



Victoria Division

Recasting the Net:

- *An Action Plan for the Victoria Division.*



Contents:

Introduction:.....	6
Victoria Leadership Team:	6
The Process:.....	7
2022 - 2023.....	4
2024.....	4
2025.....	5
Background Processes:	6
Principles of Recasting the Net:.....	7
Recasting the Net Biblical Foundation:.....	7
The Themes:	8
Guiding Principles:.....	11
New Hubs Established.	12
Corps Closed:	13
Sample Corps Leadership Models:	14
Appendix:.....	17

Introduction:

In April 2022 the Divisional Commander, Colonel Kelvin Merrett and Area Officers met for Strategic Planning Days for the Victoria Division. This was an opportunity to evaluate the Division and gain a sense of its direction and health. It was the first meeting of this kind for a few years because of COVID-19 and changes in Divisional Leadership.

From those days together, it quickly emerged that there was a need for radical change in the Division, when examining the:

- Health of our Corps
- Financial resources
- Leadership resources

This led to continuous (every month the Area Officers meet with DC) work on the Action Plan. The initial team now has the support of the Assistant Divisional Commander (ADC), appointed in June 2022, and the . Divisional Chaplaincy Manager, with the Faith Communities Development Secretary, appointed in February, 2023.

The *Recasting the Net Action Plan* is a result of teamwork. The Action Plan is a “live” process with no end date and is continually being revised and adapted. This is Version 6.

Victoria Leadership Team:

Current Area Officers:

- Major Matt Moore
- Major Fleur Hodge
- Major Darren Elkington
- Major Rebecca Inglis
- Major Karen Castley
- Major Simon Damen

Major Tim Lynn, Divisional Chaplaincy Manager

Major Mal Davies, Assistant Divisional Commander, Divisional Commander as of 1st October 2025

Colonel Kelvin Merrett, Divisional Commander.

(Major Sandra McLean, Faith Communities Development Secretary, VIC & SA/NT, is also part of the monthly Area Officer’s Strategy meetings).

The Process:

Over 40 focus groups held:

- Geelong
- Ballarat
- Shepparton
- Latrobe Valley
- Merri-bek (Western Corps)
- Eva Burrows College (Eastern Corps)
- Dandenong (Eastern Corps)
- Box Hill (DHQ Mission Support partners – over 50 present).
- Chaplains Day apart.
- Officers Days apart.
- EMC Briefing



Divisional Gathering: (Over 1,000 people attended)...



2022 - 2023

Recasting The Net Concept and themes emerge:

- February to March 2022

Regional Focus Groups around Victoria

- Late 2022

Presentation to Officers in the Division (Findings)

- March 2023

Regional Focus Groups - Round 2 (Findings)

- Early 2023

Divisional Gathering - over 1,000 present

- October 2023

2024...

Area Officers/ADC Presentation to Officers in the Division (Their Vision and Hopes)

- March 2024

Next round of *Recasting the Net* conversations with Corps in selected Regions commence

- All year

Deep Dives

- Finances
- Staffing

Learning Labs

- Servant Leadership
- Skill based

What's next...???

2025...

On going development of ministry teams and multi-site hubs

- Ongoing and new conversations.



Lifting the Profile of Discipleship.

a) Discipleship pathways to be established in all existing and new Corps and Chaplaincy Programs.

b) Division to resource and provide training for the following discipleship initiatives: ***



Promotion of Generous Giving

- Workshop on how we ensure Generous Culture is part of all three new ways of doing Church.



Ongoing Development of ministry teams and hubs

- Training of Officers and Teams in the Hub Model
- Identifying the Apostolic leaders in the Division.

***** DISCIPLESHIP INITIATIVES**

Shift M2M

OIKOS

Spiritual Life Groups

Modeling Community Tables

Children's Discipleship

Youth Discipleship

Background Processes:

The following tasks are being undertaken by the Leadership Team. These projects have commenced in 2024 and are ongoing.

Evaluations of communities with the most social needs.

