



NACLC

ANNUAL REPORT
2010/11

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About community legal centres and NACLC



Community legal centres

Community legal centres (CLCs) are not-for-profit, community-based organisations that provide legal advice, casework, information and a range of community development services to their local or special interest communities.

CLCs' work is targeted at disadvantaged members of society and those with special needs; and in undertaking matters in the public interest. CLCs in Australia have been advocating for a rights-based approach and equitable access to the justice system for forty years.

CLCs and their associations work collaboratively with their communities and with all levels of government, community and private service providers, business, professional bodies and a range of philanthropic organisations.

National CLSP CLCs Activity Profile 2010/11

In 2010/11 the CLCs in the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP):

- provided almost 164,000 information, support and referral services
- provided more than 244,000 individual services
- worked on almost 72,000 individual cases
- concluded 3,641 community legal education projects (and worked on many others into the new year)
- finalised 1,276 law or policy reform projects (and worked on many others into the next year)

National Association of Community Legal Centres

The National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc (NACLC) is the peak national organisation representing CLCs in Australia. Its members are the state and territory associations of CLCs that represent around 200 centres in various metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations across Australia.

NACLC's purpose is to assist disadvantaged and marginalised people in the Australian community obtain access to legal services by:

- supporting and assisting CLCs to provide these services
- providing a national forum for CLCs
- developing and coordinating national CLCs' policy and
- advancing the interests of CLCs within Australia

NACLC provides a range of services direct to CLCs and in other ways actively supports CLCs in their work. This annual report contains many examples of how NACLC continues to facilitate free and subsidised resources to CLCs, advocates on their behalf and thereby enhances the capacity of each individual CLC to serve its community.

NACLC also undertakes social justice campaigns itself, particularly by advocating for the legal protection of human rights. It provides practical and financial support to a number of National Networks of CLCs that work in specialised areas and works in collaboration with a number of these Networks and individual CLCs on many of its law reform and other projects.

NACLC's governing body, the Management Committee, comprises state and territory representatives and elected office holders and meets several times each year. The Committee sets the priorities for NACLC in line with the fundamental principles set out in its strategic plan. Those principles include a commitment to being guided by the vision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and working with them to achieve access to justice. When committing to projects, NACLC ensures that it remains sufficiently flexible to ensure that it can anticipate and respond to emerging or changing issues and needs.

NACLC is funded through contributions from CLCs, generated income and project funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and other bodies.

NACLC People in 2010/11

In the NACLC office in Sydney:

Executive Director

Julia Hall

Policy and Projects Officer

Louise Edwards (until 3 May 2011)

Catherine Hastings (from 23 May 2011)

Administrator

Anna Bruce

Finance Officer

Chrisanthi Maddison – part-time

(until 30 September 2010)

Ana Rey – part-time (from 30 August 2010)

National Conference Coordinator

and Administrative Assistant

Jane Housley – part-time

Consultant

Jill Anderson – casual (from 18 October 2010)

Administrative Assistants

Ellen Davis – casual (during July 2010)

Adelaide Kershaw – casual (from 16 August 2010)

NACLC Management Committee

National Convenor

Liz O'Brien (until 23 October 2011)

Michael Smith (from 23 October 2011)

Treasurer

Carol Benda (until 23 October 2010)

Alex Mactier (from 23 October 2010)

ACT representative

Deb Pippen

NSW representative

Kim Price

NT representative

Teena Balgi (until 8 December 2010)

Nicki Petrou (from 8 December 2010)

Qld representative

Rosslyn Monro

SA representative

Matthew Atkinson (until 7 February 2011)

Patsy Kellett (from 7 February 2011)

Tas representative

Jane Hutchison

Vic representative

Michael Smith (until 23 October 2011)

Alex Mactier (acting representative from 23 October 2010 – 14 February 2011)

Laura Vivarini (from 15 February 2011)

WA representative

Chris Gabelish/John Perrett

By standing invitation: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services National Network representative
Donna Hensen



TOP ROW (L-R):
Julia Hall,
Catherine Hastings,
Anna Bruce



BOTTOM ROW (L-R):
Ana Rey,
Jane Housley

and, off-site:

National Accreditation Coordinator

Lis Maier – part-time (from 1 March 2011)

BBS Administrator

Phill Byrne - casual

CL SIS, WebEx, telephony consultants providing advice, support services and training for CLCs and CL SIS rollout to FVPLS

Justin Finighan and Kaeleene Owen, Finrea P/L – contract service provider

FirstClass (BBS) technical support

Damien Gardner, Rendrag P/L

– contract service provider

External National CLCs Conference Organisers

Marilyn Hall and Brooke Lennon, Quality Events (for 2010 Conference)

Julie Jerbic, Conference Online (for 2011 Conference)

Term Project Workers and Consultants:

Law Graduates in RRR CLCs

Rachna Muddagouni (until December 2010)

Helen McGowan (from January 2011)

Recruitment and Retention in Regional, Rural and Remote Areas

National Coordinator

Helen McGowan

Regional Coordinators

Debi Bodden (NT) (from 20 September 2010)

Sharon Tomas (NSW) (from 1 February 2011)

Victoria Laing-Short (Qld) (from 8 February 2011)

Barbara Rowe (SA) (from 23 February 2011)

Improving Coordination of CLE & Law Reform

Steve Womersley (from 24 January 2011)

Information Technology Advisory Service – Pilot and Evaluation

Polly Porteous and Phill Byrne (from February 2011)

National Legal Needs Assessment & Strategic Planning Framework

Judith Stubbs & Associates

Cost Benefit Analysis of CLCs

Judith Stubbs & Associates



Convenor's report

One of the great writers of our time said, "Achievable goals are the first step to self improvement."

The Community Legal Centre sector pursues improvement in our work every day, both externally - for the clients and communities we serve - and internally - within the management and processes operating in the 200 or so Centres across Australia.

NACLC plays a vital role in supporting these improvements and this year has had significant achievements at both of these levels.

CLCs' work consistently focuses on the communities experiencing vulnerability, poverty and disadvantage. As the writer has said, "Poverty entails fear, and stress, and sometimes depression; it means a thousand petty humiliations and hardships." For the people we work with, it means having an increased chance of being in contact with the legal system, but less capacity to be assisted by it.

Externally, NACLC has been active in advocating for human rights and law reform, through a range of approaches and fora. As the national peak, NACLC works extensively in partnership with a range of CLCs and other NGOs and has a strategic focus where its resources can be most effective. NACLC also enjoys NGO accreditation status at the United Nations and has utilised this within a partnership approach.

Acknowledging the extensive unmet needs of the sector's clients and communities NACLC has been steadfast in advancing the interests of the legal assistance sector through engagement with government and others. In addition, NACLC liaises with and co-ordinates National CLC Networks encouraging collaboration, best practice, advocacy and law reform.

Internally, NACLC works hard to develop the sector and encourage best practice approaches. Over the last year, this has focused on implementing the National Accreditation Scheme throughout Australia. In addition, NACLC provides or brokers a range of legal, insurance, management and communication resources for Centres, works with key funders and stakeholders and hosts the National Conference.

The Accreditation Scheme is focused on quality improvement and working together to ensure the best possible services and organisations for the communities needing our help. For poorly resourced CLCs this can be challenging. As the author said, "It takes a great deal of courage to stand up to your enemies, but even more to stand up to your friends." Yet it is through taking this sector-led approach that we can take primary responsibility for our own standards and quality systems rather than CLCs having these imposed by external stakeholders.

NACLC would like to acknowledge our support from the Attorney-General's Department and our other partners at many levels. NACLC works very closely with the State and Territory Associations and we thank them for their collaboration and support through a busy year. In particular appreciation is extended to the NACLC Management Committee for their insights and commitment in their vital governance role - I also thank them of their support of me in my new role of Convenor.

At the National Conference in Melbourne, NACLC acknowledged the leadership and dedication of Liz O'Brien as National Convenor for over a decade - her contribution has been extraordinary. Liz continues to work for justice in her local community through her CLC.

Julia Hall continues to provide exceptional leadership to NACLC on a strategic, systematic and skilful basis. Her role is crucial in the great gains NACLC has made over recent years and on behalf of the CLC sector, I thank her for this excellent work. Julia also leads a great team and we thank this team for their tremendous work throughout the year - we are truly grateful for these efforts.

"If you choose to use your status and influence to raise your voice on behalf of those who have no voice; if you choose to identify not only with the powerful, but with the powerless; if you retain the ability to imagine yourself into the lives of those who do not have your advantages, then it will not only be your proud families who celebrate your existence, but thousands and millions of people whose reality you have helped change. We do not need magic to change the world, we carry all the power we need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better."

In the year ahead NACLC will continue to work for change and a more just society. We continue to welcome your collaboration in this quest.

Michael Smith

(All quotes are from J.K. Rowling)



Executive Director's report

Funding

The 2010–11 financial year started on a very positive note following the announcement at the end of the 2009–10 year that the Australian Government was investing an additional \$154 million over four years in legal assistance programs to improve access to justice in the community (\$26.8 million of which, over four years, was for community legal services programs). It was the largest and most significant injection of new funding into the legal assistance sector for well over a decade.

The Attorney's, and the Department's, role in obtaining this funding for the sector should be recognised. In the economic and political context of the time, this money had to be found from within the portfolio: the majority came from savings within the Department, the remainder from revenue realised by federal courts' fees increases.

Perhaps ironically, it was not long before NACLC found itself, with representatives from other legal assistance providers, advocating to protect the whole legal assistance/fee increases package, while arguing in other contexts for amendment to some of the new fee arrangements that operated harshly on the disadvantaged.

NACLC's lobbying for funding continued and we were very pleased that the Attorney, at another unpromising time for obtaining funding increases, managed to pull another funding rabbit from the Treasury hat with a grant in June 2011 of additional one-off funding of \$1 million for 15 CLCs.

NACLC continued to be successful in gaining funding for services to support CLCs and state associations. For example: funding from the Australian Government for a Regional Accreditation Coordinator for QAILS (3dpw for two years) and for 50 percent of a similar position over two years at CLCNSW, with the remaining 50% being obtained from Legal Aid NSW.

In an unusual development, NACLC was contacted by Toys'R'Us, which wanted to make a total donation of \$60,000 to CLCs in South Australia and in the ACT, preferably to be used for services supporting the employment of young workers. After establishing that the young workers who had been in an action with the company had been properly compensated, NACLC facilitated this donation.

Quality assurance and protecting the CLC brand

By far the largest project undertaken by NACLC this year was the development and implementation of the National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs, a joint project of the national and state/territory CLC peak

bodies. The sector should be applauded for its innovation, strength, pride and commitment to its clients in introducing a sector-led quality assurance program.

This enormous exercise has been achieved with much work and some pain, and in that context I give great thanks to Julie Nyland and Jane Bradfield of Breaking New Ground, who produced some immensely useful and practical tools and proved that it is possible to be both very competent and hilarious.

NACLC and the sector have also greatly benefited from the expertise and experience of Lis Maier, whom we were very lucky to recruit as the National Accreditation Coordinator. Lis comes to us under secondment from Quality Management Services, a national, independent not-for-profit provider of quality improvement, review and accreditation services. She has worked in the area of standards assessment, training and accreditation in health, community services and not-for-profit NGOs for 14 years.

Some CLCs had expressed concerns about having to undergo two reviews, so NACLC was pleased to negotiate with the Commonwealth and some State Program Managers of the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP), a trial of one process where those Program Managers consider certain information produced from the accreditation review and do not, absent exceptional circumstances, conduct a separate CLSP Service Standards audit (although they may follow up later if necessary). The trial is running in NSW, Queensland, SA and ACT and NT for the remainder of the current Service Agreement period (i.e. until 30 June 2013).

