

ANNUAL REPORT

2017-2018



*NACLC acknowledges the traditional owners on 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.*

Contents

NACLC People 2017/18	3
About NACLC and Community Legal Centres	5
National Census of Community Legal Centres 2017	6
Chair Report	8
CEO Report	9
Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021	10
Sector Sustainability	11
Quality Assurance: National Accreditation Scheme	13
Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS)	14
Insurance and Risk Management	15
National Professional Indemnity Insurance Network	15
Policy and Advocacy	16
NACLC Reconciliation Plan	18
knowmore	19
National CLCs Conference 2017	20
National Networks	21
National Social Security Rights Network	21
National Regional, Rural and Remote Network	22
Women's Legal Services Australia	23
LGBTIQ+ Network	24
Environmental Defender's Offices of Australia	25
Financial Reports	26
Community Legal Sector Snapshot	30

National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)

PO Box A2245 Sydney South NSW 1235

Tel: 02 9264 9595

Fax: 02 9264 9594

Email: nacalc@nacalc.org.au

Web: www.nacalc.org.au

Twitter: www.twitter.com/nacalcocomms

Facebook: www.facebook.com/nacalcocomms

ABN 67 757 001 303

ACN 163 101 737



Cover photo: 2017 National CLCs Conference delegates

NACLC People 2017/18

NACLC Staff

CEO

Nassim Arrage

Policy and Advocacy Team

Director

Communications Manager

Communications Manager

Casual Policy Officer

Amanda Alford

Te Raehira Wihapi (until Oct 2017)

Rachel Ryan (from April 2018)

Fleur Ramsay (from April to June 2018)

Sector Sustainability Team

Director

Acting Director

Sector Capacity Building Coordinator

National Accreditation Scheme Coordinator

Sector Capacity Building Officer

Insurances Officer

Insurances Coordinator

Conference Organiser

Projects Officer

Projects Officer

Volunteer

John Macmillan (until April 2018)

Meg Houston (from April 2018)

Meg Houston (from Feb 2018)

Meg Houston (until Jan 2018)

Alice Jones Rabbitt (from Feb 2018)

Alice Jones Rabbitt (until Feb 2018)

Kiri-Ana Libbesson (until Jan 2018)

Jane Housley (until Jan 2018)

Catherine Dornan (until Oct 2017)

Charlotte Maung (from Nov 2017)

Cailey Grice (February 2018)

Operations

Special Projects Manager

Office Manager

Finance Officer

Administrator

Operations Officer

Operations Officer

Administrative Assistant

Administrative Assistant

Polly Porteous (from March 2018)

Liz Dods (until January 2018)

Ana Rey (until Jan 2018)

Charlotte Maung (from Feb 2018)

Catherine Dornan (from Feb to May 2018)

Melanie Walsh (from April 2018)

Fran Bowron (until Aug 2017)

Charlotte Maung (from Sept 2017 to Oct 2017)

CLASS

IT Project Manager

IT Business Manager

CLASS Training and Support Officer

CLASS Training and Support Officer

Casual Help Desk Officer

Casual CLASS Testing Officer

CLASS Training and Support Officer

CLASS Training and Support Officer

CLASS Project Officer

Contract CLASS and other IT Support Services

Contract CLASS Help Desk Officer

Chris Dubrow

Fran Bowron

James Okeby

Victoria Kim

Jon Schild (until Dec 2017)

Jon Schild (from April 2018)

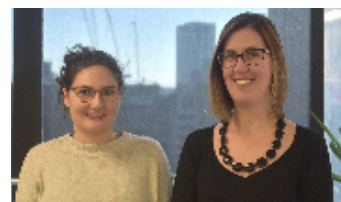
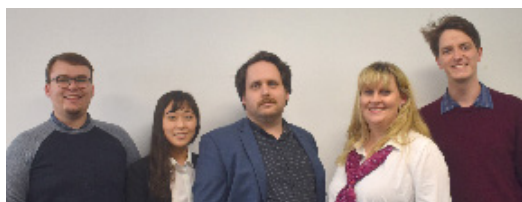
Koumbah Semega-Janneh (until Feb 2018)

Patricia Gora (until Aug 2017)

Alice Jones-Rabbitt (until Feb 2018)

Phill Byrne

Sam Thorne (from Oct 2017)

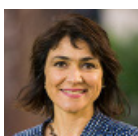


NACLC People 2017/18

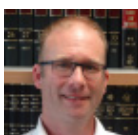
NACLC Board of Directors July 2017 - June 2018



Sara Kane
(Chair)



Anna Cody
(Deputy Chair)



Nick Hudson
(Treasurer)



Lee-Ann Emzin



Vanessa Lesnie



Rosslyn Monro



Dan Stubbs
(until 20 April 2018)

NACLC Advisory Council Representatives 2016/17

ACT

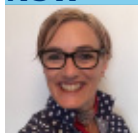


Elena Rosenman (from Oct 2017)



Genevieve Bolton
Deb Phippen (until Oct 2017)

NSW



Katrina Ironside (from Nov 2017)



Linda Tucker (until Nov 2017)



Tim Leach (from Feb 2018)
Polly Porteous (until Feb 2018)

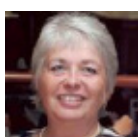
NT

Caitlin Perry (until Oct 2017)
Matt Fawkner
Vanessa Lethlean (from Oct 2017)

QLD

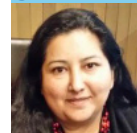


James Farrell



Janet Wight

SA

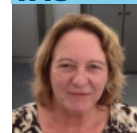


Catherine McMorris



Zita Ngor (from Oct 2017)
Marja Elizabeth (until Oct 2017)

TAS



Jane Hutchison
Susan Fahey

VIC



Jackie Galloway



Serina McDuff

WA



Carrie Hannington (from Oct 2017)



Sharryn Jackson (from Feb 2018)
Helen Creed (until Feb 2018)
David Kernohan (until Oct 2017)

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Representatives

Bobbi Murray

About NACLC and Community Legal Centres



[®] The National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) is the peak national organisation for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) in Australia.

NACLC's members are eight state & territory CLC associations, which together, represent 181 centres in metropolitan,

regional, rural and remote locations across Australia.

Community Legal Centres are independent, not for profit, community based organisations that provide free and accessible legal and related services to everyday people across Australia.

Some Family Violence Prevention Legal Services & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island Legal Services are members of state and territory CLC associations and therefore also come under the NACLC umbrella.

In 2017-2018, centres provided over 470,000 services to people across Australia.

Community legal centres:

- play a **unique but complementary role** to the other legal assistance providers and community services
- are **independent, community-based organisations** that are **embedded in and responsive to community**
- provide **holistic, client-centred, wrap-around, safe and appropriate services**
- deliver **efficient, effective and innovative services**
- often comprise **multidisciplinary** teams and service delivery models
- provide **high quality services** and are supported by a strong national quality service framework focused on continuous improvement
- use frontline service delivery to inform broader systemic work, including **law reform, policy and strategic advocacy**

As the peak body, NACLC's work is wide ranging. We play a key role in:

- working to support our **members**
- providing a **voice** to, and for, the community legal sector
- facilitating and leading **strategic sector thinking** (for example, through the development of National Position Papers)
- playing a key **coordination and support** role including by sharing information and good practice, facilitating consultation and drawing upon sector expertise to inform government decision-making
- working to support and facilitate the provision of high quality community legal services (for example, through the **National Accreditation Scheme** to ensure continuous quality improvement)
- negotiating and administering a **National Community Legal Sector Insurances Scheme**
- organising events including an annual **National CLCs Conference**
- undertaking **strategic national advocacy and law reform** with, and on behalf of, the sector and the people and communities our centres work with across Australia
- developing, rolling out and maintaining **Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS)** – a new database system to manage and record legal cases and advices, to record community legal education work and law reform activities, and as a reporting tool to government
- **collecting and communicating sector data** (for example, through CLASS, the National CLCs Census and sector surveys)
- providing a number of other **direct services** to CLCs aimed at building the sustainability of the community legal sector
- supporting specialist **National Networks** of CLCs
- **working collaboratively and in partnership** with other peak bodies, supporters and partners, and
- supporting **knowmore** a national, culturally safe, legal advisory service for people engaging or considering engaging with the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and National Redress Scheme.

