

2012/13

Advocacy and Rights Centre | Annual Report



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# Who we are

## The Board

John McPherson	Chairperson
Mandy Stewart	Deputy Chairperson
Rebecca Boreham	Member (resigned December 2012)
Barry Keane	Secretary
Trevor Elliott	Treasurer
Pat Boyer	Member
Niall Hensey	Member

## Administration

Jane Staley	Executive Officer
Joanne Baker	Finance Officer
Denise Williams	Reception/Administration
Jarra Hicks	Project Worker (Quality Assurance)

## Tenant Advocacy and Support (TAS)

Mim Dineen	Team Leader
Leah Berger	Tenant Advocate
Kirsty Waller	Tenant Advocate
Lyndall Blandthorn	Tenant Advocate
Natalie Blaney	Tenant Advocate

## Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre (LCCLC)

Peter Noble	Coordinator
Anna Howard	Principal Solicitor
Chris Casey	Community Lawyer
Michael Hennessy	Community Lawyer
Bonnie Renou	Community Lawyer
Steve Womersley	Communications Worker
Courtney Lucanto	Social Worker and Community Legal Educator
Alison Rees	Reception/Administration
Lisa Grealy	Community Lawyer
Carolyn Staszkiwicz	Casual Reception/ Administration

## Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd

Bendigo  
54 Mitchell St  
Bendigo 3550  
Tel: 5444 4364  
Fax: 5441 1033

[www.advocacyandrights.org.au](http://www.advocacyandrights.org.au)

incorporating:

 loddon campaspe  
community legal centre

 goulburn valley  
community legal centre



## Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC)

Kaz Gurney	Managing Lawyer
Sara Molenaar	Community Lawyer
Shane Appel	Community Lawyer
Amanda Scholl	Administration Worker

## Seniors Rights Victoria Initiative – LCCLC Team

Tabitha O'Shea	Community Lawyer
Elaine Harrington	Administration

## Departures

Marlene McLoughlan	Social Worker
Jacinta Quin	Tenant Advocate
Charlotte Powell	Community Legal Education and Development Worker
Jo Ann Mason	Advocacy-Health Alliance Project Worker
Carolyn Munson	Finance Officer
Julie U'Ren	Team Leader
Vince Simonetta	Tenant Advocate
Jenny Pillmore	Tenant Advocate
Margrete Hamence	Tenant Advocate
Lyndon Gray	Tenant Advocate

# What we do

## Vision

Social justice and individual rights realised within our communities

## Values

The right of individuals to be informed and empowered to participate in decisions from a base of equality regardless of their income, religious beliefs, mental health, physical and intellectual abilities or cultural background

## Mission

To promote and support services that protect and enhance the rights and interests of those who are disadvantaged due to structural, social, economic or cultural inequities

## Community

The vulnerable and disadvantaged who live, work or study in the Loddon Mallee region. To advance the mission of the Advocacy and Rights Centre (ARC) outside the region if achievable within the organisation's resources

We advocate for and support the vulnerable and disadvantaged of the Loddon Mallee region, protecting and enhancing the rights and interests of those who are disadvantaged due to structural, social, economic or cultural inequities

## Our programs

- Tenant Advocacy and Support (the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program [SHASP]) is funded by the Department of Human Services (DHS).
- The Tenant Advocacy Advice Program is funded by Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV).
- Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre is funded by Victoria Legal Aid.
- Consumer Advocacy Advice

## Rental advocacy

- The SHASP program runs across the Mallee and Loddon Campaspe regions.
- The CAV contract offers housing support to private tenants throughout the Loddon Mallee region.

## Legal services

- The LCCLC services the Loddon Campaspe region.
- The GVCLC services the Goulburn Valley region.
- Consumer matters are handled across both the Loddon Mallee and Hume regions (including the Goulburn Valley).

## The area we cover

Our service covers people living across Northern Victoria, including the Loddon Mallee and Hume regions. Our staff acknowledge that they travel across and work within the traditional lands of many Aboriginal communities.

We acknowledge the Aboriginal people as the traditional owners of the land and we pay our respects to their elders, past and present.

# How we work

## Our strategies

The organisation's objectives are to:

- advocate for and actively work towards changes which redress injustices and inequities
- ensure strong community consultation and awareness
- ensure that the organisation has strong and viable services into the future
- expand the services where compatible.

## Corporate governance

ARC's Board is very strong on governance, meeting monthly to evaluate the organisation's operations and ensuring that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place to minimise risks.

Areas of focus are:

- financial accountability
- occupational health and safety
- risk management
- policies and procedures.

## Accreditation

The organisation underwent its three-year review early in 2013. The review looked at organisational standards and the DHS standards as they apply to housing and homelessness services, in particular to the SHASP.

We continue to be accredited by Quality Improvement and Community Services Accreditation (QICSA) in the Homelessness Assistance Service Standards and by the National Association of Community Legal Centres.

# Chairperson's report

A consistent theme in the story of the Advocacy and Rights Centre (ARC) has been the organisation's resilience and adaptation in the face of challenging changes to the social and funding landscape within which it works. This continued in 2013.

The year saw the appointment of a new Executive Officer, Jane Staley, who has contributed immensely to ARC in the time she has performed this role. On behalf of ARC's Board and staff, I thank Jane sincerely for her hard work, steady hand and calm demeanour.

Program highlights in the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre (LCCLC) this year included the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC) project, work on the Advocacy-Health Alliance pilot, and funding under the National Broadband Network (NBN) Regional Legal Assistance Program.

In July 2012 the State government and Victoria Legal Aid confirmed increased funding for GVCLC, and the Commonwealth also advised of funding for this service from July 2014. This centre has expanded its services over the last year and is well positioned to grow further. Our ultimate goal remains that of establishing a fully funded community legal centre in this area of such high unmet legal need.

Advocacy-Health Alliances, or Medical-Legal Partnerships, starting from an appreciation of the social and legal determinants of health, seek to more closely integrate the provision of relevant legal assistance with the work of health professionals. It is a concept dear to the heart of Peter Noble, our Coordinator, and in respect of which he has assumed a national profile within the community legal sector. The Clayton Utz Foundation continues to be a wonderfully generous supporter of LCCLC and agreed to fund a three-year pilot project for the Advocacy-Health Alliance at Bendigo.

Appropriately for a service covering such a large regional geographical area, LCCLC has been funded by the NBN Regional Legal Assistance Program to pilot the delivery of

legal services and staff training through videoconferencing.

Whereas most of ARC's housing work has conventionally focused on public housing tenants, Back on Track (BoT) is a program aimed at preventing homelessness amongst vulnerable private renters. The Tenant Advocacy and Support (TAS) team within ARC worked extensively during 2013 on this multi-partner project.

Organisationally, ARC's Executive Officer, program Coordinators, staff and Board worked very hard to comply with the accreditation requirements of the major funder of our housing work, DHS, and also so as to be accredited under applicable Community Legal Centre standards. The work involved in accreditation compliance over the last year, requiring as it did significant reflection upon how our work is done, will have lasting benefits for ARC.

Alongside accreditation work and influenced by it, a strategic review of ARC's operations led us to restructure the organisation of the administrative functions that necessarily underpin our substantive work.

News that the funding for our core tenancy program, the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP), would be cut by 37% over the next two years was mentioned in my report of last year. Despite these cuts, we have remained dedicated to providing high-quality services to vulnerable tenants. The management of these very substantial cuts remains a great challenge to ARC. Jane Staley and the TAS team have stayed focused on the core goal within TAS of advocating for and more broadly supporting vulnerable tenants, while attempting to manage with sensitivity the effects of the cuts on ARC, staff and clients.

Longstanding Mildura-based ARC worker Margrete Hamence left ARC in December 2012 after 10 years of great service to us in our housing program. She left with our thanks and appreciation. Julie U'Ren, who most recently

worked at ARC as TAS Coordinator, left after four years with us to pursue opportunities in the Northern Territory. We wish Julie well in her move.

I would also like to note the departure of two of our long-serving Board members, Rebecca Boreham and Trevor Elliott, and thank them for their service to ARC. Rebecca resigned from the Board in December 2012 after nine years of service. Her contribution to ARC has been immense. Trevor's six-year tenure ends with our 2013 AGM. The experience of Rebecca in legal practice and in not-for-profit organisations, and Trevor's expertise in finance and accounting, as well as his long and varied experience with community-based organisations, strengthened ARC's Board greatly. They will both be missed. We welcomed Niall Hensey to the Board in December 2012, and Pat Boyer re-joined the Board this year.

I sincerely thank the resigned, new and current members of the Board who, in their voluntary capacity, strive to achieve prudent and careful

governance and support for visionary strategic direction within the organisation.

On behalf of the Board, I again gratefully acknowledge our volunteers, including solicitors, students and administration staff. Without our volunteers' help, our capacity would be greatly reduced.

I thank our funding bodies – Victoria Legal Aid, DHS and the Clayton Utz Foundation – for their continued support of ARC.

Lastly, I join with the Board in commending the excellent work of the staff of ARC. Notwithstanding the difficult funding and socio-political environment we now find ourselves in, and the hard work of necessary organisational adaptation and change, ARC staff members continue to focus on client needs. Daily, ARC's staff delivers exceptional services to vulnerable clients, according to dignity and respect to people in need of help. In 2014, whatever challenges may arise, this will endure.

**John McPherson, Chairperson**

# Executive Officer's report

The past year has been a busy one for ARC. In addition to our core work for vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our communities, we have undertaken some important projects to strengthen our capacity and the quality of the services we provide.

A major project we have undertaken is the successful external accreditation of both our housing and legal programs. While accreditation has always been a requirement of our DHS funding, there is also now a new industry-based certification scheme for community legal centres. The benefits of implementing a rigorous quality and improvement system, however, go beyond the meeting of a contractual or industry requirement. The reflective process and development of a quality system for the organisation has given us a strong framework for monitoring, evaluating and improving our work. We were very fortunate to have Mim Dineen join us (initially) as Quality Officer to lead us through the significant policy and procedure review and the implementation of consequent operational changes. The organisation has emerged much stronger and resilient, with a renewed focus on effectively meeting the need in our communities.

The review process and reports from the accreditors have provided a good basis for further reflection as we commence the development of ARC's next strategic plan, which has been another area of organisational focus this year. We are operating in a quickly changing environment – both in terms of funding and policy changes – and it is timely to take stock and look at the bigger picture of what we do, why we do it, and how we can use our specialist skills and expertise to move towards our vision of social justice and human rights for our community.

