

**BI-ANNUAL REVIEW & NEWS**

# ACIRT22

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**FEBRUARY 2022**



THE NO.1  
REDUNDANCY  
SAFETY NET

## Meet the Board



**Peter Glover**  
(Chair) (MBA – NSW)



**Rita Mallia**  
(ACTU)



**Chris Melham**  
(CCF – National)



**Callum McKay**  
(MP and MCA – NSW)



**Jim Wilson**  
(AWU)



**Matt Gissane**  
(MBA – NSW)



**Frank O'Grady**  
(CFMEU)



**Lindsay Le Compte**  
(AIG)



**Brian Seidler**  
(MBA – NSW)



**Jim Barrett**  
(AIG)



**Steve McCarney**  
(PTEU)



**Glenn Thompson**  
(AMWU)



**Peter Genovese**  
(CFMEU)



**Michael Hiscox**  
(CFMEU)

## Financial summary 2022

### THE YEAR SO FAR

Total Assets	\$719,536,583
Total Liabilities	\$2,292,010
Number of Members	92,095
Number of Employers	1,926
Number of Claims Paid	7,380
Total Member Account Balances	\$632,540,334
Total Value of Funeral Benefits Paid	\$39,000
Total Value of Investments	\$728,523,382

As at 30 November 2021.

Half of the Board is appointed by union organisations while the other half is appointed by employer organisations. Any decision has to be supported by three quarters of the Board.



# DAVE'S HAPPY DAYS

## FUN THE FOUNDATION FOR NEW ACIRT COORDINATOR

**Dave McNamara**, new ACIRT Co-ordinator

Dave McNamara followed his scaffolder father into construction at 15. He started at the bottom with no qualifications, yet remembers being surrounded by characters and enjoying work so much he'd come home at night asking himself, 'Do I get paid to do this? How much fun!'

Worksites were filled with banter and social gatherings after knock-off were common. No-one was referred to by their real name, and finding your boots nailed to the floor or your nail bag stapled to the wall (probably with your chisel siliconed into its pouch) was shrugged off as just another day on the tools.

Progress took time – not least because the training was so thorough. 'You can always pick somebody who worked for a major company back then – Civil and Civic, Leightons, John Holland – because they've been taught properly. People might laugh, but you even got taught how to use the broom and shovel properly, you got taught how to clean.'

Starting out as the 'peggy', Dave would collect 60–70 'smokos' and lunches from the local shop, clean the toilets and sweep up the site. 'You didn't stuff anyone's order up or you

got chased out of the shed. But you did get a free feed – you'd pinch a few chips on the way back!'

**'People might laugh, but you even got taught how to use the broom and shovel properly, you got taught how to clean.'**

### Peace of mind

Now, after 35 years in materials handling driving hoists, forklifts and tower cranes, he's using the skills he picked up as a company Delegate to help lighten ACIRT Southern Region Coordinator Ben Manna's load. Having been a founding member of ACIRT when it was launched in 1987, Dave knows how vital the fund is for workers' security and peace of mind.

'The scheme is fantastic, and it's quite unique. The union movement have fought to have it incorporated in their EBA, and I know how important it is for workers to have something to fall back on.'

Dave is a keen bike rider who loves being at home in the Blue Mountains. Yet he's excited by the prospect of being on the road for ACIRT, not least because it's already put him back in touch with many familiar faces who've crossed his path over a long construction journey.

'I love seeing the members, it's great getting on a site. It's fantastic that I've already been able to reacquaint with guys I haven't seen for 20 years, it ignites some old memories of great fun.'

# STEEL-FIXING

## THE PERFECT FIT FOR TIARNEE

**Tiarnee Franks, Steel-fixer**

Tiarnee Franks has worked in a car dealership that sold everything from other people's cast-offs to flash new European models. She's worked in disability and for the Police Citizens Youth Club, and been a stay-at-home mum for her four daughters.

Finding her way into construction, via an Aboriginal employment agency and a Tafe course that taught her the fundamentals, has been her own personal game-changer.

'Because I'm such an active person, to feel better I need to feel active and physically fit. It challenges me mentally and physically – it's new to me, so I'm learning something pretty much every day. Construction is ideal for me, it's worked out really well.'

Going down to the work site in the hoist on her first day will stay with her forever, emotions swirling, nervous yet excited. She knows it's stereotyped as a 'male industry', but as Tiarnee uses a jackhammer, drill or grinder, carries and ties steel and combines being a steel-fixer and

labourer, she feels supported, valued and right at home.

