

**CHAIRMANS REPORT FOR 23/34 FOR MILLICENT COMMUNITY ACCESS RADIO INC**  
**MEETING HELD, 5<sup>TH</sup> OF SEPTEMBER 2024**  
**ST. ALPHONSUS HALL, MILLICENT.**

A very warm welcome to you tonight and thank you for attending our first Annual General Meeting, it is with immense pride that I deliver my first report as chairman.

As we gather to reflect on our journey over the past year, I am reminded of the humble beginnings that marked the inception of our little community radio station.

When we first gathered in this very hall some 18 months ago and dreamt of this station rising out of the ashes of its former self, our resources were minimal, and our budget was nonexistent. But what we lacked in financial backing, we made up for with passion, dedication, and the unwavering support of our community. Our dream was to create a platform that would give a voice to local stories and content, amplify community voices, highlight local music and musicians, and foster a sense of unity among us all.

In those early days, every step forward was a challenge. We started with a substandard studio, relying on donated equipment and the generosity of a few key sponsors. These sponsors believed in our vision, even when the path ahead seemed uncertain. Their support was not just financial but also symbolic of the trust and commitment that would become the future foundation of our success.

We reached out to local businesses, service clubs, organisations, and individuals who shared our passion for community and local media. Their contributions were the lifeline that allowed us to keep our vision alive. From small financial donations to in-kind support for equipment and technical support, every bit of help played a crucial role in our journey.

Our initial broadcasts were modest, but they were filled with heart. Our volunteers, driven by a shared mission, worked tirelessly to bring quality content to our listeners. Their dedication, coupled with the support of our sponsors, enabled us to grow slowly but steadily. We faced obstacles in those first few months, yes, but we also experienced countless moments of triumph that made every challenge worth it.

As we reflect on our past year, it is clear to us that our station has evolved far beyond what we could have ever dreamt of in those early days. We have expanded our local programming to 24 hours a day, undertaken over 50 on-air interviews and conversations, 36 Saturday night live concerts, we have reached more listeners right across the globe and built a stronger, more vibrant community around us through our on-air content and our social media pages. None of this would have been possible without the foundations laid by those early sponsors and supporters who believed in us when our resources were limited.

Tonight, as we look ahead to what the future brings, we continue to rely on the same spirit of community and collaboration that brought us this far. Our journey is a testament to what can be achieved when people come together with a shared purpose and a belief in each other.

To our volunteers, you are the heartbeat of our radio station. Your dedication and passion for the station have not only kept us on the air but has made us stronger and more connected to our community. Whether you have been behind the microphone, handling administrative duties, or supporting us in countless other ways, your contributions have been invaluable. It is through your tireless efforts, enthusiasm, and commitment that turn our vision into reality. Your selflessness and hard work are what make our programming rich, diverse, and truly special.

Thank you for the countless hours you have devoted, for your unwavering support, and for being the driving force that helps us deliver quality content to our listeners. We are deeply grateful for your time, your energy, and your passion.

To our sponsors, your customers are our listeners, and your unwavering support is the cornerstone of our on-air operations. Your belief in our station and your financial contributions make it possible for us to continue offering exceptional programming, investing in new projects and equipment, and reaching out to our community in more meaningful ways. Your commitment to supporting local community radio helps us to amplify voices, share stories, and foster connections that enrich our community, and we trust that your businesses benefit from this exposure as well.

We are incredibly fortunate to have partners like you who understand the value of community radio and the impact it can have on our community. Your sponsorship not only sustains our station but also helps us to grow and innovate, ensuring that we remain a vibrant and essential part of our community.

As we move forward, we are excited about the future and the new opportunities that lie ahead. We are committed to continuing to provide quality programming and to furthering the positive impact we have on our listeners and our community. With your continued support and feedback, we are confident that the best is yet to come.

To our listening audience, when we first embarked on this adventure, our vision was simple but profound, to create a space where community voices could be heard, and stories could be shared. From the very beginning, it was clear that our success would depend on more than just equipment and funding, it would depend on the connection we built with you, our listeners.

Your support has been the bedrock of our growth and the inspiration behind every broadcast. You have tuned in, engaged with our content, and become a vital part of our community. Your feedback, your stories, and your enthusiasm have not only guided our programming but have also given us the motivation to strive for excellence every day.

To our regular listeners who have been with us since the beginning, thank you for your loyalty and for making our station a part of your daily lives. Your consistent presence has been a constant reminder

of why we do what we do. And to those who have joined us more recently, welcome to the family. We are thrilled to have you with us, and we look forward to continuing to earn your trust and support.

In the past year, we have navigated both challenges and triumphs. Whether it was tackling technical issues, staffing challenges, overcoming financial constraints, retiring debt, or exploring new programming ideas, knowing that we had your support made all the difference. Your active participation in our events, your sharing of our social media posts, and your support during fundraising efforts have been truly invaluable.

Tonight, as we reflect on our journey, we celebrate not just the milestones we have achieved but also the incredible community that has made it all possible. Our station is more than just a transmitter of information and music, it is a living, breathing entity that thrives because of the vibrant and engaged community that surrounds it.

We are committed to continuing our mission of bringing you content that is relevant, engaging, and reflective of the diverse voices within our community. As we look ahead, we are excited about the new opportunities and innovations on the horizon, and we are grateful to have you by our side as we embark on this next chapter.

Thank you for being the heart and soul of our station. Your support is our greatest reward, and we are honored to serve such a passionate and dedicated audience.

To my fellow Board members, since you were elected to your positions, some 12 months ago, you have been the guiding force, providing not only strategic direction but also an unwavering support to me. Your dedication, wisdom, and commitment have been crucial in shaping our vision, overcoming challenges, and achieving our objectives.

When we started this journey, the path ahead was filled with uncertainties, there was even a very real risk that we could have been personally liable for the mountain of debt the previous Board and management incurred, but it was your belief in what we were trying to achieve and your willingness to roll up your sleeves and get involved that made all the difference. You have offered your time, expertise, and resources, often going above and beyond to ensure that our little radio station could thrive.

Your roles have been diverse and demanding, whether it was navigating complex and sometimes emotive decisions, ensuring the stations financial stability, undertaking major fundraising activities, or fostering relationships with key stakeholders. Each of you has contributed in unique ways, and together, we have formed a solid foundation upon which our station continues to build.

I am particularly grateful for your ability to balance strategic oversight with a genuine passion for our cause. Your insights and guidance have not only helped us navigate through challenges but have also inspired us to aim higher and dream bigger.

Tonight, as we celebrate our achievements and reflect on the past year, it is important to recognise that these successes are, in no small part, a result of your hard work and dedication. Your support has been instrumental in helping us reach where we are today, and I thank you for what you have collectively achieved.

Finally, we look forward to the 24/25 financial year with great excitement as we continue to grow our listening audience through more diverse program content, increase our on-air presenter numbers to provide more local content until at least 9 PM each night, increase our station sponsors and improve our infrastructure. This year we hope to have a backup battery installed on site so we can continue to provide a broadcast service when the power goes out which will assist our emergency capability, and we also hope to purchase some additional IT equipment to allow us to undertake outside broadcasts for special events such as the MSE football games in our listening area and ANZAC day marches or just broadcast from our sponsors businesses, all very exciting stuff.

I now dedicate this annual report and financial statements to your perusal and here's to many more years of shared stories, great music, community engagement, and mutual growth. Thank you for being a crucial part of our stations journey.

David Walshaw  
Board Chairman  
28-08-24