



# NACLC Annual Report 2014/15



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NACLC acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, traditional owners of the land on which the NACLC office is situated. We pay deep respect to Elders past and present.

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

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# About NACLC and Community Legal Centres



**T**he National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) is the peak national organisation for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) in Australia. NACLC's members are the state and territory CLC associations, which together represent nearly 200 centres in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations across Australia. Some Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Legal Services choose to join state and territory CLC associations and also come under the NACLC umbrella.

CLCs are not for profit, community-based organisations that provide free legal advice, casework and information and a range of community development services to their local or special interest communities. Some CLCs also advocate for law reform or conduct test cases where laws are operating unfairly or are unclear.

CLCs' work is targeted at people experiencing or vulnerable to disadvantage and those with special needs, and in undertaking matters in the public interest. CLCs have been advocating for a rights-based approach and equitable access to the justice system in Australia for over 40 years.

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

NACLC's **vision** is:

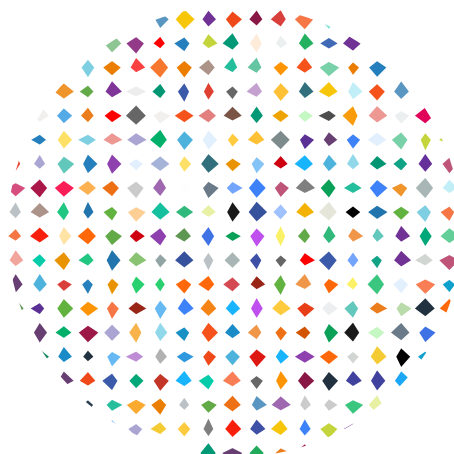
- Achieving rights, fairness and equality for our communities.

NACLC's **mission** is that:

- NACLC leads, connects and develops CLCs to pursue rights, fairness and equality for all communities.

NACLC's **strategic priorities** are to:

- lead in good practice for NGOs by building the long-term viability and sustainability of NACLC's governance, management and organisational structures
- advocate for access to justice and the promotion and protection of human rights
- proactively identify and respond to the sector-identified and sector-driven needs of CLCs
- develop, maintain and strengthen mutually beneficial collaborations with CLCs and with key stakeholders and peak bodies
- establish and support the operation of the **knowmore** legal advisory service.



NACLC's work is wide ranging and includes providing a range of services directly to CLCs, practical and financial support to specialist National Networks of CLCs, and working collaboratively with CLCs on many law reform and other projects. NACLC also lobbies for funding for CLCs; represents CLCs in national forums, debates and negotiations; operates a National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs; and organises the annual National CLCs Conference.

NACLC also makes law reform and public policy submissions and undertakes social justice campaigns advocating for the legal protection of human rights, often in collaboration with CLCs and other NGOs.

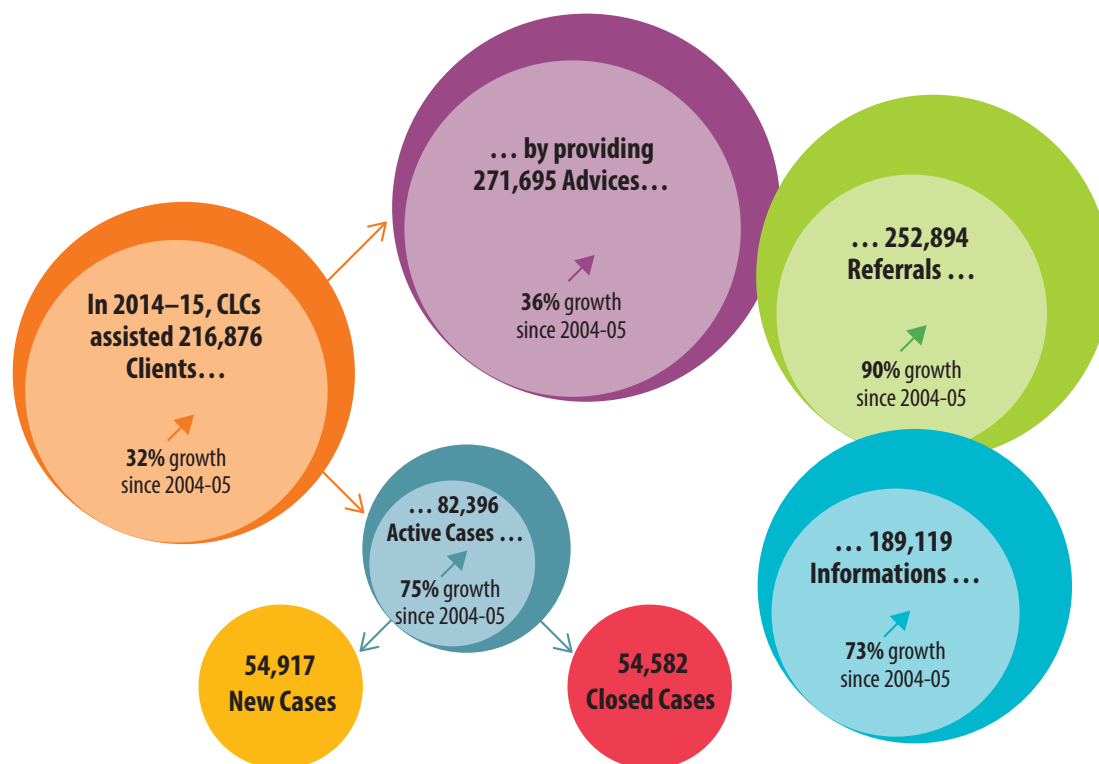
**knowmore** was established by NACLC in 2012/13, at the request of the Australian Government. It is a national, culturally safe, legal advisory service for people engaging or considering engaging with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. While operating independently day to day, **knowmore** remains a project managed by NACLC.

NACLC formally adopted a new governance structure in November 2014 after an extensive period of consultation and development. There was a General Meeting of NACLC on 5 February 2015, the first following NACLC becoming a company limited by guarantee. The General Meeting was held to elect the new Directors, who were recommended by the Transitional Nomination Committee (TNC).

The new Board comprises: James Farrell, Nick Hudson (Treasurer), Sara Kane, Rosslyn Munro, Michael Smith (Chairperson), Daniel Stubbs and Nancy Walke.

NACLC is funded through fees paid by centres, generated income and project funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department and other bodies.

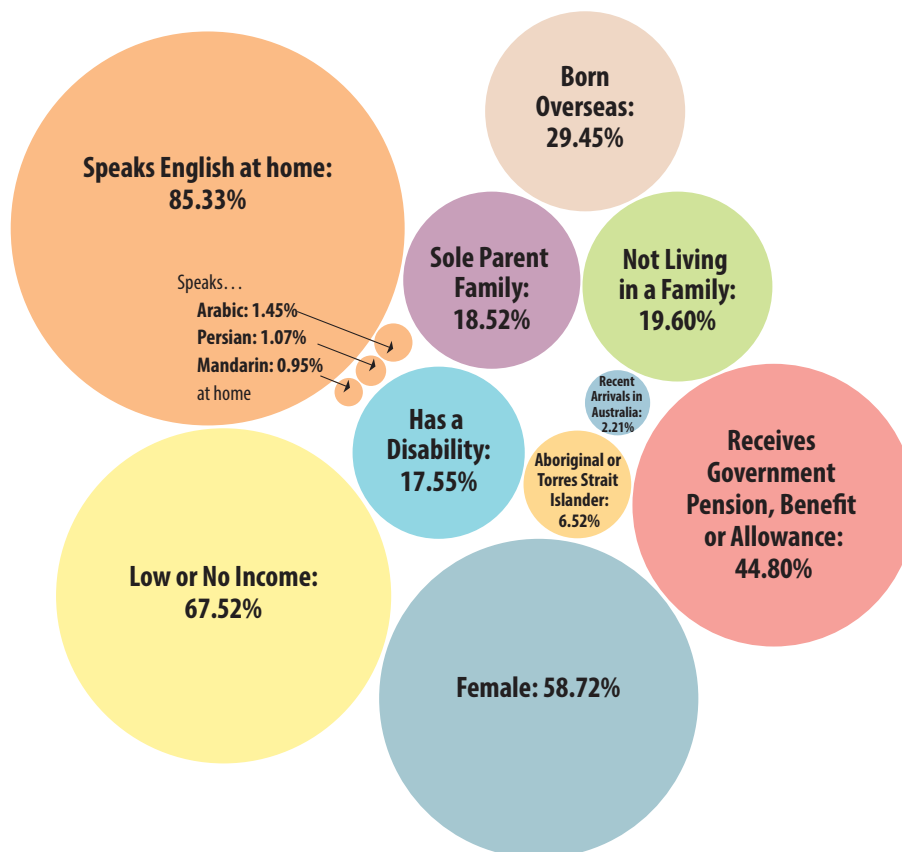
## Profile of legal services delivered by CLCs that currently report through CLSIS



\* CLSIS is the database used by CLCs in the Community Legal Services Program

\* Referrals include those made when also providing information, advice and casework services

## Profile of clients from CLCs that currently report through CLSIS



\* CLSIS is the database used by CLCs in the Community Legal Services Program

\* Client refers to any person who has received either advice or a casework service in the 2014/15 financial year

\* Family is a group of two or more people that are related and who usually live together in the same household



# NACLC people in 2014/15



Some NACLC staff FRONT L-R: Amanda Alford, Ana Rey, Chantel Cotterell, Kiri-Ana Libbesson BACK L-R: Te Raehira Wihapi, Liz Dodds, Jane Housley, Polly Porteous

## NACLC Office:

### CEO (formerly Executive Director)

Julia Hall (until April 2015, then on long leave)  
Polly Porteous (from May 2015)

### Deputy Director, Policy and Advocacy

Amanda Alford

### Deputy Director, Sector Sustainability

Visakesa Chandrasekaram (until February 2015)

### National Accreditation Coordinator

Diana Dagg – part-time

### Regional Accreditation Coordinator WA

Sharryn Jackson – part-time (from February 2015)

### Communications Manager

Te Raehira Wihapi – part-time

### Finance Officer

Ana Rey

### Office Manager

Liz Dods

### National Conference Coordinator

Jane Housley – part-time

### Policy and Projects Officer

Chantel Cotterell – part-time

### Insurances Coordinator

Kiri Libbesson – part-time (from February 2015)

### Consultant

Jill Anderson – casual (until February 2015)

### Law Graduates in RRR CLCs Admin Assistant

Brendan Ross – casual (from June 2015)

## Contract Project Workers:

### Law Graduates in RRR CLCs Project Coordinator

Mary Flowers (from January 2015)

### Recruitment and Retention in Regional, Rural and Remote Areas: National Coordinator

Helen McGowan (until December 2014)

### Recruitment and Retention in Regional, Rural and Remote Areas: NSW Regional Coordinator

Sharon Tomas (until December 2014)

