

# **FRC / CLC Partnerships & Legally Assisted Mediation**



# Presenters



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Principal Solicitor

Murray Mallee Community Legal Service (MMCLS)



## **Sarah Rodgers**

Principal Solicitor

Hume Riverina Community Legal Service (HRCLS)

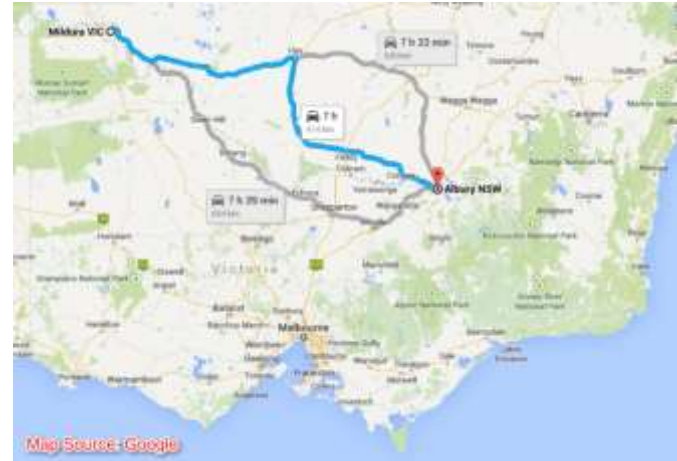
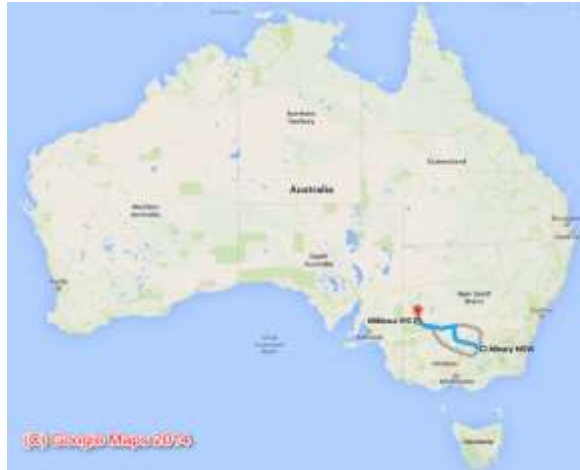


# Background

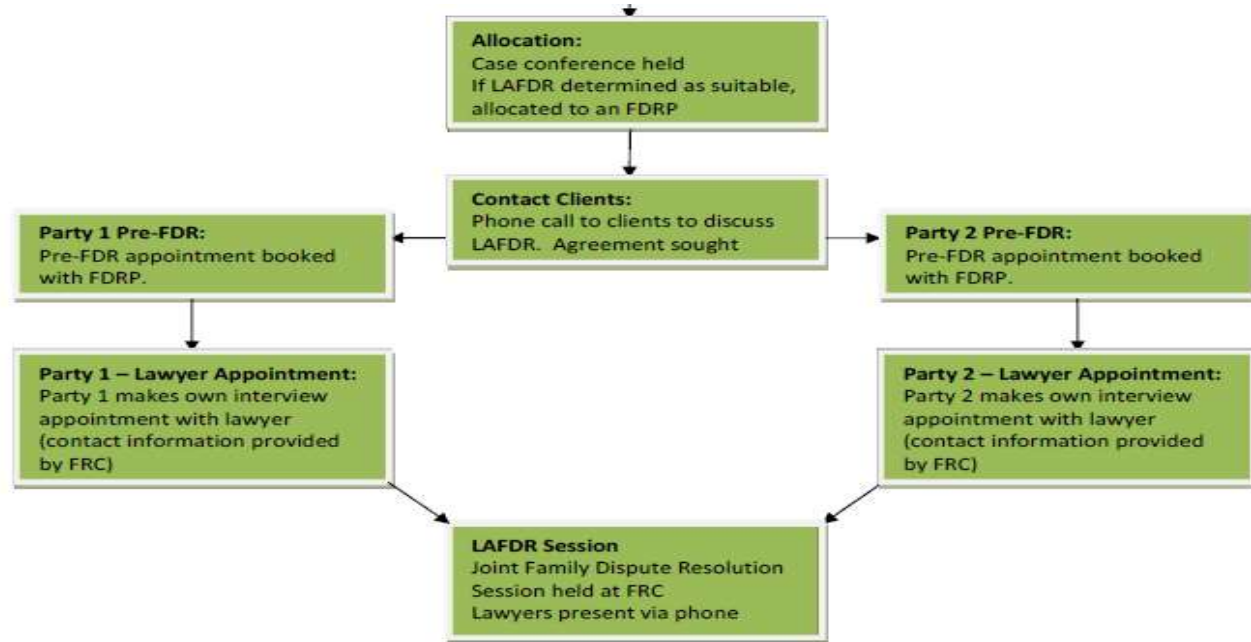
- 2009 – Commonwealth Attorney-General funding for CLCs and Legal Aid partnerships with FRCs
- Murray Mallee CLS – Partnership with Mildura & Swan Hill FRCs
- Hume Riverina CLS – Partnership with Wodonga FRC

# Background

- Partnership between HRCLS & MMCLS – to deliver “LAFDRS”