It has also been a year of volatility in our funding base, including major new funding from the Clayton Utz Foundation for the Advocacy-Health Alliance pilot, new Commonwealth and State funding

for the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC), a Commonwealth grant to pilot service delivery through the National Broadband (NBN) scheme and the first year of funding reduction in the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP). These changes have provided both challenges and opportunities to ensure we have ongoing capacity to meet our operational requirements.

ARC's total income was \$2,275,364 and our expenditure was \$1,820,887, resulting in a net surplus of \$454,477. At the end of the year, the organisation has carried forward unexpended grants of \$483,471, which have been recognised as revenue in 2012/13 but will be expended in the 2013/14 year (see Note 16: Unexpended Grants, in the Financial Statements).

Our employee benefits have increased by 13% this year, which reflects a small increase in program staff. The employee expenses are now \$1,327,381, and we have a team of 22 staff, which equates to 17.6 full-time equivalent.

The organisation has net equity of \$860,789 after taking into account all provisions for employee entitlements. The cash and cash equivalents total \$979,017, which clearly covers all liabilities. The net increase in cash held during the year was \$577,098.

The financial position of the organisation is robust.

**Jane Staley**, *Executive Officer*

# Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre

LCCLC is a generalist CLC undertaking a range of activities, including:

- legal assistance (information, referral, advice and casework)
- community development and legal education
- law reform and special projects.

Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre (GVCLC), based in Shepparton, is a division of the LCCLC practice.

## The year in summary

2012/13 was a year of both exploration and internal consolidation.

Consolidation work focused on:

- participation in the National Association of Community Legal Centres accreditation process and support for the ARC QICSA accreditation
- revisiting the strategic priorities of the program as part of the overall ARC strategic planning process and completing a new work plan for Victoria Legal Aid
- integrating an expanded staffing team.

The campaign for the GVCLC took great forward strides with increased funding through Victoria Legal Aid and further investment by the Commonwealth Government late in the financial year. The expanded service was formally opened by Victorian Attorney-General, the Hon. Robert Clark MP, in September 2012. Increased funding enabled the recruitment of three new staff – Kaz Gurney, Sara Molenaar and Amanda Scholl – who together spearheaded an exciting new phase of community engagement and service provision in the region.

The LCCLC family violence prevention legal program, staffed by the interdisciplinary team of Bonnie Renou (Solicitor) and Courtney Lucanto (Social Worker), began

to gather critical data from women who have experienced the family violence legal system, with a view to improving the system's responsiveness to their needs. The project also engaged with local health and social service providers concerning the causes and identification of family violence and the potential legal responses.

The research project funded by the Clayton Utz Foundation to research Medical-Legal Partnerships in the United States was completed with the publication of *Advocacy-Health Alliances in Australia: Better Health through Medical-Legal Partnership*. The research project touched a chord with people working in social justice, encouraging various initiatives and events that have furthered the Advocacy-Health Alliance (AHA) principles of practice. It also secured significant additional funding from the Clayton Utz Foundation to initiate a pilot AHA with Bendigo Community Health Services.

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day events, including the illumination of the Bendigo Information Centre (Old Post Office) in a purple hue, and a community forum in Shepparton starring celebrity chef Peter Russell-Clark, strengthened public awareness of elder abuse and the services of Seniors Rights Victoria in the region.

The Bendigo Student Association (La Trobe University, Bendigo campus) provided funding to enable us to deploy a lawyer to the campus to staff a weekly advice service.

Funding secured from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department for a National Broadband Network (NBN) justice initiative (JusticeNETworks) will enable enhanced communications between Bendigo/Shepparton sites and various partners in the legal assistance sector throughout Victoria and nationally. It will also facilitate the delivery of

specialist migration law assistance into the Goulburn Valley via videoconferencing to the Shepparton office.

LCCLC maintained its strong commitment to sector development, investing personnel and resources in a range of critical local, regional, State-wide and national networks and initiatives. These included:

- extending a secondment by Steve Womersley to the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) Community Legal Education and Reform (CLEAR) database project
- the Federation of CLCs (Vic.) Adaptive Leadership Development, Civil Law, Family Violence Legal Assistance and Community Legal Education Working Groups
- the Seniors Rights Victoria consortium
- project reference groups associated with AHA initiatives (including the Michael Kirby Centre for Public Health and Human Rights, the Rolah McCabe Centre for Cancer and the AHA national working group)
- various networks and project reference groups associated with family violence initiatives, including the Loddon Mallee Women's Health Take a Stand project
- a range of other local, State and national interest groups.

## The year ahead

With the strategic planning process nearing completion and numerous projects coming online, the community legal services program will have to balance vision with execution, ensuring that new services are consolidated into the core program structure and project outcomes inform our internal practice and have external impact.

Challenges will include:

- launching the pilot AHA in Bendigo and securing resources to effectively monitor and evaluate its work
- initiating family violence legal assistance services in Shepparton and undertaking a project regarding therapeutic jurisprudence in the Goulburn Valley region
- building the family violence prevention and response education services and capturing the voices of women experiencing the family violence legal assistance process
- initiating the NBN project.

## Service statistics

### LCCLC SERVICE PROVISION

For the financial year ending 30 June 2013, LCCLC assisted clients in 2,282 matters. Of these, 27.3% of clients indicated that they had a disability, while 64.3% relied on Centrelink benefits for income.

La Trobe University, Bendigo	6
Bendigo Court	416
Bendigo Other	643
Bendigo SRV	163
Thursday afternoon service (Bendigo)	224
Wednesday night service (Bendigo)	346
Echuca	57
Echuca Court	67
Maryborough	35
Maryborough Court	80
Kyneton	30
Kyneton Court	69
Swan Hill Court	57
Bendigo Family Relationship Centre	53
Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program (Bendigo)	25
Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program (Hume)	11

### GVCLC SERVICE PROVISION

For the financial year ending 30 June 2013, GVCLC assisted clients in 612 matters. Of these, 30.5% of clients indicated that they had a disability, while 60.9% relied on Centrelink benefits for income.

Cobram	22
Cobram Court	32
Seymour	16
Seymour Court	96
Shepparton	335
Shepparton Family Relationship Centre	72
Shepparton Court	19
Night Service	20

### LCCLC AREAS OF LAW

These figures exceed the number of matters because some involved multiple areas where assistance was required.

Family	523
Family violence	628
Personal safety IVO	177
Wills, POA & guardianship	173
Credit & debt	81
Traffic	21
Consumer	89
Civil	88
Employment	48
Crime	52
MVA	47
Tenancy	14
Administration & social security	93
Injuries	22
Neighbourhood disputes	59
Discrimination	13

### GVCLC AREAS OF LAW

These figures exceed the number of matters because some involved multiple areas where assistance was required.

Family	225
Family violence	134
Personal safety IVO	62
Wills, POA & guardianship	53
Credit & debt	49
Traffic	40
Consumer	30
Civil	30
Employment	22
Crime	17
MVA	14
Other	13
Tenancy	12
Administration & social security	7
Victims of crime	7
Neighbourhood disputes	6
Discrimination	4

## Funding

LCCLC gratefully acknowledges funding from the Victorian Government (Department of Justice) and the Commonwealth Government (Attorney-General's Department, administered by Victoria Legal Aid), the Clayton Utz Foundation and the Victoria Law Foundation.

Victorian Government funding was applied to provide all core generalist CLC services, expanded services in the Goulburn Valley, the Seniors Rights Victoria initiative and consumer advocacy for disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers in the Hume region.

Commonwealth Government funding supported the expansion of services in the Goulburn Valley, a service partnership led by the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service in response to the Income Management regime in Greater Shepparton, the NBN regional justice project, operation of a clinical legal education program with La Trobe University and legal assistance services at the Family Relationship Centre.

Clayton Utz Foundation funding will enable a pilot Advocacy-Health Alliance (AHA) to be established in Bendigo.

The Victoria Law Foundation funded a legal curriculum development project to complement the AHA pilot, delivering legal education to health staff at Bendigo Community Health and beyond.

## Core services

### BENDIGO-BASED GENERALIST SERVICES

Telephone advice, Wednesday evening advice clinic, day clinics and outreach to Echuca, Maryborough and Kyneton.

### SHEPPARTON-BASED GENERALIST SERVICES

Tuesday evening advice clinics, day clinics and outreach to Cobram and Seymour.

### FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION LEGAL SERVICES

Attending courts to provide regular family violence prevention duty lawyer services at Bendigo, Kyneton, Maryborough, Echuca, Swan Hill, Seymour and Cobram (Kerang and Castlemaine as required).

### SENIORS RIGHTS VICTORIA

Legal assistance, legal education, policy development and participation in local networks. Monday to Friday 10am-4pm; outreach and home visits by appointment.

### FAMILY RELATIONSHIP CENTRE

Legal information sessions in Shepparton (twice weekly) and Bendigo (weekly); legal advice and casework by appointment.

### COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Community legal education is a core component of LCCLC's work. A better-educated community is better able to assert its rights and to access relevant support. We frequently respond to ad-hoc requests from schools and community organisations to deliver plain-language legal education to students, staff and members.

LCCLC also delivers a community legal education program to young people that promotes respectful relationships: Sex and the Law. This program is delivered in partnership with Victoria Legal Aid. Sex and the Law facilitates school-based legal education that is focused on sex, relationships and young people. The program is delivered in schools and alternative school settings in and around Bendigo. The program engages young people in a conversation about the legal aspects of sexuality and relationships and provides avenues for assistance and support. The sessions help young people to make informed decisions and to pursue healthy relationships, thereby reducing their contact with the legal system.

We also deliver community legal education around family law to separating parents via our work with the Family Relationship Centres in Bendigo and Shepparton.

## Key programs/projects

### OLDER PERSONS' LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV): elder abuse prevention and response services were provided by LCCLC, a partner in the Seniors Rights Victoria consortium.

Of note were the events held on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD), 15 June 2013, organised by LCCLC's SRV team. The aim of the day was to raise awareness about elder abuse, celebrate ageing and recognise the contribution that seniors make to the community. Representatives from several local agencies attended a morning tea in Bendigo at which the Dispute Settlement Centre Victoria outlined the services it offers in partnership with SRV. The historic former Bendigo Post Office building was lit up in a purple hue for the first time (purple represents WEAAD) and Bendigo trams sported a WEAAD banner. In Shepparton, a morning tea was held with Peter Russell Clarke as the guest speaker.

The Palliative Care Legal Program at Bendigo Health (assisting patients with life-limiting illnesses) has continued with the support of local lawyers. The program has responded to many urgent referrals for assistance throughout the year, undertaking wills, powers of attorney and a range of other legal work for clients.

