

arc
justice

annual report
2014/15



2014/15

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Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd,
trading as **ARC Justice**

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Open 9am-5pm Monday to Friday

www.arcjustice.org.au

incorporating:

 loddon campaspe
community legal centre

 goulburn valley
community legal centre

 housing justice

Who we are

THE BOARD

John McPherson (resigned as Chair and Board member November 2014)

Niall Hensey (appointed Chair November 2014)

Barry Keane

Mandy Stewart

Jennifer Wilson

Deb Allan

Sally Smith

Trevor Kuhle

Pat Boyer

MANAGEMENT

Peter Noble Executive Officer

Chris Sedgman Operations Manager

ADMINISTRATION

Joanne Baker Finance Officer

Melinda Daunt Finance Officer

Jennifer Warren Bookkeeper

Steve Womersley Communications Worker

HOUSING JUSTICE

Mim Dineen Manager

Kirsty Waller Lead Advocate Support

Leah Berger Advocate Support

Lyndall Blandthorn Advocate Support

Caddie Russell Hoarding and Squalor Project

Denise Williams Reception/ Administration

LODDON CAMPASPE COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE (LCCLC)

Clare Sauro Legal Practice Manager

Anna Howard Co-Principal Lawyer/ Project Worker

Nickie King Co-Principal Lawyer/ Health-Justice Partnership Lawyer

Chris Casey Community Lawyer

Michael Hennessy Community Lawyer

Bonnie Renou Community Lawyer

Lisa Grealy Community Lawyer

Robert Southgate Family Violence Legal Educator/Health-Justice Partnership Research Assistant/Community Lawyer

Carolyn Neilson Family Violence Researcher

Isabelle Manning Paralegal

Carolyn Staszkievicz Reception/ Administration

GOULBURN VALLEY COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE (GVCLC)

Kaz Gurney Managing Lawyer

Sara Molenaar Community Lawyer

Shane Appel Community Lawyer

Carmendy Cooper Community Lawyer

Sejal Amin Therapeutic Justice Lawyer

Hannah Fiddelaers Paralegal/Reception

Amanda Sharp Reception/ Administration

SENIORS RIGHTS VICTORIA INITIATIVE – LCCLC TEAM

Caroline Granger Community Lawyer

Elaine Harrington Administration

DEPARTURES

John McPherson Chairperson

Amanda Sharp GVCLC Reception/ Administration

Sara Molenaar GVCLC Community Lawyer

Anna Howard LCCLC Co-Principal Lawyer/Project Worker

Michael Hennessy LCCLC Community Lawyer

Bonnie Renou LCCLC Community Lawyer

Carolyn Neilson LCCLC Family Violence Researcher

Caroline Granger SRV/LCCLC Community Lawyer

Jennifer Warren Bookkeeper

What we do

VISION

An inclusive community built on a foundation of human rights and equality before the law.

MISSION

We are a leading and innovative advocacy and rights organisation delivering client focused services that empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people in rural and regional Victoria. We elevate justice as an issue in public discourse and advocate for systemic change that upholds human rights. We are a leader that strengthens the sector, pursuing best practice and innovation through collaboration.

WHERE WE WORK

We work in the rural and regional areas of Central and Northern Victoria. We have legal services in the Loddon Campaspe and Goulburn Valley regions, and a housing service in the Loddon Mallee region. We have offices in Bendigo and Shepparton and provide regular outreach services. Our service covers people living across Northern and Central Victoria.

OUR PROGRAMS

- Housing Justice is supported by the Victorian Government (Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program [SHASP] through the Department of Health and Human Services) and Consumer Affairs Victoria (Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Program [TAAP]).
- Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre and Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre are funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments, largely administered by the Community Legal Services Program of Victoria Legal Aid.
- Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre is also funded by Consumer Affairs Victoria (Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program), Legal Services Board and Commissioner (grants program), Clayton Utz Foundation, Council on the Ageing, Bendigo Student



Association, RE Ross Trust, City of Greater Bendigo and the Victoria Law Foundation.

- Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre is also funded by the Legal Services Board and Commissioner.

HOUSING SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY

- The SHASP service operates across the Loddon Mallee region.
- The Tenant Advocacy Advice Program provides information, advice and assistance at VCAT for 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).
- Seniors Rights Victoria Bendigo outreach operates across much of Central and Northern Victoria.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

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 PRINCIPLES

> Empowerment

We work with disadvantaged and vulnerable people and our diverse community on strategies to help themselves.

> Equality

We ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable people have access to services.

> Compassion, Dignity and Respect

We act with empathy and respect the dignity of every person.

> Creativity

We strive to find new solutions and approaches.

> Quality and Accountability

We strive for excellence and rigour in everything we do.

> Social Justice and Human Rights

We ensure that people's fundamental freedoms are protected and promoted.

> Collaboration

We seek to work with others knowing that through the alignment of effort we are more effective.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

ARC Justice's Board is 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.

The areas of focus are:

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

ACCREDITATION

The organisation underwent two separate accreditation reviews early in 2013. The Quality Innovation Performance review looked at organisational standards, DHS standards as they apply to housing and homelessness services, in particular to the SHASP, and the new National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) Accreditation Scheme.

We continue to be accredited by QIP and NACLC with the next three year review to occur in 2016.

COMMUNICATIONS

In 2014/15, our Communications program continued to extend ARC Justice's reach across our geographical and sectoral catchments. We generated strong local and state print, radio and television coverage on issues ranging from age pension changes to counterterrorism laws. Highlights included our GVCLC Managing Lawyer Kaz Gurney discussing family violence service funding cuts on ABC Radio Statewide Drive, and LCCLC Lawyer Bonnie Renou talking about court safety at Kyneton on ABC Radio National.

The websites belonging to our three programs continued to demonstrate strong growth in key metrics (e.g. sessions, page views) and exceeded all metric targets.

Loddon Campaspe CLC's profile on Twitter also grew, and its Klout ranking (a standard measure of reach and influence) grew from 47 to 56 (out of 100). Housing Justice joined Twitter in September 2014 and is helping to raise the profile of Central Victorian tenant issues via this platform.

All three programs are on Facebook, and the reach and levels of engagement of our posts continue to grow, especially in the Goulburn Valley. Each month, the three pages engage thousands of people.

Both Loddon Campaspe and Goulburn Valley CLCs distribute quarterly e-newsletters to a growing audience of approximately 900 subscribers across the two programs. These newsletters' high open and click rates indicate above-average engagement rates for non-profit newsletters.

Loddon Campaspe CLC's YouTube channel allows us to extend the reach of events like Talking Justice and Justice Bites beyond the date of delivery, and to sidestep geographical boundaries to engage with audiences interested in justice issues. For the 2014/15 financial year, our YouTube audience spent 5,030 minutes (or 3 days and 11 hours) watching videos on this channel, a 124% increase on the previous financial year.

Chairperson's report

The past year has been one of renewal at the governance level for ARC Justice, following the resignation of former Chair John McPherson and the appointment of three new Board members: Deb Allan, Sally Smith and Trevor Kuhle. I also acknowledge the contribution of Patrick Boyer, who recently resigned.

In my first year as Chair, the Board and I have been ably supported by Executive Officer Peter Noble and Operations Manager Chris Sedgman. They have engaged and worked closely with us to ensure both continuity of service delivery and a refresh of governance systems and processes, as we endeavour to streamline governance according to the changing needs of the organisation. The Board has adopted its strategic responsibilities with full confidence in the Executive team.

There has also been change and renewal in the staff group, particularly within the Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre. We welcomed Clare Sauro as the Legal Practice Manager. She replaced Anna Howard and Nickie King (co-Principals). We farewelled Bonnie Renou and Carolyn Neilson, who worked on the family violence research project and produced a compelling report, published earlier this year. Caroline Granger, our Seniors Rights Victoria Lawyer, also left our service. And after eight years at the Centre, we farewelled Michael Hennessy, our Senior Civil Lawyer. We wish them all well.

It has been a busy and fulfilling year for ARC Justice. In May 2015, the second annual Talking Justice Law Week event took place in the Stratagem Studio within the Ulumbarra Theatre, Bendigo. A series of engaging public talks was held that promoted understanding, discussion and debate around justice issues that are immediately relevant to the Victorian community. The highly professional program had the major support of the City of Greater Bendigo and the Victoria Law Foundation and was very well received. The diverse roster of speakers included Professor Mick Dodson AM, Oxfam Australia CEO Helen Szoke, Human Rights Commissioner Tim Wilson, Victorian MP Louise Staley and Dr Allesandro Demaio. They brought their passion, expertise and a high standard of presentation to the event. The program was guided by the principles of respect, balance, diversity and accessibility, and we successfully promoted a culture of respectful non-partisan commitment to ongoing dialogue.

In September 2014, the Housing Justice team spearheaded publication by the SHASP Manager's Network (Victoria) of *Support that Works*, a significant overview of the SHASP. Housing Justice was successful in securing two innovative grants through the Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local to assist people with complex and persistent mental health issues and to sustain their tenancies while addressing problematic hoarding behaviours. In this work, Housing Justice has exercised great leadership of the Hoarding Working Group.