NATIONAL CENSUS OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES (CLCs) 2017

CLIENTS, SERVICES, PARTNERSHIPS AND WORK



NACLC is the peak national organisation representing community legal centres (CLCs) in Australia. Its members are the state and territory CLC associations that represent 181 centres in various metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations across Australia.

The 2017 Census is the fifth annual survey of the CLC sector conducted by NACLC, in consultation with our members. The Census is an important tool to collect information about the clients, services, work and priorities of CLCs.

Note: All statistics in this infographic relate to the 2016/17 financial year.¹

PEOPLE



CLCs helped more than

211,991

people in 2016/17

PARTNERSHIPS



49%

partnered with legal pro bono partners when delivering legal services



68%

partnered with non-legal community organisations in the provision of community legal education



39%

partnered with non-legal community organisations on policy advocacy and law reform projects

PROFILE

124

CLCs responded to the Census



TOP 3

Top 3 specialist areas or clients groups were:



DOMESTIC/FAMILY VIOLENCE



FAMILY LAW



TENANCY

FUNDING SOURCES



36%

fundraising and sponsorship



28%

philanthropic support

¹ Every percentage (%) referred to in this infographic is a percentage of the number of respondents that answered that particular question in the Census. To locate how many CLCs responded to each particular question, please refer to the National Report on the NACLC website: http://www.nacalc.org.au/cb_pages/reports_and_resources.php

NATIONAL CENSUS OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES (CLCs) 2017

CLIENTS, SERVICES, PARTNERSHIPS AND WORK



TIME SPENT ON FUNDING-RELATED ACTIVITIES

97 CLCs
spent over

3857

hours per week



on funding-related
activities

including reporting, grant
applications and fundraising



VOLUNTEERS AND PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS

6,915 
volunteers

contributed a total of

15,300 hours of work per week

Pro bono partners
contributed

83,253 hours to 63 CLCs



POLICY ADVOCACY AND LAW REFORM



78% undertook policy advocacy
and law reform activities

OUTREACH



83% provide legal outreach at a location other
than their main or branch offices



82% provide services to clients and communities
in Rural, Regional and Remote communities

Chair Report 2017/18

The NACLC Board has governed and navigated NACLC through a period of significant transition over the year following the review of organisational values and vision in 2017. We have progressed the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan; rolled out a new organisational structure to reflect the Strategic Plan; settled a Risk Management Framework and Plan; established a Business Development Framework; and considered several sustainability projects for our peak.

In addition to this governance work, the NACLC team delivered major projects in 2017-2018 including CLASS to over 170 CLCs across Australia; reviewed the National Conference and delivered an extraordinary conference in Canberra; implemented Phase Two of the National Accreditation Scheme; supported knowmore through the last stages of the Royal Commission; and sourced a better insurance package for the sector to name a few.

We would like to sincerely thank the CLC sector and our Members for their confidence, engagement and support during this time. The organisation is now in an implementation, monitoring and reviewing phase of the strategic work and the Board is focusing on succession to ensure this essential work continues.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Daniel Stubbs who finished on the NACLC Board in April this year. Dan made a significant contribution to NACLC and the CLC sector during his six years as Director on the NACLC Board. His contribution during the Enterprise Agreement negotiations, support to three NACLC CEO's, and most importantly, his role as National Spokesperson throughout the Fund Equal Justice campaign has been outstanding! We will miss his wit and wisdom and wish him the very best in future leadership roles.

Thank you also to fellow Board Directors Anna Cody (Deputy Chairperson), Nick Hudson (Treasurer), Rosslyn Monro, Lee-Ann Emzin and Vanessa Lesnie for their continued stewardship, commitment, leadership, tenacity, guidance and wisdom this year.

NACLC could not succeed in these achievements without the work of our exceptional team of staff led by Nassim Arrage, NACLC CEO. Nassim continues to be an energetic and strategic leader guiding our peak through considerable changes and achieving great milestones on behalf of the sector. The Board would like to express thanks and sincere appreciation to each member of the NACLC staff team for the role they play in delivering success for the community legal sector.

NACLC looks forward to continuing to be a vibrant and effective peak supporting a thriving CLC sector in the year ahead.



Sara Kane
Chair

CEO Report 2017/18

What I love most about being CEO at NACLC is being part of shaping the vision for the community legal sector. What an exciting time to be doing it! This year, we celebrated success in the fund equal justice campaign – ensuring that essential resources did not leave the sector – and now we are in the midst of the review of the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services. These moments help us reflect on what is important and essential to our work.

We have used this time wisely and launched a new strategic direction: **Ensuring a thriving community legal sector**. We need a thriving community legal sector to ensure that all people and communities across Australia can have access to timely and quality legal services.

We also underwent an organisational restructure in which we bid farewell to three long-standing members of the NACLC team. I would like to thank Jane Housley (Conference Organiser), Ana Rey (Finance Manager) and Liz Dods (Office Manager) for their contributions to the success of NACLC and the community legal sector as a whole.

Our new team structure will have a more integrated and joined-up approach to the services we deliver to the community legal sector – and we are already beginning to see the benefits of these changes.

In 2017/18 we continued to provide a voice to, and for the community legal sector and delivered services that enhance community legal centre success and sustainability, including through:

National Accreditation Scheme (NAS) – the NAS continues to support quality assurance for all centres as well as in directly informing the work of CLC peaks in providing training and support across the sector. Phase 2 continues to be implemented with a focus on quality, continuous improvement and a framework for organisational sustainability. We have also been consulting on the development of Phase 3 which will come into effect after March 2019.

Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS) – over the last 12 months we have continued to deliver essential functionality to this database. More than 160 centres use the database, along with 8 State and Territory governments and the Commonwealth government.

Although there have been delays to the delivery timetable, we are proud of what we have achieved – especially given the challenging timeframes and budgets we had available.

National Community Legal Sector Insurance Scheme – we continue to ensure the scheme provides centres with a range of tailored insurance coverage at below market premiums.

National CLCs Conference – Mind the Gap: Responding with Resilience, Resourcefulness and Reconciliation in Canberra provided the sector with the opportunity to reflect on and celebrate our ongoing success

despite an unsupportive funding environment; the community legal sector continues to put clients, people and communities first. We also undertook a review of the conference. We are using the recommendations to help shape future conferences.

Advocacy – we have continued to undertake strategic national advocacy on behalf of the sector and the people and communities our centres work with in key areas such as community legal sector resourcing, attacks on the ability of not-for-profits doing advocacy work, reconciliation, family violence and family law reform, elder abuse and other human rights issues.

I would like to thank all the NACLC staff who have worked with commitment and integrity through a period of considerable change and uncertainty. I would like to mention John Macmillan, who left NACLC in April 2018 to pursue a career in private practice. John held NACLC together in between CEOs and was of great support to me in my first year as CEO. I would also like to thank Amanda Alford, Meg Houston and Polly Porteous who work closely with me to guide the rest of the NACLC team.

Special mention and thanks also go to the NACLC Board who give many hours of their time to provide sound governance to NACLC. I want to acknowledge the work and support of Sara Kane, the NACLC Chairperson in always being available to discuss the tough issues.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the passion, collaboration and commitment of all the staff and volunteers in the community legal sector. It is always challenging to work in an environment of uncertain funding, but despite this people across our sector continue to put clients and communities first. Access to justice is an essential part of our democracy and the work we do is key to keeping our democracy fair and ensuring vital legal help when people need it most.