I thank the program managers involved in this trial; they were open to a different approach and in our discussions demonstrated flexibility and a commitment to sector development.

CLSP liaison

NACLC continued its CLSP liaison role, consulting the sector and providing coordinated responses to the Attorney-General's Department on a range of program matters including CLSIS upgrades and improvements, a CLC stakeholder feedback process, and draft performance feedback reports for CLCs.

Management and governance

We commenced work this year on reviewing and improving procedures and policies at NACLC. A governance subcommittee of the Management Committee was set up to review the constitution and decision-making process. Another subcommittee reviewed outdated policy and processes for setting and administering CLCs' contributions to NACLC. The Management Committee settled a detailed delegations

policy. We will continue to review policies and procedures. NACLC also developed a position statement on CLCs charging clients.

National conference

This year NACLC, as it has every few years, sought expressions of interest for the role of external conference organiser. The provider we chose was able to meet all key specifications, including an online registration process. Our fantastic organisers from previous years, Marilyn Hall and Brooke Lennon, who had served NACLC and the sector so well over so many conferences and were great friends to many, decided not to tender. I thank them both for their work with past conferences.

The 2010 conference, held in the capacious Melbourne Convention Centre, was a great success with around 480 attendees (another record!).

A new convenor, the end of an era

At the conference, the sector paid its respects and conveyed its appreciation to long serving Convenor, Liz O'Brien, for her extraordinary contribution. On behalf of all the staff at NACLC, I extend our great thanks to Liz.

We welcomed Michael Smith, from Eastern CLC in Victoria, as Convenor.

Sector collaborations

NACLC's work and value are enhanced by our collaborations and cooperative relationships with key sector partners, including the staff of the CLSP section in the Attorney-General's Department and state Community Legal Services Program managers. Some other collaborations included:

- working with other members of the Australian Legal Assistance Forum to research and identify issues and responses for young people with mental health problems
- contributing to the Law Council of Australia's development of a DVD, website and related marketing campaign as recruitment and retention strategies for lawyers in rural, regional and remote areas
- working with CLCNSW and other state associations to update the 2006 report for NACLC done by Mercer, which compared CLC and government lawyers' salaries
- participating in a working group to improve data collection and consistency in legal assistance services with Attorney-General's Department and other legal assistance services representatives

Human rights advocacy and NGO collaboration

NACLC collaborated with sector partners and NGOs both locally and internationally on a number of human rights projects. This work is reported on at pages 10–11.

Communications and publications

A review of the communications needs of NACLC and its stakeholders has led to a substantial revision of our website and the ways we provide information and services to CLCs and the public. Our new website, and improved access to a number of online resources and services, will be launched later in 2011.

An extraordinary effort continued to go into revision of the *Risk Management Guide*. I particularly thank Jill Anderson, who has ploughed on diligently, thoroughly and patiently, with writing, consulting and editing. I also thank the National PII Network (and former members such as Bill, whom we never quite let go) for their expert input.

Staff

Two major staff changes occurred at NACLC this year. The first was the departure of our Finance Officer, Chris Maddison, whose contribution to the sound financial management of the office and to staff morale and humour were enormous, and the arrival of her very competent and hard working replacement, Ana Rey.

The second was the departure of our prolific Projects and Policy Officer, Louise Edwards, who returned to work overseas. Lou left behind her a phenomenal legacy of the highest quality submissions on an array of human rights issues and a continuing incomprehension at NACLC as to how such highly organised and excellent work can come out of such office chaos.

NACLC has been very lucky to have Cath Hastings, a very experienced projects manager, join us and continue Lou's high quality research and project work.

Thank you...

Thank you to the many people who helped NACLC achieve so much this year: our staff and consultants, the Management Committee, convenors and members of the National Networks and all the other CLC workers who represented NACLC at forums or contributed to submissions and projects, to our colleagues in the state and territory associations, and to our sector partners, particularly the Commonwealth Community Legal Services Program staff and our colleagues in state legal aid. Thank you all for your help in supporting CLCs and the communities they serve.

Julia Hall



Insurance and Risk Management

NACLC negotiates and coordinates nationally a number of highly discounted insurance schemes for the benefit of CLCs that choose to participate, including Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) and Associations Liability Insurance, and the free NACLC negotiated Public Liability insurance that covers all CLCs automatically.

Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII)

The NACLC bulk Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) scheme and its associated Risk Management regime continues to be a successful and cost-effective way for CLCs to ensure risk minimisation and meet their PII requirements. 171 Centres participated in the NACLC PII scheme in 2010-2011. The premium remained low, significantly due to CLCs' low risk record and the scheme's good risk management practices.

The *Risk Management Guide (RMG)*, annual cross-checks and compulsory state PII meetings help individual Centres understand and manage risk in their legal practice, identify possible new risks and act to minimise risks and prevent and/or mitigate claims being made against them. The scheme also gives centres and their people responsible for the legal practice access to an experienced PII state representative (and through them, the National PII Network) who can assist them with any questions they may have about managing their files and service delivery. PII State representatives freely and generously give their time to supporting centre workers with risk and insurance issues and are a great resource for all but particularly for less experienced, lawyers and centres.

Each state PII representative sits on the National PII Network. This committee met, generally by telephone link up but face to face at the National Conference, 15 times during the year, with many extra sessions held to work on updating and improving the RMG. NACLC thanks the individual members for the extraordinary commitment and contribution they have shown this year. NACLC also particularly thanks Jill Anderson from the NACLC office for coordinating the process, and Bill Mitchell from the Townsville CLS for his ongoing contributions.

NACLC thanks the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department for again granting a significant amount towards the payment of the PII policy premium, and Victoria Legal Aid and the Queensland Law Society who contributed to paying the premium costs for CLCs in their respective states.

Public Liability Insurance

NACLC again arranged free public liability cover for all CLCs this year. The national policy was renewed on 1 January 2011. It provides all member Centres and their branch offices in Australia with public liability cover to the limit of \$20 million, at no cost to them.

Association Liability (formerly Directors and Officers) Insurance

Renewal of the bulk Association Liability Insurance Policy was negotiated on 1 March 2011 at a reduced rate to last year. This year it covered 151 Centres.

The Association 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.

Office Pack Insurance

As part of the insurance arrangements organised by NACLC, CLCs are also able to take out, if they choose, a comprehensive Office Pack insurance at a less than commercial price.

Separate Insurances for NACLC & State Associations

NACLC, QAILS, CLC NSW, Federation of CLCS (Victoria), SACCLS and CLCA (WA) again took out separate insurance to that for the CLCs, at the same rate as previously.

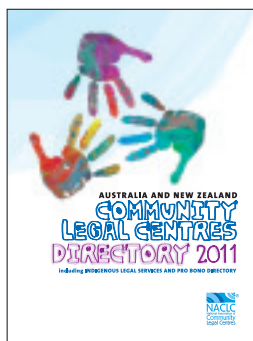
Our broker, AON

NACLC works closely with AON Risk Services Australia Limited in Adelaide to provide these insurances. We thank Wayne Trezona, Simon Landrigan, Irmgard de Villiers and the other staff involved with our account at AON, for their advice, assistance and patience.

NACLC provided a range of services to CLCs with the support of annual project grants, contributions from CLCs and self-generated income.

These included:

- advocacy and negotiation with government and other funding bodies in the interests of the sector and its clients
- liaison between the sector and the CLSP
- representation of the sector at forums and collaboration with national bodies (e.g. Australian Legal Assistance Forum, ACOSS)
- development, implementation and coordination of a national quality-assurance program, the National Accreditation Scheme
- information services and publications – newsletter, email broadcasts, a directory of Australian and NZ CLCs, an email bulletin board service (BBS) and online resources and guides through NACLC's Management Support Online
- discounted and subsidised insurance schemes (see 'Insurance and risk management', above)
- a national conference providing opportunities for professional development, information sharing, showcasing work, and networking
- training and support for the use of the CLC database CLSIS, the BBS and online training and collaboration technology WebEx
- media statements promoting the sector and its values
- law and policy reform submissions and representation at United Nations forums through our status as a UN-accredited NGO



NACLC also undertook projects to support sector advocacy and effectiveness, some of which are profiled in this section of the Annual Report.

Salary benchmarking report

CLCNSW and NACLC retained Mercer Consultants to update their 2006 report comparing CLC salaries with those of Commonwealth and state Legal Aid lawyers. The Queensland, Victorian and WA associations also took part, enabling the project's focus to be expanded. The updated report will support our ongoing campaign for more funding to better remunerate CLC workers.

Mercer examined award wage rates for six CLC positions and compared them with wage rates for public sector positions of comparable work value. For CLCs to be competitive, they would need to increase salaries by: Centre Manager 75%, Principal Solicitor 75%, Solicitor 24% and Community Worker 14%.

The updated report is being included in a joint submission to the Fair Work Australia community sector equal pay case by the Federation of CLCs (Victoria) and CLCNSW. The submission notes that the CLC sector is predominantly female. (A 2011 Victorian CLC workforce survey showed that 73 percent workers are female.)

NACLC has distributed the report to the Commonwealth and state CLSP managers and will use it in its lobbying for funding and in national media.

Social and economic cost-benefit analysis of CLCs

Judith Stubbs and Associates was retained to undertake this project by incorporating an analysis of existing published material, interviews with key members of the sector and analysis of casework files at four CLCs (chosen for their geographic and client diversity).

While cost-benefit analysis is widely used in other sectors to justify expenditure and quantify the benefit of allocating money and other resources, only limited work of this sort has been done in the community legal sector. NACLC's report will be the first attempt to show the efficiency and equity benefits of CLCs through this framework.

Although the project has not yet finished, preliminary indications are that the cost-benefit of CLCs is high; CLCs significantly reduce social and economic costs to the community and government. Those in the sector know this and the final report will provide empirical evidence supporting sector claims for funding.

Access to online legal resources

With funding obtained from the Australian Government, NACLC provided CLCs with free access to on-line legal resources from publishers Thomson Reuters and CCH. These cover over thirty titles including case reports, commentaries, court practice manuals, and specialist employment, family law and social security guides. NACLC's subscription to these resources enabled CLCs to reallocate money towards service delivery or, in some cases, access important resources they would otherwise not be able to afford improving the range and quality of their services.

Over half of CLCs surveyed towards the end of this year, used the resources at least weekly and they were 80–90 percent satisfied with the range and quality of the titles provided.

Survey respondents confirmed the important utility of the resources to their work, one CLC saying that they are “an excellent source of information. We could not afford to purchase these resources ourselves. The NACLC purchase has been invaluable.”

Improving coordination of community legal education and law reform

NACLC's project to redevelop its website and a new online resource, the Community Legal Education And [Law] Reform ('CLEAR') database, has been significantly progressed this year. The new website and database will be launched in October 2011.

CLEAR records and catalogues good examples of community legal education, law reform and policy activities. It will become a powerful resource for the sector and the public. NACLC will be promoting CLEAR through a social media campaign as well as through established networks.

The new website has been designed to communicate more effectively to the public and to provide improved networking and service provision to CLCs.

Practical legal training in RRR CLCs

With further funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, NACLC continued its placement program to enable law graduates to undertake their practical legal training (PLT) in regional, rural and remote (RRR) CLCs.

The program encourages law graduates to consider work in a RRR CLC as a career option and allows CLCs to leverage off these opportunities and connections. It also supports RRR CLCs by providing short-term workers. Feedback from graduates and CLCs has generally been very positive.

One graduate said: “The placement itself was beyond excellent; I had a great experience and am very impressed ...”. A CLC said a placement was a valuable experience because “it provided a learning experience for legal staff to instruct clearly what they required from the graduate [and the] student contributed to research and development of CLE... was very capable, considered all options in matters [and] made proactive decisions in file management”.