LCCLC has also shown great leadership through publication of the Family Violence Research Report, *Will somebody listen to me?*. This has led to direct engagement with the family violence policy reform process of the Victorian Government and Family Violence Royal Commission. Pleasingly, LCCLC also secured funding from Victoria Legal Aid by being selected to initiate one of two Child Protection pilot projects in Victoria.

In the Goulburn Valley, our CLC has been able to establish a three-year Therapeutic Justice program in partnership with Primary Care Connect in Shepparton, with funding from the Legal Services Board and Commissioner.

These are but a few examples of the progressive and successful work being conducted by ARC Justice. As we face external review of our quality accreditation in the coming year, I have confidence that our Board, Executive and staff are working together towards the fulfilment of our vision and mission.

Niall Hensey, Chairperson

Executive Officer's report

I am confident in saying that ARC Justice has worked hard this year to further our mission:

- as a leading and innovative advocacy and rights organisation
- delivering client-focused services that empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people in rural and regional Victoria
- elevating justice as an issue in public discourse and advocating for systemic change that upholds human rights, and
- strengthening the sector, pursuing best practice and innovation through collaboration.

Housing Justice has delivered consistently against its core work while pursuing new opportunities for impact and growth. Leadership and innovation have been demonstrated through the publication of *Support that Works* (on behalf of the SHASP Manager's Network [Victoria]), convening of the Hoarding Working Group in Central Victoria, and securing two grants from the health program Partners in Recovery (with the Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local) to undertake housing support and hoarding-related training.

Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre followed suit, delivering another great line-up of speakers for Talking Justice 2015 (at the Ulumbarra Theatre complex in Bendigo), launching the family violence research report *Will Somebody listen to me?* and the associated project evaluation by Dr Liz Curran of the Australian National University, and securing funding to pilot one of two innovative Child Protection services by Community Legal Centres in Victoria. Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre has continued to strengthen its work in the Therapeutic Justice arena, securing funding from the Legal Services Board and Commissioner for a three-year Health-Justice Partnership with Primary Care Connect in Shepparton.

Through 2014/15 our financial position has remained strong.

ARC's total income was \$2,678,092 and our expenditure was \$2,167,578, resulting in a net surplus of \$510,514. At the end of the year, the organisation carried forward unexpended grants of \$1,034,682, which have been recognised as revenue in 2013/14 but will be expended in the 2015/16 and 2016/17 years (see Note 16: Unexpended Grants, in the Financial Statements).

Our employee benefits have remained steady, following growth in provisioning of 6.6% in the previous year. The employee expenses are now \$1,521,966, and we have a team of 32 staff.

The organisation has net equity of \$1,556,937 after taking into account all provisions for employee entitlements. The cash and cash equivalents total \$1,491,838, which clearly covers all liabilities. The net increase in cash held during the year was \$422,709.

Amidst the tremendous programmatic outcomes and overall financial growth, the service has farewelled numerous staff who have made significant contributions to it, particularly within the LCCLC program. Anna Howard, who was a Senior Lawyer and then Principal for approximately four years, returned to private practice. Anna, through her diverse talents and determination, achieved much while at LCCLC, leading the Missing Person's law reform, Talking Justice events, legal needs study and day-to-day practice management. While Anna is uniquely talented, we have recruited an excellent replacement in Clare Sauro as Legal Practice Manager, who will undoubtedly bring her own unique skills and feel to the position.

Michael Hennessy, Senior Civil Lawyer, also returned to private practice after eight years with the service. His deep and broad knowledge of many areas of law, particularly civil practice, provided a real foundation of confidence. His particular capacity for mentoring younger lawyers and students

was greatly appreciated and will be greatly missed. Bonnie Renou and Carolyn Neilson left the service on completion of the philanthropic funding supporting the family violence research. The work that they did through the project, from direct service delivery to education and research into the experiences of women, was unique because of its diversity and commitment to supporting women survivors of violence to be heard. We also farewelled Caroline Granger (LCCLC), who ventured into sole practice; Sara Molenaar (GVCLC), who went to St Kilda Legal Service; Amanda Sharp (GVCLC), who went to the Department of Justice; and Jennifer Warren (Finance Worker). All made unique contributions in their roles, especially Sara and Amanda, who with Kaz Gurney shaped GVCLC as a service in its own right.

With these staffing transitions, recruitment and retention will be a significant challenge during 2015/16. Other challenges include growing the Housing Justice program and profile, particularly through continued investment by the Victorian Government; successfully implementing the child protection pilot; securing new funding for the Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre to set it on a course of financial sustainability; and successfully completing the next phase of our service accreditation. While these challenges are considerable, especially when combined with normal service delivery demands, I am confident that we will meet them.

I thank all of the staff, volunteers and Board members who contributed to our organisational successes in 2014/15, particularly our Operations Manager Chris Sedgman for her attention to organisational strengthening. I thank all of those staff who have left the organisation for their contributions and look forward to a new year with some new faces and meeting the challenges ahead.

Peter Noble, *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.

GVCLC, based in Shepparton, is a division of the LCCLC practice.

THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

For LCCLC, 2014/15 was a year defined by consolidation, collaboration, culmination and opportunity. Here are some examples of the partnerships that were continued or entered into:

- Health-Justice Partnership project, with Bendigo Community Health Services
- Migration Service pilot with the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC) (using NBN funding)
- Therapeutic Justice Project commenced with Shepparton-based Primary Care Connect
- Bridging the Divide project with Partners in Recovery, Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local
- Child Protection Pilot project with Victoria Legal Aid.

In the 2014/15 financial year, LCCLC and Housing Justice began a legal needs analysis to ensure that these services target the needs of priority clients, communities of interest, stakeholders and partners. The need for better data analysis is an integral part of our current funding environment. Interim findings have been made from analysis of internal LCCLC/GVCLC data as well as external data from the ABS, LGA profiles, Department of Social Security and Victoria Police. The interim report found that while we are largely meeting

legal needs, improvements can be made. The next step in the 2015/16 financial year will be to complete the examination of data and undertake community consultations, allowing for fulfilment of the analysis.

There were various notable achievements across the practice this year, from law reform to community engagement. They included the following:

- LCCLC held its second Talking Justice event in May 2015, which saw a distinguished line-up of speakers address the place of the law and justice in a free society. More than 377 tickets were sold to four sessions run over two days at the Ulumbarra Theatre in Bendigo.
- LCCLC held two 'Justice Bites' sessions on Prison Reform and Restorative Justice.
- Detailed submissions were made by GVCLC and LCCLC to the Royal Commission into Family Violence, and there was participation in multiple practitioner and community consultations.
- GVCLC was involved in the Shepparton Court redevelopment, including membership of the steering committee.
- In December 2014, LCCLC presented a candidates' forum for the 2014 Victorian election, with a focus on justice. This allowed the public to question their potential leaders and influence future decisions.
- There was active involvement in the organisation of the Health-Justice Symposium at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne, at which our Health-Justice Partnership Lawyer Nickie King presented and which Executive Officer Peter Noble chaired.
- Five staff attended the National Association of CLCs conference in Alice Springs, where the centre made presentations on

legal education and the Health-Justice Partnership.

- Partners in Recovery funded Bridging the Divide, which delivered legal education to mental health workers in the Loddon Murray Mallee region.
- SRV Bendigo continued its advocacy against elder abuse. The regional awareness of SRV continued to grow as a result of engagement and legal education involving community groups and service providers, with a particular focus on Aboriginal communities.
- There was improved collaboration and communication between the LCCLC and GVCLC offices, as well as increased educational opportunities through the installation of video-conferencing infrastructure (through NBN).

LCCLC's commitment to sector development continued in 2014/15. Three staff participated in the Federation of CLCs' Adaptive Leadership Program (Sejal Amin, Lisa Grealy and Clare Sauro). From October to December 2014, GVCLC hosted another graduate from the Federation of CLCs' Graduate Lawyers Scheme – Amy Frew. The management team also attended a two-day Crucial Conversations course to enable open and enhanced communication within the organisation.

As part of the LCCLC strategic plan, which prioritises giving voice to client experiences, staff received training in telling effective client stories.

GVCLC was referenced by a Victorian Parliamentary report into methamphetamine abuse, and LCCLC was referenced in the *Forfeiture Rule Report* by the Victorian Law Reform Commission. LCCLC staff members are active members on a number of Federation Working Groups: rural, regional and remote; family law; family violence applicant

lawyers; and community legal education and development.

The financial year saw many changes to our staff. At GVCLC we welcomed the start of a new program – the Therapeutic Justice project – and the commencement of Sejal Amin as Therapeutic Justice Lawyer. With the departures of GVCLC's Sara Molenaar and Amanda Sharp, Carmendy Cooper commenced as a Community Lawyer and Hannah Fiddelaers as a Paralegal/Receptionist – the latter a change in focus for the receptionist position that recognised the higher skills needed.