- Community Needs Analysis
- Community Development Pilots

Evaluation of Mission Support Funding to Corps

- Matrix Analysis of all Corps receiving MSF

Property Priority Listing

- Unfunded Projects
- Funded Projects

Team Leadership Development/Training

- Officers Fellowship Theme
- Learning Labs
- Skill Based Training
- Team Leaders Learning Clusters
 - Alternative to ALT meetings
- Risk Assessment - Employed Corps Leaders

16 Corps Health Reviews

- Corps Identified - Viability Test cases

Ongoing Communications Plan

- DC to do video updates
- Telling the Stories

Corps Admin Support

- Where to?
- Streamlining in Division

Youth Strategy

- Regional Youth Teams (In partnership with Mission Support Department).
- Two pilots

Key Learnings new Entities Evaluations

- Underpinned by Mission and Vision of TSA
- Preparation work (selling the vision) needs to be understood
- Teams need to be staffed up from the beginning

Planned Giving

- Generous Culture to be explored and promoted

Principles of Recasting the Net:

As the Leadership Team continued to firm up the principles of *Recasting the Net*, the following themes emerged:

Recasting the Net Biblical Foundation:

From John 20:

- After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the disciples went back to what they were used to; fishing.
- They were having a bad night = not catching anything!!!
- A man from the shore yells out “*throw your net on the other side...*”
- They responded!!!
- They caught fish!!!
- They recognised it was Jesus giving them the instructions...
- They returned to the shore and had a fish BBQ breakfast. 😊
- And they engaged in conversation!

Recasting the Net is a call to do mission and ministry differently – to do something new (if it’s not working).

To engage in the conversation followed by action,

Select Verse Jn 20:31 - 21:15 NIV

in his name.”

Jesus and the Miraculous Catch of 153 Fish

21 ¹ Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples,^a by the Sea of Galilee.^{1b} It happened this way: ² Simon Peter, Thomas^c (also known as Didymus²), Nathanael^d from Cana in Galilee,^e the sons of Zebedee,^f and two other disciples were together. ³ “I’m going out to fish,” Simon Peter told them, and they said, “We’ll go with you.” So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.^g

⁴ Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus.^h

⁵ He called out to them, “**Friends, haven’t you any fish?**”

“No,” they answered.

⁶ He said, “**Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some.**” When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish.ⁱ

⁷ Then the disciple whom Jesus loved^j said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, “It is the Lord,” **he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water.** ⁸ The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards.³ ⁹ When they landed, they saw a fire^k of burning coals there with fish on it,^l and some bread.

¹⁰ Jesus said to them, “**Bring some of the fish you have just caught.**” ¹¹ So Simon Peter climbed back into the boat and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. ¹² Jesus said to them, “**Come and have breakfast.**” None of the disciples dared ask him, “Who are you?” They knew it was the Lord. ¹³ Jesus came, **took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish.**^m ¹⁴ This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciplesⁿ after he was raised from the dead.

The Themes:

The following themes have been developed:

As part of the conversations, opportunity was given for participants to respond. These responses are recorded in the tables underneath each topic.

✓ **We know what we are about...**

- Our focus is Jesus: (Our Vision Statement)
- The things that matter to us are;
- Worship that is expressed in all aspects of life:
 - the formation of people,
 - discipleship
 - and mission.

Wherever there is hardship or injustice, Salvos will live, love and fight alongside others to transform Australia, one life at a time with the love of Jesus.

What we've heard you say:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes! • This is who we are and what we are about. • We want Jesus to be the focus of all we do. • People love the idea of being released to dream. • Imagining a new way of being the church is permission giving. 	

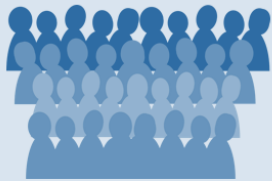


✓ **We want to release you and give you the freedom to dream again.**

- Where we can, we will endeavour to help relieve the pressure of systems, but we want you to reimagine with us a new future where the most important aspects of our work and calling are Jesus centred, not systems centred.

What we've heard you say:	However, we have also heard:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People love the idea of being released to dream • Imagining a new way of being the church is permission giving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are limited resources to dream with (time, finance and personnel). • We are often constrained by systems and models that are imposed and limit our freedom to dream. • Actions have not always backed up the words around being free to dream.

