that they were excluded from close connectedness to Bendigo because of geography and probably because of co location arrangements where a different 'look and feel' is evident when compared to Bendigo.

My interpretation of this is that it is more perceived than actual.

Given the staff profile of ISTJ, that is predominant at the personal level within the organization in 2007, INTJ at the Team operations level, INTJ at the Management level, INTP at the Team leader level and INTP in Mildura and SwanHill the notion of close bonding at the personal level is not high on the agenda of most staff members within the organization. 60% of individuals within the organization are Introverts. The only teams that are Extraverted in nature are the Assertive Outreach Team and the Complex Care Needs Team. All other Teams are Introverted in their preferences, tendencies and character.

For the most part work across the agency is seen as putting your head down and getting on with the tasks at hand, managing to business objectives and being results oriented. What others are doing is of little concern or consequence.

This means that communicating '*what is going*' on, anywhere in the organisation in relation to others, is not something that we are particularly interested in or good at generally. The expression of emotions between the teams is problematic at times.

This is a potential pitfall throughout the agency and is not only confined to the relationship between the Bendigo Office and the outlying office locations.

#### **OVERCOMING DISCONNECTEDNESS - REAL AND IMAGINED**

In this sense this phenomenon of 'disconnectedness' is wide spread, unconscious and unintentional. Although there have been some improvements in this area it is something to keep in mind and find ways to manage better.

Improving the connectedness between teams and offices within the Bendigo office components is just as critical as improving the connectedness between the Bendigo Office and the regional offices.

'*Being adults*' in relation to this phenomenon demands that we be aware of it and manage and or compensate for it on a rational basis and take responsibility for at the personal and social levels. This requires discipline in not reverting to or operating out of an inferior '*feeling*' function which will express itself more often than not in awkward ways.

#### **TYPE DYNAMICS AND THE ORGANISATIONAL CHARACTER INDEX**

In terms of type dynamics the respondents have indicated no significant change in their understanding of the organization's character. That is, what we are in business for and for whom. The staff and Board report that the agency has remained stable in relation to the business that we are engaged in.

The only slight change in this respect over the last three years is from the then dominant extraverted Feeling (Values) function guided and informed by introverted Intuition to the dominant extraverted Intuition function

(future possibilities) being directed by the introverted feeling (Values) function.

This is a subtle but nonetheless important shift and captures the strategic direction of the organization toward expanding the exploration of external possibilities for homeless people.

The organization is moving further along the path of manifesting ideas in the wider world in addressing the needs of homeless people. Becoming the auspice of Power Housing Australia and the 'out there' nature of the Affordable Housing Association are expressions of this shift in emphasis.

Values are more significant in defining Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd now more than ever before. The shift in values (Introverted Feeling) signifies a deep change that continues to occur within the organization. The value based culture matters. Values are a given in this culture and in fact they are what guides and gives balance to the drive toward external possibilities for homeless people.

When there is a disconnect between what we say we do and what we actually do it is noticeable now in a way that was not as obvious say six years ago.

In fact our behaviour is now taken so seriously that we can lose our jobs if there is any disconnect between our personal values and the organizational values base when and where this is not addressed or corrected. The intrinsic drivers at a personal level are aligned and integrated to the extrinsic drivers of the company's Mission, Vision and Values.

The pursuit of excellence in everything we do at the business level is underpinned by our internally focused values at the personal level. The social system of the agency and the organizational environment support the personal domains of motivation, capability and opportunity in observing values.

The agency remains proactive and externally focused.

In fact the current profile continues to demonstrate that this proactive approach particularly around the roll out of values and the introduction of tools and practice anchors for recruitment, the development of self awareness and awareness of others and managing emotions combined with, leadership development and rational issue resolution and problem solving is paying off strategically within the internal environment and handsomely in the external environment purely on bottom line indicators (quantitative) and improved community reputation (qualitative).

## **THE STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL GAP**

Typically in organizations there is a lag time and a gap between where the management team is operating from currently and the rest of the organization. This gap has narrowed dramatically over the past three years

with the advent of more projects and project management positions being created.

The level of management and business literacy in the organization is extending from senior managers now through to Team Leader level and base grade worker level as project management becomes a capability that is valued and supported by the business more and more in achieving its objectives.

The Affordable Housing Association, Executive Project Manager, Support Services Project Manager are indicative of this as the productivity of the organization rises and the organization adapts and changes to meet new challenges.

The gap is now a question of degree that can be explained by the different situational maturity levels and the differing levels of complexity that exist within the different domains that we operate in. The experience and capability level of the individuals involved as well as the opportunities afforded them are also important factors to take into consideration.

#### **ALIGNMENT OF OPERATING PROFILES**

All the team profiles when aggregated operate out of an INTJ way of being and operating. This aligns with the paradigm out of which the Managers (INTJ) operate and is very close to the Team Leaders aggregated profile of INTP.

A question put to me at the Board Retreat in 2007 was; 'If this is the kind of culture we are now, what should we be?'

The key to cultural understanding and even attempting to answer this question is to recognize where the organization is traveling along its life cycle (sigmoid curve). Cultural auditing in this sense is a broad brush description of where we think we are on this cycle and how we understand and manage the issues that arise for us given our organizational profile.

It is my view that we have moved further up the '*making it*' stage of the sigmoid curve and at the same time we are beginning to experience elements of the '*becoming an institution*' stage as we become more corporate and bureaucratic and risk averse.

That this cultural change is occurring along a well proven cycle is a given. The key to managing the changing culture is to understand it deeply and recognize the challenges that it throws up for us as an organization as we grow and travel its path.

## FACTS AND FIGURES AROUND CULTURAL CHANGE AND WHERE WE SIT ON THE LIFECYCLE

The analysis of the data, points to the fact that, cultural change is occurring as the organization moves around its life cycle.

LMHS employs 60 people

From the 58 MBTI individual profiles available to us we ascertain that;  
24 people report an MBTI preference of SJ or Guardian Temperament  
17 people report an MBTI preference for NT or Rational Temperament  
10 people report an MBTI preference of SP or Artisan Temperament  
7 people report an MBTI preference of NF or Idealist Temperament

38 of the current staff contingent have been recruited using the CPI (Best Cultural Fit analysis)

Understanding and managing our culture through recruiting, developing people and achieving results all go hand in hand.

Understanding and managing the ongoing cultural shift means we move towards higher levels of performance, personal responsibility and accountability. This culture is driven by the CEO and the environment which is deliberately created. Culture is imbedded and transmitted through the leader's commitment and dedication to this approach within the organization.