### ADVOCACY-HEALTH ALLIANCE PROJECT

Medical-Legal Partnerships (MLPs), or Advocacy-Health Alliances (AHAs), are in their infancy in Australia. While there is a handful of long-standing examples of collaboration practice in Australia, there is a well-developed MLP movement in the United States. While MLPs vary widely, all engage in three core activities: providing legal assistance in the healthcare setting, transforming health and legal institutions and their practices, and influencing policy change.

Research conducted by LCCLC during 2012 with the generous financial support of the Clayton Utz Foundation revealed that providing legal services in partnership with healthcare providers can have a significant impact on the health of disadvantaged people and potentially reduce overall public

health costs. Many disadvantaged people do not access the legal system and are more likely to access the healthcare system. The US experience of MLP has shown that legal assistance which is provided at the same time as disadvantaged people access health treatment can help to tackle some of the environmental causes of poor health, change policies which impact on poor health and reduce readmission rates.

*Advocacy-Health Alliances in Australia: Better Health through Medical-Legal Partnership (2012)*, written by Peter Noble, recommended that the following steps be taken to advance AHA thinking and practice in Australia:

- Establishment of a pilot AHA in Bendigo and other sites that consciously and critically apply the MLP approach and demonstrate its usefulness in the Australian context. (The Clayton Utz Foundation has provided three years of funding to support this initiative.)
- Support for an Australian symposium which will stimulate and inform understanding of the MLP concept and explore its application by potential exponents. (Symposia were held in Sydney and Melbourne in November 2012.)
- That consideration be given to establishing a national 'centre' to support the evolution of MLP in Australia. (The Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department announced seed funding for this initiative in 2013.)
- That critical specialist/academic partners be identified for guiding the development of appropriate monitoring and evaluation processes for MLP in Australia.
- That Clayton Utz give consideration to leading the Australian MLP movement by directly supporting MLP-style clinics at a range of sites across the country, and through a diversity of means.
- That a comprehensive survey be conducted across Australian legal, health and social services to identify the nature and extent of existing multi-disciplinary practice akin to AHAs.

## WHY DIDN'T YOU ASK?

LCCLC established the 'Why didn't you ask?' project to improve the safety, social and health outcomes for women who are at risk of or are experiencing family violence. 'Why didn't you ask?' is a three-year project funded through a grant from the Legal Services Board. It employs a social worker (Courtney Lucanto) and a solicitor (Bonnie Renou).

We know that women often arrive at court not knowing what to expect from the legal process or how an Intervention Order will meet their needs. We also know that the courts often make assumptions about what victims of family violence want from the legal system. So we decided to take a step back and to ask women themselves what they wanted.

There are a number of components to the project, which aims to highlight women's voices and demonstrate women's experiences of the legal and justice system.

Interim project data from surveys completed at court by women who have experienced family violence have highlighted that upon coming to court:

- a high proportion of women wanted their concerns for safety to be heard and respected (over 90%)
- over 70% of women wanted to make their children safer
- nearly 70% of women wanted to begin to heal from the harm that has been caused
- over 65% of women ranked 'Very much' regarding this behaviour being monitored.

It will be worthy of further exploration with women whether they had sensed these four things being achieved through the responses they had experienced through the courts and the justice system.

'Why didn't you ask?' also addresses the geographic disadvantage, or 'postcode disadvantage', that inhibits the delivery of consistent services across the population. During this project, LCCLC's Family Violence Legal Service was extended from three to five courts in our region to include Bendigo, Echuca, Maryborough, Kyneton and Swan Hill.

The project has formed and strengthened partnerships with specialist family violence support organisations, regional Aboriginal collectives and community health providers to further the long-term goals of the project.

'Why didn't you ask?' also aims to demonstrate the benefits of Advocacy-Health Alliances. We are undertaking research into when and how health professionals screen for family violence and how they provide referrals to legal and other supports. 'Why didn't you ask?' will deliver education sessions in relation to screening and referral options for women who experience family violence and who present to their healthcare professional.

The project also delivers community legal education sessions on family violence and legal protections for those at risk of family violence.

## CONSUMER ADVOCACY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Our partnership with Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) gained momentum in the 2012/13 financial year. We have noticed that many of our clients struggling with consumer-related matters are experiencing difficulties with solar panel installations, motor vehicles and caravans. Our experiences have been fed back to CAV for it to use in its preventative work. We look forward to continuing working with CAV and the Consumer Action Legal Centre in 2013/14.

## FAMILY RELATIONSHIP CENTRE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

We continued to build on our strong relationship with the Family Relationship Centres (FRCs) in Shepparton and Bendigo in 2012/13. We have worked with the FRCs to streamline administrative procedures which have led to parents being able to access our legal advice appointments more quickly. We look forward to developing new community legal education projects, including presentations to schools, and to continue to explore new opportunities for legally assisted family dispute resolution in 2013/14.

## BENDIGO STUDENT ASSOCIATION (BSA) STUDENT LEGAL SERVICE

BSA and LCCLC commenced a pilot legal service based at the La Trobe Bendigo campus in August 2012. The service provides students with free legal advice and referrals, a Justice of the Peace service and ongoing community legal education opportunities. After a successful nine-week pilot, BSA and LCCLC entered into a contract for ongoing services throughout the university year. Although the contract is for 12 months, it is understood that this service is expected to roll over annually subject to funding continuing to be made available. It has recently been confirmed by BSA that the Student Legal Service is now considered a part of its 'core' service provision to the Bendigo student body.

## CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

LCCLC hosted five students throughout the second semester of 2012: Rob Southgate, Claire Soccio, Keyorra Shrimpton, Lisa Kaiser and Madeline Clarke. All students successfully completed their placements and maintained the high standard of enthusiasm and assistance we have come to expect from the La Trobe Bendigo students.

The funding for the clinic program is due to expire at the end of 2013, but we have begun work on a research report and funding application to extend the program. Research of previous and current clinic students was undertaken in May 2013. The results of the survey overwhelmingly point to the success of the clinic program in providing rural and regional justice perspectives to law students, promoting volunteering and a pro bono mindset amongst the next generation of lawyers. The program also promotes regional legal practice as a genuine and desirable career choice for young lawyers. A briefing paper was prepared for a visit by the Attorney-General, outlining the key response findings of the research.

## Communications

Communications continues to be a burgeoning aspect of LCCLC's work. Communications Worker, Steve Womersley, has continued to provide leadership and enthusiasm in the

legal assistance sector to develop and employ new and evolving communications tools to promote program activities. These have included managing the Community Legal Education and Reform database (CLEAR) for the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), building and maintaining ARC and TAS websites, social media engagement, delivering e-newsletters to a growing mailing list, graphic design project management and video production. Of particular note has been the evolution of the GVCLC campaign blog into a new, stand-alone and mobile responsive website.

An exciting area for exploration during 2013/14 will be initiatives to engage the community in a better 'justice dialogue' – understanding how the law works, its cultural and philosophical foundations, and the historical and contemporary challenges.

## Pro bono support

We strongly believe that all lawyers can make a pro bono contribution and greatly value this work. While the contribution varies between individuals and firms, a strong ethic of structured pro bono is patently evident in the local private profession, with practitioners volunteering through a range of services provided or facilitated by ARC. These included approximately:

- 36 practitioners supporting the Bendigo evening advice service
- 20 practitioners supporting the Shepparton evening advice service
- 3 practitioners supporting the Outreach at Bendigo Health program.

Practitioners also contribute by providing secondary consultation to ARC lawyers, access to libraries, and community/professional legal education. ARC has continued to benefit from a sustained pro bono commitment by top-tier firm Clayton Utz. Assistance provided by Clayton Utz has included:

- funding the Clayton Utz Foundation Fellowship
- digital dictation services
- access to library services
- secondary consultation and receipt of pro bono case referrals

- expert legal advice, underpinning legal research and policy work by LCCLC.

### **Cooperative/collaborative activities with other local service providers**

The Seniors Rights Victoria initiative is delivered by a consortium of services including Council on the Ageing (COTA), Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH), Eastern CLC and LCCLC. Various local elder abuse prevention and health service networks have supported direct service provision and promotion.

The Goulburn Valley CLC grew out of a strong partnership with UnitingCare Cutting Edge. The fledgling service also greatly appreciated the support received from the Uniting Church in Maude St, Shepparton when its services had to be temporarily relocated due to inundation.

Our Clinical Education Program is based on a partnership between La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus, and LCCLC.

The Student Outreach at La Trobe University, Bendigo was formed through a collaboration

between the Bendigo Student Association and LCCLC.

Our Family Relationship Centre services are based on a partnership between the Shepparton/Bendigo Family Relationship Centres and LCCLC.

Our Family violence legal assistance services are delivered in cooperation with workers from the Centre for Non-Violence and Annie North, Njernda, the Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative and the Swan Hill and District Aboriginal Cooperative. Education initiatives, including participation in the Loddon Mallee Take a Stand project, have also been supported by local partnerships and connections.

Our Bendigo Advocacy-Health Alliance Pilot is a partnership formed with Bendigo Community Health to focus services on children (and their families) serviced by their Child Health Invest Project.