✓ **We give you permission to explore local expressions of faith and community.**

- We want you to be able to work within the strengths that you bring to ministry and the strengths of your local context.
- We want you to reimagine what it looks like to be The Salvation Army where you serve. *Some examples: Gathered Worshipping Communities, Communities of Hope and Community Tables.*

Gathered Worship	Communities of Hope	Community Tables
		
A Gathered Worshipping Community is a regular gathering that focuses on celebrating Jesus through corporate worship and preaching/teaching of the Word. It has the primary focus of worship that refreshes and equips us to be 'sent' into the community.	A Community of Hope is a regular gathering, created in response to an 'identified need' in the community. They meet to intentionally walk alongside people and meet need in a holistic way. A Community of Hope may also refer to a place: a missional <u>centre</u> of holistic connection (Corps) that is based on these same markers.	A Community Table is a regular meeting of 2-12 people who gather to have conversations about life, faith and ways to work together to serve others. They can meet in a home, at a coffee shop or anywhere!

What we've heard you say:	However, we have also heard:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We love the idea of being free to explore different expressions of worship and what it means to be the gathered community. • The three examples of community resound well – many already heading that way naturally. • Change is critical to Corps survival. 	<p>Lots of questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we move to the new? • What are others doing that is working? Can we share more stories with each other? • How do we measure/evaluate the effectiveness of different expressions? • Will this require more from the same people? • How can we collaborate and better share resources with nearby Corps? <p>And a few concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does it mean for the gathered worship space? • The need to be respectful of older generations who might struggle with change. • The struggle to connect with people in our community from different cultures.

- **"The priesthood of all believers" is something we want to reclaim.**
 - We want to explore different options for leadership and to reimagine what it is to be an officer in Australia today.
 - We want to give priority to training and raising leaders in the division.

What we've heard you say:	However, we have also heard:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Priesthood of all believers equalizes and empowers people to be Jesus in their community. • It changes the view of the officer as the only one qualified to share their story with others or to disciple people. • Acknowledgement that serving others enables a greater sense of connection. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about future leadership and where this is going to come from. • There is a need to rethink the officer model and its conditions. • The challenge of encouraging lay participation against the demands of modern leadership. • Compliance associated with onboarding acts as a deterrent to utilizing people in our corps. • People are not buying into the traditional discipleship pathways; Junior Soldiers, Corps Cadets, Senior Soldiers etc

We are serious about evaluating where The Salvation Army in Victoria needs to be.

- We will be working through a process to make decisions about where we need to be investing resources and where we may need to divest resources. LaTrobe Valley and Mitchell Shire provide examples.

What we've heard you say:	However, we have also heard:
<i>This question not presented at the Focus Groups!</i>	

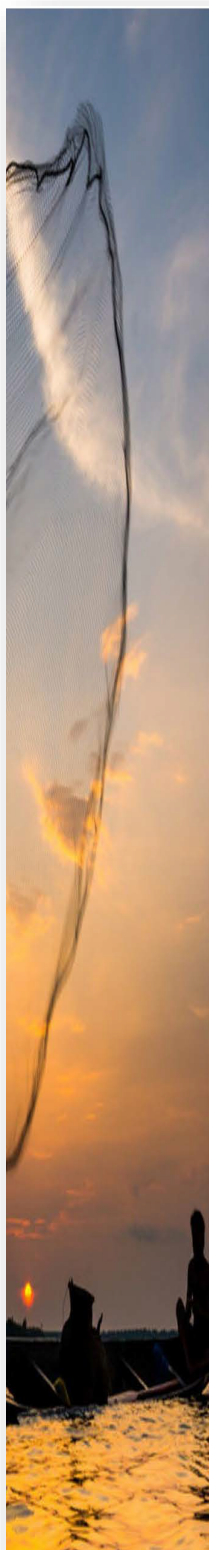
✓ God is seen when we are one.

- There is room for people with different views in TSA.
- We can live in unity with our differences.
- We are in this together.

What we've heard you say:	However, we have also heard:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is room for difference in TSA • We are making progress towards a more inclusive TSA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is currently not seen because we are not one – there is disagreement and disunity. • Concern that it is not always safe to think differently, and that there really isn't room for different views. • Places for conversation and teaching is important in this space. • How do we genuinely live this out? How can it be more than words? • We don't have a good history of living with difference and remaining united. • Concern that TSA is compromising and siding with the world. • Concern that TSA is not moving quickly enough to become more inclusive.

Guiding Principles:

After a review of the feedback, the following guiding principles were established and presented back to the Focus Groups. (8 groups around Victoria).



Recasting the Net – Guiding Principles – Version 5

Jesus Centred:

The priority for our work will be the Kingdom of God as revealed through the life and teachings of Jesus and to follow His example of making disciples"

Development of varied expressions of Corps:

- Gathered Worshipping Communities, Communities of Hope, and Community Tables will be valid expressions.
- The ongoing viability of mission expressions will be determined by the missional outcomes.