CLEAR – the online database of community legal education, law reform and community development projects undertaken by Australian Community Legal Centres, coming in late 2011!

This year saw an expanded pool of participating PLT providers and law graduates, following a successful partnership with Australian National University College of Law in the first two years of the program.

Helen McGowan, with her significant experience and expertise in RRR law practice, took over as project officer when Rachna Muddagouni left.

Legal needs assessment toolkit

Based on a successful pilot project previously undertaken with a number of NSW CLCs, NACLC engaged Judith Stubbs and Associates to develop a legal needs assessment toolkit for CLCs throughout Australia. The toolkit enables CLCs to:

- better assess met and unmet legal need in their areas (geographic or legal)
- identify and target services at groups with special needs
- assess current, and plan future, service delivery

The toolkit uses a model based on 13 indicators – shown through research as associated with legal need – and ABS, Centrelink and crime statistics to predict ‘calculated legal need’ in each local government area around Australia, combined with the CLC’s own data on ‘met legal need’ to give CLCs a strong indication of areas, geographic and legal, which may need further attention.

The toolkit also provides useful data for reporting and as evidence for funding submissions. The toolkit can be used both by CLSIS and non-CLSIS centres. NACLC will investigate ways of obtaining training and other support for CLCs to enable them to take full advantage of this resource.

Recruitment and retention in RRR areas (the 5R Project)

NACLC received one-off funding from the Attorney-General's Department to manage a two-year project to enhance the recruitment and retention of lawyers in regional, rural and remote areas, particularly with the Australian Government funded legal assistance services. The project comprises two initiatives:

- the engagement by NACLC of regional coordinators focussing on, respectively, the NT, NW Qld, Western NSW and SA, to develop strategies to attract and retain lawyers for Australian Government funded legal assistance services in these RRR areas; and
- the development by the Law Council of Australia of a dedicated website www.RRRLaw.com.au, a DVD and a related marketing campaign



Victoria Laing-Short (Regional Coordinator, North West Queensland, 5R project) and Topsy Tapim (Regional Community Counsellor) at the Townsville QIFVLS office.



Julia Barber, a lawyer from Broome, WA and Alex Ward, the President of the Law Council of Australia at the launch of the RRR Law website in Perth on 20 May 2011.

During this, the first year of the project, NACLC organised the employment of the regional coordinators and negotiated host arrangements with local Legal Aid, CLC and Family Violence Legal Prevention Service offices. The project's national coordinator, Helen McGowan, has supported the regional coordinators in identifying the recruitment and retention needs of their local legal profession, particularly the publicly funded legal service providers, and developing and implementing support strategies.

NACLC was a member of the working group guiding the Law Council's initiative. The Attorney-General launched the DVD and website in Law Week in Perth, May 2011.

Human rights work

NACLC supports sector-wide advocacy for human rights in Australia by allocating resources and expertise to coordination and representation both locally and internationally. We collaborate with a range of sector partners in these efforts, including National Human Rights Network members.

UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

NACLC co-authored with the Human Rights Law Resource Centre (HRLRC) a NGO shadow report for consideration by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The report contains concrete recommendations for Australian authorities to bring Australia into compliance with its obligations under the convention. It was endorsed by 113 Australian NGOs and was prepared with input from an NGO strategy group comprising: representatives from Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia, Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, Muslims Australia, Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria, Centre for Multicultural Youth, and Immigrant Women's Speakout Association.

NACLC attended in August 2010 Australia's formal review by the Committee in Geneva, in support of its NGO Shadow Report, and met with the Committee and the Australian mission. In Geneva, NACLC and HRLRC worked as part of a larger NGO coalition, which included representatives from Amnesty International, Foundation for Aboriginal and Islander Research Action, National Native Title Council, and two Aboriginal elders from Utopia and Arnhem Land, and worked closely with the Australian Human Rights Commission.

In addition, media releases and advocacy materials including factsheets were prepared on:

- domestic protections for racial discrimination
- the Northern Territory Emergency Response
- native title
- civil, political, economic and social rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- access to remedies for racial discrimination
- human rights of refugees, asylum-seekers, non-citizens and migrant communities
- the impact of counter-terrorism laws

The Australian Government is due to provide its 12-month update to the CERD in August 2011.



Universal Periodic Review

In January 2011, the Australian Government came before the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The UPR is a new mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council, which reviews the human rights records of all 192 UN member states.

NACLC, in partnership with Kingsford Legal Centre and the Human Rights Law Centre, coordinated an NGO UPR coalition. The coalition prepared a shadow report with input from a high-level NGO working group. The report was endorsed by 68 organisations. It also prepared factsheets and advocacy materials which were distributed to the missions involved in Australia's UPR.

Representatives of the coalition attended Australia's review in Geneva, met formally with 22 missions and spoke to a further 29 missions. The coalition sought to actively engage Australian NGOs and wider Australian community in the UPR process through social media, written updates and media releases. The coalition representatives were able to significantly influence the issues included in the UPR report because of the coalition's size, quality of its materials, early provision of resources and its presence in Geneva.

In March 2011, the Australian Government announced a public consultation on how it should respond to and prioritise the 145 UPR recommendations. NACLC co-drafted and coordinated the NGO UPR Coalition's response.

National Human Rights Action Plan

In December 2010, the Attorney-General's Department released a background paper outlining the proposed approach to a new National Human Rights Action Plan and committed to working with NGOs in its development and implementation.

NACLC participated in the community consultation on the background paper, workshops organised by the Human Rights Law Centre on the development of a the action plan and an associated baseline study. The baseline study will be used to identify gaps in human rights protection in Australia and determine actions under the plan.

DO YOU KNOW THAT as at July 2010, CLCs around Australia were utilising the services of over 2,500 volunteer solicitors and over 3,300 other volunteers?

Submissions to Federal Parliament

In March 2011 NACLC made a submission to the Senate Standing Committee for the Scrutiny of Bills on how the Committee's role could be expanded in relation to the Commonwealth's human rights obligations. This followed on from a submission made in April 2010.

In July 2010, NACLC made a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee held an inquiry into the Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Bill 2010 which proposes to establish a Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights.

Human Rights Framework Education Grant

In July 2010, the Attorney-General's Department invited applications for their Human Rights Framework Education Grants. NACLC applied for and was successful in obtaining a grant, to advance awareness of human rights through targeted community legal education 'toolkits' on practical steps for leaving domestic violence, human rights for people affected by guardianship orders, and housing and tenancy in the Northern Territory, under the banner of 'Achieve your rights, understand your responsibilities'.

Work on the toolkits is underway with NSW and NT CLCs and volunteer researchers and writers.



This artwork for the domestic violence toolkit was provided by Sista Girl Yarnz Group at Campbelltown, a group which seeks to support and empower women affected by domestic or family violence.

Other work

During this year, NACLC's human rights advocacy has included:

- participating on steering committees
 - for NGO shadow reports on Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention of the Rights of the Child
 - to develop a guide to using the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- convening a workshop with the National Human Rights Network for CLCs and other NGOs about UN shadow reporting processes
- endorsing campaigns and submissions by other NGOs, including
 - the Safety in Family Law campaign, an initiative of the Women's Legal Services NSW
 - the Australians for Native Title campaign to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the criminal justice system
 - the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network's Fair Calls for All campaign
- providing, in partnership with a number of CLCs, two submissions to the Attorney-General's Department on the proposed harmonisation of federal discrimination legislation
- undertaking work on a research project for the Australian Legal Assistance Forum on young people, mental health and the law

Quality assurance and protecting the CLC brand

During this year NACLC finalised the model and process for the National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs and began its implementation. The Scheme is a major joint initiative of NACLC and the state and territory associations of CLCs, and is driven by a sector commitment to ensure nationally consistent, quality service delivery to CLC clients and to actively support organisational development.

NACLC had committed its own funds to develop the standards assessment tool, the SPP, and complementary Management Support Online (MSO), as well as paying the first year's licences for both services for all CLCs. A one-off funding contribution secured from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department however reduced this cost significantly and enabled NACLC to purchase the additional MSO advice service for CLCs for 12 months.

NACLC recruited Lis Maier as its National Accreditation Coordinator, on a secondment arrangement from Quality Management Services, an established and highly regarded not-for-profit provider of quality improvement, review and accreditation services. Lis has worked in the area of standards assessment, training and accreditation in health and community services and NFP NGOS for many years. This partnership has brought added experience, expertise and credibility to the CLC Scheme.

A centre that has been accredited under the National Scheme will be licensed to display this sign.

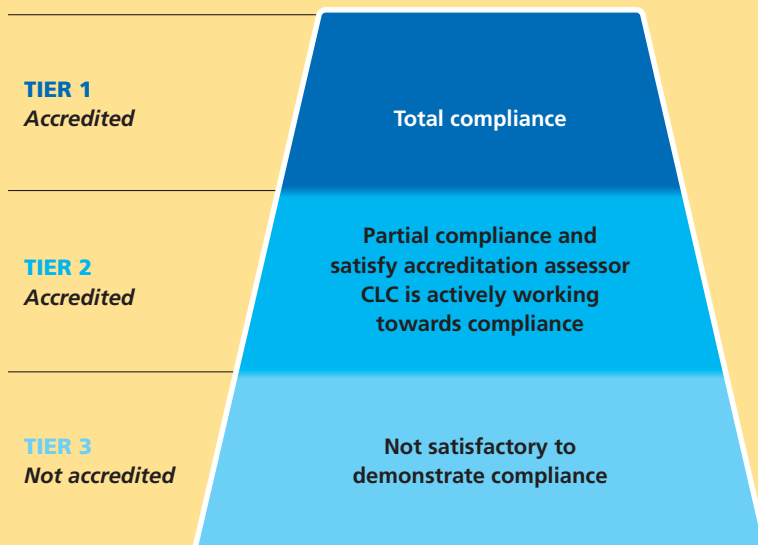
Development

Following the settling of accreditation criteria with the states' and territories' representatives, NACLC and its consultant, Breaking New Ground P/L (BNG), worked hard on developing a CLC tailored standards assessment portal and complementary NACLC Management Support Online resource. Both services were trialled with a number of CLCs and, in the case of the SPP, by some State and Commonwealth Program Managers for the CLSP, CLCs' major funding program.

In September 2010, NACLC organised its Management Committee members (the state and territory representatives) and the chairs and executive officers of the state and territory associations to attend a special consultation meeting to decide on the final model for implementation and priority actions.



The Accreditation Scheme is a tiered system. A centre does not have immediately to meet all its policy and procedural objectives or satisfy every standard to achieve accreditation. A CLC that has undertaken its online self-assessment, participated in its site visit, finalised its workplan satisfactorily, and meets some standards, will be accredited – provided it is actively working towards satisfying unmet standards.



Launch

After further testing, the National Accreditation Scheme and its tools, the NACLC SPP and MSO, were launched at the National Conference in Melbourne in October 2010. BNG provided training sessions and an information desk where CLCs could register for and log onto the SPP and MSO and ask questions. Following the launch, introductory materials were posted to every centre and CLCs were encouraged and supported by telephone to register for the services and to take advantage of the useful resources and free advice service of the MSO.

Accolades

Feedback from the trial of the NACLC SPP was very positive. One State CLS Program Manager commented that “the system is excellent and more than covers the requirements of the CLSP Audit process”, and another said that the requirements generally met and in some cases exceeded the CLSP standards.

After a demonstration of the SPP to the Attorney-General’s Department in Canberra, the Department retained BNG to develop a SPP specifically for the Indigenous Legal Services and sought NACLC’s agreement to allow them access to the valuable resources on the NACLC SPP, for which NACLC will receive a ‘user fee’ for access to NACLC material.

