

NSW HMMS
state council



Executive Officer's Annual Report

2008~2009 FYE

NSW HMMS
state council



Proudly representing Home Modification and Maintenance Services across NSW

Foreword	1
Overview of the NSW HMMS State Council	2
Introduction	3
Purpose of Funding	4
<i>Overviews:</i>	
• The Quality Assurance Program / The Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund	4
• The Non-Recurrent Fund / The Non-Recurrent Rural and Remote Fund	5
Outcomes Achieved by Each of the Funded Programs	6
• The Quality Assurance Program / The Inaugural Technical Manual	6
• Fact Sheets / The Shed Training / Quality Assurance Mechanisms in NSW	7
• Technical Advice / Mentoring	8
The Regional Technical Advice Fund	9
• Inadequate Recurrent Funding Levels for the Regional Technical Advice Fund	10
• Regional Technical Officers Workshops	12
• RTO Sign Off and the Quality Assurance Rectification Program	13
• Has the Quality Assurance Program in NSW been effective?	14
• The Quality Assurance Rectification Program	15
• Quality Assurance Rectification Program Statistics for 2008-2009 FYE	15
• QARP Applications & Unlicensed HMMS / Regional Allocation of QARP Funding 2008-2009 FYE	17
• Contractual Arrangements in the HMMS Industry	19
The Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund	20
• The Shed Series of Workshops	20
• <i>OT Resource Development:</i> Fact Sheets	21
• Pro-formas / OT Manual / DVD / Information and Advice / Looking Ahead	22
• Applications made to the NR OT Brokerage Fund 2008-2009 FYE / NROT Policy Review	23
• State Averages for Brokerage OT Assessment in NSW	25

The Non-Recurrent Rural and Remote Fund	26
The Non-Recurrent Fund	27
• Background Information / Overview of NR Applications recieved 2009-2008 FYE	27
• Streamlining NR Processes and Procedures / External Factors Increasing Need for NR Funding	28
• Discussion of NR Funding in the HMMS Industry / Major Modifications Reliance on NR Funding Levels	30
• Sustainability of the Major Modifications Program	31
• The NR Asbestos Management Fund / Asbestos Public Liability Insurance	34
• Rural and Remote Regional Consultations and the HMMS Model	35
The NSW HMMS State Council's Achievements for 2008-2009	36
• Overview of all Training for 2008-2009 FYE	36
• Legally Speaking / MDS Workshop / The Shed Series of Workshops	37
• Looking Ahead / Resource Development - Multicultural NSW HMMS Brochures	39
• Review of Applications to the NSW HMMS State Council	39
• Electronic Application Process / State Council Planning Day / Regional Consultations	40
• MOU with the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse	41
Industry Initiatives	42
• HACC Research Project - Service Models for Lawn Mowing and Garden Maintenance	42
• HACC Workforce Development Project / Access Point Project	43
• ADHC's Direct Allocation of Funding to HMMS during 2008-2009 FYE	43
• ADHC's Tendering Process in the HMMS Sector / Closing	45

FOREWORD

The financial year 2008-2009 has been an incredibly busy year for the New South Wales Home Modification and Maintenance Services (NSW HMMS) State Council. Capacity building initiatives such as training and resource development for the HMMS industry have been the key focus and this would not have been made possible without the drive, dedication and passion of the NSW HMMS State Council Staff. My sincere thanks and gratitude are extended to the NSW HMMS State Council team for their ongoing professionalism, commitment and enthusiasm. These staff members include:

- Keith Stevenson, Specialist Technical Officer
- Margaret Neuss, Specialist Occupational Therapist
- Christine Ivey, Office Manager
- Theresa Crawford, Executive Assistant
- Kate Feain, Marketing and Promotions Officer
- Nicolie Scrivener, Training and Administration Officer
- Christine Casey, Assistant to Specialist Occupational Therapist

Additionally, State Council staff have been supported by NSW HMMS State Councillors as well as staff members of individual HMMS. My sincere thanks are extended to these people for supporting a broad vision and providing the staff with a framework for implementing this vision.

Finally, I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the two Reference Groups who had input into the creation of key resources for the HMMS industry i.e. the Regional Technical Officers and the Occupational Therapists Reference Groups. The collaboration and knowledge imparted by the Reference Groups under the guidance and leadership of State Council's Specialist Staff have ensured the creation of quality resources which aim to support and strengthen both the knowledge and processes within the HMMS industry in NSW.

OVERVIEW OF THE NSW HOME MODIFICATION AND MAINTENANCE SERVICES STATE COUNCIL

Background Information

Established in 1994, the NSW HMMS State Council is the peak organisation for the HMMS industry in NSW. A not-for-profit organisation, State Council is committed to the interests of Home Modification and Maintenance Service providers in New South Wales to ensure optimum client outcomes and service delivery are achieved via capacity-building initiatives and sector development.

Vision

The vision of the NSW HMMS State Council is to unite and enhance Home Modification Services statewide.

Purpose

As the peak organisation, the purpose of the NSW HMMS State Council is to provide support for Home Modification and Maintenance Services, act as a collective think tank and promote leading practice and outcomes throughout the state.

Values

In carrying out its vision and purpose, the NSW HMMS State Council values open and ethical practices, transparency, accountability, quality services and safe and productive workplaces.

Objectives

In accordance with the Annual Project Peak Activity Plan signed by State Council with Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) State Council's following objectives are:

- Developing policy and advocacy
- Providing advice, information and representation
- Consulting broadly
- Building sector capacity and sustainability
- Promoting partnerships and collaboration
- Demonstrating leadership and innovation
- Taking a proactive approach

INTRODUCTION

Contained within this Report is an overview of the funding managed by the New South Wales Home Modification and Maintenance Services (NSW HMMS) State Council for the period 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 and the outcomes achieved within this period. This Report complements the Chairperson's Report completed by Shalla Thomas who has provided an overview of the past year.

Funding

The NSW HMMS State Council currently auspices seven separate funding streams all with varying purposes. The funding is provided by Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) under the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program in NSW.

The fixed term recurrent funding received by State Council is:

- the Quality Assurance Rectification Program (formerly known as the Contingency Fund); and
- the Regional Technical Advice Fund

The non-recurrent funding received by State Council is:

- the Quality Assurance Program which includes the employment of a Specialist Technical Officer;
- the Non-Recurrent Fund to reduce HMMS waiting lists;
- the Non-Recurrent Fund to reduce waiting lists in rural and remote HMMS in NSW;
- the Non- Recurrent Asbestos Management Fund; and
- the Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund which includes the employment of the Specialist Occupational Therapist;

PURPOSE OF FUNDING

Overview of the Quality Assurance Program

The Quality Assurance Program began in 2007 and has played a pivotal role in self-insuring, self-regulating and risk management of the HMMS sector in NSW. The Program's initiatives also include the employment of the inaugural Specialist Technical Officer to oversee the implementation of the following funds:

- the Quality Assurance Rectification Program (formerly known as the Contingency Fund; established in 1998);
- the Regional Technical Advice Fund (established in 1998); and
- the Asbestos Management Fund

The Regional Technical Officers (RTOs) also play an integral role and work collaboratively with the Specialist Technical Officer monitoring the quality of workmanship and standard of work in the HMMS industry. All the Programs listed above are intertwined ensuring a strong foundation to build the skill and capacity of the HMMS sector in NSW

The Specialist Technical Officer's role is pivotal to the implementation of quality assurance mechanisms, the development of technical sector resources and capacity-building initiatives such as training. Non-recurrent funding is provided to support this position.

The Regional Technical Advice Fund is a fixed-term recurrent stream of funding providing technical advice and support to HMMS in their regions via a nominated Regional Technical Officer. The RTOs play an integral role in monitoring the quality of workmanship and standard of work in the HMMS industry and work collaboratively with the Specialist Technical Officer.

The Quality Assurance Rectification Program (QARP) is a fixed-term recurrent stream of funding available to the HMMS industry to rectify sub-standard or inappropriate work completed by HMMS or when HMMS are unable to achieve results from due processes. The QARP acts as the HMMS industry's self-insurance program for all sub-standard work and assists Services to comply with all statutory warranty requirements as set out by the Office of Fair Trading.

The Asbestos Management Fund is a non-recurrent stream of funding supporting HMMS to comply with asbestos legislative requirements as set out by WorkCover NSW and the National Codes for Asbestos Management as set out by the Commonwealth Government.

Overview of the Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund

The Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund was originally established in 2004. The Fund's original purpose was to provide timely occupational therapy assessments to home modification clients by brokering private provider occupational therapy services in regions where occupational therapy services are delayed or otherwise unavailable within NSW Health. The first installment of funding targeted rural and remote areas of NSW and was then expanded in 2006 to be available in all regions of NSW including metropolitan areas.

In 2007 the Fund was further expanded to include the employment of the inaugural Specialist Occupational Therapist for the NSW HMMS State Council.

Overview of the Non-Recurrent Fund

The NSW HMMS State Council became aware that extensive waiting lists existed for HMMS in NSW as recurrent funding received from DADHC did not adequately meet the demand. The NSW HMMS State Council successfully lobbied DADHC for a pool of non-recurrent funds to be available for HMMS to specifically reduce waiting lists. The following non-recurrent funding installments have been received and made available to HMMS via an application process:

- \$ 2.47 million in 2004 - funding allocated to HMMS over 8 months 2004-2005 FYE
- \$ 5 million in 2006 - funding allocated over 2.5 years 2006-2008 FYE
- \$ 2 million in 2008 - funding allocated in 6 months 2008-2009 FYE
- A total of \$ 9.47 million has been received from 2004-2009

Overview of the Non-Recurrent Rural and Remote Fund

Due to the geographical isolation of HMMS in the Central West and Orana Far West Regions of NSW, these HMMS experience much higher operational costs and lack access to skilled, licensed and appropriately insured tradespeople compared to their metropolitan counterparts. This has resulted in high waiting lists particularly for major modifications. In 2008 State Council submitted a proposal to ADHC to consider providing a pool of non-recurrent funding for rurally remote and isolated HMMS in the Central West and Orana Far West Regions of NSW.

ADHC approved the availability of non-recurrent funding for these services in the 2008-2009 FYE for the following:

- \$ 600,000 in 2009 – funding allocated in 1 month 2009-2010

OUTCOMES ACHIEVED BY EACH OF THE FUNDED PROGRAMS

The Quality Assurance Program

Under the leadership of Keith Stevenson, Specialist Technical Officer for the NSW HMMS State Council, the Quality Assurance Program plays a pivotal role in self-insuring, self-regulating and risk management of the HMMS sector in NSW. There have been a number of major issues identified by State Council's Specialist Staff and Executive from consultations with HMMS and these are as follows:

- inconsistency in the level of knowledge about the HMMS Program by Occupational Therapists (OT);
- inconsistency in the quality of information received in Referrals by OTs;
- inconsistency in the level of technical expertise and licensing of HMMS across NSW;
- inconsistency in the use of quality assurance mechanisms for HMMS across NSW; and
- limited technical information available to assist HMMS regarding home modifications.

To combat the above identified issues, the Specialist Technical Officer's key focus has been to strengthen the HMMS sector via capacity-building initiatives through the implementation and development of the following:

- development of the inaugural Technical Manual to create consistency and increase technical knowledge in the HMMS industry;
- development of industry-specific Fact Sheets for distribution to the sector by December 2009;
- implementation of The Shed series of workshops which aimed to upskill, mentor and train OTs, Builders and Tradespeople in the HMMS industry (March-July 2009);
- implementation of Quality Assurance Mechanisms for all major modification work via the Regional Technical Officers' network; and
- the creation and implementation of the Quality Assurance Workshop.

The Inaugural Technical Manual

The creation of the Technical Manual was indeed collaboration in action! State Council's Specialist Staff together with the Technical Manual Reference Group and Regional Technical Officers allocated a considerable amount of time collating the information contained within the Technical Manual prior to the process of peer review at the beginning of 2009. To State Council's knowledge the Manual is the first of its kind in Australia and is absolutely delighted with the quality of the end product. A number of orders for the Technical Manual have been received from a number of different stakeholders outside the HMMS industry and from other States and Territories. State Council's sincere thanks and appreciation goes to all the individuals who had input into creation of the Manual. My personal thanks and appreciation is extended to State Council's Marketing and Promotions Officer, Kate Feain, who coordinated all the information and acted as the interface with Flawless Imaging, the graphic design team. Kate's patience and perseverance saw the Technical Manual come to fruition. The Technical Manual is a quality technical resource which aims to create a framework for consistent technical information regarding home modifications for the HMMS industry in NSW.

Fact Sheets

The first of many industry-specific Fact Sheets have been created for distribution to the HMMS sector by December 2009. Again, Reference Groups reviewed the information contained within the Fact Sheets to ensure their relevancy and accuracy. The Fact Sheets created under the Quality Assurance Program in 2009 are as follows:

- Overview of the Quality Assurance Program
- Regional Technical Officers and their role in the HMMS Industry
- Funding Available to HMMS from the NSW HMMS State Council
- Licensing Requirements in the HMMS Industry
- The Building Code of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Standard AS1428 Suite of Standards
- Contractors' Statutory Requirements
- Information for Contractors – Bathrooms
- OT & Builder Roles
- Generic HMMS Information
- HMMS Minimum Documentation
- Record Keeping
- Promoting your HMMS

The Shed Training

The Specialist Technical Officer in conjunction with the Specialist Occupational Therapist presented 16 workshops across NSW with a total of 485 participants trained. For a full brief of The Shed series of workshops please see Training, The Shed Series of Workshops, on page 37.