At LCCLC, with the departure of Anna Howard we welcomed Clare Sauro as Legal Practice Manager. This new role has an increased managerial focus over the former Principal Lawyer's role. This allowed Nickie King to focus on the Health-Justice Partnership. Sadly, Bonnie Renou and Carolyn Neilson departed at the completion of the *Why Didn't You Ask?* project, and Michael Hennessy and Caroline Granger also departed to pursue sole practice.

THE YEAR AHEAD

The year ahead will be a time of consolidation after a number of staff departures. It will also be an exciting time in welcoming new staff and new ideas.

With the establishment of two significant projects – GVCLC's Therapeutic Justice project and LCCLC's Child Protection Project – it will be important to ensure that the appropriate planning and evaluation are undertaken. Significant efforts will be made during the 2015/16 financial year to ensure that staff are trained in these new areas of law, a community legal education plan is implemented, and time is set aside to take a bird's-eye view of current systems, with the aim of advocating for improvements.

The Health-Justice Partnership pilot will move into its third year and continue the trend of increasing referrals and positive, impactful outcomes for clients.

During the 2015/16 financial year, LCCLC and GVCLC will prioritise the completion of their legal needs analysis to ensure the service targets priority clients.

SRV commissioned a review of their program, and after assessing need and centralised efficiencies, they decided to no longer have dedicated positions in the region. Accordingly, this project will be wound down during the first quarter of the 2015/16 year.

With the current high awareness of family violence issues and the Royal Commission into Family Violence, GVCLC and LCCLC (especially with the completion of the Why Didn't You Ask? project) will advocate for dedicated family violence funding. GVCLC will also increase awareness of the low level of funding they receive in comparison with other CLCs, with a view to becoming sustainable.

SERVICE STATISTICS

In addition to the figures below, LCCLC and GVCLC assisted with 61 matters that arose from our work delivering community legal education and advice sessions at the Family Relationship Centres in Bendigo and Shepparton.

LCCLC service provision

During the financial year ending 30 June 2015, LCCLC assisted clients in 1157 matters – 27.3% of clients indicated that they had a disability, 59.4% relied on Centrelink benefits for income, and 3.8% indicated that they identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

LCCLC client activities by location

Mon/Thurs afternoon service (Bendigo)	326
Wednesday night service (Bendigo)	322
Bendigo IVO	304
Bendigo Other	187
Bendigo SRV	145
Health-Justice Partnership	129
Echuca IVO	100

Maryborough IVO	76
Swan Hill IVO	54
Kyneton IVO	53
Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program (Bendigo)	51
Echuca	35
Bendigo Family Relationship Centre	23
La Trobe University, Bendigo	22
Maryborough	21
Kyneton	16
Castlemaine Court	8
Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program (Hume)	4
<i>Note: IVO – Intervention order matters inclusive of family violence and personal safety.</i>	

GVCLC service provision

During the financial year ending 30 June 2015, GVCLC assisted clients in 778 new matters – 32.4% of clients indicated that they had a disability, 60.9% relied on Centrelink benefits for income, and 6.1% indicated that they identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

GVCLC client activities by location

Shepparton	451
Shepparton IVO	201
Night Service	169
Seymour IVO	133
Shepparton Family Relationship Centre	67
Seymour	38
Cobram IVO	31
Cobram	13
<i>Note: IVO – Intervention order matters inclusive of family violence and personal safety.</i>	

LCCLC areas of law

Family violence	477
Family	278
Personal safety IVO	100
Credit & debt	62

Consumer	58
MVA	57
Wills, POA & guardianship	51
Civil	47
Administration & social security	36
Child protection	31
Traffic	25
Employment	25
Crime	25
Tenancy	24
Neighbourhood disputes	14
Injuries	8
Discrimination	3

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

GVCLC areas of law

Family violence	341
Family	150
Personal safety IVO	98
Crime	72
Wills, POA & guardianship	63
Immigration	40
Credit & debt	34
Traffic	32
Civil	30
MVA	23
Consumer	20
Employment	17
Administration & social security	16
Tenancy	13
Neighbourhood disputes	10
Child protection	9
Injuries	5
Environment	2
Discrimination	1

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

FUNDING

LCCLC and GVCLC gratefully acknowledge funding from the Victorian Government (Department of Justice) and the Commonwealth Government (Attorney-General's Department, largely administered by Victoria Legal Aid). We also acknowledge the funding received from the Clayton Utz Foundation, Consumer Affairs Victoria, Legal Services Board and Commissioner, Council on the Ageing and the Bendigo Student Association.

- Victorian Government funding was applied to all core generalist CLC services, services in the Goulburn Valley, the Seniors Rights Victoria initiative, and consumer advocacy for disadvantaged and vulnerable consumers.
- Commonwealth Government funding supported services in the Goulburn Valley, the NBN regional justice project, operation of a clinical legal education program with La Trobe University, and legal assistance services at the Family Relationship Centres.
- Clayton Utz Foundation funding enabled a pilot Health-Justice Partnership with Bendigo Community Health Services.
- The Legal Services Board and Commissioner funded the family violence research project and Health-Justice Partnership with Primary Care Connect to deliver a therapeutic justice program.
- Council on the Ageing, through its Seniors Rights Victoria program, funded LCCLC to host a lawyer to deliver regional services.
- The Victoria Law Foundation funded a legal curriculum development project to complement the Health-Justice Partnership pilot, delivering legal education to health staff at Bendigo Community Health Services and beyond, and the Talking Justice seminar series.
- The RE Ross Trust supported the evaluation of the Health-Justice Partnership in Bendigo.
- The City of Greater Bendigo and Victoria Law Foundation were key supporters of the Talking Justice lecture series.

CORE SERVICES

Bendigo office

54 Mitchell Street, Bendigo
5444 4364 or 1800 639 121
Monday–Friday 9am–5pm

Shepparton office

Suite 3, 98 Nixon Street, Shepparton
(03) 5821 9849 or 1800 010 799
Monday–Friday 9am–5pm

Bendigo-based generalist services

Telephone advice 10am–1pm, Wednesday evening advice clinic 6–8pm, day clinics 1–4pm and outreach to Echuca, Maryborough and Kyneton (various times).

Shepparton-based generalist services

Tuesday evening advice clinics 6–8pm, day clinics (various times) and outreach to Cobram and Seymour 1–2pm.

Family violence prevention legal services

Attending courts to provide regular family violence prevention duty lawyer services at Bendigo, Kyneton, Maryborough, Echuca, Swan Hill, Seymour, Cobram and Shepparton (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

Weekly legal information sessions in Shepparton and Bendigo; 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 the 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.

In May 2015, LCCLC presented the second Talking Justice series, a series of public lectures at Ulumbarra Theatre in Bendigo that

explored notions of law and justice in a free society. The program sourced diverse voices and perspectives and brought together some of Australia's finest writers and thinkers. Over the weekend it was held, more than 200 people attended this event.

Talking Justice was sponsored and/or supported by Bendigo Community Health Services, Victoria Law Foundation, La Trobe University, Arnold Dallas McPherson, City of Greater Bendigo, Ulumbarra Theatre, Clayton Utz, O'Farrell Robertson McMahon, Strategem Community Foundation, Bress Winery and Community Sector Banking. We are very grateful for their support.

GVCLC launched its Issues in Criminal Sentencing Community Legal Education Project, which aimed to promote rehabilitative justice. GVCLC also delivered a series of family law workshops centred on the Building Respectful Relationships resource.

Partners in Recovery at Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local funded LCCLC to deliver mental health legal education to 93 mental health service workers and 20 clients/carers, resulting in 97% of workers reporting that they would use the information they learnt.

Seven training sessions were held in the Loddon Murray Mallee Region and delivered to approximately 93 mental health and community service workers.

Seniors Rights Victoria staff continued to place evidence on professional/community education to community members and service providers, especially in outlying areas.

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

KEY PROGRAMS/PROJECTS

Why Didn't You Ask?

In 2012, LCCLC established a family violence research project to improve the safety of, and social and health outcomes for, women who are at risk of or experiencing family violence. Why Didn't You Ask? was a three-year project funded by a grant from the Legal Services

Board. It employed a Researcher (Carolyn Neilson), a Lawyer (Bonnie Renou) and a Legal Educator (Robert Southgate).

Our Family Violence Legal Services at Bendigo, Echuca and Maryborough Courts taught us that women often arrive at court not knowing what to expect from the legal process or how an Intervention Order might meet their needs. We also knew 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 ask women what they themselves wanted.

The project also addressed the geographic or 'postcode' disadvantage that inhibits the delivery of consistent services across the population. During this project, Loddon Campaspe CLC's Family Violence Legal Service was extended from three to five courts in our region to include Kyneton and Swan Hill.

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

The project also sought to demonstrate the benefits of Health-Justice Partnerships. We undertook research into when and how health professionals screen for family violence, and how they provide referrals to legal and other supports. It delivered education sessions in relation to screening and referral options for women who experience family violence and who present to their health care professional.