Nassim Arrage
CEO

Strategic Plan 2018 - 2021

Ensuring a Thriving Community Legal Sector

Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021

We are a strong voice to, and for, the community legal sector

- We advance a shared vision for the community legal sector
- We lead and support national advocacy that facilitates access to justice and the protection of human rights for all people in Australia
- We collect and communicate compelling data to ensure a strong understanding of the importance and impact of community legal services

We increase the resources available to the community legal sector

- We advance the financial sustainability of the community legal sector
- We adapt the range of services we provide to support the changing needs of the community legal sector
- We share employment policies and practices designed to nurture the wellbeing and personal growth of staff, including our own

We strengthen our communities through enhanced collaboration

- We are guided by and support the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations
- We enhance coordination and collaboration within the community legal sector
- We enhance strategic and collaborative partnerships with stakeholders external to the community legal sector

We facilitate the provision of high quality community legal services

- We provide a framework for the community legal sector to provide greater and improved services that best meet the needs of their communities
- We provide a robust National Accreditation Scheme to ensure continuous quality improvement

Our Values

Member Focus

We assist and enhance the capacity of our Members and individual community legal centres, and support their independence and autonomy

Leadership

We work with our Members to lead a strong, independent and innovative community legal sector

Fairness

We believe in equity, social justice and human rights and work towards alleviating systemic disadvantage

Collaboration

We build quality relationships to leverage combined resources, expertise and knowledge for the benefit of the organisations and communities that we collectively serve

Quality

We strive to develop and support high standards and quality in our own work and across the sector

Sector Sustainability

This last year has been important in delivering a range of products and activities aimed at supporting, and building the vision for, the long-term sustainability of the community legal sector. It has also seen the creation of a Sector Sustainability Team within NACLC which brings together sector sustainability and capacity building work and key services in these areas.

Our sector sustainability initiatives continue to be delivered as part of the implementation of the six core activity areas of the **National Sector Sustainability Framework** established in 2015/16.

Sector efficiency and financial sustainability

- We continue to coordinate a number of national schemes and bulk purchasing opportunities to support the sector, including through:
 - » the National Community Legal Sector **Insurances** Scheme, which continues to provide tailored and highly discounted insurance offerings to centres
 - » providing access to the **Standards and Performance Pathway** tool generated by BNG for full member CLCs, to support and enable centres to conduct their self-assessments under the National Accreditation Scheme
 - » maintaining access to the **Management Support Online** resources through a negotiated deal with BNG
 - » implementing the **LexisNexis** contract for significantly discounted bulk purchasing of online legal resources, available to all CLCs, including facilitating the transfer of all CLCs to a new and improved platform before the end of December 2017.
- We maintained our membership of **Good360** and built **partnerships with private law firms** to provide access for CLCs to office supplies and training.
- We developed relationships with universities, including UTS and UNSW, to design a program of NACLC placements for interns and volunteers
- We renewed our approach to securing **sponsorship** for the National CLCs Conference, developing a prospectus for the first time

NACLC CEO, Nassim Arrage with the National and Regional Accreditation Coordinators in May 2018
Left to right: Meg Houston (NACLC), Laurel Draffen (NSW), Penny Sullivan (QLD), Trish Ryans-Taylor (WA), Natalie Hallam (Vic), Nassim Arrage (NACLC)

Sector coordination and collaboration

- We are working with state and territory CLC associations to lead and inform a common agenda, collaborate and share resources including through its Advisory Council and **National Sector Sustainability Committee**. We established new membership of the Committee and bi-monthly meetings from March 2018. We also works with the **National Networks** to support collaboration and engagement
- Updated the **National CLCs Directory** and made it available to members as an online resource
- We continue to work closely with our colleagues across the legal assistance sector including the **National Family Violence Prevention Services** and **National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services** and a range of other supporters and partner organisations
- We continue to support the **CLEAR database**, as the only national repository of Community Legal Education resources

Quality and continuous improvement

- We continue to lead and support quality service delivery and a commitment to continuous improvement through implementation of Phase 2 of the **National Accreditation Scheme for CLCs**, including the new Cultural Safety Standard.

continued on page 12



Sector Sustainability continued...

- We have established a working group to review and improve the National Accreditation Scheme for Phase 3
- We continue to review the **Risk Management Guide** – a guide to risk management in legal practice for CLCs – and support implementation nationally. In December 2017 we published a minor update to the second edition.

Access to justice

- To support CLCs to plan their services and contribute to Collaborative Service Planning under the National Partnership Agreement we scoped the update of the **Legal Needs Assessment Toolkit** to fully integrate with Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS)
- We have drafted **National Position Papers** on the role and function of the community legal sector, service delivery models and key issues, consulting across the sector and contributing to a shared vision for the sector

Workforce capability and sustainability

- We hosted another successful **National CLCs Conference** and National Networks Day in Canberra on 8 – 11 August 2017
- We finalised the review of the National CLCs Conference and developed a strategic purpose for future conferences. We implemented key recommendations from the review in the planning of the 2018 National CLCs Conference including a co-hosting arrangement

Evidence base and information management

- Continued maintenance and development of the **Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS)**
- Collection and communication of data through the annual **National Census of Community Legal Centres**. The 2016 Census report was launched at the 2017 National CLCs Conference and we provided data packs to all state and territory associations to support their work and advocacy efforts. We conducted the 2017 census in late 2017
- Continuation of a project to develop a national approach to consistent implementation of the **National Legal Assistance Data Standards Manual** across the CLC sector – including a well-attended session at the 2017 National CLCs Conference and establishment of a sector Data Standards Working Group
- Continuation of project to develop a **NACLC National Data Strategy and National Research Agenda**



The Sector Sustainability Team meet with the National PII Network and Regional Accreditation Coordinators

Sector Sustainability continued...

Quality Assurance: National Accreditation Scheme

The National Accreditation Scheme for Community Legal Centres (the NAS) continues to be a very successful sector led initiative which drives quality service provision for clients, guides organisational development and supports Boards, managers and staff.

The NAS is a joint project of NACLC and the eight state and territory CLC associations. It was launched in 2010 as an industry based accreditation and certification process for CLCs that supports and recognises good practice in the delivery of community legal services. The aim of the NAS is to provide a quality assurance process that gives CLCs, funding bodies and clients confidence that CLCs are operating according to good practice and industry standards. A key feature of the NAS is to promote a culture of continuous quality improvement.

All member CLCs are required to participate in the NAS. This involves a rigorous process of self-assessment against the NAS Standards, an onsite assessment and the preparation of an Accreditation Assessment report and an Improvement Plan. CLCs that are successful are certified for 3 years during which they are required to provide 6 Monthly Reports on progress.

We are currently in the second cycle of the NAS, Phase 2, which was launched in February 2016 and runs for 3 years. Phase 2 builds on the significant work CLCs undertook in the first cycle, further strengthening processes and systems and helping to embed a culture of continuous quality improvement. There is a strong focus on the Cultural Safety Standard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and staff which was introduced for Phase 2.

According to Russell Westacott, Chief Executive Officer, Seniors Rights Service NSW:

"The accreditation process ensures we are reflective on our policies and practice. As a result, we build and provide better services for our clients. We find the accreditation process to be a useful tool for our organisation."

The NAS is governed by representatives from across the sector. There have been some changes to the governance of the NAS this year. Until December 2017 governance was provided by a NAS Steering Committee which comprised a member of each state and territory CLC association and NACLC. From March 2018 governance moved to the newly established National Sector Sustainability Committee. A NAS Phase 3 review working group, which is considering improvements to the NAS in preparation for Phase 3, reports to the Sector Sustainability Committee.

NACLC oversees the development and implementation of the NAS for the sector and provides support for the sector and for individual CLCs. This includes access to a Standards and Performance Pathway tool (the SPP provided by an external supplier BNG) which contains the self-assessment and a range of resources for organisational management.