Quality Assurance Mechanisms in NSW

Throughout the course of 2008-2009, it became increasingly evident from applications made to the Quality Assurance Rectification Program that more jobs were being rectified due to the lack of supervision of Contractors and poor quality assurance mechanisms to reduce risk implemented by HMMS. As a result Keith Stevenson, Specialist Technical Officer, has been driving the implementation of post-modification sign-off via the Regional Technical Officers' (RTOs) network in NSW. The process of inspecting all major modifications by RTOs has seen a huge influx in RTO inspections. However, with this, there has been increased transparency and accountability of all Level 2 and 3 Budget Holders in NSW.

Continuing the process of the post-modification sign-off will ensure the following:

- OT specifications have been met;
- a high standard of workmanship has been completed; and
- quality client outcomes are achieved.

Additionally, to mentor Level 1 HMMS and impart the correct information regarding quality assurance in the HMMS industry, the inaugural Quality Assurance Workshop took place on the 30 September 2009. It is planned to run these workshops at all Regional Meetings in 2010.

For a full report on the Regional Technical Advice Fund, please refer to page 9. For a full report of the Quality Assurance Rectification Program, please refer to page 13.

Technical Advice

As a result of The Shed Training and promotion of the Quality Assurance Program, State Council has seen a steady increase in the number of HMMS/Builders and Occupational Therapists contacting the Specialist Technical Officer for technical advice and policy clarification. Numerous phone calls and emails from the industry are fielded each week regarding information required. Therefore, not only has training and resource development been a key initiative, but advice and information regarding modifications is progressively increasing also.

Mentoring

The Specialist Technical Officer has also had the opportunity to mentor many new Builders in the HMMS industry in 2009. Managers of many HMMS have contacted the STO to provide orientation for their new Builders as their time, knowledge and resources have been limited. This will be an on-going role for the STO in 2010.

THE REGIONAL TECHNICAL ADVICE FUND

Aside from capacity-building initiatives and resource development currently completed under the Quality Assurance Program, the Specialist Technical Officer (STO) in conjunction with the Regional Technical Officers (RTOs) have been driving the importance of the quality assurance mechanisms via the Regional Technical Advice Fund. The aim of quality assurance mechanisms, through tools such as post-modification sign-off and supervision of Contractors, aims to reduce risk and HMMS' exposure to liability for all major modifications completed.¹ The STO and RTOs have been working collaboratively with Level 2 and 3 Budget Holders to ensure post-modification sign-off is completed. As a result, the number of applications to the Regional Technical Advice Fund has exploded by 380% from 2005 to 2009.

There were 144 claims made to the RTO Fund for the 2008-2009 FYE with 283 individual site inspections made of HACC clients' homes. As shown in Table 1.1 and Figure 2, 89% of claims made to the RTO Fund were for post-modification sign-off of major works completed, followed by 8.13% of consultation and technical advice with HMMS. The average amount for an RTO claim in the 2008-2009 FYE was \$257.61.

Please refer to Table 1.2 and Figure 1 below for a summary of RTO Applications from 2005-2009 information.

Purpose	Number of Jobs Inspected	Percentage
Consultation and Technical Advice	23	8.13%
Inspection of Rectification Work Identified	3	1.06%
Major Modification - Post Mod Sign Off	253	89.40%
Preliminary Inspection for Level 3 Work	2	0.71%
Supervision - Level 3 Work	1	0.35%
Technical Inspection and Recommendations	1	0.35%
Totals	283	100.00%

Table 1.1. Categories of RTOs Claims from 2008-2009 FYE

RTO Applications	Quantity
2005-2006 FYE	30
2006-2007 FYE	79
2007-2008 FYE	111
2008-2009 FYE	144

Table 1.2. RTO Applications from 2005-2009

¹ \$40,145, 707.91 worth of major modifications has been completed from 2000-2009. Please refer to Page 31-34.

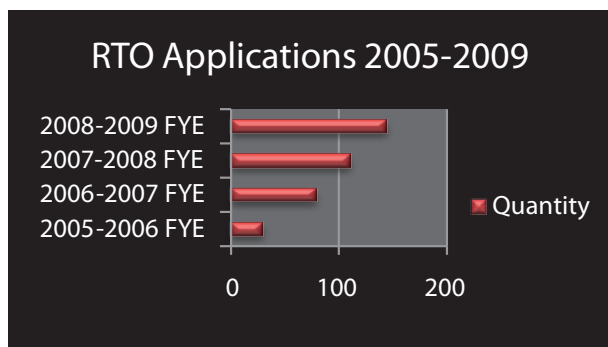


Figure 1. RTO applications from 2005-2009

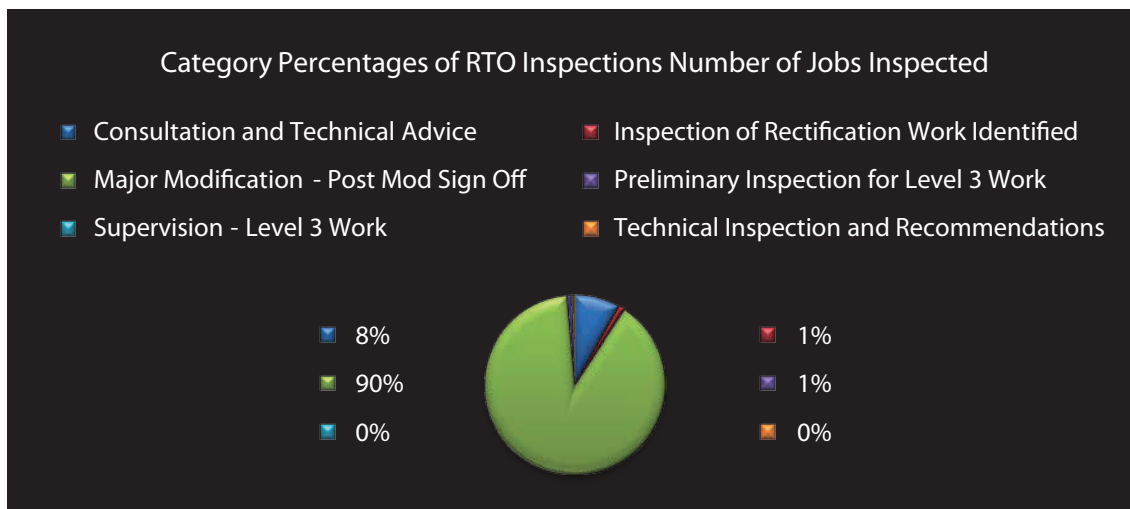


Figure 2. Categories of RTO claims

Inadequate Recurrent Funding Levels for the Regional Technical Advice Fund

As a result of the explosion of applications, the fixed term recurrent funding of \$21,212 does not adequately meet the demand for Regional Technical Officer claims/duties. As a result, non-recurrent funding from the Quality Assurance Program has been used to supplement the shortfall in funding. In the 2008-2009 FYE, the fixed term recurrent funding received only covered 23.28% of claims while non-recurrent funding met the gap of the further 76.72% of claims. (Refer to Table 1.3 and Figure 3). With an increase in the ageing population, the need for major modifications will increase and with it the demand for RTO sign-off will also increase. Therefore, it is imperative to note that, for the RTOs to perform their set duties in accordance with the NSW HACC Service Type Guidelines, Home Modification, an increase in fixed term recurrent funding is essential for the continuation of the Quality Assurance Program.

Funding Stream	Number of Applications	Net Funding Allocated	%
Fixed Term Recurrent Funding	29	\$ 16,969.60	23.28%
Non-Recurrent Funding	115	\$ 55,935.23	76.72%
Total	144	\$ 72,904.83	

Table 1.3. The amount of recurrent and non-recurrent funding allocated to RTO sign offs

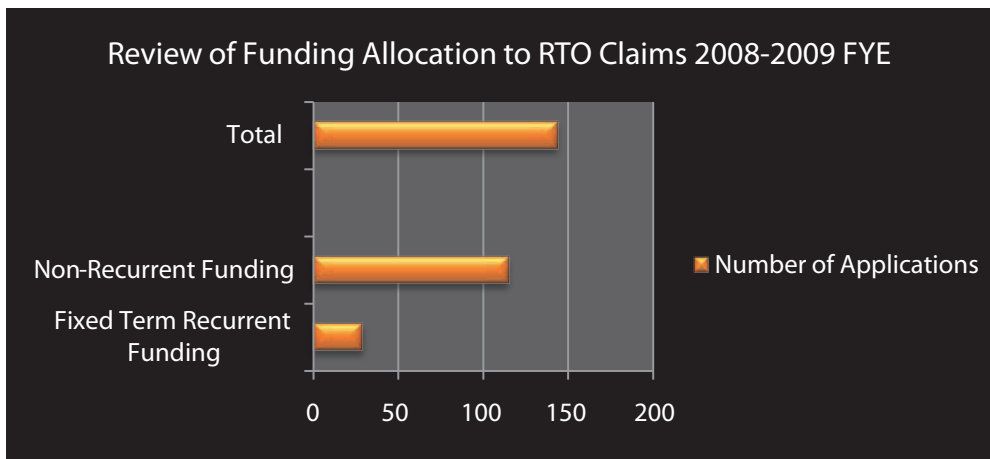


Figure 3. The amount of recurrent and non-recurrent funding allocated to RTO claims

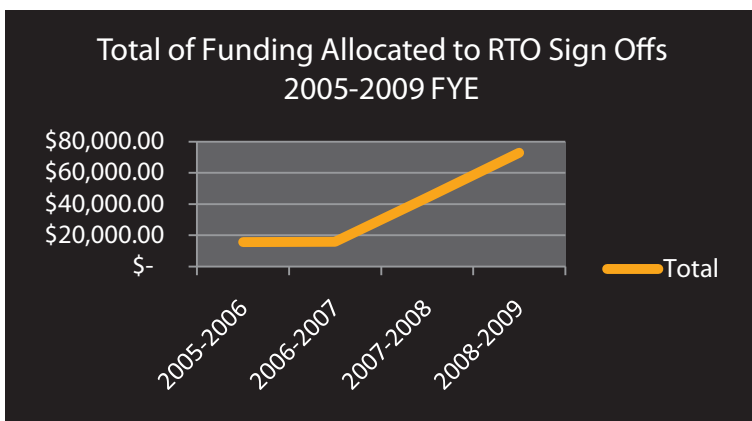


Figure 4. Total funding allocated to RTO claims from 2005-2009

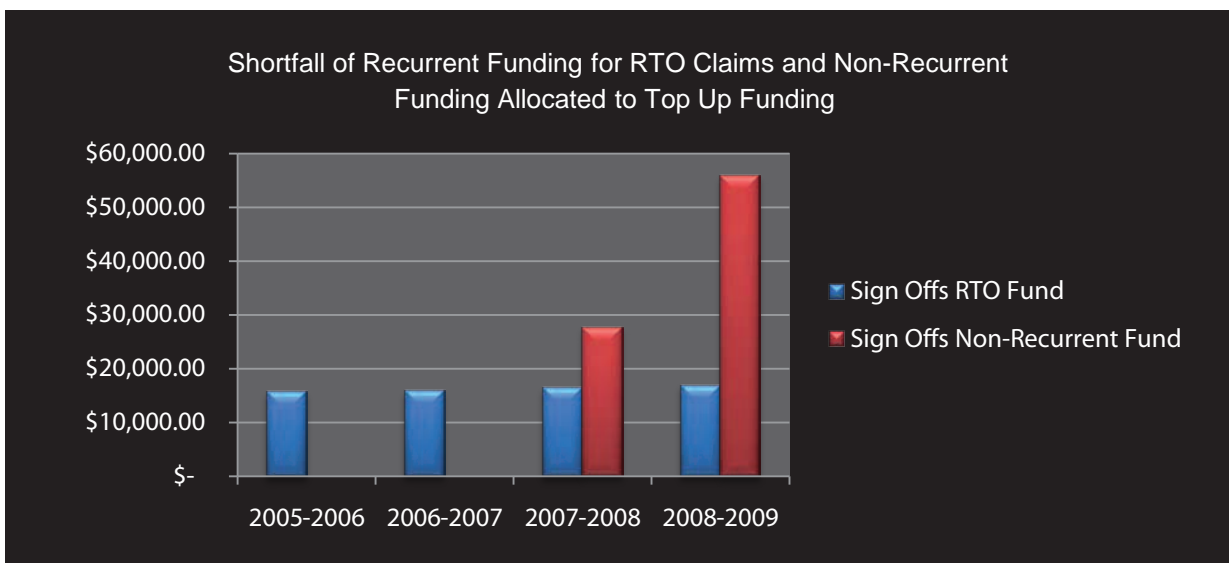


Figure 5. Shortfall of Recurrent Funding and Non-Recurrent Funding top ups for RTO Claims 2005-2009

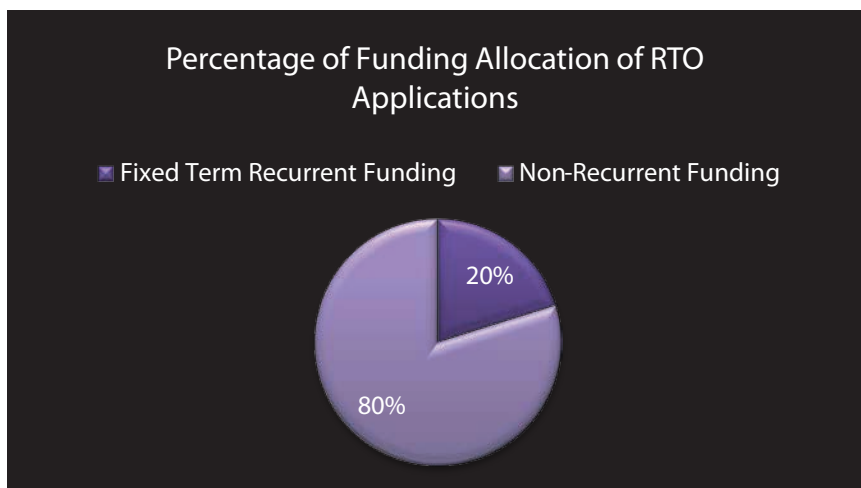


Figure 6. *Funding Allocation to RTO Claims*

Regional Technical Officers Workshops

The Regional Technical Officers meet twice a year in a formal workshop setting for the following purposes:

- to review resources developed such as the Technical Manual and Fact Sheets;
- to create Safe Systems of Work for the HMMS industry, e.g. the SSOW for Drilling into Wall Sheeting Containing Asbestos, the SSOW for Mig Welding and the SSOW for Installing Grabrails;
- sharing innovative resources created by their services/regions for distribution to the HMMS industry, e.g. visio pro templates and detailed estimates/scope of works;
- to identify and discuss technical issues from their regions;
- to review new products available to the HMMS industry;
- to review RTO and QARP Policy;
- to review and improve quality assurance mechanisms and procedures for the HMMS industry;
- network with their peers.

