

NACLC

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES



07/08 ANNUAL
REPORT

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About the National Association of Community Legal Centres

The National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) is the peak organisation representing community legal centres in Australia. It is a federated structure. Its members are the state and territory associations. Together, these organisations represent over 200 community legal centres nationally. The objects of the National Association of Community Legal Centres are to assist disadvantaged and marginalised people in the Australian community obtain access to legal services by:

- supporting and assisting community legal centres to provide these services;
- providing a national forum for community legal centres;
- developing and coordinating national community legal centres policy;
- advancing the interests of community legal centres within Australia.

NACLC's governing body, the Management Committee, meets eight times each year as a group of state and territory representatives and elected national representatives. The work of NACLC is directed by the Management Committee, within the priorities set as part of the Association's strategic plan. NACLC is funded through contributions from centres, income which it generates and it also receives some project funding from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and other bodies.

Community Legal Centres

Community legal centres (CLCs) are independent, not-for-profit community-based organisations that provide free legal advice, information and education to their client communities with a particular focus on disadvantaged members of the Australian community and those with special needs. CLCs' management and operational structures encourage community involvement.

CLCs adopt unique and innovative ways of working with their communities to identify and address new and changing areas of legal needs. Their strategic service delivery approach identifies their communities' legal needs and plans and develops services in response. They are committed to delivering accessible services. CLCs' service delivery includes an integrated mix of information and advice provision, casework, court representation, outreach work, community development education and capacity building, law and policy reform and advocacy.

CLCs assist their clients wherever possible by way of early intervention strategies to prevent the escalation of problems. CLCs use preventative strategies including informing and supporting people in ways to protect their own rights.

CLCs work collaboratively with their local or special interest communities and with all levels of government, with community and private service providers, interested representatives of business and a number of philanthropic organisations. They also share information and resources among themselves, including operating a number of highly effective national specialist networks of CLC workers.

For over thirty years CLCs have been working for a rights-based approach and equitable access to justice for all Australians to ensure their social inclusion. Resolving the legal and related problems that cause homelessness has always been part of the daily work of CLCs. It continues to be so.

Many CLCs have tailored specific programs and service models for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities in their service areas.

Communities and clients of CLCs benefit from Centres' expertise in:

- areas of law in which other providers have no interest, experience and/or expertise
- assisting people with complex and inter-related needs and multiple disadvantages
- assessing and innovatively addressing client needs by providing a responsive and holistic service
- recognising that their clients' problems are not only legal and by providing a multi-disciplinary service staffed by a mix of lawyers, community educators, social workers, non lawyer advocates and a range of other compassionate and committed staff and volunteers to get the best outcomes for their clients.

CLCs have a long history of demonstrated success on obtaining, maintaining and leveraging volunteer and pro bono support directly adding to the total time, dollar value and range and depth of expertise of services provided, and providing funding bodies with greater value for their funding dollar.

CLCs:

- utilise over 300,000 hours of volunteers' time
- garner an additional estimated 25,000 hours per year of pro bono support from private law firms by way of secondments and other legal services to CLCs and their clients
- leverage more than \$23 million worth of free legal assistance each year.



Convenor's Report

The election of a new Federal Government in November 2007 has provided a renewed sense of energy in CLCs. We began the year with our Budget submission called *Community Legal Centres across Australia – an Investment Worth Protecting* and ended with a welcome injection of funds and a gesture of faith from the new Attorney-General, Robert McClelland. The new Attorney-General has sought to involve NACLC in many aspects of the justice system and we welcome this new attitude of respect for CLCs work.

Social Inclusion has become the new speak for government service delivery to disadvantaged Australians. NACLC has been involved in the development of this project and is endeavouring to ensure that Access to Justice is seen as a major part of it. Our clients are typically socially excluded in no small part by their inability to exercise their ordinary rights.

A major focus of NACLC since July 2007 has been the impact of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) on our clients and communities in the NT. A full report on NACLC and National Welfare Rights Network NTER project follows on page 20.

In October I attended the Family Violence Conference in Coffs Harbour and was able to catch up with our members in these services. I addressed the conference on insurance and governance and membership of state associations.

In November I provided input to Evaluation of the Legal Aid for Indigenous Australians Program

In May 2007 NACLC joined the national network Against Trafficking in Women and Girls. Heidi Yates from Women's Legal Centre (ACT & Region) attended the National Roundtable On People Trafficking hosted

by the Commonwealth Minister for Home Affairs 23 June 2008

We provided case studies to Commonwealth Attorney General's on CLCs and Homelessness and on CLCs Domestic Violence and Homelessness as part of a joint endeavour to ensure that the access to justice issues were included in the Green paper.

In June I attended the Victorian Federation of Community Legal Centres conference "Leading Justice" where I spoke at the opening and chaired a session on unmet legal need.

In June NACLC launched our exciting new project to match graduate student placements with opportunities in regional, rural and remote (RRR) CLCs. The project will identify and assist CLCs to recruit graduate law students willing to go to RRR areas.

This year we farewelled our Director, Julie Bishop, after countless years of service. Many thanks are due to Julie for her work for CLCs. We have welcomed Julia Hall to the position and I take this opportunity to thank her for her work and dedication.

Thanks and farewell also to Megan Robson and Toni Luu.

Thanks to Sarah Mitchell, Chris Maddison, Jane King, Justin Finighan, Rachna Muddagouni and all the untiring and hard working state representatives and state associations who make this organisation strong and connected.

Liz O'Brien
CONVENOR



Liz O'Brien

Executive Director's Report

The earlier and later parts of the 2007/2008 year provided very different challenges for NACLC. In the latter part, a new Australian Government with some priority areas shared with CLCs has provided a quite different context for the funding lobbying and social justice campaigning that NACLC performs.

In October 2007, NACLC made a detailed submission to the Attorney-General's Department's consideration of a funding formula for CLCs. The submission argued that there should be one funding allocation for staffing and premises based on evidence of the legal needs of the CLC's relevant community and separate funding for special circumstances, such as specific operational requirements (eg in RRR centres). NACLC said that the funding formula should be applied only to the distribution of newly available money, not to current allocations.

In a budget submission to the (new) government in January 2008, NACLC argued the case for a minimum of 5FTE multi disciplinary team as the most effective CLC service delivery model.

In detailed funding submissions to the new government, NACLC sought an immediate \$10.3m to address 10 years of funding starvation, and another \$13.7m targeted at specialist service provision and regional and rural Australia to be provided in 2008/2009.

On 18 April the Attorney-General announced one off additional funding of \$10 million to the CLCs with Commonwealth Community Legal Service Program (CLSP) funding and \$7 million for legal aid. NACLC received some additional one off funding for sector coordination.

NACLC welcomes the genuine understanding of the value of CLCs and their work that the new Attorney-General has shown. He has visited a number of CLCs, repeatedly spoken positively of CLCs' contributions and restored the funding contribution to the National CLC Conference enabling NACLC to, once again, subsidise attendance costs.

NACLC has put much work in 2007/2008 into educating new Members of Parliament about CLCs and their clients' needs, and attempting to influence policy and law development. For example, NACLC wrote to Ministers providing a summary of the economic value

and social benefits of CLCs and coordinated a welfare rights education program in the NT following the Intervention.

In April 2008, the government published its Report on the CLSP, the Attorney expressing his commitment to consulting CLCs about its recommendations.

At the request of the Attorney, NACLC, assisted by the State/Territory associations, has coordinated obtaining centres' feedback and providing consolidated responses to AGD about the various recommendations. This work continues into the new financial year.

In the CLSP Review and in other work, NACLC has continued to work collaboratively with staff of the AGD and the state/territory State Program Managers and others in Legal Aid. We appreciate their support for CLCs.

NACLC has continued to provide a range of services direct to CLCs during this year, including access to free online legal resources, a trial of a range of collaborative online services using WebEx for CLSIS and other training and meetings, and another successful National CLC Conference. A project significantly performed during this year will result soon in the production of a National Management Committee Guide for CLCs.

NACLC also continued its collaborative work in human rights projects and campaigning.

The NACLC office itself has undergone major staff changes in this year. The tremendous contribution made to the sector by my predecessor, Julie Bishop, is acknowledged, as well as the committed work of other NACLC staff and consultants, and the NACLC Management Committee. NACLC has been greatly supported by the dedicated experts working within the national networks and by the state/territory associations. Thank you all for your contributions.

In the coming year NACLC will continue to strive to support CLCs, their management and workers, paid and volunteer, in their work to assist and empower people suffering disadvantage to access justice.

Julia Hall
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Julia Hall

NALCLC Priorities and Projects for 2007-2010

(updated to October 2008)

■ PRIORITY 1: IMPROVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAM

Project 1.1: **CLSP Review – Response & Negotiation**
Outcome: CLSP Review recommends changes that improve CLC capacity to provide services, that enhance service delivery, that improve the outcomes for CLC clients and their communities, and respects the independence of CLCs. NALCLC provides effective coordination and representation of CLCs' feedback on CLSP Review Report in consultation process and implementation of recommendations.

Project 1.2: **Negotiate 2009-2012 CLSP Service Agreement**
Outcome: Ensure 2009-2012 CLSP Service Agreement reflects the requirements of all stakeholders, is easily understood, and the reporting requirements supply information that is useful to all stakeholders

■ PRIORITY 2: BROAD COMMUNITY RECOGNITION OF CLCS AS A QUALITY LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDER

Project 2.1: **Branding of CLCs & Implementation of the Quality Mark**
Outcome: Recognition of NALCLC logo as a mark of quality, recognition of the availability and type of services provided by CLCs, recognition that CLC services are of a high standard and a system in place to ensure that CLC services are of a high standard and are delivered in accordance with agreed recognised principles.

Project 2.2: **CLC Doing Justice DVD**
Outcome: Greater awareness of the work of CLCs and its importance, greater awareness of the availability of CLC services

Project 2.3: **Why CLCs are Good Value booklet**
Outcome: Greater awareness of the work of CLCs and its importance, greater awareness of the availability of CLC services

■ PRIORITY 3: BE AN AUTHORITATIVE VOICE ON JUSTICE ISSUES

Project 3.1: **Doing Justice – Indigenous Justice**
Outcome: Improved non-indigenous understanding & support of indigenous issues.

Project 3.2: **Doing Justice – Human Rights**
Outcome: Shadow Reports on ICCPR & ICESCR assists with improved understanding of Human Rights and how to assert & protect them within Australia.

Project 3.3: **Doing Justice – Northern Territory Emergency Response**

Outcome: Investigate how CLCs can assist support service delivery by NT CLCs in dealing with social security issues arising from the NTER, apply for funding to support project, support the NT services.

■ PRIORITY 4: CENTRE SUPPORT

Project 4.1: **Provision of Services to CLCs including Insurance, Communications, IT Support, and Volunteer, Management Committee and Financial Management guides**
Outcome: Through work of NALCLC, Centres are better able to provide free and quality legal services to those in need, are assisted to provide the best service that they can, and each funding \$ received by centres is better able to be used to the maximum benefit.

■ PRIORITY 5: NETWORK SUPPORT

Project 5.1: **Facilitate collaboration between CLCs by provision of support to the national networks**
Outcome: Active and effective national networks that involve a large number of centres, that collaborate on projects of mutual interest; that share skills and resources.

■ PRIORITY 6: MEMBER / ASSOCIATION SUPPORT

Project 6.1: **Assist State associations in their work**
Outcome: Effective collaborative relationship with well-run State associations that provide services and support to CLCs so that CLCs can better provide services to their clients.

■ PRIORITY 7: NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Project 7.1: **Run the national conference each year**
Outcome: Well-attended, well-run and well-evaluated national conference that energises and inspires delegates; that facilitates collaboration; that strengthens partnerships between CLCs and other organisations; that strengthens relationships between staff, volunteers and management committee members of CLCs; that provides training, updates skills and assists with identifying future training needs; and is fun.