### Improving Coordination of CLE & Law Reform

Steve Womersley (until December 2014)

## NACLC Management Committee Members July 2014 – January 2015

### National Convenor

Michael Smith

### Treasurer

James Farrell

### ACT representative

Deb Pippen

### NSW representative

Dan Stubbs

### NT representative

Nicki Petrou

### QLD representative

Marja Elizabeth (until October 2014)

Michelle Emeleus (from November 2014)

### SA representative

Iris Furtado

### TAS representative

Nicky Snare

### VIC representative

Hugh de Kretser (until October 2014)

Nick Hudson (from November 2014)

### WA representative

Lesley Kirkwood (until August 2014)

Arlia Fleming (September 2014 – October 2014)

Richard Tagiston (from November 2014)

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services National Network representative by standing invitation

June Lennon

## NACLC Board of Directors February 2015 – June 2015

James Farrell

Nick Hudson - Treasurer

Sara Kane

Rosslyn Monro

Michael Smith - Chair

Dan Stubbs

Nancy Walke

## NACLC Advisory Council Members February 2015 – June 2015

### ACT

Genevieve Bolton

Elena Rosenman

### NSW

Nassim Arrage

Alastair McEwin

### NT

Caitlin Perry

Jasmin Silver

### QLD

James Farrell

Janet Wight

### SA

Alan Merritt

Patsy Kellett

### TAS

Jane Hutchison

Susan Fahey

### VIC

Liana Buchanan

Jackie Galloway

### WA

Helen Creed

David Kernohan

### Board appointed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members

June Lennon

Corina Martinn



## Chairperson's report

**A**n Anableps is an unusual fish, often called the four-eyed fish. They have eyes raised above the top of the head and divided in two different parts, so that they can see below and above the water surface at the same time.

Apart from being an unusual fish they are an excellent analogy for the work of NACLCLC over the last year.

Much of NACLCLC's work has been highly visible, effective and active in the broader community as well as the legal assistance sector. However, there has also been much significant work occurring below the surface, less visible to the outside but also crucial for the long term health and development of NACLCLC and the CLC sector.

*Above the surface*, NACLCLC continued to 'lead, connect and develop CLCs to pursue rights, fairness and equality for all communities'. The detail of this work is outlined in this report.

In recent years, both NACLCLC and the CLC sector have improved their skills in sharing the key stories and issues faced by our clients and communities. Community Law Australia was an important and effective collaborative approach and when resources necessitated a diminution in that campaign, while major funding cuts loomed across the sector, a number of centres including those in remote areas took the risk of sharing their own story more publicly and often very effectively, assisting not just their own communities, but ultimately the broader CLC movement.

Ultimately individual CLC advocacy became part of a community owned and inspired campaign against the planned Mid Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) cuts to centres scheduled for June 2015, with a particular focus on the extensive work centres undertake responding to family violence victims/survivors. In a last minute turnaround, Attorney-General George Brandis announced in March that the cuts would not proceed.

Among many conclusions, the statements of the Attorney that, "*a national conversation about domestic and family violence has grown with increasing momentum*" and that the, "*Government has listened and is acting in the interests of the most vulnerable in our community including Indigenous Australians*" were a true summary of the success of that community campaign.

The adoption of a new National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services has also initiated significant change for the sector. While some early implications of the new agreement were negative for a number of CLCs, it is still too early to identify any real benefits. Regrettably, the opportunity for a real partnership between the Commonwealth and state/territory governments appears to have again been missed.

Now in its third year, **knowmore**, NACLCLC's independent service for people considering telling their story or providing information to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, has assisted over 3,000 clients. Operating as a national holistic service using trauma-informed and

collaborative approaches to assist this highly vulnerable and disadvantaged group of survivors, evaluation has confirmed its extraordinary successes. During the year, the Royal Commission's timeline was extended and then **knowmore** also. In October Jenny Hardy concluded as Executive Officer and Warren Strange assumed this role, initially on an acting basis and later as a permanent appointment. We thank them both for strong leadership of this critical service that the CLC sector can be proud of. Key evaluation reports continue to highlight both the service's successes and the benefits of the **knowmore** model.

While this and other key developments occurred, *below the surface* NACLCLC was managing a series of key internal changes to build the 'long term viability and sustainability of NACLCLC's governance, management and organisational structures' (Strategic Plan objective).

In particular, NACLCLC, with the support of its eight state and territory CLC association members, adopted a new governance structure, with a new skills based Board of Directors supported by a members focused NACLCLC Advisory Council. It also transitioned to a Company Limited by Guarantee. These improvements were developed over a number of years and the members support in facilitating this change were much appreciated.

The new Board commenced its work in February and has worked very well together in its first year, utilising its diversity and finding unity and clarity in its key governance role.

Soon after the new Board commenced, it supported a period of extended leave for the CEO, Julia Hall and welcomed Polly Porteous as Interim CEO. Polly quickly assumed this crucial sector leadership role at a critical period particularly with the complex and fraught NPA negotiations.

Both Julia and Polly have led NACLCLC and the team with extraordinary skill, professionalism and commitment through the year. The staff has continued to expand and on behalf of the Board, the CLC sector and our stakeholders I acknowledge them, Warren and all of the **knowmore** team for their dedication, expertise and determination throughout another challenging year – it is absolutely appreciated.

NACLCLC acknowledges the support of the Attorney-General, the Department, our other funders and numerous partners at many levels. NACLCLC works closely with the state and territory CLC associations and its Advisory Council and we thank them for their cooperation and support. Great appreciation is also due to the new Board for their insight, wisdom and expertise throughout.

Whether above or below the surface, in rough seas or smooth, with or against the current, CLCs and NACLCLC will continue to work enthusiastically for rights, fairness and equality for all communities.

Michael Smith  
Chair



## Chief Executive Officer's report

This year, the report from the 'boss' of NACLCLC looks different to the report in the previous five NACLCLC annual reports, for three reasons.

The first is a name change. The 'boss' is now a CEO rather than an Executive Director, in order to better distinguish the role from the Non-Executive Board Directors appointed during the NACLCLC governance restructure in February 2015. It's also much easier to type.

The second change is the name at the end of the report. In April 2015, Julia Hall stepped away from the position for a well-earned long leave, and I was very lucky to be offered the role for a 12-month period. I have been out of the CLC sector for six years, trying out the world of corporate consultancy and NSW public service, before the sector enticed me back.

The third change is the shortness of this report. I started at NACLCLC on 4 May 2015. Although it felt like I barely drew breath between start date and the end of the financial year, my personal engagement with NACLCLC's impressive activities during 2014/2015 was, by anyone's description, short.

My report therefore can really only refer you to written reports from the NACLCLC staff and our trusty Chair.

Much of the work of NACLCLC requires a close working relationship with the Attorney-General's Department. We are grateful to the Department this year for the extension of funding for **knowmore**, and for the continued provision of various project and one-off funds including CLSIS training, Legal Health Check, RRR PLT Project, RRR Sector Sustainability Project, and contributions towards core salary costs, PII and the National CLCs Conference.

Just before the end of the financial year, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department extended

**knowmore**'s funding until the Royal Commission into Institutional Child Sexual Abuse ends in 2018. The Department also provided NACLCLC with a five year funding agreement for CLC Sector Support. Both funding agreements are very welcome, and provide much needed certainty for NACLCLC and **knowmore**.

At the same time, NACLCLC also received some one-off funding from the Department to scope and develop a replacement IT solution for the CLSIS database. This is a great opportunity, but also comes with some risks, particularly in terms of ongoing funding for the support and maintenance of an IT solution. NACLCLC is now undertaking rigorous planning and risk analyses to inform our decisions in relation to the project.

NACLCLC's staffing underwent several changes during 2014/2015, in addition to the change in the 'boss' role. There were also changes to the **knowmore** EO position as set out in the Chairperson's report. Vissa Chandrasekaram resigned as Deputy Director Sector Sustainability in early 2015, and in June, our National Accreditation Coordinator Diana Dagg left us to work for the NSW Department of Education. We wish all these outgoing staff members well in their new positions, and look forward to working with new staff members in 2015/2016.

Thank you to all the staff, consultants, representatives from the state and territory CLC associations, and numerous CLC people who have worked with NACLCLC over the last 12 months. This truly is the most collaborative NGO sector that I have ever experienced, with an extraordinary amount of passion and goodwill amongst you all.

*Polly Porteous*  
CEO

## Reforms to the legal assistance sector

Throughout 2014 and 2015, as in every year, one of the busiest parts of NACLCLC's work was seeking more sustainable funding and improved administration of CLCs and the wider legal assistance sector. A constant stream of NACLCLC submissions, comments, feedback and advocacy culminated in a flurry of activity in May and June 2015 with the release of a new National Partnership Agreement for Legal Assistance Services 2015-2020 (NPA).

In the early part of the financial year NACLCLC provided feedback to the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department on several documents, which went on to form the backbone of the NPA:

- *National Strategic Framework for Legal Assistance*
- Discussion Papers relating to priority CLC clients and services

- a Discussion paper on jurisdictional service planning, and
- through the National Legal Assistance Data Working Group, the *National Legal Assistance Data Standards Manual*.

NACLCLC also worked with the Australian Legal Assistance Forum (ALAF) and other legal assistance sectors to continue expressing our concern about the administration of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Program. In the previous year, the program had been removed from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, and the individual services were required to seek funding through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. We continued to advocate for their reinstatement as a legal assistance program in its own right.



The focus of our funding campaign this year was on getting the Commonwealth Government to reverse the December 2013 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) decision to cut the four year funding package provided by former Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus to CLCs and the legal assistance sector more broadly. The MYEFO decision would have led to around 60 CLCs losing around 30% of their funding on 1 July 2015, rather than the original end date of 1 July 2017. NACLC, state and territory CLC associations, Community Law Australia, and several individual CLCs led a strong campaign against the MYEFO cuts, highlighting in particular the expected reduction in CLCs capacity to provide assistance to women facing domestic violence.

We were very pleased when the Productivity Commission's *Report on Access to Justice*, released in December 2014, included a recommendation that the proposed funding cuts be permanently reversed, with a total of \$200m extra per year urgently required so that the legal assistance sector (CLCs, Legal Aid Commissions, ATSILS and FVPLS) could begin to meet demand.

In late March 2015, the Commonwealth Government announced that in recognition of the important work CLCs were doing in relation to family violence, they would not pursue the funding cuts due on 1 July 2015.

While this was a significant win for the sector, NACLC was disappointed that the Commonwealth Budget released in May 2015 showed no overall increase in the quantum of funding for CLCs for 2015/2016, and clearly showed the 30% reduction in CLC funds in 1 July 2017.