### Respectful workplace

'I didn't know what I was going to come up against, but they've all been so good. They've taught me a lot, they're very respectful. All the boys lend a hand if I need it, they come and help.'

**'It's a weight lifted off the shoulders, to know we've got something to fall back on if we end up in a rut.'**

Tiarnee knew of ACIRT before she started in the industry, through construction-worker friends and family who are members, and she welcomes the backstop of having financial help at the ready should the work on a project dry up before the next job comes along.

'It's a weight lifted off the shoulders, to know we've got something to fall back on if we end up in a rut.'

Having four girls aged seven to 17 is all the more reason to cherish that safety net. She describes them as tomboys who like to get up to the local oval to kick a ball around, but whether they'll follow their mother's lead when it comes to work might be a matter of each to their own.





'The 15-year-old, I might get her into it in the future, she's like me. My older daughter just looks at me and shakes her head. But they're proud of mummy. Who knows, maybe we'll bring a few more girls into the industry one day.'



# ACIRT HEALTH CHECK

Make it your new year's resolution to do an ACIRT Health Check.

Making sure that your ACIRT payments are being made, that your details are correct and that we have your dependents details, means you can make a claim quicker and easier if you find yourself out of work. Do yourself a favour and take five minutes to do an ACIRT Health Check today.

 <p>Is your employer making the payments? Check your pay slip to make sure you're getting the right amount. If you are not sure, check your EBA or ask your delegate.</p>	 <p>Does ACIRT have your correct details? Have you moved or changed bank details? Do we have the right email address? If we can't find you, we can't pay you.</p>	 <p>Do we have your bank account details? ACIRT pays a distribution in November every year. If we have your bank account, you'll get paid instantly via EFT.</p>	 <p>Do we have your beneficiaries details? In case something should happen to you, your ACIRT money goes to your beneficiaries. Do we have their details?</p>
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Do your ACIRT Health Check today.  
Either log in into your account at **[www.acirt.com.au](http://www.acirt.com.au)** or call **1800 060 467**.

## ACIRT.COM.AU IS NOW EASIER TO USE



ACIRT's new and improved website is an information hub for employees, employers and anyone who wants to learn more about ACIRT and the benefits of participating.

ACIRT has been serving the needs of building and construction workers since 1994, and our new website makes us more accessible than ever.

HEAD OVER TO **[ACIRT.COM.AU](http://ACIRT.COM.AU)** TO SEE FOR YOURSELF

# BRINGING SECURITY IN THE FACE OF SHUTDOWN

**Ben Manna**, ACIRT Southern Region Co-ordinator

Ben Manna's father was a career construction worker and a union official for 30 years. Ben followed his lead in the early 1990s when he became a 'chippy'. It's easy to imagine they'd seen everything the industry could bowl up – until last year, when it ground to a halt.

'I'd never seen that happen, and I don't remember as a kid growing up the construction industry ever being shut down,' Ben says. 'It's had some bad patches, but it's never been completely shut down.'

After the unprecedented happened and Sydney building sites fell silent midway through 2021, as the COVID-19 pandemic grew to unprecedented levels of concern, the nervousness and anxiety among workers was driven home to Ben in each phone call and email exchange with ACIRT members. Partners even reached out, worried sick about what lay ahead.

'People were scared – this is something that had never happened. We'd gone through lockdowns in 2020 and the construction industry was protected, it never shut down. When this happened a lot of people were in

shock – they'd felt pretty secure that they were working in an industry that wouldn't be impacted, or that they'd at least still be working.

'Mentally they struggled – a lot of people have got big mortgages, and they were worried that they couldn't make their payments or pay rent and were going into debt.'

## Covid payment

Bricklayers can't work from home, neither can form workers or crane drivers. Even after the initial Sydney shutdown eased, many of those impacted were unable to get back on the tools because they lived in local government areas where the virus was rife. Thankfully, ACIRT was there for them.

Through ACIRT's 'Covid Payment' members who were stood down for at least two weeks could access \$5,000,

and the same amount again if they were still out of work five weeks later. From the start of the NSW shutdown, more than 4,200 members accessed payments of nearly \$20 million.

Ben also spoke to many employers who were grateful that ACIRT was there to help, having feared that paying out workers who sought to claim their leave entitlements to tide them over could send their businesses to the wall.

**'A lot of people were very relieved their ACIRT was there, without it they could have lost their house or not been able to feed the family.'**

As the 2022 outlook remains uncertain, having ACIRT behind you is more vital than ever.