Whilst the RTO workshops only represent 3%² of the total amount of people trained in the 2008-2009 FYE, the flow-on affect the meetings and their decisions have in the HMMS industry can not be underestimated. The meetings are very successful forums for training, resource development, sharing of information and policy development. More importantly, consistencies in the technical aspects of service provision are formulated at these meetings which solidify the meetings as a pivotal event in the RTOs training calendar.

² Refer to Page 36 for Training Statistics

RTO Sign Off and the Quality Assurance Rectification Program

Via the mentoring of new Builders by the Specialist Technical Officer and the post-modification sign-off process completed by RTOs, extensive rectification work has been uncovered in some regions of NSW in the 2008-2009 FYE. Upon review of the applications and circumstances for each, there are a number of common themes which have emerged as follows:

- the absence of licensing;
- lack of knowledge regarding the HMMS application process by service providers;
- lack of knowledge regarding AS 1428 Suite of Standards;
- lack of supervision of Contractors engaged resulting in a poor quality of workmanship;
- Contractors engaged are sub-contracting their work out and have minimal supervision in place of their sub-contractors;
- lack of management from Senior Managers of the Project Managers employed by the HMMS;
- an absence of auditing systems and quality assurance mechanisms; and
- General Managers and Boards of auspicing organisations not being made aware of existing problems.

The implications of the rectification work uncovered have had direct policy implications for the Quality Assurance Rectification Program (QARP). The policy has now been updated to not only support HMMS but to also inform Boards of Management in the event of rectification work and advocacy on behalf of the client until disputes and rectification work has been resolved. Reflected in the updated policy is the role of the STO and RTO in the identification of rectification work. The average cost of RTO inspections for the 2008-2009 FYE was \$257.61. I believe this is a small cost to the HACC program to ensure optimum client outcomes are achieved and claims to the Quality Assurance Rectification Fund are minimised.

Finally, as a result of the rectification work identified for major modification work, the Specialist Technical Officer has increasingly become an mediator in resolving difficult, challenging and confronting disputes which have arisen between HMMS, Contractors, Occupational Therapists and clients. The Office of Fair Trading has recognised the STO's experience and his role within the HMMS industry and has determined these meetings to be arbitration meetings. If in the instance the STO cannot resolve the matter at hand, tribunal meetings with the Office of Fair Trading is the next official step.

Keith Stevenson has developed a high level of trust amongst many Builders, OTs and clients in the HMMS industry and has displayed a very professional approach towards Boards of Management, HMMS and clients. Keith has been an incredible advocate on behalf of clients ensuring the rectification work is completed to restore the safety, dignity and independence to which they are entitled. My congratulations is extended to Keith for his professionalism and excellence in this role.

Has the Quality Assurance Program in NSW been effective?

When a new program and its initiatives are introduced it is often hard to quantify its effectiveness. However the data collected from post-modification sign-off via the RTOs and major modifications completed for 2008-2009 have had some surprising results.

When the figures are regionalised and overlapped for both RTO post-modification sign-off and major modification work completed in NSW, the results show that the Quality Assurance Program is effective and working well in most regions of NSW. Of course not all figures equally match but this anomaly would be due to lag time of jobs being approved in one financial year and completed in the next financial year. There are of course two regions, Metro Southeast and Metro North, where RTO sign-off needs to be improved and the STO will focus on these areas in 2010. (Please refer to Table 1.4 and Figure7 below).

Therefore, when assessing the effectiveness of the Quality Assurance Program, I believe it has been highly successful. Not only have major works been monitored, rectification work has also been identified which may in the past have gone under the radar. The 2008-2009 FYE has seen the expansion of the program beyond my original expectations and has highlighted the importance of the need for ongoing funding and additional staffing support for this program for 2010 and beyond.

Region	Number of RTO Sign Offs Completed	Number of Level 2/3 Work Approved and Completed 2008-2009
Far North Coast	21	21
Mid North Coast	28	35
New England	7	13
Hunter and Central Coast	45	61
Central West/Orana Far West	35	30
Riverina Murray	8	14
Illawarra & Southern Highlands	59	39
Inner Sydney	28	14
Metro North	0	26
Metro North West	19	39
Metro South East	4	0
Metro South West	30	26
Totals	284	318

Table 1.4. Number of RTO Sign Offs and Major Modification Work completed in NSW 2008-2009 FYE

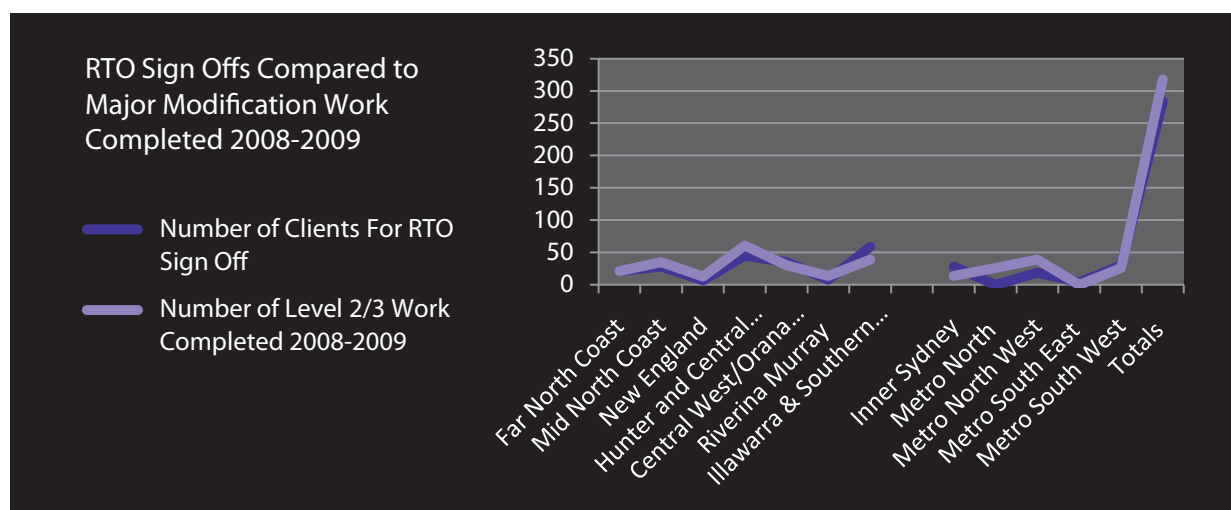


Figure 7. Number of RTO Sign Offs and Major Modification Work completed in NSW 2008-2009 FYE

The Quality Assurance Rectification Program

The Quality Assurance Rectification Program (QARP) is a fixed term recurrent stream of funding available to the HMMS industry to rectify sub-standard or inappropriate work completed by HMMS or when HMMS are unable to achieve results from due processes. The QARP acts as the HMMS industry's self-insurance program for all sub-standard work providing a framework for HMMS to comply with all legislative statutory warranty requirements as set out by the Home Building Act and Regulation.

Quality Assurance Rectification Program Statistics for 2008-2009 FYE

As noted in Table 1.5 and Figure 8, 16 applications were approved for funding in the 2008-2009 FYE with 63% of the total applications funded for bathroom rectifications, followed by 13% for access rectifications. In previous years, QARP applications have mainly involved product failure in regard to waterproofing. However, with the employment of the STO now driving the Quality Assurance Program in conjunction with the RTOs, a higher amount of rectification work has been identified via post-modification sign-off³.

Year	Number of Applications
2004-2005 FYE	15
2005-2006 FYE	19
2006-2007 FYE	5
2007-2008 FYE	18
2008-2009 FYE	16
Total	75

Table 1.5. QARP Applications 2004-2009

³ Please refer to Page 13, RTO Sign Off and the Quality Assurance Rectification Program.

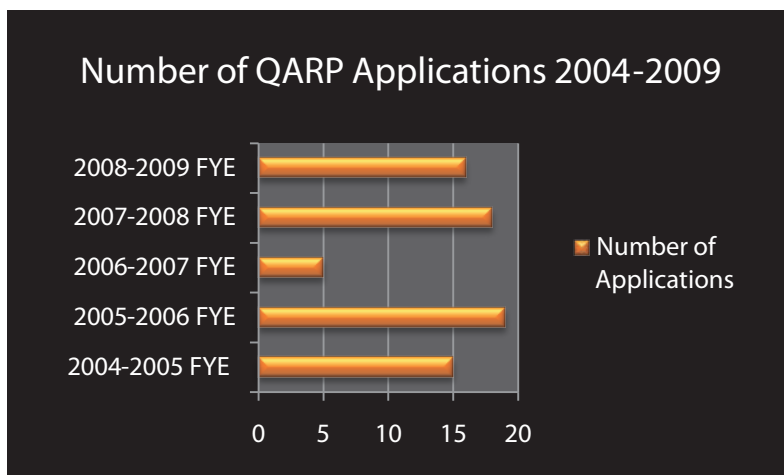


Figure 8. QARP Applications 2004-2009

Category of Rectification Work	Qty
Bathroom Rectification	10
Access Rectification	2
Access and Bathroom Rectification	1
Structural Rectification	1
Rectification of Wiring and Grabrail Installation	1
Other	1
Total	16

Table 1.6. Categories of Rectification Work for 2008-2009 FYE

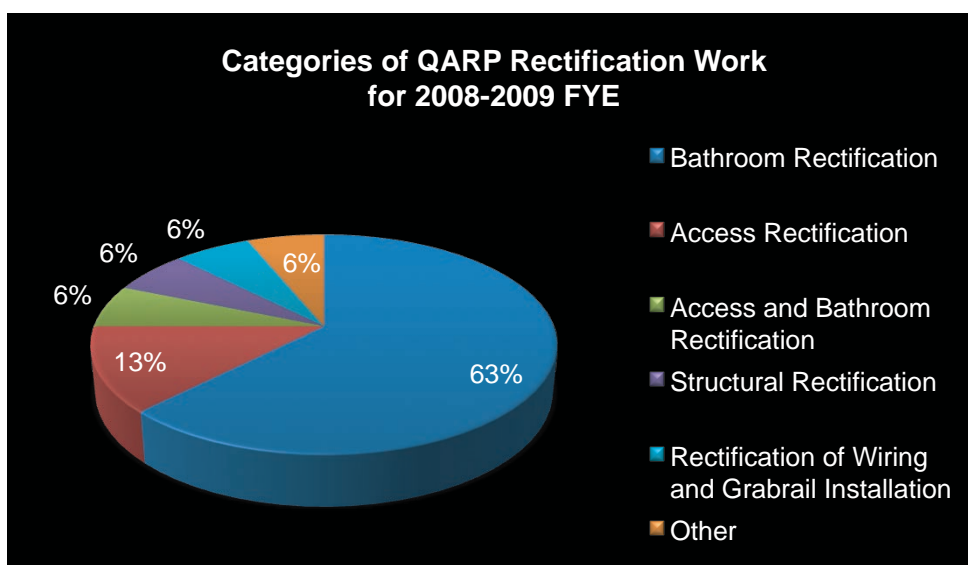


Figure 9. Categories of QARP Rectification Work 2008-2009 FYE

QARP Applications and Unlicensed HMMS

As reported in previous Executive Officers Reports, unlicensed HMMS are a particular problem for the HMMS industry and are the largest drawers of QARP funding. As noted in Table 1.8 and Figure 11, 38% of applications received in the 2008-2009 FYE were to rectify poor workmanship by unlicensed HMMS. The clear absence of technical expertise resulted in situations where no clear scope of works could be provided, Contractors were over-quoting, and a lack of supervision of Contractors resulted in poor workmanship. The largest allocation of QARP funding in the 2008-2009 FYE was to the Riverina Murray Region (Table 1.7) to rectify major works completed unlicensed HMMS, the total sum of \$37,545.46. Therefore, as the data shows, there is a direct correlation between unlicensed HMMS and their increased reliance on QARP funding. The NSW HMMS State Council cannot stress the importance of the resolution of licensing in the HMMS industry. If HMMS were adequately licensed and funded to employ Builders resulting in the building of technical expertise in their services, the drain on QARP funding would be substantially minimised.

Additionally, as noted in Figure 11, 25% of the works rectified was as a result of poor workmanship completed by HMMS in NSW. These services will be mentored and supported to ensure the quality of their works will be improved in the future.

