

(8) Building Up A Professionalised Management Team And Structure

During its first 20 years, CASS had gone through a bumpy road with many difficulties. Many enthusiasts had volunteered to participate in its development, making enormous contributions, giving selfless and wholehearted efforts and support. However, like the evolution of the wider society, management and operation of an organisation, including a community organisation, cannot simply rely on volunteers and operate in traditional manners, especially in view of the economic pressure placed on individuals in the modern society.

As the social structure of the general society is changing, contributions made by enthusiastic volunteers are decreasing. Though the efforts of volunteers will always be a key backbone of CASS, the daily administration and management can no longer rely on volunteers but must be undertaken by a team of employed professionals. To achieve this, as a bottom line, CASS must have economic strength, professional spirits, and a concise and efficient structure. The Society must apply modern management philosophy and principles, appropriate science and technology to aid its operation.

Meanwhile, the mainstream organisations are developing services to cover particular ethnic communities. The Chinese community has been targeted. Under the same context, as CASS is a registered organisation in Australia, it can surely legitimately expand its scope of services and activities laterally likewise to cover the mainstream and other communities. All along, the child care centres operated by CASS are open to anyone in the public. This kind of operation mode will increase the economic viability of CASS in the long run.

From 2000 onwards, a lot of efforts have been placed in the building of a professionalised management team and structure for CASS. The corporate planning process held in 2001 clearly sets the priority and direction of the Society in this regard. A wholly owned subsidiary, CASS Care Ltd was also formed to take on the role of providing services to communities beyond the Chinese community.

4 March 2001

Celebrated 20th Anniversary with the holding of an Official Ceremony at the CASS Activity Centre, about 200 invited guests attended, including the Premier, Hon. Bob Carr, Consulate-General of the People's Republic of China in Sydney, his Excellency Mr. Liao Zhihong. Senator Bin Chen representing the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, Hon. Philip Ruddock, and many other Federal and State MPs, Mayors and Councillors of local governments and leaders of key community organisations.

An Open Day event was also organized at the Campsie Head Office site, which attracted about 3,000 people.

22 July 2001

Held an important Corporate Planning Day to formulate strategies, plans and direction for CASS to guide its development and management for the next 3-4 years. It was concluded at this meeting that it would be necessary to enhance the professionalised management team and structure of CASS.

26 July 2001

Launched a relaxation skills CD and the publication of a book collecting those counselling articles from the CASS Column.

3 & 8 August 2001

Jointly organized a radiothon with SBS Radio to raise funds for the Westmead Children's Hospital. CASS volunteers helped receiving calls during a live broadcast. A total of \$18,000 was raised.

September 2001

A gambler's support group was formed and continued to meet once or twice per month until early 2005.

October 2001

Purchased the residential property at 69 Fifth Avenue, Campsie with a bank loan for future development purpose.

January 2002

An additional 13 CACP packages were granted to extend our Service to Chinese-speaking people residing in the Inner West and South East Sydney regions. Also granted 10 packages to establish a CACP Service for the Korean-speaking people residing in the same two regions, marking the commencement of CASS in providing services to the Korean community.

8 March 2002

Formation of the wholly owned subsidiary, CASS Care Ltd, on the day when CASS celebrated its 21st Anniversary. It was registered as a company limited by guarantee. From then on, services targeting the wider communities are provided through CASS Care as "CASS" is the brand name which does not imply any ethnic identity.

June to July 2002

Acquired a child care centre in Peakhurst at the end of June 2002 with a bank loan, and was named as CASS Peakhurst Child Care Centre. It commenced operation on 1 July 2002.

22 July 2002

In a special ceremony, DIMIA appointed CASS, Anglicare and Auburn Migrant Resource Centre to jointly provide settlement services to newly arrived migrants and refugees residing in the Inner West due to the closure of the Inner West Migrant Resource Centre. The appointment of CASS as a general settlement services provider by the Government signified that CASS has been regarded as a mainstream services provider. This is a pivotal breakthrough in the work of CASS.