Within NACLC there have been some operational changes to the delivery of the NAS. During 2017 the NAS was overseen by the CEO and Director Sector Sustainability with work undertaken by the National Accreditation Coordinator, Meg Houston.



The Accreditation Team at the 2017 National CLCs Conference. Left to right: Penny Sullivan (QLD), Laurel Draffen (NSW), Trish Ryans-Taylor (WA) and Meg Houston (NACLC).

The National Accreditation Coordinator supported five Regional Accreditation Coordinators (RACs) in NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia and implemented the NAS in ACT, Northern Territory, South Australia and Tasmania. From 2018, NAS work is being undertaken across the Sector Sustainability Team, primarily managed by the Sector Capacity Building Coordinator, Meg Houston, with oversight and direction from the CEO. The new team-based approach reflects NACLC's vision for the NAS as an integral part of sector sustainability and a crucial framework for building the capacity of the sector, in close alignment with NACLC's Risk Management Guide and the National Insurance Scheme.

NACLC continues to work closely with the RACs, facilitated 2-day meetings in Sydney in November 2017 and May 2018 and collaborated to deliver a workshop and 2 training sessions at the National CLCs Conference in August 2017.

NACLC is grateful to CLCs for their high engagement with the NAS and appreciates the work of the RACs, Certifiers and their peak bodies. Congratulations to the CLCs which have achieved accreditation for the first time this year, or have been successful in certification renewal.

Sector Sustainability continued...

Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS)

The Community Legal Assistance Services System (CLASS) database provides a cloud-based platform that supports legal practice management in CLCs and FVPLS and provides a comprehensive reporting platform that fulfils requirements under the NPA and supports CLC needs.

Data from 166 organisations was migrated to CLASS in March 2017 with the system in use by centres from this date onwards. As with all IT projects of any size and complexity, there were some delays to the original planned timetable for this project. An in-depth project restructure was undertaken towards the end of 2017 and a revised program plan developed. Significant progress was then made particularly, through the first half of 2018, including:

- Significant improvements to system speed, performance and stability
- A range of new Client count and Service count reports with reporting breakdowns by Office and Outreach location, and breakdowns by demographic and NPA priority group indicators
- A geolocation module which uses contemporary address validation methods utilising the G-NAF dataset, as well as geotagging clients and services by location, administrative boundaries and ABS Statistical Areas - reports can filter by these boundaries, allowing for flexible breakdowns of service delivery that match formats used by other government statistics and services
- The Accountability mechanism and related reports for government CLC program managers were considerably improved

NACLC maintains an ongoing focus on continuous improvement, continuing to consult and collaborate with the sector through personal contact, email and ongoing training and support.

A dedicated team of staff responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of CLASS was established and remained stabilised across the 2017/2018 period. The team provide real time Help Desk support and up to date information to centre staff, as well as undertake comprehensive testing of any new development, issue investigation and resolution and new feature design.

The online User Guide available to all centre staff was continuously developed, reviewed and updated and continues to be a significant information resource for all users of CLASS.

The Help Desk team provide a regular program of online training sessions on particular modules as well as focussed training and support for new staff and as new functions as they become available.

Face to face training and information sessions were delivered in a number of States including NSW, Qld, WA, NT and Victoria over 2017/18. There are further plans to deliver an extensive program of face-to-face training on location in 2018/19.

NACLC continues to maintain regular contact with all CLCs and FVPLS through identified contacts in every centre as well as the publishing of regular updates and other information on the NACLC website, the Message Board and regular CLASS News email newsletters.

What Next?

NACLC is positively committed to continuing to work closely with CLCs and FVPLS to further develop a contemporary, secure and high quality legal practice management tool through CLASS that will support the information management needs of the sector now and into the future.

The next development phase will include particular focus on the development of a fully functioning and flexible Application Programming Interface (API), to allow for connectivity to other applications and databases.



CLASS team in action

Sector Sustainability *continued...*

Insurance and Risk Management

We negotiate and administer the National Community Legal Sector Insurances Scheme for the benefit of the community legal sector across Australia. This is one of our key services and means centres that are full members of a state or territory CLC association can obtain highly discounted, tailored insurances, without the need to negotiate their own policies. The current insurances include Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII), Association Liability Insurance (ALI), and Public Liability Insurance (PLI).

Our work includes managing the renewal process on behalf of all participating centres. Throughout 2017/18, we continued to work closely with the broker, McDougall Kelly & Martinis, to review the Scheme and implement improvements and efficiencies.

As part of our commitment to ensuring we continue to support the sector, we also scoped and prepared the Scheme to include new policy offerings that will launch in 2018/19.

We also provide ongoing support to centres throughout the year and work closely with the National PII Network as part of a strong risk management framework as part of the Scheme. For example, in December 2017, we published a small update to the Risk Management Guide (RMG).

Professional Indemnity Insurance

In 2017/18, 160 centres participated in the National PII Scheme. We negotiate and coordinate the policy. We delegate the regional administration of the associated risk management scheme to the National PII Network, which consists of a number of CLC lawyers, with at least one representative from each state and territory. Our thanks the PII Network for their ongoing commitment to promoting strong legal practice management across centres throughout the year.

Association Liability Insurance

151 CLCs participated in the National ALI scheme for the 2017/18 financial year. We also administers a separate combined ALI and PII policy for itself and participating state CLC associations.

Public Liability Insurance

This year we continued to provide Public Liability Insurance (PLI) for 160 organisations (both centres and State and Territory CLC Associations) this year. as one of the many benefits of NACLC membership.

We remain committed to a strong Scheme, including tailored and discounted insurances for the benefit of the sector, and will work hard on behalf of the sector over the coming year to further develop the offerings and associated frameworks and processes.

National Professional Indemnity Insurance Network

The Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) Network consists of the PII representatives from each state and territory. We meet monthly by phone, and in 2017 we met face-to-face during National CLCs Conference in Canberra.

Throughout the year, the Network continued to provide guidance, support and training to principal lawyers in legal practice management at both a national and state/territory level.

The members of the PII Network in 2017/18 were:

- Australian Capital Territory - Genevieve Bolton
- New South Wales - Hilary Kincaid, Ali Mojtahedi and Annette van Gant
- Northern Territory - Matt Fawcner (to December 2017), Kim Raine (from December 2017)
- Queensland - Rachel Neil
- South Australia - David Bulloch (to December 2017), Alan Merritt (from December 2017)
- Tasmania - Jess Feehely, Jess Downie

- Victoria - Clare Sauro (to April 2017), Melanie Dye (from April 2018)
- Western Australia - Catherine Eagle (Convenor)

Throughout 2017/18 we also liaised regularly with the Accreditation Coordinators, including regarding changes to the National Accreditation Scheme (NAS) in relation to legal practice and reducing areas of overlap with the cross-check process. In August 2018, we presented a session at the National CLCs Conference.

Alice Jones Rabbitt
PII Network Secretariat

Policy and Advocacy

Over the past year, we have continued to lead, support and work collaboratively with the sector on policy, advocacy and systemic reform. We have done this through:

- providing a voice to, and for, the community legal sector
- playing a key coordination and support role to the benefit of governments and the sector, including for example by sharing information; facilitating consultation; sharing and encouraging good practice; and sharing and drawing upon sector expertise to inform government decision-making
- undertaking strategic national advocacy and representation on behalf of the sector and the people and communities our centres work with
- contributing to the evidence base that informs improved government policy development and decision-making, including through: research, policy development, expert advice and participation in roundtables and similar; sector consultation; and provision of submissions
- advocating for and contributing to law and legal frameworks, policy settings and a society that enables access to justice and the protection of human rights for people in Australia
- educating governments, other organisations and the community about the sector and access to legal help
- facilitating and leading strategic sector thinking (for example, through the development of National Position Papers)
- working to support our members and the National Networks, and
- working collaboratively and in partnership with peak legal assistance bodies and a range of supporters and stakeholders on key advocacy initiatives.