Implementation

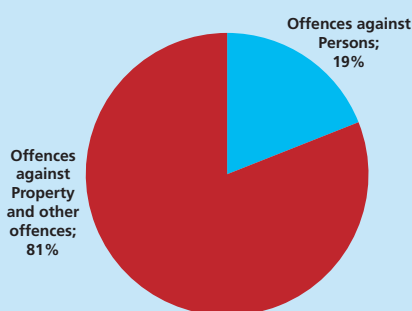
NACLC has made presentations on the Accreditation Scheme and/or the SPP and MSO and run training sessions at a number of state events including: a QAILS meeting; different quarterly meetings of CLCNSW; a meeting of SACCLS; a training session on undertaking a centre’s self assessment to centres in Victoria and WA; and to state and territory Legal Aid Directors. A proposed face-to-face training session in WA was delivered on-line when Lis was prevented at the last minute from flying by the ash cloud!

During the second half of the year NACLC drafted National Guidelines; Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) between NACLC, state/territory associations and CLCs; regional and national timelines; draft job descriptions for accreditation coordinators; funding submissions; and newsletters. MOUs between state associations, NACLC and CLCs will help to ensure that all parties, including CLC staff and management committees, have the opportunity to fully understand and consider the respective roles, obligations and expectations of the associations and centres.

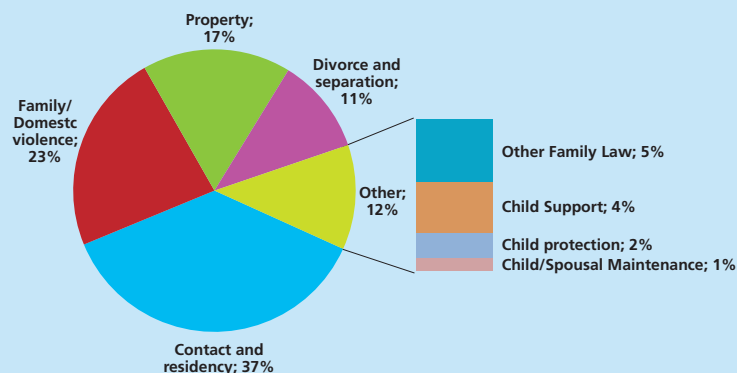
It is exciting that by the end of this year NACLC has received signed MOUs from a number of centres and associations, and that many centres have started their online self assessments.

NACLC data: 2010–11 CLSP CLCs advice and casework services

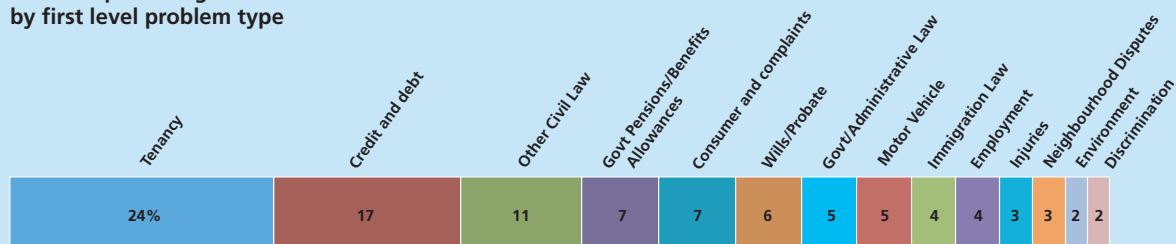
National percentage – criminal law by first level problem type



National percentage – family law by first level problem type



National percentage – civil law by first level problem type



2010 National CLCs Conference

The National Association of Community Legal Centres and the Federation of CLCs (Vic) hosted the 2010 National CLCs Conference in Melbourne. The Conference opened with a Welcome to Country from Auntie Doreen, a Wurundjeri Wandoon elder.

This year's Conference was also an opportunity to farewell the outgoing National Convenor Liz O'Brien and welcome Michael Smith to the role.

The 2010 Conference theme was *Breaking new ground – CLCs advancing justice*. The Conference focused on innovation, partnerships and exploring new and better ways that CLCs can best respond to community needs.

This year we had 498 delegates registered. They included lawyers from CLCs, the private profession and government legal aid agencies, social workers, counselors, academics, researchers and policy workers, law students and people from a broad range of other disciplines. Several staff from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and from State Legal Aid offices attended, as well as representatives from Ombudsman services and delegates from Community Legal Centres in New Zealand. Attendees from CLCs included legal and non legal employees, management committee members and volunteers.

At the Conference, CLC workers and colleagues had the opportunity to access a range of formal and informal legal and other professional development and networking opportunities. A large number of sessions were available on political, policy and legal issues and developments that affect CLCs' work and their client groups. NACLC provided a range of free training to CLC workers in services it provides or administers for centres, for example, the BBS, WebEx



In thanks for her years as Convenor, Liz O'Brien received a gift certificate to a local art gallery.



National CLCs Conference
24–27 October 2010 Melbourne Vic



services, CLSIS database recording and reporting, advice and support in telephony options for CLCs and online legal research resources.

This year also saw the launch of the National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs and a demonstration of the online standards assessment tool (SPP) and complementary set of online resources for CLCs, NACLC's Management Services Online (MSO).

Keynote speakers in 2010 included Rob Hulls MP, Muriel Bamblett, Simon Rice, Paula O'Brien and Rob Stary.

Special thanks go to the Conference Organising Committee, Federation of CLCs (Vic) and Quality Events, our external conference organisers.

DO YOU KNOW THAT as at July 2010, CLCs around Australia employed

- over 400 fulltime and over 26 part-time solicitors
- over 500 fulltime and over 670 part-time other workers?

CLCs awards

NACLC is proud to be associated with the many lawyers and other workers in CLCs who are experts and leaders in their respective fields, be it an area of law or practice, or a type of work such as community legal education or law reform. The following are some of the CLC people who received external recognition of their contributions to the community this year.

Katrina Wong, a solicitor with the Children's Legal Service, was nominated by Marrickville Legal Centre for the National Children's Law Awards. Katrina was shortlisted as one of only three nominees for the National Award for Outstanding Contribution to Advocacy in Policy or Law Reform to Advance the Legal Rights and Interests of Children and Young People.

Amanda Goodier and **Shayla Strapps**, working together as the principal solicitor for not-for-profit organisation CASE for Refugees, were jointly awarded the Law Society of Western Australia 2011 Lawyer of the Year Award. This is a landmark for lawyers who work part-time.

A number of CLC people were recognised in this year's Australia Day honours, including:

- **Maree O'Halloran**, Member (AM) in the General Division, for service to industrial relations and to the education sector through a range of representative roles. Maree is the Director of Welfare Rights Centre and President of the National Welfare Rights Network
- **Denis Nelthorpe**, Member (AM) in the General Division, for service to social justice. Denis has worked for CLCs for 25 years and currently manages the Footscray Community Legal Centre, works as a special projects lawyer at the West Heidelberg Community Legal Service and is on the management committee of the Moonee Valley Legal Service. Denis also worked for many years at both the Consumer Credit Legal Service and the Consumer Law Centre (since merged)
- **Helen Campbell**, Medal (OAM) in the General Division, for service to the law, and to the community of Redfern. Helen is the CEO of Women's Legal Service NSW, and was the CEO of Redfern Legal Centre for eight years



Amanda Goodier and Shayla Strapps

- **Kon Karapanagiotidis**, Medal (OAM) in the General Division, for service to the community through refugee assistance organisations. Kon is the founder and CEO of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre in Victoria

Victorian CLCs were recognised in the Law Institute of Victoria's annual awards:

- **Phillip Lynch**, Director and Principal Solicitor of the Human Rights Law Centre won the Paul Baker award
- **Tamar Hopkins**, Principal Solicitor of the Flemington and Kensington CLC received the Community Lawyer Award
- **Denis Nelthorpe** received the prestigious Tim McCoy Award for 2010. This award recognises outstanding work in the community law or legal aid movement with a particular focus on the promotion of human rights for socially and economically disadvantaged Victorians

Other CLC workers acknowledged were **Antoinette Braybook** (Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Legal Service – finalist for the Access to Justice Award and **Chris Povey** (Public Interest Law Clearing House), **Jeni Lee** (Seniors Rights Victoria) and **Adrian Kennedy** (Fitzroy Legal Centre) – finalists for the Community Lawyer Award. **Barbara Shalit** (Mental Health Legal Centre) was a finalist in the Mentor Award.

The **Prisoners Legal Service** (Queensland) received the Corporate International Legal Award for Administrative Law Firm of the Year in Australia, which acknowledges those who have shown excellence in expertise and service delivery over the past 12 months.



AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Deb Pippen
territory representative

Highlights and issues for the year include:

- Insufficient office space for ACT CLCs. While there has been cross-government support there is yet to be anything more concrete in terms of available suitable space. We continue to liaise
- Joint CLE activities, including information stalls at major community events – ACT Multicultural Festival, university orientation events, and a joint training day run by Tenants' Union, Welfare Rights and Legal Centre (WRLC) and Women's Legal Centre (WLC)
- Legal needs research – there are no generalist CLCs in ACT but this research tool can identify legal needs, be useful for strategic planning, and assist joint work with ACT Legal Aid regarding legal needs planning for the ACT
- Regular liaison with ACT providers of legal services through quarterly ACT Legal Aid Forum. Work has included establishing working groups on a range of issues including – continuing professional development, CLE, criminal law, employment law, emergency legal assistance response plan, family law, law access, migration services, tenancy, young Indigenous women and family law
- Street Law, an outreach project for homeless people – a joint initiative of the ACT Legal Assistance Forum and ACT CLCs. It was managed by WRLC and was successful in obtaining increased funding from the ACT Government to extend the pilot for a further 12 months. Street Law's outreach service delivery model has been very successful in connecting with people who would otherwise might not access legal services. A project reference group was established, aimed at providing strategic advice to the project and developing a proposal for recurrent funding to secure a specialist long-term service for homeless people
- WLC and WRLC are developing appropriate projects utilising the donation from Toys'R'Us
- Producing an ACT CLC brochure
- Accreditation – Early in 2011, the ACT was identified as a jurisdiction to pilot the National Accreditation Scheme. The experience has already shown the importance of realising the time the process will take. In the ACT we only have 5 centres ranging from 15 staff to two staff. We also have two CLCs that do not receive CLSP funds. Nevertheless, centres are progressing with their self assessments



NEW SOUTH WALES

Kim Price
state representative

In March 2011, NSW saw a new government elected, with Greg Smith MP appointed as the Attorney General. CLCNSW welcomes him to the role and looks forward to a cooperative relationship with him. Priority issues to be raised with the Attorney General include state funding for CLCs, changes to victims' compensation legislation and police accountability.

In May, the NSW Public Purpose Fund provided ongoing funding for the CLCNSW Aboriginal Legal Access Program (ALAP), Sector Development (SDP, formerly the Learning & Development Program) and for 14 CLCs for various projects, to provide vital services to disadvantaged individuals and communities in NSW, particularly in areas of unmet need. This includes outreach programs in rural and remote areas, legal services to people who are homeless or have experienced domestic violence, and specialist services to targeted communities, such as the GLBTI community.

The Aboriginal Legal Assistance Program has produced two documents. The first, *Protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country*, provides guidance to CLCs for their Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols. It contains information on the difference between a Welcome and an Acknowledgement, as well as cultural ceremonies. The *CLCNSW Aboriginal Employment Strategy*, based on the NACLC version, has been developed to provide principles and guidelines for CLCs to include in their own Aboriginal employment strategies.

In early 2011, Legal Aid NSW released its CLC / Legal Aid NSW Partnership Program. This is a funding program for one-off projects, which are undertaken in genuine partnership between at least one CLC and Legal Aid NSW. A total of \$100,000 is made available every year for innovative and responsive projects conducted in genuine partnership, that aim to provide access to justice for disadvantaged people in NSW.