Rectification for water damage as a result of waterproofing failure is consistently applied for each year by varying HMMS. Citing of waterproofing certificates has now become compulsory for all major modification post-modification sign-off. This may reduce the claims for QARP in the future. However, product failure cannot be controlled and it is anticipated that on-going claims to QARP for waterproofing failure can be expected in the future.

Regional Allocation of QARP Funding 2008-2009 FYE

Region	Total Net Funding Allocated
Far North Coast	\$ 2,915.00
Mid North Coast	\$ 3,602.89
Hunter	\$ 28,787.73
Central Coast	\$ -
Orana Far West	\$ -
Central West	\$ 7,536.36
Riverina Murray	\$ 37,545.46
Illawarra	\$ 4,088.64
Southern Highlands	\$ 11,354.00
Metro North	\$ -
Metro North West	\$ -
Metro South East	\$ 3,787.35
Metro South West	\$ -
Inner Sydney	\$ 13,833.50

Table 1.7. Regional Allocation of QARP Funding 2008-2009 FYE

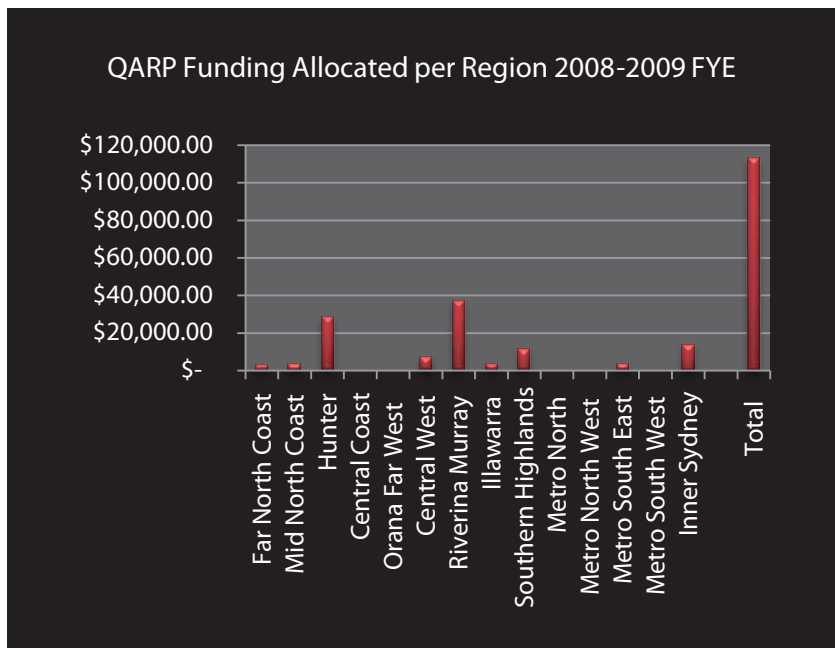


Figure 10. QARP Funding Allocated per Region 2008-2009 FYE

Problem Causing Rectification Work 2008-2009	Qty of applications
Waterproofing Failure	2
Unforeseen Circumstances	2
Poor Workmanship from HMMS	4
Product Failure not under Warranty	1
Unlicensed and Unsupervised Contractors resulting in Poor Workmanship	6
Other	1
Total	16

Table 1.8. Problem Causing Rectification Work 2008-2009 FYE

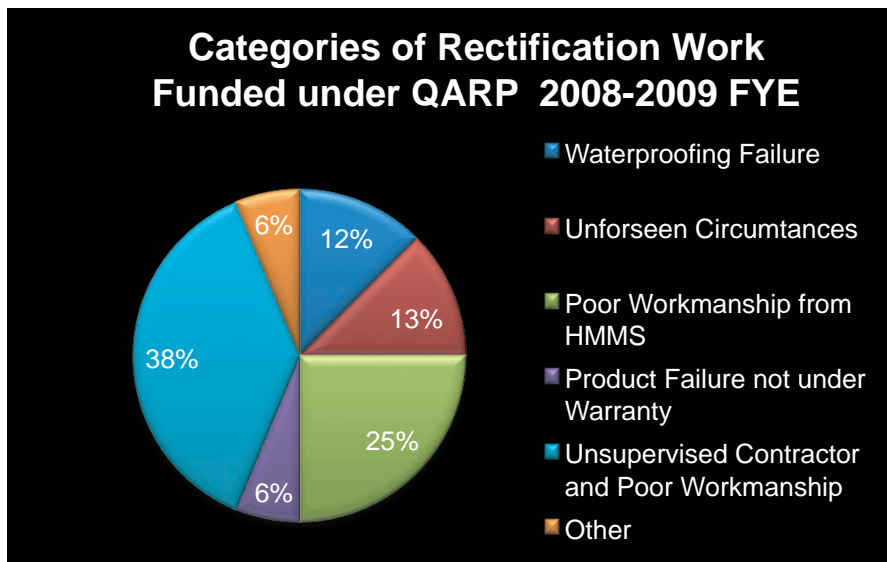


Figure 11. *Categories of Rectification Work Funded under the QARP Program 2008-2009 FYE*

Contractual Arrangements in the HMMS Industry

The Quality Assurance Rectification Program consistently highlights the need for risk management and compliance in the HMMS industry in NSW. To reduce HMMS liability and deal with the complexity of the model system in the HMMS industry in NSW (i.e. Levels 1, 2 and 3), the NSW HMMS State Council engaged DLA Phillips Fox to create a Suite of Contracts for the HMMS industry. The Suite of Contracts will aim to reduce HMMS's liability and risk when engaging external contractors who complete work for the HMMS industry. Paul Vergotis, Senior Partner, and Alicia Chryssochoides of DLA Phillips Fox presented their findings to the NSW HMMS State Council on 1 December 2009. All findings and recommendations provided by DLA Phillips Fox will be reviewed with action to be taken in 2010. The Suite of Contracts will be disseminated to the sector for use once final approval has been granted by State Council.

THE NON-RECURRENT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY BROKERAGE FUND

The Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy (NR OT) Brokerage Fund has a dual purpose; the employment of the Specialist Occupational Therapist and to broker private Occupational Therapists' assessments for clients who require home modifications.

As mentioned under the Quality Assurance Program, key issues identified by State Council's Specialist staff pertaining to OTs were:

- inconsistency in the level of knowledge about the HMMS Program by referring Occupational Therapists (OT);
- inconsistency in the quality of information received in referrals by OTs;
- limited practical training available to OTs regarding home modifications; and
- limited practical resource material available to OTs regarding home modifications.

To address the above issues, the key focus of the Specialist Occupational Therapist, Margaret Neuss, in 2008-2009 FYE has been the development and implementation of capacity building initiatives for both referring OTs and HMMS.

The capacity building initiatives developed, implemented and released in the 2008-2009 FYE are as follows:

- the development of all course materials for The Shed Series of Workshops (November - February 2009);
- the implementation of the Shed Training Series of Workshops (March-July 2009);
- the creation of an OT Reference Group for review and consultation for the development of all Fact Sheets;
- the development of the first installment Fact Sheets released in November 2009; and
- an information and advice service for referring Occupational Therapists in the HMMS industry.

The Shed Series of Workshops

The Specialist Occupational Therapist in conjunction with the Specialist Technical Officer presented 16 workshops across NSW with a total of 485 participants trained. For a full brief of The Shed series of workshops, please go to Training, The Shed Series of Workshops, page 37.

OT Resource Development

Fact Sheets

To be inclusive and to capture a broad range of knowledge from practising OT clinicians in NSW, under the leadership and direction of Specialist Occupational Therapist Margaret Neuss an OT Reference Group was formed to review and have input into State Council's Fact Sheets. Additionally, all Fact Sheets developed were reviewed by Regional Technical Officers and State Councillors. The following Fact Sheets were released in November 2009:

- Minimum Requirements for Documentation of OT Referrals to HMMS – Minor Modifications
- Minimum Requirements for Documentation of OT Referrals to HMMS – Major Modifications
- Prescribing Vanity Units
- Prescribing Hand Basins and Basins for Vanity Units
- OT Considerations when Prescribing Taps

The Specialist Occupational Therapist has also had been involved in the development of Fact Sheets under the Quality Assurance Program including:

- OT & Builder Roles
- The Building Code of Australia (BCA) and the Australian Standard AS1428 Suite of Standards
- Generic HMMS Information

Fact Sheets flagged for development in 2010 are:

- OT Written Specifications vs Scope of Works
- Water Temperature Control
- Electrical Safety in Wet Areas
- Dementia and Home Modifications
- Legal Requirements in the HMMS Industry (also available on DVD)
- Checklists; Stair Lifts; Lower Rise Platform Lifts; Residential "Vertical Lifts"

On behalf of the NSW HMMS State Council, I would like to formally acknowledge and say thank you to the members of the OT Reference Group who committed their time to review and have input into the Fact Sheets. The final product is of the highest quality and will be a component to strengthen the information available pertaining to home modification service provision in NSW.

Pro-formas

In 2010, standardised pro-formas will be created by the Specialist Occupational Therapist and OT Reference Group for implementation as referral /report writing tools for both minor and major modifications.

The aim of the pro-formas is to capture information in a consistent format with a view to improving the quality of referrals received by HMMS.

OT Manual

The NSW HMMS State Council has had such a positive response from OTs regarding the Inaugural Technical Manual developed under the Quality Assurance Program that a complimentary OT Manual will be produced in 2010.

DVD

A DVD on Prescribing Grabrails is planned for 2010 based on the practical session on grabrails presented in The Shed Workshop. The aim of this DVD is to highlight the OT assessment process including activity analysis and the simulation of functional tasks to identify individual needs and also demonstrate the use of the Australian Standard AS 1428 as a starting point for OT prescription of home modifications and how to develop recommendations based on clinical need and within the context of AS 1428 as appropriate.

Information and Advice

Due to the attendance at OT focus groups by the Specialist Occupational Therapist, Margaret Neuss, and her participation as a presenter at training initiatives in NSW, like the Specialist Technical Officer, the number of enquiries for advice and information regarding home modifications has increased substantially over the past 12 months.

Looking Ahead

As with the Specialist Technical Officer, the Specialist OTs program has expanded beyond State Council's previous expectations. All the projects and inquiries are more than one person can manage and the NSW HMMS State Council will be seeking an expansion in funding in the future for additional staff members to support the Specialist Occupational Therapist in the future.

Applications made to the Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Fund 2008-2009 FYE

As noted in Tables 1.9 and Figure 12, applications to the Non-Recurrent Occupational Therapy (NROT) Fund have remained consistent with previous financial years' allocations. The largest portion of the funding, 75% was allocated to regional and rural areas of NSW while the remaining 25% was allocated to metropolitan regions. (Refer to Table 1.10 and Figures 13 and 14).

On review of the applications received, there is a vast contrast as to why services are applying for NROT funding from regional/rural areas compared to their metropolitan counterparts. In regional/rural areas of NSW there is only very limited or no access to OTs who cover vast geographical distances to provide service whereas, in metropolitan areas, there are many OTs available in close proximity to each other. However, due to the high population of metropolitan areas, OTs have very lengthy waiting lists resulting in the delay of timely service to home modification clients.

With the limited available resources in NSW Health and the growing waiting lists for OT assessment, the need to broker private OTs cannot be underestimated. NSW Health's limited resources will find it increasingly difficult to service all HACC clients as the population ages and therefore the need for on-going NROT is pertinent and relevant to the current climate.

NROT Policy Review

During the 2008-2009 FYE, the NSW HMMS State Council actively reviewed the NROT Brokerage Funding policy to reflect the changing needs of the NROT Fund and current day requirements. The updated policy will be made available to services via the State Council's website and in policy folders distributed to HMMS in early 2010.