## **LGCLC volunteers**

### **LAWYERS – BENDIGO**

Megan Aumair  
Peter Baker  
Matt Barkla  
Mark Bolton  
Annette Brewer  
Zoe Broadbent  
Daniel Cole  
Peter Cutting  
Ian Dallas  
Elizabeth (Liz) Davidson  
Luke Docherty  
Mark Donaldson  
Riley Driscoll  
Kevin Finn  
Paula Glassborow  
Peter Goffin  
Laura Hall  
Gabrielle Howley  
Tim Iser  
Trevor Kuhle  
Marina Leikina  
Alastair Lyall  
Kirstie Lyons  
Sam McGee  
John McPherson  
Michelle O’Sullivan  
Gaayathri Periasami  
Russell Robertson  
Lachlan Singe  
Simon Swayn  
Alithea Thompson  
Rose Walsh  
Greg Westbrook  
John Whelan  
Hannah Wilson  
Tom Wolff

### **LAWYERS – ECHUCA**

Skye Engwerda  
Kate Freshwater

### **LAWYER – SEYMOUR**

Jasmine Goddard

### **LAWYERS – SHEPPARTON**

Ashleigh Barri  
Rebecca Carne  
Laura Evans McKendry  
David Faram  
Ben Franklin  
Jonathan Green  
Charles Hart  
Stacey Hunter  
Beryl Krake (Legal Executive)  
Fiona Merrylees  
Georgina Morrissey  
James O’Brien  
James Oldfield  
Robert Oldfield  
Simon Pogue  
Alice Robinson  
Stephen Rodgers  
Natasha Russo  
Danny Ryan  
Suzanna Sheed

### **STUDENTS – BENDIGO**

Sian Briggs  
Emily Chamberlain  
Amy Cochrane  
Aaron Day  
Kristen Furey  
Sarah Gordon-Nilsson  
Marina Habashi  
Rowena Harding  
Robert Houston  
Alison Ingle  
Jess James-Murphy

Kimberley Parker  
Ashley Patterson  
Nicole Smith  
Robert Southgate  
Lauren Taylor  
Pavithra Tissera  
Kathryn Wright

### **STUDENTS – SHEPPARTON**

Rachael Clifford  
Ashlyn McCurdy  
Christopher Mingah  
Naomi Nagle  
Kristen Nicholls  
Saul Wakerman  
Andrew Westman

### **ADMINISTRATION – BENDIGO**

Bev Garlic  
Heather Osland

### **ADMINISTRATION – SHEPPARTON**

Irene Lia-Oster

## LGCLC case studies

### DECISION-MAKING ABILITY

A married couple in their mid-70s who were living in a low-level care facility in Gippsland contacted LGCLC's Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV) initiative. The couple had children from previous marriages and there was a history of conflict between members of their families. As a result, they had a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) appointed Administrator who managed their financial and legal affairs. They wanted to relocate to a Bendigo facility as they both have family in the area. They asked several facilities if they could provide them with a double room.

The manager of one aged-care facility was concerned about their request and, based on what he thought was his duty of care, made an application to VCAT for the appointment of a guardian to manage their lifestyle choices. The couple contacted SRV for advice and assistance in relation to the manager's application and the upcoming VCAT hearing. They were assessed by a GP, who determined they were incapable of making reasonable decisions in relation to their lifestyle. The GP noted that the husband had damaged hearing due to a stroke, which the GP regarded as a cognitive impairment.

At the VCAT hearing, a SRV lawyer argued that the couple had made a sound and reasonable decision and that there was no need to appoint a guardian. Initially, the Tribunal member suggested the appointment of a family member with limited powers to make decisions regarding accommodation. The SRV lawyer argued that this was not the least restrictive option, and that given the circumstances, the applicant (the facility manager) had not established a need for the appointment of a guardian. The SRV lawyer also argued that the GP's assessment of the husband was flawed because it confused his compromised verbal skills with his cognitive ability.

The Tribunal member decided that the couple was capable of making such a decision and on that basis did not appoint a guardian for either of them. The Tribunal member also criticised the GP's assessment of the husband.

The couple attended the Tribunal hearing and expressed their wishes and the reasons for them directly with the Tribunal member.

This case raised several issues, including the interpretation of 'duty of care'. It also highlighted the importance of providing a local specialised service, such as SRV, in a regional area.

### UNPAYABLE INFRINGEMENT FINES

A middle-aged Aboriginal man from the Western Desert came to LGCLC in early 2013 for assistance with unpaid infringement fines amounting to \$6,500. While we were working with him he was also charged with six new behavioural offences associated with his alcohol abuse.

Our client is a deeply cultural man who has been effectively banished from his own country because of a family feud and his fear of an almost certain death should he return to it. He has been diagnosed with multiple physical and mental health issues associated with his alcoholism and separation from family and land. English is his third language and his ability to communicate is somewhat diminished as a consequence.

We gained therapeutic assistance for our client from his GP and the AoD team at Primary Care Connect, who provided us with reports verifying that the client met the test for special circumstances consideration in regard to his infringement offences. We therefore took those matters to a hearing in the special list at Melbourne Magistrates' Court, where all matters were proven and dismissed. Our client was provided with transport and personal assistance to attend court over an extended period by the Koori Liaison Officer at UnitingCare Cutting Edge.

A couple of weeks later, we appeared again for the client, this time in the Koori Court at Shepparton where his new charges were considered before Deputy Chief Magistrate, Ms Popovic, and two elders from the local Aboriginal community, one Yorta Yorta and one Wemba Wemba. We tendered the medical reports and explained to Her Honour how the consumption of alcohol was an attempt by the client to gain some release from the

overwhelming distress he felt at being cast out of the country given to him by his ancestors. Her Honour spoke to our client at length about his life and his hopes. She talked to him about his behaviour and encouraged contributions from the elders present. In the event, DCM Popovic found that our client's circumstances were such that he was already serving a 'life sentence' and there was therefore no appropriate penalty. All charges were proven and dismissed.

We had with us at court a student who is completing his practical skills requirements at the GVCLC. He ventured afterwards that he found the experience a particularly moving one and was quite emotional about the outcome.

We now have one task left: to have quashed the nearly \$10,500 in outstanding infringements incurred by our client in Queensland and which he repays at the rate of \$73 per fortnight by way of a garnishee order against his Centrelink income.

### UNSOLICITED CONSUMER AGREEMENT

An elderly gentleman sought assistance from GVCLC in relation to a consumer contract.

He had previously decided that he was interested in installing solar panels at his property and had engaged a number of suppliers to provide him with quotes. One company in particular was quite insistent and two weeks after providing the quote, the company called to follow up. The salesman was again quite insistent and our client agreed to the contract. Our client paid a deposit on the spot with his VISA card.

Having thought more about the outlay involved in the installation of the solar panels, our client contacted the company two days later and advised that he didn't wish to proceed with the contract. The company then refused to return our client's deposit, claiming that preparation work had already been commenced.

We wrote to the company and argued that the contract was an unsolicited consumer agreement under Australian Consumer Law, given that the salesman had instigated the call

that had resulted in the contract. Furthermore, under the legislation, our client's previous request for a quote did not constitute an invitation to negotiate about supply. Given that this was an unsolicited consumer agreement and our client had terminated the contract within 10 business days, the company was required to return our client's deposit.

Following this discussion, the company agreed to return our client's deposit in full.

### Thank you

- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)
- Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)
- Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS)
- Bendigo Health (BH)
- Council on the Ageing (COTA)
- Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)
- Public Interest Law Clearing House (PILCH)
- La Trobe University
  - Law Faculty
  - Social Work Faculty
- Law Institute of Victoria (LIV)
- Department of Human Services (DHS)
  - Office of Housing
- Department of Justice
  - Victoria Legal Aid (VLA)
  - Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)
- Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department
- Philanthropic funds
  - Victoria Law Foundation
  - Clayton Utz Foundation
- Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria
- National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)
- Loddon Mallee Homelessness Network (LOMA)
- Bendigo Regional Institute of Technology (BRIT)
- Bendigo and district legal community
- Victorian Public Tenants Association (VPTA)
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Legal Services Board
- CentaCare
- UnitingCare Cutting Edge

# Tenant Advocacy and Support

## The year in summary

Although in recent months Bendigo has experienced an unusually high vacancy rate in private rentals, there remains a low vacancy rate for affordable accommodation and an ongoing shortage of smaller residences. Mildura's rental availability continues to be extremely low, contributing to the ongoing challenge of providing a service in a remote location.

This year has seen the Tenant Advocacy and Support (TAS) team work closely with the homeless and housing services sector in Bendigo through the Back on Track (BoT) program. This positive collaboration has provided each partner with a greater understanding of the other's services and the needs of the community.

The preparations for a three-day visit by Quality Improvement and Community Services Accreditation (QICSA) reviewers in April 2013 was a beneficial process that enabled internal reflection, feedback and recommendations. An ongoing Quality plan will now be developed across the organisation for planned improvements over the next three years. Accreditation of both the new Department of Human Services (DHS) and Quality Improvement Councils (QIC) standards was successful.

In late April this year, the TAS team bid farewell to Julie U'Ren, who had been team leader and then TAS Coordinator for the past four years. Julie's commitment to tenant rights and staff support has been instrumental in the provision of quality services. Some of the achievements to highlight include:

- her contribution to securing the BoT project, an Innovative Action Project (IAP) funded by DHS
- the development of close working

relationships, especially with DHS and Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV), both our funders and primary referrers.

TAS also bid farewell to Margrete Hamence, who opted to remain with Haven, Home, Safe following a 12-month secondment. Margrete had worked for ARC for 10 years prior, often as a sole worker. Margrete's dedication and strong networks within the local Mildura community will be sorely missed. Unfortunately, we have not had a Mildura Advocacy and Support worker since early 2013. The staff members based in the Bendigo office have been doing an exemplary job of covering the Mildura service from Bendigo during this interim period. Specific thanks to Kirsty for travelling to Mildura on a fortnightly basis for up to three days at a time.

TAS has weathered numerous challenges this year, the most challenging being the reduced DHS funding to the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP) through State-wide cuts in 2012/13. Fortunately, TAS was able to manage this significant loss of resources through natural staff attrition and a limited number of redundancies. Sadly, the reductions have resulted in less public housing tenants receiving advocacy and support from TAS. In spite of this reduction, we remain committed to providing an accessible and high-quality service for all vulnerable tenants in our region. We will continue to work with our existing funders and seek out new opportunities for innovative projects that provide support to both individual clients and advocacy around the human right to have a roof overhead.

## Core services

### SOCIAL HOUSING ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT PROGRAM (SHASP)

The new case management model for SHASP was implemented in October 2012. This model sees a greater focus on longer case management support for tenancies at risk. Previous components of SHASP that are no longer provided include community facility management, tenant participation, assisting people with transfers, and early housing applications (where people need to move from their Office of Housing property due to issues around danger, overcrowding or health).

TAS workers continue to provide a quality service to these clients. Trends we have noticed include hoarding tendencies, mental health issues and financial stress.

### TENANT ADVICE AND ADVOCACY PROGRAM (TAAP)

Advocacy is provided for vulnerable people in private rental when matters require negotiation or assistance and representation at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). Access to the service is through referrals from Bendigo, Mildura or Melbourne CAV offices, as well as self-referrals.

TAS is currently investigating the provision of a Duty Advocate service for VCAT sittings, both in Bendigo and Castlemaine. This service will enable the more vulnerable tenants to be supported when they attend their VCAT sittings. Advice at VCAT can also be provided to public tenants through this service.

## Projects

### BACK ON TRACK – BENDIGO

This is a collaboration between five agencies (St Luke's Anglicare, Haven, Cobaw Community Health, the Centre for Non-Violence and ARC) who are working across three locations (Kyneton, Bendigo and Echuca) to provide support to private rental tenants. The project model has proven to be a great success, although a significant effort has been required to establish processes and systems across the partnerships and sites. The opportunity to work closely with other key agencies offers increased training opportunities for staff and effective use of specialist knowledge for client work.