>> Major Projects for 2007/2008

NACLC projects typically fall into three categories:

- sector coordination, including consultation and negotiation with AGD and other stakeholders
- projects to provide, or scope and investigate providing, new or improved services to centres to support them in their service delivery; and
- projects involving lobbying and campaigning on current social justice, funding and other issues affecting CLCs and their clients.

SECTOR COORDINATION

In early 2008, NACLC received one off funding from AGD for additional support and coordination activities between the CLCs' sector and AGD and other stakeholders, including consultation in relation to the CLSP Review Report's recommendations, and scoping by NACLC of an improved mechanism or procedures for coordinating and leveraging on community legal education and law reform work being performed by the sector.

NACLC has been very active in the second half of this year in relation to consultation about the CLSP Review recommendations including organising special meetings with state/territory representatives and associations to decide nationally coordinated responses from the sector.

SUPPORT SERVICES PROJECTS

NACLC's role includes obtaining funding, performing or supervising the actual work and identifying ways in which services can be alternatively or self-funded to guarantee their continued availability to CLCs. Some examples from the 2007/08 year are:

WebEx

In early 2008, NACLC, with funding from AGD, negotiated and purchased for one year a licence from WebEx for a range of collaborative online services (for meetings, training etc). WebEx has the potential to be of great assistance, particularly to CLC networks and RRR centres – not least for its potential for providing on demand CLSIS training. WebEx is currently being trialed now at some centres and with networks.

CLSIS training

Face to face training was delivered by NACLC consultant Justin Finighan in a number of regions and at State and National Conferences. Most recently, Justin delivered training to all NT centres in Alice Springs and Darwin in early June and at the Victorian Federation's Conference in Melbourne in late June. Work commenced in the last quarter on preparation of a number of CLSIS training modules utilising WebEx.

Online legal resources

Funded by AGD, this project resulted in NACLC negotiating access for CLCs through the BBS to a number of online legal resources. It took a lot of work to consult and establish the services that would most benefit centres and usage figures show this needs further refinement. The licence (and funding) was only for a year. Uptake was slow and there were some access problems that took a while to work out. AGD would not fund the service again without more evidence of wider benefit across the sector. Unfortunately this evidence could not be gathered from one year's trial and our suggestion of a levy from each CLC was not sufficiently subscribed to allow it to proceed.

National Management Committee Guide for CLCs

The Guide, which comprises a number of factsheets, FAQs and a resources directory about understanding the various parts of the role of a CLC management committee member, is in the last stages of design and will shortly be distributed to CLCs, with supporting training material.



Overseas Participants for National Conference

In 2007/08 NACLC obtained funding from AusAid to bring some of our international colleagues from the

>> Major Projects of 2007/2008

Pacific and Asia to the 2007 National Conference to further the mutual understanding of the issues and contexts in which we and our overseas colleagues live and work, and to facilitate future communication.

Protecting the CLCs 'brand' – trademarks, accreditation & common membership rules

As part of its role in protecting the interests (including reputation) of CLCs across Australia and the quality and nature of service delivery to CLC clients, NACLC has for some time been working on ways to protect the CLCs' 'brand'.

Steps have included trademarking the NACLC logo and, in 2008, the NACLC logo with the words "This Centre is accredited by NACLC National Association of Community Legal Centres". NACLC hopes to establish a Certification Trademark (CTM) that can only be used by approved (certified) Centres. This would be given according to membership of the State or Territory body and national.

NACLC has also been investigating establishing a CLCs' accreditation process with CLC agreed criteria largely based on existing processes and systems. The process would assist CLCs in reaching desired standards, supported by their associations.

Early in 2008, in consultation with state/territory representatives and associations, NACLC drafted some proposed Common Membership Rules and some draft Accreditation Criteria for the associations to consult and obtain feedback from their member CLCs. NACLC is waiting for feedback before progressing.

PLT Law Interns in RRR Centres Project

NACLC successfully applied for funding for a project aimed at encouraging law graduates to work in regional CLCs for their Professional Legal Training (PLT) work experience/placement and from that experience to consider regional CLCs as a career option. The first year comprises a feasibility study and, if judged feasible, the development of a project plan.

Developing a methodology for the measurement of CLC outcomes

This project will develop a methodology for outcomes measurement of CLCs' work. It arises from a recogni-

tion that performance monitoring by way of assessing CLSIS data does not reflect the complexities of the work undertaken by CLCs or capture the outcomes they achieve. A consultant's report should be available in late 2008.

SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECTS

NGO Shadow Reports

NACLC has been involved in the co-ordination and preparation of two NGO reports to the UN Committees responsible for monitoring the implementation of the ICESCR and the ICCPR, was submitted to the CESCR in April 2008. It was prepared with contributions from over 30 NGOs, with significant contributions from many CLCs, in particular Kingsford Legal Centre and the Human Rights Law Resource Centre, and some pro bono assistance. The report, supported by over 100 local, national and international non-government organisations, is a comprehensive and constructive analysis of the state of ESC rights in Australia and makes a range of targeted recommendations and documents a number of areas in which Australia is falling short of its obligations under the ICESCR. The second report is well underway and will be submitted later in 2008. NACLC gratefully acknowledges the funding support of the Keir Foundation for this work.

Doing Justice – NTER Welfare Rights project

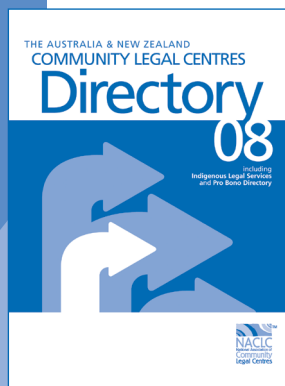
Following the announcement of the Northern Territory Emergency Response (NTER) in 2007, NACLC obtained a small grant to undertake a scoping project to study the best ways to support delivery of social security advice and advocacy. The need for clear, accurate and culturally appropriate legal advice and information to help the more than 20,000 Indigenous people affected by the significant social security changes included in the NTER was identified. NACLC obtained further funding to allow the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency and the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service to each host two CLC staff with welfare rights expertise to provide advice and assistance in their respective regions for 12 months.

Keeping in Touch

Throughout the year, NACLC communicates with CLCs to keep them updated on national issues. We do this in a variety of ways.

NACLC FACTS

NACLC FACTS is a 1-2 page information sheet that is faxed to all CLCs monthly or when important information needs to be communicated. It contains updates on national issues, including alerts and reminders, submission deadlines, upcoming events, news about the BBS, the national conference, insurance and service agreement matters as well as information on the work of NACLC and the National Networks.



Community Legal Centres: The Australia and New Zealand Directory

The Directory is a listing of Australian and New Zealand CLCs' contact details. Listings also include Family Violence Prevention Legal Services, Aboriginal Legal Services, pro bono schemes and government contacts around Australia relevant to CLCs. The Directory is produced around April/May of each year and is distributed to all CLCs and relevant agencies and published on the NACLC website. The 2008 Directory continued listing the information added to the 2007 Directory, such as hours, outreach locations and specialist services, and added an alphabetical index of CLC names.

NACLC website

The NACLC website is located at www.nacлк.org.au. It was re-designed and updated in 2007. The website is the public face for NACLC and CLCs. It includes information about NACLC, CLCs, and the state associations as well as NACLC publications, major submissions and

information on NACLC's current work, the Community Legal Centre Directory in electronic format, conference papers and the latest NACLC news.

Bulletin Board System (BBS)

The BBS is a free messaging system and the NACLC's preferred method of communication with CLCs. It provides online discussion groups and forums for CLCs' private use, allows sharing of Centre resources and documents and facilitates enhanced Centre collaboration.

NACLC purchases the licenses for the BBS from the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW. The system is run, funded and maintained by NACLC. The BBS's capacity is for 1275 accounts - as of June 2008, 1205 accounts were being used.

The BBS is well used by some of the National Networks, especially the National Welfare Rights Network and the Women's Legal Services Network. The NSW Tenancy Services continue to run a vibrant and successful separate part of the BBS as well.

Phillip Byrne and Sarah Mitchell, continued to provide technical and account establishment support to all users. We especially thank Phill who has taken over the role of CLC BBS Administrator after the departure of Sam Schuman.

Systems administrator, Damien Gardner, who is based in NSW, maintains the BBS server. Our thanks to Damien, for his many hours of work looking after the BBS servers and assisting Phill and Sarah, and through them, all BBS users.

Telephone Meetings

NACLC provides annual funding for the National Networks to meet via phone link-up. These meetings provide the opportunity for Networks to exchange information, share resources and ideas, and work together more effectively.



2007 NACLC Conference

The 2007 National CLCs Conference was held in Brisbane, Queensland from 3-6 September. CLC workers from every state and territory attended as well as a number of our colleagues from New Zealand CLCs. A number of associated organisations, such as Family Violence Prevention Units, Legal Aid Commissions, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and the NSW Law and Justice Foundation, to name just a few, sent delegates.

Through the International Seminar Support Scheme administered by AusAID, NACLC was able to assist eleven delegates from the Pacific and Asia to attend the conference. The delegates came from community organisations in Vanuatu, Indonesia, Philippines, Papua, Banda Aceh, Samoa and Fiji. This brought the total of delegates in 2007 to 390.

As always, the conference started with a designated National Networks day, held on Sunday 3 September, where CLC workers operating in the same areas met up to discuss and learn about new and emerging issues facing CLCs and their constituents, and to formulate creative and positive ways in which they might address them. Sixteen of NACLC's twenty National Networks met during the conference. We are grateful to the Queensland University of Technology for generously donating its facilities for the Networks' meetings.

The Welcome Reception on Sunday night saw delegates welcomed to Brisbane by the Hon Kerry Shine, Attorney General of Queensland. This was followed by the keynote speakers, Jackie Katona of the Lumbu Indigenous Community Foundation, Chris McGrath presenting for The Climate Project and the Australian Conservation Foundation and Olga Havnen from the Council of Aboriginal Organisations of the Northern Territory speaking about the Northern Territory Intervention.



Other issues addressed during key-note sessions included the Effect of Climate Change on CLCs and their communities, Changes in the Justice Climate and Perspectives from Oceania. Key-note speakers were Michael Raper, President, National Welfare Rights Network; Professor Jan McDonald, Deputy Director (Research), Griffith University; The Hon Bill Carter, retired Queensland Supreme Court Judge; Fr Peter Norden SJ, Associate Director of Jesuit Social Services; Stephen Keim SC, Barrister at Law; and our international guests. Julian Burnside QC and Mark Woods of the Law Council of Australia spoke about Travesties of Justice: the Australian Climate in the 21st Century at the closing plenary.

In between the opening and closing plenaries, forty workshops were offered to delegates covering topics as diverse as the Family Law changes, a Charter of Rights for Australia, anti-terrorism laws, IT support and working with volun-

teers. Thirty-seven conference resolutions were passed by the various networks – these resolutions help to guide the work of the NACLC over the year.

Many thanks to the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services (QAILS), the Queensland and National Conference Organising Committees and Marilyn Hall, NACLC's consultant conference organiser for their many hours of work on the conference.

The National CLC Conference is an important opportunity for CLC workers to discuss areas of common interest and formulate creative and plans of action to support the sector and best help our clients. It is a great opportunity for professional development for many CLC workers and it was gratifying to see so many CLC workers and other colleagues attend in 2007.

Insurance and Risk Management

NACLCL manages and coordinates a number of insurance schemes for the benefit of the CLCs that are members of State and Territory Associations and hence entitled to access the services provided by NACLCL.

Once a CLC becomes a member of a State or Territory Association, they have access to free Public Liability insurance, a bulk Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) scheme and a bulk Associations Liability Insurance scheme (formerly Directors and Officers Insurance) at substantially reduced costs, all coordinated by NACLCL.

Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII)

The NACLCL bulk Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) scheme and its associated risk management regime continue to be a successful and cost-effective way for CLCs to manage both their risk and their PII premiums. There are currently 168 CLCs participating in the NACLCL PII scheme.

Due to our low risk record over previous years the premium decreased this year and we were able to maintain last year's fees levels and ensure we retained a reasonable amount in the Excess and Legal Investigations Cost Funds. These funds assist centres in meeting the cost of the excess, should a claim be made against the centre and in paying any investigations costs incurred by centres after notifying the insurer of circumstances which may give rise to a claim.

The Risk Management Guide, annual cross-checks and compulsory state PII meetings help individual Centres understand risk in their legal practice, identify possible new risks and act to minimise risks and prevent claims being made against them. It also gives them access to a state representative who can assist them with any questions they may have about their risk.

Each state PII representative sits on the National PII Committee. This committee met 11 times during the year and they continue to guide the PII scheme with a steady and sensible hand. NACLCL thanks the individual members for their continued participation, their thoughtfulness and skill in considering and answering the big insurance questions and the help they are always willing to lend to CLCs and NACLCL.

We must especially thank Natalie Ross, one of the NSW PII representatives, from the Inner City Legal Centre

who chaired the committee. Natalie left the CLC sector at the beginning of 2008, after 7 years; 4 of which she spent on the PII committee. Her sensitivity and common sense were a great boon to all CLCs. Ian Tranthem, of Darwin Community Legal Service, has kindly taken over the chairing responsibilities.

The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department again granted CLCs a significant amount towards the payment of the premium for the 2007/08 Policy for all centres. Thanks also to Victorian Legal Aid and the Queensland Law Society who contributed to the premium costs for CLCs in their respective states.

Public Liability

NACLCL continues to offer free public liability cover to all member Centres. The national policy was renewed on 1 January 2008 and it means that all member Centres and their branch offices in Australia have public liability cover to the limit of \$20 million, at no cost.

Associations Liability (formerly Directors and Officers) Insurance

The bulk Associations Liability Insurance Policy was renewed on 1 March 2008. The scheme now covers 134 Centres. This cover continues to be issued under an Association Liability Insurance policy, providing a much broader cover than the previous Directors and Officers policy – at no rise in costs to individual Centres.

The Associations Liability Policy covers CLCs' Board Members (past, present and future) against any claims for 'wrongful acts' committed or alleged to have been committed by them in their capacity as Directors or Officers of the CLC. It also provides cover for the Legal Centre, Centre Manager and Board Members against Employment Practice Claims, such as wrongful dismissal or discrimination claims. The policy also covers the entity (i.e. the legal centre) itself. Claims for wrongful acts including defamation are also covered.

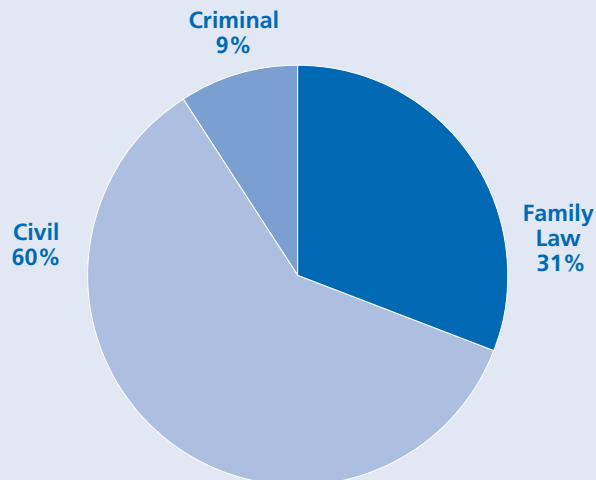
NACLCL works closely with AON Risk Services Australia Limited in Adelaide to provide this coverage. We would like to thank our previous broker, David Berry, who retired at the end of 2007 and Wayne Trezona, our new representative at AON for all their assistance and their willingness to help.

National CLC Activity Profile 2007/08

In 2007/08, 142 of the over 200 centres provided data to the Community Legal Services Information System – CLSIS. CLSIS recorded that those 142 CLCs provided the following services to clients:

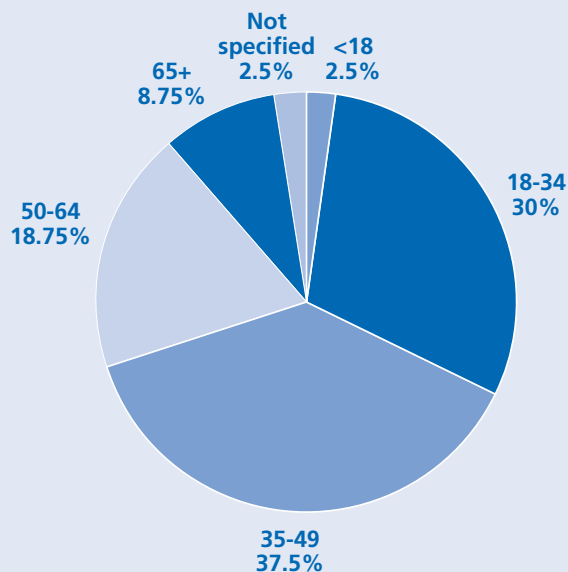
| | |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| Information | 142,312 |
| Advice | 211,620 |
| Cases | 37,750 |
| Community Legal Education | 2,567 |
| Law Reform Projects | 875 |
| TOTAL | 395,124 |

CLIENTS BY AREA OF LAW

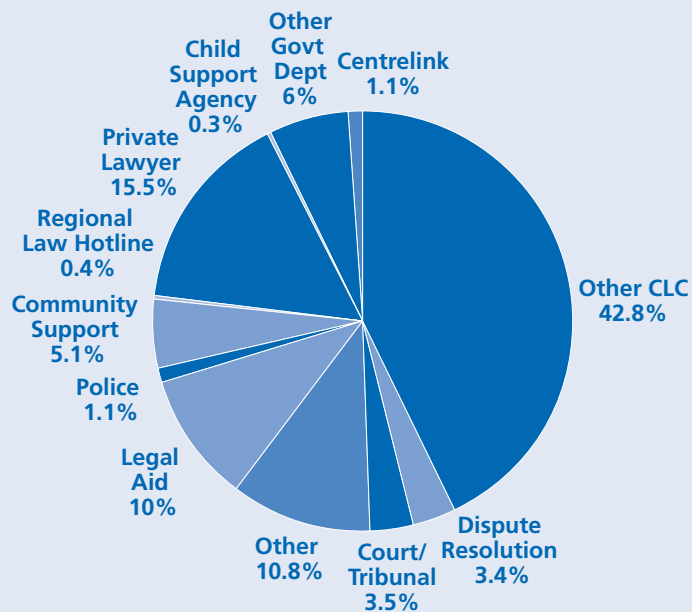


CLC Client Profile

CLIENTS BY AGE GROUPS



Referrals

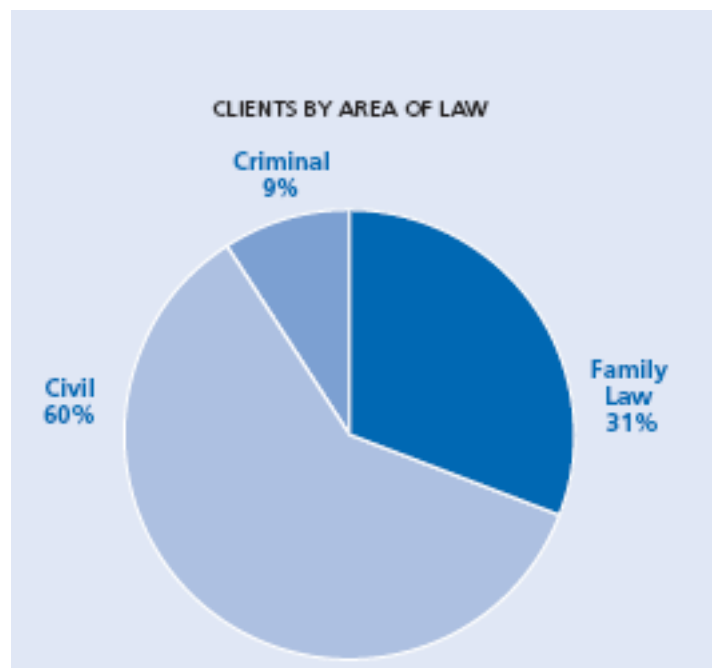


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ERRATUM

Page 11- Please note that in the graph, headed Clients by Area of Law, in the top right hand corner of page 11, the headings Family Law and Civil were inadvertently transposed.

The correct figures and headings are Family Law 31% and Civil 60%. The correct graph is below.



This error occurred at the graphic design stage. NACLC apologises for any inconvenience or confusion this may have caused.

PRO BONO SUPPORT

A major contribution to NACLC's work each year comes from the major law firms through their pro bono schemes. NACLC accesses this assistance directly through its relationships with the Pro Bono Coordinators of the firms and through the Public Interest Law Clearing Houses (PILCH) in QLD, NSW and Victoria. NACLC thanks each PILCH for their willingness to assist, their speedy response and their appropriate selection of firms.

NACLC would also like to thank each of the Pro Bono Coordinators at the firms for their patience and their attempts to meet our many requests ranging from money, meetings rooms to expert law library advice and office fit-outs – and even legal advice!

In particular this year, we thank

- Blake Dawson Waldron for the provision of meeting rooms and catering for NACLC's meetings throughout the year
- Legal Aid NSW for the provision of meeting rooms for NACLC's meetings throughout the year
- Gilbert & Tobin for legal assistance with trademarking and related issues and online legal resources advice

Most importantly, NACLC thanks the over 3,800 people who volunteer each year at CLCs throughout the country, and the additional estimated 25,000 hours per year of pro bono support from private law firms to CLCs, together making a contribution valued at more than \$23 million of free legal and related assistance each year. This is a great sum in monetary terms, but invaluable in terms of its beneficial effect for the disadvantaged people CLCs serve.

STRATEGIC ALLIANCES

Australian Legal Assistance Forum

NACLC is a partner, with National Legal Aid, the Law Council of Australia and Aboriginal Legal Services, in the Australian Legal Assistance Forum. The major issues ALAF dealt with in 2007/08 include:

- funding and resourcing of ATSILS
- family law reforms
- family Relationships Advice Line
- ALAF & Mediation agency meetings
- National Civil Legal Aid Scheme
- state Legal Assistance Forums
- progress on Human Rights Legislation in each jurisdiction
- IR laws
- funding issues for Legal Aid and CLCs including Legal Aid guidelines for Family Law matters
- death penalty
- ending the Commonwealth/State divide in Legal Aid funding
- new Strategic Plan for Legal Aid

Australian Council of Social Service

Liz O'Brien, NACLC Convenor, attended a briefing with the then Shadow Minister Julia Gillard to discuss the ALP plans for a Social Inclusion Project.

The Convenor and Matthew Atkinson (SA state representative) attended the ACOSS conference in Adelaide in November 2007. Sharon Burrows, ACTU President, congratulated NACLC from the podium for our work on employment rights.

Liz O'Brien and Michael Smith (Victorian state representative) attended the ACOSS annual congress in April. Liz spoke as a member of the panel of the session on youth and social inclusion and a handout called Community Legal Centres – securing housing, protecting tenants and preventing homelessness was distributed.

In April 2008, Liz O'Brien attended the NTCOSS conference and gave a presentation on Access to justice, CLCs and Social Inclusion.

With a little help from our friends...

The over 200 Community Legal Centres across Australia employ over 1,450 staff. Some remarkable people work in the CLC sector, assisting their clients and communities, and their centres and the State and National CLC Associations with enthusiasm, dedication, energy and absolute commitment.

Following are profiles of just a few some of these exceptional people.