The day after the Budget, the Commonwealth released the draft NPA which set out the funding allocations to each state and territory for CLCs. Because of the application of a new Resource Allocation Formula, some states and territories – notably WA, SA, NT and Tasmania – received less than their previous share of the national CLC funding pool. Due to the Government's 'promise' to continue the former Government's four-year funding package to individual CLCs, some centres listed in Schedule C of the NPA had guaranteed funding allocations, while the remaining CLCs in each state or territory had to share in the remaining funds. It became rapidly apparent that this would have the effect of reducing funding to several individual CLCs in some jurisdictions.

The NPA also set up a new mechanism for the funding of CLCs. The Commonwealth now provides funding to the state and territory governments, in return for a report from those governments setting out how the funding is spent, how decisions about the funding allocation was made, the progress of jurisdictional service planning activities, whether benchmarks have been met, and other key performance indicators. The NPA also requires state and territory governments to use the data definitions set out in the *National Data Standards Manual*.

NACLC immediately commenced working with state and territory CLC associations to understand the NPA and its impact on CLCs. NACLC and the state and territory CLC association's then provided detailed feedback on the development and wording of the agreement to the state, territory and Commonwealth governments.

Through a combined state, territory and national focus, NACLC was able to convey the serious concerns about inadequate funding; the timetable for reforms; the risks associated with moving away from national coordination and consistency; the benchmarks which require CLCs to only provide representation services to financially disadvantaged clients; and a narrowing of the definition of priority CLC clients.

Overall, NACLC and state and territory CLC associations were able to achieve significant 'wins', including an agreement by the Commonwealth not to reclaim CLC budget surpluses; the shift away from requiring Commonwealth funding to be expended solely on Commonwealth matters; and lessening the impacts of changes to proposals around priority clients and associated benchmarks.

However, we continue to have a number of ongoing concerns with the NPA and funding for CLCs, for example in relation to:

- the new CLC Resource Allocation Formula leading to funding cuts to CLCs in some jurisdictions
- the loss of national coordination of the program and increasing inconsistency across jurisdictions with respect to service agreements, service standards, and potentially client management databases
- the amount of funding available under the NPA, including the funding 'cliff' which represents a 30% cut nationally from 2017/2018
- lack of resources available for processes associated with the NPA, including jurisdictional service planning
- lack of consistent or 'model' jurisdictional service planning processes
- priority clients and services, in particular the requirement that representation services can only be provided to financially disadvantaged clients, with a lack of clarity in relation to the definition of, and evidence required for a client to prove 'financial disadvantage'
- the impact of guaranteed funding to 'Schedule C' or 'Dreyfus' centres, which has had the effect of limiting service agreements to between one-three years, rather than the intended certainty of five-year agreements.

NACLC will continue monitoring the effect of these elements of the NPA and advocating to improve any negative impacts on the ability of CLCs to continue providing our most disadvantaged people with free legal assistance. NACLC continues to do this while maintaining a strong and mutually respectful relationship with the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.



# Services, projects and programs

In 2014/15, as in previous years, NACLC did not receive any ongoing funding to provide services to CLCs. NACLC's only income was from one off project grants, fees paid by CLCs and interest.

From this income NACLC offered a range of 'member' services to CLCs this year for free or for a discounted fee, including:

- highly discounted, CLC-tailored **Professional Indemnity Insurance** and **Association Liability Insurance**, facilitated by bulk purchase and extensive negotiation, and subsidised by NACLC garnering a one-off grant from the Attorney-General's Department. This service is complemented by the coordinated implementation of the National PII Scheme and *Risk Management Guide* and coordination and support of the **National PII Network**
- quality assurance and accreditation through the **National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs (NAS)**. An independent review of the accreditation scheme, was completed in 2014/15. The Report recommended that the accreditation scheme continue, with some streamlining of its structure and process and improvements in its communications
- access to over 90 free online legal resources, purchased from **LexisNexis** with funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department. The package covers nearly all areas of law practised by CLCs
- access to **Management Support Online (MSO)**, a web based integrated set of tools, templates and resources, designed to support centres in their management, governance and operations, including template policies and procedures, and induction and training modules
- a range of IT services including free **email** accounts and the **Bulletin Board System (BBS)**, and free training in using the free suite of **WebEx** tools and in effective data entry and reporting using the **Community Legal Service Information System (CLSIS)** database
- **Community Legal Education and Reform database (CLEAR)**, a database that allows easy access to and showcases community legal education and law reform projects undertaken by CLCs and other non profit legal services
- coordinated and facilitated placement of eligible graduate law students for their **Practical Legal Training** work experience in organisations from all four publicly funded legal assistance services, operating in regional, rural and remote areas of Australia. 53 law students – an average of one per week - were placed this year
- the National CLCs Conference held this year in Alice Springs, with over 400 people attending, and introducing two new events: a short film festival

and a TED inspired short talk competition - both receiving very good feedback.

NACLC represents the sector in a range of fora and advocates widely on **behalf of CLCs** with a range of stakeholders including the Commonwealth and state and territory program managers and with funding bodies. NACLC also undertakes many initiatives to raise the profile of CLCs nationally and internationally. Some examples of these types of work include:

- NACLC's **liaison role** between the CLC sector and the **Community Legal Services Program (CLSP)**. NACLC informed and consulted with CLCs and state and territory CLC associations and negotiated and represented the interests of CLCs at national discussions
  - NACLC made numerous **submissions** either on its own or jointly with other state and territory CLCs associations, National Networks or individual CLCs. Some submissions included: submission to **Australian Law Reform Commission's Freedoms Inquiry**, joint submission on the **Domestic Violence Inquiry**, submission on the **Senate Inquiry on Budget Cuts**
  - NACLC represented the CLC sector on **national bodies** such as the **Australian Legal Assistance Forum** (Julia Hall of NACLC finished her two year term as chair of ALAF in March 2015), the **National Legal Assistance Data Standards Working Group** and at **forums** in collaboration with other peaks such as **ACOSS**
  - NACLC was actively involved in coordinating engagement, along with the **Human Rights Law Centre** and **Kingsford Legal Centre**, by a large coalition of NGOs in Australia's **Universal Periodic Review**. In addition to coordinating a NGO submission endorsed by 190 NGOs, NACLC has been engaging with the Australian Government, Australian Human Rights Commission, other NGOs, and embassies and missions in preparation for Australia's appearance before the Human Rights Council in November 2015
- NACLC continued to better its communications to inform management and workers of CLCs, key stakeholders and the general public by maintaining or creating a range of communication tools and resources, including:
- through the NACLC **website**, which provides high quality resources and publications, such as: the Report of the **National Census of CLCs 2014** and the **National Census of CLCs 2014 Infographic**, and important national news and information about CLCs posted on the website for the general public
  - through undertaking the **National Census of CLCs** to gather information on the views and needs of individual CLCs and state and territory

- CLC associations, in order to better support and to lobby on behalf of, the sector
- through producing **hardcopy newsletters** and regular and ad hoc **e-bulletins** that inform the sector about government legal assistance reforms and funding decisions, current issues or trends in the sector, innovative initiatives of CLCs, summaries of media mentions of CLCs and their associations, and lobbying actions undertaken on behalf of the sector
- by issuing **media releases** and **securing media** attention, whereby NACLCL raises CLC issues on a broader scale
- through producing the **Directory of Australian and NZ CLCs**
- by producing and distributing high quality publications such as **Real Law Real People** – a publication that tells the stories of five lawyers and how they came to be working in regional, rural and remote areas of New South Wales, and what they have gained from doing so

- updating the **Working Collaboratively** series – **Working Collaboratively – CLCs and Pro Bono Partnerships** and **Working Collaboratively – CLCs and Volunteers**. Work is completed on a new publication called **Working Smarter: Community Legal Centres using innovation and technology**.

In this financial year NACLCL also implemented a number of initiatives, all done at NACLCL cost, to better inform the NACLCL Board and office of sector views and to improve communications both ways, these initiatives included:

- establishing a **NACLCL Advisory Council**, to be the major consultation forum for the NACLCL Board. The Advisory Council is primarily comprised of representatives of NACLCL's members
- holding a number of information and consultation meetings about **NPA reforms** and accreditation
- establishing an **NAS Steering Committee**, comprising of the CEO of NACLCL and equivalent senior role from each state and territory CLC association

## Insurance and Risk Management

NACLCL negotiates and administers three national insurance schemes for the benefit of CLCs around Australia. They enable CLCs to obtain highly discounted, CLC-tailored insurances, without the need to negotiate their own policies. Under these schemes, CLCs that are full members of a state or territory CLC association can elect to take out Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII), Association Liability Insurance, and/or Public Liability Insurance (the last provided free of charge by NACLCL).

Operating these schemes involves NACLCL working closely with its insurance broker and negotiating with insurers to obtain policies on the best possible terms for CLCs. NACLCL's work includes coordinating and processing hundreds of proposal forms, determining and collecting premium contributions, responding to queries and liaising with centres, and, working closely with the National PII Network, identifying common risk management issues and developing strategies to address them, and maintaining and updating the *Risk Management Guide*.

NACLCL employs a part-time Insurances Coordinator and commits significant other staff and resources to these schemes. Kiri Libbesson, an experienced insurance lawyer, joined NACLCL as the new Insurances Coordinator in February 2015.

NACLCL thanks Ashurst for continuing to provide generous pro bono assistance in relation to insurance issues.

### Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII)

In the 2014/15 financial year, 164 CLCs participated



in NACLCL's National PII Scheme. NACLCL coordinates the Scheme, but has delegated its day to day regional administration to the National PII Network. The Network consists of a number of CLC lawyers, with at least one representative from each state and territory.

NACLCL has negotiated a number of improvements and clarifications to the PII policy this year, including expansions of the definitions of 'Insured' and 'Professional Services' to more accurately reflect the types of people involved with CLCs and the lines of work undertaken, as well as removing a key exclusion from the policy.

NACLCL thanks all the members of the PII Network for their significant work and contribution throughout the year. Particular thanks go to the Network Chair, Catherine Eagle, and to Jill Anderson for her support to the Network and many hours and contributions to improving the PII policy and cover for CLCs, and significantly revising and enhancing the *Risk Management Guide*.

NACLCL thanks the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department for their significant grant towards the payment of the PII policy premium, as well as Victoria Legal Aid and Legal Aid Queensland, who contributed to PII premium costs for CLCs in their respective states.



### Public Liability Insurance

NACLC again arranged Public Liability Insurance for CLCs and state CLC associations this year, which is offered free of charge as one of the many benefits of membership. 175 organisations participated in the scheme for the 2014/15 financial year. This insurance protects CLCs in the event of claims from third parties for loss arising from injury or physical damage suffered while visiting the CLC or being visited by a representative of the CLC.

### Association Liability Insurance

148 CLCs participated in NACLC's Association Liability Insurance scheme in 2014/15. The Association Liability Insurance policy covers CLC's Board members (past, present and future) against 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 CLC, its employees and Board members for employment practices claims, such as wrongful dismissal and discrimination claims

NACLC administers a separate, combined Association Liability and PII Insurance policy for itself and participating state CLC associations.