Year	Number of Applications
2005-2006 FYE	18
2006-2007 FYE	16
2007-2008 FYE	12
2008-2009 FYE	13
Total	59

Table 1.9. Number of Applications made to the NROT Fund 2005-2009 FYE

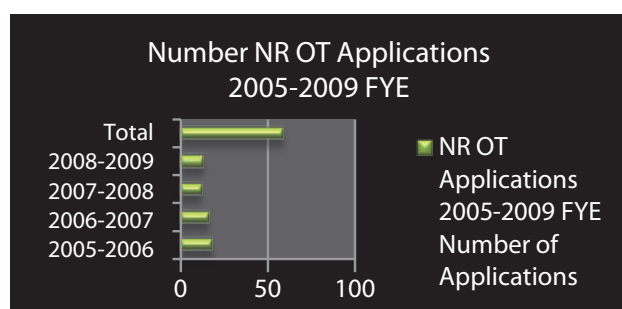


Figure 12. Number of Applications made to the NROT Fund 2005-2009 FYE

Region	NROT Funding Allocated
Illawarra & Southern Highlands	\$ 84,275.00
Metro North	\$ 69,451.10
Central West and Orana Far West	\$ 55,000.00
Hunter Region	\$ 50,893.70
Riverina Murray Region	\$ 50,000.00
Metro Southwest	\$ 8,525.00
Metro Southeast	\$ -
Inner Sydney	\$ -
New England	\$ -
Central Coast	\$ -
Far North Coast	\$ -
Mid North Coast	\$ -
Total	\$ 318,144.80

Table 1.10. Regional Allocation of NROT Funding 2008-2009 FYE

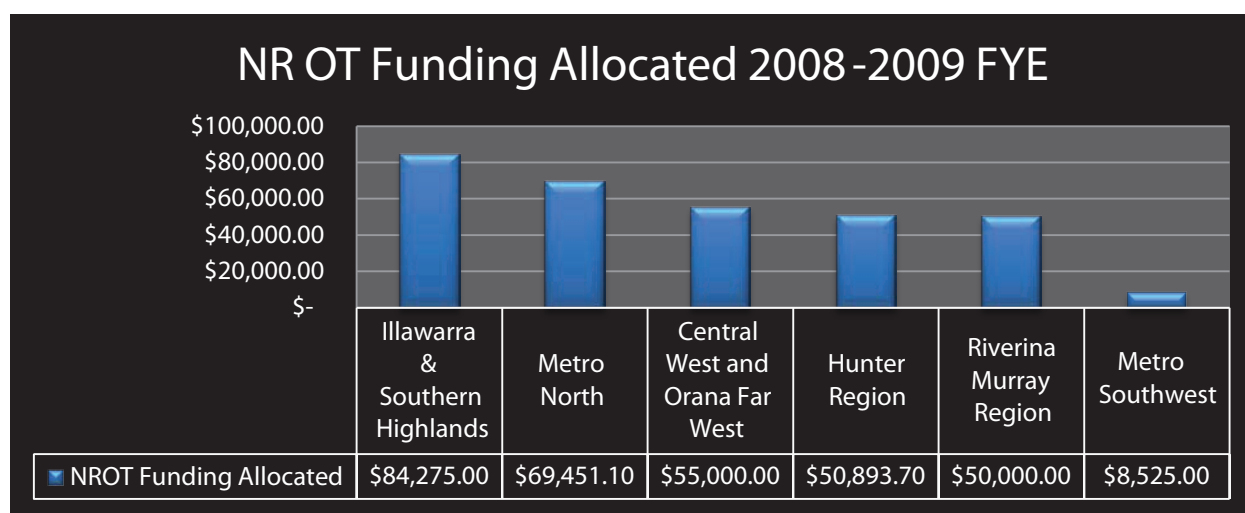


Figure 13. Regional Allocation of NROT Funding 2008-2009

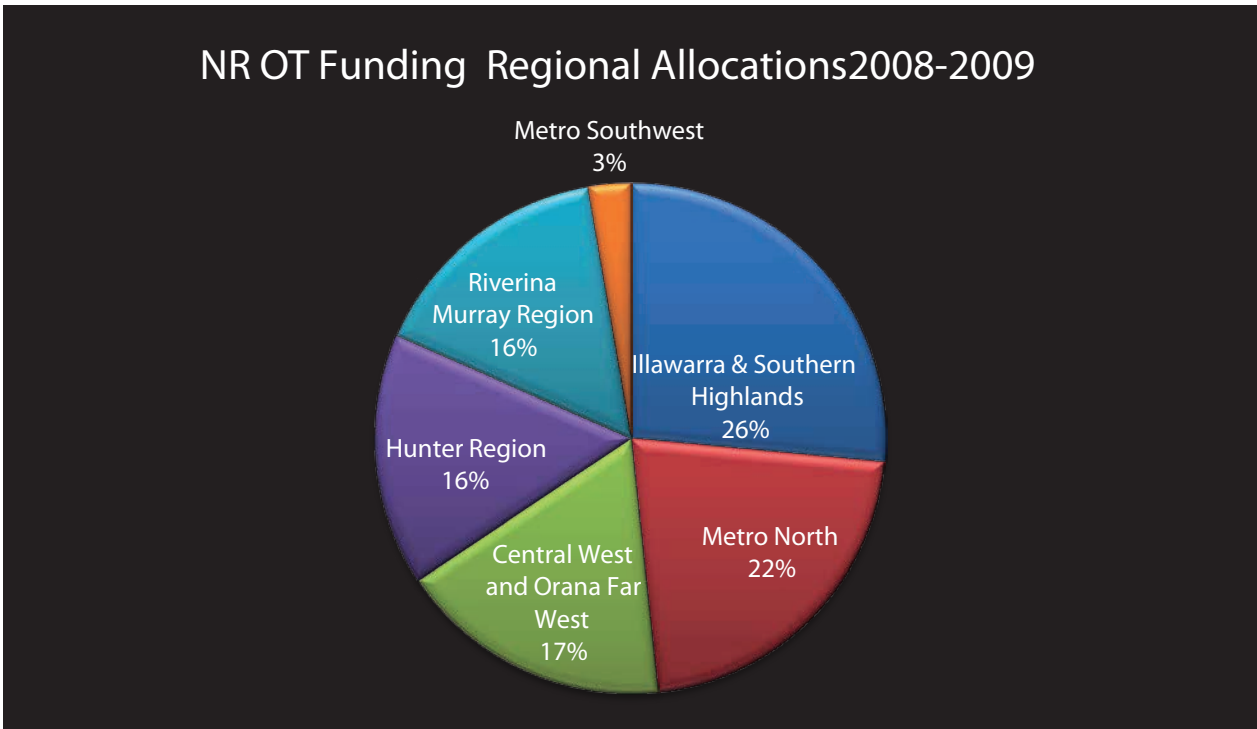


Figure 14. Regional Allocation of NROT Funding – Percentage Based

State Averages for Brokerage OT Assessment in NSW

Area	Average per Client
Regional Average	\$ 1217.02
Metro Average	\$ 593.00

As displayed in the above table, regional averages for OT assessment have been calculated at twice the average of metropolitan averages. OTs in rural and remote locations travel vast geographical distances to carry out multiple assessments for one client which in turn increases the cost of assessments exponentially. Comparatively, OTs in metropolitan Sydney cover much shorter distances thus not impacting on costs.

NON-RECURRENT RURAL AND REMOTE FUND

Due to the geographical isolation of HMMS in the Central West and Orana Far West Regions of NSW, these HMMS experience much higher operational costs and lack access to skilled, licensed and appropriately insured tradespeople compared to their metropolitan counterparts. This has resulted in high waiting lists particularly for major modifications. In 2008, State Council submitted a proposal to ADHC to consider providing a pool of non-recurrent funding for rurally remote and isolated HMMS in the Central West and Orana Far West Regions of NSW. State Council was successful and received \$600,000 in April 2009. As these HMMS experience a lack of tradespeople in their areas, the funding was allocated to the HMMS to engage tradespeople on 12 month fixed-term contracts to reduce waiting lists. Figure 15 provides an overview of allocated funding. State Council will continue to lobby for on-going non-recurrent funding for the Western Region as growth funding is minimal due to low HACC population statistics.

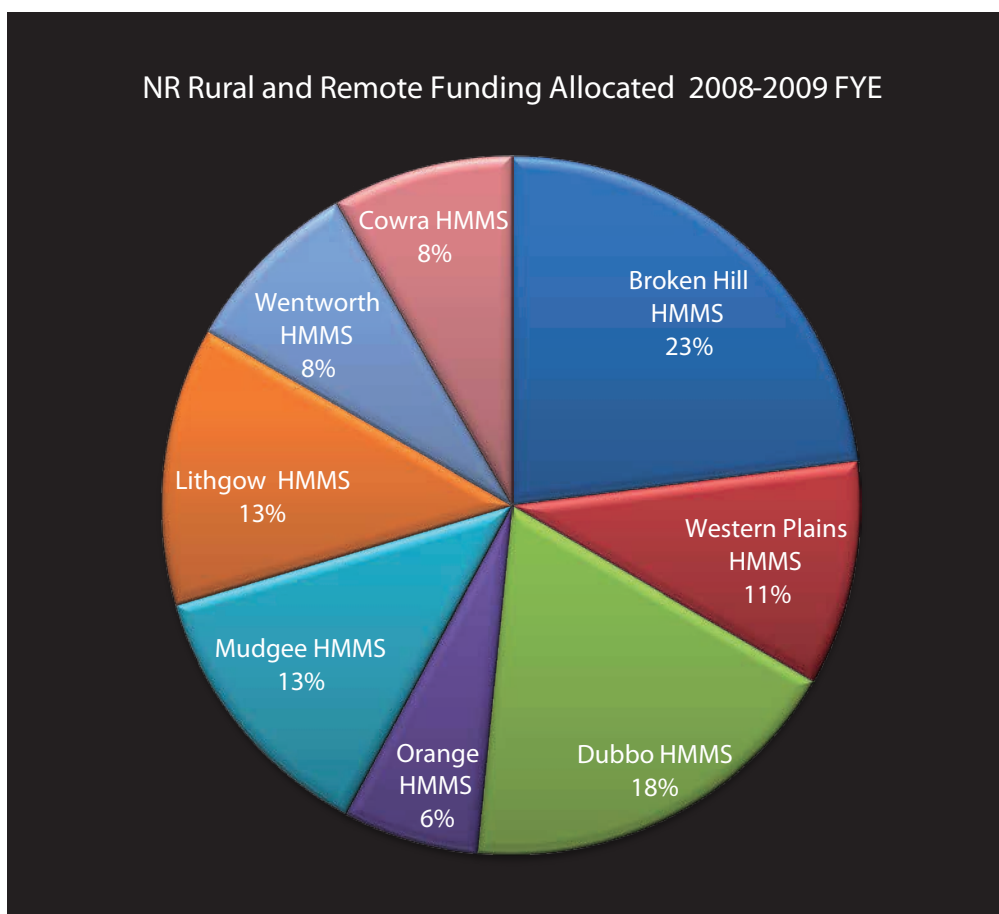


Figure 15. NR Rural and Remote Allocation for 2008-30/06/10 FYE

THE NON-RECURRENT FUND

Background Information

A pool of non-recurrent funds to reduce HMMS waiting lists has been made available to the HMMS industry since 2004. The following non-recurrent funding installments have been received from ADHC:

- \$ 2.47 million in 2004 - funding allocated to HMMS over 8 months, 2004-2005 FYE
- \$ 5 million in 2006 - funding allocated over 2.5 years, 2006-2008 FYE
- \$ 2 million in 2008 - funding allocated in 6 months, 2008-2009 FYE
- A total of \$ 9.47 million has been received from 2004-2009

Overview of Non-Recurrent Applications received in 2008-2009 FYE

Non-Recurrent Funding to reduce waiting lists received for the 2008-2009 FYE was allocated in a six month time frame once the previous allocation of \$5 million was allocated. As noted in Table 1.1 and Figure 16, a total of 418 applications were received with a total allocation of \$1,625,777.29. This installment of non-recurrent funding was allocated the fastest compared to any other allocation received since 2004. As consistently noted in previous Executive Officer's Reports, Levels 2 and 3 Budget Holders have been the largest drawer of non-recurrent funds in 2008-2009 FYE. Please refer to Page 30 for a full report on Major Modifications in NSW.

Level of Service Provision	Funding Allocated	Number of Applications Received
Level 1	\$ 143,600.86	253
Level 2	\$ 1,137,793.93	129
Level 3	\$ 344,382.50	36
Total	\$ 1,625,777.29	418

Table 1.11. Allocation of Non-Recurrent Funding to Model Levels

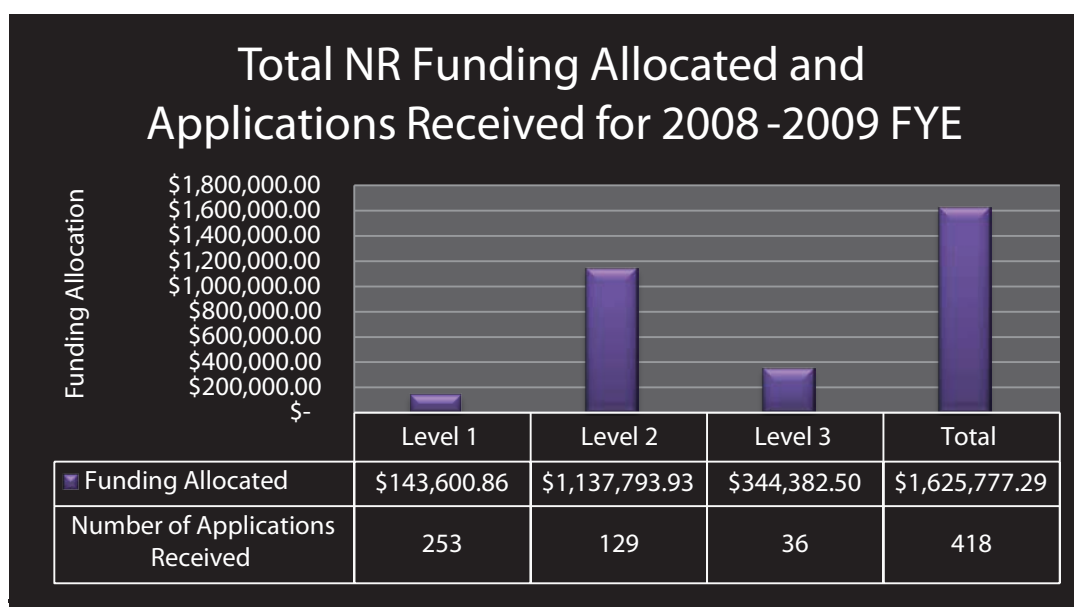


Figure 16. Allocation of Non-Recurrent Funding to Model Levels

Streamlining NR Processes and Procedures

As a result of the high level of applications and feedback received from HMMS, State Council actively changed its review process. Additionally, all of State Council's application processes will become electronic in 2010 which will enhance the process further. As noted in the Executive Officer's Report for 2007-2008 FYE, policies were developed for the Non-Recurrent Fund to complement existing HMMS Guidelines. However this year, the policies have been further enhanced to reflect industry requirements.

External Factors which have Increased the Need for Non-Recurrent Funding in the HMMS Industry

Home Modifications are costly compared to other HACC service types. The allocation of \$9.47 million dollars over a five year period is evidence of the shortfalls in recurrent funding levels experienced by HMMS in NSW.