Under the new arrangement, DIMIA provided a one-year funding for the employment of a Generalist Worker as well as a CSSS Worker to provide settlement services for people residing in the Inner West Region and Marrickville LGA, with emphasis to migrants from Thai, Indonesian, Korean and Chinese communities.

28 August 2002

In view of the increasing service scope in the Inner West, the CASS Ashfield Office was established on the first floor of 226-230 Liverpool Road, Ashfield. It was

officially opened on 28 August 2002 by the Mayor of Ashfield, Cr. Mark Bonanno. In addition, the provision of sessional settlement service commenced at the May Murray Neighbourhood Centre in Marrickville and the Canterbury-Bankstown Migrant Resource Centre in Campsie.

November 2002

Our Hurstville Environment Care Team was awarded the Hurstville City Council's Green City 2002 Environmental Award for their work in protecting the local environment.

November 2002

Made a submission to present our views regarding the "Review of Settlement Services for Migrants and Humanitarian Entrants", conducted by DIMIA. The outcomes of this Review have far-reaching impacts on the settlement services subsequently.

Late 2002

Two properties adjoining the Campsie Head Office site were purchased with bank loans. The one at 71 Fifth Avenue, is a residence which will be used for future development. The other one at 50 Sixth Avenue was to be renovated and used for administration and training purposes.

25 January 2003

As part of the work funded by the NSW Environment Trust to promote awareness in the Chinese community on environment protection, an Education Kit was launched by Ms Cherie Burton MP representing the Hon. Bob Debus, Minister for the Environment NSW. Over 2,300 free kits were distributed in the Chinese community.

January 2003

Auspiced the operation of the Pandaroo Playgroup which commenced its activities at our CASS Activity Centre in Campsie. It is specially organised to assist Australian parents in furthering their knowledge of the Chinese culture and customs while parenting their adopted child from China.

March 2003

CASS Aged Day Care (ADC), a centre-based respite care service funded by the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) under the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, commenced operation using our CASS Activity Centre in Campsie on every Monday. This service provides respite care for Chinese-speaking frail seniors residing in the Inner West region.

April & August 2003

After consultation with DIMIA, the provision of sessional settlement services in Bankstown and Burwood commenced.

With the support of the Burwood Council, two information expos were organised to promote the settlement services of CASS in Burwood and other local welfare and health services. The first event directed at the Korean community was held in April and attracted over 260 people. The second event, held in August and aimed at the Chinese-speaking community, attracted more than 350 people.

August 2003

Entrusted by the funding body DADHC to manage the Chinese Group Home (CGH) in Marrickville. It provides supported accommodation services to a group of five people with mild intellectual disabilities.

August 2003

The renovation of 50 Sixth Avenue, Campsie was completed and used for administration and training purposes.

July to September 2003

Organised the first “Cooking Competition”. The final was held as part of the charity dinner “Beautiful Food in Sydney”. Over 600 people attended and nearly \$30,000 was raised for our CGH to renovate and upgrade its existing facilities. Guests included MPs, Mayors and councillors of Local Government, departmental officers, sponsors and many leaders of community organizations. Ettason Pty Ltd was the major sponsor for this event.

September 2003

DIMIA modified the target groups of our grants to cover Chinese-speaking new migrants only. The Board resolved to discontinue the services to Thai but self-fund the Korean and Indonesian sessional settlement services and activities provided at the CASS Ashfield Centre.

November 2003

CASS Chinese School and CASS Academy of Arts jointly celebrated their 10th anniversary with two events. On 23 November 2003, CASS Academy of Arts staged a special ballet concert titled “The Nutcracker” at Kogarah High School. The event attracted an attendance of over 300 people.

On 30 November 2003, a celebration function was held at Kogarah High School with more than 400 people in attendance.

Students of our CASS Academy of Arts achieved excellent results in external examinations. All ballet students passed the Royal Academy of Dance (RAD) examination with approximately 81% receiving distinction. One of the students in the Advanced Foundation class was admitted to the RAD Certificate in Ballet Teaching Studies. The students of the keyboard classes attained a 100% pass rate in the examinations of the Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB), with over 30% attaining distinction.