### Other insurances

NACLC's arrangement facilitates CLCs that choose to do so, arranging other insurances, such as Business Pack and Volunteer Workers Personal Accident insurance through the same broker. These policies are not coordinated by NACLC.

### Insurance broker

NACLC has worked closely this year with its broker, AON Risk Services Australia Ltd, to provide and improve these insurances. This year the broking team was changed from AON's Adelaide office to their specialist not for profit team, based in Parramatta, Sydney. NACLC thanks Karen Brown and Irmgard de Villiers of the Adelaide team, and Jamie Quinn, Whitney Muñoz, Gavin Deadman and Nathan Richmond of the Parramatta team for their assistance.

## The National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs



**T**he National Accreditation Scheme (NAS) for CLCs is a joint project of NACLC and the eight state and territory CLC associations.

The aim of the NAS is to provide a quality assurance process that gives CLCs, funding bodies and ultimately clients, confidence that CLCs are operating according to good practice and industry standards.

The NAS was launched in 2010, with the first CLCs gaining their three years accreditation in 2013. The NAS is overseen by NACLC through the National Accreditation Coordinator. This position works closely with Regional Accreditation Coordinators (RACs) employed (or, in one case, hosted) by the Victorian, NSW, Queensland and Western Australian CLC associations.

At 30 June 2014, 136 (76%) of the 177 CLCs registered with the national Scheme were fully accredited. By 30 June 2015, all but three CLCs had completed the accreditation process.

### *L to R: Jude Clarkin, Meg Houston, Diana Dagg and Lucy Barrow reviewing accreditation documents*

As part of the process to achieve accreditation, centres develop an agreed workplan that sets out ways centres with substantial compliance with the requirements can progress towards full compliance, and for all centres to further improve. Throughout the year, accredited centres continued to work with their Accreditation Coordinators on six monthly reporting against their workplans, and in particular, developing systems within their offices to enable continuous improvement.

The National Accreditation Coordinator, Diana Dagg, worked together with the four Regional Accreditation Coordinators as a strong team, they were:

- Jude Clarkin, RAC at QAILS
- Lucy Barrow, RAC at the Federation (VIC)

- Meg Houston, RAC at CLCNSW, and
- Sharryn Jackson, RAC at CLCAWA.

The National Accreditation Coordinator and RACs continued to work closely with Bradfield and Nyland Group, who provide access to Management Support Online (MSO) – a suite of good practice resources for non profits – as well as the online Standards and Performance Pathways tool (SPP), which CLCs use to self-assess online against the NAS standards and requirements. Licences for CLCs to access the MSO are paid for with funding garnered by NACLC from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, and CLC licences to the SPP are paid for by NACLC from its own funds.

In late 2014, the NAS was independently reviewed by Hecate Consulting. The recommendations of the *Report of the Review of the National Accreditation Scheme* formed the basis for some reflection and consideration for how the scheme will be shaped as the NAS heads into the second round of accreditations. NACLC and the RACs together worked on implement-

ing recommendations of the Review Report, including streamlining the Standards and Performance Pathways tool, and clarifying the standards, requirements and evidence indicators.

One of the recommendations of the Review Report was that NACLC engage state and territory CLC associations more closely with the NAS. For this reason, the NAS Steering Committee was formed in June 2015, consisting of the CEO of NACLC and a senior position holder of each state and territory CLC association (the EO or the Chair). Towards the end of June 2015, the Steering Committee commenced a consultation with the sector about proposals to change the scheme, including new Guidelines, procedures and some new requirements.

Towards the end of 2014/15, NAS National Coordinator, Diana Dagg, announced that she was moving to a government position. After two and a half years in the role, Diana left the NAS in great shape, but NACLC was sad to see her go.

## Policy and Advocacy

NACLC has continued to undertake a wide range of policy, advocacy and law reform work this year, including both domestically and internationally.

Importantly, while NACLC remains concerned about limitations on CLCs using Commonwealth funds for law reform and policy advocacy work in some circumstances, NACLC continues to highlight the importance of CLCs undertaking this work.

NACLC has engaged with and responded to a range of policy and advocacy issues and processes, including:

- the negotiation of the new *National Partnership Agreement for Legal Assistance Services* and broader funding and administration of legal assistance services, which has been the key focus of NACLC's policy and advocacy work over the past year
- family violence, through submissions to relevant inquiries and reviews and broader advocacy, including briefing of and presentation to Members of Parliament and Senators and media engagement
- the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including through submissions to the *Senate Access to Legal Assistance Inquiry* and more broadly
- democratic rights and freedoms, through engagement with the *Australian Law Reform Commission's Freedoms Inquiry*
- the rights of older persons, through engagement with the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing and support for the development of an international instrument on the rights of older persons

- the rights of people with disability, including through calls for a shift from substitute to supported decision making
- lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer issues, including through involvement in the LGBTIQ Network 'CLE for CLCs' Project
- regulation of the legal profession, through submissions in relation to the *Draft Proposed Legal Profession Conduct Rules (Solicitors)* and *Draft Proposed General Uniform Rules*, as well as working with the Legal Services Commission on guidance material for CLCs
- other areas, including for example a submission to *Volunteering Australia* on *Draft Proposed National Standards for Volunteer Involvement* and a joint submission with the Queensland Association of Independent Legal Services to the *House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment on the Register of Environmental Organisations*.

## International Engagement

NACLC has continued to participate in, coordinate, and support engagement by CLCs and NGOs across Australia in United Nations' human rights mechanisms. The focus of NACLC's work has been monitoring compliance with its international human rights obligations, drawing on the unique experiences of CLCs and our clients, and using international mechanisms and processes as a domestic advocacy tool.

NACLC has engaged with a number of international mechanisms and processes this year, including *Australia's 2015 Universal Periodic Review (UPR)*, the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing, and reporting under the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*; *Convention on the Elimination of All*



*Forms of Racial Discrimination*; and *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*.

In particular, NACLC is actively involved in coordinating engagement, along with the Human Rights Law Centre and Kingsford Legal Centre, by a large coalition of NGOs in Australia's UPR. In addition to coordinating a NGO submission endorsed by 190 NGOs, NACLC has been engaging with the Australian Government, Australian Human Rights Commission, other NGOs, and embassies and missions in preparation for Australia's appearance before the Human Rights Council in November 2015.

NACLC has continued its focus on protecting and promoting the rights of older persons. For example, NACLC endorsed Bill Mitchell (Townsville Community Legal Service) to attend the 6th session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing and is working collaboratively with organisations in Australia and internationally to encourage moves towards an international instrument on the rights of older persons.

### Relationships and Stakeholders

NACLC continues to work closely with state and territory CLC associations, National Networks and peak legal assistance bodies in much of its policy and advocacy work. NACLC also has key relationships with

a number of civil society organisations across Australia. In particular this year in undertaking its policy and advocacy work, NACLC has collaborated with organisations including: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, National Family Violence and Prevention Legal Service Forum, National Legal Aid, ACOS, National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, People with Disability Australia, the National Justice Coalition and bodies such as the Australian Human Rights Commission.

NACLC established a pilot project involving coordinating CLCs interested in preparing submissions to key inquiries and reviews and drawing on the support of a standing pro bono panel of firms willing and able to assist to prepare joint submissions and support CLCs to undertake research and policy work.

NACLC is pleased to report that feedback from the most recent National Census reflects an increase on already very high levels of satisfaction with NACLC's policy and advocacy work over the last year.

NACLC is committed to continuing its policy and advocacy work, led by CEO, Polly Porteous and the Deputy Director Policy and Advocacy, Amanda Alford, to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community.

## Reconciliation Action Plan and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Project

The NACLC Reconciliation Action Plan 2012-2015 (RAP) reflects NACLC's commitment to be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure their fair access to legal assistance, and to provide leadership in supporting CLCs to provide culturally safe service delivery and operate culturally safe organisations.

In addition to achieving many of the actions and targets under the RAP, this year NACLC commenced discussions and consultation in relation to drafting a new RAP to build on and extend its commitments under the existing RAP. Over the coming year NACLC will be working to expand the RAP Working Group and working closely with the sector and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services Network to develop the new RAP.

NACLC held a number of events this year, including jointly hosting a morning tea with CLC NSW and Tenants' Union of NSW to celebrate National Reconciliation Week, and undertaking a range of media advocating for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and funding of community controlled organisations.

One of the key activities that will assist NACLC in achieving its commitments under the RAP is NACLC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Project, which is partly funded by the Australian

Government Attorney-General's Department. The focus of the project is on:

- modelling and encouraging culturally safe policies and practices in CLCs to improve accessibility and appropriateness of frontline service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- encouraging CLCs to improve attraction and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, volunteers and Management Committee/Board members by assisting CLCs in creating culturally sensitive and welcoming working environments, and
- developing, strengthening and formalising mutually supportive relationships between NACLC and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) and National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum (NFVPLS).

The project includes development of a number of sector resources such as: a NACLC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy; supporting and building the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Services Network; and supporting some Aboriginal sector workers in establishing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Men's Legal Services Network.

## Sector Sustainability

### LexisNexis online legal resources

CLCs continue to have free access to, and training on, the online legal resources package, purchased from LexisNexis with funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department. The package includes over 90 titles, covering nearly all areas of law practised by community lawyers. NACLC is currently exploring funding and partnership opportunities, to continue to provide these resources to CLCs beyond the funding end date of 31 March 2016. In order to inform this process, NACLC undertook a survey of the sector about the resources, including the most used titles, benefits of the resources to CLC staff and clients, and any gaps in the existing package.

### CLEAR

CLEAR continues to provide a platform to showcase and share community legal education and law reform projects undertaken by CLCs and other legal assistance services. This year NACLC brought the management of the CLEAR database in-house, and is consulting with the National Community Legal Education and Community Development Network how to best resource and support the database into the future. NACLC thanks former CLEAR Coordinator, Steve Womersley, for championing CLEAR since its establishment in 2011.

### Legal Health Check

NACLC was pleased to retain, with funding received from the Australian Government's Attorney-General's Department, the Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House (QPILCH) to develop an online version of the Legal Health Check, a legal screening tool developed by QPILCH that enables community and health workers to both "diagnose" a client's multiple legal needs using structured interview questions and collaborate with legal assistance services to develop effective referral pathways to address those legal needs.

### Rural, Regional, Remote Practical Legal Training (RRR PLT) Project

The RRR PLT Project offers law graduates an opportunity to develop their skills, work with vulnerable and disadvantaged clients and communities and understand the life and work of a RRR lawyer. In 2014/15, 53 law graduates were placed for their PLT work experience in a RRR CLC, Family Violence Prevention Legal Service or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service – an average of one per week. The project team continues to focus on how to support and grow this project, including increasing the number of legal assistance services and PLT providers participating.

### RRR Sector Sustainability Project

With funding from the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, NACLC is coordinating the development of training resources focussed on building the capacity of RRR CLCs in areas identified by those CLCs during a consultation in late 2014. The

training areas are: work health and safety, governance, CLC induction, and building effective pro bono relationships.