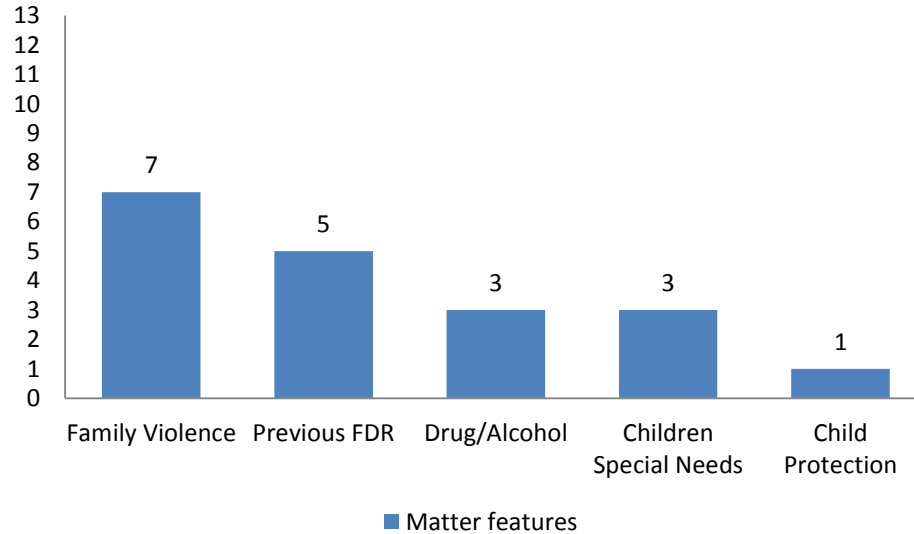
# Process – How it works



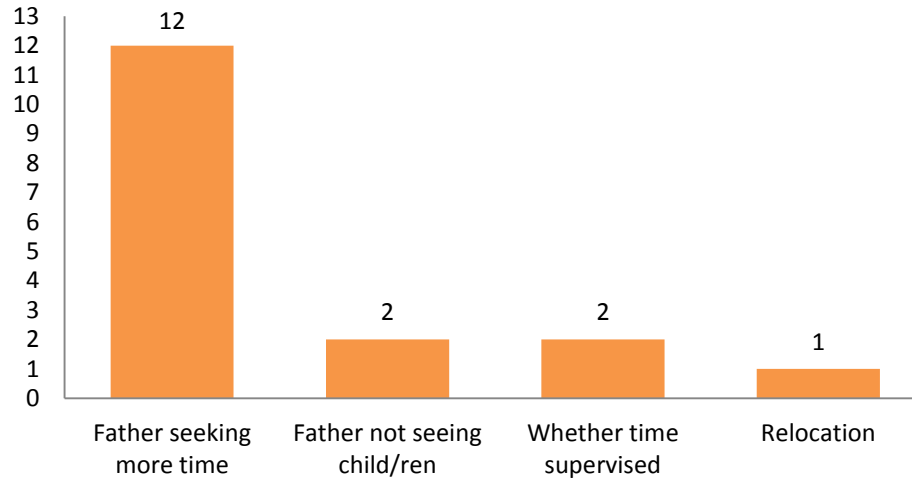
# LAFDR process – How it works



# Features of LAFDRs conducted

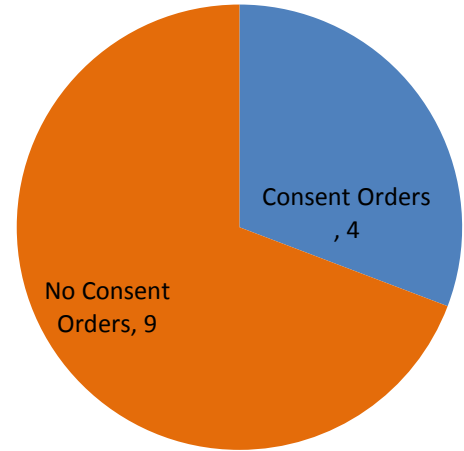
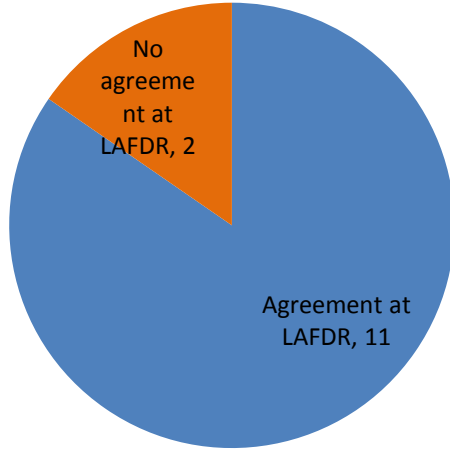


# Nature of dispute





# Outcomes



# FDRP Perspective

## A. Wodonga FRC





# FDRP Perspective

## B. Mildura FRC





# Client perspective

**15 survey participants of a possible 26.**

## **What did you like about the process?**

- Helped me understand it / made it easier.
- Made me feel more comfortable / confident with speaking for myself.
- Helped me get the outcome I wanted.
- Helped to have legal advice/someone to run my ideas past.
- Appreciated an extra person there to make it run more smoothly.
- Made the other party listen to what was said and understand the law.

# Client perspective

## What didn't you like about the process?

- Took too long.
- Didn't want to be there in the first place. But I was glad I had a lawyer there.
- Would have liked even more guidance.
- Still ended up going to Court so didn't end up with the result I wanted.

# Client perspective

100% of respondents said they felt like they got helpful advice during the process.

100% of respondents said that having a lawyer to assist them helped to feel confident about expressing their views/wishes

100% of respondents said they felt they were better off by having a lawyer.

100% of respondents said they would do this type of mediation again



# Achievements

- A. 13 matters completed.**
- B. Positive feedback from clients.**
- C. Better relationship between lawyers and FRCs.**

# The Challenges

- A. Use of technology to overcome problem of distance.**
- B. FDRPs and Lawyers having different approaches.**
- C. No funding for this partnership.**
- D. Information sharing.**

# The Future

- A. Funding?**
- B. Different modes of delivery?**
- C. Add new legal assistance partners?**