NACLC and centres across Australia contributed to the Marriage Equality campaign



Left to right: Nassim Arrage, Cheryl Axelby (NATSILS), Antoinette Braybrook (NFVPLS), Renee Cumming (FVPLS) and Amanda Alford working together as peak legal assistance bodies

This has involved:

- supporting the sector through advocacy and engagement about **increased, long-term, sustainable and predictable funding for the sector**
- engaging with the sector, our partners and Government through the **review of the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services** and various State and Territory reviews
- working to advance a shared vision for the sector through the development of **National Position Papers**, for example a Collaborative Service Planning and a Data and Research Strategy
- working to protect the right of centres and civil society to undertake vital **advocacy** work
- undertaking and contributing to **strategic advocacy** on key issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, older people, LGBTIQ people and communities and people experiencing family violence
- using the **UN and international human rights** frameworks as a tool in domestic advocacy, through engagement in a range of UN Treaty Body reporting processes
- supporting the **National Networks** to share information, good practice examples and make or inform submissions and engagement with a number of inquiries and reviews
- continuing to build our **political engagement**, and
- **collaborating** with peak legal assistance bodies and a range of supporters and stakeholders on key advocacy initiatives.

Supporting the Community Legal Sector

The focus of our policy and advocacy work this year has been on ensuring a thriving community legal sector, in particular by ensuring the appropriate legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks are in place to facilitate the vital work of the sector. This has involved advocacy and engagement on:

- increased, long-term, sustainable and predictable funding for the sector
- the review of the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services Review - to ensure it reflects the work and value of the sector, recognises key areas for reform and provides a blueprint for reform to inform future Government thinking and decision-making in relation to the sector
- specific sector funding opportunities, including in relation to elder abuse
- various State and Territory sector reviews, particularly in NSW and Tasmania
- the review of the Australian Solicitors' Conduct Rules - to ensure the rules facilitate CLC legal practice
- the review of the Australian Charities and Not For Profits Commission, and
- other ways to increase resources available to the sector, including for example through increased collaboration and partnerships between academics and centres in a research and project sense

As part of working towards a shared vision for the sector, we have also developed a number of National Position Papers, including on Data and Evidence and Collaborative Service Planning.



Candlelit vigil co-organised by NACLC to call for justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth

Access to Justice and Human Rights

We are committed to continuing to work with the sector and partner organisations and coalitions to protect and promote the rights of all people in Australia. We have worked across a wide range of issues over the past 12 months, including:

Attacks on Advocacy

Our sector has a long and successful history of bringing about systemic change through policy, advocacy and law reform. We have continued working to protect the right of CLCs and civil society to undertake this vital work, including through ongoing advocacy around the restriction on use of Commonwealth funding for policy and advocacy work; working with the Hands Off Our Charities coalition around proposed changes to electoral funding and disclosure laws; and opposing reforms to tax and related laws that may seek to limit this work through administrative or other mechanisms.

The rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities

We have worked with and supported our centres and community controlled organisations across a range of inquiries and events, including community vigils. Through the Change the Record Coalition we have continued the push for justice targets and meaningful changes to end the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the justice system.

The rights of older people

Together with the National Older Persons Legal Services Network, we have worked to protect and promote the rights of older people, including through engagement around services assisting people experiencing elder abuse and the development of a National Plan as well as contributing to international moves to draft a Convention on the Rights of Older Persons.

People experiencing family violence and using the family law system

We have supported sector engagement in reforms such as the prohibition on cross-examination of vulnerable witnesses and significant changes to the family law system, including through providing evidence to relevant inquiries and reviews.

The rights of **LGBTIQ people and communities** we actively supported the marriage equality campaign and have continued to advocate on behalf of LGBTIQ people and communities.

What Next?

Over the coming year we will continue to work with the sector, other legal assistance bodies and peaks, Government, civil society, pro bono partners and others to protect and promote human rights and access to justice in Australia.

NACLC Reconciliation Plan

As the peak body for Community Legal Centres in Australia, we acknowledge and accept the role we should and must play in working towards reconciliation and in protecting and promoting the human rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

This year we have continued our commitment to being guided by and support the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations through:

- ongoing implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan 2017-2019 (RAP)
- engagement and advocacy on key rights and justice issues, including funding and support for community-controlled organisations and the Australian Law Reform Commission's Inquiry into Incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- supporting centres across Australia to provide culturally safe and appropriate services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, including through the cultural safety standard in the National Accreditation Scheme (NAS)
- strong relationships and collaboration with community controlled organisations and peak bodies, including in particular National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services (NATSILS) and the National Family Violence Prevention Legal Services Forum (NFVPLS)
- working with the Change the Record Coalition to work towards justice targets, addressing the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the criminal justice system and violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- engagement in key Government reviews, such as the review of the Indigenous Legal Assistance Program (ILAP)
- support for and engagement with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Network
- ensuring a strong focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander justice, and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to present and speak on their own behalf from their lived experience at events such as the National Conference
- hosting and participating in a range of events, including for NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, Yabun Festival and the candlelit vigil calling for justice for Elijah hosted as part of the National Conference



NACLC staff and others at a community event on International Day of the World's Indigenous People

We look forward to continuing to work with the sector to ensure that our centres and services are culturally safe and appropriate, we work in partnership with community-controlled organisations, and we continue to provide vital services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities across Australia.



'Untitled' by Jillary Lynch from Keringke Arts which is situated in the community of Ltyentye Apurte in the Northern Territory

2017/18 was a period of significant activity and change for **knowmore**, as the service transitioned to its future role of delivering legal services to support survivors of child sexual abuse seeking redress.

The past year saw **knowmore** complete its work with clients engaging with the Royal Commission. At the same time as transitioning the service for its new role, **knowmore** continued to undertake high levels of work in relation to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which delivered its final report on 15 December. We recognise the outstanding five years of work by the Commission, which is being acknowledged internationally as a model of best practice and a significant milestone in the lives of survivors and Australia. Its scale, complexity and quality was unprecedented. **knowmore** assisted nearly 9,000 survivors across the life of the Commission, supporting many to seek justice and to tell the Commission about their experiences of institutional child sexual abuse and importantly, what they need governments and other institutions to do to address the impacts of that abuse and ensure justice for them.

Informed by that work and the stories of so many clients, **knowmore** has provided many submissions and other information to the Royal Commission and to state and federal governments about law reform issues to support improved access to justice for survivors. This included advocating for the need to establish a national redress scheme for survivors, as recommended by the Royal Commission in its 2015 report *Redress and Civil Litigation*. Over the past year we saw that vision take shape, as each state came on board to support the concept of a national scheme.

In its 2017 final report, the Royal Commission also recommended the establishment of a national legal service for victims and survivors of institutional child sexual abuse. On 19 February 2018 the Attorney General the Honourable Christian Porter MP and the Minister for Social Services, the Honourable Dan Tehan MP, announced that funding of \$37.9 million over three years would be made available to NACLC/**knowmore** to provide legal support services for the National Redress Scheme.

It was acknowledged that as **knowmore** had *“developed significant expertise in assisting survivors throughout the Royal Commission process, **knowmore** is well placed to provide this service and to ensure continuity of service for many existing clients.”*

In June 2018, legislation to establish Australia’s National Redress Scheme (the NRS) was passed by Federal Parliament, and NACLC entered into a further Funding Agreement with the Commonwealth to operate **knowmore** for another three years. This funding is to support **knowmore** providing information to survivors (whether they are eligible for the NRS or not) on their legal options under the NRS, other compensation schemes or under civil law.

This is great news for survivors, an exciting opportunity for the sector and an affirmation of the community and government’s confidence in **knowmore** and the work of community legal centres. With **knowmore**’s future secured, the NACLC Board also began taking steps to support **knowmore** to transition from its current program status to an independent community legal centre.