### ABORIGINAL TENANT SUPPORT PROJECT – MILDURA

This project, commenced in September 2012, supported Aboriginal families and individuals in the Mildura area with issues related to rental needs and barriers within the private rental market. It liaised with real estate agents and addressed access and equity issues for Aboriginal tenants.

### Client feedback

In line with our commitment to continual improvement and our belief that our clients are best placed to tell us about our services, we continue to seek ways to gather this knowledge. Our client feedback forms were modified early in 2012 and are sent to most clients at the completion of a service. Although the response numbers remain low, the feedback is positive. Below are a few summary details from the first quarter of 2013 (13 respondents):

- 100% of respondents were very satisfied with the services provided by the worker
- 100% were confident the personal information would be kept private
- 92% (12/13) felt the worker allowed them to talk about what they felt was important.

Here is a recent client quote: *'I am very grateful for everything the staff did for me – THANK YOU VERY MUCH!! It has changed my life'*.

Future client feedback plans include conducting phone surveys involving a random selection of clients who received services in the March–June quarter of 2013.

### Communications

The TAS website, which is linked to the ARC website, has now been operational for approximately 12 months. Further development work is required to provide resources and links for tenants and to act as a forum for news and opportunities.

### Consultation

As part of the QICSA accreditation, a number of TAS stakeholders were contacted by the QICSA reviewers. The following quote is from the QICSA ARC accreditation report of April 2013:

*‘Stakeholders noted that these programs provide services to some of the most vulnerable and challenging members of the community. It was observed that ARC staff do not shy away from addressing challenging issues and remain passionate and committed to the work despite the many challenges, including [an] operating environment in which funding has just been reduced markedly without warning.’*

*Stakeholders report that ARC TAS shows leadership in local and regional sector networks and professional capacity building initiatives and are recognised for their expertise in tenancy support and advocacy generally. They are known to be open to feedback.’*

TAS has also been an active member of both the Mallee and Loddon Local Area Service Network (LASN) groups and of a local hoarding working party.

### The year ahead

There will be a focus in the coming year on funding security and diversification. TAS will continue to work with its primary funders and referrers to ensure that vulnerable clients are supported. We remain hopeful that successful funding of the second stage of BoT will be secured until June 2014 and perhaps beyond. This funding will enable further capacity for positive outcomes for clients at risk of homelessness.

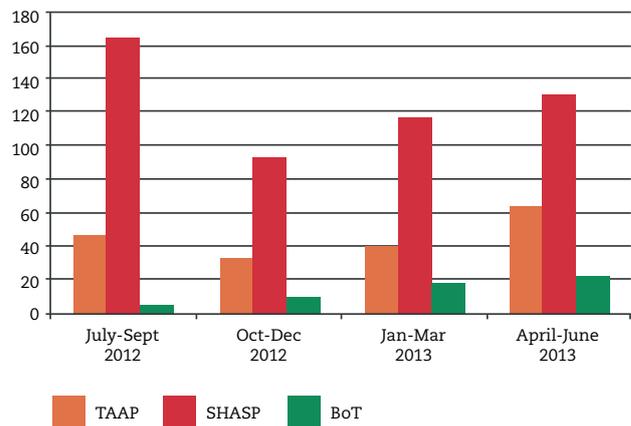
Further investigation will also be conducted to identify what works with each service and how these successes can be utilised for both private and public tenants. To assist in funding diversification, TAS plans to implement a stronger monitoring and evaluation framework that identifies service gaps, unmet needs and successful elements of existing service delivery.

The VCAT Duty Advocate role provides a further opportunity to identify the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged tenants and to assist in identifying supports beyond the VCAT sitting, such as BoT or further TAAP (Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Program) services.

The TAS team continues to experience a vulnerable funding climate and is united in advocating for individual clients and on a systemic level to ensure that housing is recognised as an essential human right.

### Service statistics

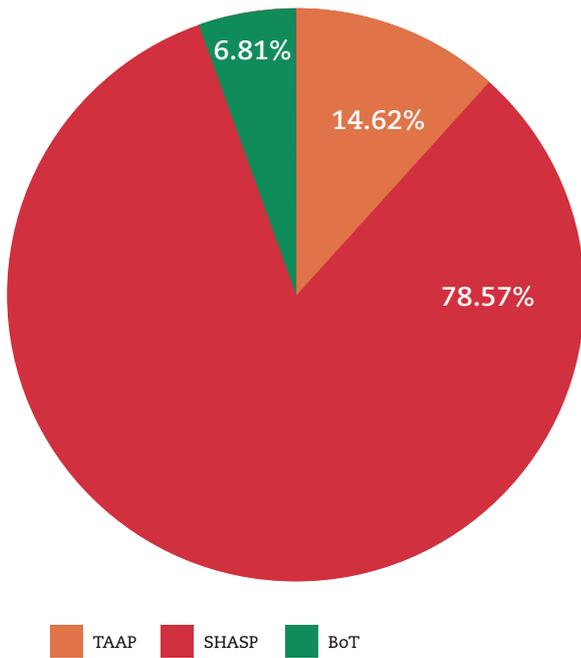
#### NUMBER OF CLIENTS PER QUARTER



Explanatory notes:

- Some clients may overlap and therefore be counted in more than one quarter.
- SHASP funding cuts took place on 1 October 2012 and 1 July 2013, with the total cut = 37%.
- BoT worker began in July 2012. Client numbers, although low, show an increase during the period with an expected caseload at any one time of approx. 13 clients.
- TAAP numbers have experienced a decline over the past two financial years. Current changes to the screening process and the aim to begin a Duty Advocate service should see these service numbers increase.

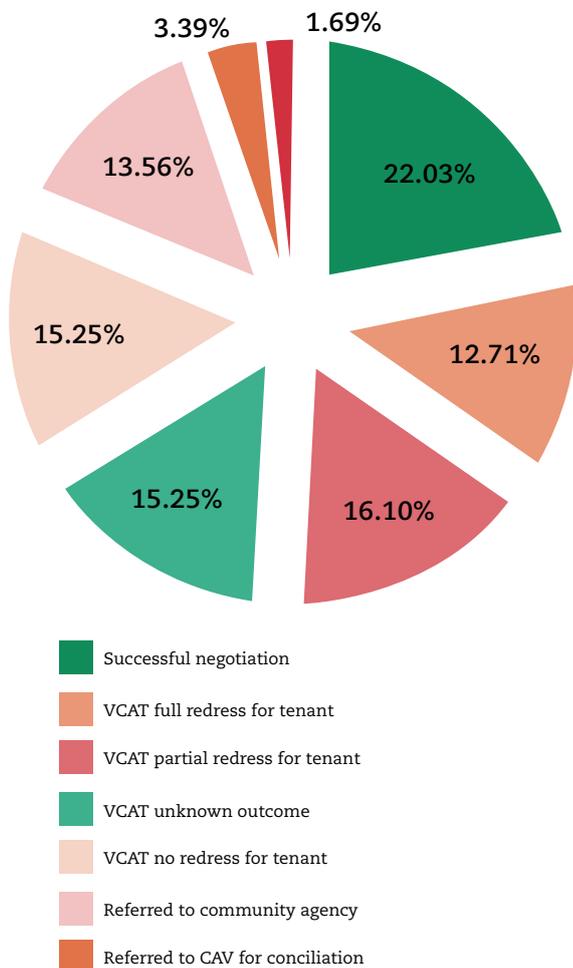
## TOTAL SERVICE HOURS BY PROGRAM



Explanatory notes:

- Trend for TAAP hours started to show an increase towards the end of the last financial quarter.
- Funded EFT for direct client service: BoT = 1; TAAP = 0.9; SHASP = 2.18.

## TAAP OUTCOME SUMMARY



Explanatory notes:

- 80 clients were supported at a VCAT hearing.
- 22% of clients achieved successful negotiations (without a VCAT hearing).
- A further 28% of cases had full or partial redress awarded to the tenant.

## Funding

We acknowledge the ongoing funding from the Department of Human Services, Office of Housing, Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Department of Justice.

## Core services

### BENDIGO OFFICE

54 Mitchell Street, Bendigo  
Tel: 5444 4364 or 1800 639 121

### OUTREACH

By appointment at Robinvale, Echuca, Kerang, Kyabram, Swan Hill, Castlemaine, Maryborough and Kyneton.

### SOCIAL WORK STUDENT PLACEMENT

February–July 2013: Rosie Baxter (also employed casually post-placement).

## TAS case studies

### SHASP STORY

A 64-year-old gentleman residing in an Office of Housing (OoH) property, and who had casual employment, suffered a stroke and was hospitalised for eight weeks. He was discharged from hospital with no support and no family in town to assist. OoH sought a possession order due to rent arrears of \$1,200. The man's electricity and water bills were also overdue and he had received disconnection notices.

- Intensive case management involved:
- negotiations with OoH
- negotiations with utility companies
- VCAT representation
- arranging Centrelink payments
- setting up bank accounts
- arranging home care
- referrals to other agencies for ongoing support.

The outcome was that the client's rent was rebated after his Centrelink payments commenced and the arrears were reduced to \$500. Centrelink payments were backdated two months, which allowed the client to pay his arrears and other bills in full. The tenancy was sustained.

### BACK ON TRACK STORY

A single mum was sharing a house with a friend and the friend moved out, leaving her with an unmanageable weekly payment. The BoT worker negotiated with the real estate agent to ensure some flexibility in the woman's repayments. A plan was agreed to that allowed her to look for alternative accommodation. BoT was able to provide brokerage funds to address her immediate essential financial demands.

The BoT worker also accessed LOMA funding for uniform assistance for her child. She was then assisted in finding a cheaper rental, although the new real estate agent was reluctant due to the woman's poor rental history. The BoT worker negotiated with the agent to allow the woman to undertake a three-month lease, on the understanding that if rent was paid and the house was clean during that time, the lease was to be extended.

A payment plan was arranged for the rent and maintenance costs of the older property. We assisted the woman in obtaining a moving truck to move house. This client's tenancy is going very well and all parties are happy with the outcome. This is an example of the benefits of working with real estate agents to develop manageable tenancy agreements and to allow disadvantaged tenants to have an opportunity to rent, where previously they would not have been considered.