'I've had so many people come and see me on jobs and say, "I'm so thankful I've got my ACIRT – I couldn't get back to work and it was there for me"', Ben says. 'A lot of people were very relieved their ACIRT was there, without it they could have lost their house or not been able to feed the family.'

If you need help with your ACIRT contact Ben on **0409 256 157** or [ben.manna@acirt.com.au](mailto:ben.manna@acirt.com.au).



# GIVING THANKS FOR THE CERTAINTY OF ACIRT

**Barry Martin**, ACIRT Northern Co-ordinator

Barry Martin has always loved the reliability of his job, that no matter what was happening in the world he'd be on the road visiting worksites and having a yarn with construction workers. Certainty has given way to the unknown, which makes Barry even more grateful for ACIRT.

'We've had times in Queensland in the past two years where the pandemic hasn't really impacted people's lives too much – they've been able to keep working and going about their business,' Barry says. 'But then Omicron came along, and we've all had to learn to live with it.'

After the initial shock of COVID-19's arrival in 2019, which impacted Barry's ability to do what he loves best – get out on site and talk to workers – 2021 felt like a pathway out of the mire as vaccination rates rose and our resistance built.

The rising infection rates caused by the more easily-transmissible Omicron variant of the virus have created a virtual 'watch and act' scenario, one that Barry says members can approach with the comforting knowledge that ACIRT has their backs.

'We've been lucky at times, but Covid is here now and we don't know what that will mean for the next few months or even years,' Barry says. 'There could be more restrictions and even shutdowns, or construction workers could face other issues that they haven't had to deal with before.'

## Getting the most out of your ACIRT

'That's why ACIRT is there – it's got their backs and gives them reassurance that everything will be okay.'

Barry is looking forward to a 2022 that will bring people together again, and encourages employees and employers alike to use the services ACIRT offers either by picking up the phone for a



chat or logging on to [acirt.com.au](https://www.acirt.com.au) to make sure your details are up to date and you're getting full bang for your ACIRT buck.

The construction landscape remains bright in the face of unprecedented challenges. Barry is typically upbeat that, through initiatives like the Covid Special Payment that helped so many workers when the pandemic forced them to down tools – along with the security of knowing their safety net is always growing – ACIRT will shepherd them safely through the storm.

'Our members know that if they haven't made a claim they can access a distribution every November, and if they don't need the money stays with us and keeps building for them to

access later on when they need it most. 'It's a bit of peace of mind for them.'

If you need help with your ACIRT contact Barry on **0419 775 324** or [barry.martin@acirt.com.au](mailto:barry.martin@acirt.com.au).

**'That's why  
ACIRT is there –  
it's got their  
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# BRINGING COMFORT

## IN A TIME OF LOSS

**Colm Munroe**, Health and Safety Representative

Colm Munroe was 15 when he left school in Ireland and began his journey in construction. It's taken him to Australia, back home and back again, and almost four decades later he's still loving the opportunity to better himself and help those around him.

Having cut his teeth as a bricklayer in a Dublin training centre all those years ago, Colm now furthers himself with the help of the ACIRT Education Foundation. Since he stopped laying bricks, stone and blocks and became a Health and Safety Representative, he's accessed two grants to help pay for extra training that he knows is bettering him in so many ways.

'I've always been a pretty strong union member, and through that I was interested in my own safety and other workers' safety,' Colm says.

'Being a Health and Safety Rep, the training has helped me do my job better – consulting with management and workers, it's been a big help. I was fairly strong in my views beforehand, but now I know exactly what I'm talking about.'

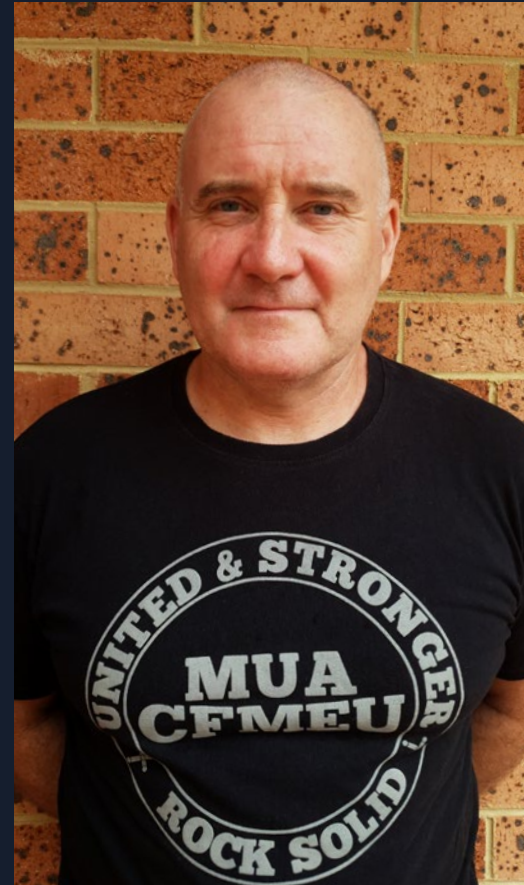
**'Being a Health and Safety Rep, the training has helped me do my job better – consulting with management and workers, it's been a big help.'**