Aside from the increase in demand for HMMS, there are a number of external factors which also contribute to the rise of costs for HMMS as follows:

- **The Impact of Commercial Contractors of HACC Work**
 - Building work completed by HMMS under the HACC Program can be costly requiring work to be completed by specialist sub-trades such as electricians, plumbers, waterproofer and tillers.
 - These specialist sub-trades engaged by HMMS are commercial contractors who charge HMMS commercial contracting rates.
 - HMMS do not recover the full cost of the sub-contracted work from the clients as their costs can be very expensive. Therefore, greater subsidies are applied when specialist sub-trades are engaged. As such, commercial contracting prices increase and lesser outputs achievable by HMMS as recurrent funding is finite.

- Additionally, as HMMS do not have adequate funding levels to employ all the tradespeople required to complete works on their waiting list, HMMS have a reliance on commercial contractors to assist with completion of the required workload. Due to the increased demand for home modifications, it is not physically possible for the existing workforce to complete all work on existing waiting lists.

- **Increases in Material Prices**

- HMMS purchase building materials at commercial industry rates. All building materials have substantially increased in price particularly the price of steel. Steel costs have increased by 60% which has greatly impacted upon the price of purchasing grabrails and the manufacturing of handrails by HMMS. Grabrail and handrail installation is the HMMS industry's core business.
- The substantial increases in material prices have impacted on the amount of outputs achievable by HMMS

- **Increased Fuel Prices**

- The increase in fuel prices has impacted greatly on HMMS as this is a non-recoverable cost when completing modification or maintenance work for HACC clients. HMMS particularly in rural and remote areas of NSW travel extensive geographical distances to provide service. In this instance the expense is deducted from operational costs within limited recurrent funding budgets resulting in fewer outputs.

- **Decrease in Client Contributions**

- HMMS have reported to the NSW HMMS State Council that there has been a decrease in client contributions due to the current economic climate. Ordinarily, client contributions received by HMMS assist in expanding service provision to other HACC clients. However, due to the decrease in client contributions received, HMMS cannot provide additional service to clients on their waiting lists.

- **Asbestos**

- Services meeting compliance costs such as asbestos removal and management has had an impact on providing service. The cost of a major bathroom modification has increased by approximately \$3,000 when asbestos has been identified and needs removal.

Discussion of Non-Recurrent Funding in the HMMS Industry

The ageing population and number of people with disabilities is increasing exponentially with only a finite amount of government funding available for the implementation of the HACC Program. Due to the high demand for HMMS coupled with the influence of commercial building contracting rates and increases in building materials, current funding levels do not meet the demand for HMMS and extensive client waiting lists exist.

In previous years as recognition of the shortfall of recurrent funding to HMMS, ADHC have allocated one-off installments of non-recurrent funding totaling \$9.47 million (2004-2009) to the NSW HMMS State Council to assist HMMS to reduce client waiting lists. All such funding received from 2004-2009 has been allocated, the largest drawer being those services who provide major modifications for HACC clients with complex needs. To date, no further non-recurrent funding has been received from DADHC for 2010 and beyond resulting in a large amount of work which cannot be funded with further client waiting lists created. The large amounts of non-recurrent funding previously made available by ADHC to State Council clearly demonstrate the recurrent funding shortfalls and the demand experienced by HMMS in NSW.

As previously stated, no further non-recurrent funding installments have been received by State Council from ADHC for 2010 and beyond and this has exacerbated client waiting lists across NSW. As such, extensive client waiting lists have become particularly problematic for service providers who fund major modifications for clients with complex needs. It must be noted that the clients' prognosis who are currently awaiting the availability of funding for major modifications are of a very complex nature. Examples of the type of conditions these clients have been diagnosed with include, Arachnoiditis, Spastic quadriplegia, T12 Paraplegia, Chronic Ischemic Demyelinating Polyneuropathy (CIPD), Right trans-tibial amputation, Hyperparathyroidism, William Syndrome, Ataxia-telangiectasia, Angelman Syndrome. These services are now fielding a high number of complaints from clients some resulting in Ministerials.

The NSW HMMS State Council does not intend to diminish the importance of the 16 other HACC service types available and acknowledges their interdependence on one another. However, State Council would like to highlight that other HACC service types rely on the work completed by HMMS. A modified home allows the client to remain living independently at home providing a care base and additionally a vehicle for care workers from other HACC service types to provide service.

For example; personal care is made possible as a result of a modified bathroom; ramps allow community transport or ambulance services to access clients' homes to assist with appointments and emergencies. Therefore, without a modified home, optimum care may not be provided or, in some cases, may become non-existent and independence, which is the driving ethos of the HACC program, may not be achieved. To date, State Council is yet to be notified by ADHC of further allocations of non-recurrent funding for 2010. More importantly, non-recurrent funding is very effective as it can be funneled to regions/HMMS most in need. As such, State Council can only continue to lobby and stress the importance of non-recurrent funds to the HMMS sector to alleviate extensive client waiting lists and to enable HMMS to continue to provide minor and major modifications for HACC clients in NSW.

Major Modifications and their Reliance on Non-Recurrent Funding Levels

Table 1.13 and Figure 17 provide a summary of the total cost of modifications completed from 2000-2009. As displayed, there has been a 35% increase in 2008-2009 FYE in the amount of major modifications completed compared to 2007-2008 FYE. As displayed in Table 1.12, the average cost of a major modification in Level 2 is \$15,078.12 and the average cost for a major modification in Level 3 is \$31,478.11.

As previously stated in this report, Level 2 and Level 3 Budget Holders are the largest drawers of non-recurrent funding and have been consistently so since 2004. The shortfall in funding over the last five years provides adequate demonstration to ADHC that their funding levels are inadequate and cannot meet current demand. With the upward pressure of increased material/contractor prices and asbestos compliance a bathroom modification has increased substantially over the last 5 year period. Level 2 and Level 3 Budget Holders' recurrent budgets have not increased adequately to meet the demand in this time to accommodate such rises and thus their dependence on non-recurrent funding is absolute.

Of notable concern is the NSW Statewide Level 3 Project which funds all work over the value of \$20,000 for clients with complex needs/diagnosis. Due to the high demand for their services, Level 3 allocated their total 2009-2010 recurrent funding at the beginning of August 2009. As funding allocation was for applications currently on their waiting list, they are now unable to fund any new applications until 1st July 2010. Currently, the NSW Statewide Level 3 Project has \$1.404 million worth of major works on their waiting lists and cannot review this waiting list until 1st July 2010 when the new funding year begins.

As a result three situations are occurring:

1. High need clients and carers in dire need of complex modifications are at serious risk of injury in their own homes as funding is not available for their modifications for some time as there is no non-recurrent funding available to reduce waiting lists.
2. High need clients are unable to return home from hospital as their home modifications cannot be funded. Prolonged hospital stays drain NSW Health's resources/budgets.
3. Clients are being prematurely institutionalised due the lack of availability of funding to complete major modifications

With the above points highlighted, State Council cannot underestimate the importance of an increase to the NSW Statewide Level 3's recurrent budget.

Sustainability of the Major Modification Program

HMMS in NSW cater very specifically to clients with complex care needs and has done so since the inception of the major modification program in 2000. Of notable concern, the program has grown by two and half fold the amount that was initially completed in 2000 and HMMS as yet have not experienced the onslaught of the baby boomers into the HACC target population.

Whilst the availability of non-recurrent funding has supplemented inadequate recurrent funding experienced by Levels 2 and 3 Budget Holders, it will not resolve the problem at hand. When looking to the future of the major modifications program, I believe it absolutely necessary and essential to review policy to ensure the sustainability of the program.

Policy considerations for the future may include:

- means testing of all clients who require major modifications to determine subsidy levels;
- capping the cost of major modifications; and
- the availability of nil or low interest loans managed by a separate entity to ensure the burden of collecting client contributions is not placed on Levels 2 and 3 Budget Holders

Clear policy direction to ensure sustainability of the major modification program is essential. Modified homes provide the care base for other HACC services to provide care and therefore I cannot underestimate the importance of sustaining a major modification program in terms of supporting HACC services and clients in NSW.

Level	Jobs Completed	Funding Allocated	Average Cost
Level 2	318	\$ 4,794,842.03	\$ 15,078.12
Level 3	75	\$ 2,360,858.55	\$ 31,478.11

Table 1.12. Averages of Major Modifications Levels 2 and 3

Year	Total cost of Major Mods provided in NSW
2000-2001	\$ 2,985,189.15
2001-2002	\$ 3,461,770.12
2002-2003	\$ 3,713,470.18
2003-2004	\$ 4,161,290.57
2004-2005	\$ 4,580,931.80
2005-2006	\$ 4,111,573.85
2006-2007	\$ 4,656,899.49
2007-2008	\$ 5,318,882.17
2008-2009	\$ 7,155,700.58

Table 1.13. Displays a 2.5 fold increase from work initially completed in 2000

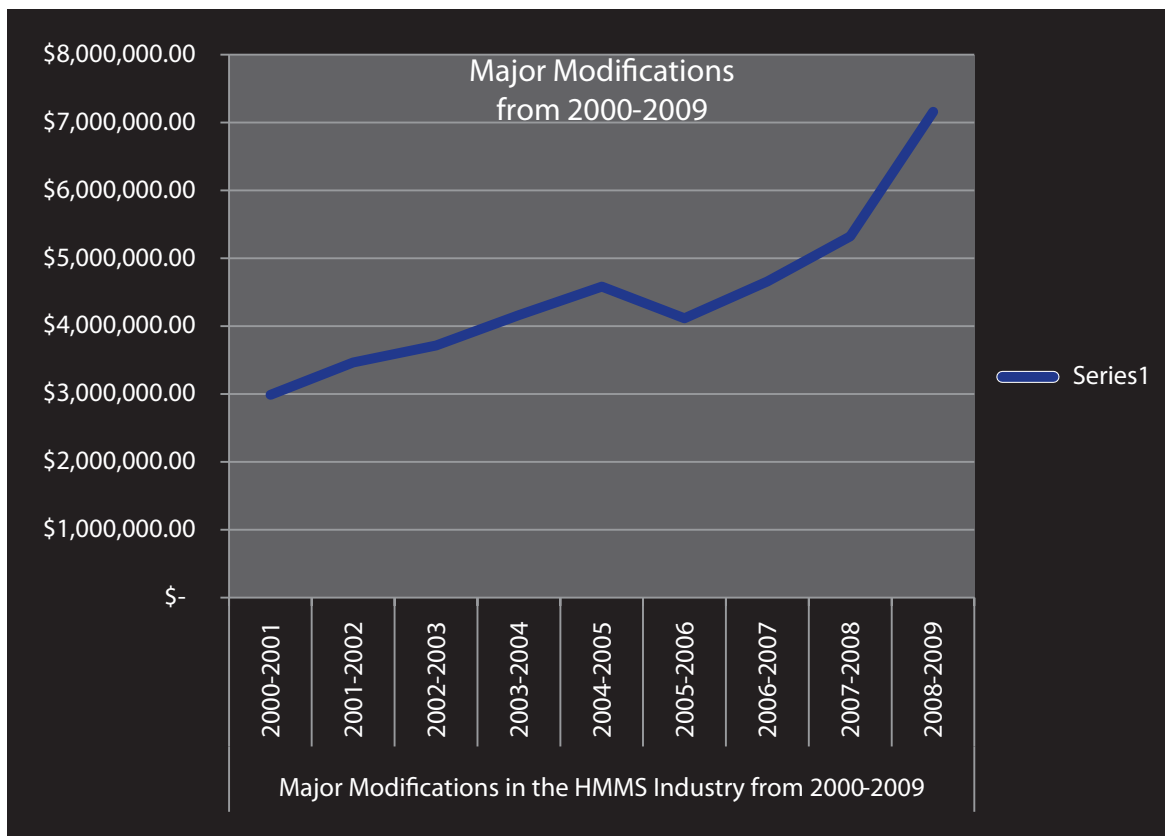


Figure 17. Increase in the cost of Major Modifications 2000-2009

Regions	Recurrent	Non Recurrent
Central West (Care West Inc)	\$ 281,335.00	\$ 118,129.33
Far North Coast (Lismore HMMS)	\$ 209,738.00	\$ 0.00
Hunter & Central Coast (Kurri Kurri HMMS)	\$ 389,367.00	\$ 329,868.60
Mid North Coast (Coffs Harbour HMMS)	\$ 257,000.00	\$ 221,070.80
New England (New England HMMS)	\$ 95,788.00	\$ 0.00
Riverina Murray (Age Concern)	\$ 320,000.00	\$ 44,359.50
Southern / Southern Highlands (Scope Access)	\$ 1,415,779.00	\$ 321,558.15
Metro North (Manly Warringah)	\$ 543,164.00	\$ 0.00
Inner West (Wesley HMMS)	\$ 181,927.00	\$ 0.00
Metro South East (St George HMMS)	\$ 346,173.00	\$ 0.00
Metro South West (Macarthur HMMS)	\$ 355,552.00	\$ 102,807.55
NSW Statewide Level 3	\$ 1,361,396.00	\$ 344,372.50
Total allocated funds 08-09	\$ 5,757,219.00	\$ 1,482,166.43

Table 1.14. Level 2 and Level 3 Budget Holders Recurrent and Non-Recurrent Funding Levels for 2008-2009 FYE