### TAAP STORY

A tenant was being taken to VCAT by their landlord for compensation due to a stain on the carpet, which was only 12 months old. The tenant was not denying that there was a stain; however, they were concerned about the cost of the quote. The TAAP advocate advised the tenant to get an independent quote to replace/repair the affected section of the carpet as opposed to replacing the carpet throughout the whole room. At the hearing, the VCAT Member ruled in favour of the tenant – the landlord's original claim was for \$864; the quote that the tenant got was for \$179.

# Finance report 2012/13

## Auditor's report

**ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LTD**



### ***Independent Audit Report to the Members***

#### ***Report on the Financial Report***

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a general purpose financial report, of Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2013, the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows for the year then ended and notes comprising a summary of the significant accounting policies and the director's declaration.

#### ***Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report***

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report, and have determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 of the financial report are appropriate to meet the requirements of the company's constitution and the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### ***Auditor's Responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have 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 as to 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 auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation

OFFICE 61 Powells Avenue, Bendigo VIC 3550 // POSTAL PO Box 5092 Sandhurst East VIC 3550  
PH 03 54 444 417 FAX 03 54 444 427 // E [info@asbendigo.com.au](mailto:info@asbendigo.com.au) // W [www.asbendigo.com.au](http://www.asbendigo.com.au)

## ACCOUNTING & AUDIT SOLUTIONS BENDIGO

### **Independence**

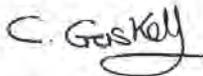
In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001*. We confirm that the independence declaration required by the *Corporations Act 2001*, provided to the directors of the Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd, would be in the same terms if provided to the directors as at the date of this auditor's report.

### **Opinion**

In our opinion the financial report of Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* including:

- i. Giving a true and fair view of the Company's financial position as at 30 June 2013 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- ii. Complying with Australian Accounting Standards and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

### ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT SOLUTIONS BENDIGO



Catherine Gaskell

Dated this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2013

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OFFICE 61 Powells Avenue, Bendigo VIC 3550 // POSTAL PO Box 5092 Sandhurst East VIC 3550  
PH 03 54 4444 417 FAX 03 54 4444 427 // E [info@asbendigo.com.au](mailto:info@asbendigo.com.au) // W [www.asbendigo.com.au](http://www.asbendigo.com.au)



**AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION  
UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001  
TO THE DIRECTORS OF *ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LTD***

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2013, there have been no contraventions of:

- (1) the auditor independence requirements as set out in the *Corporations Act 2001* in relation to the audit; and
- (2) any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

**ACCOUNTING AND AUDIT SOLUTIONS BENDIGO**

*C. Gaskell*

**Catherine Gaskell  
Registered Auditor # 287836**

**Dated:** *20<sup>th</sup> September, 2013*

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OFFICE 61 Powells Avenue, Bendigo VIC 3550 // POSTAL PO Box 5092 Sandhurst East VIC 3550  
PH 03 54 444 417 FAX 03 54 444 427 // E [info@aabendigo.com.au](mailto:info@aabendigo.com.au) // W [www.aabendigo.com.au](http://www.aabendigo.com.au)

# Financial Report

## For the year ended 30 June 2013

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED (A Company Limited By Guarantee) A.C.N. 082 541 240

### Directors' Report

Your directors present their financial report of Advocacy and Rights Centre Limited for the financial year ended 30 June 2013.

#### DIRECTORS

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

John McPherson	Chairperson
Mandy Stewart	Deputy Chairperson
Barry Keane	Secretary
Trevor Elliot	Treasurer
Pat Boyer	Member
Niall Hensey	Member
Rebecca Boreham	(Resigned Dec 2012)

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report, unless otherwise stated.

#### PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The major activities during the year were the:

- Provision of support & referrals for current & potential public housing tenants.
- Provision of free legal assistance in the Loddon Campaspe area.
- Provision of consumer complaints to disadvantaged consumers.
- Provision of specific legal project work.

#### SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN STATE OF AFFAIRS

There were no significant changes in the state of affairs of the Company.

#### OPERATING RESULTS

The net result of the Company for the financial year was a profit of \$454,477 (profit of \$2,964 in 2012).

Revenue has increased by \$627,260 compared to the previous financial year

Expenses have increased by \$175,747 compared to the previous financial year

A positive cash flow of \$596,168 was achieved.

#### DIRECTORS AND AUDITORS INDEMNIFICATION

The Company has not, during or since the financial year, in respect of any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Company:

- indemnified or made any relevant agreement for indemnifying against a liability incurred as an officer, including costs and expenses in successfully defending legal proceedings; or
- paid or agreed to pay a premium in respect of a contract insuring against a liability incurred as an officer for the costs or expenses to defend legal proceedings.

#### DIRECTORS' BENEFITS

Since the end of the previous financial year no director of the Company has received or 'become entitled to receive' a benefit other than:

1. A benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the accounts; or
2. a fixed salary as a full-time employee of the Company or of a related corporation, by reason of a contract made by the Company or a related entity corporation with the director or with a firm of which they are a member or with an entity in which they have a substantial financial interest.

#### AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

The lead auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2013 has been received and can be found on the following page.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Directors.



DIRECTOR



DIRECTOR

**Dated this 21st day of October 2013.**

## DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes are in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001; and
  - (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
  - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2013 and of its performance for the year ended on that date of the company.
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 21st day of October 2013.**

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
Revenue	2	2,275,364	1,648,104
Employee Expenses	3a	(1,327,381)	(1,173,547)
Supplies & Consumables	3b	(446,845)	(437,736)
Audit Fees	11	(3,030)	(2,910)
<b>Net Result Before Capital &amp; Specific Items</b>		<b>498,108</b>	<b>33,911</b>
Depreciation and Amortisation Net Result for the year	4	(43,631)	(30,947)
<b>Net Results for the Year</b>		<b>454,477</b>	<b>2,964</b>

The above Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2013

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2011	403,348	403,348
Profit Attributable to the Entity	2,964	2,964
<b>Balance at 30 June 2012</b>	<b>406,312</b>	<b>406,312</b>
Profit Attributable to the Entity Balance at 30 June 2013	454,477	454,477
<b>Balance at 30 June 2013</b>	<b>860,789</b>	<b>860,789</b>

The above Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5	979,017	401,919
Trade and Other Receivables		11,696	73,626
Accrued Income		7,113	1,931
Bond Paid		1,867	-
Prepayments		12,152	7,391
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>1,011,845</b>	<b>484,867</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	6	188,759	216,409
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>188,759</b>	<b>216,409</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,200,604</b>	<b>701,276</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and Other Payables	7	197,713	150,446
Provisions	8	101,356	102,822
Interest Bearing Liabilities	9	4,183	3,088
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>303,252</b>	<b>256,356</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Provisions	8	36,564	34,425
Interest Bearing Liabilities	9	-	4,183
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>36,564</b>	<b>38,608</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>339,816</b>	<b>294,964</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>860,788</b>	<b>406,312</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Retained Earnings		860,789	406,312
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>860,789</b>	<b>406,312</b>
Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets	12		
Commitments for Expenditure	15		

The above Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2013

	Note	2013 \$	2012 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Receipts</b>			
Operating Grants		2,161,476	1,567,769
Interest Received		8,005	16,919
Other Income		335,979	156,238
<b>Payments</b>			
Employee Expenses		(1,326,708)	(1,149,247)
Supplies & Consumables		(457,510)	(462,364)
<b>Net GST Paid to ATO</b>		<b>(123,207)</b>	<b>(82,537)</b>
<b>NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>14b</b>	<b>598,035</b>	<b>46,778</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payment for Property, Plant and Equipment		(15,982)	(192,363)
<b>NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>(15,982)</b>	<b>(192,363)</b>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Proceeds/(Repayment) of Borrowings		(3,088)	(2,690)
<b>NET CASH INFLOW/(OUTFLOW) FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		<b>(3,088)</b>	<b>(2,690)</b>
<b>NET INCREASE IN CASH HELD</b>		<b>578,965</b>	<b>(148,275)</b>
CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		401,919	550,194
<b>CASH AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>14a</b>	<b>979,017</b>	<b>401,919</b>

The above Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2013

### NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

#### Basis of preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements which have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including Australian Accounting Interpretations ) and the Corporations Act 2001.

Australian Accounting Standards set out accounting policies that the AASB has concluded would result in a financial report containing relevant and reliable information about transactions, events and conditions.

Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless otherwise stated.

The financial statements, except for cash flow information, have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs, modified where applicable, by the measurement at fair value of selected non-current assets, financial assets and financial liabilities. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

#### (a) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of 3 months or less and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities in the Statement of Financial Position.

For the Statement of Cash Flows presentation purposes, cash and cash equivalents includes bank overdrafts, which are included as current borrowings in the Statement of Financial Position.

#### (b) Receivables

Receivables and other debtors include amounts due from members as well as receivables from customers for goods sold in the ordinary course of business. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

Receivables are initially recognised at fair value and subsequently measured at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method, less any provision for impairment.

#### (c) Financial Instruments

Financial instruments arise out of contractual

agreements that give rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity. Due to the nature of the Company's activities, certain financial assets and financial liabilities arise under statute rather than a contract. Such financial assets and financial liabilities do not meet the definition of financial instruments in AASB 132 Financial Instruments: Presentation . For example, statutory receivables arising from taxes, fines and penalties do not meet the definition of financial instruments as they do not arise under contract.

Where relevant, for note disclosure purposes, a distinction is made between those financial assets and financial liabilities that meet the definition of financial instruments in accordance with AASB 132 and those that do not.

The following refers to financial instruments unless otherwise stated.

#### *Categories of non-derivative financial instruments*

##### Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are financial instrument assets with fixed and determinable payments that are not quoted on an active market. These assets are initially recognised at fair value plus any directly attributable transaction costs. Subsequent to initial measurement, loans and receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any impairment.

Loans and receivables category includes cash and deposits, term deposits with maturity greater than three months, trade receivables, loans and other receivables, but not statutory receivables.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial asset and of allocating interest income over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash receipts through the expected life of the financial asset, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

##### Held-to-maturity investments

Held-to-maturity investments are non-derivative financial assets that have fixed maturities and fixed or determinable payments, and it is the Company's intention to hold these investments to maturity. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

##### Available-for-sale financial assets

Available-for-sale financial assets are those

designated as available-for-sale or not classified in any other category of financial instrument asset. Such assets are initially recognised at fair value. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are recognised directly in equity until the investment is disposed of or is determined to be impaired, at which time the cumulative gain or loss previously recognised in equity is included in the net result for the period.