We are looking forward to **knowmore** continuing to deliver high quality and client-centred services through its multidisciplinary and trauma informed model, working in collaboration with our partner services, the community legal sector and all levels of government. In addition, we will continue to build upon the five years of work **knowmore** has already undertaken by continuing to advocate for the implementation of the recommendations made by the Royal Commission and other law reform to help survivors seeking justice. We will also continue to look for ways and opportunities to expand **knowmore**’s services to support all survivors of child abuse. Ultimately, we want to see an end to child abuse, and that when it does occur it is addressed and not forgotten.

*knowmore team
gathered in Sydney*



National CLCs Conference 2017

Mind the Gap: Responding with resilience, resourcefulness and reconciliation

The National CLCs Conference 2017 was held in Canberra from 8-11 August 2017. Over 400 delegates came together from the legal assistance sector, broader community sector, government, private sector and universities across Australia and New Zealand. The conference included 5 plenary sessions, 36 breakout sessions and 5 masterclasses over 5 days.

The Conference provided a key opportunity for the sector to come together and reflect on our role in ensuring people can access the legal help they need, as well as our challenges, strengths and opportunities.

Conference sessions involved an array of powerful speakers who spoke of rising inequality, our value and work as civil society in protecting and promoting human rights and justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We also heard about the innovative work happening across the sector.

Key speakers included:

- Professor Philip Alston, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights
- Shen Narayanasamy, the Human Rights Campaign Director at GetUp!
- Fiona McLeod SC, President of the Law Council of Australia
- Attorney-General, Senator the Hon George Brandis QC
- Shadow Attorney-General Hon Mark Dreyfus QC, MP

We heard powerful personal stories from people with lived experience, including Keenan Mundine and Dylan Voller who shared their stories, including lived and professional experiences in the justice system.

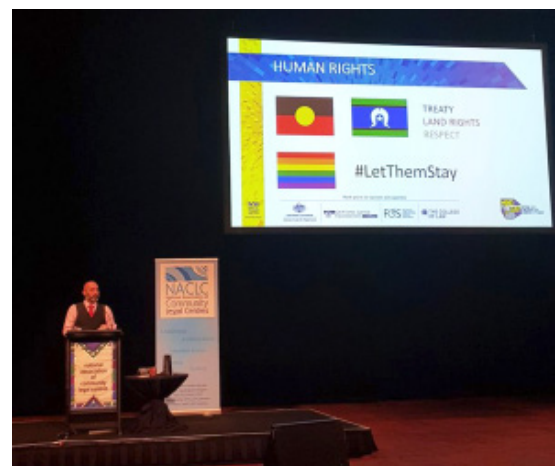
During the conference, to celebrate International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, we organised a vigil with the Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, Amnesty International, and GetUp. The vigil was held to honour and demand justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children harmed by our criminal justice system.

The Conference also provided an opportunity to highlight the vital work of NACLIC as the peak body and we facilitated a range of sessions, including on CLASS, the National Accreditation Scheme and data.

Thank you to all sponsors and partners of the 2017 National CLCs Conference for their support.



Rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Panel. Left to right: Amanda Alford, Roxanne Moore, Karly Warner, Keenan Mundine, Dylan Voller and Judge Matthew Myers



Nassim Arrage (CEO) presents to Conference delegates



2017 National CLCs Conference delegates

National Networks

There are a number of National Networks that bring together workers from across the sector to share their expertise and information and work collaboratively including on law reform and policy projects.

The current National Networks include: Women's Legal Services Australia, National Social Security Rights Network, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Network, Older Persons Legal Services Network, Employment Law Network, Disability Rights Network, Human Rights Network, LGBTIQ Network, Animal Law Network, Clinical Legal Education Network, Police Accountability Network, RRR Network, Youth Advocacy Network and Women's Safety Package Network.

Here is a spotlight on some of those Networks:

National Social Security Rights Network

Leanne Ho, Executive Officer

The National Social Security Rights Network (NSSRN) advocates in the interests of people who are receiving social security and family assistance payments, while maintaining the strong relationships it has built with those in a position to influence how the system works for these people. We do this by ensuring our advice is always evidence-based and draws on the casework experience of our member community legal centres which provide expert specialist legal assistance to people having social security problems.

This year, for example, while the Network completely opposed the introduction of the so called "Robodebt" automated Centrelink debt raising system, we have provided advice to government which influenced the administration of Robodebt to reduce the negative impacts on people affected by it. The Secretariat has facilitated media opportunities for member centres to speak out about AAT decisions which have cast doubt on the legality of the system.

Other major welfare reforms on which the Secretariat has represented the views of its members by opposing them include the drug testing of welfare recipients, expansion of the Cashless Debit Card, and an increase in the waiting period for newly arrived migrants to access income support. We have shared our expertise with our colleagues

in the broader community sector and provided specialist advice to various community organisations on the likely impact of this and other draft social security legislation.

Our two major research projects have not only engaged government, but also provided our fellow community organisations with strong evidence to support their advocacy efforts. The Disability Support Pension (DSP) research we undertook in partnership with our member centre, Basic Rights Queensland, provides a unique snapshot of the experiences of people claiming DSP since the introduction of the new medical assessment process which has been referenced by disability organisations in their work to improve access to DSP.

We intend for our most recent research into the relationship between Family and Domestic Violence and Social Security we undertook in partnership with our member centre, Welfare Rights Centre (NSW), to inform a wide range of decision-makers and advocates in this area. This research report has benefited from the generous contributions of pro bono legal resources from partner law firms and the leadership of a diverse and expert Advisory Group. This support will help to ensure that the report's findings and recommendations are broadly disseminated and have the best chance of having a positive impact on the lives of people who need income support to leave a situation of violence.



Over the past year, our consultations with government have included participation in biannual meetings with DHS and DSS, post-Budget briefings with DSS, meetings with the DHS National Multicultural Advisory Group, Welfare Payment Infrastructure Transformative (WPIT) Civil Society Advisory Group, DHS Online Compliance Intervention team and DHS Centrepay Stakeholder Consultations. We also participated in consultations with the Department of Employment on a range of measures including expansion of the ParentsNext Program, the Targeted Compliance Framework Measure and the Online Job Seeker Classification Instrument (JSCI) trial, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Human Rights Forum.

Among the issues on which government has engaged with the issues we have raised from our membership are: debts arising from dual reporting obligations for Family Tax Benefit and Social Security payments; processes for Centrelink internal appeals; and the desirability of an Indigenous specific appeals unit within DHS/ Centrelink.

National Regional, Rural and Remote Network

Philippa Whitman, Convenor RRR Network

Our National Regional Rural and Remote Network goes from strength to strength and is steadily building our coalition of members. At the recent NACLC Conference we saw a number of new faces join us at the RRR Network meeting; all sharing the common desire to be better connected to each other.

As the most recent Convenor of the Network, It seemed to me that the very thing that was joining us together was, in fact, keeping us apart! It's hard to find a sense of connection when, unfortunately, we have been so disconnected. As a response, we have created a new website: rrrnetwork.org

The RRR Network website is for all Network Member CLC's to share. Information about Network Member CLC can be posted together with information about the people working in these Centres through the Member Directory area. Issues of interest can be posted in the Discussion Form for other Network Member CLCs to share their thoughts and experience. NACLC or industry news will also be added to the news page to keep everyone up to date with information relevant to the Network.

Our RRR Network reflects the governance and vision of NACLC.



Rural Regional and Remote Network

Our RRR Vision

The Vision of the RRR Network is achieving rights, fairness and equality for all our RRR communities.

Our RRR Mission

The Mission of the RRR Network is connecting Community Legal Centres to pursue rights, fairness and equality for all our RRR communities.

Our RRR Strategic Priorities

The Strategic Priorities of the RRR Network are:-

- To lead in good practice for RRR Network members by building the long-term viability and sustainability of RRR Network members' services
- To advocate for access to justice, legal assistance services and the promotion and protection of human rights in RRR Network communities
- To proactively identify and respond to the sector-identified and sector-driven needs of RRR Network members
- To develop, maintain and strengthen mutually beneficial collaborations with RRR Network members, CLCs and with key stakeholders and peak bodies

My hope is that this website will provide a meeting point for members of our RRR Network so that we can get to know one another; learn more about our different CLC's and workplaces, and share ideas, news and a sense of unity.