Fran Gibson

Fran Gibson has been working in CLCs for 21 years. After working in private practice, at Legal Aid and then at an Aboriginal Legal Service, she started at Redfern Legal Centre, ending up as their co-Principal Solicitor and then became the Director of Kingsford Legal Centre, where she worked for 8 years. Upon

her relocation to Victoria she joined the Board of the Advocacy and Rights Centre and was on the consultative committee that assisted with the establishment of the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre in Bendigo, Victoria. Since January 2008 she has worked at the centre one day per week as a generalist solicitor and spends the rest of her time working as a senior lecturer at La Trobe University.

The Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre was officially opened in December 2005. Since then, as well as helping many people in their community, they have set up a homeless persons' legal service, a seniors' rights service and many other innovative services.

Fran has observed the centre's trajectory with respect. She says that the "people who work there are committed - the staff of CLCs are their great strength. Most great things that are accomplished in CLCs are achieved by all the staff - it's a team effort."

In terms of what she is most proud of in her own career, Fran nominated her coordination of the early 90s campaign to reinstate legal aid for civil matters in NSW. CLCs ran a collaborative campaign with other community and legal organisations to get legal aid reinstated for these matters. The campaign was ultimately successful and the results were clearly demonstrated, something

that doesn't often happen but did in this case, which was most gratifying.

Fran believes that CLCs are important because they offer a very different approach to the legal system. They attract creative, innovative people who want to help overcome structural inequalities. CLCs don't just take on cases - their whole point is to step back to see if a client's problem can be fixed at a structural level. She has noticed that whenever she hears someone speaking in the media or on a national stage about a creative solution to legal inequality or has a spot-on analysis of what should be going on, that they are or used to be a CLC lawyer.

Fran likes the concept of community lawyering - she likes the fact that she can live and work in a community and help the people she might sometimes see in the supermarket. She believes that we, as CLC workers, should never forget we are here to achieve change - CLCs must not forget that.



Kristen Wallwork

Kris has been the Principal Solicitor and Coordinator of the Katherine Womens Information and Legal Service (KWILS) located in Katherine, Northern Territory for almost 4 years. Before joining KWILS, Kris's previous experience in the CLC sector included employment at Sussex Street Community Legal Centre in Perth

and a clinical placement at the Southern Communities Advocacy Legal and Education Service Inc. (SCALES), also in WA.

KWILS is a RRR CLC that covers a very large catchment region - approximately 380,000sqkm between Central Australia and the Top End. Due to this, they need to employ diverse ways of engaging with their communities and helping their clients. They have employed some community based workers in a number of out-lying communities in the Top End: they have workers in Lajamanu and Borroloola, both about 600 km away from Katherine and are about to employ someone at Njukurr which is over the Roper River and difficult to get to during the wet season.

With a little help from our friends...

As well as travel that happens on an 'as needs' basis Kris travels throughout the Katherine Region as part of the NT Bush Court circuit which visit bush court communities every 2 months. This allows her to assist clients in outlying areas.

KWILS provide assistance in a variety of capacities in a range of civil law matters and family law matters. KWILS spent time collaborating with legal services in Katherine to ensure representation for parents in child-in-need cases, parents who were previously often without representation. KWILS has also identified the gaps facing migrant women in family and domestic violent situations and therefore is currently undertaking to register the Solicitors as migration agents.

Kris has also been the Convenor of Women's Legal Services Network since 2006. She has found that convening a National Network is a great opportunity for RRR services to stay involved and gives her and KWILS an impetus to engage on a national level and keep abreast of the broader picture issues.

Kris enjoys working in a CLC because they have a less conservative approach to community legal work. CLCs also have an opportunity to be diverse in their service provision. Kris believes it is an important distinction that CLCs do not just focus on casework alone; CLE and law reform work contributes to changing community perceptions and empowering and educating people about their rights and responsibilities.

Kris thinks that it could be very easy for CLC workers to become disillusioned, for instance constant lack of resources, barriers facing our clients and systemic problems eluding justice for many. She notes that sometimes being in a RRR location can intensify those feelings and whilst we seek to provide strength and support to our clients we must remember that our workers require it as well. It is the uniqueness of the sector being a very positive environment that ensures there are often many people who are willing to provide that strength and support.



Jude Clarkin

Jude Clarkin is the Administration Coordinator at the Women's Legal Service (WLS) in Brisbane, Queensland. She has worked at WLS for 14 years, since 1994. Prior to WLS she had been working in the community sector at a women's refuge and rape crisis centre.

Prior to that, she had emigrated from New Zealand, hoping to continue working as a telephone technician. The lack of female toilets in phone exchanges put paid to that.

Jude has also sat on the management committee of the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services (QAILS) for many years, although she is not on the committee at present.

Apart from the day-to-day operations of WLS in Brisbane, Jude has been involved in many other areas of CLC work. She was involved with the development of CLSIS and its predecessor, NIS, helping to make it meaningful as a tool for management and easy for CLCs to use.

She has also been deeply involved in the organisation of the last two National CLC Conferences held in Brisbane, in 1999 and 2007. Continuing on the conference theme she also assisted with the organisation of a 2004 national conference on feminism and the law, held to celebrate 20 years of Women's Legal Services.

Her biggest achievement for WLS has been the fund-raising, purchase and renovation of a house to use as their own premises. It was a big and time-consuming project for the centre but ultimately exciting and freeing for them – it means the centre has saved a lot of money over the years, being able to use more of their funding to aid their clients and their community.

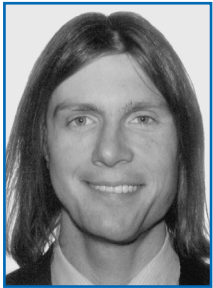
Day-to-day, the most important things Jude does are trying to find extra funds for her centre in order to help them better assist their community, reporting and looking at ways to help WLS and the sector retain solicitors and staff.

Jude believes that CLCs are important because they are the only avenue of legal redress for a large portion of the community – "all centres have some

With a little help from our friends...

special clients whose lives have been immeasurably changed for the better because of their intervention."

CLCs also fulfil a watchdog role in terms of legislative reform and justice. As Jude put it, "we are in a position to give bold and fearless advice and criticism and this is one of the key reasons for CLCs' existence. It is, however, easy to forget this in the day-to-day grind of centre work."



Benedict Bartl

Benedict Bartl is the Welfare Rights Solicitor at the Hobart Community Legal Service in Tasmania. He has been a lawyer for 4 years – all of it spent working at Hobart CLS.

Benedict was the Law Council of Australia's 2007 Young Lawyer of the Year. The award was given in recognition of the "incredible scope and impact of his contribution to social justice". Benedict was also awarded a 2007 Tasmanian Award for Humanitarian Activities. The award was given in recognition of "incredible scope and impact of his contribution to social justice and rights of the disadvantaged in the community".

Benedict finds working at a CLC very satisfying because he is able to work on matters of public interest. He feels that this is a huge advantage to working at a CLC, as opposed to private practice. CLCs believe there are important public interest issues at stake in some cases and are able to take them on despite the fact that there is often no money.

He also believes that CLCs are in a good position to assist their communities at a more systemic level by working on law reform projects. Generally CLCs can put aside time to help review Acts, draft legislation and comment on important issues.

Along with Jane Hutchison, Benedict was involved with the drafting of the Sex Industry Bill in Tasmania in 2007, after being approached directly by the Tasmanian government. Despite Hobart CLS arguing that harm minimisation for sex workers was the most appropriate way to handle the sex industry, the legislative process swung 180 degrees and ended up criminalising prostitution. An introduction, the hard way, to the political process.

Benedict is most proud of Hobart CLS's longest running case that he is conducting. The case is that of a young gay man who is arguing that the Red Cross has discriminated against him because they refused to accept him as a blood donor. Hobart CLS are arguing that the Red Cross should not block blood donors because of their sexuality but should instead ask about donor's sexual practices and base their decision to accept donors on that basis. The case is currently before the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Tribunal.

Benedict believes that CLCs are important because they give lawyers a more holistic view of the law – they are asked to participate in law reform and undertake public interest law, as well as casework. For the community they are important because they provide an avenue for justice otherwise unavailable for most of their clients. Access to Justice is what CLCs do best.

Staff and Volunteers

From figures provided by approx 170 CLCs participating in the National Professional Indemnity Insurance Scheme for 2007/08.

| State | Full-time staff | Part-time staff | Volunteers |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| ACT | 11 | 13 | 51 |
| NSW | 215 | 199 | 1011 |
| NT | 37 | 6 | 66 |
| QLD | 125 | 113 | 776 |
| SA | 33 | 44 | 112 |
| TAS | 11 | 16 | 101 |
| VIC | 194 | 244 | 1300 |
| WA | 81 | 133 | 339 |
| Total | 707 | 768 | 3756 |

State Reports



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Deb Phippen
ACT NACLC State rep

The ACT CLC network consists of 5 centres and is unfunded. Members meet on a regular basis to share information and organise joint work. Highlights for this year include:

- Continuing to work together on a range of law reform issues including a joint submission on the development of a new ACT Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal.
- Other law reform activities including submissions for a variety of legislative reviews such as DV and Protection Orders Act, the Unit Titles Act and the Housing Assistance Act. We have also produced our own law reform documents such as a report card on the Residential Tenancies Act; this led to the Government announcing a review of the ACT.
- Community Legal Education continues to be a major focus for individual centres focusing on the areas of specialisation. Centres also provide joint CLE including a workshop on domestic violence and tenancy issues, visits to schools and sharing information stalls at community events.
- Liaison with ACT Government, community organisations and providers of legal services occurs throughout the year and in May the ACT Legal Aid Forum was established in 08.



NEW SOUTH WALES

Jackie Finlay and Janet Loughman
NSW NACLC State Reps

- A State CLC Conference, Justice – CLCs celebrating change and connecting communities, was held in Sydney in April. The conference included a closed day for delegates from rural, regional and remote areas; a second day for the whole justice sector and the third day was a closed for all NSW CLC members for training and capacity building. The conference was attended by 196 delegates and was highly successful.
- The CCLCG newsletter On the Record went to over 200 subscribers featuring the varied work of CLCs.
- The two state-wide programs for NSW community legal centres: a Training Program and an Aboriginal Legal Access Program were consolidated and evaluated. Further funding was approved by the Public Purpose Fund for these 2 projects.
- The Aboriginal Legal Access Program funded 8 further projects in CLCs to increase their capacity to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities. Projects included the Environmental Defender's Office's Caring for Country and Kingsford Legal Centre's La Prouse Outreach Service.
- The Training Program provided training on cultural awareness, mentoring, mental health awareness, time management and more.... Legal Aid NSW also offered 2 recurrent places to CLC workers in the Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) course.
- CCLCG continued to build strong relationships with other justice sector agencies through NSW Legal Assistance Forum (NLAF) and joined a new NLAF working group on access to justice for CaLD communities.
- The key law reform and policy issues for the CCLCG were: sexual assault in Aboriginal communities; a campaign for a Charter of Rights for NSW and federally; Legal Aid NSW review of services to people who have experienced domestic violence; and a special project to report on human rights protections during the APEC meetings in Sydney in September 2007.
- NSW CLCs continued to meet quarterly in Sydney with member levies used to assist representatives from RRR centres to attend the meetings.