The project also delivered community legal education sessions on family violence and legal protections for those at risk of or experiencing family violence. Sessions were available to a variety of groups and community service organisations.

In May 2015, the project published the report *Will Somebody Listen to Me?*, which outlined the experiences of local women who participated in 190 court-based surveys at Bendigo, Echuca, Maryborough, Kyneton and Swan Hill Magistrates' Courts. Twenty-seven women later agreed to in-depth interviews. Full and abridged versions of this report are available

on the LCCLC website: www.lcclc.org.au

Women were very clear about what they want from the justice system. In particular, they want:

- their concerns for their safety to be heard and respected
- their children to be safer (for those who had them)
- the offender to acknowledge the harm he has done
- the offender to change his behaviour
- community disapproval of the offender's behaviour
- to begin to heal from the harm that has been caused.

In our conversations, women also prioritised the prevention of family violence, which along with a sense of offender and community accountability would enable them to begin to heal from the harm caused to them.

This project was evaluated by Dr Liz Curran, Senior Lecturer, Australian National University, who judged that the project 'led to a greater understanding of the family violence service, referral pathways, and the role of the law and family violence orders with health and allied professionals'. Dr Curran's evaluation is also available on the LCCLC website.

Health-Justice Partnership Project (formerly the Advocacy-Health Alliance Project)

The Health-Justice Partnership between LCCLC and Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS) continued to gain momentum. Direct referrals and secondary consultations by BCHS staff members are growing and the service has now opened more than 90 cases for BCHS clients since its inception.

Referrals to this project have centred on children's and family law issues, and there is a noticeable trend in clients seeking assistance who are ineligible for a grant from Victoria Legal Aid.

Rob Southgate was employed as a research assistant to Dr Liz Curran from the Australian National University for the evaluation of the HJP project. The evaluation employs Dr Curran's '360-degree action research'

methodology, which captures information from clients, front-of-house staff, professional staff, managerial staff, legal staff and key relationship holders who are involved with, or have knowledge of, the Health-Justice Partnership. Working closely with Liz, Rob has diligently refined our evaluation tools and ably coordinated the practical and technical aspects of the evaluation.

The Community Focus Group activity attracted 25 participants, all of whom were patrons of the BCHS Centre. Feedback was very positive, with participants commenting that it 'was good to have a voice'. Data arising out of the client and professional staff interviews is wholly positive and suggests the partnership is having a positive impact on clients' lives. Two additional snapshots are planned for the 2015/16 financial year.

In March 2015, Nickie King co-presented with BCHS Senior Manager Andie West at a well-attended HJP symposium held at the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne. The forum was a great opportunity to profile our project and to hear from other key stakeholders involved in this area.

The flexibility and integration of the HJP role has allowed Nickie to provide advice and casework assistance to many clients with a disability involved in the Child Protection System. We were able to draw from our experiences in this area to provide case studies and commentary to the discussion paper *Rebuilding the Village: Supporting families where a parent has a disability*, which was launched in September 2015 by the Office of the Public Advocate and dealt with clients with a disability and their interactions with the Child Protection System in Victoria.

We provided contributions to the *Medical Journal of Australia* and the *Victorian HealthCare Network Magazine*. Peter Noble also presented, alongside BCHS' Andie West, at the Victorian HealthCare Network in Creswick. Nickie and Peter also travelled to Sydney to speak at a HJP symposium convened by Legal Aid NSW. While there, they met with Redfern CLC which is establishing an HJP with St Vincent's Hospital, the State Association of CLCs and Clayton Utz. We continue to participate in the National HJP

Network and assisted with the planning of the HJP Symposium in March 2015. We have also contributed to the development of a new national HJP toolkit, launched at the annual National Association of Community Legal Centres conference in Melbourne in August 2015.

GVCLC Therapeutic Justice Project

GVCLC secured a three-year grant from the Legal Services Board to deliver a therapeutic justice model in the Goulburn Valley. The Therapeutic Justice Program (TJP) is an innovative and collaborative service based on the theory of therapeutic jurisprudence. It targets people with complex health care needs and related legal issues who are users of the Shepparton Magistrates' Court.

The program has its foundations in a Health-Justice Partnership between the GVCLC and Primary Care Connect. The program team consists of a Therapeutic Justice Lawyer, Sejal Amin, and a Therapeutic Justice Case Manager, David Johns. The TJ Lawyer provides legal information, advice and advocacy assistance to the participants of the TJP. The Lawyer also provides legal education to any relevant health and social services. The TJ Case Manager is an allied health professional who connects participants in the TJP to the appropriate support services in the areas of health, social and cultural support (of particular importance to Koori participants and new arrivals to the Shepparton community).

The TJ team commenced working with GVCLC in the third quarter of the financial year. It spent time gathering baseline data for future evaluation purposes and establishing important professional links with court staff and a wide range of community agencies. To assist in this pre-evaluation work, the team attended training sessions arranged by the funding body, the Legal Services Board, and facilitated by Dr Liz Curran.

To gain a greater insight into therapeutic jurisprudence, Sej and David visited the Melbourne Magistrates' Court where they looked at the way the Court Integrated Services Program interfaced with both the General List and the Assessment

and Referral Court. They were also given very comprehensive introductions to the work of two other therapeutic courts: the Neighbourhood Justice Centre and the Drug Court. A TJ Reference Group was then established with senior representatives of key organisations. Those participating include Regional Coordinating Magistrate Ms Stella Stuthridge, and Mr John Duck, Regional Director, Hume Region, Department of Justice. The Reference Group meets bi-monthly and has provided important input into the team's guidelines and practice arrangements.

The focus, at least in the medium term, will be on clients with complex legal issues (multiple matters) and complex health issues (two or more pathologies). While the program can assist with a range of legal issues, it targets people dealing with criminal law matters and aims to provide medium-to-high-risk recidivists with support services throughout their legal proceedings and beyond. Although the program involves identifying and connecting participants to the relevant support services, or reconnecting them to previous supports, it does not solely focus on crisis situations. It also strives to identify opportunities for clients to engage in life skills development and increased community connections, thus improving their current and future circumstances. This increased engagement with services, and the holistic health and legal case management of therapeutic justice practice, has been clearly demonstrated to be a highly cost-effective means of reducing the risk of reoffending, thereby providing better outcomes for both our clients and the wider community.

Sej and David have already brought about one very useful change in court processes. The Family Violence Coordinating Registrar now receives conflict lists from both VLA and GVCLC. The Registrar then holds a pre-court meeting with advocates, support agency staff and prosecutors to arrange representation, consider safety issues and ensure the availability of appropriate services for the parties. We are confident there will be many more such achievements over the life of the program.

Consumer Advocacy Assistance Program

Our partnership with Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) and our expertise in consumer law gained momentum in the 2014/15 financial year. We have noticed that many of our clients who are struggling with consumer-related matters are experiencing specific difficulties with solar panel installations, gyms, training, 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 to work with CAV and the Consumer Action Legal Centre in 2015/16.

Family Relationship Centre legal assistance

We continued to build on our partnership with the Family Relationship Centres (FRCs) in Shepparton and Bendigo in 2014/15. 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 and enhancing our relationship with the FRCs in 2015/16 to ensure that the best model of family law assistance is provided to those who are vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Bendigo Student Association Student Legal Service

The Bendigo Student Association (BSA) and LCCLC commenced a pilot legal service based at La Trobe's Bendigo campus in August 2012. The service continued over this past financial year to provide students with free legal advice and referrals, a Justice of the Peace service, community legal education opportunities and online content. LCCLC now provides ongoing services throughout the university year, and the Student Legal Service is considered a part of BSA's 'core' service provision to the Bendigo student body.

Clinical Legal Education Program

LCCLC's clinical education program continues to link it with intelligent and dedicated students, allowing them to explore the sector as well as offering a pathway to volunteering and employment. LCCLC hosted three students throughout the second semester of 2014: Nathaniel Loorham, Hannah Wynd and

Jess James-Murphy. 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.

LCCLC committed to the clinical program in 2015 despite uncertainties as to the future of its funding. This allowed La Trobe to plan the subject and culminated in high numbers of enrolments for the 2015/16 financial year.

NBN/RILC Migration Law Partnership

NBN service delivery remained mostly stable in the period, with a slight reduction in client service. Fluctuations in staffing levels prevented expansion of client service; however, client demand increased, outstripping the existing capacity. The success of the community forum held in March 2015 undoubtedly contributed to this demand. Over 40 participants from a diverse range of communities attended and were able to ask representatives of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC) various questions. A strong topic of interest was the sponsorship of family members from overseas. RILC was able to address queries relating to procedure, process and waiting lists. Many community members were justifiably emotional about reuniting with family members, since some are minors being cared for by strangers in unsafe countries.

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.

SRV Lawyer at LCCLC, Caroline Granger, built relationships and collaborated with Bendigo and District Aboriginal Cooperative in the making of a number of short films on the topic of elder abuse. She has also been working very closely with Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria, encouraging clients to participate in mediation with the service wherever possible.