December 2003

Our CASS website underwent its first upgrade and enhancement, including the design and structure. Apart from Chinese and English, relevant service information was also provided in Indonesian and Korean languages. The website continued to attract a high hit rate of over 50,000 per month.

December 2003

Purchased the residential property at 73 Fifth Avenue, Campsie with a loan for future development purposes.

December 2003

At the end of 2002, CASS conducted a fundraising campaign in the community to raise fund for bush fire victims as well as drought sufferers in regional NSW. By the end of 2003, \$10,000 was raised with \$3,000 donated to the Red Cross and \$7,000 donated to the Rural Fire Brigade.

July 2004

Established a new Burwood Chinese Activity Group jointly with the Smith Family, and an official inauguration was launched by Clr David Weiley, Mayor of Burwood Council.

September 2004

Celebrated the 10th Anniversary of our Settlement and Migrant Services receiving funding from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) to provide settlement services targeting the Chinese-speaking migrants. The number of grants from DIMIA had increased from one in 1994 to four then, and CASS also self-funded services for Korean and Indonesian migrants.

November 2004

Awarded funding under the National Community Crime Prevention Program of the Federal Attorney-General's Department to our "Chinese Community Crime Prevention Initiative". The work included supporting groups and providing counselling services to victims of crime, writing articles to the Chinese media and organising information sessions on crime prevention.

March 2005

With funding from the Wollongong City Council, an updated Community Services Directory for Chinese-speaking migrants residing in and around Wollongong was compiled and launched.

4 June 2005

Participated in the Campsie Food Festival for the first time, organised by the Canterbury City Council. Volunteers of our Seniors Groups, Activity Groups, Women's Groups, Korean Group and Indonesian Group ran four food stalls and one information stall.

1 July 2005

Commenced to operation of the Dementia Day Care (DDC), a centre-based respite care community providing activities for older people with dementia. The service received funding under the National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP) from the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA).

July 2005

Received a 2-year funding from the NSW Department of Health under the NSW Carers Program to provide information, referral, support and training for the Cantonese, Mandarin and Korean-speaking family carers of the frail aged or people with disabilities residing in the Sydney Inner West region.

July 2005

Entrusted by DADHC to manage another group home, the Dominic House (DH), located in Campsie.

July 2005

The funding to provide counselling service for problem gamblers and their families from the Casino Community Benefit Fund (CCBF) was terminated. The Board resolved to continue the services through self-funding and support from community donations.

September 2005

In partnership with the St George Division of GP, conducted the Healthy Ageing Forum on 22 September at the Marana Auditorium in Hurstville, with financial support given by the Hurstville City Council. Over 400 people attended the event.

October 2005

The Australian Chinese Charity Foundation kindly raised \$24,000 for our counselling service at their Annual Charity Dinner.

13 October 2005

Launched the project which received funding from the Cancer Institute NSW and worked in partnership with the Chinese Australian Tobacco & Health Network, running the Parents Quit Smoking Campaign, targeting the Chinese speaking population in Sydney Metropolitan area. The launch was held at the CASS Activity Centre, and was conducted by Dr. Stephen Li, Chairperson of the Australian Chinese Medical Association.

November 2005

Launched the Crime Prevention Booklet at CASS Activity Centre and was conducted by the Hon. Philip Ruddock, Attorney General, together with Senator Connie Fierravanti-Wells, representing Senator Chris Ellison, the Minister for Justice and Customs. 10,000 copies of the booklet were distributed to the Chinese communities in the whole of Australia.

November 2005

Made a submission to present our views to the “Review of the Management of Charity”, conducted by the Department of Finance.

November 2005

With funding received from the NSW Community Relations Commission (CRC), established an Activity Group in Wollongong.

November 2005

Received the Einfield Award Metropolitan (Highly Commended) of the 2005 Fair Trading Awards in recognition of our valuable contribution to raising awareness of consumer rights in the community.