The current operating business environment (ENFP) is aligned with where the organization sits in relation to its clients and where it sits in the organizational life cycle as it continues to transition through '*the making it*' stage.

In terms of succession and development, along the sigmoid curve, we know from the MBTI® data, that the majority of staff members (ISTJ) have an individual preference for analytical and logical analysis even though they are operating in a people valuing focused business environment.

We are being given the tools frameworks and processes that equip us to control and manage our emotions better and to think about issues and resolve problems on a rational basis. The Management Team models the expected behaviours that this culture values.

The question is 'How do we manage the next transition of organisational development and change through the next two to three years?'

## THE ORGANISATIONAL LIFE CYCLE - LMHS IS TRANSITIONING...

Loddon Mallee Housing Services is continuing along the predictable path of its life cycle. It has transitioned out of what is described as the '*getting organised phase*', which occurred through 2000 - 2003, into the '*making it*' phase, which begins in 2003.

Through 2004 - 2007 we continue to transition through the '*making it phase*' with a tendency driven by the need toward becoming more bureaucratic because of the imperative to nail down policy and procedures. This is indicative of us moving into the '*becoming an institution*' stage of organisational life.

Greater accountability in and around safety, quality and compliance to a range of standards are becoming highly significant and extremely important. This ongoing transition is being experienced as 'a going through a kind of no mans land' where vulnerabilities are exposed and threats emerge along with new opportunities that need to be exploited.

This period causes tensions within the cultural environment. How we maintain our flexibility and adaptability in pursuing the next round of 'new ideas', in solving the problems of people experiencing homelessness and at the same time experience the frustration of a dip in effectiveness as we pay closer attention to compliance concerns is a critical management task.

The drive to achieve ongoing excellence in everything we do is best accomplished by perturbing the system with new ventures and ideas. Such change though will be resisted by the majority of staff in the organisation.

The potential threat here is that we may find ourselves getting bogged down in administrative detail just to feed the beast and find ourselves stretched to the limit in day to day service delivery.

There is no distinct beginning and end point to these tensions as we progress along the sigmoid curve. They are not linear in that sense but are running in parallel. This is where I believe the data shows us to be at this point in time.

This is evidenced by the exponential growth pattern and the 'growing pains' that we associate with this experience along the way. The relentlessness of achieving the vision of excellence in everything we do takes a beating around the edges. This is a potentially a very dangerous period for us.

This growth phenomenon has always been with us and has been observed since 2000. However, we are on a steep upward curve currently as the complexity of the organisation increases, capital becomes available and the kinds of business activities that the agency has identified in its Strategic Critical Issues Agenda require greater attention to managing risk. At the same time the demand is on us to fulfil our contractual obligations and measure our effectiveness to demonstrate that we are doing what we say we do.

#### **A REMINDER OF WHERE WE HAVE COME FROM ON OUR JOURNEY**

Prior to this there was an explosive growth pattern as the organization moved from being a dysfunctional organization, having a 'bad reputation' in the community, to establishing itself as a new organization in 1994 (*the 'dream phase'*).

In the '*dream phase*' the CEO had a core idea. Basically he had to keep the organization financially viable and turn its reputation around. This phase was marked by the '*death phase*' of a previous entity and the emergence of the new organization.

The '*venture stage*', through 1996-1997, is marked by the successful tendering for the SAAP and THM contracts.

Activities had an ad hoc feel to them and the leadership was still operating by the '*seat of its pants*' to some extent resulting in a very loose and creative kind of chaos.

From 1997 through to 2000 the organization went through its '*getting organised*' stage when structure and practices were beginning to be standardised, procedures and systems were established and financial controls were refined.

The '*making it*' stage is evidenced by the fact that the organization has been successful in establishing some controls and processes without losing its flexibility and responsiveness, and is beginning to reap some consistent rewards in terms of its reputation and the requests being made by funding sources for agency involvement.

In 2003 Loddon Mallee Housing Services Ltd. was establishing itself in the market place as a highly regarded entity and other players are beginning to take the agency seriously.

The '*becoming an institution*' stage is beginning to make its presence felt in 2007 along with the '*making it*' stage. A subtle yet profound shift is beginning to take place from doing to being. There is a growing concern in the organisation for how things are done than for what is done, a sense of 'arriving' is at hand.

In 2007 we are becoming more respected as a 'pillar of the community'. Risk is being minimised or avoided to ensure that we put some chocks behind what has been gained thus far. Regulations, standards and the beginnings of wealth generation are becoming evident.

Significantly during this stage the types of people being employed have the preferences and tendencies of Introversions (energy being turned back inwardly), Sensing (established practices are expected to be adhered to and followed), Thinking (status quo is exclusively relied upon), and Judging (inflexibility and conformity reign).

In 2007 there now exists in the organization a growing tension between security and innovation - Loddon Mallee Housing Services is constantly in touch with its major customer's (DHS) changing needs, its clients needs and is still disciplined enough to remain focused on its purpose.

The business that we are in is perceived by its constituents to be still very much in the '*making it*' stage that is turned outward toward the market (Extraverted, Perceiving), open to the ongoing opportunities that are emerging (Intuition), and establishing bonds with constituents and external stakeholders based in values (Feeling).

This description matches and correlates with the character of the organisation where it now sits as reported by the respondents to the latest Organisational Character Index. However the seeds of becoming more bureaucratic are being sown today. *The management role will be to facilitate this important change out of necessity whilst still balancing and driving the innovation agenda.*

Our sense of mission, Vision and Values is going to become even more important as levers to reinvigorate the organization as we transition through this stage.

#### REVISITING THE PAST PROFILES AND COMPARING THEM:

##### The LMHS Organisational Character Index Profile - 2000: (ESFP)

In 2000 the Organisational Character Index returned 23 surveys from across the agency and this indicated that the respondents understood the character of the organization to be:

**Extraverted** - focused outwardly, responds to external stimuli

**Sensing** - concerned with actualities, attends to details

**Feeling** - reaches conclusions on the basis of values and beliefs

**Perceiving** - likes to keep options open - is distrustful of too much definition

The character of Loddon Mallee Housing Services was seen by the respondents to be:

- Focused on giving its clients and its customers exactly what they wanted
- Pragmatic and unconcerned with precedent or formal procedure
- An organization whose employees treated work as 'pay for play' The assumption being that people get their pleasure as much from the doing of the job as from any formal reward that the work might bring
- Competitive and spontaneous in all of its activities. Even routine tasks and events are carried out as though there is a spur- of- the- moment quality to them

##### Our Strengths in 2000:

Given this understanding the organizational strengths were reported as being that the organization is:

- At it's best in a crisis and is not good at routine
- Good at public relations and maintains a favourable image in the public eye
- Distrustful of rules and precise roles and functions
- Honouring of skill, style and timing and comes into its own in situations where skill, enthusiasm and energy are required
- Very present oriented and seldom plans too far ahead

- Flexible and responsive
- Risk taking and not at all intimidated by change
- Great at improvisation and dealing with major challenges spontaneously, usually under pressure
- Rebellious, viewing tradition as unimportant
- Egalitarian - recognition comes through demonstrated skill and competence
- An exciting and dynamic place to work having a strong sense of fun permeating much of what is done
- Typified by lots of short-term projects going on at the same time
- Driven by values and beliefs and likes to keep its options open and distrusts too much definition.