The Palliative Care Legal Program at Bendigo Health, which assists patients with life-limiting illnesses, has been reviewed and is continuing with the support of additional 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.

PRO BONO SUPPORT

We strongly believe that all lawyers can make a pro bono contribution and we 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:

- 24 practitioners supporting the Bendigo evening advice service
- 4 practitioners supporting the Echuca advice service
- 12 practitioners supporting the Shepparton evening advice service
- 8 practitioners supporting the Outreach at Bendigo Health program.

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

LCCLC and GVCLC have developed numerous collaborations to deliver their programs, including:

- LCCLC's partnership with Seniors Rights Victoria / Council on the Ageing to deliver the SRV service
- LCCLC and GVCLC's partnership with Catholic Care to delivery Family

Relationship Centre legal services in Bendigo and Shepparton

- GVCLC's partnership with Primary Care Connect to deliver a Health-Justice Partnership, and with the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre to deliver a Migration Service Pilot
- LCCLC's Clinical Education Program in partnership with La Trobe University, Bendigo Campus
- LCCLC's Student Outreach at La Trobe University, Bendigo with the Bendigo Student Association
- LCCLC's Family violence legal assistance services, 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 such as participation in the Women's Health Loddon Mallee's Take a Stand project, which have also been supported by local partnerships and connections
- LCCLC's Bendigo Health-Justice Partnership, formed with Bendigo Community Health Services to focus services on children (and their families) serviced by their Child Health Invest Project
- Women's Legal Service Link program, GVCLC and LCCLC, which have now signed an MOU with the Women's Legal Service allowing staff to contact it for specialised assistance and advice on their files.

LCCLC VOLUNTEERS

Lawyers – Bendigo

Peter Baker
Matt Barkla
Mark Bolton
Annette Brewer
Zoe Broadbent
Melissa Buchanan
Peter Cutting
Carolyn Davey
Elizabeth (Liz) Davidson
Mark Donaldson
Paula Glassborow
Peter Goffin
Amy Hando
Jessica Hellsten
Kirsten Hughes
Trevor Kuhle
Alastair Lyall
Kirstie Lyons
Sam McGee
Luisa McGrath
John McPherson
Jenny Orchard
Gaayathri Periasami
Russell Robertson
Annalise Romer
Lachlan Singe
Juliana Smith
Alithea Thompson
Catherine Wardrup
Greg Westbrook
Hannah Wilson
Tom Wolff

Lawyers – Echuca

Skye Engwerda
Kate Freshwater
Libby Glen (Admin)
Jack Hobbs
Rachel Kelly
Emma Wright (Admin)

Lawyers – Shepparton

Jade Finn
Cameron Hook
Tom Kilmartin
Owen Lai
James Maxwell
Andrew McCowan
Erica Molyneaux
Amanda Neilson
Felicity Dalle Nogare
James Oldfield
Stephen Tuck
Andrew Westman

Students – Bendigo

Benjamin Caddaye
Aaron Day
Candice Draper
Sarah Gordon-Nilsson
Jessica Hellsten
Gabrielle Jack
Jess James-Murphy
Tom Lawler
Johnathon Lim
Keely McDonald
Indi McGonigal
Stephanie Mein
Kimberly Parker
Verity Pickles
George Puckering
Cole Sloan
Nicole Smith
Robert Southgate
Shaun Stephenson
Chloe-Ellen Townsend
Hannah Wynd

Students – Shepparton

Angelina Bell
Rachael Clifford
James Corrigan
Ramadan Hamidon
Lauren King
Georgia Klaver
Nathaniel Loorham
Mae Mactier
Christine Mellino
Annabelle Mendoza
Christopher Mingah
Kristen Nicholls
Carla Sellwood
Bill Tennant
Rumeysa Topal
Meagan Van Der Schoor
Briana Zito

Administration – Bendigo

Bev Garlic
Heather Osland
Pam Turner

Administration – Shepparton

Irene Lia-Oster
Amanda Sharp

LCCLC & GVCLC CASE STUDIES

Former prisoner blacklisted by tenancy database

LCCLC worked with Housing Justice to help a former prisoner who had been blacklisted by the National Tenancy Database to clear his name and secure accommodation following his release.

Steve* was having difficulty securing a tenancy due to his blacklisting. He contacted Housing Justice, who investigated the source of the listing and discovered that there had been an adverse finding against Steve at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT). Steve knew nothing of the finding.

Prior to his imprisonment, Steve had been living with his partner in a joint tenancy. He was incarcerated before the tenancy ended. The real estate agent contacted Steve's partner and offered to renew the tenancy. Steve's partner visited him in jail and asked him to sign the new lease. Steve refused as he couldn't afford the rent and didn't need a house. Nonetheless, Steve's partner returned a 'signed' lease to the real estate agent.

During the second tenancy period, Steve's partner fell behind in the rent and allegedly damaged the property. The real estate agent took both parties to VCAT, although Steve was unaware of this action. The real estate agent obtained an adverse order in the absence of Steve and his partner.

Housing Justice referred Steve to LCCLC. We lodged an application with VCAT to have Steve's name removed from the adverse order, and an application for a rehearing. As the 14-day time limit for a rehearing had passed, we made submissions in support of an out-of-time application. VCAT granted the rehearing and affirmed the original order with Steve's name removed.

** Not his real name*

CLC argues homeless woman's financial hardship

Mary* lived by the Goulburn River. She didn't live in a luxury waterfront apartment. Or a retirement village. Or even a caravan park. Mary, who was 76, lived alone in her broken-

down car on the banks of the river. She was homeless. And all she wanted was to be left alone to live in peace.

Mary was doing it tough. She scraped by on the aged pension and her old car was her only significant asset. Insurance was out of the question.

When Mary had a car accident in 2014, the other party's insurance company tracked her down and demanded payment for the damage done to their client's car. Mary was in no position to pay this debt. Nor could she afford to pay for a private solicitor. And her matter was ineligible for legal aid. With nowhere else to turn, Mary contacted Goulburn Valley CLC.

One of our lawyers contacted the insurer's collection agent and explained Mary's circumstances. We argued that Mary's income was protected under Section 12 of the Judgement Debt Recovery Act and proposed that the outstanding debt be waived on the basis of financial hardship. After further negotiations with the insurer, it discontinued its action against Mary in February 2015.

Mary still lives in circumstances that most of us would find intolerable. But for now she has one less thing to worry about.

** Not her real name*

Inquest into the death of a Bendigo Health Care Group patient

In 2014, LCCLC represented a local family in a coronial inquest into the death of a young man who was on leave from the Prevention and Recovery Care facility (PARC) operated by Bendigo Health Care Group (BHCG).

In 2009, Dean Laycock, then 24, was a patient at the BHCG facility. Dean had been diagnosed with schizophrenia and was identified as having an intellectual disability. Prior to his discharge to PARC, which was done to assist his transition to independent living, Dean was an involuntary patient at the Alexander Bayne Centre, also managed by BHCG. Dean was told by his treating psychiatrist at the Alexander Bayne Centre that he would be granted four days' leave over Christmas. Dean was excited at this prospect and his family was happy and able to care for him.

On the cusp of his release, a decision was made at a Clinical Team Meeting at PARC to reduce Dean's leave to two days. This meeting was chaired by a consultant psychiatrist who had not met Dean, nor consulted with his treating psychiatrist, nor read his case notes. The reduction in leave was made on the basis of an unsubstantiated and undocumented assertion by a PARC staff member that Dean's mother was unable to care for Dean for the full four days.

The assertion did not go unchallenged, but the team member who challenged this decision was overruled and delegated the responsibility for breaking the news to Dean and his mother when she came to collect him later that afternoon. Dean was visibly upset at this news, but the late notice and the failure to consult with the family thwarted a full and proper risk assessment. That night, Dean took his life at his mother's house.

Coroner Tregent's findings documented the following deficiencies in the care provided to Dean by BHCG:

- a failure to communicate or consult with Dean's family
- a failure to undertake a mortality review
- a failure to comply with the *Mental Health Act 1986* and the relevant Chief Psychiatrist's Guidelines
- a failure to adequately document Dean's care, and
- a breakdown in communication between BHCG staff.

Dean's family and LCCLC welcomed the Inquest's findings. Although only public statutory bodies are mandated to respond to a Coroner's recommendations, the family hoped that BHCG would heed the Coroner's recommendations and assure the community that its current policies and procedures mitigate the potential for future tragedies.

LCCLC was pleased by the Coroner's finding that the family could not be held in any way responsible for Dean's death. BHCG's strategy at the Inquest was, in part, to deflect the focus from its own deficiencies by calling into question the response by Dean's family to his agitated state following his release on

leave and prior to him taking his life. Coroner Tregent rejected this line of attack. Dean's father Peter said that BHCG's strategy 'was to deflect the blame on us. Now the Coroner has said that's not right'.