JusticeConnect's Not For Profit Law has been engaged to develop RRR specific training in work health and safety and governance, while NACLC will be looking to work with state and territory CLC associations and other partners to develop the other training. All training sessions will be informed by case scenarios provided by members of the National RRR Network.

### Legal Needs Assessment Toolkit

NACLC recognises the importance of the Legal Needs Assessment Toolkit to CLCs and their strategic planning processes. As actively supporting CLCs in using this Toolkit was the number one sector sustainability priority reported in the 2014 Census, NACLC is working with a consultant to update the Legal Needs Assessment Toolkit, ensure the Toolkit provides a range of relevant demographic indicators for CLCs, and replicates geographic boundaries recently updated by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. NACLC will be looking to provide guidance to CLCs when the revised Toolkit is available.

### Census 2014

In 2014, the second year of NACLC's National Census of CLCs, 79.4% of the 180 CLCs provided crucial data to inform NACLC and state and territory CLC associations' sector sustainability, policy advocacy and law reform work.

The 2014 Census statistics cover the 2013/2014 financial year, unless noted otherwise.

Some of the key reported statistics were:

- 1,307.9 full-time equivalent staff employed by CLCs
- 6,543 volunteers contributed a total of 776,178 hours
- 72,047 hours were contributed by pro bono partners to CLCs
- 156,854 people were turned away, and
- 82.7% undertook policy advocacy and law reform activities.

This crucial data formed the basis of a widely distributed national report and infographic, and was repeatedly referenced in NACLC's advocacy efforts, with the statistics on turnaways picked up by *The Project*, *ABC PM*, *The Saturday Paper* and *The Australian*. Such coverage underscores the importance of CLCs completing the Census, as the data collected directly informs NACLC's work. NACLC will be working with the sector to plan and develop the 2015 Census.

Please note that the number of CLCs who answered each question varied. To locate how many CLCs responded to each question, please refer to the National Report on the NACLC website: [www.naccl.org.au/resources/NACLC\\_NationalCensusofCLCs\\_2014\\_COMBINED.pdf](http://www.naccl.org.au/resources/NACLC_NationalCensusofCLCs_2014_COMBINED.pdf)

Staffing questions were worded to capture staffing statistics at a point in time and that is, at the time when CLCs completed the Census, rather than for the 2013/14 financial year.

NACLC defined a turnaway as: any person a CLC had to send away because the CLC was unable to assist them within the needed timeframe or because of a lack of resources, lack of centre expertise or a centre's eligibility policy.





### knowmore

**knowmore** is an independent, national legal service established in 2013 to provide free legal advice and assistance, information and referral services to people engaging or considering engaging with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. **knowmore** was established by, and operates as, a separate program of NACLC with funding from the Australian Government, represented by the Attorney-General's Department.

**knowmore** delivers practical assistance to clients in a confidential and supportive environment. The **knowmore** team of lawyers, social workers, counsellors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement advisors and operational support staff are committed to delivering culturally safe, trauma-informed services to clients.



2014/15 was the second year of **knowmore's** operations, and saw **knowmore** enter its peak period of service delivery, with all of the Royal Commission's key programs, including public hearings, private sessions, community engagement and policy and research work, all operating at high levels of activity. **knowmore** opened an office in Perth in July 2014 and as of 30 June 2015 employed 49 staff delivering national services from offices located in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

During the 2014/15 financial year, **knowmore** provided 7,580 instances of legal advice, information and referral assistance, to 1,629 individual clients. In their two years of operations **knowmore** staff have assisted over 3,200 clients.

In the past year they conducted or participated in 335 community outreach and liaison events (688 since commencing operations), including meetings with legal and support service providers, speaking engagements at conferences, community information sessions for potential clients and support services, and advice conferences with clients in regional and remote locations.



These events also included meetings with Stolen Generations groups and many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies that are sources of referral of clients to **knowmore**. Approximately 18% of **knowmore's** clients nationally have identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. **knowmore** workers are very conscious of the large numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in remote locations who may be with- in the terms of reference of the Royal Commission but may not yet be aware of their options to engage with the Royal Commission. **knowmore** is committed to trying to reach as many people as they can, in the time available.

Clients who received face to face advice were provided with sessions either as:

- part of a community outreach session in conjunction with support services working in established relationships with those clients; or
- clients who had indicated they were unable to effectively seek assistance over the phone.

**knowmore** provided counselling and support to many people who had never been able to access counselling services to help them deal with the consequences of the abuse they suffered. Over a third of the clients who have called **knowmore** have received social work or counselling from our support staff. This service is provided on a short-term basis to clients with a view to making supported referrals to other services that provide ongoing counselling and assistance.

**knowmore** also provides referral assistance for those who need representation at public hearings or interviews with the Royal Commission, and for clients who wish to seek legal representation to pursue compensation for the abuse they suffered. We have established legal representation panels in a number of jurisdictions and a national compensation referral panel.

As well as providing individual services to clients, **knowmore** has provided a number of submissions responding to Issues Papers released by the Royal Commission and Discussion Papers released by governments on issues such as the reform of limitation periods. Our submissions are based on our clients' collective experiences and needs, and in 2014/15 included a comprehensive response to the Commission's Issues Paper # 8, which addressed our clients' experiences of police and prosecution responses. **knowmore** also provided a detailed response to the *Royal Commission's Consultation Paper on redress and civil litigation*.

## Specialist staff for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients

**knowmore** has a strong commitment to providing culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients



**18% of our clients** identify as being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent



We employ 5 experienced male and female Aboriginal Engagement Advisors and an Aboriginal lawyer



We also work closely with interpreters and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations to ensure that we are engaging respectfully and appropriately with people

## Counselling/ social work

**All clients** have access to social work/counselling assistance in addition to legal assistance

**1262 clients** received social work/counselling support either directly or through case consultation



**887 clients** have been referred to other support services from **knowmore**

## Feedback

From a client...

"After so many decades of 'suffering in silence' I feel so lucky that I am believed and heard, without judgment. I guess those were the issues that held me back from speaking sooner aside from my feeling of embarrassment and shame. After I spoke with you I finally got up the courage, to talk with my family about what happened to me and the impact it had on me over my life. I was ready to have this conversation after I had spoken with you."

From a service provider...

"Thank you for the responsive and flexible service you have afforded our clients – It's been a pleasure working along side you."

From a client...

"You've given me more information and clarity about my matter than I've been able to get in a long time so thanks."

From a client...

"The letter and factsheets you posted to me were very much appreciated and helped me prepare for my private session because they were very practical and easy steps to follow."

\*The **knowmore** graphics come from **knowmore** publications and cover the period from **knowmore**'s establishment (July 2013) until 30 June 2015.



# National CLCs Conference 2014

The Conference theme was *Rising to the Challenge*, reflecting the values and commitment of the people working in the community legal sector. Framed within this theme, a range of sessions were presented on various topics including ways of providing effective culturally safe service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, prevention of family violence and the adoption of integrated service delivery models to assist disadvantaged clients including those who live in rural and remote areas.

The Conference program included five plenaries, 42 breakout sessions and a range of networking and professional development events. A significant proportion of attendees came from CLCs and legal assistance services that provide front line services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and/or are located in rural and remote areas.

Issues relating to equitable and appropriate access to legal services and the legal system and justice were given a high priority at this Conference.

The plenary, *Hey, whose disability is it anyway?* received the highest overall positive feedback. Three eminent speakers, Graeme Innes AM, the former Disability Discrimination Commissioner, the Hon Kelly Vincent MLC and Gayle Rankine, Chairperson of the First Peoples' Disability Network, discussed issues around how we perceive people with disability and how to best assist people with disability.

Another well received plenary focused on the value of CLCs' law and policy reform and advocacy activities in contributing to better laws and ensuring less legal problems arise. The speakers were Emeritus Professor Jim Ife from Curtin University and the Hon Mark Dreyfus QC, MP, the Shadow Attorney-General.

Two new events were introduced this year: a short film festival and a TED inspired short talk competition. CLCs were invited to make short films promoting their CLC and/or its services, using mobile devices. At this inaugural film festival, 11 short films were screened including dramatised educational films, documentaries, semi animation films and musicals. The films presented a range of themes including integrated service delivery models, people with a disability accessing legal systems, fundraising and volunteering.

The TED inspired plenary provided CLC workers with the opportunity to give a short talk showcasing an innovative project. There were 12 participants presenting talks on a range of topics. Feedback about this session and the opportunity it provided to easily see a wide range of other CLCs' work, was highly positive, as was feedback for the film competition.

Networks Day was, as usual, held the day before the Conference. These National Networks' meetings are organised, facilitated and paid for by NACLC, with some contribution from the Attorney-General's Department. The networking, information sharing and collaborative response planning opportunities provided by these meetings for working with a specific client group or on specific issues are very valuable for attendees.



Dan Stubbs from Inner City Legal Centre winner of the inaugural TED-inspired short talk competition



Some of the feedback received about this year's Conference included:

*"loved my first conference and hope to be back next year"*

*"well done, this was a thoroughly enjoyable conference, very well organised and very informative. I came back feeling very inspired!"*

*"Disability plenary was a highlight, as was the network meetings, networking in general, meeting and learning from old and new colleagues in the sector"*

*"This year's content and presentations were of a really high standard - loved that there was more of a focus on practical sessions than last year. The TED Talks and short films were an amazing exhibition of the work of CLCs and very enjoyable."*

NACLC thanks the Central Australian Women's Legal Service for their practical assistance and to Conference Online, our external organisers. Special thanks go to all the sponsors of the 2014 Conference listed on the back page.

# CLCs' AWARDS

CLC people are often experts and leaders in their fields, and many have had their contributions to their communities recognised externally. Here are some of the awards that CLC people or partners received or were nominated for in the 2014/15 financial year.

**Nalika Padmasena**, from **The Aged-Care Rights Service**, won this year's **Stepan Kerkyasharian AO Harmony Award**. This Award recognises the contribution and achievement of an individual or organisation in facilitating and promoting social cohesion, understanding and acceptance between members of the differing cultural or faith communities in NSW.

**NSW Premier Mike Baird** presented her with her award and said the Award recognised the work she has done *"to empower female migrants of their legal rights while providing safe environments for them to speak out about domestic violence"*.

**Kara Cook** from **Women's Legal Service Queensland** won the **Law Council of Australia's (LCA's) 2014 Australian Young Lawyer of the Year Award**. The Award recognises excellence in young lawyers who have made a continuous and outstanding contribution to the profession and the community.

**Callum Hair**, from **Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre** received the **Law Society of WA's Young Lawyer of the Year Award**.

**Redfern Legal Centre** won the **2014 NSW International Student Community Engagement Award** organised by **StudyNSW** and the **NSW Government** for its *International Student Advice Service*.