Team Ministry:

- Wherever possible, Officers, leaders of Corps and Chaplains will be part of a team who work together to deliver the mission.
- Teamwork will allow greater potential for people to work within their areas of passion and strength, aligned to the four mission intentions.

Leader Development:

- There will be opportunities for leaders to expand their experience through working in teams and multi-site expressions.
- A set percentage of resource savings will be committed to leader development.

Contextual Mission:

Our work is connected to the identified needs of the community we serve in.

Resource Savings:

We will consolidate mission and ministry activity, freeing personnel, buildings, and funding for innovative approaches.

Co-location:

Wherever possible, Salvation Army Services will be co-located in one centre to enhance the opportunities for collaboration.

Use of buildings:

- Where there is more than one building available for the use of a team, each building will have a distinct focus or function.
- Any new property development will include revenue generating options.

Funding:

- Funds will be released to support new initiatives.
- Funds will be released in line with mission and vision priorities.
- Ongoing funding of mission expressions will be reviewed according to missional outcomes.

January 2025

New Hubs Established.

The following new Hubs have been established in the Division:

Corps	New Multi-Site Hubs
Echuca-Moama Corps Rochester Corps Kyabram Corps	Campaspe Salvos
Berwick Corps Cranbourne Corps Pakenham Corps	Casey-Cardinia Salvos
Maryborough Corps Eaglehawk Corps Bendigo Corps Castlemaine Corps	Central Vic Salvos
Frankston North Corps Hasting Corps	Frankston North/Hastings Salvos
Delacombe Corps Ballarat Corps	Greater Ballarat Salvos
Ararat Corps Stawell Corps	Greater Grampians Salvos
Morwell Corps Traralgon Corps Moe Corps	Latrobe Valley Salvos
Merri-bek Corps Brunswick Corps Moone Valley Recovery Church	Merri-Bek City Salvos
Broadford Corps Seymour Corps Wallan – New Expressions	Mitchell Shire Salvos
Leongatha Corps Wonthaggi Corps	South Coast Gippsland Salvos
Mildura Corps Red Cliffs Corps	Sunraysia Salvos
Brimbank Corps Sunbury Corps Sunshine Corps Melton – new expression	Westside Melbourne Salvos
Farsi Faith Fellowship Greensborough Corps Preston Corps	North-East Melbourne Salvos
Mornington Corps Hastings Corps Rosebud Corps	Mornington Bayside Salvos

36 Corps

to

14 Hubs

Corps Closed:

The following Corps have been formally closed:

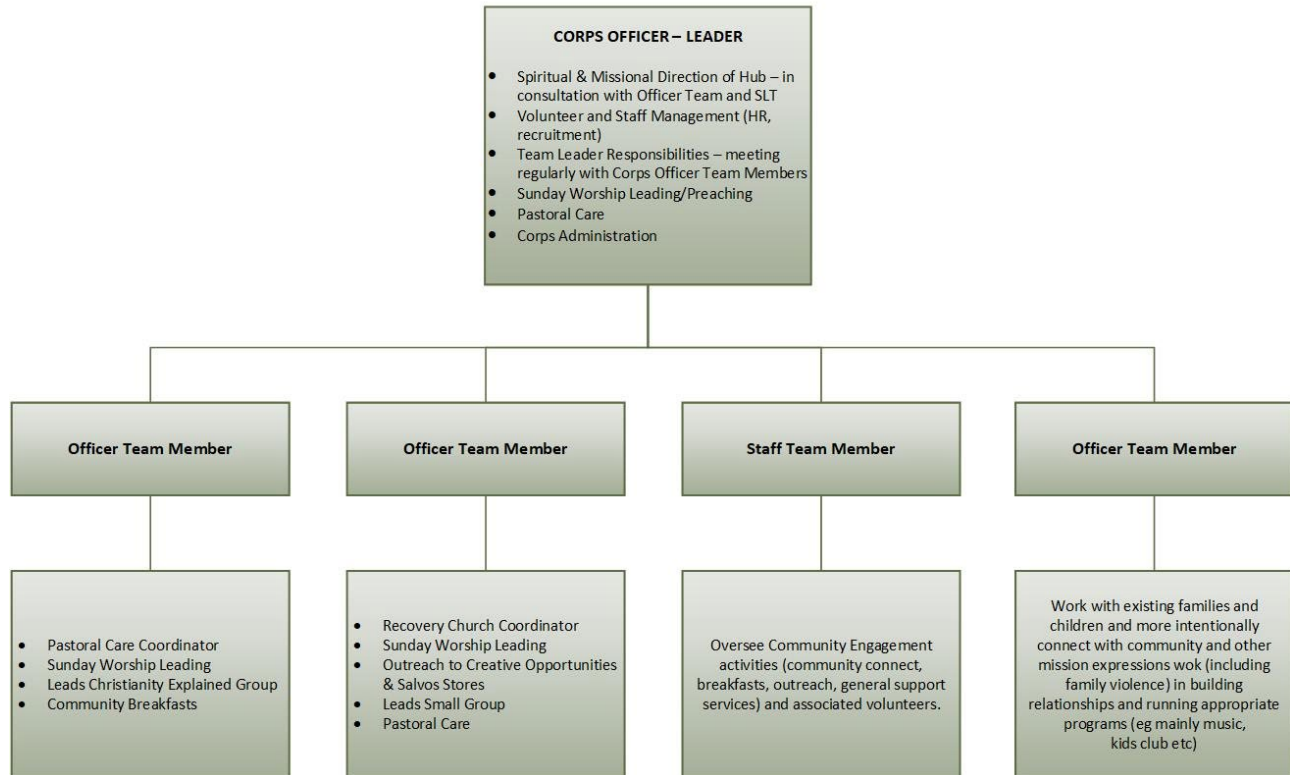
Corps	Comments:
Moonee Valley Corps	No longer financially viable. Recovery church relocated to Merri-bek City Corps. 2 Officers appointed to Corps redeployed. Building asset to be sold for future property needs.
Kaniva Corps	No longer financially viable. 1 Officer- appointed to Corps redeployed. Building asset to be "sold" for future property needs.
Springvale Chinese Corps	No longer financially viable. Congregation relocated to Waverley. Building asset to be sold for future property needs.
Surrey Hills Chinese Corps	No longer financially viable. Lack of leadership Congregation relocating to Waverley and/or Box Hill. Building asset to be sold for future property needs.
Inala Corps (Chapel)	No longer financially viable. "Congregation" now has weekly service led from Box Hill Corps. No building assets. Now operating as an Outpost of Box Hill Corps.
Bentleigh Corps	No longer financially viable. New "Community Table" established locally. 1 Officer- appointed to Corps redeployed. Now an Outpost of Camberwell Site to be repurposed for Youth Housing and new Community Space.

Sample Corps Leadership Models:

Each will be unique – but will embrace the concept of teams.