NORTHERN TERRITORY

Caitlin Perry

NT NACLCLC State Rep

- NTACLCLC members were all affected by the Commonwealth government's 'NT Emergency Response'. Some received extra funding to assist services to meet increased demand for services. All members contributed to related policy debates, participated in the development and delivery of appropriate CLE, and continued to seek justice on behalf of the communities they work with.
- NTACLCLC members met with the NT's new Attorney General to introduce our members and raise issues including funding and law reform
- NT centres organised and participated in community legal education activities including NT Law Society Law Week, presentation of mock domestic violence courts and human rights training, an NTER themed 'hypothetical', producing booklets, brochures, radio programs and organising events like the Human Rights Art Show.
- Central Australian Aboriginal Family Violence Legal Unit independently incorporated and became NTLAC's 7th member
- NT centres continued to provide legal services to urban and remote communities despite challenges faced including isolation, under funding and recruitment difficulties
- NT centres participated in policy development and law reform activities in relation to both Commonwealth and NT laws, including domestic violence, welfare rights and homelessness.
- NTACLCLC members worked with other legal service providers through the NT Law Society to establish an NT Pro Bono Clearing house, which was launched in May 2008.
- NTACLCLC members received the first of what will be an annual contribution towards general operating costs as required by the recent Legal Profession Act.
- NTACLCLC Members worked with the National Conference Organising Committee to prepare for the annual NACLCLC conference in Darwin in August 2008.



QUEENSLAND

Susan Bothmann

Queensland NACLCLC State Rep

- The 2007 National CLC Conference in Brisbane with the theme of *Justice in a Climate of Change: CLCs Looking to the Future* was timely and the conference was well attended.
- QAILS centres were involved with the Commonwealth review of the CLSP programme. The Review Report was issued in March 2008 and was discussed at the QAILS conference in May. Joan Jardine from the Commonwealth Attorney's department attended and heard comments from CLC workers.
- Funding for Queensland CLCs was boosted considerably during 2007/08. A total sum of \$825,318 was new recurrent state monies distributed for increasing the salaries of CLC workers. There was also an increase to the CLSP state funding pool from LPITAF of \$1,099,718 at the end of 2007. This money was to upgrade the relevant centres' staff levels to bring those centres into line with Legal Aid Queensland's funding model.
- LPITAF grants of \$600,800 were for project funding to CLCs in the same year.
- Queensland centres received \$1.8 million as its share of the Commonwealth one off funding allocation.
- Unfortunately notwithstanding the increases in funding in general the Arts Law Centre of Queensland (ALCQ) was not so lucky. It had been defunded at the end of 2007 by Arts Queensland then sought funding from the state Attorney General on the basis that as a CLC since 1991 and member of QAILS the anomaly that it had never received CLSP funding previously, should be addressed. Emergency funds to allow ALCQ to continue until 30 June 2008 were granted but subsequently no recurrent funds were provided. As at 30 June 2008 ALCQ management committee was facing winding the centre up.
- Queensland Advocacy Incorporated (QAI) had not previously received State CLSP funds but will receive recurrent funding from 2008/09.

State Reports



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Matthew Atkinson
SA NACLC State rep

South Australian highlights, challenges, and significant issues for the 2007–2008 period include:

- Members of South Australian Council of Community Legal Centres (SACCLS) have participated and consulted with NALC in respect to the Review of the Community Legal Centre Program.
- The Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement of South Australia (ALRM) and the Port Lincoln Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service became members of SACCLS.
- Members of SACCLS are grateful for the additional funding provided by the Commonwealth Government to improve social inclusion.
- Whilst the relationship between SACCLS and South Australian Bar Association is very much at an embryonic stage, it is envisaged that an association can be made whereby members of SACCLS will readily be able to access pro bono assistance.
- Unfortunately, the Legal Profession Bill 2007 (SA) still remains a Bill. The “sticking point” preventing the passage of the Bill at this stage relates to the rights of claimants to access the Guarantee Fund. Members of SACCLS hope that this Bill becomes law in the near future. In respect to dealing with Community Legal Centres, the Bill defines a Community Legal Centre as a legal practice and it resolves the issue of breaching client legal privilege within the Centre; the Bill provides that disclosure, for any proper purpose, to officers of the Centre whether or not they are legal practitioners will be taken not to affect the operation of client legal privilege (or other legal professional privilege).
- SACCLS and the Legal Services Commission of South Australia continue to work cooperatively and report to each other on service delivery and issues within the sector on a regular basis.
- Members of SACCLS continue to provide legal assistance and services to individuals, engage in law reform activities, and community legal education.



TASMANIA

Jane Hutchison
Tasmanian NACLC State rep

All CLCs in Tasmania were very grateful to receive the one-off funding announced in April by the Federal AG. This money is very much needed by centres in Tasmania due to the fact that there is no State CLS Program. TACLCL is very grateful to NALC for the lobbying done to secure this money.

- TACLCL began the process of drawing up Rules of Association.
- The State Government announced in its May budget funding for Hobart CLS and North West CLC. Whilst this is very good news, TACLCL continues to lobby for a State Community Legal Services Program
- TACLCL worked on a joint submission to the Family Violence Act Review. This submission was coordinated by Susan Fahey from the Women’s Legal Service Tasmania and is the first time centres in Tasmania have worked collaboratively on such a submission.
- Tasmania continues to not have a dedicated SPM, which at times has caused some confusion and difficulties for centres.
- Community Legal Education continues to be a very important activity for all centres, with centres providing information sessions to a variety of community groups and producing a number of legal resources for the public.
- All centres continue to concentrate on delivering quality legal services to the Tasmanian population, particularly those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable.



VICTORIA

*Robin Inglis to Nov 2007
Michael Smith from Nov 2007*
Victorian NALCL State rep

Victorian CLCs and the Federation have enjoyed a very busy and productive year in service delivery, collaboration and innovation.

Highlights:

- The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities becoming fully operational in January - a significant advance in the protection of the rights of the disadvantaged in Victoria. This has led to a range of implementation, education and policy initiatives and its use in legal argument.
- Seniors Rights Victoria established, a specialist CLC focused on preventing elder abuse, by a consortium of Council on the Ageing (Vic), Loddon Campaspe CLC, Public Interest Law Clearing House and Eastern CLC.
- Two other new members: Muslim Legal Service and Association of Employees with Disability.
- State Government introduced landmark family violence prevention legislation with extensive consultation with a Federation co-led coalition.
- Implementation of eight specialist family violence court support lawyers in CLCs, assisted by Federation Best Practice Project.
- Federation's Inclusion & Disability Project, designed to resource the establishment of Disability Action Plans to remove barriers for people with a disability in accessing CLCs
- Expansion of Community Law Partnerships scheme between private law firms and CLCs, including a new partnership between Middletons and Gippsland CLC on a Gippsland residents challenge to local council's development charge
- Brimbank Melton CLC establishing a pilot prisoner legal service with funding from the Legal Services Board.
- Victoria Law Foundation CLC Fellowship awarded to Nicole Rich (Consumer Action Law Centre) who studied how US public interest groups use advocacy strategies, including citizen advocacy. – MS



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

*Chris Gabelish
and Gai Walker*
WA NALCL State reps

- RRR and metro centres continue to struggle to attract and retain staff.
- Accommodation issues and extreme rent rises have been problematic. Commercial rent rises mirror residential rent rises.
- ASU campaign "Community Services – What's it worth?" has been supported by a number of CLCs and their staff in an attempt to improve wage rates and conditions.
- Country Lawyers Graduate Programme commences with 8 Articled Clerks employed.
- CPD legislation introduced. Outcomes include Pro Bono partnerships with larger firms providing training events. CLCAWA and its membership obtained QA provider status meaning presentations and training provided by CLC Solicitors can be counted.
- Successful tenancy workers conference held in December with a two day negotiation course provided by UWA.
- Valuing Volunteers Kit training held to 25 CLC staff.
- WA CLCs participate Law Week in Western Australia with many events held by or in partnership with CLCs.
- New Executive Officer, Amanda Just, commenced in early October.
- The Strategic Plan has been reviewed.
- Review of new membership requirements.
- New 5 year contracts with CPI increments commence for new Tenancy regions based on WA CLCs proposal.
- New Joondalup CLC funded for 3 years.
- New Older Persons Service commenced at Northern Suburbs CLC. They are developing a model based on the WA Tenancy funded model. TASWA provides support on policy, 'peak', non metro advice line and resources to local service units at CLCs.
- WA AG has again funded some costs towards Practice certificates.
- WA CLCs made submissions on proposed Human Rights Act.

THE CUTTING EDGE

The effectiveness of community legal centres results from their holistic approach and the complementary variety of services offered to support their clients – education projects may be developed as a response to a legal need perceived through an increase in inquiries in a particular area of law, law reform projects are devised, or a test case run, in response to a systemic problem revealed through an individual's case. CLCs strive to engage with and respond to their communities in creative ways. Whether it is through community legal education theatre or novel policy projects, CLCs develop innovative ways of assisting their client communities.

Three significant projects from this year are profiled below.

NALCLC and the Northern Territory Emergency Response

In July 2007 the Federal Government announced it's so called "Emergency Response" in the Northern Territory. NALCLC joined the voices raised against the imposition of the "response". Letters were sent to ALP parliamentarians and NALCLC was part of the National Civil Society Organisations call for the delay of the NTER Bill 2007. On behalf of NALCLC, Liz O'Brien, NALCLC Convenor attended the National Civil Society gathering in support of the delegation of NT elders to parliament on 7 August 2007.

While the NTER was said to be triggered by the Little Children are Sacred Report, not a single one of the recommendations of that report formed part of the Federal Governments "response". In order to impose the NTER on Indigenous communities the Government trampled on Australian Human Rights by suspending the Racial Discrimination Act.

The issue was a major focus of the 2007 National CLC Conference with the NALCLC and National Welfare Rights Project developed during the conference. In November 2007 Liz O'Brien secured funding from Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department for NALCLC, utilising the expertise and commitment of the National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN), to undertake a scoping project on how best to support service delivery by NT CLCs in dealing with social security issues arising from the Australian Government's NT Emergency Response.

The project was carried out by Genevieve Bolton (Principal Solicitor at the ACT Welfare Rights & Legal Centre and National Liaison Officer of NWRN).

Following the findings of the scoping project, NALCLC and NWRN made a successful submission to the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department to pilot a NTER Welfare Rights outreach pilot for 12 months.

The Attorney-General's Department funded the 12 month pilot project through the allocation of \$250 000 each to the NT indigenous legal aid services, the North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency (NAAJA) and the Central Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service (CAALAS).

This project would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the National Welfare Rights Network, Genevieve Bolton, the Welfare Rights and Legal Centre in the ACT and Darwin Community Legal Centre. It is an example of an outstanding partnership between NALCLC, NWRN and Aboriginal Legal Services.

WA Country Lawyers Graduate Program

The Country Lawyers Graduate Program is a joint initiative between the CLCs in WA, the Law Society of Western Australia, Legal Aid WA, the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia and Family Violence Prevention Legal Services.

Graduates who enter the program spend their Articles year at the Legal Aid WA office in Perth. Once they have completed their Articles, they then spend the following three years rotating through various rural, regional or remote legal services, including CLCs, Aboriginal Legal Service, Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and Legal Aid WA regional offices. The graduates will be restricted practitioners in their first year of rotation and unrestricted over the following two years. They will be assisting RRR communities in WA, by way of the provision of the types of legal services that the participating agencies deliver to their communities.

The Country Lawyers Graduate Program provides an opportunity for legal practitioners to create a broad and solid foundation to their legal career and an opportunity for them to explore a range of career paths outside the normal metropolitan big-firm experience. The experiences and skills set they will be provided with will be second to none.

The program also helps address many of the issues around recruitment and retention of staff for RRR services in WA, giving these CLCs and other services access to a larger group of legal practitioners who are interested in working in these areas, thereby increasing the access to justice for these communities.

The Program commenced in 2007 with seven Articled Clerks employed in early 2008. Once they have finished their Articles, the solicitors will begin working in RRR services – at this stage they are earmarked for CLCs, ALSs, Family Violence Prevention Units and Legal Aid offices. The Country Lawyer's Project Team based at Legal Aid will continue to monitor and support the solicitors during their placements. Legal Aid WA will continue to be the employing body with an MOU between Legal Aid and the participating Agencies defining the roles and responsibilities of all the parties.