THANK YOU

- Ange Barry
- Dr Allesandro Demaio
- Arnold Dallas McPherson
- Bendigo and district legal community
- Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS)
- Bendigo Health (BH)
- Bress Winery
- Central Victorian Restorative Justice Alliance
- City of Greater Bendigo
- Clayton Utz Foundation
- Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department
- Community Sector Banking
- David Hillard
- David Neal
- Department of Justice
 - > Victoria Legal Aid (VLA)
 - > Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV)
- Eva Cox
- Federation of Community Legal Centres Victoria
- Helen Szoke
- Ken Marchingo
- La Trobe University
 - > Law Faculty
 - > Social Work Faculty
 - > Bendigo Students Association
- Legal Services Board and Commissioner
- Louise Staley MP
- Lydia Shelly
- Mick Dodson AM
- O'Farrell Roberston McMahon
- National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)
- Robert Stary
- Seniors Rights Victoria (SRV)
- Strategem Community Foundation
- Stuthridge Legal
- Tim Wilson
- Ulumbarra Theatre
- Victoria Law Foundation
- Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS)
- Victorian Association for Restorative Justice
- Warwick Smith

Housing Justice

THE YEAR IN SUMMARY

2014/15 was a year of continued client focus, a new social media presence and highlighting the great work done by the Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP).

Housing Justice joined the world of Facebook and Twitter early in the financial year and used these platforms to highlight program activities and advocate on housing, homelessness and family violence issues.

The SHASP Paper *Support That Works* was released in September 2014 following statewide data collection and collaboration. The paper highlights the successful case management model and the importance of early intervention, and makes a case for the 2012 38% funding cuts to be rectified. Housing Justice, as chair of the SHASP Managers' Network, played a key role in the collation of data and development of the paper, alongside other SHASP providers.

Services in the Mallee region continued to be provided by Haven; Home, Safe through a subcontracting arrangement, although the challenges continue in providing services to a vast area with such limited service hours.

CORE SERVICES

Bendigo office

54 Mitchell Street, Bendigo
5444 4364 or 1800 639 121
Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Mallee service

Provided by Haven; Home, Safe.
143A Lime Ave, Mildura
Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

Outreach

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

Social Housing Advocacy and Support Program (SHASP)

SHASP is an assertive outreach case-management program funded by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It supports public housing tenants whose tenancies are at risk and those who need specialised support to establish new tenancies. Areas of risk and client supports include poor condition of property, hoarding, financial difficulties, household stress and family violence.

Housing Justice renegotiated service targets following benchmarking with other SHASP providers. The Housing Justice service continues to exceed the newly agreed targets.

Tenant Advice and Advocacy Program (TAAP)

Advocacy is provided for vulnerable people in private rental when matters require negotiation or assistance and representation at VCAT. Access to the service is through referrals from Bendigo, Mildura or Melbourne Consumer Affairs Victoria offices, as well as self-referrals.

A Duty Service for the Bendigo Victorian Civil Administration Tribunal (VCAT) residential tenancy sittings was provided for approximately 85% of sittings and assisted in 49 matters.

Hoarding and squalor project

The Loddon Mallee Murray Medicare Local (LMMML), through their Partner's In Recovery (PIR) program, funded Housing Justice for a six-month project. This project provided training to community and mental health workers around hoarding and squalor across the LMMML region. Information sessions were also provided to families and carers in Bendigo, Kerang and Echuca. A new website resource (www.hoardingresources.org.au) was developed to highlight referral pathways and optimise service coordination.

Here are some of the highlights of this project:

- The project delivered eight training sessions to 138 mental health and community service workers across Bendigo, Echuca, Castlemaine, Kerang and Wycheproof.
- Results from pre- and post-training surveys demonstrated a significant increase (approximately 85% of participants) in worker knowledge, understanding and confidence to work with people who hoard or live in squalor.
- 83 workers (54% yes, 34% maybe) expressed interest in more-specialised training using the Buried in Treasures framework.
- 63% of family and carer attendees stated they had limited to no understanding of hoarding and squalor pre-session, in comparison with the 93% of attendees who stated they had very good to good understanding around hoarding and squalor post-session.
- Family and carer confidence in supporting their loved ones regarding hoarding and squalor climbed from 32% (confident or very confident) to 86%.

Network and sector involvement

Housing Justice continues to take an active role in local homelessness service networks (LASN and LOMA) and now sits on the LOMA Steering Committee. The Housing Justice Manager chairs the statewide SHASP Managers' Network, and Housing Justice is an active member of the TAAP network and the Community Legal Centres' Tenancy Working Group.

Housing Justice were invited to join the Partners In Recovery Housing Working Group to improve housing options for people with severe and persistent mental health issues.

Housing Justice co-facilitates the Hoarding Working Group in the Loddon Campaspe region. This group looks at service coordination to address issues related to hoarding, including animal hoarding, and

squalor. Housing Justice often works with SHASP clients to address conditions of property and poor living skills that put their tenancies at risk.

Parity, a national publication by Council for Homeless Persons, provided an informative forum to launch their March edition: 'Responding to Regional and Rural Homelessness'. Housing Justice were co-funders and contributors, and presented on the panel at the forum.

CLIENT FEEDBACK

Client feedback forms are provided to clients at the completion of a service. Of the 22 respondents during the financial year:

- 95% felt their rights were explained and they understood the information or services received
- 95% felt their information would be kept private
- more than 95% felt supported and that they were treated respectfully, were assisted in a timely manner, had their cultural needs acknowledged, and were listened to
- 80% felt their situation improved a lot while working with Housing Justice, with just two people (1%) stating their situation did not change.

Client quotes

'You feel confident in yourself after the help.'

'I just hope you realise how important your work is to people who feel very vulnerable and confused. Please continue. My thanks always.'

'Excellent service. Found your service very prompt and caring.'

'[She] was extremely helpful and explained everything as it came up. She returned calls in a timely manner and was very understanding of our predicament. I would recommend her to anyone needing her services.'

COMMUNICATIONS

Housing Justice's profile both regionally and statewide has been strengthened through our Facebook and Twitter presence.

SERVICE STATISTICS

SHASP

Key service statistics include the following:

- 10% of SHASP clients were Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander or both; just two clients were from a CALD background.
- 5% of clients were employed, 47% were receiving a Disability Pension (including DVA), 16% were on Newstart, and 17% were receiving a Parenting or Carer's payment.
- 24% were in the Mallee and 76% resided in Loddon.
- although there were 306 episodes (13 weeks of support), SHASP worked with 156 individuals – thus, most clients require, on average, six months of case management support.

TAAP

TAAP service provision was above-target for both direct client support and outreach activities.

Key service statistics include the following:

- Housing Justice (including Mallee subcontractor) assisted 300 clients.
- 85% of TAAP clients were in private rental. Of these, 64% were on a government pension. Although a number of these tenants would receive Rental Assistance, many would be experiencing financial stress.
- 8% were in community housing and 5% in public housing.
- The top five tenancy matters were compensation claims (22%), possession or notice to vacate (21%), rent arrears (17%), bond claims (13%) and lease breaks (11%).
- 34% of clients' matters were heard at VCAT, with 35% of these subject to full redress and a further 37% to partial redress. Just 8% of clients with VCAT matters had no redress.
- 73% were either self-referred (59%) or attended the duty service (16%).

- 5% were known to be from a CALD background, and 4% were known to be of ABTSI background.
- 68% were receiving a government pension.

THE YEAR AHEAD

SHASP funding was renewed for a further three-year cycle at the end of 2014/15. We look forward to working with our funders and the Victorian Government to strengthen the SHASP program and rectify the funding cuts of 2012.

Housing Justice was successful for a further Partners in Recovery project to strengthen the links between real estate agents and the community and mental health service sector. We look forward to working over the next year to identify barriers and enablers, and to improve the capacity for vulnerable and disadvantaged tenants to successfully establish and sustain private rental tenancies.

TAAP is undergoing a statewide review of both the program and opportunities for future developments. Housing Justice is working with Consumer Affairs Victoria and other TAAP providers to consider new innovations and how to best work within the VCAT system and under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*.

FUNDING

We acknowledge the ongoing funding from the Department of Human Services, Office of Housing, Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Department of Justice. We also acknowledge funding by Murray Primary Health Network.

STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Darlene Taylor: Diploma in Community Services and volunteer assistance with literature research around hoarding, July–December 2014.

Melissa Wild: Masters in Social Work, September–December 2014.

CASE STUDIES

The risk of homelessness in family violence

Helen* was seeking assistance at VCAT due to a breakdown of her tenancy following family violence. Helen and the perpetrator, John*, were both on the lease. Helen left the property and advised the agent. John remained at the property and refused to sign agency forms to acknowledge that Helen had left the tenancy. John eventually stopped paying rent and abandoned the property.

Helen was assisted by Housing Justice and was able to establish that the damage to and cleanliness of the house were John's responsibility, as the agent's records from previous house inspections indicated that while Helen was living there, there was no damage and the house was kept to a high standard. The VCAT member apportioned the costs without question as all the evidence demonstrated John's responsibilities. As per the RTA and the Wrongs Act, the rent arrears were apportioned evenly as the tenants are jointly and severally responsible for this. This case was further complicated due to the real estate agent's lack of knowledge about how to manage a family violence situation and their failure to inform Helen of a VCAT application. Housing Justice's submission to the Family Violence Royal Commission recommended that costs such as rent arrears be considered in the management of tenancies and for avoiding additional costs to victims of family violence.