#### **Our Weaknesses - 2000:**

The strengths have implications in terms of weaknesses.

The 23 respondents of the 2000 survey reported that they understood the organization was characterized by the following in terms of weaknesses:

- Little tolerance for anxiety and stress within the organisation. Interpersonal tensions are denied for as long as possible.
- Real problems can potentially build into really large issues before they are addressed.
- The organization and its constituents have little interest in long range planning and are poor at foreseeing what customers are going to want into the future.
- The constituents have a poor understanding of the impact of actions on internal constituents (burn-out)
- The agency having a frenetic quality that is fine as long as the organization is moving quickly, but it can lead to trouble if it slows down or pauses to take stock of what is going on.

#### **Interpretation and comment:**

LMHS existed by giving its clients and customers exactly what they wanted now. *'No one will be turned away homeless'* epitomized the drive to satisfy the needs of our clients. The services LMHS provided were spontaneous and were focused in the here and now and were full of possibilities. Routine assignments were carried out with a 'spur of the moment' quality to them. There was a sense of fun about what was done, and there was a noticeably friendly kind of competition and camaraderie amongst co-workers.

LMHS was pragmatic and unconcerned with precedent or formal procedure. This did not mean that it was efficient- that required too much planning and structure. LMHS had a *'fly by the seat of your pants'* open-ended ethos, which relied on the skill, enthusiasm and energy of the staff to carry the day.

The culture was characterized by an "us" and "them" division toward the outside world and the internal world and in that sense was a closed system. This was to do with the division between housing and support. Housing

workers were of the view that support workers generally were a *“lazy bunch of tree hugging hippies”*.

### **LMHS Organisational Character Index Profile 2003 - (ENFJ)**

In 2003 the Organisational Character Index returned 34 surveys which was representative of 50% of all constituents including staff and Board from across the agency and this indicated that these respondents understood that Loddon Mallee Housing Services was:

**Extraverted** -focused outwardly, responding to external stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attending to the big picture

**Feeling** - reaching conclusions on the basis of values and beliefs

**Judging** - liking things spelled out and defined, seeking closure

Loddon Mallee Housing Services was seen to be:

- Externally focused
- Dynamic, energetic and positive in style
- Concerned with human needs, taking them seriously, expecting cooperation, and espousing human issues
- Interested in organizational cultures and was endeavouring to build a values-based, people-centred place to work
- Proactive and wanting to make things happen, perhaps before fully understanding them
- Full of high expectations and goals and managing to live up to them to a high degree
- Growth seeking and developmental both at the organizational level and at the individual level
- Value based and seeking alignment between its planning and its practice
- Participative, although not necessarily egalitarian
- Preferring of a charismatic style of leadership
- It was an organization that took its human resources seriously
- Committed to teamwork, cooperation and sought contributions by everybody
- Based on a vision for people
- Exhibiting internal dynamics that were relational rather than functional
- Offering products and services that served a societal need
- Insightful and innovative in its approach to achieving humanistic goals

### **LMHS Strengths (2003)**

The 34 respondents in the 2003 survey reported that Loddon Mallee Housing Services:

- Handled change better than many other types of organizations, by emphasizing the envisioned goal and making sure everyone shared it
- Depended on the talent and integrity of its own employees to a high degree

- Managers and leaders tended to manage their public relations well and spend a good deal of their time communicating and managing external relationships with key stakeholders
- Could handle unstructured or ambiguous situations and had an affinity for “winging it”

#### **LMHS Weaknesses (2003):**

The respondents reported weaknesses were:

- That the organisation may have had unrealistic expectations that could lead to a general feeling within the constituents of being overwhelmed with possibilities, stretched resources and burn-out in people
- That the organization because of its idealism might fall victim to a tendency toward hype
- That because the organization takes human needs so seriously that there were some undercurrents of conflict and turbulence beneath the cooperative surface

#### **LMHS Organisational Character Index Profile 2007 - (ENFP)**

In 2007 the Organisational Character Index returned 38 surveys which represents 56% of all constituents across the agency. The results from this survey indicate that the majority of respondents understood that Loddon Mallee Housing Services is:

**Extraverted** -focused outwardly, responding to external stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attending to the big picture

**Feeling** - reaching conclusions on the basis of values and beliefs

**Perceiving** - likes to keep options open - is distrustful of too much definition

Loddon Mallee Housing Services is seen to be in a business that:

- Develops new ideas and services for homeless people
- Is an interesting exciting place to work with many new things that are happening that are focused on delivering solutions and possibilities for people within the organization and for homeless people.
- Tends to be very egalitarian and participative with everyone able to have a say and be included in decision making and discussion
- Creates a harmonious work place that gives people a lot of space to do their own thing
- Leadership is seen to influence and persuade by appealing to the value base of the organization.

#### **LMHS Strengths 2007**

The respondents reported our strengths as follows:

- We are sensitive to subtle signals in our environment and are perceived to be an organization that is the first to pick up cues about trends and emerging possibilities.

- Leaders are experienced as people who are willing to reconsider plans and courses of action on the basis of input from the constituency and other key stakeholders.
- Works on the assumption and belief that people within the organization are basically good and can be trusted to do the right thing
- Tackles projects with great enthusiasm, generating the needed vision and motivation and support up front

#### LMHS Weaknesses (2007):

The respondents reported our weaknesses as:

- Having difficulty with any aspect of our tasks that involve structures and systems.
- Have difficulty with attending to details and consistency in follow through. We expect things to unfold according to some natural pattern of events.
- We may avoid painful or difficult tasks until they reach a crisis point.
- Because of our lack of follow through and lack of clarity around roles, functions, policies and procedure we are susceptible to following the latest in a series of trends or coming up with new projects.