#### (d) Property, Plant and Equipment

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

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis and are therefore carried at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. In the event the carrying amount of plant and equipment is greater than the estimated recoverable amount, the carrying amount is written down to the estimated recoverable amount. A formal assessment of recoverable amount is made when impairment indicators are present.

The cost of fixed assets constructed by the company includes the cost of materials, direct labour, borrowing costs and an appropriate proportion of fixed and variable overheads.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount or recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the Company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are recognised in the profit or loss during the financial period in which they are incurred.

#### (e) Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets, including buildings and capitalised lease assets, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life commencing from the time the asset is available for use. Leasehold improvements are depreciated over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvements.

The following table indicates the expected useful lives of non current assets on which the depreciation charges are based.

Asset Class	Rate - 2012/13	Rate - 2011/12
Leasehold Improvements	30% to 40%	30% to 40%
Plant & Equipment	36%	36%
Leased Assets	12.5% to 33%	33%

#### (f) Net Gain/(Loss) on Non-Financial Assets

Net Gain/(Loss) on Non-financial Assets includes realised and unrealised gains and losses from revaluations, impairments and disposals of all physical assets and intangible assets.

##### Disposal of Non-Financial Assets

Any gain or loss of the sale of non-financial assets is recognised at the date that the control of the asset is passed to the buyer and is determined after deducting from the proceeds the carrying value of the asset at the time.

##### Impairment of Non-Financial Assets

Intangible assets with indefinite useful lives (and intangible assets not yet available for use) are tested annually for impairment (i.e. as to whether their carrying value exceeds their recoverable amount, and so require write-downs) and whenever there is an indication that the asset may be impaired. All other assets are assessed annually for indications of impairment, except for:

- inventories;
- assets arising from employee benefits;
- financial instrument assets;
- investment property that is measured at fair value;
- non-current assets held for sale.

If there is an indication of impairment, the assets concerned are tested as to whether their carrying value exceeds their possible recoverable amount. Where an asset's carrying value exceeds its recoverable amount, the difference is written-off as an expense except to the extent that the write-down can be debited to an asset revaluation reserve amount applicable to that class of asset.

It is deemed that, in the event of the loss off an asset, the future economic benefits arising from the use of the asset will be replaced unless a specific decision to the contrary has been made. The recoverable amount for most assets is measured at the higher of depreciated replacement cost and fair value less costs to sell.

Recoverable amount for assets held primarily to generate net cash inflows is measured at the higher of the present value of future cash flows expected to be obtained from the asset and fair value less costs to sell.

#### (g) Comparative Figures

Where necessary comparative figures have been reclassified to facilitate comparisons.

#### (h) Payables

Payables represent the liability outstanding at the end of the reporting period for goods and services received by the Company during the reporting period that remain unpaid. The

balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

#### **(i) Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the Company has a present obligation, the future sacrifice of economic benefits is probable, and the amount of the provision can be measured reliably.

The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at reporting date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation.

Where a provision is measured using the cash flows estimated to settle the present obligation, its carrying amount is the present value of those cash flows.

#### **(j) Goods & Services Tax**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Cash flows are represented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

#### **(k) Employee Benefits**

Provision is made for the Company's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits that are expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Employee benefits payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may not satisfy any vesting requirements. Those cash outflows are discounted using market yields on national government bonds with terms of maturity that match the expected timing of cash flows.

#### **On-Costs**

Employee benefit on-costs, such as superannuation and workers compensation are recognised together with the provisions for employee benefits.

#### **Superannuation**

Contributions to contribution superannuation plans are expensed when incurred.

#### **(l) Leases**

Leases of fixed assets where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset, but not the legal ownership, are transferred to the Company are classified as finance leases.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amount equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values.

Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for the period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives where it is likely that the Company will obtain ownership of the asset or ownership over the term of the lease.

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

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

#### **(m) Income Recognition**

Revenue is recognised in accordance with AASB 118 Revenue. Income is recognised as revenue to the extent it is earned. Unearned income at reporting date is reported as income in advance.

Amounts disclosed as revenue are, where applicable, net of returns, allowances and duties and taxes.

#### **Government Grants**

Grants are recognised as income when Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. gains control of the underlying assets in accordance with AASB 1004 Contributions. For reciprocal grants, Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. is deemed to have assumed control when the performance has occurred under the grant. For non-reciprocal grants, Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. is deemed to have assumed control when the grant is received or receivable. Conditional grants may be reciprocal or non-reciprocal depending on the terms of the grant.

#### **Donations and Other Bequests**

Donations and bequests are recognised as revenue when received. If donations are for a special purpose, they may be

appropriated to a reserve, such as specific restricted purpose reserve.

### Interest Revenue

Interest revenue is recognised on a time proportionate basis that takes in account the effective yield of the financial asset.

### Other Income

Other income is recognised as revenue when the cash is received.

## (n) New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods

The AASB has issued a number of new and amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations that have mandatory application dates for future reporting periods, some of which are relevant to the Company. The Company has decided not to early adopt any of the new and amended pronouncements. The company assessment of the new and amended pronouncements that are relevant to the Company but applicable in future reporting periods is set out below:

Standard / Interpretation	Summary	Applicable for reporting periods beginning on	Impact on Company's Annual Statements
AASB 1053 Application of Tiers of Australian Accounting Standards	This standard establishes a differential financial reporting framework consisting of two tiers of reporting requirements for preparing general purpose financial statements	Beginning 1 July 2013	The company is currently considering the impacts of Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDRs) and has not decided if RDRs will be implemented.
AASB 2010-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements	This Standard makes amendments to many Australian Accounting Standards, including Interpretations, to introduce reduced disclosure requirements to the pronouncements for application by certain types of entities.	Beginning 1 July 2013	The company is currently considering the impacts of Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDRs) and has not decided if RDRs will be implemented.
AASB 2011-2 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards arising from the Trans-Tasman Convergence Project -Reduced Disclosure Requirements [AASB 101 & AASB 1054]	The objective of this amendment is to include some additional disclosure from the Trans-Tasman Convergence Project and to reduce disclosure requirements for entities preparing general purpose financial statements under Australian Accounting Standards -Reduced Disclosure Requirements.	Beginning 1 July 2013	The company is currently considering the impacts of Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDRs) and has not decided if RDRs will be implemented.
AASB 2011-4 Further Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards to remove Individual Key Management Personnel disclosure requirements [AASB 124]	This Standard amends AASB 124 Related Party Disclosures by removing the disclosure requirements in AASB 124 in relation to individual key management personnel (KMP)	Beginning 1 July 2013	No significant impact is expected from these consequential amendments on entity reporting.
AASB 2011-11 Amendments to AASB 119 (September 2011) arising from Reduced Disclosure Requirements	This Standard makes amendments to AASB 119 Employee Benefits (September 2011), to incorporate reduced disclosure requirements into the Standard for entities applying Tier 2 requirements in preparing general purpose financial statements.	Beginning 1 July 2013	The company is currently considering the impacts of Reduced Disclosure Requirements (RDRs) and has not decided if RDRs will be implemented.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### NOTE 2: REVENUE

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Operating Grants	2,088,626	1,426,187
Interest	8,005	16,563
Donations	50	-
External Payments Income	123,636	164,191
Other	55,047	41,163
	<u>2,275,364</u>	<u>1,648,104</u>

### NOTE 3: EXPENSES

Note (3a) Employee Expenses		
Salaries and Wages	1,213,840	1,074,039
Superannuation	107,840	91,716
Work Cover	2,033	4,153
Other Employee Expenses	3,668	3,639
	<u>1,327,381</u>	<u>1,173,547</u>

### NOTE (3B) SUPPLIES & CONSUMABLES

Advertising & Promotion	16,321	32,605
Consultants	57,020	-
Brokerage	7,717	-
Advocacy Health Alliance	10,080	-
Accounting Fees	13,500	33,510
Bank Charges	1,009	1,414
Cleaning	5,013	4,911
Computer Expenses	25,509	29,620
External Evaluator	6,431	-
Conference Fees	9,264	5,334
Electricity & Gas	9,750	5,762
Insurance	6,536	6,906
Resource & Subscriptions	18,559	20,627
La Trobe University Expenses	54	9,091
Licenses and Permits	244	415
Meeting Expenses	1,153	4,025
Minor Equipment	8,390	10,804
Other Expenses	12,449	14,488
Planning & Programming	8,681	4,590
Printing, Postage & Stationery	26,466	18,957
Projects	240	10,309
Rates and Taxes	1,161	3,114
Rent	93,980	88,400
Relocation Expenses	395	4,039
Repairs & Maintenance	4,249	7,632
Security	1,335	390
Telephone & Internet	23,706	24,749
Tenant Participation	-	3,527
Travel/Accommodation & Professional Development	19,207	38,429
Vehicle Expenses	58,426	54,088
	<u>446,845</u>	<u>437,736</u>

### NOTE 4: DEPRECIATION AND AMORTIZATION

Plant & Equipment	20,625	16,684
Leasehold Improvements	20,022	11,279
Leased Assets -Amortisation	2,984	2,984
	<u>43,631</u>	<u>30,947</u>

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### NOTE 5: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Cash on Hand	400	400
Cash at Bank -Cheque Accounts	670,583	302,510
Cash at Bank -Term Deposits	308,034	99,009
<b>TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>979,017</b>	<b>401,919</b>

### NOTE 6: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Plant & Equipment -at Cost	171,506	155,925
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(111,994)	(91,369)
	59,512	64,556
Leasehold Improvements -at Cost	173,372	172,972
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(47,856)	(27,834)
	125,516	145,138
Leased Assets	11,937	11,937
Less: Accumulated Amortization	(8,206)	(5,222)
	3,731	6,715
<b>TOTAL PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>188,759</b>	<b>216,409</b>

Reconciliation's of the carrying amount of each class of asset at the beginning and end of the previous year and current financial year is set out below.