The Country Lawyer's Programme also has been placing unrestricted practitioners into RRR WA as well as funding an e-based Learning Management System based in the Law Society of WA.

Freedom, Respect, Equality, Dignity: Action NGO REPORT TO THE UN COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Over the course of 2007/08, NACLC, together with the Human Rights Law Resource Centre and the Kingsford Legal Centre, prepared and submitted a major NGO Report to the United Nations regarding Australia's compliance with the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*.

The project was jointly coordinated by Teena Balgi (Kingsford Legal Centre), Annie Pettitt (NACLC) and Ben Schokman and Philip Lynch (Human Rights Law Resource Centre), with substantial contributions from a further 30 NGOs with specific human rights and subject matter expertise. The NGO Report was supported, in whole or in part, by over 100 NGOs across Australia.

The report, entitled *Freedom, Respect, Equality, Dignity: Action*, is a comprehensive and constructive analysis of the state of economic, social and cultural rights in Australia and makes a range of targeted recommendations to address disadvantage and poverty. The NGO Report documents a number of areas in which Australia is falling short of its obligations.

It focuses on areas that have been the subject of extensive NGO activity and research in Australia. Among other issues, subjects detailed in the Report include:

- the lack of legal recognition and protection of economic, social and cultural rights;
- groups within society that remain vulnerable to discrimination, including Indigenous Australians, women, children, people with disability, asylum seekers and same-sex couples;
- the current housing crisis and the significant problem of homelessness;
- regression of workers' rights under WorkChoices;
- the chronic underfunding of both public health care and education;
- the nature and extent of poverty in Australia and the need for a comprehensive national poverty reduction strategy, and
- Indigenous self-determination and disadvantage.

The Report includes recommendations and concrete steps that Australian authorities should take to bring Australia more fully into compliance with its obligations under the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*; an Australia in which all persons can live with freedom, respect, equality and dignity. Importantly, the NGO Report provides a valuable resource for CLCs who are looking to undertake their work in a human rights framework.

The project was a substantial undertaking and a very effective way to bring many NGO voices together; including those of 19 CLCs and 2 National CLC Networks. The project and report was assisted by the substantial pro bono assistance of Mallesons Stephen Jaques and was generously supported by funding from the Keir and Reichstein Foundations. (www.hrlrc.org.au)



Network Reports

NATIONAL COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE NETWORKS

National CLC Networks are the key policy advisory and consultative bodies for CLCs and NACLC. The Networks also function to enhance collaboration between centres, to share expertise and resources, to identify emerging needs and to develop joint projects to address those needs. The Networks are organised around specific areas of community legal concerns and practice.

NACLC provides assistance to the Networks including funding for regular phone link-ups between CLCs across Australia, support for face to face meetings at the National CLC Conference and other support as necessary. This year there are 12 reports from the National Networks.

Australian Network of Environmental Defender's Offices (ANEDO)

ANEDO comprises EDO offices in each State and Territory dedicated to public interest environmental law and public participation in environmental decision-making. EDOs provide services to the community through advice and legal representation, community legal education and law reform and policy work. The EDO network produces a large range of online and printed publications designed to educate the community about environmental law and to assist members of the public to effectively participate in environmental decision making.

Although Commonwealth funding continues to be subject to a "no litigation" restriction, EDOs have been able to pursue many interesting and important cases using other funds. An area in which several EDO offices have made a particular contribution is in pursuing public interest litigation with respect to climate change issues. ANEDO welcomes the commitment to lifting the litigation restriction contained in the Commonwealth AGs Review of Community Legal Services program report.

ANEDO has contributed several important submissions about national policy issues ranging from water resource management to the development of an emissions trading scheme. Examples of the policy work of ANEDO are available at <http://www.edo.org.au/>.

Brendan Sydes
Environment Defenders Office, Victoria

Disability Rights Network

This year, the Disability Rights Network re-instated quarterly phone hook-ups, which has resulted in an increase in information sharing and collaborative work.

In particular, DRN Network members have worked on shadow reports under the ICCPR and ICESCR, submissions on issues relating to accessible public transport (including airline travel) for people with disability, and have run test cases on the issue of companion animals.

It is also worth highlighting that on 18 July 2008, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was ratified by Australia. Members of the Disability Rights Network, disability person's organisations (DPOs), the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) and the Australian Government were instrumental in Australia's substantial involvement in the convention process and all should be proud of their contribution to the first major human rights treaty of the 21st Century. In the year ahead, the DRN will continue its work agitating for effective implementation of convention in Australia.

Joanna Shulman
Disability Discrimination Legal Centre, NSW

Employment Network

The federal election was, of course, significant for all CLC members. For the employment network it provided an opportunity to campaign about the impacts of Workchoices as well as appraise all parties' workplace policies.

The network compiled lobbying materials for each centre to customise for their local MPs. These set out compelling case studies about how workplace

conditions for our clients had deteriorated under Workchoices, along with analysis of how clients may fare under the proposed policies of the ALP, Greens and Democrats.

We also wrote to Julia Gillard with a critique of how the ALP's 'Fair Work Australia' policy might affect our clients.

This work has continued under the new government as our clients remain largely excluded from unfair dismissal remedies and report continuing high levels of bullying and harassment, as well as the loss of award entitlements.

We are also concerned that Fair Work Australia's proposed overhaul of workplace laws will not do enough to redress the heightened imbalance in the employment relationship resulting from Workchoices.

Linda Tucker
Kingsford Legal Centre
Employment Network Convenor

National Human Rights Network

The last year has been a busy one for the National Human Rights Network. We have been involved in a project to document the state of human rights in Australia, and ultimately to contribute to the effective protection of human rights standards in Australia, through the production of NGO reports for the UN. In April 2008, in conjunction with Kingsford Legal Centre and the Human Rights Law Resource Centre, the Network submitted a report on Australia's implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CECSR).

The Report, prepared with contributions from over 30 NGOs and supported by over 100 local, national and international NGOs, was very well received by CECSCR.

We are currently working on a NGO Report on Australia's implementation on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which is expected to be submitted to the UN Human Rights Committee (HRC) in September 2008.

Our ICESCR and ICCPR Reports, which are known together as Freedom, Respect, Equality, Dignity: Action are a comprehensive analysis of human rights in

Australia and include a range of targeted recommendations to address disadvantage. The CECSCR and HRC will review Australia's implementation of ICESCR and ICCPR next year.

The Network has also been involved in doing preparatory capacity-building and educational work in relation to the upcoming national human rights consultation and possible national charter of rights.

Other activities of the Network include hosting sessions with Gay McDougall, UN Independent Expert on Minority Issues, and Philippe Tremblay, of the Association for the Prevention of Torture; attending the NGO consultations on human rights conducted by the federal Attorney-General's Department and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; conducting workshops at conferences on human rights; and generally supporting the human rights work of the CLC sector.

Teena Balgi
Kingsford Legal Centre, NSW

Mental Health Network

We also shared resources and strategies in relation to potential sources of advocacy funds (beyond the Commonwealth who knocked us back last year); advocacy levels at Mental Health Review Tribunals; reviews of mental health legislation in Tasmania and NSW; use of pro bono resources; privacy issues; and Shadow Reports on International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Thanks, again, to NACLC and all Network members. Let's hope that the PIAC MHLS pilot leads to the establishment of the third specialist mental health CLC in Australia and brings us one step closer to the long term goal of one in every Australian state and territory.

Sophie Delaney
Mental Health Legal Centre, Victoria

National Association of Tenancy Organisations (NATO)

Along with other telephone meetings during the year, NATO held its regular face-to-face meeting prior to the Brisbane National Conference.

Network Reports

However, the year became more exciting with the election of a new government who introduced a Federal Housing Minister and portfolio for the first time in over 10 years.

In response to an emerging housing policy agenda, NATO met in Canberra last May. Discussions were held regarding the new National Affordable Housing Agreement (to replace the current Commonwealth State Housing Agreement) and the National Affordable Rental Scheme aimed at delivering 50,000 new units of 'affordable housing' across Australia by 2011. A written response to the latter was forwarded.

During the May meeting, NATO organised a meeting with the Federal Housing Minister, Tanya Plibersek to identify ourselves and our work.

NATO also made a submission to the Federal Government's green paper on homelessness in Australia.

NATO has continued its representative role on National Shelter, the peak non-government organisation representing the interests of low-income housing consumers. This work has included the development of its 2007 Policy Platform and lobbying Federal political parties in the lead up to the Federal election. National Shelter also continued to be an integral part of the National Affordable Housing Summit Group, a coalition of Australian Council of Social Service, Australian Council of Trade Unions, Community Housing Federation of Australia and Housing Industry Association and National Shelter; and the National Housing Alliance - the Community Housing Federation of Australia; Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union; National Shelter and the Urban Development Institute of Australia, as well as ACOSS and HIA. The alliances were first formed in 2004 to demonstrate cooperation and provide some directions for reform across the spectrum of housing issues including the supply of public housing, first home ownership and infrastructure provision. After the formation of the new Federal Government, the two alliances have also worked closely with them towards developing a National Housing Agreement.

Penny Carr
Tenants Union Queensland

Rural, Regional & Remote (RRR) Network 2007-2008 Annual Report

The RRR Network continues to meet periodically by phone link-up.

A face-to-face national RRR network meeting was held at the National Conference in Brisbane in 2007. At this meeting Brett Cranswick, from the South East CLC in SA, was elected RRR Convener. The meeting put forward a resolution to call on NACLCLC to approach the Commonwealth for specific funding for a RRR (Rural, Regional Remote) breakout prior to the 2008 National CLC Conference.

Issues RRR CLCs continue to face include:

- Communication between RRR Centres to maintain a more cohesive network to work on solutions, including associated travel costs;
- Better IT support including exploring Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP);
- Travel costs to do outreach for clients in areas where there is poor public transport infrastructure, and associated time/staff costs in doing this travel;
- Getting specialist legal assistance to RRR areas and Centres; and accessing pro bono support.

RRR Centres have been working with NACLCLC to secure funding of secretariat support for the RRR Network to enable it to more strategically address some of the issues outlined above.

The following items were discussed at our regular teleconference link ups.

- Country Lawyers Project
- "Doing Justice" DVD
- RRR Network response to Federal Governments intervention in Territory
- Strategic Partnerships with State Legal Aid Organisations
- RRR Breakaway at 2008 National CLC Conference
- Internet and other proposed communication or training needs.

With his move to the private sector Brett resigned at the RRR convener. Lee Milcherdy from Taylor Street

Community Legal Service in Hervey Bay, Queensland agreed to take on the position of convener and Allan Mallard the task of minute secretary until the 2008 National CLC Conference.

Lee Milcherdy

Taylor Street Community Legal Service, Queensland

National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN)

The NWRN is an incorporated (2003) national peak body representing Welfare Rights Centres throughout Australia.

Over the last 12 months, NWRN have provided a number of submissions to Government inquiries and reviews including into Social Security Amendment (2007 Measures No 2) Bill 2007, job capacity assessment review, Employment services review, Disability Employment strategy, DEEWR review of Social Security litigant practices, Homelessness review, JCSI review and FaHCSIA's review of the Intelligent Information system.

NWRN's work in these areas has resulted in some early successes since the election of the new Government, including the adoption of a new set of principles to guide not only DEEWR's litigation but that of FaHCSIA as well. The government has also appeared to have taken on board one of our fundamental concerns with the design of the Welfare to Work system and has adopted a 'work ready' rather than a 'work first' approach. They have also implemented some of the NWRN's interim measure proposals ahead of the new compliance regime.

NWRN undertook a number of delegations to Canberra resulting in high-level meetings with Centrelink, Government Departments and Ministers, part of which involved highlighting the flaws in the Welfare to Work regime and proposing changes to ameliorate its harsh effects. NWRN also undertook significant campaign work around its Budget Priorities Submission which identified a series of proposals to readdress the balance of risks and responsibilities in the social security system.