#### OBSERVATIONS AND INTERPRETIVE COMMENT

This comparative data suggests a subtle but very significant cultural shift in the understanding of the constituents about the character of the organization now compared with six years ago.

The agency went from being present focused to future oriented in 2003 and remains so in the latest profile in 2007.

The culture has moved further down the track of being more and more proactive and more along the 'making it' stage of the life cycle along with an increasing and growing amount of bureaucratization beginning to occur.

Values have subtly now moved into an assumed way of operating (values are now an auxiliary function rather than a dominant function). Corporate values have moved back into an internalized form that describes 'how we do business around here' as a business. Values are now supported structurally and socially in a way that was not the case in the first profile of 2000. The externalized prescription of values between 2003 and 2007 has lead to this manifestation of them now in an embedded way.

In other words, the respondents understand and now take for granted that the business, that LMHS is involved in, is value driven. (See Staff comments in and around values in the Interviews in Appendix 1)

Respondents take for granted now that the agency is in the 'caring for people business' in a global sense rather than an immediate personal 'hand

out' sense. This is framed within a performance based approach rather than that of open ended responses on an individual basis.

The open ended approach now (as reflected in the dominant function of Extraverted Intuition supported by the Introverted Feeling) is about the pursuit of ideas and innovation within clear boundary conditions around values that were inchoate in 2000.

Respondents understand that LMHS takes human needs seriously, expects cooperation, and espouses human issues. But this is now framed within the organizations character as a drive to pursue business objectives that deliver results for homeless people on a much larger and broader scale.

#### **The dramatic shift in the employment profile amongst our staff**

Over the past three years there has been a significant shift in the MBTI profiles of the people that are employed in LMHS. We employ people who are the best fit for the jobs available and we do not use the MBTI as a recruiting tool. With this in mind let's look at what the previous constituent's profiles were in 2003 and compare these with the current individual profiles.

#### **LMHS - Individual preferences staff profile 2003 - (ENTJ)**

**Extraverted** - focuses outwardly, responds to external stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - likes things spelled out and definition, seeks closure

In 2003 the data extracted from 41 MBTI® Expanded Interpretive Reports revealed that 68% of the currently then employed staff, who had Expanded Interpretive Reports, had a preference for analytical and logical decision-making. This is significant, reliable and valid data that tells us that of the 41 profiles, 28 individuals had a preference within the agency for the *Thinking* function rather than the *Feeling* function. Even if we assumed that 50% of the rest of the employees of LMHS (27), say another 14, had a preference for the *Feeling* function, which is statistically highly unlikely given the split in the actual reports that we had at that time, then we can extrapolate that conservatively 61% of staff had a preference for the *Thinking* function. This is very unusual in a welfare services environment, which one would mostly expect to be operating using a dominant or auxiliary *Feeling* function.

Using the same algorithm as used above, the preference for *Extraversion* was 57%.

The preference for *Intuition* was 60% and the preference for *Judging* was 52% of the then staffing population of LMHS. This translated into an actual individual preference profile for staffing within the organization of ENTJ.

It was also remarkable that 14 personal preference profiles of the 41 Reports were Intuitive Thinking types. This equated to 34% of this sample population being described as *Rationals* in terms of temperament. In normal populations statistical data reports that only 6% are *Rationals* (NT).

### **LMHS - Individual preferences staff profile 2007 - (ISTJ)**

**Introverted** - take cues and draw power from within, are fairly closed

**Sensing** - concern themselves with actualities, attend to details

**Thinking** - depend on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - like things spelled out and definite, seek closure

In 2007 the data extracted from 58 MBTI ® Expanded Interpretive Reports (96% of our constituents) reveals a real shift in the employment profile of the agency. 60% of our staff members in 2007 are Introverted. 60% have Sensing preferences, 60% have Thinking preferences and 56% have Judging preferences.

This is a highly significant sample and an astounding change. The staffing profile at the individual level is now predominantly ISTJ.

SJ's or Guardians are the most represented in the agency in 2007. There are 24 people we currently employ who report these preferences and tendencies.

This is 40% of our current workforce.

The move from '*Rational*' temperament to '*Guardian*' temperament (See below for description of the temperaments) within our staff contingent reflects a change in the nature of the jobs available as the work moves toward more administration, project management, risk management and the compliance oriented tasks that are now required.

It also may explain to some extent the turnover rate in the agency where people are delivering direct service to clients. Staff members who have preferences for Sensing and Thinking will have a shorter shelf life than those with preferences for Feeling for example.

Remember people are attracted to jobs that suit their type preferences 80% of the time.

### **The Management Profile**

In contrast the management of the agency has remained stable with only a slight shift over the past three years.

### **Management personal profile preference 2003 - (ENTJ)**

**Extraverted** - focuses outwardly, responds to external stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - likes things spelled out and definition, seeks closure

In terms of management populations the research data reports that 38.5 % are described as *Rational* temperaments.

Significantly, in the Management Team and the Team Leaders of LMHS, four (80%) of the five managers were reported as being *Rationals* (NT) and three (60%) of the five Team Leaders were reported as being *Rationals*

An ENTJ type manager/leadership role is typified by the following characteristics:

- Big picture and future focused
- Prefers design to execution
- Thinks of the organisation as an interlocking system of Mission based groups
- Strategy driven with long-term goals
- Mistrustful of personal authority
- Can be seduced by broad global concepts
- Develops an impersonal atmosphere with scanty appreciation for contributions
- Sets high standards - although can be sloppy with detail
- Values ingenuity with efficient and effective problem solving
- Has a tendency to use cryptic communication and language
- Independent, innovative, and iconoclastic, and is focused on the intellectual interests of the organization and its stakeholders
- Tends to be forceful and undeterred by conventional objections
- Is pragmatic, efficient, and pioneering
- More interested in understanding things than making things
- Demands proof; everything is up for discussion and there are no sacred cows

The general description of an ENTJ leadership team is that it is:

- Strategy driven; takes control of a situation and acts decisively
- Strategy is based on an intuitive grasp of the situation
- Pursues objectives with will power and single minded focus
- Is future and opportunity oriented and goes about the business in an objective manner
- Is proactive and decisive, which makes the organization good at turning chaos into order
- Dislikes imprecision and inefficiency; everyone is expected to engage in constructive criticism

**Management Strengths:**

- Usually plans change well, responding to obvious cues and trends from the external environment
- Tends to be straightforward and unequivocal in its approach to business and keeps focused
- Forte is grand strategy and there is always a model of reality behind the plan explaining how things work
- Skilled at functional analysis and approaches situations from an engineering point of view