**Denise Kay**, from **Albany CLC** received the **Excellence in Advocacy and Rights Promotion Award** at the **2015 Disability Support Awards**. The Disability Support Awards recognise people in the disability sector providing supports of the highest standards to increase the quality of life and inclusion of people with disability in Western Australia.

**Launceston CLC's Sarah House** was awarded the **Tasmanian Young Lawyer of the Year**. **Tasmanian Law Society President, Matthew Verney** said *"the criteria for the Award are an outstanding contribution to the legal profession in the first five years of practice and being an outstanding example to the profession. Sarah excelled in both counts."*

**Elsie Stokie** from **Barwon Community Legal Service** received **Law Institute of Victoria's (LIV) Community Lawyer/Organisation of the Year Award**. The award recognises leadership and excellence in legal knowledge and practice and commitment to use the law to serve their communities. Amongst the nominated finalists from within the legal assistance sector were: **Antoinette Braybrook - Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service (AFVPLS)**, and **James Wardlaw - Asylum Seeker Resource Centre**. Elsie was



**Sarah House, from Launceston CLC with her Tasmanian Young Lawyer of the Year Award**

also a finalist for the **Regional Lawyer of the Year Award**.

As well as being a nominee for the **Community Lawyer of the Year Award** **Antoinette Braybrook** received the **Access to Justice/Pro Bono Award**. This Award recognises lawyers who provide access to justice or undertake pro bono legal work.

**Glen Ludbrook** from **Central Highlands Community Legal Centre** received a **Certificate of Service**.

**Refugee Advice and Casework Service (RACS)** was nominated for the **Human Rights Awards 2014 - Community Award**. This Award recognises a not for profit community based organisation with a track record in





PHOTO: PETE CLEANE FOR LAW INSTITUTE OF VICTORIA AWARDS

promoting and advancing human rights in the Australian community.

.....  
**Anna Brown** from the **Human Rights Law Centre** was nominated for the **Human Rights Awards 2014 - Tony Fitzgerald Memorial Community Award**. This Award recognises a person with a track record in promoting and advancing human rights in the Australian community on a not for profit basis.

.....  
**Queensland's LGBTI Legal Service Inc.** and its Director, **Emile McPhee**, were nominated for the **Queen's Birthday Ball Awards**. The Awards recognise the outstanding achievements and contributions made within Queensland's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer community (LGBTIQ).

.....  
**Inner City Legal Centre** received the **2014 CLCNSW Award** at the **Law and Justice Foundation of NSW's annual Justice Awards** for its *Safe Relationships Project*. Highly commended for the **CLCNSW Award** was the **Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre**.

Other nominees for the Award were: **Central Coast Community Legal Centre**, **HIV/AIDS Legal Centre**, **Hume Riverina Community Legal Service**, **Hunter Community Legal Centre**, **Macquarie Legal Centre**, **Refugee Advice and Casework Service**, **Women's Legal Services NSW**, and **North and North West Community Legal Service**.

The CLCNSW Award is awarded to a project in a CLC that demonstrates outstanding commitment to improving access to justice in NSW, particularly for socially and economically disadvantaged people.

**L to R: Elsie Stokie, from Barwon Community Legal Service with the Law Institute of Victoria's President, Katie Millier**

**Consumer Credit Legal Service (WA)** was nominated for the **Richard (Dick) Fletcher Award**. The Award acknowledges a local government, non government organisation or group of individuals that has made a significant contribution to the advancement of consumer protection in their community.

.....  
**Flemington Kensington CLC** received the **Tim McCoy Award** for its work redressing police violence. Other nominees were: **Anna Brown**, from the **Human Rights Law Centre**, **Eastern CLC**, **Meghan Fitzgerald**, from **Fitzroy Legal Service**, **knowmore**, and **Inner Melbourne Community Legal**.

.....  
**Far West CLC** was nominated for the **Community Organisation Award** at the **Honour Awards**, an annual event that recognises outstanding achievements within or contributions to NSW's LGBTI community.

.....  
**Nanette Williams**, from **Pilbara CLC** was inducted into the **WA Women's Hall of Fame**. It's purpose is to recognise and celebrate the achievements of Western Australian women past, present and future.





## National Animal Law Network (NALN)

Angela Pollard, Convenor

The National Animal Law Network (NALN) continues to grow, with two new members, the Animal Defenders Office (ADO) in ACT/NSW and the Animal Law Institute in Victoria joining this year.

The ADO was successful in its application for membership of Community Legal Centres New South Wales (CLCNSW), which means that NSW now has a dedicated pro bono legal practice for animal law. ADO activities for the year included a presentation on the “ag gag” aspects of the Biosecurity Bill at the Animal Activist Forum, preparing factsheets, research, reports and submissions on animal protection issues as diverse as saleyard welfare standards, companion animal breeding, animals in entertainment, hen welfare in intensive barns and the quest for legal rights for animals.

The Animal Law Institute is a recently formed CLC and the newest member of the Victorian Federation of CLCs. Once fully operational, it will provide pro bono legal advice and assistance to individuals and organisations that promote animal protection and the prevention of animal cruelty, represent animals and their advocates in court, challenge the way the legal system protects animals through effective law reform, and engage with the community to provide free education about how the legal system can be used to promote and advance animal protection.

Peel Community Legal Services continued to roll out its innovative community development project, *Saving Grace*, an animal abuse and domestic violence photography venture.

Northern Rivers CLC produced new and revised factsheets on reporting animal cruelty, companion animal responsibilities and working dogs carer responsibilities as well as co-hosting a workshop on *Our Wildlife and Our Pets, Living Together* with Environmental Defenders Office New South Wales (Northern Rivers office) and co-presenting at the Animal Activists Forum with the ADO on the proposed “ag gag laws”.

Fitzroy Legal Service is also continuing to operate its Animal Law Clinic each Friday.

## Community Legal Education and Community Development Network (CLECDN)

Andrea Staunton, Convenor

Recognising the unique and valuable role that CLCs play in identifying, developing and delivering Community Legal Education (CLE) and Community Development (CD) activities across Australia, this network (formerly the CLEWs Network) was revived following the National Network Day in 2014, and now meets quarterly by teleconference and in person at the National Networks Day.

Our representatives from seven states and territories have shared their insights into how CLE and CD activities are coordinated in their jurisdictions as well as discussing opportunities for professional development and capacity building. We have considered the findings of the *Productivity Commission Report into*

*Access to Justice*, in particular in relation to collaboration and duplication of CLE activities. We have also provided feedback to NACLC about the operation of the CLEAR database, which the Network regards as a highly valuable resource.

We thank the National Legal Aid CLE Working Group (NLA CLEWG) for inviting our Convenor to join their group, and have likewise been pleased to welcome the NLA CLEWG convenor, George Hatzirodos, to our Network.

We gratefully acknowledge the work of Visakesa Chandrasekaram who was Co-convenor of the Network from November 2014 to February 2015. Special thanks to Saskia Weerheim for fulfilling the role of acting Convenor and organising the meeting on Networks Day in 2014, and to John Jablonka of Northern Territory Legal Aid and Will Crawford of North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency for delivering professional development at that meeting.

## EDOs of Australia

Jess Feehely, Convenor

2014/2015 was the year in which Federal funding cuts took effect across the Network of Environmental Defenders Offices. Though community support remains strong, financial insecurity has put significant pressure on service delivery in most states and territories.

In late 2014, we engaged a project officer to undertake a strategic review of the Network. This work has helped to improve both internal and external communications and to maintain public awareness of the role EDOs play in securing a healthy environment. Activities have included a new website, rebranding as EDOs of Australia, several publications outlining our work (including *Environment Matters* – which was coordinated by NACLC), representations to the *Access to Justice inquiry* and establishing stronger networks with politicians, academics, NGOs and the legal profession.

Despite funding difficulties, EDOs of Australia continues to be a strong and active Network and a respected national voice for public interest environmental protection and access to environmental justice. Key achievements for 2014/2015 include:

- several successful court challenges to mining proposals in QLD and NSW which threatened water resources, koala habitat, threatened species and productive agricultural land
- securing an injunction to prevent off-road vehicles damaging Aboriginal cultural heritage values in western Tasmania
- overturning groundwater licences which would compromise the health of two rivers in the Northern Territory
- opposing developments and management practices that threaten the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area
- continued advocacy for stronger environmental regulation through submissions, appearances at parliamentary hearings and the release of several



**L to R: Maree O'Halloran, Amie Meers and Alex Greenwich MP at the launch of the two reports 'Living the the Disability Support Pension' and 'How does the NWRN add value to its clients,' commissioned by the National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN), 19 February 2015**

detailed reports assessing the effectiveness of current laws

- keeping the broader community up to date on how to have their say through newsletters, fact sheets and workshops.

### National Human Rights Network

**Amanda Alford and Dianne Anagnos, Co-convenors**

The National Human Rights Network meets once every two months by phone link up and once a year in person at the National CLCs Conference. The focus of the Network over the last year has been in sharing information and supporting members to participate in human rights advocacy and law reform work.

The Network's annual meeting at Alice Springs allowed us all to discuss a range of submissions to inquiries and reviews and other work being undertaken by members as part of their CLC's human rights work. At that meeting the Network also decided that the main priority areas for the year ahead would be:

- engagement with the *Universal Periodic Review*
- engagement with the *Human Rights Commissioner's Rights and Responsibilities Tour*
- consultation and submissions to the *Australian Law Reform Commission's (ALRC) Freedoms Inquiry*
- refugees and asylum seekers
- anti-terrorism measures and metadata issues.

During the year the Network supported the team who is coordinating the NGO Report for Australia's second *Universal Periodic Review*. The team is made up of three sector workers, Amanda Alford from NACLC, Anna Brown from Human Rights Law Centre and Emma Golledge from Kingsford Legal Centre. This process is ongoing and will continue throughout 2015/2016.

Members of the Network also participated in the *Rights and Responsibilities Tour* and contributed to the NACLC submission to the ALRC *Freedoms Inquiry*. The Network did not perform any specific work on the remaining priority areas, although individual CLCs continued to advocate in relation to refugee, asylum seeker and anti-terrorism measures issues.

The focus in the year ahead will be on holding our governments accountable in terms of human rights, and monitoring government implementation of recommendations, both internationally and domestically.

### National Professional Indemnity Insurance Network

**Catherine Eagle, Chair**

The Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) Network is made up of the PII representative from each state and territory. We meet monthly by phone and then face to face at least once each year at the Networks Day prior to the National CLCs Conference. In March 2015 we had an extra full day face to face meeting in Sydney which included a meeting with the Accreditation Coordinators to discuss the intersection between the accreditation process and the annual cross check process.

In October 2014, the PII Network and NACLC released a revised version of the crosscheck questionnaire, following feedback received through a survey of CLCs. We are continuing to work on revisions to the *Risk Management Guide (RMG)*. We are also developing an Induction kit for new PII representatives – we have been working on this for some time but hope to have it finalised soon – it will be a great resource for anyone becoming a PII representative and will also increase knowledge within the sector of the role of the PII representative.