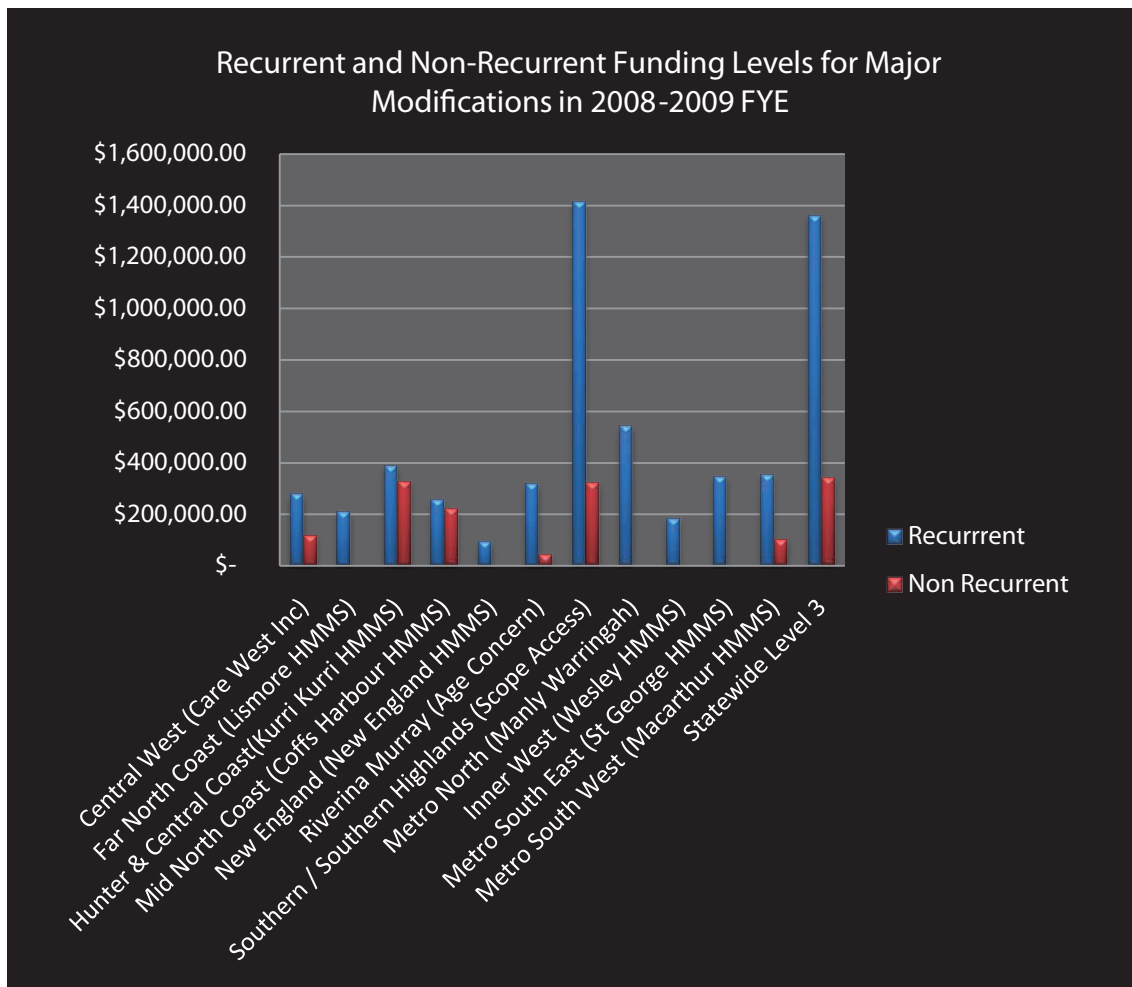


Figure 18. Level 2 and Level 3 Budget Holders Recurrent and Non-Recurrent Funding Levels for 2008-2009 FYE

The Non-Recurrent Asbestos Management Fund

The Non-Recurrent Asbestos Management Fund was made available to assist services with meeting asbestos compliance requirements. In the 2008-2009 FYE a training DVD was developed by the NSW HMMS State Council for the Safe System of Work for Drilling into Wall Sheeting Containing Asbestos. All Regional Technical Officers (RTOs) reviewed the DVD and were also deemed competent in the procedure. RTOs have since run training in their regions to ensure all tradespeople are competent in the procedure.

Additionally, WorkCover NSW encouraged State Council to enter the training DVD in its Safe Work Awards. Even though State Council was not successful in receiving an award, it was honoured to have been asked to enter such a prestigious award.

Asbestos Public Liability Insurance

In an on-going bid to reduce future litigation and asbestos related claims, the NSW HMMS State Council and CRISP Insurance have continued their partnership to ensure Asbestos Public Liability Insurance is available to the HMMS industry in NSW. A quarter of HMMS in NSW have taken the insurance to reduce risk to their organisations in the future.

Rural and Remote Regional Consultations and the HMMS Model

Encompassing the Central West, Orana Far West, Riverina Murray and Southern Highlands Regions of NSW

The NSW HMMS State Council is committed to reviewing the HMMS model and service structure in NSW to gain efficiencies in the sector and this aspect has been incorporated into State Council's Annual Service Project Plan with ADHC.

Feeding into this work and to gain a thorough understanding of the issues faced by HMMS, State Council completed Regional Consultations by visiting each HMMS in the following regions:

- Riverina Murray Region ~ November 2008-February 2009
- Southern Highlands Region* ~ November 2009

**Please note this excluded HMMS funded under Scope Access*

Each region visited during this time provided its own set of unique circumstances. However, the very broad common themes for the regions visited were as follows:

- Limited or no existence of OTS
- Inadequate funding levels
- Inability to meet compliance due to inadequate funding levels
- Inability to employ Builders due to inadequate funding levels
- Inadequate Licensing as a result of the absence of Builders
- Lack of technical expertise due to the absence of Builders
- Heavy reliance on Contractors which increases the price of modifications
- Workforce Development Issues
- Over servicing of some clients as there is no technical expertise available

Previous consultations with Orana Far West and Central West Regions were completed in April-November 2008 resulted in a separate set of issues. (Please refer to page 26 for further information).

All information collected has been collated into a formal report and will be released to ADHC and the HMMS industry in 2010. The issues experienced by each region are varied and complex and any change to model structures will have far and wide-reaching implications. It is anticipated that the Discussion Paper released regarding the findings and recommendations for future models will bring some very fervent debate regarding any change to the HMMS model in the future.

THE NSW HMMS STATE COUNCIL'S ACHIEVEMENTS FOR 2008-2009

Overview of all Training for the 2008-2009 FYE

The NSW HMMS State Council is committed to training initiatives for the HMMS industry in NSW. Training has been State Council's core business in the 2008-2009 FYE with a total of 916 people attending organised training. Targeted audiences have been staff employed by HMMS and referring Occupational Therapists with the aim of improving knowledge and strengthening service provision. The Shed Series of Workshops encompassed 53% of people trained followed by 24% at the Biennial State Conference. Please refer to Table 1.15 and Figure 19 for an overview of the amount of delegates who attended training.

Workshop	Total Number of Delegates	%
2008 Conference	268	29 %
MDS and Output Training	38	4%
Legally Speaking Workshop	100	11%
The Shed Series of Workshops	485	53%
RTO Workshop Nov 2008	25	3%
Total	916	

Table 1.15. Total quantities of delegates trained by the NSW HMMS State Council 2008-2009

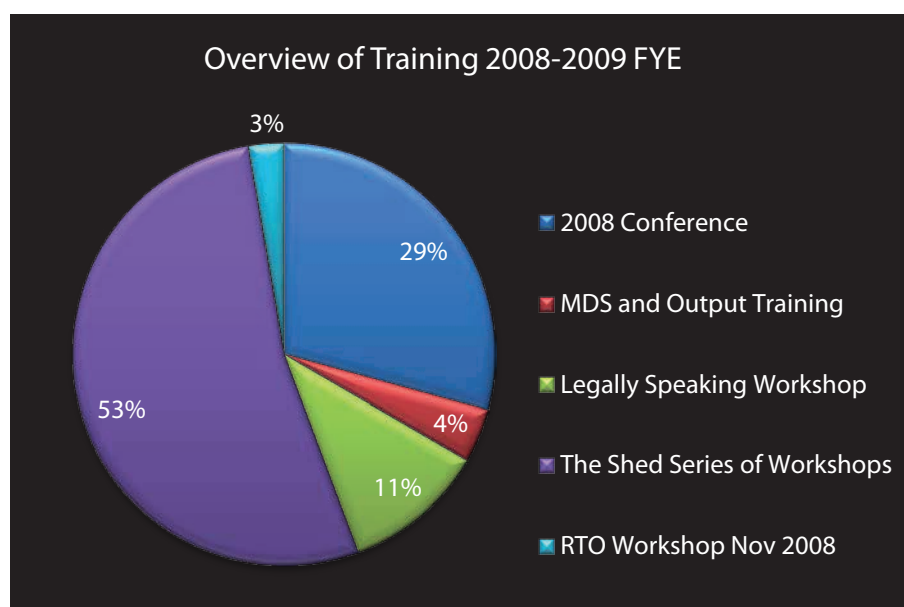


Figure 19. Total quantities of delegates trained by the NSW HMMS State Council 2008-2009

Legally Speaking ~ Your Home Modification Legal Questions Answered

Via Regional Consultations completed by the NSW HMMS State Council and from extensive feedback provided by the HMMS industry and referring Occupational Therapists, the NSW HMMS State Council ran a statewide half-day legal workshop titled “Legally Speaking ~ Your Home Modification Legal Questions Answered” on the 31st March 2009.

“Legally Speaking ~ Your Home Modification Legal Questions Answered” aimed to ensure the most appropriate and correct legal information was imparted to the HMMS industry and referring Occupational Therapists regarding the provision of environmental modifications in the home.

The workshop was presented by Tim Smyth, Health Lawyer and Paul Vergotis, Planning and Development Lawyer, DLA Phillips Fox. A high satisfaction rate of the workshop was reported in the client surveys completed by attending delegates. Notably, the workshop highlighted how pertinent legal requirements/questions are for HMMS and, as a result, Legal Fact Sheets and a Legal DVD will be created as a resource for the HMMS industry in 2010.

MDS Workshop

Following on from the MDS and Outputs Workshop at the State HMMS Conference in September 2008, many HMMS requested the training be re-run in their regions. Andrea Thomas, Service Manager of Port Stephens HMMS, provided a comprehensive workshop on the Minimum Data Set and Outputs in the HMMS industry. The workshop covered the following:

- The purpose and need for collecting data for the Minimum Data Set followed on by comprehensive examples of how to calculate reportable modification costs and maintenance and allied health hours for the MDS.
- Explanation on Outputs and Service Description Schedules for HMMS as set out by ADHC.
- The participants explored the relationship between MDS and Outputs and how ADHC uses this information for planning.

The workshops were very successful and complemented the MDS Training implemented by ADHC in 2009. The NSW HMMS State Council will continue to run the training on request by HMMS in 2010 and beyond. State Council’s sincere thanks is extended to Andrea for presenting the workshop.

THE SHED Series of Workshops

Background

The NSW HMMS State Council recognized there was a large gap in training for Occupational Therapists and HMMS in NSW regarding the HMMS Program. Whilst a high level of theory based training is available for OTs, there was no practical training available in which OTs could apply their skills. As such, the Shed Series of Workshops was developed to expand OTs/HMMS knowledge regarding the HMMS program, functional and technical aspects of environmental modifications and product knowledge. To ensure the largest proportion of delegates were captured, the workshops were based not just in metropolitan locations but in major regional centers in NSW as well. What resulted was a total of 16 workshops, and 485 delegates participating in the training.

Aims of the Workshop

The Specialist Technical Officer, the Specialist Occupational Therapist in conjunction with State Council staff allocated a considerable amount of their time, energy and financial resources towards The Shed Series of Workshops; development November 2008- February 2009, implementation March to July 2009.

The main aim of The Shed Series of Workshops was to strengthen Occupational Therapists and HMMS knowledge of the HMMS Program and information pertaining to environmental modifications. Each workshop had a theory based component however a large component of the workshop was the interactive and practical component. The practical component focused on the following:

- The application of clients' functional requirements
- Technical aspects of modifications
- Products used in the HMMS industry.

The evaluation forms completed by OTs/HMMS displayed a high level of satisfaction rate with the workshop with a belief that their knowledge had been improved.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the Shed Series of Workshops have been very positive for the NSW HMMS State Council and the HMMS industry in NSW. Outcomes achieved are as follows:

- Increased knowledge of the HMMS Program
- An understanding of technical aspects of building works
- An understanding of AS1428 and client's individual requirements
- An increased knowledge of products available
- The quality of referrals to HMMS has improved
- Promotion of the NSW HMMS State Council and the services which are provided

Additionally, an unexpected outcome of The Shed Series of Workshops has been the recognition of this training by other organisations/services both within NSW and interstate i.e. request by Housing NSW for the workshop to be presented to Housing NSW Technical Officers (Goulburn, December 2009); by the All of OT Group, ACT (representing all OTs in the ACT) with planning underway for a workshop to be held in the ACT for OTs and local builders in 2010; interest from Western Australia's Independent Living Centre.

Finally, the Shed Series of Workshops also highlighted the need to develop Fact Sheets for the HMMS Industry to compliment training and strengthen knowledge of the sector. As a result, the development of the first installment of Fact Sheets became a main project for State Council for the remainder of 2009.