### Management Weaknesses:

- May miss subtler aspects of situations and can be careless about the human side of what we are trying to do
- Can be a bit like a '*bull in a china shop*', with a tendency toward overkill
- At worst can be prescriptive and dogmatic, insisting that people fit into a pattern that has been set without their input
- Can be somewhat insensitive in their communications, both internally and externally

### Management personal profile preference 2007 - (INTJ)

**Introverted** - focuses inwardly, responds to internal stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - likes things spelled out and definition, seeks closure

In terms of management populations the research data reports that 38.5 % are described as being of *Rational* temperament. (See *Developing Leaders page 119- Centre for Creative Leadership data*)

Significantly, in the Management Team and the Team Leaders of LMHS, three (80%) of the four managers are reported as being *Rationals* (NT). One is an *Idealist* (NF). Three (40%) of the seven current Team Leaders are reported as being *Rationals*. Two are *Artisans* and there is one *Idealist* and one *Guardian*.

The overall profile for the Team Leaders is INTP (Rational). Six out of the seven team leaders are logical analytical thinkers (Thinking types).

An INTJ type manager/leadership role is typified by the following characteristics:

- Big picture, future focused and visionary
- Planning oriented
- Prefers autonomy and expects others to act autonomously
- Strategy driven with long-term goals
- Values competence knowledge and insight
- Getting the most for the least effort - efficiency
- Trust logical reasoning
- Detest lack of will power
- Drive for clarity
- Translate theories into actuality
- Verbally skilled and precise in their speech
- High need for achievement
- Fear of failure
- Problem solvers
- Authority is granted by competence
- Directive in relationships

The general description of an INTJ leadership team is that it is:

- Independent, innovative, and iconoclastic and are focused on intellectual and scientific approaches
- Forceful and undeterred by conventional objections
- Pragmatic, efficient and pioneering
- More interested in understanding things than making them
- Demands proof; everything is up for discussion and there are no sacred cows

#### **Management Strengths:**

- Creative and confident
- Strategy and rational innovation are core strengths
- Can operate very quickly in terms of both analyzing situations and coming up with solutions
- Flexible and adaptable and can reorganize very rapidly to meet challenges
- Skilled at functional analysis and approaches situations from an engineering point of view

#### **Management Weaknesses:**

- May be insensitive to the human aspects of what is being done
- Expect people to see the logic of a situation and can display impatience when others don't 'get it' immediately
- Self confidence can turn into stubbornness that can be disastrous as they do not readily admit that they are wrong
- May be demanding and unappreciative at times

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND INTERPRETIVE COMMENT**

In 2007 we have an ENFP business being managed by an INTJ management group with a staff constituency that is now predominantly ISTJ.

This represents minor changes since 2003 in the Organisational Character Index Survey and the Management Team profile.

The OCI has moved the reported characteristics of the business culture from ENFJ to ENFP. This minor change from closure to openness may simply be the perception coming from a staffing contingent that is predominantly now ISTJ. I have expressed above that this is due to the fact that the value base of the organization is well embedded now and serves to inform the possibilities for the clients that we work with.

However it is of interest to note in this case also that the ENFP culture represents the inferior functioning of an ISTJ and vice versa.

For the ISTJ type extraverted Intuition (The dominant function of ENFP) is the inferior function for the ISTJ and will exhibit itself as the loss of control over facts, becomes impulsive and knee jerk and tends to catastrophise

about ambiguous data, and dreams up all sorts of shadowy, sordid possibilities that may or may not be lurking in the background.

On the other hand the ENFP when extroverting Intuition is possessed of singular resourcefulness and has a 'good nose' for objectively real possibilities.

On the other hand when the ENFP business is in the grip of its inferior function, that is Introverted sensing (The dominant function of ISTJ) it falls into obsessing about the smallest insignificant details to the point of paralysis. Projects can come to a stop because of this.

The differences in temperament may create ambivalence and distrust and be a potential cause of conflict. To that end I think it worthwhile to examine the four temperaments that exist in our business to raise our awareness about possible tensions that may emerge between particular business units.

#### **THE FOUR TEMPERAMENTS AS THEY PERTAIN TO BUSINESS UNITS**

**SJ 'Guardian Temperament' - typical business unit characteristics**  
(Finance and Administration, Executive Support, Complex Care Needs & Outreach Support Teams)

- Hierarchical - authority based on position taken seriously
- Firm policies and standard operating procedures
- Rely on schedules and deadlines
- Excel at concrete operations such as accounting and production
- Prefer incremental change
- Expect loyalty and hard work from everyone
- Define roles clearly
- Honour the past and pay attention to tradition
- Are stable
- Struggle with transformational change

**NF 'Idealist Temperament' - typical business unit characteristics**  
(OCI Profile, Housing Team, The Client Centre)

- Seek growth and development both organizational and individually
- Values based seeking alignment
- Participative although not necessarily egalitarian
- Prefer charismatic style of leadership
- Take human resources seriously
- Emphasise teamwork, cooperation and contribution
- Have internal dynamics that are relational not functional
- Offer services and products that meet a societal need
- Espouse insightful and innovative approaches to humanistic goals
- Likely to be based on a vision

**NT 'Rational Temperament' - typical business unit characteristics**  
(Housing Mildura and SwanHill, Assertive Outreach Team, LMHS Board, Management Team, Team Leaders)

- Big picture future focus on the market
- Prefer design to execution
- Strategy driven with long term goals
- Think of the organization as interlocking mission based groups
- Mistrustful of personal authority
- Can be seduced by broad global concepts
- Develop an impersonal atmosphere with scanty appreciation for contributions
- Set high standards although can be sloppy on detail
- High regard for ingenuity with efficient and effective problem solving
- Have a tendency to use cryptic communication

**SP 'Artisan Temperament' - typical business unit characteristics**  
(There are nine SP's in the organization, three of whom have leadership roles)

- Are at their best in a crisis and are not good at routine
- Distrust rules and precise roles
- Honour skill, style and timing
- Are very present oriented - seldom plan ahead
- Are flexible and responsive
- Can take risks and are not intimidated by change
- View tradition as unimportant
- Tend to be egalitarian - status comes through skill
- Like excitement and dynamic environments
- Likely to have lots of short term projects going on at the same time

#### **Minor shift - Management Team**

The Management Team has moved from an ENTJ to INTJ. This has been caused by one manager leaving and the team is tipped into Introverted because the CEO is an Introverted type. (Currently the management team is comprised of two Extraverted and two Introverted types)

#### **The major shift has been in the staffing profile...**

Staffing has moved from an ENTJ profile to an ISTJ profile. As stated above this I think reflects the changing nature of the work in LMHS as we become more corporate.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

*"If we don't reinforce a sense of responsibility at the same time that we build a culture of empowerment, we are headed to chaos" - Rita Ricardo-Campbell (Hoover Institute)*

As the organization continues to move through the 'making it' stage along its life cycle in parallel with the growing emergence of the 'becoming an institution' stage the following points may be well worth considering as we manage the culture over the next three years.