During 2014/15, we also:



- worked on developing a sample policy for CLCs who require an information barrier
- negotiated with the insurer to amend the terms of the Policy, and
- developed a protocol for the consistent storage of PII records in each state or territory.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution of Jill Anderson to the work of the PII Network and since February 2015 the work done by the NACLC Insurances Coordinator, Kiri Libbesson in supporting and on behalf of the PII Network.

### National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN)

*Amie Meers, Executive Officer*

The National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN) is the peak community organisation concerned with social security law and policy. Our membership includes CLCs and Aboriginal legal services with welfare rights programs.

The NWRN's secretariat supports the NWRN's policy activities focusing on alleviating poverty by ensuring that income support is adequate and is administered efficiently, fairly and effectively and that people have access to free legal advice and assistance for social security problems.

Many legislative changes were proposed to social security law in 2014/2015 and NWRN appeared at, or provided written submissions to 13 parliamentary inquiries. NWRN published media statements and a quarterly newsletter *Welfare Rights Review* and worked collaboratively with the wider community legal sector. NWRN continued to engage with the government on its broad welfare review and met regularly with three key Commonwealth departments: Social Security, Human Services, and Employment.

The Network commissioned two independent research papers. The first, *Living on the Disability Support Pension* highlights the social security and employment assistance needs of people with disabilities. The second, *How does the NWRN add value to its clients?* is an independent evaluation of the services provided by our member centres. It involved both qualitative and quantitative surveys. It found that the NWRN provides a quality frontline service meeting most client needs and expectations and services a specific gap in access to legal services not met by other CLCs or legal aid commissions. The report revealed flow on effects of our assistance.

### Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA)

*Pauline van Adrichem, Convenor*

Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA) is a group of CLCs that specialise in women's legal issues, and promotes a legal system that is safe, supportive, non-discriminatory, and responsive to the needs of women in accessing justice. WLSA members jointly fund a part-time National Policy Coordinator - Heidi Guldback.

WLSA's focus this year has been on:

- advocating for reforms to the Family Law Act to provide specific protections to victims of family violence from being directly cross examined by their abusers
- promoting the need for family report writers to be accredited
- continually advocating for the presumption of 'equal shared parental responsibility' to be removed, to promote safer outcomes for victims of family violence and their children
- ensuring that the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2022* is adequately consulted, securely funded, implemented, and independently monitored; and
- lobbying for increased funding to meet the legal needs of women.

Our work in this area has included:

- pre-budget submissions to the Department of Treasury through our work with Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) and Equality Rights Alliance (ERA) (two of the national women's alliances)
- joint submission with NACLC to the *Senate Inquiry into Domestic Violence* and giving evidence at the hearing
- submission to the *Australian Law Reform Commission Inquiry into Encroachments by Commonwealth Laws of Traditional Rights and Freedoms*
- responding to the *Productivity Commission's Report on Access to Justice Arrangements*
- attending the Judicial Council on Diversity's roundtable on access to justice for culturally and linguistically diverse women
- attending consultations and providing submissions to the *National Framework to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children*
- contributing to Shadow Reporting processes and other human rights instruments.



## Treasurer's report

The inaugural NACLC Board has inherited a healthy, vibrant and growing organisation. This growth is very apparent in the organisation's financial statements with 2014/15 being another record breaking year.

Revenue has exceeded \$7.7M which is a 30% increase over last year. The growth is due, in the main, to the **knowmore** legal service operations gathering momentum. Whilst **knowmore** continues to consume management and Board attention, all of the other NACLC work also continues apace. Our other revenue streams including membership fees, Conference, PII insurance and other projects have remained strong.

NACLC has maintained a focus on delivering high quality services and projects for our CLCs and the broader community, which has seen good utilisation of grant and fee income and a modest deficit of around \$90,000 for the year. This deficit, which is mainly due to the loss incurred in holding the 2014 National CLCs Conference in Alice Springs, was foreseen and approved by the Board as an irregular occurrence. It is the Board's intention to deliver balanced budgets in the future. NACLC continues to enjoy a solid financial foundation with good levels of cash reserves at around 3 months of expense coverage.

Whilst the organisation's focus to date has rightly been on establishing and delivering exceptional

services, the new governance structure brings a better focus on the organisation's compliance and other systems. The recent significant growth has presented many challenges for our dedicated team of management and administration workers. Whilst their hard work has delivered outstanding results, the Board recognises that there are opportunities to improve our systems to match them to the current scale of operations and better support our workers. Our financial arrangements are now more complex than was ever contemplated, and in the year ahead the Board is particularly committed to reviewing our financial systems so that the financial management of NACLC can be more easily accomplished in a timely and efficient manner.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge our dedicated team of workers and my fellow Directors for the work and support they provide me and our organisation. The year ahead will be another exciting one as we all work together to lead and support Australian Community legal Centres in the work they do to assist vulnerable people with legal needs.

*Nick Hudson*  
Treasurer



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303**

**STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>Revenue</b>	4	7,783,561	5,927,441
<b>Less: expenses</b>			
Depreciation and amortisation expense	5	(311,118)	(174,988)
Employee benefits expense		(4,575,224)	(2,962,916)
Occupancy expense		(452,839)	(243,836)
Conference expense		(319,740)	(293,625)
Operating expense		(543,156)	(428,763)
Project expense		(355,615)	(468,613)
Consultants expense		(526,565)	(582,650)
Recruitment expense		(124,518)	(304,055)
Travel expense		(665,266)	(522,871)
		<u>(7,874,041)</u>	<u>(5,982,317)</u>
<b>Surplus / (deficit) before income tax expense</b>		(90,480)	(54,876)
<b>Other comprehensive income for the year</b>		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>		<u>(90,480)</u>	<u>(54,876)</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION  
AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	2,656,433	1,789,062
Receivables	7	176,741	424,511
Other financial assets	8	2,425,000	3,116,000
Other assets	10	<u>229,498</u>	<u>251,406</u>
<b>Total current assets</b>		<u>5,487,672</u>	<u>5,580,979</u>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Other financial assets	8	276,075	266,775
Property, plant and equipment	9	438,911	704,951
Other assets	10	<u>36,716</u>	<u>72,403</u>
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<u>751,702</u>	<u>1,044,129</u>
<b>Total assets</b>		<u>6,239,374</u>	<u>6,625,108</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Payables	11	590,983	848,328
Provisions	12	257,212	178,038
Other liabilities	13	<u>4,507,604</u>	<u>4,651,298</u>
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<u>5,355,799</u>	<u>5,677,664</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	12	<u>124,335</u>	<u>97,724</u>
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<u>124,335</u>	<u>97,724</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<u>5,480,134</u>	<u>5,775,388</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>759,240</u>	<u>849,720</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Reserves	14	87,500	87,500
Accumulated surplus	15	<u>671,740</u>	<u>762,220</u>
<b>Total equity</b>		<u>759,240</u>	<u>849,720</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	Reserves \$	Accumulated surplus \$	Total equity \$
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2013</b>	152,821	751,775	904,596
Deficit for the year	<u>-</u>	<u>(54,876)</u>	<u>(54,876)</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(54,876)</u>	<u>(54,876)</u>
Transfers	<u>(65,321)</u>	<u>65,321</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2014</b>	87,500	762,220	849,720
Deficit for the year	<u>-</u>	<u>(90,480)</u>	<u>(90,480)</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(90,480)</u>	<u>(90,480)</u>
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2015</b>	<u>87,500</u>	<u>671,740</u>	<u>759,240</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from customers		8,868,321	6,793,558
Payments to suppliers and employees		(8,744,513)	(6,007,923)
Interest received		<u>106,941</u>	<u>173,312</u>
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	16(b)	<u>230,749</u>	<u>958,947</u>
<b>Cash flow from investing activities</b>			
Proceeds of investments		681,700	-
Payment for property, plant and equipment		(45,078)	(730,900)
Payment for investments		<u>-</u>	<u>(631,198)</u>
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>		<u>636,622</u>	<u>(1,362,098)</u>
<b>Reconciliation of cash</b>			
Cash at beginning of the financial year		1,789,062	2,192,213
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		<u>867,371</u>	<u>(403,151)</u>
<b>Cash at end of financial year</b>	16(a)	<u>2,656,433</u>	<u>1,789,062</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

**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 *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The directors have determined that the Company is not a reporting entity.

The financial report is for the entity National Association of Community Legal Centres as an individual entity. National Association of Community Legal Centres is a Company limited by guarantee, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. National Association of Community Legal Centres is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the following Accounting Standards:

AASB 101:	Presentation of Financial Statements
AASB 107:	Cash Flow Statements
AASB 108:	Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
AASB 1031:	Materiality
AASB 1048:	Interpretation and Application of Standards
AASB 1054:	Australian Additional Disclosures

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) Basis of preparation of the financial report**

*Historical Cost Convention*

The financial report has been prepared under the historical cost convention, as modified by revaluations to fair value for certain classes of assets as described in the accounting policies.

**(b) Revenue**

Grant income, conference and insurance is recognised as revenue in the year to which the associated expenditure and grant funding agreement relates. Accordingly, the income received in the current year for expenditure in future years are treated as grants or income in advance. Unexpected 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 Company during the financial year. Where surplus funds are required to be repaid, they will remain as a liability in the financial statements until repayment.

Membership fees are recognised as revenue when no significant uncertainty as to its collectability exists, if the fee relates only to membership and all other services or products are paid for separately, or if there is a separate annual subscription. Membership fees are recognised on a basis that reflects the timing, nature and value of the benefit provided if the fee entitles the member to services or publications to be provided during the membership period, or to purchase goods or services at prices lower than those charged to non-members.

Revenue from organising and hosting events is recognised in the period in which the events are held.



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

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).

**(c) Income tax**

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

**(d) 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 in the statement of financial position.

**(e) Financial instruments**

*Classification*

The Company 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.

**(f) 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.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**(f) Property, plant and equipment (Continued)**

*Depreciation*

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment is depreciated over their estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Land and the land component of any class of property, plant and equipment is not depreciated.

<b>Class of fixed asset</b>	<b>Depreciation rates</b>	<b>Depreciation basis</b>
Leasehold improvements at cost	33.33%	Straight line
Office equipment at cost	10.00%- 33.33%	Straight line

**(g) Impairment**

Goodwill, intangible assets not yet ready for use and intangible assets that have an indefinite useful life are not subject to amortisation and are therefore tested annually for impairment or more frequently if events or changes in circumstances indicate that they might 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.

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.

**(h) Provisions**

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

**(i) 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.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

**NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (CONTINUED)**

**(j) Employee benefits**

*(i) Short-term employee benefit obligations*

Liabilities arising in respect of wages and salaries, 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. The expected cost of short-term employee benefits in the form of compensated absences such as annual leave is recognised in the provision for employee benefits. All other short-term employee benefit obligations are presented as payables.