	Leasehold Improvements \$	Plant & Equipment \$	Leased Assets \$	Work in Progress \$	Total \$
<b>Balance as at 1 July 2011</b>	<b>3,978</b>	<b>36,221</b>	<b>9,699</b>	<b>5,095</b>	<b>54,993</b>
Additions	147,344	45,019	-	-	192,363
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	5,095	-	-	(5,095)	-
Depreciation and Amortization (note 4)	(11,279)	(16,684)	(2,984)	-	(30,947)
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2012</b>	<b>145,138</b>	<b>64,556</b>	<b>6,715</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>216,409</b>
Additions	400	15,581	-	-	15,981
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Amortization (note 4)	(20,022)	(20,625)	(2,984)	-	(43,631)
<b>Balance as at 30 June 2013</b>	<b>125,516</b>	<b>59,512</b>	<b>3,731</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>188,759</b>

### NOTE 7: TRADE & OTHER PAYABLES

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Trade Creditors	28,040	41,569
Net Amounts Payable to the ATO	77,440	32,957
Accrued Expenses	92,221	75,920
Other Creditors	12	-
<b>TOTAL TRADE &amp; OTHER PAYABLES</b>	<b>197,713</b>	<b>150,446</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### NOTE 8: PROVISIONS

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Current		
Employee Benefits (refer note 8a)	101,356	102,822
Non-Current		
Employee Benefits (refer note 8a)	36,564	34,425
<b>TOTAL PROVISIONS</b>	<b>137,920</b>	<b>137,247</b>

### NOTE 8A: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Current		
Annual Leave	85,138	81,583
Long Service Leave -nominal value	16,218	21,239
	101,356	102,822
Non-Current		
Long Service Leave -nominal present value	36,564	34,425
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS</b>	<b>36,564</b>	<b>137,247</b>

### NOTE 9: INTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES

Current		
-Finance Lease	4,183	3,088
Non-Current		
-Finance Lease	-	4,183
<b>TOTAL INTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES</b>	<b>4,183</b>	<b>7,271</b>

### NOTE 10: KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL COMPENSATION

#### (a) Directors' Remuneration

Income received or due and receivable by all directors of the Company from the Company and any related party corporations

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
John McPherson	-	-
Mandy Stewart	-	-
Barry Keane	-	-
Trevor Elliot	-	-
Pat Boyer	-	-
Niall Hensey	-	-
Rebecca Boreham	-	-
<b>Total Director's Remuneration</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

#### (b) Executive Officers Remuneration

No Executive Officers received remuneration in excess of \$100,000

#### (c) Related Party Transactions

There were no transactions with related parties during the year.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### NOTE 11: REMUNERATION OF AUDITORS

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Amounts received or due and receivable by auditors for:		
- auditing the accounts	3,030	2,910

### NOTE 12: CONTINGENT LIABILITIES & CONTINGENT ASSETS

There are no known contingent liabilities or contingent assets for Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. as at the date of this report.

### NOTE 13: EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Company, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Company in subsequent financial years.

### NOTE 14: CASH FLOW INFORMATION

#### a). Reconciliation of cash

For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, Cash and Cash Equivalents comprise the following at 30 June 2013:

	Note	2013	2012
		\$	\$
Cash & Cash Equivalents - Operational Funds	5	979,017	401,919

#### b). Reconciliation of Cash flow from operations with net result

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Profit Attributable to the Company	454,477	2,964

Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities

Non-cash flows in operating profit:

Depreciation	43,631	30,947
Changes in assets and liabilities		
(Increase)/Decrease in Prepayments	(4,761)	(7,078)
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade & Other Receivables	61,930	(49,116)
(Increase)/Decrease in Accrued Income	(5,182)	357
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade & Other Payables	47,267	44,404
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	673	24,300
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>	<b>598,035</b>	<b>46,778</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

There are no known capital commitments as at 30 June 2013.

<b>Operating Lease Commitments</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Payable		
-Not later than 1 year	95,444	111,363
-Later than 1 but not later than 5 years	20,084	51,261
<b>Total operating leases</b>	<b>115,529</b>	<b>162,624</b>

<b>Finance Lease Commitments</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Payable		
-Not later than 1 year	4,183	3,903
-Later than 1 but not later than 2 years	-	4,555
-Later than 2 years	-	-
	<b>4,183</b>	<b>8,458</b>
Less future interest charges	-	1,187
<b>Total finance leases</b>	<b>4,183</b>	<b>7,271</b>

Finance lease commitments is represented by the lease of a Photocopier. The lease repayments are \$325.29. The lease expires in August 2014.

### NOTE 16: UNEXPENDED GRANTS

The following funds were received during the financial year and have been brought to account as revenue. As at the end of each financial year, these amounts had not been expended. All unexpended funds are to be utilised in future financial periods.

	<b>2013</b>	<b>2012</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
VLA Commonwealth	150,000	-
National Broadband Network Regional Legal Assistance Project	205,000	-
Advocacy Health Alliances Project	5,827	11,853
LSB Family Violence Project	122,590	112,317
	<b>483,417</b>	<b>124,170</b>

### NOTE 17: MEMBERS GUARANTEE

Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd is a company limited by guarantee. If it is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the Company. At 30th June 2013, the number of members was 6.

### NOTE 18: COMPANY DETAILS

#### The registered office of the Company is:

54 Mitchell Street  
Bendigo  
Victoria 3550

#### The principal place of business is:

54 Mitchell Street  
Bendigo  
Victoria 3550

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### NOTE 19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

#### Financial Risk Management Objectives and Policies

Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd.'s principal financial instruments comprise of deposits with banks, accounts receivable and accounts payable and interest bearing liabilities.

The totals for each category of financial instruments, measured in accordance with AASB 139 as detailed in the accounting policies to these financial statements, are as follows:

	Note	Carrying Amount 2013 \$	Carrying Amount 2012 \$
<b>Financial Assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	(5)	979,017	401,919
Trade and other receivables		11,696	73,626
<b>Total Financial Assets</b>		<b>990,713</b>	<b>475,545</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>			
At amortised cost			
Trade and other payables	(7)	197,713	150,446
Interest Bearing Liabilities	(9)	4,183	7,271
<b>Total Financial Liabilities</b>		<b>201,896</b>	<b>157,717</b>

#### Specific Financial Risk Exposures and Management

There have been no substantive changes in the types of risks the Company is exposed to, how these risks arise or the Committee's objectives, policies and processes for managing or measuring the risks from the previous period.

##### (a) Credit risk

Exposure to credit risk relating to financial assets arises from the potential non-performance by counterparties of contract obligations that could lead to a financial loss to Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd.

The Company does not have any material credit risk exposures.

##### *Credit risk exposures*

The maximum exposure to credit risk, by class of recognised financial assets at the end of the reporting period is equivalent to the carrying value and classification of those financial assets (net of any provisions) as presented in the statement of financial position.

Trade and other receivables that are neither past due or impaired are considered to be of high credit quality.

The Company has no significant concentration of credit risk exposure to any single counterparty or group of counterparties.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### (b) Liquidity Risk

Liquidity risk arises from the possibility that the Company might encounter difficulty in settling its debts or otherwise meeting its obligations related to financial liabilities. Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. manages this risk through the following mechanisms:

- preparing forward-looking cash flow analysis in relation to its operational, investing and financing activities; and
- only investing surplus cash with major financial institutions.

The table below discloses the contractual maturity analysis for the Company's financial liabilities.

#### Financial liability and financial assets maturity analysis

	Within 1 Year		1 to 5 Years		Over 5 Years		Total	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
<b>Financial Liabilities due for payment</b>								
Trade and Other Payables	197,713	150,446	-	-	-	-	197,713	150,446
Interest Bearing Liabilities	4,183	3,088	-	4,183	-	-	4,183	7,271
Total contractual outflows	201,896	153,534	-	4,183	-	-	201,896	157,717
Total expected outflows	201,896	153,534	-	4,183	-	-	201,896	157,717
<b>Financial assets -Cash flow realisable</b>								
Cash and Cash Equivalents	979,017	401,919	-	-	-	-	979,017	401,919
Trade & Other Receivables	11,696	73,626	-	-	-	-	11,696	73,626
Total anticipated inflows	990,713	475,545	-	-	-	-	990,713	475,545
<b>Net (outflow)/inflow on financial instruments</b>	<b>788,817</b>	<b>322,011</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>788,817</b>	<b>317,828</b>

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### (c) Market Risk

#### (i) Interest rate risk

The financial assets of the Company is not exposed to any significant interest rate risk since cash balances are maintained at various fixed interest rates.

Interest rate risk refers to the risk that the value of a financial instrument or cash flows associated with the instrument will fluctuate due to changes in market interest rates. Interest rate risk arises from interest bearing financial assets and liabilities that are used. The interest rate exposure on the debt portfolio is managed by appropriate budgeting strategies and by managing in accordance with target maturity profiles.

#### (ii) Price risk

Price risk relates to the risk that the fair value of future cash flows of a financial instrument will fluctuate because of changes in market prices.

Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. is exposed to insignificant foreign currency risk and other price risks.

### Sensitivity analysis

The following table illustrates sensitivities to the Company's exposure to changes in interest rates. The table indicates the impact on how profit at the end of the reporting period would have been affected by changes in the relevant risk variable that management considers reasonably possible. These sensitivities assume that the movement in a particular variable is independent of other variables.

- A parallel shift of + 1% and -2% in market interest rates (AUD).

	<b>Profit</b>	<b>Equity</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Year ended 30 June 2013</b>		
+1% in interest rates	9,790	9,790
-2% in interest rates	(19,580)	(19,580)
<b>Year ended 30 June 2012</b>		
+1% in interest rates	4,019	4,019
-2% in interest rates	(8,038)	(8,038)

No sensitivity analysis has been performed on foreign exchange risk as the company is not exposed to foreign currency fluctuations.

## Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2013

### Net Fair Values

#### Fair value estimation

The fair values of financial assets and liabilities are presented in the following table and can be compared to their carrying values as presented in the Statement of Financial Position. Fair values are those amounts at which an asset be exchanged, or a liability settled, between knowledgeable, willing parties in an arm's length transaction.

Differences between fair values and carrying values of financial instruments with fixed interest rates are due to the change in discount rates being applied by the market since their initial recognition by the Company. Most of these instruments which recarried at amortised cost (i.e. trade receivables, loan liabilities) are to be held until maturity and therefore the net fair value figures calculated bear little relevance to the company.

#### Net Fair Value

	<b>Net Carrying Amount 2013 \$</b>	<b>Net Fair Value 2013 \$</b>	<b>Net Carrying Amount 2012 \$</b>	<b>Net Fair Value 2012 \$</b>
<b>Financial Assets</b>				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	979,017	979,017	401,919	401,919
Trade and Other Receivables	11,696	11,696	73,626	73,626
<b>Total Financial Assets</b>	<b>990,713</b>	<b>990,713</b>	<b>475,545</b>	<b>475,545</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>				
Trade & Other Payables	197,713	197,713	150,446	150,446
Interest Bearing Liabilities	4,183	4,183	7,271	7,271
<b>Total Financial Liabilities</b>	<b>201,896</b>	<b>201,896</b>	<b>150,446</b>	<b>150,446</b>