Identify the challenges and creative tensions that we face as an organization as we continue through this phase of our development.

Identify key threats in the transition from the 'making it' stage through to the 'becoming an institution' stage on our life cycle.

Identify what we could do to ensure that we pay attention to the important areas of risk management and compliance and at the same time keep ourselves open to innovative responses as a business.

Identify where power, authority and responsibility lies in terms of delivering results for the business.

Find ways of keeping energetic, passionate people at all levels within our business.

Ensure that our reward system is focused on results

Understand the potential for conflict between business units as we grow larger and different drivers are at play.

Find ways of building trust and shared understandings by providing opportunities for dialogue and discussion around the changing nature of our business

Reinforce continually the Mission, Vision and Values of the business to build cohesion and coherence

Ensure that as the organization takes on the need for more bureaucracy that this is kept lean and serves the purpose of the business

Look for ways to rejuvenate well established business units and activities

Educate managers and staff in transition and change management skills  
Keep driving the training agenda around 'emotional' intelligence

Reinforce the practice anchors

## APPENDIX ONE

### REPORT STAFF INTERVIEWS - Conducted by Fred Beach

#### Introduction:

As a component of the 2007 organisational cultural audit the Community Support Services General Manager decided to include feedback and opinions from a sample of staff members obtained through one to one confidential interviews. The task of formulating and conducting the interviews was assigned to the Community Support Project Officer.

Ten names were selected randomly. The managers, team leaders and senior staff were excluded from the pool and drawn names were also excluded if the particular program/team was already represented from a previous draw. Of the ten names selected eight staff members were interviewed. Two interviews did not take place as arrangements could not be made within the allotted period and a sample of eight was considered to be representative given the size of the organisation.

A time limit of one hour was set for each interview that proved to be overly generous. All participants were given an explanation of the purpose of the interview and the following conditions;

- Participation in the interview was completely voluntary.
- Information, feedback and opinions would be given anonymously and the report would be kept general to ensure that the material presented would not identify specific individuals.
- And also that the interview report would identify broad themes and patterns and would not attempt to compare or contrast one program or team with another.

All of the selected staff members expressed a willingness to participate in the process.

#### Interview Format

The interview format was taken from a site on the internet offering a generic employee feedback and satisfaction survey. The survey included five main categories that appeared to comprehensively cover the important aspects of organisational functioning and operations. Within each category there was between three and seven sub-categories on which the employee/interviewee could respond. The survey asked participants to consider what they liked, what they disliked and how things could be done better with regard to each item within a category.

The five broad areas and sub-categories were

- The organisations working environment, methods and equipment
  - Work practices
  - Working environment
  - IT facilities
  - Morale

- Communication
  - Cooperation within your office/program
  - Inter-program cooperation
  - Organisational structure
  - Assigning of clear directions and responsibilities
  - Meetings (quality and frequency)
  - Communication with management
  - Information about organisational activities
- General
  - Remuneration
  - Holiday and Sick Benefits
  - Social Amenities
  - Social Events
- Responsibilities
  - Who you are responsible to
  - Who you are responsible for
  - What duties and procedures you are responsible for
- Equal opportunities
  - Race
  - Age
  - Gender & Gay Issues
  - Disabilities

### **The Interview Process**

It is worthwhile to describe the process undertaken in conducting as it affects the nature and structure of the content presented. The interviewer decided to ensure that the interview process would be as open ended and flexible as possible to enable the participants to take their responses to where they have the strongest views and opinions.

The interviews were structured so that each category was presented in turn and each of the sub-categories was stated as a prompt for thinking. Participants were not required to provide their likes, dislikes and recommended changes for each issue nor were they required to comment on every sub-category. The topics were stated by the interviewer and the participant was given scope to deal with it or not in whatever way they chose. Likewise, any requests for clarification, examples or expansion were kept to an absolute minimum and only arose when the interviewer did not understand or was in significant doubt regarding the interviewees meaning.

Hopefully this flexible process gave each participant the freedom to take their responses to where they had strongest feelings and not to feel a need to perform or work hard to concoct a response to sound credible or meet compliance expectations.

## WORKING ENVIRONMENT, METHODS AND EQUIPMENT

### Our Work Practices

Two interviewees were critical of our work practices while the balance felt they were acceptable. Two interviewees considered them to be excellent. Of the critical responses, it was suggested that the maintenance of our files and information was not secure and well organised and that further work could be undertaken in developing better systems. Another criticism concerned many old manuals and outdated process documents being kept in work areas that clogged and confused our work practices and confused newer staff. One interviewee related our working environment as contributing to poor work practice in managing information in that offices are cramped and proper and effective storage and organisation of documents is difficult.

One of the first themes to emerge from the interviews was introduced by interviewees in response to "work practices". This was the feeling that workers had the opportunity for autonomy, that is to self manage and be flexible and creative in undertaking their duties and that in terms of practices they do not feel overly process driven.

### Our Working Environment

Not surprisingly most interviewees, to varying degrees, were critical of the Bendigo office building. The issues that were raised are probably all known and have all been addressed within what is practical and affordable for the organisation at present. This should not however suggest a complacent response to the feedback as staff felt quite strongly regarding some issues and related them to a de-valuing of staff and our consumers.

On the strongest side were quotes such as "its crap" and "borders on negligent to staff and clients". Specific mention was made of

- Ineffective heating and air-conditioning
- Poor ventilation
- Cramped conditions
- Awkward access or no access for the disabled
- It's a rabbit warren
- Insufficient interview and meeting rooms
- Partial partitions in the toilets make them unsanitary and unpleasant.

A few interviewees were satisfied with the office and mentioned some positives that included

- The small shared office situation promoted good communication and work relationships
- That the location was excellent and provided many benefits for staff and good access for our clients in terms of convenience and parking

A number of staff members raised the issue of dissatisfaction with the availability of vehicles for staff to conduct their duties. This is an issue that has raised its head previously and apparently lingers on. As there is no particular subcategory for vehicles I have included it here.