Thank you

Each training session was also supported by local HMMS, local Regional Technical Officers and local OT facilitators. My sincere thanks is extended to all these people who assisted with the workshops, however in particular, I would like to extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to Paul Martin, from Hastings HMMS who assisted the Specialist Technical Officer on many occasions. Finally, a big thank you to all of my staff. We all travelled extensively during this time which meant time away from family and loved ones. Your efforts did not go unnoticed and is greatly appreciated by myself and the NSW HMMS State Council.

Looking Ahead for 2010 and Beyond

The NSW HMMS State Council has had a very positive response from the Shed Series of Workshops held in 2009. As a result, another series of workshops have been scheduled for 2010, mainly focusing on the metropolitan areas of NSW. The need for this type of training will always be necessary and ongoing as many new OT graduates and new HMMS employees will be entering the HMMS industry in NSW. The training provides an intersection of theory and practical knowledge and serves as a comprehensive orientation tool for all those entering the industry for the first time or for those who would like to update their knowledge.

Resource Development Multicultural Brochures

In addition to the Technical Manual, Fact Sheets and DVDs now available for distribution, State Council has had the HMMS Generic Brochure translated into the following languages:

Arabic	Italian	Vietnamese	Croatian	Khmer
Chinese	Macedonian	Farsi (Persian)	Dari	Maltese
German	Polish	Korean	Filipino	Portuguese
Greek	Serbian	Armenian	French	Russian
Hindi	Spanish	Bosnian	Indonesian	
Somali	Thai	Turkish	Japanese	

Review of Applications to the NSW HMMS State Council

As the NSW HMMS State Council allocates funding based on an application process from HMMS in NSW, Table 1.16 and Figure 20 provides an overview of the applications approved. As displayed, the largest proportion of applications review was for the Non-Recurrent Fund. However, this is proportional to the amount of funding received.

Fund	Number of Applications 2008-2009 FYE
NROT	13
RTO Fund	144
QARP Fund	18
NR Fund	418
Total	593

Table 1.16. Overall Number of Applications made to the NSW HMMS State Council 2008-2009 FYE

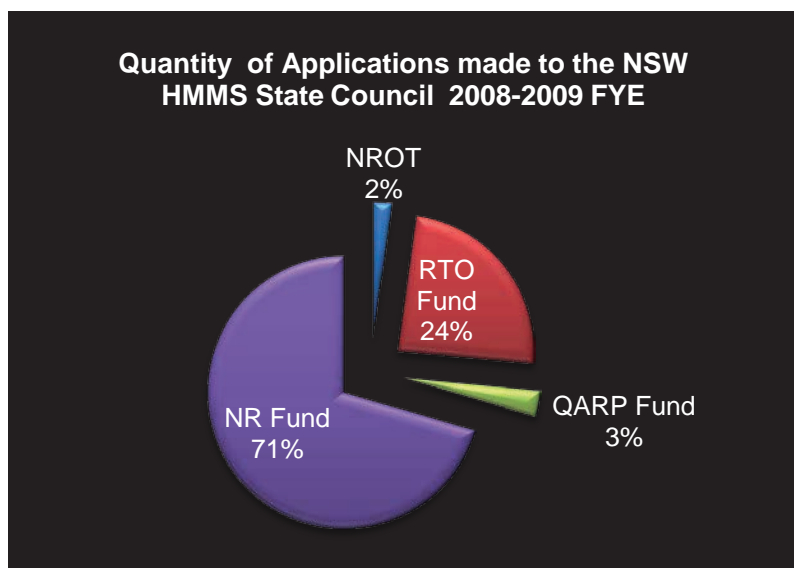


Figure 20. Overall Number of Applications made to the NSW HMMS State Council 2008-2009 FYE

Electronic Application Process

As previously stated, the NSW HMMS State Council's application process will become electronic in 2010 with a view to increasing efficiencies and timeliness of the review of applications and the allocation of funding. The project is near completion and my absolute congratulations go to the team at Weblogics and Theresa Crawford, Executive Assistant, for managing this very important, long-term and sustainable project for the NSW HMMS State Council and the HMMS industry in NSW.

NSW HMMS State Council Planning Day

State Council holds biennial planning days with each new election of State Councillors. The Planning Day took place on the 3rd of March 2009 and was facilitated by Kylie Frazer and Amanda Howard of Frazer Howard and Partners. As a result of the day's activities, State Council's vision, purpose, values, objectives and structure were reviewed and updated accordingly. Additionally, a new Strategic Plan was set for State Council for the period 2009-2012. For a copy of the NSW HMMS State Council's Strategic Plan, please refer to State Council's website www.nswhmms.org

Regional Consultations

The Executive Officer and Specialist Technical Officer have been very proactive in attending Regional Meetings and meeting with key stakeholders within the HMMS industry in 2009. Regions in which consultations have taken place to address key issues are as follows:

- Hunter and Central Coast Regions
- Metropolitan Southeast Region
- Metropolitan North Region
- Riverina Murray Region
- Southern Highlands Region

Additionally, the Specialist Occupational Therapist in 2009 has also attended many OT focus groups to keep abreast of OT issues and has also received invitations from NSW Health and the Spastic Centre to provide information and advice.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Home Modification Information Clearing House

The NSW HMMS State Council and the Home Modification Information (HMI) Clearing House finalised their Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2009. The MOU reflects and clarifies the roles of both organisations within the HMMS sector and has established clear protocols as a way forward. State Council looks forward to a collaborative working partnership with the HMI Clearing House in 2009 and beyond.

INDUSTRY INITIATIVES

ADHC Metro North, HACC Research Project, Service Models for Lawn Mowing and Garden Maintenance; Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas

The HACC Research Project, Service Models for Lawn Mowing and Garden Maintenance; Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas was initiated in 2009 by ADHC Metro North. The project was contracted to Blue Mountains Home Modifications and Maintenance Service by ADHC in June 2009 for completion in November 2009. The Project Officer appointed to the project was Kathryn Knight who worked closely with Ruth Ley from Blue Mountains HMMS.

The overall aims of the project were to:

- investigate cost effective models for lawn mowing or garden maintenance to allow people to maintain a safe outdoor environment to assist them to remain living independently in their own homes in the Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas;
- investigate options for better lawn mowing and/or garden maintenance service delivery in remote areas in the Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas; and
- investigate likely reactions of the target group of HACC clients to the new models in the Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas.

On completion of the research project, the final report prepared by Kathryn Knight presented findings of an investigation into a range of models for lawn mowing and garden maintenance service delivery in the Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas. The final report proposed models guided by the HACC principles of wellness, participation and independence of clients. Additionally, client choice as well as practicality for service providers was of main consideration.

Home Modification tends to take precedence over maintenance and lawn mowing funding/issues. However the demand for home maintenance and repetitive gardening services is increasing dramatically. Comparatively, home modification is generally a one-off episode of service provision with a view to creating client independence whereas maintenance and repetitive garden services are regular recurrent events which create a reliance on HMMS rather than independence for HACC clients. HMMS in NSW report to State Council of the high administrative burden that repetitive garden services create for a minimal recovery cost. Therefore a review of the current lawn mowing and gardening system is timely and necessary. To State Council's knowledge, minimal research has been completed on lawn mowing and gardening maintenance service models in NSW and the work undertaken by Kathryn Knight and Ruth Ley of Blue Mountains HMMS is ground-breaking and provides a fresh approach.

As the research project was completed for the Cumberland/Prospect and Nepean Local Planning Areas, State Council would be most interested in sourcing non-recurrent funding in the future to extend the project to encompass all of NSW. State Council would like to extend their congratulations to both Kathryn Knight and Ruth Ley of Blue Mountains HMMS for an informative and well researched project.

HACC Workforce Development Project

The NSW HMMS State Council was delighted that ADHC initiated the HACC Workforce Development Project in 2009. The project aims to gather and collate information on staff numbers, recruitment, retention and support of all HACC service types in NSW. Via the completion of Regional Consultations with the HMMS sector by State Council, HMMS have increasingly reported the difficulty they are experiencing in recruiting and engaging adequately experienced, skilled, licensed and appropriately insured local tradespeople. State Council anticipates the HACC Workforce Development Project will also identify this pertinent issue within the HMMS sector. The importance of workforce planning cannot be underestimated for, without an adequately skilled workforce, service to HACC clients would be seriously compromised not only in the creation of extensive waiting lists but quality of works completed could also be seriously compromised and expensive to rectify. State Council anticipates the issues identified by the HACC Workforce Development Project will ensure HMMS and other HACC Service types are adequately staffed and supported in the future.

Access Point Project

As a part of the Commonwealth Government's Strategy, A New Strategy for Community Care - The Way Forward, one of the broad aims of the reforms is to simplify access to Community Care Services in Australia. As such single Access Points in each of the States and Territories have been piloted with ADHC piloting their Access Point in the Hunter and Central Coast Regions of NSW. Andrea Thomas, Executive Officer of Port Stephens HMMS, has participated in the Access Point Project and has reported positively to State Council of the Access Point's benefits. Notably, an unmet need for maintenance and repetitive gardening services was identified by the Access Point Project and as such services received increases in funding to address the increased demand. The Access Point Project may therefore improve/enhance ADHC's planning processes by identifying unmet needs. Additionally, as clients' eligibility is being consistently assessed by trained health professionals, inappropriate referrals will decrease as a result. State Council looks forward to the final report completed by KPMG on the Pilot Access Point Projects in Australia and their recommendations for its implementation.

ADHC's Direct Allocation of Funding to HMMS during 2008-2009 FYE

In the declining absence of non-recurrent funding allocations to reduce HMMS waiting lists for 2008-2009 FYE, ADHC's Direct Allocations has had little impact for HMMS statewide with only \$140,223 allocated to increase modification budgets. Notably the largest portion, \$802,342 (80% of total funding allocated), was allocated to maintenance and repetitive gardening services with 55% of the funding (\$439,970) allocated to the Central Coast and Hunter Regions of NSW. This funding allocation to the Central Coast and Hunter Regions was a direct result of the pilot Access Point Project which identified unmet need for maintenance and repetitive gardening services and as such HMMS received an increase in funding.

Please refer to Table 1.17 opposite for a summary of direct allocations to HMMS in 2008-2009.

Region	Maintenance	Modification	Occupational Therapy
Metro North	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Metro North West	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Hunter and Central Coast	\$ 439,970.00	\$ 20,223.00	\$ -
Metro Southwest	\$ 191,000.00	\$ -	\$ 93,000.00
Inner Sydney	\$ 111,372.00	\$ 120,000.00	\$ -
Metro Southeast	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -	\$ -
Far North Coast	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Mid North Coast	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
New England	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Illawarra & Southern Highlands	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Central West and Orana Far West	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Riverina Murray	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total	\$ 802,342.00	\$ 140,223.00	\$ 93,000.00

Table 1.17. A summary of ADHC's direct allocations to HMMS in 2008-2009 FYE

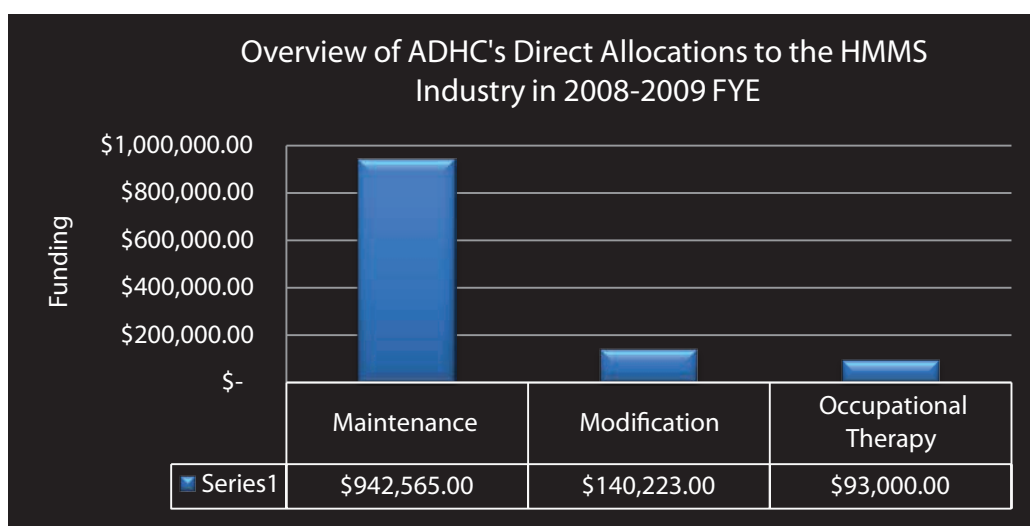


Figure 21. A summary of ADHC's direct allocations to HMMS in 2008-2009 FYE

ADHC's Tendering Process in the HMMS Sector

In June 2008, Wesley HMMS successfully tendered for an open modification and maintenance tender in the Cumberland Prospect Region of Sydney where existing HMMS Service structure was already in place. State Council addressed a number of concerns regarding this tender and they were as follows:

- ADHC's tendering allocation processes
- Duplication and inefficiencies of referral pathways and processes created by having multiple services in the same LPAs
- The inefficiencies of allocating new funding to a new provider when the existing services required additional funding to cope with the increased demand
- Panel representation for review of HMMS funding

State Council made recommendation for ADHC to review and strengthen their tendering processes in the future to incorporate the above points raised.

Closing

Lastly but most importantly, I would like to take the time to thank all of the staff who are employed in the Home Modification and Maintenance Services industry in NSW. Via State Council's training and regional consultations, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you in my travels and would like to highlight your dedication and commitment to providing quality service to those many Australians who require it. I thank you all for your feedback, co-operation and openness in addressing the issues at hand and which has contributed much to the work State Council ultimately completes. Please know that I highly value your contribution and look forward to working with you all in 2010 and beyond.