### Eighty percent paid up to \$2,000

ACIRT Region Coordinator Ben Manna says grants are available to any members with a positive ACIRT balance to access extra training for anything from hoist to crane tickets, traffic control to offshore oil-rigging. Successful applicants have 80 percent of the cost of training paid for up to \$2,000.

'It doesn't come out of ACIRT profits – it's a pool of money and the interest is spent each year on training, so it never runs out,' Ben says, adding that workers who can no longer work in construction due to injury can also access funds for retraining to work in other industries.

Colm, who was a union delegate before he became a HSR representative, says Ben encouraged him to look into what the foundation offers when he was keen to take on more work health and safety training.



The process was straightforward, and after paying for the course upfront the money was refunded promptly.

'A lot of members I don't think probably know about it, so it's a good thing that you're writing about it now. There's only a finite amount of funds, people need to be thinking about the training they need and get on the website and apply.

'It just keeps you employable, puts you onto the next level,' he says of education. 'I enjoy doing it myself, it's pushing you onto the next thing in your career. Whatever you're doing in construction, it's a big help.'

To download the application form or learn more about the ACIRT Education Foundation go to [acirt.com.au/acirt-education](http://acirt.com.au/acirt-education).



# WIN THIS MAKITA TOOL KIT

Have  
your say  
and win!



## COMPLETE THE MEMBER SURVEY NOW



The more we know about what our members think of us, the better our service will become – especially with so many new members joining in the last two years.

Complete our short survey, and you'll go into the running to win this fantastic Makita combo kit, valued at \$1,129.

Simply scan the code to enter.

# SENDING WORKMATES HOME SAFELY MAKES ALLAN'S DAY

Allan Leete, Delegate

Allan Leete has been a delegate for almost all of his 17 or so years in construction, and has held a safety role for much of that time, on jobs big and small. It's a responsibility he takes seriously, and one that has made him a friend to many.

'I enjoy looking after the guys, getting to know them and having an interest in them, making sure if they've got any dramas that we look after them. I have a real interest in the people I work with. Making sure everyone gets home safely at the end of the day, that's my main goal.'

He came from a labouring background and joined Probuild around the time they expanded into Sydney from Melbourne. Buildings he's seen rise out of the ground dot the CBD landscape, like the Greenland Centre. Working there during the COVID-19

lockdown, Allan was struck by how eerie the heart of Australia's biggest city had become. 'There was just nobody, it was a ghost town.'

## Work a godsend

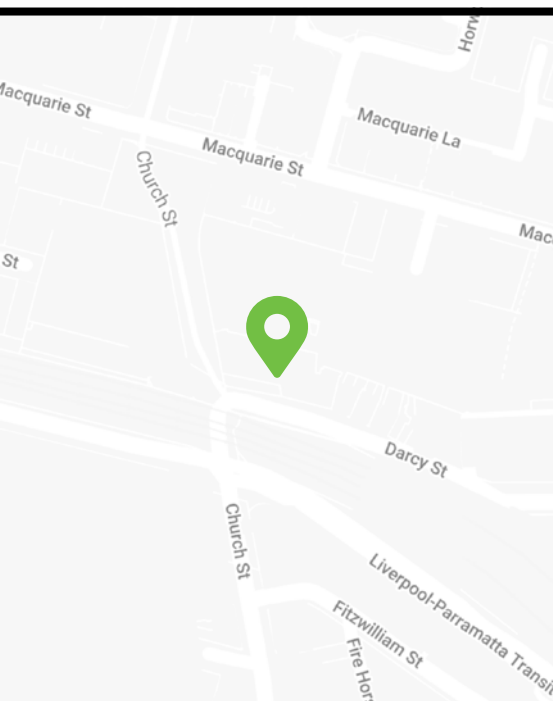
Being able to keep working when so many in the community couldn't was a godsend, with many colleagues having partners and wives who lost their jobs as the pandemic bit hard. When construction was halted in mid-2021, time at home with five-year-old Jackson and one-year-old Beau was both precious and a reminder to Allan that while he works six days a week, his wife Kristy never stops.