Information given indicates that while vehicles can generally be accessed if booked well in advance that it is very difficult to gain one at short notice. One staff member identified this as a source of anxiety and stress as that person's responsibilities often require a reactive response on short notice. Another staff member who finds vehicles difficult to access at times noted that some cars that sit in the yard all day despite the fact that they have been "blanket booked".

The two suggestions arising were that some initiative be taken to provide more vehicles, possibly more vehicle packages for staff, and also that the current procedures and policies for the use of cars be "better enforced" to ensure equitable access.

### **IT Facilities**

Two staff members felt that both the hardware and the support was lacking and needed upgrading and improvement while the balance reported great satisfaction and appreciation for the quality of their computers, email and internet access.

One staff member in particular mentioned knowledge of the IT situation in several other non-government agencies and said they felt privileged by comparison.

### **Staff Morale**

More than half of the participants saw morale as being good to excellent in the organisation. One person related the high morale to the quality of support received through supervision.

Of the other interviewees one perceived staff morale as being low with staff needing to rely on their peers for support as it does not come from management. This person also perceived that staff members do a lot of venting and also felt morale issues contributed to high staff attrition. Interesting enough, this person felt their own morale to be high. One other interviewee found morale to be generally low and that there was a concern regarding a lack of management intervention in responding to and preventing issues that could undermine morale.

Another interviewee felt that morale in the organisation could best be described as "patchy". This person felt that morale was high in some teams while troubled in others and felt that more could be done by the organisation to address this through social activities, morale and team building activities etc. It was also noted by more than one interviewee that current circumstances operating at the time of the interview coloured their perceptions and they felt that at other times organisation morale has been higher.

## COMMUNICATION

### Cooperation within your office/program.

All participants felt that communication within their own program areas was good and that there was generally a high level of cooperation.

### Inter-program communication

Approximately one third of the interviewees also felt communication between programs was good. Those who had critical things to say stated that

- People can bounce you back forth between programs to get answers to queries.
- There are problems in at least one area of the organisation
- That communication between programs can get “rocky” and that sometimes issues become personalised and mixed up with accountability.
- That some situational issues exist at the moment.

Despite the comments above the overall perception did not reflect a highly critical view of our communications between programs but may indicate some further effort can be put in to explore issues and improve the quality.

### Organisational Structure

Nearly all interviewees were clear on the organisational structure and most felt that communication through the structure was good. One interviewee felt that over the past six months organisational communication had improved significantly. Suggestions that were made for better communications across the broader organisation included:

- A need for more information about AHA
- Better communication between the staff and Management and A&F. In particular, a better understanding of direct service.
- Improved timeliness of the provision of information (perceived delay in conveying information to staff)
- More email communication and an e-notice board

Positive comments were made about the A&F regular e-letter and the Client Centre Bi-monthly as well as the effective use of organisation wide emails, distribution through pigeon holes and the occasional emails from the CEO.

On the minority/critical side were perceptions that staff members were not always notified of issues that impact upon them and that “top down” information was not always forthcoming, clear or transparent. One person found communication within the organisation one of their “biggest frustrations”.

### **Assigning of clear direction and responsibilities**

This area brought a unanimous positive response with all staff interviewed expressing satisfaction with the clarity of direction they receive. A number of positive comments were made about the quality of supervision and the also the freedom the organisation allows for self management and encouragement towards creativity and innovation.

### **Meetings, quality and frequency**

Most people felt that the situation with meetings was generally good and that the meetings were useful, open and democratic. One person stated that there were too many meetings in their opinion while another stated that meetings were infrequent and irregular within their program.

### **Communication with management**

The response to this area was more varied. Several people felt that management was approachable and accessible to them. Another stated that while ok, they did not really feel that managers were that interested in service delivery issues. One interviewee expressed the view that there are too many projects (business opportunities) taking precedence over service delivery and the opinion that service quality is falling due to this. One person questioned the transparency of management communication.

The "all staff days" were identified as a useful means for communication and contact between staff and management. These were also mentioned in the section on "meetings". Some staff found the staff days helpful and enjoyable while others would like to see more focus on operations but found it hard to express what would be useful to all staff members if changes were to be made.

### **Information about organisation activities**

No issues or areas of dissatisfaction were raised in the interviews and staff generally felt well informed about our activities.

## **GENERAL CATEGORIES**

### **Remuneration**

The majority of staff members expressed the view that the organisations pay was too low and that similar jobs in other settings pay better. More than half of these pointed out that they had accepted the pay rate willingly when they signed their contract and continued to work for the organisation because of other compensating benefits they felt within their jobs and being a part of the organisation. These included their colleagues, supervisors, the nature of the work and the general relaxed and supportive culture. Several staff also mentioned their appreciation of salary packaging.

Critical comments about the remuneration suggested that it led to constant staff turnover and limited practice quality and that a review should be undertaken.

Two interviewees felt the remuneration was fine and expressed complete satisfaction.

While a number of people did not feel paid in an equitable manner reflecting their abilities and responsibilities only one person stated that they would be leaving the organisation due to the low pay rate when the timing and opportunity was right. That person would prefer to stay but found the income too low to achieve his/her life quality aspirations.

### **Holiday and sick benefits**

All interviewees felt that the holiday and sickness benefits as provided in the award were adequate. Staff all felt that the organisation was flexible and that they were able to access their benefits as needed or desired without stress, guilt or any influence/pressure from their supervisors or managers.

One interviewee expressed the view that the organisation was very understanding and sensitive to people's personal needs and family problems.

### **Social amenities**

The only social amenity identified was the kitchen. The majority of staff did not feel any real interest in having more or better amenities in the workplace. A few felt it would be good to have a more comfortable and enticing staff room that would encourage more social interaction between staff members. One person thought a pool table would be a good idea. No one mentioned the tree on the edge of the parking area where the smokers hang out.

### **Social events**

Only a few staff members felt there should be any more social events. One suggested a once a month pub informal (not organisation funded) for those who would like to meet for a drink and general chat in a relaxed venue. Another staff member thought it would be good to re-start the social club and get a few more events happening beyond the Christmas party.

One staff member felt that social events were "over the top" and was referring to the number of times staff members are invited to meet for drinks to farewell people or acknowledge other special events. This staff member felt there was peer pressure to attend these occasions.