CLCNSW continues to assist NACLC with PII compliance with its member CLCs. This year, the Board PII representative, Pip Davis, and the PII co-convenor, Katherine Lane, have worked particularly hard with the NSW PII committee on collating extensive feedback for the upcoming revised edition of NACLC's *Risk Management Guide*. We thank them for their hard work in this regard.

CLCNSW has commenced implementation of the National Accreditation Scheme, launched in October 2010, and designed to promote best practice and consistent high-quality services. CLCNSW looks forward to working productively with CLCs in NSW and NACLC towards this goal.

As you can see, another busy year.

**NORTHERN TERRITORY****Nicki Petrou and Teena Balgi**
territory representatives

The last 12 months has been an interesting time for the Northern Territory. From August 2010, we saw the rollout of the new Income Management system across the board, meaning it no longer applied to Indigenous Communities exclusively but affected certain welfare recipients, not previously captured under Income Management.

The battle to control violence and anti-social behaviour fuelled by alcohol in the community continues. The NT government introduced a series of laws that regulate and control the purchase of alcohol. This also affected those eligible to purchase because of the lack of acceptable identification required at point of purchase.

During the year, the Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS) in partnership with the Australian Government Solicitor pro bono program, established a credit and debt legal service. This service is based at DCLS and provides specialist credit and debt legal assistance one day per fortnight. This is a first for the NT, which unlike other states and territories, does not have a dedicated credit and debt legal service.

Unfortunately, legal (and no doubt other) services in the NT continue to experience understaffing due to the difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff. However, services persist in trying to accommodate high demand for legal service delivery, whilst grappling with the vastness and uniqueness of the NT, including its Mandatory Reporting laws, which resulted in a Youth Worker being charged in Alice Springs for failure to comply with section 26 of the Care and Protection of Children Act.

This year The Top End Women's Legal Service (TEWLS) celebrated its 15th Anniversary and moved into new and bigger premises. The Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS) underwent an office refurbishment, now has a new logo design, and is currently developing a new website and resource materials.

All signs are that despite the ongoing issues and challenges facing legal services in the NT, it is business as usual.

**QUEENSLAND****Rosslyn Monro**
state representative

The past year in Queensland held a number of challenges including natural disasters, some CLCs reducing service delivery, and creating an autonomous future for the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services Inc (QAILS) secretariat.

Queensland CLCs were involved in the recovery efforts following the floods in Brisbane and Cyclone Yasi in North Queensland. QAILS participated as a member of the Flood Legal Help consortium, which consisted of members of the Queensland Legal Assistance Forum (QLAF), coordinating the legal response in the early days of the disaster. CLCs provided assistance to people at the recovery centres directly after the disasters struck and continue to work on the longer-term legal issues. Some Commonwealth and state funds were made available to support this work, but much of the need was met by CLCs' existing resources.

QAILS prepared a response to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry, submitting that legal services needed to be included in emergency services planning in the future. Queensland drew upon the experiences of both the Victorian bushfire and Cyclone Larry legal assistance responses to inform strategic use of resources in planning the immediate and long-term responses to the disasters.

QAILS has been working towards organisational autonomy for itself. The QAILS secretariat has been co-located with, and auspiced by, a member CLC since 2004. The work towards autonomy has involved a range of internal activities, such as the development of policies and procedures, sourcing new premises, applying for PBI status and working on governance models.

QAILS held another successful state conference in the rainforests of the Gold Coast hinterland at O'Reilly's. The conference theme, Smarter > Stronger > Better saw a varied program which included sessions on CLC identity, wage systems for CLC workers, accreditation, client self-empowerment and self-care for workers.

A number of Queensland CLCs have reduced services to the community, or are currently in the process of making those decisions as a result of implementing wage increases resulting from the pay equity decision handed down by the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in 2009.

QAILS welcomed a new member this year, the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI) Legal Service, which is an unfunded volunteer service operating one evening advice session per week in Brisbane.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Patsy Kellett and
Matthew Atkinson**
state representatives

South Australian Council of Community Legal Services Inc (SACCLS) has a membership of 11 CLCs both funded and unfunded; three AFVPLS's who have now amalgamated under one umbrella organisation, JusticeNet SA which harnesses the resources of a network of member lawyers to provide pro bono legal assistance to individuals and charitable not for profit organisations that cannot afford a lawyer; UniSA's Legal Clinic where law students have the opportunity to provide legal advice to clients under the supervision of a Managing Solicitor; and a homeless legal clinic operating under the auspice of Welfare Rights CLC.

SACCLS is itself still an unfunded entity and relies on the goodwill of its members to function, notwithstanding the heavy load all its members are carrying.

In 2010/11 SACCLS welcomed the placement of the NACLC Rural Regional and Remote Worker (to promote recruitment and retention of lawyers in country areas) at the Womens' Legal Service in Adelaide.

SACCLS, through its Chair, Alan Merritt, has been involved in the Consumer Law Consultative Forum. The forum aims to bring the discrete elements of the consumer advocacy sector together to discuss common consumer law issues of concern and work together to achieve better consumer outcomes:

- to explore ways to improve service delivery across the entire sector
- to improve knowledge and understanding of consumer law and keep abreast of developments
- to allow practitioners to share their experiences and learn from each other
- to identify where joint advocacy would be effective in addressing systemic issues including advocacy for law reform
- to provide feedback to industry and government regulators

Our Environmental Defenders Office (EDO), following on from a very successful 2010 seminar entitled 'Biodiversity and the law: building blocks for life' has contributed a number of papers and submissions in this specialist area. These include a substantial report proposing amendments to key SA legislation such as the *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004* and the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*. Most recently, the EDO has provided comment on important new proposals for creating protected areas on private land and special protection for the Barossa and McLaren Vale regions.



TASMANIA

Jane Hutchison
state representative

The biggest news for TACLC this financial year was that we took the big leap and incorporated in June.

It was mentioned in last year's report that the Tasmanian Government had announced its intention to introduce human rights legislation. TACLC centres made submission supporting the proposal but unfortunately this legislation hasn't eventuated and is not expected to be introduced in the near future due to budget constraints. This has been a very big disappointment.

The parlous state of legal aid funding continued to impact on CLCs, however funding has improved in recent months taking some of the pressure off.

Tasmania has at long last a Pro Bono Clearing House, run by the Law Society of Tasmania. This has been very long overdue with Tasmania being the last state or territory to establish one.

For the first time in many years, CLCs were invited to make applications to the Solicitors Trust Fund. All CLCs received some funding, and it is hoped that this fund will continue to provide an additional source of revenue to support CLC work in future.

A TACLC representative participated in the first Legal Assistance Forum for Tasmania held in late April.

All centres continue to provide quality legal services to the Tasmanian population, in particular to those who are disadvantaged or vulnerable. Community legal education continues to be a very important activity, including Launceston CLC's successful legal literacy program. All CLCs also engage in law reform. Examples include:

- Women's Legal Service Tasmania was involved in a family violence research project
- EDO Tasmania successfully argued against the adoption of an inadequate coastal policy and continues to lobby for a comprehensive coastal and marine management framework in Tasmania

**VICTORIA**

**Laura Vivarini and
Michael Smith**
state representatives

The new Victorian Liberal National Government affirmed its support for CLCs by continuing over \$2 million a year in sunset funding for CLC family violence, homelessness and rural and regional services. Attorney-General Robert Clark said that the Victorian CLC network “plays a vital role in our justice system”. The State Budget however was marred by a 60 percent reduction in state funding for the specialist employment rights CLC, Jobwatch, despite an overwhelming and already unsustainable demand for the service.

The Federation of CLCs had a strong year, continuing its successful Smart Justice project, which promotes evidence-based, humane and effective criminal justice policies. The Federation is conducting two projects with Footscray CLC: one looks to improve insurance protection for taxi drivers and a new project is exploring ways to reduce the high numbers of small debt matters pursued by local councils for unpaid rates.

The Federation continues to contribute to improvements in police accountability, releasing a detailed report examining taser use by Victoria Police and conducting other work looking at police shootings and the investigation of police-related deaths.

The first graduate under the CLC Law Graduate Scheme was admitted in August and is completing placements at a rural and regional, generalist and specialist CLC. The 2011 graduate commenced her practical legal training in January and the Federation has advertised two positions for 2012.

CLCs featured in the response to the Victorian floods including efforts to improve insurance coverage of flood events. Two clients of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre won a landmark High Court case, which found that the process of determining whether they were owed protection as refugees was conducted unlawfully. Katie Fraser’s Victoria Law Foundation CLC Fellowship concluded that legal education for refugees can prevent or mitigate some legal problems and recommended a strategic approach to education.

**WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**John Perrett and
Chris Gabelish**
state representatives

The WA Association recruited a new Executive Officer in late 2010 and was very pleased to appoint Myles Kunzli to the position. Myles brings a wealth of state CLC and international community services experience to the position.

The Association has continued its activities and embarked on new initiatives as follows.

- Governance and Management Project – Further work has rolled out under this initiative with the consultant assisting individual CLCs to develop their own risk register and strategies to minimise risks
- PII and Legal Committee – This committee has continued to provide support and assistance to legal practitioners to meet their CPD criteria
- Strategic and risk planning – A review of the Association’s business plans was undertaken which identified a number of new initiatives. Resources have been sourced for new staff to facilitate some of these tasks over the coming years, including the completion of a human rights report card
- Natural disasters – Following the trauma of the Carnarvon floods and the bushfires in the hills south of Perth, the Association was involved with Legal Aid WA in promoting the services of CLCs to assist people affected by the natural disasters
- Sustainability of CLCs – This is an ongoing issue and most CLCs are likely to benefit from a WA Government injection of additional funding into the community services sector in the 2011–12 budget. The extra funding is dependent on the type of contractual arrangement that is in place. It is expected that the bulk of additional funding will be directed to improving salaries in the sector
- Kimberley Law Week – The Association assisted Kimberley CLC coordinate a one-off Law Week in June 2011. This involved taking specialist CLC and other community training services to Kununurra for a week

The Association is afforded representation on the State Legal Aid Commission’s Stakeholders Committee and the Legal Assistance Forum.

Appreciation is extended to the major funding providers for their ongoing support of the Association and the sector, with special recognition to Lotteries West.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services Network (ATSIWLSN)

Donna Hensen, Convenor

The ATSIWLSN network met for two days in Melbourne prior to the National Conference to discuss the future of the network and the need for a documented structure so that a stronger voice could be developed on national ATSI issues.

We thank the previous network Convener Traci Harris (Women's Legal Services ACT) for her work and commitment to the network. Traci was involved in the "NACLC Indigenous Employment Strategy". The strategy's aims are to improve the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, to create the right work environment, and to ensure the support and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in CLCs.

Donna Hensen (Women's Legal Services NSW) was voted in as the new ATSIWLSN convener. She has been asked to document the roles and responsibilities of the network and to explore how ATSIWLSN can work with other national ATSI Legal networks.

Administrators

Graeme Chambers and Linda Shepherd, Co-convenors

Graeme Chambers (Macarthur CLC) and Linda Shepherd (Marrickville CLC) are co-convenors of both the NSW Finance and Administrators Network and the National Administrators Network. We wish to thank outgoing convener Carol Benda for all her dedication and efforts for our National Network over the past years. Carol organized the network meeting for the 2010 NACLC national conference. The meeting covered:

- sharing news and innovative work
- recruitment and retention – Nick Hudson
- Diploma of Legal Services – Helena Xenidis (Victoria University)

A general discussion took place on innovative ways CLCs have dealt with administration issues. Nick then spoke about recruitment and retention. A number of ideas were discussed, such as offering a meals and entertainment card (see ATO website), salary packaging, Christmas shutdown, leave loading, flexibility – list the benefits of working in a CLC.