*(ii) Long-term employee benefit obligations*

Liabilities arising in respect of long service leave and annual leave which is not expected to be settled within twelve months of the reporting date 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.

Employee benefit obligations are presented as current liabilities if the entity does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, regardless of when the actual settlement is expected to occur.

**(k) Goods and services tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and purchased 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.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

**(l) Comparatives**

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

**(m) Adoption of new and amended accounting standards that are first operative**

There are no new and amended accounting standards effective for the financial year beginning 1 July 2014 which affect any amounts recorded in the current or prior year.



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

**NOTE 2: ACCOUNTING STANDARDS AND INTERPRETATIONS ISSUED BUT NOT OPERATIVE AT 30 JUNE 2015**

The following standards and interpretations have been issued at the reporting date but are not yet effective. The directors' assessment of the impact of these standards and interpretations is set out below; AASB 9: Financial Instruments and associated Amending Standards (applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2018). AASB 15: Revenue from Contracts with Customers (applicable to annual reporting periods commencing on or after 1 January 2017).

***AASB 9 Financial Instruments***

The Standard will be applicable retrospectively and includes revised requirements for the classification and measurement of financial instruments, revised recognition and derecognition requirements for financial instruments and simplified requirements for hedge accounting.

The key changes that may affect the Company on initial application include certain simplifications to the classification of financial assets and upfront accounting for expected credit loss. Although the directors anticipate that the adoption of AASB 9 may have an impact on the Company's financial instruments it is impracticable at this stage to provide a reasonable estimate of such impact.

***AASB 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers***

AASB 15 introduces a five step process for revenue recognition with the core principle being for entities to recognise revenue to depict the transfer of goods or services to customers in amounts that reflect the consideration (that is, payment) to which the entity expects to be entitled in exchange for those goods or services. The five step approach is as follows:

- Step 1: Identify the contracts with the customer;
- Step 2: Identify the separate performance obligations;
- Step 3: Determine the transaction price;
- Step 4: Allocate the transaction price; and
- Step 5: Recognise revenue when a performance obligation is satisfied.

AASB 15 will also result in enhanced disclosures about revenue, provide guidance for transactions that were not previously addressed comprehensively (for example, service revenue and contract modifications) and improve guidance for multiple-element arrangements.

The changes in revenue recognition requirements in AASB 15 may cause changes to the timing and amount of revenue recorded in the financial statements as well as additional disclosures. The impact of AASB 15 has not yet been quantified.

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

**NOTE 3: SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS**

In the application of the Company's accounting policies, management is required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about carrying values of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>NOTE 4: REVENUE AND OTHER INCOME</b>		
Operating revenue		
Contributions from centres	664,196	645,626
Other revenue		
Bank interest	112,189	153,275
Grants	6,615,007	4,796,915
Conference income	<u>268,902</u>	<u>301,774</u>
	<u>6,996,098</u>	<u>5,251,964</u>
Other Income		
Sundry income	<u>123,267</u>	<u>29,851</u>
	<u>7,783,561</u>	<u>5,927,441</u>

**NOTE 5: OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)**

Surplus / (deficit) before income tax has been determined after:

Depreciation		
- leasehold improvements	173,469	100,918
- office furniture and equipment	<u>137,650</u>	<u>74,071</u>
	311,119	174,989
Bad debts		
- trade debtors	1,170	-
Remuneration of auditors for:		
Audit and assurance services		
- Audit of the financial report and acquittal statement	<u>10,975</u>	<u>9,675</u>



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>NOTE 6: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>		
Cash on hand	2,300	2,300
Cash at bank	<u>2,654,133</u>	<u>1,786,762</u>
	<u>2,656,433</u>	<u>1,789,062</u>
<b>NOTE 7: RECEIVABLES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Trade debtors	169,405	422,253
Other receivables	<u>7,336</u>	<u>2,258</u>
	<u>176,741</u>	<u>424,511</u>
<b>NOTE 8: OTHER FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
<i>Held to maturity financial assets</i>		
Term deposits	<u>2,425,000</u>	<u>3,116,000</u>
	<u>2,425,000</u>	<u>3,116,000</u>
<b>NON CURRENT</b>		
<i>Held to maturity financial assets</i>		
Term deposits	<u>276,075</u>	<u>266,775</u>
	<u>276,075</u>	<u>266,775</u>
Term deposits of \$133,000 (2014: \$97,000) held by the Company are utilised as security for credit cards.		
Term deposits of \$240,075 (\$225,775) held by the Company are utilised as security for lease commitments.		
<b>NOTE 9: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>		
<b>Leasehold improvements</b>		
At cost	522,317	513,160
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(288,921)</u>	<u>(115,452)</u>
	<u>233,396</u>	<u>397,708</u>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>NOTE 9: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT (CONTINUED)</b>		
<b>Plant and equipment</b>		
Office furniture and equipment at cost	448,186	412,264
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(242,671)</u>	<u>(105,021)</u>
	<u>205,515</u>	<u>307,243</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>438,911</u>	<u>704,951</u>
<b>NOTE 10: OTHER ASSETS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Prepayments	129,689	231,283
Accrued income	99,520	4,605
Rental bonds	-	11,824
Other current assets	<u>289</u>	<u>3,694</u>
	<u>229,498</u>	<u>251,406</u>
<b>NON CURRENT</b>		
Other non-current assets		
Make good	36,716	44,843
Rental bonds	<u>-</u>	<u>27,560</u>
	<u>36,716</u>	<u>72,403</u>
	<u>36,716</u>	<u>72,403</u>
<b>NOTE 11: PAYABLES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
<i>Unsecured liabilities</i>		
Trade creditors	83,894	565,637
GST liabilities	341,399	159,042
Accrued expenses	<u>165,690</u>	<u>123,649</u>
	<u>590,983</u>	<u>848,328</u>
<b>NOTE 12: PROVISIONS</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Employee benefits	(a) <u>257,212</u>	<u>178,038</u>
	<u>257,212</u>	<u>178,038</u>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>NOTE 12: PROVISIONS (CONTINUED)</b>		
<b>NON CURRENT</b>		
Employee benefits (a)	10,516	15,571
Make good	<u>113,819</u>	<u>82,153</u>
	<u>124,335</u>	<u>97,724</u>
(a) Aggregate employee benefits liability	267,728	193,609
<b>(b) Reconciliations</b>		
<i>Make good (non current)</i>		
Opening balance	82,153	11,319
Additional amounts recognised	<u>31,666</u>	<u>70,834</u>
Closing balance	<u>113,819</u>	<u>82,153</u>
<b>NOTE 13: OTHER LIABILITIES</b>		
<b>CURRENT</b>		
Grants received in advance	4,158,097	4,384,679
National conference deposits	116,870	142,377
Company and PI insurances liability	<u>232,637</u>	<u>124,242</u>
	<u>4,507,604</u>	<u>4,651,298</u>
<b>NOTE 14: RESERVES</b>		
General reserve	<u>87,500</u>	<u>87,500</u>
	<u>87,500</u>	<u>87,500</u>
The general reserve is used to support the National Accreditation Scheme and the Management Support Online License.		
<b>NOTE 15: ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>		
Accumulated surplus at beginning of year	762,220	751,775
Net (deficit)/surplus	(90,480)	(54,876)
Transfers (from)/to reserves	<u>-</u>	<u>65,321</u>
	<u>671,740</u>	<u>762,220</u>



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	2015 \$	2014 \$
<b>NOTE 16: CASH FLOW INFORMATION</b>		
<b>(a) Reconciliation of cash</b>		
Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position is as follows:		
Cash on hand	2,300	2,300
Cash at bank	<u>2,654,133</u>	<u>1,786,762</u>
	<u>2,656,433</u>	<u>1,789,062</u>
<b>(b) Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with (deficit) / surplus after income tax</b>		
(Deficit) / surplus from ordinary activities after income tax	(90,480)	(54,876)
<b>Adjustments and non-cash items</b>		
Depreciation	311,118	174,989
<b>Changes in assets and liabilities</b>		
(Increase) / decrease in receivables	247,770	(169,460)
(Increase) / decrease in other assets	152,594	(130,414)
Increase / (decrease) in payables	(257,344)	335,104
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	(238,694)	601,374
Increase / (decrease) in provisions	<u>105,785</u>	<u>202,230</u>
Cash flows from operating activities	<u>230,749</u>	<u>958,947</u>

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
**ABN 67 757 001 303**

**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

	2015	2014
	\$	\$

**NOTE 17: 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	337,363	395,860
- later than one year and not later than five years	<u>192,975</u>	<u>530,338</u>
	<u>530,338</u>	<u>926,198</u>

The property leases are non-cancellable leases with 3 and 5 year terms commencing on 1 February 2012, 22 May 2013, 1 December 2013, 13 January 2014 and 8 May 2014, with rent payable monthly in advance. Contingent rental provisions within the lease agreements require that minimum lease payments shall be increased by between 0 - 4.25% per annum respectively. Balances exclude GST.

**NOTE 18: EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO REPORTING DATE**

There has been no matter or circumstance, which has arisen since 30 June 2015 that has significantly affected or may significantly affect:

- (a) the operations, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2015, of the Company, or
- (b) the results of those operations, or
- (c) the state of affairs, in financial years subsequent to 30 June 2015, of the Company.

**NOTE 19: COMPANY DETAILS**

The registered office of the Company is:

Suite 3, Level 10  
 307 Pitt Street  
 SYDNEY NSW 2000

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES  
ABN 67 757 001 303

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

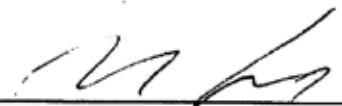
The directors have determined that the company is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 1 - 15, are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
  - (a) comply with Accounting Standards in Australia as detailed in Note 1 to the financial statements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
  - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2015 and performance for the year ended on that date of the company in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.
2. In the directors' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the company will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.

Director: 

Director: 

Dated this 15th day of October 2015





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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**  
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**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION**  
**TO THE DIRECTORS OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES**

In relation to the independent audit for the year ended 30 June 2015, to the best of my knowledge and belief there have been:

- (i) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
- (ii) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct.

Mark Godlewski

Partner

PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

16 October 2015

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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, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2015, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

*Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report*

The directors are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the financial reporting needs of the members.

The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation 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 and fair presentation of the financial report 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 directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

### *Independence*

In conducting our audit, we have complied with APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants*.

### *Opinion*

In our opinion, the financial report of National Association of Community Legal Centres presents fairly, in all material respects, the entity's financial position as at 30 June 2015 and its performance and its cash flows for the year ended on that date in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial report.

### *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 to meet the financial reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and the financial reporting needs of the members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mark Godlewski'.

Mark Godlewski

Partner

16 October 2015

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Pitcher Partners'.

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