** Not their real names*

The role of duty advocacy

Mary* is a single mum with three children. Her real estate agent was seeking an Order of Possession at VCAT for rent arrears. Mary suffers from severe anxiety. She felt that the agent was not listening and was intimidated by the situation.

Housing Justice provided support and worked with Mary on a repayment proposal. The advocate attended the hearing with Mary for support. The agent did not wish to enter into a repayment plan. They were not agreeable to negotiation and requested an

Order of Possession from the VCAT member. The VCAT member approved the repayment plan proposal and the Order of Possession application was adjourned to allow Mary to repay her debt. Mary was very grateful for our assistance.

** Not her real name*

SHASP support to reduce hoarding

Louise* lived in a public housing flat in a rural town. She had difficulty parting with belongings and had a tendency to collect antiques, machinery and clothing. Due to the small unit Louise lived in, she had also stored many items at a farm belonging to a friend. A Housing Justice advocate and support worker was asked to help Louise as the farm was to be sold and she was in breach of her tenancy due to the condition of her flat.

The advocate assisted Louise in identifying local agencies to help remove items from the farm as donations. These donations were sent to a different town to avoid Louise repurchasing them from the local op shop. Louise found the removal of her belongings very stressful but was ready to address her hoarding and work with the agencies. This stress did contribute to further hoarding within the flat; however, with help from the advocate, Louise was able to prioritise her belongings and relocate the excess chickens and other pets. When asked about her experience with SHASP, Louise stated: 'They were lovely but in the end they couldn't help as much as they wanted to because they didn't have the money to remove everything'. Louise is very interested in working more in the future to address her hoarding tendency through a peer support group.

** Not her real name*

THANK YOU

- Murray Primary Health Network and Partners in Recovery (PIR)
- Department of Justice – Consumer Affairs Victoria
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Client Residential Services (Loddon and Mallee) DHHS
- Support for High Risk Tenancies DHHS
- Bendigo Law Court, especially VCAT Registrar Kim Hudson
- Council for Homeless Persons (CHP), especially Sarah Toohey, Noel Murray and Jenny Smith
- Parity (CHP)
- Haven; Home, Safe
- Community Housing Federation Victoria (CHFV)
- Justice Connect
- Victorian Public Tenants Association
- Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS)
- City of Greater Bendigo
- Loddon Mallee Homelessness Network (LOMA)
- Loddon Campaspe Local Area Service Network (LASN)
- Mallee Local Area Service Network (LASN)
- SHASP Managers' Network
- Tenancy Working Group (FACLC)
- Tenant Advice and Advocacy Program (TAAP) Network
- PIR Housing Working Group
- PIR Hoarding and Squalor Project Reference Group
- Loddon Hoarding and Squalor Working Group
- Mallee Family Care
- Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative
- Njernda Aboriginal Corporation
- Lee and Becca Shuer
- Catholic Community Services
- La Trobe University Social Work
- Bendigo TAFE
- Green Clean Team

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 2015, 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.

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 2015 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
Registered Auditor # 287836

Dated: 16th September, 2015



**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 2015, 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

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'C. Gaskell'.

**Catherine Gaskell
Registered Auditor # 287836**

Dated:

Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2015

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

**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 2015.

DIRECTORS

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

Niall Hensey	Chairperson (Appointed November 2014)
Mandy Stewart	Deputy Chairperson
Barry Keane	Secretary
Jennifer Wilson	Member
Pat Boyer	Member
Deb Allan	Member (Appointed November 2014)
Sally Smith	Member (Appointed November 2014)
Trevor Kuhle	Member (Appointed November 2014)
John McPherson	(Resigned November 2014)

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 \$510,514 (profit of \$185,635 in 2014).

Revenue has increased by \$595,673 compared to the previous financial year.

Expenses have increased by \$270,794 compared to the previous financial year.

A positive increase in cash of \$489,532 was achieved.

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

DIRECTORS' REPORT

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:

- (i) A benefit included in the aggregate amount of emoluments received or due and receivable by directors shown in the accounts; or
- (ii) 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.

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 2015, the number of members was 6.

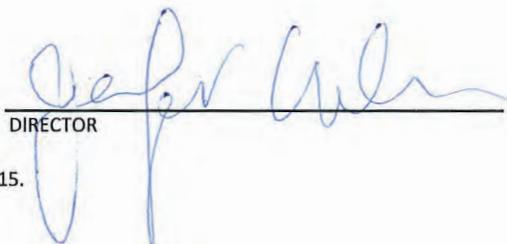
AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

The lead auditor's independence declaration for the year ended 30 June 2015 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 22 day of October 2015.

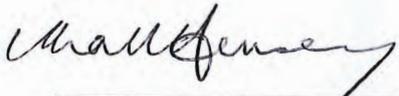
ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
(A Company Limited By Guarantee)
A.C.N. 082 541 240

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors of the company declare that:

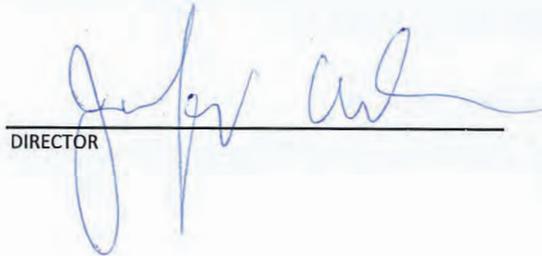
- 1 The financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*; and
 - (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
 - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2015 and of its performance for the year ended on 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

Dated this 22 day of October 2015.



DIRECTOR

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

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
Revenue	2	2,678,092	2,082,419
Employee Expenses	3a	(1,521,966)	(1,415,680)
Supplies & Consumables	3b	(587,875)	(428,211)
Audit Fees	11	(4,730)	(4,300)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Result Before Capital and Specific Items		563,521	234,228
Depreciation and Amortisation	4	(53,007)	(48,593)
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Result for the year		510,514	185,635
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

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

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

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	5	1,491,838	1,069,129
Investments		66,823	-
Trade and Other Receivables		51,327	44,833
Accrued Income		929	3,868
Bond Paid		8,993	1,867
Prepayments		77,803	76,283
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,697,713	1,195,980
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, Plant & Equipment	6	188,378	190,992
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		188,378	190,992
TOTAL ASSETS		1,886,091	1,386,972
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and Other Payables	7	150,382	155,707
Provisions	8	155,308	144,844
Interest Bearing Liabilities	9	2,081	2,658
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		307,771	303,209
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	8	18,840	32,880
Interest Bearing Liabilities	9	2,543	4,460
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		21,383	37,340
TOTAL LIABILITIES		329,154	340,549
NET ASSETS		1,556,937	1,046,423
EQUITY			
Retained Earnings		1,556,937	1,046,423
TOTAL EQUITY		1,556,937	1,046,423
Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets	12		
Commitments for Expenditure	15		

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

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

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

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2013	860,788	860,788
Surplus Attributable to the Entity	185,635	185,635
Balance at 30 June 2014	<u>1,046,423</u>	<u>1,046,423</u>
Surplus Attributable to the Entity	510,514	510,514
Balance at 30 June 2015	<u>1,556,937</u>	<u>1,556,937</u>

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

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

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts			
Commonwealth, State and Local Government Grants		2,703,670	2,059,715
Receipts from Donations, Bequests and Raffles		2,322	3,350
Interest Received		13,267	9,903
Other Income		161,107	164,619
Payments			
Employee Expenses		(1,525,542)	(1,375,876)
Supplies & Consumables		(660,892)	(585,806)
Net GST Paid to ATO		(151,513)	(137,902)
CASH GENERATED FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	14b	<u>542,419</u>	<u>138,003</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payment for Property, Plant and Equipment		(50,393)	(50,826)
NET CASH USED IN INVESTING ACTIVITIES		<u>(50,393)</u>	<u>(50,826)</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Proceeds/(Repayment) of Borrowings		(2,494)	2,935
NET CASH FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		<u>(2,494)</u>	<u>2,935</u>
NET INCREASE IN CASH HELD		489,532	90,112
CASH AT BEGINNING OF YEAR		<u>1,069,129</u>	<u>979,017</u>
CASH AT END OF YEAR	14a	<u><u>1,558,661</u></u>	<u><u>1,069,129</u></u>

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

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The financial statements cover Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd as an individual entity, incorporated and domiciled in Australia. Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd is a company limited by guarantee.

Basis of preparation

These general purpose financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* and Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. The company is a not-for-profit entity for financial reporting purposes under Australian Accounting Standards. Material accounting policies adopted in 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

Initial recognition and measurement

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the Company becomes a party to the contractual provisions to the instrument. For financial assets, this is the equivalent to the date that the Company commits itself to either purchase or sell the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instrument are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs except where the instrument is classified 'At fair value through profit or loss', in which case transaction costs are expensed to profit or loss.