We discussed the fact that salaries in a CLC equal what graduates are paid – so look at recruiting graduates. Graduates get a lot out of working in a CLC – great professional development, greater responsibility, and running matters much sooner than in private practice. We also discussed the importance of budgeting for professional development – and to perhaps offer staff the option of doing courses that are not

necessarily work related. It is also important to make your advertising interesting.

Graeme and Linda are preparing an Australia-wide survey. CLCs will be asked about their finance, administration, and IT policies and procedures so that we can target future training and information sessions and create support systems based on need. Results should be available at the 2011 NACLC national conference.

We encourage non-legal workers – in administration, finance, IT, front desk and coordinators – to join our network.

Child support

Alicia Moore, Convenor

The Child Support Network held two teleconferences, in February and May. The first was attended by eight child-support solicitors from six CLCs across Australia, and the second was attended by five solicitors from five CLCs.

Discussion focused on areas of possible reform, including:

- reversal of the onus of proof of paternity from the mother to the father in paternity cases
- notification to be given to the responding party of applications for extensions of time for appeals before the Social Security Appeals Tribunal
- pursuing child support becoming the prerogative and responsibility of the Child Support Registrar rather than the mother/payee parent, to protect the mother from possible retaliation from the father/payer parent
- the child-support legislation being amended to allow for departure orders backdating assessments past the current seven-year limit, in response to the recent spate of CSA reconciliations demanding arrears going back 10 years or more

A positive development in the Federal Budget was that the CSA mechanism for estimating a payer parent's income was changed. A payer parent's income is deemed to be two-thirds of the average weekly male earnings or CPI index of income according to the payer's last tax return, whichever is the greater.

Conference participants shared legal and procedural knowledge with each other. Senior solicitors explained legal processes, such as enforcement summons, to junior solicitors. All participants shared their experiences with clients, other community workers and magistrates, which was of great benefit to the group.

Clinical legal education

Anna Cody, Convenor

The network met at the 2010 NACLC National Conference and held an informative workshop about a range

of clinical legal education initiatives within CLCs.

Informal networking took place during the year with a research project being conducted into standards in clinical legal education. The project was lead by Associate Professor Adrian Evans of Monash University. It documents current clinical legal education practice throughout Australia with the aim of developing standards or best practice for forms of clinical legal education. This project will report formally in July 2013.

A national conference is planned for September 2011 for Australian clinical legal educators with substantial CLC participation.

Community legal education workers

Carol Benda and Steve Womersley, Co-convenors

Thirty members of the National Network of Community Legal Education Workers (CLEWS) met before 2010 NACLC National Conference to share projects and make connections.

The network's e-newsletter continued to update members about relevant news and community legal education (CLE) projects across the country. The newsletter has almost 300 on the mailing list. In addition to CLE workers, the list includes interested people from legal aid commissions and other relevant agencies. This allows the CLE work of CLCs to be promoted beyond the sector.

In July, the Network adopted a statement of purpose to clarify its role, membership and frequency of meetings; the process for the election of convenors; and the process for developing a network strategic plan.

At the 2011 NACLC National Conference, the Network convenors will present a draft strategic plan to the Network meeting for discussion and adoption.

The Network has continued to provide input into CLEAR: the new, national CLE and Reform database. Members have contributed almost 200 recent projects to the database, which will be officially launched at the 2011 National Conference.

Thanks to retiring convenor, Michelle Burgermeister (WA), for all her efforts over the last few years. Carol Benda (Women's Legal Service, ACT) and Steve Womersley (Loddon Campaspe CLC, Victoria) will continue as co-convenors until October 2011.

Disability rights

Fiona Given, Convenor

The Australian Disability Rights Network held bi-monthly phone link-ups where Network members shared information about cases and policy work. The proposed Equality Bill was the main topic of discussion this year – it will have major implications for members if passed.

We had a very successful Networks Day meeting before the 2010 NACLC National Conference. Barrister Anna Forsythe spoke about the distinction between direct and indirect discrimination.

I look forward to another successful year for the Network next year.

Employment

Fiona Rosen, Convenor

The Employment Law Network (ELN) is comprised of CLCs specialising in employment law and work-related issues. The ELN discusses trends in client matters, opportunities for law reform and other issues facing member CLCs.

Funding

Funding continues to be a significant issue for ELN members. JobWatch's state funding was cut by around 60 percent, which greatly reduces its capacity to meet client demand. It is now urging the Federal Government to cover the shortfall. Other members of the ELN provided JobWatch with support to secure additional funding.

The Federal Government conducted a review of Community Based Employment Advice Services (CBEAS), such as the Working Women's Centres, the Employment Law Centre and JobWatch. The Workplace Relations Ministers' Council met in August 2011 and began implementing recommendations from the review, such as exploring future funding arrangements for CBEAS and exploring the establishment of other CBEAS.

Client matters

ELN members noted a number of issues and trends in client matters, including:

- clients being prevented from making unfair dismissal claims to Fair Work Australia (FWA) due to the 14 day limitation period and FWA accepting very few out-of-time applications
- self-represented clients' difficulties complying with FWA's directions to lodge formal legal documents within short time-frames
- difficulties seeking adjournments in FWA matters
- increasing numbers of bullying complaints

Law reform

The ELN developed a survey to gather information about clients' experiences in unfair dismissal proceedings in FWA, which will be used to inform future law reform activities.

Members noted that there is little legal protection for bullying and lodged submissions on the proposed harmonisation of occupational health and safety laws, arguing that bullying should be addressed in new laws.

The ELN endorsed JobWatch's submissions to the Australian Human Rights Commission on sexual orientation discrimination.

Environment

Felicity Millner, ANEDO Facilitator

The Australian Network of Environmental Defender's Offices (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 casework and advice, community legal education and law reform and policy work.

ANEDO has bi-monthly phone link-ups where offices update the Network on their activities and opportunities for cooperation are discussed.

ANEDO contributed a number of important submissions about national law and policy issues. These included responses to the guide to the proposed Murray Darling Basin Plan, the Carbon Farming Initiative, the Produce Stewardship Legislation Bill and the Illegal Logging Prohibition Bill. (ANEDO's policy submissions are available at www.edo.org.au.)

Human rights

Bill Mitchell and Rachel Ball, Co-convenors

The National Human Rights Network continued its primary functions of sharing information about human rights issues among its members and supporting NACLC and CLCs in their human rights work.

The Network met regularly by phone link-up and also met face-to-face in Melbourne in 2010. A convenor attended the government NGO Forum on Human Rights and raised issues suggested by Network members and other CLCs.

Throughout the year, the Network focused on a range of big-picture issues including the Human Rights Register (now revamped and re-launched), treaty reporting (CERD, UPR, CPRD, CRC), the new National Human Rights Framework (including the legislative components), the Human Rights Education Grants process, the National Human Rights Action Plan, consolidation of federal anti-discrimination laws, implementation of treaty body recommendations, and engagement and support for NGO reporting to UN bodies.

Many of the issues aligned with the human rights work of NACLC and the Network assisted NACLC with submissions to state and territory charter reviews, parliamentary committees and to UN and related reporting processes.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex

Amy McGowan, Convenor

The LGBTI National Network met regularly via phone link-up to exchange updates and share information about the many changes affecting our LGBTI communities.

Members contributed to the Australian Human Rights Commission's consultation on protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sex and/or gender identity.

We were excited to see Queensland launch a free service in Teneriffe to provide advice, assistance and legal referrals to the LGBTI community. The service is staffed entirely by lawyers volunteering their time and is currently unfunded.

We hope that Victoria will soon launch its own LGBTI specialist service. A report, launched earlier this year, into the accessibility of legal services for LGBTI Victorians has called for the state to develop a more targeted response to the community's legal issues. Victorian network members have been working towards establishing such a service.

At the 2010 NACLC National Conference, Network members, Dr. Chris Atmore, Sally Goldner and Simone Cusack of the Federation of CLCs (Victoria) presented a session called 'Getting on the record: legal recognition of transgender and intersex identities'. There is still much work to be done in this area.

The NSW specialist LGBTI CLC, Inner City Legal Centre, continued to provide advice to our communities statewide. It also participated in the Mardi Gras and undertook a survey to quantify and understand the gap in social and legal services for LGBTI people living in New South Wales. Results from this survey will be launched at the 2011 NACLC conference.

We encourage anyone from the sector with an interest in LGBTI community rights to participate in the Network.

Older persons

Sonya Mitchell, Convenor

The OPLS Network used practice experience to gather and examine the common legal issues that affect older Australians. The majority of the Network's concerns relate to:

- enduring powers of attorney (EPAs), in particular – their misuse, the lack of formal education for attorneys, the lack of protective measures in EPA legislation, their limited recognition between states and territories, and the lack of registration and auditing of EPAs
- guardianship and administration
- access to legal assistance for older people
- financial matters

The Network prioritised these concerns and is currently focusing on the issues surrounding EPAs. It is preparing a submission to the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General seeking registration, harmonisation, accountability of attorneys through auditing and criminal prosecution of attorneys who misuse their power.

The Network continues to work collaboratively through actively sharing practice and education resources.

Police accountability

Tamar Hopkins, Convenor

The National Police Accountability Network will hold its first meeting in July 2011 and has planned a network meeting for the 2011 NACLC National Conference. The Network will also hold a panel forum at the Conference with its members from around the country on independent investigations.

Thus far, the Network has focused on the use and abuse of tasers across Australia and the independent investigation of police complaints and deaths in custody.

To date, the Network has had difficulty holding meetings without funding and gratefully appreciates the role of NACLC in resourcing its meetings.

Tenancy

Penny Carr, Convenor

In addition to telephone meetings during the year, the National Association of Tenant Organisations (NATO) held its regular face-to-face meeting before the 2010 NACLC National Conference.

In terms of national issues and work, the momentum from the Federal Election and subsequent changes to how the government managed housing issues lead to continued pressure on services.

NATO continued its representative role on National Shelter, the peak non-government organisation representing the interests of low-income housing consumers. This is a beneficial role in terms of ensuring NATO's ability as an unfunded network to participate in national housing policy forums.

NATO identified common issues for tenant organisations across the country:

- 'no-grounds' termination of tenancies, rent increases, bond disputes, termination of tenancies for alleged anti-social behavior, lack of minimum standards for rental accommodation
- changes to and reviews of tenancy legislation, including new tribunals, created a lot of work for CLCs
- media interest in rent increases, rental affordability and rent bidding
- security of tenure
- the need for best-practice tenancy legislation/standards
- student housing
- tenancy databases

Other work included:

- attending the International Union of Tenants congress in Prague and making a presentation on tenancy across Australia
- working closely with National Shelter for its report on its marginal tenancies project, 'Marginal tenures – a national picture', February 2011

- meeting with new Housing Minister, Senator Arbib, to discuss tenancy issues and promote our report on tenancy legislation, 'A better lease on life: improving Australian tenancy law'
- participating in national housing forums on regulation of community housing

Areas of work identified for the coming year are the regulation of community housing and the development of events for International Tenants Day, held on the first Monday in October each year.

Rural, regional and remote

Lee Milcherdy, Convenor

An increased number of workers from regional, rural and remote (RRR) CLCs attended the National RRR Network meeting at the 2010 NACLC National Conference. Coming from all corners of Australia, these solicitors, coordinators and other support workers ensured spirited discussions and a stimulating interchange of information.