Several NWRN members were recognised for their achievements during this year, including Michael Raper, receiving the Justice medal awarded by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, Ben Bartl, Law Council of

Australia's Young Lawyer of the Year, and the Adelaide Welfare Rights Centre who received a mention in the National Givewell Good Giving Guide Charity Award in the Best Community project for its Homelessness Clinic.

Genevieve Bolton

National Liaison Office, NWRN

Welfare Rights and Legal Centre, ACT

Women's Legal Services Australia

WLSA's Coordinating Committee had a huge year. Two face to face meetings in Sydney allowed the committee to progress some substantial issues pertaining to the network as well as give the new Law Reform representative an opportunity to meet and coordinate with representatives from around Australia face to face.

We sadly farewelled Joanna Fletcher both as our Law Reform Coordinator and from the sector as well. Joanna was always abreast of the pertinent issues and she forged a strong reputation for WLSA. We thank and congratulate Joanna for the contribution she made.

The March meeting in Sydney was well attended by members from around Australia. The 3 days allowed an opportunity to workshop CLE and law reform activities. The process was both useful as a means for sharing ideas about what works and what does not as well as providing a foundation for the Strategic Planning meeting held in June 2008. Attendees were also provided a presentation on Family Relationship Centres by the Federal Attorney General's Department and a presentation of the family law case law since the changes were introduced both from a CLC perspective and a private practise perspective.

Our June face to face meeting was a full 2 days of reflecting and considering all the law reform and policy concerns both short-term and long-term. I trust that we have captured and prioritised our Strategic Plan in accordance with the perspective of the WLSA collective.

For committee representatives who wear numerous hats in their everyday working life there has been a huge amount of effort and energy contributed over the last year into both the network itself and the various submission responses.

The committee appreciates the limitations that everyone faces in their capacity to contribute but welcomes

Network Reports

any feedback and involvement from delegates throughout Australia.

Kristen Wallwork

Coordinating Committee Convenor

Katherine Women's Information and Legal Service,
NT

National Youth Advocacy Network

The National Youth Advocacy Network's main activities revolved around information sharing. The National Children's and Youth Law centre continued to provide logistical support for meetings. The Network did not manage to set its own agenda.

Tiffany Overall (YouthLaw Vic) represented the Network on the Child Rights Taskforce – the coordinating committee for the CROC Shadow Reporting process which comprises national organisations with a commitment to child rights reporting. The network also contributed work on child rights issues to the ICCPR and ICESCR Shadow Reports.

A number of network members worked on national issues during the year – including submissions to the Green Paper on Homelessness.

The network continued to support the re-funding of a national youth peak organisation – an objective which looked likely to be achieved by year's end.

Given the existing commitments of specialist youth legal agencies, the Network will need to consider broadening its membership in order to sustain energy. There is no shortage of issues it could address.

James McDougall

National Children's and Youth Law Centre, NSW

Older Person's Law Network

At the 2007 National CLC Conference in Brisbane, an Older Person's Law Network was established. This was in response to the "high numbers of older people seeking assistance from CLCs across Australia ... as well as the specific legal and related issues faced by vulnerable clients within this cohort."

The Network has had a most active year, focusing on substantive and operational issues related to the legal and related needs of older people, with an emphasis on

the prevention of and response to abuse, exploitation and mistreatment.

There has been a growth in specific services for this client group over the last two years, with new services established in WA, NSW, Victoria and Queensland. NACLC endorsed a campaign seeking Federal Government support to establish and fund a Specialist Legal Advocacy Service for older people in each State and Territory.

The Network has conducted regular meetings, with an initial focus on sharing service models and issues arising; collated a series of case studies for use in advocacy and lobbying; co-ordinated campaigning for older people's legal issues and services around the Federal election; advocated for the implementation of the recommendations of the 2007 report of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs 'Older People and the Law', and forged links with ANPEA (Australian Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse).

Peter Noble

Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre, Vic

Michael Smith

Eastern Community Legal Centre, Vic

Child Support Network

The Child Support Network has started a Precedent file on the BBS for all members to use and add to. The Network has teleconferences four times a year so that members can keep up-to-date with changes in legislation, share information, discuss types of cases and learn from each other. We held a meeting at the Brisbane National CLC Conference so members could meet one another face to face, as it is easier to talk to people once you have met them. Anyone interested in joining the network, and who wants to understand child support legislation, policies and procedures, is welcome and may participate in the teleconferences.

Katrina Haller

Peninsula Community Legal Centre, Victoria

NACLC National Office Staff

The staff of the national office of NACLC during the 2007/2008 financial year were:

DIRECTOR

Julie Bishop (till January 2008)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Julia Hall (from January 2008)

INFORMATION & SERVICES MANAGER

Toni Luu (till March 2008)

Sarah Mitchell (from April 2008)

ADMINISTRATOR

Megan Robson (from June 2007)

CLSIS CONSULTANT

Justin Finighan

FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT – PART-TIME

Jane King (till December 2007)

FINANCIAL OFFICER – PART TIME

Chrisanthi (Chris) Maddison (from January 2008)

BBS ADMINISTRATOR – PART TIME

Phill Byrne (acting)

BBS ACCOUNTS – PART TIME

Sarah Mitchell

In addition, the following people were employed as consultants during the year:

Marilyn Hall and **Brooke Lennon** organised the 2007 National Conference.

Rachna Muddagouni was project manager and primary author of the *National Management Committee Guide for Community Legal Centres*.

Brooke Lennon coordinated the production of the 2008 *NACLC Australian and New Zealand CLC Directory* from February to May.

Annie Pettitt is project managing the Shadow Reports for NACLC to the Human Rights Committee of the UN on the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (ICESCR) and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (ICCPR).

Justin Finighan coordinated the WebEx, VoIP and CLSIS training projects.



Top Row (L-R):
Julia Hall, Toni Luu,
Sarah Mitchell



Bottom Row (L-R):
Megan Robson,
Justin Finighan

Julie Bishop

In February 2008, Julie Bishop, NACLC Director, left the CLC sector, and indeed the country, to take up a position as the Director of the Law Centres Foundation in the United Kingdom.

Julie started working at NACLC in 1993 when she became the Data Project Officer, working on the establishment of NIS (the fore-runner to CLSIS).

After 10 years, she became the Director of NACLC in 2003 upon the departure of James McDougall.

Julie's warm, effusive personality and her superb communication and management skills made her an excellent Director of NACLC. Julie dealt with staff and management from all CLCs, the Attorney-General's Department, the state program managers and funders with a high degree of professionalism and humour.

During her time as Director, Julie, among many other highlights, oversaw an increasing level of professionalism in NACLC's dealings with various stakeholders, a number of re-negotiations of the CLSP Service Agreement, an increasing focus of NACLC's work in the area of human rights and working with the UN and a number of funding increases for centres.

NACLC would like to thank Julie for her commitment to the strengthening of CLCs and wish her the best in her new position.



Financial Reports

SANDRA D. GROLLMUS

*Registered Company Auditor
Registered Tax Agent*

7 BURRANEER CLOSE
ALLAWAH 2218
TELEPHONE 9546 7366
FAX 9546 2267

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

TO: The Members

SCOPE

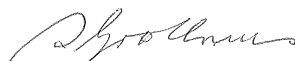
I have audited the financial report of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES for the year ended 30 June, 2008. The Members of the governing body are responsible for the financial report. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the Members.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements and relevant statutory and other requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Association's financial position and the results of its operations.

The Audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion, the financial report consisting of Balance Sheet, Income Statements and Notes to Financial Statements presents fairly, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the Funding and Performance Agreements the financial position of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES as at 30 June, 2008 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.



SANDRA GROLLMUS

Dated 3/11/08

Registered Company Auditor

Registered No. 1254

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE STATEMENT

National Association of Community Legal Centres

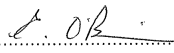
67 757 001 303

Statement by the Management Committee

The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements

In the opinion of the Committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 6:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES as at 30 June, 2008 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

NATIONAL CONVENOR.......... ELIZABETH O'BRIEN

TREASURER..........

DATED

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2008

1 Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

General Information

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT) and Funding Bodies. The Committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT) and the funding and performance agreements and the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 112 Income Taxes

AASB 117 Leases

AASB 1031 Materiality

AASB 110 Events after the Balance Sheet date

No other applicable Accounting Standards, Australian Accounting Interpretations or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Board have been applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from Income Tax.

(b) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, Plant and Equipment is stated at historical costs less Accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amounts of all fixed assets are depreciated using the straight line method over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

(c) Leases

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all of the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

(d) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the entity has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

(e) Grants

Grants are recognized as income over the periods necessary to match them with the related costs which they are intended to compensate.

2 Grants in advance

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|---|----------------|----------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Webex | 29,600 | 40,000 |
| Management Committee Guide | 53,039 | 80,000 |
| IT Support Scheme | 48,740 | 50,000 |
| Voip Trial | 48,380 | 50,000 |
| PLO | 97,693 | 95,778 |
| Online Library Resources | 0 | 130,000 |
| CLSIIS Training | 30,000 | 69,001 |
| Webex Implementation | 21,659 | - |
| Story Book DVD | 6,000 | - |
| Sector Support Activities | 150,000 | - |
| Performance Outcomes | 15,000 | - |
| RRR- Law Graduates | 60,000 | - |
| Consultation Meeting for CLSP Funding Model | 8,500 | - |
| Total Grants in Advance | 568,611 | 514,779 |

3 Non Current Liabilities

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|--|--------------|---------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Provision – Long Service Leave | 3,769 | 19,475 |
| Provision – Redundancy | - | 12,816 |
| Provision – Workers' Compensation 'Top-up' | - | 4,747 |
| Total Non Current Liabilities | 3,769 | 37,038 |

4 Other AG's Project Income

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|---|----------------|----------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Online Library Resources | 130,000 | - |
| Projects commenced but not completed as at 30 June 08 | - | - |
| Management Committee Guide | 26,960 | - |
| IT Support Scheme | 1,260 | - |
| VoIP Trial | 1,620 | - |
| WebEx | 14,100 | - |
| Other AG's Project Outcome | 173,940 | - |

5 CLSP Review Consultation Grant, for Sector Coordination & Support Activities

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|--|---------------|----------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Income recognised for Sector Coordination & Support activities in the current yr | 20,000 | - |
| Total CLSP Review Grant recognised in current year | 20,000 | - |

6 Association Liability Insurance

| | 2008 | 2007 |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| | \$ | \$ |
| Total Insurance Premiums received from members and paid to Aon Risk Services Australia Limited | 83,413 | 73,182 |

7 Operating Lease

The operating lease on the rental premises is due to expire on 28 February 2009, NACLC has the option to renew or terminate the lease. The lessor must be advised of the decision by 28 November 2008.

| NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|----------|--|
| ABN: 67 757 001 303 | | | | |
| BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2008 | | | | |
| | Note | 2008 | 2007 | |
| ASSETS | | | | |
| Current Assets | | | | |
| Petty Cash | | 100.00 | 100 | |
| PII Cash Management account | | 31,630.07 | 30,227 | |
| Cash Management Account | | 688,557.27 | 783,191 | |
| Online Saver Account | | 100,000.00 | 0 | |
| Cheque Account | | -123,953.84 | -114,462 | |
| Accounts Receivable | | 15,266.57 | 60,023 | |
| Accrued Income | | 1,425.58 | 1,170 | |
| Prepaid Expenses | | 2,695.68 | 0 | |
| Total Current Assets | | 715,721.33 | 760,249 | |
| Non Current Assets | | | | |
| Rental Bond | | 4,987.26 | 4,987 | |
| Office Furn/ Equipment-Cost | 39,320.00 | | | |
| Accumulated Depreciation | -32,241.86 | | | |
| Total Furniture & Equipment | | 7,078.14 | 9,251 | |
| Total Non Current Assets | | 12,065.40 | 14,238 | |
| TOTAL ASSETS | | 727,786.73 | 774,487 | |
| Current Liabilities | | | | |
| GST Payable -Net | | 30,980.08 | 52,242 | |
| Employee Liabilities | | 4,349.46 | 4,383 | |
| Provisions -Staff entitlements | | 9,870.63 | 21,570 | |
| Accrued Expenses | | 43,962.15 | 8,668 | |
| Grants in advance | 2 | 568,611.89 | 514,779 | |
| BBS Income in Advance | | 800.00 | 0 | |
| National conference Monies | | 2,046.10 | 49,183 | |
| PI Insurance Monies | | -1,152.16 | 13,132 | |
| PII legal costs fund | | 21,634.57 | 21,635 | |
| PII excess fund | | 31,630.07 | 30,227 | |
| Association Liability Insurance | | 0.00 | 2,079 | |
| Total Current Liabilities | | 712,732.79 | 717,896 | |
| Non Current Liabilities | 3 | | | |
| Provisions- Long Service Leave | | 3,769.06 | 19,476 | |
| Provision Redundancy | | 0.00 | 12,817 | |
| Provision-Workers Comp top-up | | 0.00 | 4,747 | |
| Total Non Current Liabilities | | 3,769.06 | 37,039 | |
| TOTAL LIABILITIES | | 716,501.85 | 754,935 | |
| NET ASSETS | | 11,284.88 | 19,552 | |
| ACCUMULATED FUNDS | | 11,284.88 | 19,552 | |

| NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES | | | |
|---|------|--------------|---------|
| ABN:67 757 001 303 | | | |
| INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2008 | | | |
| | Note | 2008 | 2,007 |
| | | \$ | \$ |
| INCOME | | | |
| Contributions from Centres | | 328,050.10 | 323,747 |
| BBS Income | | 4,400.00 | 9,400 |
| PLO Grant | | 95,778.00 | 93,900 |
| CLSP Review Consultation Grant | 5 | 20,000.00 | 0 |
| CLIS Training Grant | | 43,642.13 | 47,280 |
| Other AG's Project Income | 4 | 173,940.95 | 0 |
| Administration Income | | 18,736.17 | 18,000 |
| Bank interest received | | 20,862.64 | 14,137 |
| Sundry Income | | 125.00 | 6,747 |
| | | 705,534.99 | 513,211 |
| NALCL Conference Income | | 215,858.03 | 169,563 |
| Professional Indemnity Insurance Premium | | 176,547.21 | 178,228 |
| TOTAL INCOME | | 1,097,940.23 | 861,003 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Staffing Expenses | | 254,917.39 | 194,607 |
| Project Expenses | | 221,105.65 | 41,830 |
| Operating Expenses | | 237,779.30 | 284,148 |
| Conference Expenses | | 215,858.03 | 169,563 |
| Professional Indemnity Insurance | | 176,547.21 | 178,228 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 1,106,207.58 | 868,377 |
| DEFICIT/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR | | -8,267.35 | -7,374 |
| SUMMARY | | | |
| Deficit for the Year | | -8,267.35 | -7,374 |
| Accumulated funds at the beginning of the year | | 19,552.23 | 26,926 |
| Accumulated funds at the end of the year | | 11,284.88 | 19,552 |

| NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES | | | |
|--|------|------------|---------|
| ABN: 67 757 001 303 | | | |
| INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2008 | | | |
| 2007 NATIONAL CONFERENCE HELD IN QUEENSLAND | | | |
| | Note | 2008 | 2007 |
| | | QLD | NSW |
| INCOME | | | |
| Registration Fees | | 139,320.86 | 112,288 |
| Sponsorship | | 55,818.17 | 54,340 |
| Conference grants | | 20,719.00 | 0 |
| Donations | | 0.00 | 15,000 |
| TOTAL INCOME | | 215,858.03 | 181,628 |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Organiser | | 46,200.00 | 39,199 |
| Venue | | 78,524.95 | 50,169 |
| Audio-Visual | | 28,554.53 | 26,219 |
| Childcare | | 5,276.36 | 1,900 |
| Welcome & entertainment | | 3,078.18 | 0 |
| Design & Printing | | 10,418.45 | 6,381 |
| Network catering | | 3,002.00 | 9,091 |
| Office Supplies | | 540.00 | 3,361 |
| Advertising & Media | | 1,999.22 | 0 |
| Postage & Courier | | 328.89 | 201 |
| Subsidies | | 12,609.12 | 22,400 |
| Telecommunications | | 1,173.78 | 687 |
| Travel & Accommodation | | 28,856.52 | 7,924 |
| Sundry expenses | | 6,584.77 | 386 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 227,146.77 | 167,918 |
| Conference Surplus/Shortfall transferred to Conference float | | -11,288.74 | 13,710 |

| | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES | | |
| ABN:67 757 001 303 | | |
| | | |
| INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2008 | | |
| | | |
| CORE | | |
| | 2008 | 2007 |
| INCOME | \$ | \$ |
| Contributions from Centres | 328,050.00 | 323,747 |
| BBS Income | 4,400.00 | 9,400 |
| CLSP Review Consultation Grant | 20,000.00 | 0 |
| Administration Income | 18,736.17 | 18,000 |
| Bank interest received | 20,862.64 | 14,137 |
| Sundry Income | 125.00 | 6,747 |
| TOTAL CORE INCOME | 392,173.81 | 372,031 |
| | | |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| Staffing Expenses | | |
| Salaries | 100,229.42 | 94,338 |
| Superannuation | 13,130.83 | 8,911 |
| Staff Recruitment | 23,627.29 | 340 |
| Staff Training/Conferences | 3,355.45 | 3,260 |
| Workers' Compensation Insurance | 1,082.80 | 587 |
| Temporary Staff | 54,590.49 | 9,074 |
| Project Management fees | -23,206.93 | 0 |
| Provision -Staff leave Entitlements | 2,502.35 | 6,753 |
| Provision-redundancy written back | -12,816.56 | 0 |
| Provision -Workers' Comp top up written back | -4,747.00 | 0 |
| Total Staffing Expenses | 157,748.14 | 123,263 |
| Operating Expenses | | |
| Consultants | 10,053.41 | 30,686 |
| Accountancy & Audit | 7,311.41 | 3,918 |

| | | |
|--|-------------------|----------------|
| Advertising /Media | 1,951.35 | 1,802 |
| Administration expenses | 960.00 | 0 |
| Trade marks | 730.00 | 0 |
| Bad Debts | 3,700.00 | 0 |
| Bank Charges | 447.42 | 474 |
| BBS Expenses | 13,333.00 | 14,486 |
| Computer Expenses/Software | 1,769.98 | 3,239 |
| Depreciation | 2,528.42 | 4,697 |
| Electricity | 1,850.47 | 1,393 |
| Fee Waivers | 4,196.27 | 7,185 |
| Insurances | 4,182.53 | 6,182 |
| Gifts & Donations | 755.94 | 0 |
| Library/Subscriptions | 1,643.42 | 5,729 |
| Meeting expenses | 2,731.29 | 1,414 |
| National Representative Expenses | 15,517.47 | 16,352 |
| Network Phone Link ups | 3,893.39 | 3,675 |
| Office Supplies | 2,206.22 | 2,300 |
| Photocopying | 443.43 | 292 |
| Postage /Couriers | 3,260.16 | 6,505 |
| Printing /Design | 15,862.26 | 34,299 |
| Rent | 23,933.68 | 22,739 |
| Repairs/Maintenance/Cleaning | 2,510.60 | 2,342 |
| Sundry | 343.70 | 592 |
| Telecommunications | 5,313.17 | 5,598 |
| Travel/Accommodation | 81,080.34 | 77,272 |
| Total Operating Expenses | 212,509.33 | 253,170 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 370,257.47 | 376,433 |
| CORE Surplus for the Year | 21,916.34 | -4,402 |
| Transfer PLO deficit for the Year | -3,454.19 | -2,972 |
| Transfer Online Library Resource deficit | -26,729.50 | 0 |
| TOTAL DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR | -8,267.35 | -7,374 |

| | | | |
|---|--|------------------|---------------|
| NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES | | | |
| ABN: 67 757 001 303 | | | |
| | | | |
| INCOME STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2008 | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| PROGRAM LIAISON OFFICER | | | |
| | | 2008 | 2,007 |
| | | | |
| INCOME | | | |
| Grant Received | | 95,778.00 | 93,900 |
| | | | |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Staffing Expenses | | | |
| Salaries | | 69,613.69 | 60,453 |
| Superannuation | | 4,348.53 | 5,441 |
| Total Staffing Expenses | | 73,962.22 | 65,894 |
| Operating Expenses | | | |
| National Representative Expenses | | 10,974.54 | 10,902 |
| Office Supplies | | 1,330.40 | 1,533 |
| Photocopying | | 295.20 | 195 |
| Postage /Couriers | | 2,173.20 | 1,000 |
| Printing /Design | | 1833.64 | 0 |
| Telecommunications | | 3,328.20 | 3,732 |
| Travel/Accommodation | | 5,334.79 | 13,616 |
| Total Operating Expenses | | 25,269.97 | 30,978 |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | | 99,232.19 | 96,872 |
| Deficit transferred to Core Funding | | -3,454.19 | (2,972) |
| | | | |
| CLSIS TRAINING 07/08 | | | |
| | | 2008 | 2,007 |
| INCOME | | | |
| Grant Income | | 43,642.13 | 47,280 |
| | | | |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Project Management Fees | | 2,206.93 | 5,450 |
| Consultants | | 21,283.69 | 20,915 |
| Meeting expenses | | 6,430.00 | 20,915 |
| CLSIS travel | | 13,721.51 | 0 |
| Total Expenses | | 43,642.13 | 47,280 |
| | | | |
| ONLINE LIBRARY RESOURCES | | | |
| | | 2008 | |
| INCOME | | | |
| Other AG's project income | | 130,000.00 | |
| | | | |
| EXPENDITURE | | | |
| Project Management Fees | | 13,000.00 | |
| Consultants | | 2,400.00 | |
| Library /Subscriptions | | 141,329.50 | |
| Total Expenses | | 156,729.50 | |
| Deficit transferred to Core Funding | | -26,729.50 | |

Report pursuant to section 73(1)(c) of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991* (ACT)

(i) Names of the members of the National Association of Community Legal Centres Management Committee for 2007/08

Elizabeth O'Brien, National Convenor
Deb Phippen, ACT representative
Jackie Finlay and Janet Loughman, NSW co-representatives
Caitlin Perry, NT representative
Susan Bothmann, Qld representative
Matthew Atkinson, SA representative
Jane Hutchison, Tas representative
Robin Inglis, Vic representative (till November 2007)
Michael Smith, Vic representative (from November 2007)
Gai Walker, Treasurer, and Chris Gabelish, WA co-representatives

Special attendee by invitation:
Traci Harris (from March 2008)

(ii) Principal activities of the National Association of Community Legal Centres for 2007/08


The principal activities of the National Association of Community Legal Centres are, as stated in the Objects of its Constitution, to assist disadvantaged and marginalised people in the Australian community obtain access to legal services by:



- supporting and assisting community legal centres to provide these services;
- providing a national forum for community legal centres;
- developing and coordinating national community legal centres policy;
- advancing the interests of community legal centres within Australia.

Further information on the principal activities of NACLC performed in 2007/08 are set out in the Annual Report.

(iii) Net profit or loss of the National Association of Community Legal Centres for 2007/08

The net loss of NACLC for the year 2007/08 was \$8,267.35.


.....
Signature of Convenor

 
.....
Signature of Treasurer