The majority of staff expressed the view that they had social lives outside of work and did not want any more work related events and were happy with the status quo.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Who you are responsible to and for**

Nearly all interviewees related their responsibilities to our organisational values and mission. Although the interview format separated responsibilities “to” and responsibilities “for” as separate categories, in practice the respondents combined their answers. All of the interviewees expressed satisfaction with their responsibilities. People listed their main responsibilities to and for as

- The organisation
- Our clients
- Their supervisor and management
- Their team mates and colleagues

Comments included one person who felt frustrated in meeting their responsibilities to their clients when other involved services do not perform. This person had a feeling that they often needed to compensate for other professionals not meeting their responsibilities. One particular service was named.

A number of people expressed a strong liking for meeting the challenges of their responsibilities and praised the capacity for self management and innovation that the organisation allowed them. A few people felt their willingness “to go the extra distance” in meeting responsibilities was encouraged by the professional regard they felt from the organisation.

One person, who did not mind giving identifying information, stated that at times he felt who he was responsible to became somewhat blurred between his role as a LMHS employee delivering a service on behalf of local government. Generally, this did not create too many problems. This person also felt that at times he took on responsibilities beyond his role due to the limited number of services in his location.

### **The procedures and duties you are responsible for**

Generally respondents expressed a liking for the duties and procedures they were responsible for. One person stated that duties and responsibilities are important and should not be taken lightly and at times feels stressed about not wanting to make mistakes. Another person described the work as relentless and wished at times to be able to take a break, tidy up the mess and reflect a bit more on the big picture. This person was however not negative or critical and appeared to enjoy the challenges of the work.

Most people were positive about this area and several referred to good feelings and pride they felt in meeting the challenges of their workplace responsibilities.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

### Race, age, gender & gay issues, disabilities

Interviewed staff members were unanimous in the view that no issues exist regarding equal opportunities within the organisation.

One person summed it up by stating over the years of their employment they had never seen any example of a breach of equal opportunity or even heard any individual staff member make a derogatory or prejudicial statement relating to equality and equity.

## INTERVIEWER PERCEPTIONS

In conducting the interviews I appreciated that all of the selected staff members were very willing to participate and spoke openly and positively during the interview. The critical statements that were made were not made in a rancorous or "bitchy" manner and there was no suggestion of any staff member feeling disempowered or victimised.

An example of this was in the discussion of remuneration where despite most staff feeling that the pay was low they also acknowledged that they accepted the terms and were compensated in other ways. Those who felt remuneration should be increased pointed out benefits to the organisation such as greater staff retention, improvement in practice experience/wisdom and reduction in recruitment costs. Staff members appeared to be sincere in identifying potential value to the company and were not looking to just improve their own circumstances.

I felt that staff members generally feel a part of the organisation and noted how often mention was made of "our values" or "our mission". It was also apparent that the organisation's culture of allowing a great deal of autonomy and self management contributes to a high degree of satisfaction. Another significant theme that emerged from the interviews is the consistent appreciation that staff members have of their supervisors and the high level of support they receive from them.

It is hoped that the report provides some general barometer reading for where employees are with job satisfaction. The issues that have been raised and criticisms made by staff in this report can hopefully be used to provide direction into what we might need to explore and analyse more deeply within the organisations culture.

Fred Beach  
Community Support  
Project Officer

March 2007

APPENDIX TWO

BOARD - Type Table

ISTJ 2	ISFJ 1	INFJ	INTJ
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP 4
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ 1

Board Type - ENTP

**ENTP**

**Extraverted** - focus outward, respond to external stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Perceiving** - like to keep options open, distrust too much definition

## MANAGEMENT TEAM - Type Table

ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ 2
ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP
ESTP	ESFP	ENFP 1	ENTP
ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ 1

Team Type - INTJ

Note: tipped into INTJ on account of CEO (Leader embeds culture)

### **INTJ**

**Introverted** - focuses inwardly, responds to internal stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - likes things spelled out and definition, seeks closure

## TEAM LEADERS - Type Table

<b>ISTJ</b>  1	<b>ISFJ</b>	<b>INFJ</b>  1	<b>INTJ</b>
<b>ISTP</b>  2	<b>ISFP</b>	<b>INFP</b>	<b>INTP</b>  1
<b>ESTP</b>	<b>ESFP</b>	<b>ENFP</b>	<b>ENTP</b>  2
<b>ESTJ</b>	<b>ESFJ</b>	<b>ENFJ</b>	<b>ENTJ</b>

Team Type - INTP

### INTP

**Introverted** - focuses inwardly, responds to internal stimuli

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depends on impersonal procedures and principles

**Perceiving** - like to keep options open, distrust too much definition

**TEAMS AND OCI PROFILES - Type Table**

<b>ISTJ</b>  Exec Support Admin & Fin OST	<b>ISFJ</b>	<b>INFJ</b>  Client Centre	<b>INTJ</b>
<b>ISTP</b>	<b>ISFP</b>	<b>INFP</b>  Housing Bendigo	<b>INTP</b>  Housing Mildura/Swan Hill
<b>ESTP</b>	<b>ESFP</b>	<b>ENFP</b>  OCI Survey	<b>ENTP</b>  YP4
<b>ESTJ</b>  Complex Care Needs	<b>ESFJ</b>	<b>ENFJ</b>	<b>ENTJ</b>  AOT

Team Types - INTJ

**INTJ**

**Introverted** - take cues and draw power from within, are fairly closed

**Intuitive** - concerned with possibilities, attends to the big picture

**Thinking** - depend on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - like things spelled out and definite, seek closure

## AGENCY STAFFING PROFILE - Type Table

<b>ISTJ</b>  8	<b>ISFJ</b>  7	<b>INFJ</b>  1	<b>INTJ</b>  4
<b>ISTP</b>  3	<b>ISFP</b>  4	<b>INFP</b>  3	<b>INTP</b>  4
<b>ESTP</b>  1	<b>ESFP</b>  2	<b>ENFP</b>  2	<b>ENTP</b>  6
<b>ESTJ</b>  5	<b>ESFJ</b>  4	<b>ENFJ</b>  1	<b>ENTJ</b>  3

Number: = 58

Team Type - I = 34, E = 24; S = 34; N = 24; T = 34; F = 24; J = 33;  
P = 25

### **ISTJ**

**Introverted** - take cues and draw power from within, are fairly closed

**Sensing** - concern themselves with actualities, attend to details

**Thinking** - depend on impersonal procedures and principles

**Judging** - like things spelled out and definite, seek closure

40% of our workforce is of an SJ Temperament

## **Bibliography**

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Beside ourselves - Naomi L. Quenk

Working Together Olaf Isachsen and Linda V. Berens