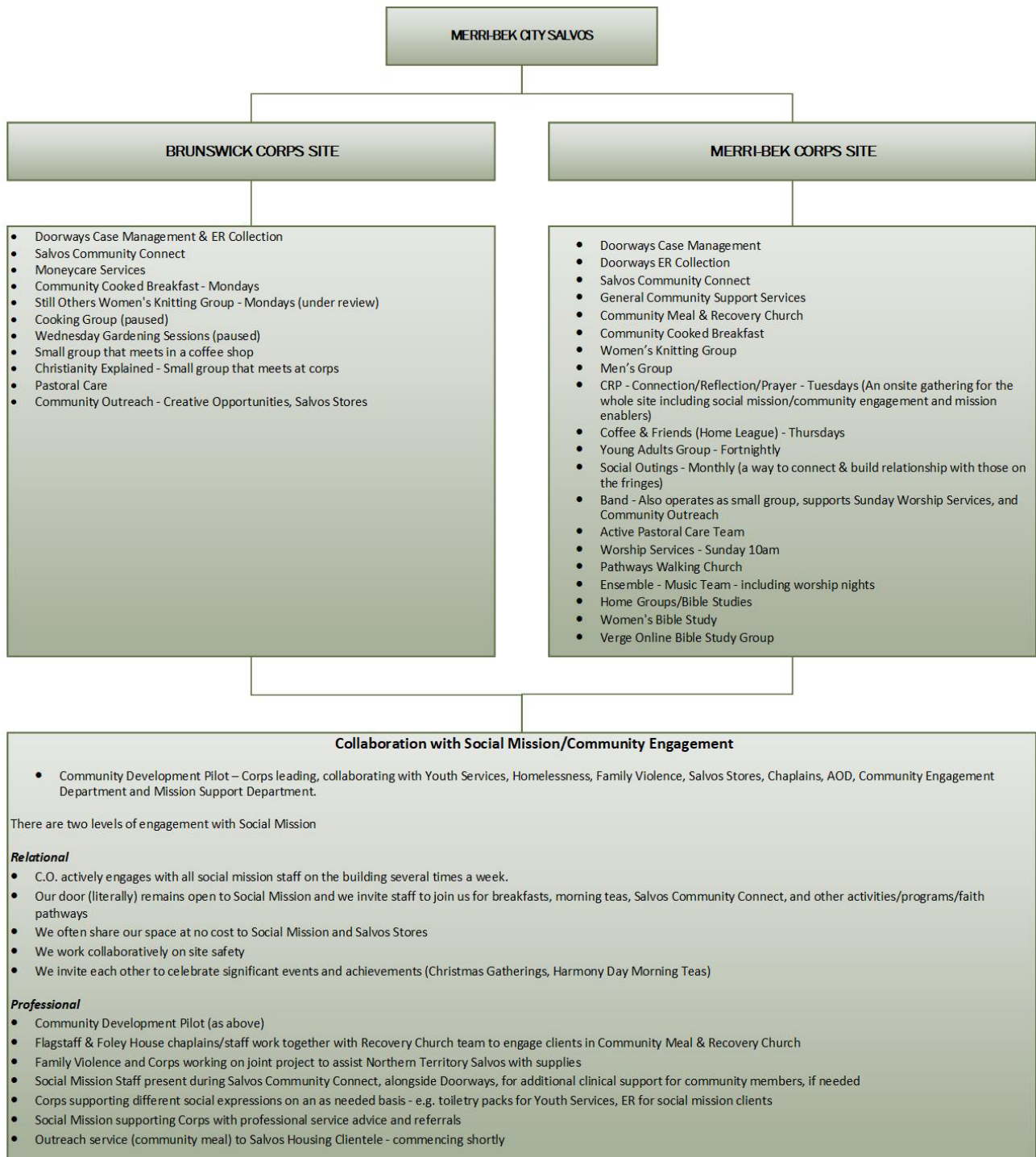
Merri-bek City Salvos – Leadership Structure