Women's Legal Services Australia

Liz Snell, Convenor

Women's Legal Services Australia (WLSA), is a national network of community legal centres that specialises 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.

In 2017-18, WLSA has continued to advocate that the safety of women and children be prioritised in family law.

Over the past 12 months WLSA made submissions in response to:

- The Australian Law Reform Commission's Review of the Family Law System
- The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into the Family Law Amendment (Parenting Management Hearings) Bill 2017
- The Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee inquiry into the Family Law Amendment (Family Violence & Other Measures) Bill 2017
- The Treasury Review of Early Release of Super Benefits under Compassionate and Financial Hardship Grounds and for Victims of Crime Compensation
- The Law Council's Justice Project

WLSA also appeared before the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs committee to give evidence regarding the:

- Family Law Amendment (Parenting Management Hearings) Bill, and
- the Family Law Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures Bill)

In December 2017, following an extensive inquiry into family law and family violence, the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Committee tabled its report. WLSA was extensively quoted and cited in the report. Many of WLSA's recommendations were adopted, including: a recommendation for the removal of equal shared parental responsibility from the *Family Law Act*; better processes for early identification of family violence; a greater legislative focus on family violence in property matters; and accreditation of family report writers and a complaints mechanism.

Safety First in Family Law
Women's Legal Services Australia's campaign for a safer family law system

The issue The solution The impact What we need Media About us



The solution

WLSA
Women's Legal Services Australia

Read the five step road map - [Safety First in Family Law](https://safetyinfamilylaw.org.au/the-solutions)

Safety First in Family Law
Women's Legal Services Australia's campaign for
a safer family law system
<https://safetyinfamilylaw.org.au/the-solutions>

Following years of advocacy by family violence survivors and their supporters, WLSA welcomed the introduction of a Bill into Parliament in late June 2018 to ban direct cross examination in family law proceedings. The success of the new bill is predicated on adequate funding for legal services, to ensure that both the victim-survivor and the perpetrator can have a legal representative to act on their behalf, and the ability of the courts to identify and respond in a trauma informed way to family violence in any given case.

WLSA continues to contribute to the work of the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance and the Equality Rights Alliance and is a member of Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) Practitioner Engagement Group.

We thank those who have experienced family violence for sharing their stories in the hope for positive change. We thank Women's Legal Centre ACT and particularly Angela Lauman and Louise Gell for all their work as the WLSA National Policy Co-ordinator. We also thank WLSA Co-ordinating Committee members for their contribution throughout the year.

LGBTIQ+ Network

At the 2018 National Conference Lee Carnie of the Human Rights Law Centre passed on the role of co-convenor of the LGBTIQ Network to St Kilda Legal Service's LGBTIQ Outreach Lawyer Sam Elkin, who will be representing the network in 2018/19 with Vicki Harding of Inner City Legal Centre.

The last two years have been incredibly big for LGBTIQ advocacy in Australia. In September 2017, the Human Rights Law Centre and Public Interest Advocacy Centre both launched a High Court challenge against the postal plebiscite on marriage equality. While the High Court found that the government plebiscite on marriage equality was lawful, the cases nevertheless played an important role in galvanising support for the LGBTIQ community, and highlighted the extraordinary nature of the process.

On 15 November 2017, the Australian Bureau of Statistics announced the results of the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. A total of 12.7 million (79.5%) of eligible Australians expressed their view, with the majority (61.6%) indicating that the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry. All states and territories recorded a majority 'Yes' response.

Thanks to the endless campaigning and contributions of those involved, the *Marriage Amendment (definition and Religious Freedoms) Act 2017* commenced on 9 December 2017, where sex or gender no longer affects the right to marry under Australian law and same-sex marriage became legal in Australia.

Service Updates

Inner City Legal Centre

The Inner City Legal Centre (ICLC) has had a long-standing commitment to representing LGBTIQ clients, and on September 10 2018, ICLC launched Australia's first pro bono transgender and gender diverse legal service. Operating once a fortnight in Kings Cross, ICLC's leading Trans and Gender Diverse Legal Service has partnered with global law firm Dentons to provide free legal advice and support service for all transgender and gender diverse people across NSW.

ICLC also represented a client in a matter that had a profoundly positive impact on young transgender people in Australia. The decision of the Full Court of the Family Court of Australia in *Re Kelvin* ultimately empowered transgender youth to have more control over treating their gender dysphoria by allowing them to access oestrogen or testosterone treatment without the Family Court's intervention.

Public Interest Advocacy Centre

In September 2017 PIAC brought proceedings in the High Court to challenge the controversial decision of the Commonwealth government to hold a postal



Women's Legal Service (NSW) celebrating the 'Yes' Vote and marriage equality legislated in Australia

survey on same-sex marriage. It was the first time in Australia's history an issue of human rights had been decided by survey and involved an allocation of funding under a power reserved for urgent and unforeseen circumstances, rather than by approval of Parliament. This was an important test case that examined the limits of executive government power in the context of minority rights.

PIAC brought the case on behalf of Andrew Wilkie, the Independent member of Parliament for the Tasmanian electorate of Denison; Felicity Marlowe, a Melbourne mother in a same-sex relationship with three children, and advocate for Rainbow Families; and PFLAG Brisbane ('Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays'), with their national Spokesperson Shelley Argent. The High Court held the government's actions were lawful: *Wilkie v The Commonwealth; Australian Marriage Equality Ltd v Cormann* [2017] HCA 40. The case nevertheless played an important role in galvanising support for the LGBTI community, and highlighting the extraordinary nature of the process.

Fitzroy Legal Service

Fitzroy Legal Service's LGBTIQ family law advice service is operating again after a break due to the departure of the volunteer lawyer who was previously involved. The service runs once a month on the first Wednesday of the month, in the evening. Appointments are required and are best booked well in advance due to the popularity of the service. Special thanks and gratitude for the continued support of volunteers that make the service possible.

Fitzroy Legal also provide a fortnightly legal outreach service to Queerspace at Drummond Street for clients who need legal advice about family violence and family law issues.

Fitzroy Legal are represented on the Victorian LGBTI Family Violence Working Group, and the LGBTI Taskforce Justice Working Group, which enables the service to have input on policy development for LGBTIQ people.

continued on page 25

LGBTIQ+ Network

St Kilda Legal Service Co-op Limited – LGBTIQ Legal Service

In a health justice partnership with Thorne Harbour Health (previously known as the Victorian AIDS Council), St Kilda Legal Service has established Victoria's first dedicated LGBTIQ outreach legal service. In May 2018, Sam Elkin began the new role of LGBTIQ outreach lawyer working closely with Thorne Harbour Health to provide free legal advice for clients of their Alcohol and Other Drugs, Family Violence and general counselling teams. Other vulnerable members of the community can also be self-referred to access service and get free legal advice.

The legal issues the service has encountered have been wide-ranging, including residential tenancy, Centrelink appeals, family violence, family law and a notably high amount of requests for migration law advice.

With the help of volunteers, the LGBTIQ outreach legal service is continuing to develop and expand with a number of projects in early stages of planning.

How to get involved and join the LGBTIQ network?

If you are interested in supporting the LGBTIQ network or are interested in having your service join the network, you can contact Sam Elkin at sam@slks.org.au to get involved.

Environmental Defenders Offices of Australia

Jo-Anne Bragg, Convenor, EDOs of Australia

When you have a love or a respect for the environment and see it being degraded, there comes a point where you realise that you have little choice but to do something about it.