'It was good to have that time with the kids – Beau's normally in bed when I get home at 6.30pm – but it made me realise what my wife does, and what teachers do.'



'That hardship payment is going to be the thing that keeps people's heads above water.'

In better times, Allan has relished the annual ACIRT distribution each November, especially as a longstanding member who has a tidy sum sitting in his ACIRT safety net. 'I've been in the scheme for so long, it's like a great little present that pretty much makes Christmas.'



## IMPORTANT NOTICE WE HAVE MOVED

If you are coming to our office to drop off your documentation, we are on Level 22 in Building 6 at the Parramatta Square complex at Parramatta.

The easiest way is to catch the train to Parramatta Station and follow the signs to Parramatta Square.

If you drive there are plenty of parking stations around Parramatta CBD.

Due to the relocation, there are no staff available to assist members in

completing documentation but the Reception Team on Level 22 will be happy to take your forms and pass them on.

Our new office details are:

Level 22  
Building 6 and 8  
Parramatta Square  
10 Darcy Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150





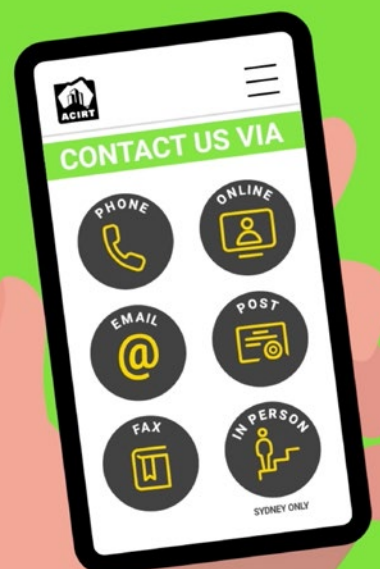
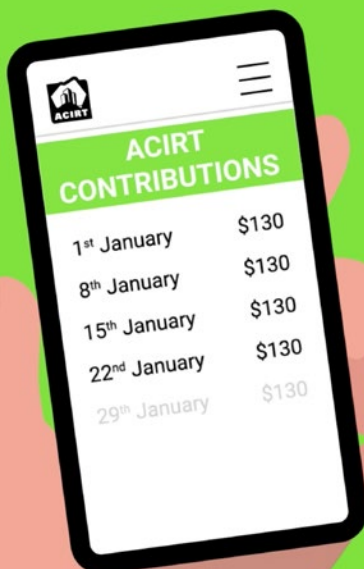
# HOW ACIRT HELPS YOU



Building & construction is a boom or bust industry. ACIRT was created to help with the down times.

ACIRT has been Australia's No.1 redundancy safety net since 1994. Since then, we've helped thousands of members get through to their next job.

But that's not all we do. To find out more benefits of membership, please watch our new video online at [acirt.com.au](http://acirt.com.au).



# CLAIMS ARRANGEMENTS DURING OMICRON

Due to the continuing Omicron outbreak at time of printing, there are no staff available to assist in claims processing at ACIRT's Parramatta office, however claims may still be dropped off.

Claims may be made online at [acirt.com.au](https://acirt.com.au) or call our Contact Centre on **1800 060 467** for assistance. Staff will be available again once the situation has improved.



## Need help? Contact us



### SOUTHERN REGION CO-ORDINATOR

**Ben Manna**

M: 0409 256 137  
T: 02 8571 5438  
E: [ben.manna@acirt.com.au](mailto:ben.manna@acirt.com.au)



### SOUTHERN REGION CO-ORDINATOR

**Dave McNamara**

M: 0490 490 714  
E: [dave.mc@acirt.com.au](mailto:dave.mc@acirt.com.au)



### NORTHERN REGION CO-ORDINATOR

**Barry Martin**

M: 0419 775 324  
E: [barry.martin@acirt.com.au](mailto:barry.martin@acirt.com.au)

### SYDNEY

Level 22, Building 6 and 8  
Parramatta Square  
10 Darcy Street  
Parramatta NSW 2150

### MELBOURNE

Tower 3  
727 Collins Street  
Docklands VIC 3008

### BRISBANE

Level 21  
10 Eagle Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

### PERTH

QV1 Building, Level 12  
250 St Georges Terrace  
Perth WA 6000



If we can't find you due to incorrect or missing details, you might not get your ACIRT distribution quickly, or at all.

### WE CAN'T PAY YOU IF WE CAN'T FIND YOU

Update your details  
before 31 October.  
[acirt.com.au](https://acirt.com.au) | 1800 060 467



THE NO.1  
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