January, 2024

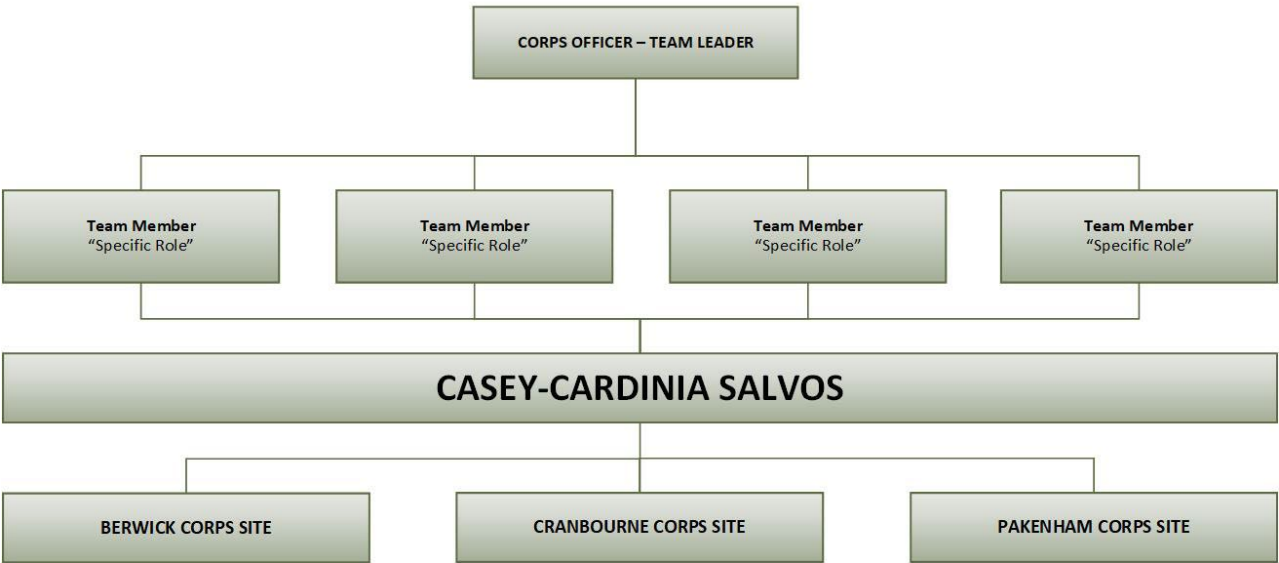


Merri-bek City Salvos – Mission Activities

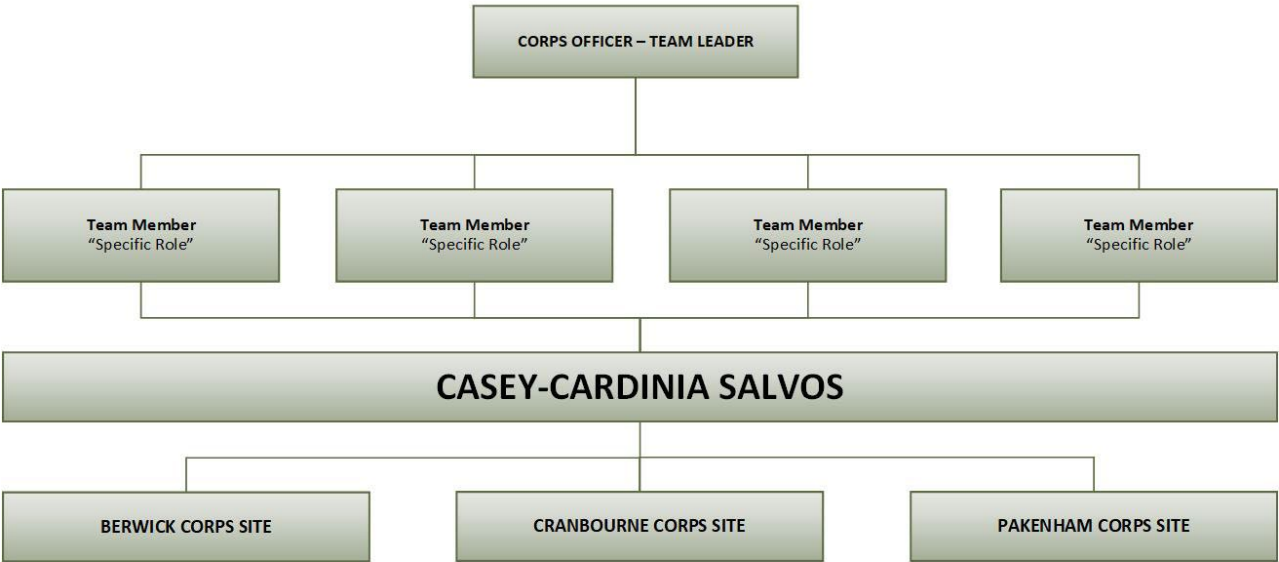
January, 2024



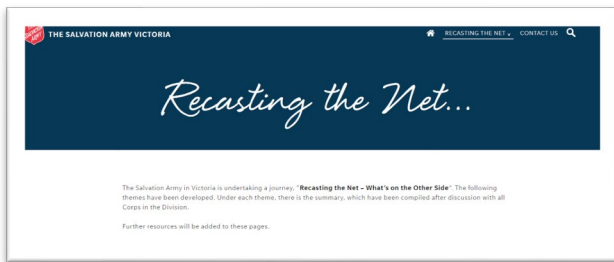
Casey-Cardinia Salvos – Leadership Structure
June, 2024



Casey-Cardinia Salvos – Leadership Structure
June, 2024



Appendix:



Web Page:

“Recasting the Net”. Themes:

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/victoria/recasting-the-net/>



Main document:

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/victoria/recasting-the-net/recasting-the-net-action-plan/>



YouTube videos:

(Divisional Gathering, 1,000 plus people attended)

Search on YouTube “Recasting the Net – The Salvation Army” or

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.au/victoria/recasting-the-net/recordings-of-the-divisional-gathering-sessions/>

[https://salvosau.sharepoint.com/sites/xfg0021-divisionalleaders/shared documents/divisional leaders/strategy/recasting the net/2025/recasting the net - action plan v 7.docx](https://salvosau.sharepoint.com/sites/xfg0021-divisionalleaders/shared%20documents/divisional%20leaders/strategy/recasting%20the%20net/2025/recasting%20the%20net%20-%20action%20plan%20v%207.docx)