Hon Murray Wilcox AO QC, April 2018

At a Law Council event in April 2018 honouring Hon Murray Wilcox AO QC, the former Federal Court judge nominated as his greatest achievement the role he played in establishing EDO NSW, and the national network that subsequently developed. This initiative laid the foundations for public interest environmental law in Australia, and the network has gone from strength to strength ever since.

2017-2018 has been an exceptionally busy year for EDOs around the country, continuing to provide access to justice for farmers, Aboriginal communities, residents affected by poor water or air quality, and others concerned with conservation and a sustainable future.

In the face of ongoing resource constraints, the network has been actively discussing options to ensure our services can be delivered most effectively and responsively to areas of need across Australia. We expect that these discussions will lead to more formal national working arrangements in 2019.

Key litigation activities for 2017-2018 include:

- Challenging the decision to approve the Yeelirrie uranium mine in WA, despite EPA advice that it would result in the extinction of several species
- Challenging a range of coal mine approvals in Queensland and New South Wales
- Landmark proceedings in the NT Supreme Court challenging the approval to clear more than

20,000ha of land without considering climate change implications

- Enforcement proceedings against irrigators unlawfully taking water from the Barwon-Darling River
- Seeking review of the lethal shark management program in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park

EDOs understand the importance of informing the community about environmental rights and responsibilities. In 2017-18, our offices have published comprehensive, easy to understand resources on a range of topics, delivered workshops to community groups in local, regional, and remote areas, and partnered with universities to deliver clinical legal placements and volunteering programs.

We maintain an active, robust, and collaborative law reform program. In addition to commentary on local laws and policies from individual offices, EDOs have made network submissions to various government inquiries regarding the operation of the EPBC Act, management of the Murray-Darling Basin, whether Australia is meeting its international biodiversity commitments, sustainable cities planning, and ensuring that NGOs' legitimate advocacy on environmental issues does not disqualify them from charitable status.

A comprehensive review of Australia's environmental laws is expected to commence in 2019. The EDO network looks forward to using our expertise to shape the outcome of that review and secure stronger, more effective environmental protections for all.

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Revenue	2	7,545,476	7,837,997
Less: expenses			
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(74,730)	(202,419)
Employee benefits expense		(4,945,651)	(5,227,135)
Occupancy expense		(370,661)	(428,380)
Conference expense		(284,653)	(248,269)
Operating expense		(456,421)	(544,226)
Project expense		(133,569)	(98,882)
Consultants expense		(451,094)	(579,520)
Recruitment expense		(38,720)	(48,001)
Travel expense		(316,222)	(456,794)
Other expenses		(33,404)	-
		<u>(7,105,125)</u>	<u>(7,833,626)</u>
Surplus / (deficit) before income tax expense		440,351	4,371
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income		<u>440,351</u>	<u>4,371</u>

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,784,009	2,565,294
Receivables	94,925	421,518
Other financial assets	605,035	563,400
Other assets	<u>239,007</u>	<u>185,641</u>
Total current assets	<u>4,722,976</u>	<u>3,735,853</u>
Non-current assets		
Other financial assets	173,735	173,735
Intangible assets	951,552	665,323
Property, plant and equipment	996,859	76,549
Other assets	<u>-</u>	<u>4,295</u>
Total non-current assets	<u>2,122,146</u>	<u>919,902</u>
Total assets	<u>6,845,122</u>	<u>4,655,755</u>
Current liabilities		
Payables	1,521,296	322,924
Provisions	358,580	342,067
Other liabilities	<u>2,027,922</u>	<u>1,519,947</u>
Total current liabilities	<u>3,907,798</u>	<u>2,184,938</u>
Non-current liabilities		
Provisions	<u>116,121</u>	<u>89,965</u>
Total non-current liabilities	<u>116,121</u>	<u>89,965</u>
Total liabilities	<u>4,023,919</u>	<u>2,274,903</u>
Net assets	<u>2,821,203</u>	<u>2,380,852</u>
Equity		
Reserves	137,500	137,500
Accumulated surplus	<u>2,683,703</u>	<u>2,243,352</u>
Total equity	<u>2,821,203</u>	<u>2,380,852</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

	Reserves \$	Accumulated surplus \$	Total equity \$
Balance as at 1 July 2016	137,500	2,238,981	2,376,481
Surplus for the year	-	4,371	4,371
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	4,371	4,371
Balance as at 1 July 2017	137,500	2,243,352	2,380,852
Surplus for the year	-	440,351	440,351
Total comprehensive income for the year	-	440,351	440,351
Balance as at 30 June 2018	137,500	2,683,703	2,821,203

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Cash flow from operating activities			
Receipts from customers		9,091,347	8,376,760
Payments to suppliers and employees		(7,571,318)	(8,456,725)
Interest received		58,266	45,844
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		1,578,295	(34,121)
Cash flow from investing activities			
Proceeds from term deposits			1,331,340
Payment for property, plant and equipment		(31,716)	(22,609)
Payment for intangible asset		(286,229)	(325,575)
Payments for investments		(41,635)	-
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		(359,580)	983,156
Reconciliation of cash			
Cash at beginning of the financial year		2,565,294	1,616,259
Net increase in cash held		1,218,715	949,035
Cash at end of financial year		3,784,009	2,565,294



PITCHER PARTNERS

ACCOUNTANTS AUDITORS & ADVISORS

Level 22 MLC Centre
19 Martin Place
Sydney NSW 2000
Australia

Postal Address:
GPO Box 1615
Sydney NSW 2001
Australia

Tel: +61 2 9221 2099
Fax: +61 2 9223 1762

www.pitcher.com.au
partners@pitcher-nsw.com.au

Pitcher Partners, including Johnstone Burke,
is an association of independent firms
Melbourne | Sydney | Perth | Adelaide | Brisbane

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

Auditor's Opinion

The accompanying summary financial report which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2018, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended and related notes and director's declaration, are derived from the audited financial report of the National Association of Community Legal Centres Limited for the year ended 30 June 2018.

In our opinion, the summary financial report is consistent, in all material respects, with (or a fair summary of) that audited financial report, in accordance with the basis of preparation as described in note 1 to the summary financial statements.

Summary Financial Statements

The summary financial report does not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards Reduced Disclosure Requirements, Interpretations and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. Reading the summary financial report, therefore is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report of the National Association of Community Legal Centres Limited. We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on that financial report in our report dated 4 October 2018.

Directors' Responsibility for the Summary Financial Report

The directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the summary financial report in accordance with the basis of preparation as described in note 1 to the summary financial statements. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal controls relevant to the preparation of the concise financial report, selecting and applying the appropriate accounting policies, and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the summary financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

Mark Godlewski

Partner

5 October 2018

PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

COMMUNITY LEGAL SECTOR SNAPSHOT

NATIONAL 3 Centres
The Community Legal Sector
Helped **201,493** People in 2017

National Association of Community Legal Centres
Combined Funding: \$48,638,000

WA 28 Centres
Helped **22,759** People

Community Legal Centres Association WA
Funding: \$6,256,000

SA 13 Centres

Helped **10,408** People

S.A. Council of Community Legal Services
Funding: \$4,121,000

TAS 8 Centres

Helped **5,200** People

Community Legal Centres
Funding: \$1,570,000



Centres
Helped 24,488 People

Community Legal Centres
Funding: \$39,000

QLD 34 Centres
Helped 49,972 People

Community Legal Centres Queensland
Funding: \$9,478,000

NSW 32 Centres
Helped 54,663 People

Community Legal Centres NSW
Funding: \$13,238,000

ACT 6 Centres
Helped 3,577 People

ACT Assoc. of Community Legal Centres
Funding: \$1,138,000

VIC 49 Centres
Helped 51,994 People

Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria
Funding: \$11,192,000

Centres
Helped 5,272 People

Legal Centres Tasmania
Funding: \$1,576,000

Funding figures indicate 2018-19 Commonwealth Government funding
People helped figures are reported number of clients in 2017-18 as generated from the CLASS database used by 152 CLCs