The meeting included a roundtable, where everybody introduced themselves and gave a brief overview of their CLC – contributing greatly to networking opportunities. A range of topics were then discussed:

- partnerships with Family Relationship Centres
- the use of electronic resources in service delivery
- the NACLC Law Graduate Project, the University of NSW Law Graduate Placement Program and the Country Lawyers Project
- recruitment and retention of staff in RRR CLCs
- casework and conflict-of-interest issues

Other issues RRR CLCs continue to face include:

- a lack of time for regular RRR CLCs teleconferences. These meetings provide the opportunity to focus on solutions associated with RRR outreach service delivery
- travel and other costs associated with the delivery of outreach for rural clients, especially those in smaller remote communities
- getting specialist legal assistance to RRR areas and CLCs, and accessing pro bono support
- securing funding for secretariat support for the RRR Network to enable it to more strategically address some these issues

The network met periodically by teleconference.

Items discussed included:

- RRR funding opportunities
- formulation of a RRR lobbying strategy
- use of information communications technology to meet the legal needs of geographically isolated RRR clients and to assist with communication and/or training needs of RRR CLCs
- identification of useful/common practice resources to share
- the Country Lawyers and graduate placement projects

Welfare rights

Maree O'Halloran, President

The National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN) is an incorporated association. Its members are 14 CLCs that specialise in social security law and policy, Centrelink practice and employment participation issues.

A national delegation of NWRN members met with Centrelink on two occasions to raise matters of concern to our client base as well as service delivery issues. The matters canvassed were broad-ranging – from the prosecution of people for alleged social security fraud to the impact of the same-sex law reform to the fact that many people were missing out on social security payments to which they were entitled.

NWRN believes that Centrelink has a role to inform and educate the community about how to claim their entitlements.

On the policy front, NWRN made a number of 4submissions to parliamentary inquiries and raised many issues directly with federal MPs and through the media. Major areas of policy work included:

- employment participation
- carbon pricing and assistance to households
- compulsory income management
- reforms to the Disability Support Pension
- the interaction of the tax and transfer system and the distribution of wealth and income
- social security issues for children and young people
- the lack of access to social security in Australia for NZ citizens, including those born in Australia
- the Special Benefit
- the prevention and/or waiving of debts owed to Centrelink
- the unsustainably low rate of the Newstart and Youth Allowance rates

The NWRN will continue to work for major, beneficial law reform for our client base over the coming year. One of the urgently needed reforms is for the Newstart Allowance (unemployment benefit) to be increased by at least \$50 per week in line with the recommendations of the Henry Tax and Transfer Review. The rate of Newstart Allowance for a single adult is currently \$237 per week (\$128 per week lower than the pension rate).

I would like to thank all the members of the NWRN for the magnificent efforts over the last year. I would also like to thank the outgoing and incoming National Committee members for their commitment over the last year (Kate Beaumont, Mark Leahy, Caitlin Perry, Dale Nelson, Georgina Warrington, Peter Horbury, Genevieve Bolton and Bill Mitchell).

Women

Caitlin Tierney, WLSA Convenor

Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA) has had a very busy 12 months, having made numerous law reform submissions whilst broadening its range of activities by attending an array of meetings and forums and becoming involved in a series of new alliances.

WLSA met face-to-face in Sydney in January 2011 in preparation for its *Put Safety First in Family Law Campaign*. WLSA created a blog for the campaign (www.safetyinfamilylaw.com), and is in the final stages before launching its first website to assist future law reform campaigns and raise WLSA's profile. WLSA secured pro-bono media assistance to assist with campaigning.

In addition, WLSA produced a range of materials as part of the campaign:

- a submission to the Attorney-General's Department's consultation on the Family Law (Family Violence) Exposure Draft Bill (with the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance)
- a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into the *Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011*
- a brief for politicians on the Bill
- a petition calling for support of the Bill and further changes to be made
- two position papers on the Exposure Draft Bill and the Bill as introduced
- two submission writing kits to assist other organisations and individuals to engage in the consultations on the Exposure Draft Bill and the Bill as introduced

WLSA has continued to respond to other inquiries/reports in the area of family law, such as providing comments to the Attorney-General's Department on proposed changes to expand family dispute resolution in September 2010, and a response to the National Alternative Dispute Resolution Advisory Council's Issues paper on alternative dispute resolution and family law.

WLSA has also been proactive in engaging with the broader community about legal issues affecting women. Committee members attended the launch of the Family Law Bill and the domestic violence model on family dispute resolution, appeared before the Senate Committee as a witness as part of its inquiry into the Family Violence Bill, wrote media releases and a letter to the editor of *The Australian*, and attended meetings (and corresponded with) with key parliamentarians/political advisers in relation to the Family Law Bill.

WLSA was represented in a number of committees and networks, including, as NACLC delegate, at the Chief Justice Family Law Forum in November 2010, and the Chief Justice's Family Law Forum in May 2011. WLSA committee member Edwina McDonald was a steering committee member of the Equality Rights Alliance, and Zita Ngor an advisory group member

of the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance. WLSA also joined the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network.

WLSA saw internal changes. Edwina MacDonald (WLS NSW) and Zione Walker-Nthenda (WLS Victoria) handed over the 2011 role of Co-Convenor to Dianne Hamey (WLS NSW) and Caitlin Tierney (Central Australian Womens Legal Service). Dianne then departed and Caitlin continued as WLSA's 2011 Convenor.

WLSA intends to continue to respond to inquiries and proactively campaign to further equality and access to justice for women. We anticipate that the passage of the Family Law Bill will continue to be a focus of our work in the coming year. We also anticipate monitoring any changes, continuing to push for safer family laws and feeding into the Commonwealth, state and territory governments' national response to the Australian Law Reform Commission's report on family violence.

WLSA is in the process of reviewing its membership rules so as to allow dedicated women's legal services that are not necessarily recipients of federal funding to become eligible for WLSA membership.

Youth

Matthew Keeley, Convenor

The Youth Advocacy Network (YAN) last met face-to-face at the 2010 NACLC National Conference. Whilst fruitful discussion took place, the YAN did not take any recommendations to the plenary session of the Conference.

YAN members made submissions to the Commonwealth Attorney-General, seeking an increase in funding for youth legal services. Regrettably, his reply in effect advised that he considered spending on youth to have increased through enhancements to spending in other areas of the community legal services program.

The convenor of the YAN, James McDougall of National Children's and Youth Law Centre (NCYLC) resigned and was replaced by Matthew Keeley, incoming Director of NCYLC. Matthew communicated with those YAN members known to him about the future of YAN and how to engage the Network.

Matthew and others identified that the YAN currently faced some barriers to becoming an effective network:

- lack of clarity about who is a member of YAN
- lack of agreement about what YAN can reasonably do and achieve

He identified potential members and has invited them to the YAN meeting at the 2011 NACLC National Conference. Members and potential members will also be surveyed before the meeting to identify priorities for future work. The results of this survey will be presented at the National Conference meeting and will inform the agenda.

Members of YAN contributed to the development of the NGO shadow report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child on Australia's implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This document, 'Listen to children,' will be lodged with the committee in July 2011 and will be launched in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne soon after.

A delegation, expected to include representatives of NCYLC, NACLC and the Human Rights Law Centre, will present the report to the Committee in Geneva in mid-October 2011, immediately before the next YAN meeting.



Treasurer's report

The National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc has produced a net surplus of \$161,057 for the 2010/2011 financial year. This strong result has been built by the organisation increasing its project funding by over \$680,000 and obtaining the benefit of \$129,000 interest.

Members' contributions have risen from \$401,200 to \$422,155, a 5% increase derived from a small increase in the number of centres and, more significantly, an increase in sector funding. NACLC has not changed its contributions scales, nor included indexation increases, for the last several years.

The association has been able to fully fund the development and the licensing for all member CLCs for two years of the Management Support Online resources tailored to CLCs, the National Accreditation Scheme including the development of and purchase of licences to use the online self assessment tool, the SPP, for all member CLCs for two years, and employing a National Accreditation Co-ordinator, all from its current funding.

The association is financially sound with accumulated members' funds being \$497,863 as at June 30. However the next few years will be financially challenging for the organisation, particularly because:

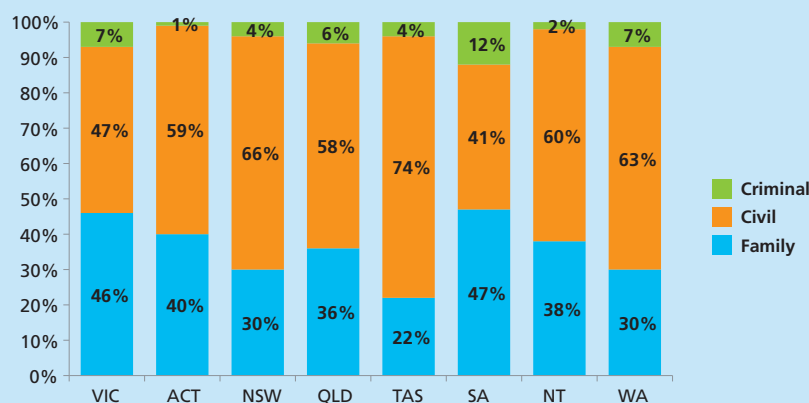
- The organisation has outgrown its current accommodation and needs to look for new accommodation shortly
- NACLC is committed to continuing to fund the MSO and Accreditation SPP licences for its members
- There is continuing pressure on the administration and staff to be able to manage the expanded number of services and projects to support centres, and maintain its human rights and social justice advocacy and its lobbying on behalf of the sector and its clients

NACLC has changed its fee structure for the 2011/2012 year. This has been undertaken to provide a simpler and more consistent and equitable system of calculation and increase transparency. This year the fee will be capped to 0.5% of a CLC's revenue and the total amount to be paid by any one centre capped at \$6000 pa. The change was made to realign with a changed sector, and not to obtain a greater proportion of funds from the sector.

Alex Mactier

NACLC data: 2010–11 CLSP CLCs advice and casework services

Law type % of all matters by state/territory



National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

Financial report for the Year Ended 30 June 2011

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

The committee members present their report together with the financial report of National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc for the year ended 30 June 2011 and auditors report thereon.

Committee members

The names of the committee members in office at any time during or since the end of the year are:

Liz O'Brien National Convenor, until 23 October 2010
Michael Smith National Convenor, from 23 October 2011
Carol Benda Treasurer, until 23 October 2010
Alex Mactier Treasurer, from 23 October 2010
Deb Pippen ACT representative
Kim Price NSW representative
Teena Balgi NT representative, until 8 December 2010
Nicki Petrou NT representative, from 8 December 2010
Rosslyn Monro Qld representative
Matthew Atkinson SA representative, until 7 February 2011
Patsy Kellett SA representative, from 7 February 2011
Jane Hutchison TAS representative
Michael Smith VIC representative, until 23 October 2010
Alex Mactier VIC representative, acting representative from 23 October 2010 – 15 February 2011
Laura Vivarini VIC representative, from 15 February 2011
Chris Gabelish WA representative
John Perrett WA representative

The committee members have been in office since the start of the year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Principal activities

The principal activity of the association during the year was 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; and
- advancing the interest of community legal centres within Australia.

Further information on the principal activities performed during the financial year are set out in the Annual Report. No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Review of operations


The association continued to engage in its principal activity, the results of which are disclosed in the attached financial statements.

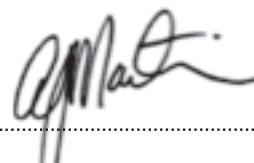
Significant changes in state of affairs

There were no significant changes in the association's state of affairs that occurred during the financial year, other than those referred to elsewhere in this report.

Results

The net profit of the association for the year amounted to \$161,057.


.....Michael Smith
Committee Member


..... Alex Mactier
Committee Member

Dated this twentieth day of September 2011

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2011

	Note	CURRENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011	PREVIOUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2010
		\$	\$
REVENUE	2	1,980,971	1,206,301
LESS: EXPENSES			
Depreciation and amortisation expense	3	(13,366)	(16,869)
Employee benefits expense		(442,404)	(290,130)
Conference expense		(289,273)	(286,024)
Operating expense		(389,584)	(206,141)
Project expense		(685,287)	(240,460)
		(1,819,914)	(1,039,624)
NET PROFIT		161,057	166,677
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME		161,057	166,677

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

	Note	CURRENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011	PREVIOUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2010
		\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	954,446	628,378
Receivables	5	677,901	257,302
Other financial assets	6	1,319,056	2,010,000
Other assets	8	25,674	50,538
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		2,977,077	2,946,218
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	14,926	21,891
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		14,926	21,891
TOTAL ASSETS		2,992,003	2,968,109
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Payables	9	337,072	233,460
Borrowings		51,866	-
Provisions	10	10,000	4,500
Other liabilities	11	2,088,377	2,393,343
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		2,487,315	2,631,303
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	10	6,825	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		6,825	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES		2,494,140	2,631,303
NET ASSETS		497,863	336,806
MEMBERS FUNDS			
Reserves	12	155,149	147,059
Accumulated net profit	13	342,714	189,747
TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS		497,863	336,806

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial report preparation requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT). The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs, which do not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

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

(a) Revenue

Grant income, conference and insurance is recognised as revenue in the year to which the associated expenditure and grant funding agreement relates. Accordingly, this income received in the current year for expenditure in future years are treated as grants or income in advance.

Revenue from the rendering of services is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

Unexpended specific grant income at 30 June each year is disclosed as a liability in the financial statements. The amount brought to account as income is equivalent to that amount expended by the Association during the financial year. Where surplus funds are required to be repaid, they will remain as a liability in the financial statements until repayment.

Revenue for CLSIS data base rollout to FVPLS units is reported on a net basis. All cost incurred by NACLC was directly invoiced to Attorney General's (AG's) department and the remuneration to NACLC was the management fee.

Interest revenue is recognised when it becomes receivable on a proportional basis taking in to account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

(b) Income tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand and at banks, short-term deposits with an original maturity of three months or less held at call with financial institutions, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the statement of financial position.

(d) Financial instruments*Classification*

The association classifies its financial assets into the following categories: financial assets at fair value through profit and loss, loans and receivables, held-to-maturity investments, and available-for-sale financial assets. The classification depends on the purpose for which the instruments were acquired. Management determines the classification of its financial instruments at initial recognition.

Held-to-maturity investments

Fixed term investments intended to be held to maturity are classified as held-to-maturity investments. They are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are measured at fair value at inception and subsequently at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

(e) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses.

Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is measured on the cost basis.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by committee to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows which will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to present values in determining recoverable amounts.

Leasehold Improvements

Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets are depreciated over their estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Class of fixed asset	Depreciation rates	Depreciation basis
Leasehold improvements at cost	33.33%	Straight line
Office furniture and equipment at cost	10.00% – 33.33%	Straight line

(f) Impairment

Assets with an indefinite useful life are not amortised but are tested annually for impairment in accordance with AASB 136. Assets subject to annual depreciation or amortisation are reviewed for impairment whenever events or circumstances arise that indicates that the carrying amount of the asset may be impaired. An impairment loss is recognised where the carrying amount of the asset exceeds its recoverable amount. The recoverable amount of an asset is defined as the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and value in use.

(g) Provisions

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

(h) Leases

Leases are classified at their inception as either operating or finance leases based on the economic substance of the agreement so as to reflect the risks and benefits incidental to ownership.

Operating leases

Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Lease incentives received under operating leases are recognised as a liability and amortised on a straight-line basis over the life of the lease term.

(i) Employee benefits

Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries and annual leave and any other employee benefits expected to be settled within twelve months of the reporting date are measured at their nominal amounts based on remuneration rates which are expected to be paid when the liability is settled. All other employee benefit liabilities are measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflow to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

(j) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

(k) Comparatives

Where necessary, comparative information has been reclassified and repositioned for consistency with current year disclosures.

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	CURRENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011 \$	PREVIOUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2010 \$
NOTE 2: REVENUE		
Sales revenue		
Contributions from centres	422,155	401,200
Donations	500	-
	<u>422,655</u>	<u>401,200</u>
Other revenue		
Conference income	290,545	310,651
Grants	1,114,975	433,215
	<u>1,405,520</u>	<u>743,866</u>
 BBS accounts income	 4,900	 2,850
Admin income	18,000	18,039
Bank interest received	129,896	40,306
Sundry other income	-	40
	<u>152,796</u>	<u>61,235</u>
Total revenue	<u>1,980,971</u>	<u>1,206,301</u>
NOTE 3: NET PROFIT		
Net profit / (losses) before income tax has been determined after:		
Depreciation and amortisation		
- leasehold improvements	8,724	8,724
- office furniture and equipment	4,642	8,145
	<u>13,366</u>	<u>16,869</u>
Bad debts		
- trade debtors	-	100
NOTE 4: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS		
Cash on hand	200	100
Cash at bank	954,246	628,278
	<u>954,446</u>	<u>628,378</u>
NOTE 5: RECEIVABLES		
CURRENT		
Trade debtors	659,149	247,008
Interest receivable	17,708	10,294
Other debtors	1,044	-
	<u>677,901</u>	<u>257,302</u>
NOTE 6: OTHER FINANCIAL ASSETS		
CURRENT		
<i>Held to maturity financial assets</i>		
Term Deposit	1,319,056	2,010,000
	<u>1,319,056</u>	<u>2,010,000</u>

A term deposit of \$10,000 is held as a bank guarantee per the Sydney office lease agreement, equivalent of three months gross rental plus GST.

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	CURRENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011 \$	PREVIOUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2010 \$
NOTE 7: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
<i>Leasehold improvements</i>		
At cost	26,171	26,171
Accumulated amortisation	(20,355)	(11,631)
	<u>5,816</u>	<u>14,540</u>
<i>Plant and equipment</i>		
Office furniture and equipment at cost	29,611	23,209
Accumulated depreciation	(20,501)	(15,858)
	<u>9,110</u>	<u>7,351</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>14,926</u>	<u>21,891</u>
NOTE 8: OTHER ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Prepayments	25,674	50,538
	<u>25,674</u>	<u>50,538</u>
NOTE 9: PAYABLES		
CURRENT		
GST liabilities	72,930	192,171
Employee liabilities	25,311	19,932
Accrued expenses	238,831	21,357
	<u>337,072</u>	<u>233,460</u>
NOTE 10: PROVISIONS		
CURRENT		
Other	10,000	4,500
	<u>10,000</u>	<u>4,500</u>
NON CURRENT		
Employee benefits	6,825	-
(a) Aggregate employee benefits liability	32,136	19,932
(b) Reconciliations		
<i>Other (current)</i>		
Opening balance	4,500	4,500
Additional amounts recognised	5,500	-
Closing balance	<u>10,000</u>	<u>4,500</u>
NOTE 11: OTHER LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Grants received in advance	1,783,307	2,049,936
National conference liabilities	54,027	71,316
PI insurance liability	251,043	272,091
	<u>2,088,377</u>	<u>2,393,343</u>
NOTE 12: RESERVES		
General reserve	87,500	87,500
Conference surplus reserve	67,649	59,559
	<u>155,149</u>	<u>147,059</u>

The general reserve is used to support the National Accreditation Scheme and the Management Support Online License.

The conference surplus reserve is kept separately to cover future years' conferences.

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	CURRENT AS AT 30 JUNE 2011 \$	PREVIOUS AS AT 30 JUNE 2010 \$
NOTE 13: ACCUMULATED NET PROFIT		
Accumulated net profit at beginning of year	189,747	87,697
Net profit	161,057	166,677
Transfers to reserves	(8,090)	(64,628)
	<u>342,714</u>	<u>189,747</u>

NOTE 14: RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

Transactions between parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

NOTE 15: CAPITAL AND LEASING COMMITMENTS

(a) Operating lease commitments

Non-cancellable operating leases contracted for but not capitalised in the financial statements:

Payable		
- not later than one year	16,407	27,496
- later than one year and not later than five years	-	16,407
- later than five years	-	-
	<u>16,407</u>	<u>43,903</u>

The property lease is a non-cancellable lease with a three-year term, with rent payable monthly in advance. Contingent rental provisions within the lease agreement require that the minimum lease payments shall be increased by the higher of fixed percentage review or 4% per annum. An option exists to renew the lease at the end of the three-year term for an additional term of two years.

NOTE 16: ASSOCIATION DETAILS

The registered office and principal place of business of the association is:

Suite 4, Level 9

307 Pitt Street

SYDNEY NSW 2000

National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

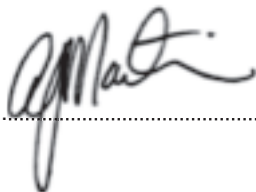
The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 27–39:

1. Presents fairly the financial position of National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc as at 30 June 2011 and performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.



.....Michael Smith
Committee Member



.....Alex Mactier
Committee Member

Dated this twentieth day of September 2011



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES
ABN 67 757 001 303

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2011, and statement of comprehensive income for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the statement by members of the committee.

Responsibility of Those Charged With Governance

The committee of the association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act 1991 (ACT)* and is appropriate to meet the needs of the financial reporting needs of the members.

The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

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 **BAKER TILLY**
INTERNATIONAL



PITCHER PARTNERS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES
ABN 67 757 001 303

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Auditor's Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc as at 30 June 2011 and of its financial performance for the year ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report and the *Associations Incorporations Act 1991 (ACT)*.

Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc to meet the financial reporting needs of the members as determined by the governing committee. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

MARK GODLEWSKI

Partner

PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

Date: 20 September 2011



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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES
ABN 67 757 001 303

DISCLAIMER
TO NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

We have compiled the accompanying additional financial data presented on page 17 in accordance with the books and records of the association, which have been subjected to auditing procedures applied in our statutory audit of the association for the year ended 30 June 2011.

Our statutory audit did not cover all details of the additional financial data. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on such financial data and we give no warranty of accuracy or reliability in respect of the data provided. Neither the firm nor any member or employee of the firm undertakes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person (other than National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc) in respect of such data, including any errors or omissions therein however caused.

The responsibility of the committee

The committee of National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc are solely responsible for the additional financial data and have determined that it is appropriate to meet their needs.

Our responsibility

Our procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information provided to us, to compile the additional financial data in accordance with APES 315 *Compilation of Financial Information*. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

Mark Godlewski
Partner

PITCHER PARTNERS
SYDNEY

Date: 20 September 2011

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National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc

ABN 67 757 001 303

	Melbourne 2010	Perth 2009
NATIONAL CONFERENCE TRADING STATEMENT	\$	\$
INCOME		
Registration fees	239,999	220,061
Sponsorship	50,546	90,590
Conference grants	30,000	-
Donations	500	-
TOTAL INCOME	321,045	310,651
EXPENSES		
Conference audio-visual	2,810	33,222
Conference organiser	61,167	56,700
Conference childcare	1,350	6,195
Conference interpreting services	3,309	4,325
Conference materials and equipment	5,801	-
Venue	40,215	70,585
Catering	91,167	27,494
Conference welcome and entertainment	13,997	3,600
Design and printing	9,033	8,739
Network costs	4,557	1,356
Office supplies	830	112
Conference postage and courier	533	621
Subsidies	27,419	43,072
Salaries	15,010	-
Superannuation	1,351	-
Telecommunications	2,181	1,355
Travel and accommodation	30,719	27,155
Sundry expenses	1,506	1,492
TOTAL EXPENSES	312,955	286,023
CONFERENCE NET PROFIT	8,090	24,628

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