Classification and subsequent measurement

Financial instruments are subsequently measured at fair value, amortised cost using the effective interest method, or cost.

Amortised cost is calculated as the amount at which the financial asset or financial liability is measured at initial recognition less principal repayments and any reduction for impairment, and adjusted for any cumulative amortisation of the difference between the initial amount and the maturity amount calculated using the *effective interest method*.

The *effective interest* method is used to allocate interest income or interest expense over the relevant period and is equivalent to the rate that discounts estimated future cash payments or receipts over the expected life of the financial instrument to the net carrying amount of the financial asset or financial liability. Revisions to expected future cash flows will necessitate an adjustment to the carrying amount with a consequential recognition of income or expense in profit or loss.

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.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(c) Financial Instruments (Continued)

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 and impairment losses are recognised either in profit or loss or as a revaluation decrease if the impairment losses relate to a revalued asset. 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 - 2014/15	Rate - 2013/14
Leasehold Improvements	30% to 40%	30% to 40%
Plant & Equipment	36%	36%
Leased Assets	12.5% to 33%	33%

(f) Impairment of Assets

At the end of each reporting period, the Company assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. The assessment will consider both external and internal sources of information. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less cost of disposal and value-in-use, to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is immediately recognised in profit or loss.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(f) Impairment of Assets (continued)

Where the future economic benefits of the asset are not primarily dependent upon the asset's ability to generate net cash inflows and when the company would, if deprived of the asset, replace its remaining future economic benefits, value in use is determined as the depreciated replacement cost of an asset.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the Company estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Where an impairment loss on a revalued asset is identified, this is recognised against the revaluation surplus in respect of the same class of asset to the extent that the impairment loss does not exceed the amount in the revaluation surplus for that class of asset.

(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 legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions recognised represent the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

(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

Short-term employee benefits

Provision is made for the Company's obligation for short-term employee benefits. Short-term employee benefits are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service, including wages and salaries. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the (undiscounted) amounts expected to be paid when the obligation is settled.

The Company's obligations for short-term employee benefits such as wages and salaries are recognised as a part of the current trade and other payables in the Statement of Financial Position.

Other long-term employee benefits

Provision is made for employees' annual leave entitlements not expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Other long-term employee benefits are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments are measured at present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures, and are discounted at rates determined by reference to end-of-reporting-period market yields or Government bonds that have maturity dates approximating the terms of the obligations. Any remeasurements of other long-term employee benefit obligations due to changes in assumptions are recognised in profit or loss in the periods in which the exchanges occur.

The Company's obligations for long-term employee benefits are presented as non-current provision in the Statement of Financial Position, except where the Company does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the reporting date, in which case the obligations are presented as current provisions.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(k) Employee Benefits (continued)

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 recognised 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

Non-reciprocal grant revenue is recognised in profit or loss when the entity obtains control of the grant and it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before it is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

When grant revenue is received whereby the entity incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant is recognised as income on receipt.

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.

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

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
 NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 1 : STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

(n) Economic Dependence

Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd is dependent on the Department of Social Services and the Department of Human Services for the majority of its revenue used to operate the business. At the date of this report, the Board of Directors has no reason to believe these Departments will not continue to support Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd.

(o) New Accounting Standards for Application in Future Periods

The AASB has issued a number of new and amended Accounting Standards 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's 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 the Company's Annual Statements
AASB 9 <i>Financial Instruments</i>	The key changes include the simplified requirements for the classification and measurement of financial assets, a new hedging accounting model and a revised impairment loss model to recognise impairment losses earlier, as opposed to the current approach that recognises impairment only when incurred.	1 January 2018	The assessment has identified that the financial impact of available for sale (AFS) assets will now be reported through other comprehensive income (OCI) and no longer recycled to the profit and loss. While the preliminary assessment has not identified any material impact arising from AASB 9, it will continue to be monitored and assessed.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014.

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

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

NOTE 2: REVENUE	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Operating Grants	2,497,841	1,874,655
Interest	10,328	6,658
Donations	2,322	3,350
External Payments Income	129,748	140,438
Other	37,853	57,318
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL REVENUE	2,678,092	2,082,419
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NOTE 3: EXPENSES	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Note (3a) Employee Expenses		
Salaries and Wages	1,369,867	1,293,068
Superannuation	123,768	112,409
Work Cover	5,236	4,623
Other Employee Expenses	23,095	5,580
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Employee Expenses	1,521,966	1,415,680
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Note (3b) Supplies & Consumables		
Advertising & Promotion	33,043	17,617
Consultants	143,439	24,801
Brokerage	-	3,401
Bank Charges	990	654
Cleaning	8,109	9,218
Computer Expenses	21,266	21,267
Conference Fees	-	8,914
Electricity & Gas	13,756	14,385
Insurance	1,992	5,154
Resource & Subscriptions	15,757	24,492
Licenses and Permits	233	911
Minor Equipment	11,927	7,171
Other Expenses	37,261	27,124
Planning & Programming	2,130	23,102
Printing, Postage & Stationery	25,065	21,941
Projects	13,415	9,039
Rates and Taxes	4,834	4,297
Rent	90,086	85,484
External Evaluation	29,704	-
Repairs & Maintenance	5,660	5,096
Security	1,062	982
Telephone & Internet	40,641	31,521
Travel/Accommodation & Professional Development	44,356	30,184
Vehicle Expenses	43,149	51,456
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Supplies & Consumables	587,875	428,211
	<hr/>	<hr/>
NOTE 4: DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Plant & Equipment	29,236	22,671
Leasehold Improvements	21,025	21,105
Leased Assets - Amortisation	2,746	4,817
	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL DEPRECIATION AND AMORTISATION	53,007	48,593
	<hr/>	<hr/>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
(A Company Limited By Guarantee)
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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015**

NOTE 5: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Cash on Hand	600	600
Cash at Bank - Cheque Accounts	949,113	594,991
Cash at Bank - Term Deposits	542,125	473,538
TOTAL CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS	1,491,838	1,069,129

NOTE 6: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Leasehold Improvements - at Cost	188,191	185,157
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(89,985)	(68,961)
	98,206	116,196
Plant & Equipment - at Cost	249,905	202,547
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	(163,901)	(134,665)
	86,004	67,882
Leased Assets	19,937	19,937
Less: Accumulated Amortization	(15,769)	(13,023)
	4,168	6,914
TOTAL PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT	188,378	190,992

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 \$	Total \$
Balance as at 1 July 2013	125,516	59,512	3,731	188,759
Additions	11,785	31,041	8,000	50,826
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Amortisation (Note 4)	(21,105)	(22,671)	(4,817)	(48,593)
	116,196	67,882	6,914	190,992
Balance as at 30 June 2014	116,196	67,882	6,914	190,992
Additions	3,035	47,358	-	50,393
Disposals	-	-	-	-
Depreciation and Amortisation (Note 4)	(21,025)	(29,236)	(2,746)	(53,007)
	98,206	86,004	4,168	188,378
Balance as at 30 June 2015	98,206	86,004	4,168	188,378

NOTE 7: TRADE & OTHER PAYABLES

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Trade Creditors	13,379	15,896
Net Amounts Payable to the ATO	78,244	46,154
Accrued Expenses	58,759	93,657
TOTAL TRADE & OTHER PAYABLES	150,382	155,707

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014.

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

NOTE 8: PROVISIONS

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Current		
Employee Benefits (refer note 8a)	155,308	144,844
Non-Current		
Employee Benefits (refer note 8a)	18,840	32,880
TOTAL PROVISIONS	174,148	177,724

NOTE 8a: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Current		
Annual Leave	108,027	115,479
Long Service Leave - <i>nominal value</i>	47,281	29,365
	155,308	144,844
Non-Current		
Long Service Leave - <i>nominal present value</i>	18,840	32,880
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	174,148	177,724

Employee provisions represent amounts accrued for annual leave and long service leave. The current portion for this provision includes the total amount accrued for annual leave entitlements and the amounts accrued for long service leave entitlements that have vested due to employees having completed the required period of service. Based on past experience, the Company does not expect the full amount of annual leave or long service leave balances classified as current liabilities to be settled within the next 12 months. However, these amounts must be classified as current liabilities since the Company does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of these amounts in the event employees wish to use their leave entitlement.

The non-current portion of the provision includes amounts accrued for long service leave entitlements that have not yet vested in relation to those employees who have not yet completed the required period of service.

NOTE 9: INTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES

Current		
- Finance Lease	2,081	2,658
Non-Current		
- Finance Lease	2,543	4,460
TOTAL INTEREST BEARING LIABILITIES	4,624	7,118

Interest bearing liabilities represented by the lease of two Photocopiers:
Copier 1: The lease repayments are \$325.29. The lease expires in August 2014.
Copier 2: The lease repayments are \$209.10. The lease expires in July 2017.

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

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
John McPherson	-	-
Mandy Stewart	-	-
Barry Keane	-	-
Jennifer Wilson	-	-
Pat Boyer	-	-
Niall Hensey	-	-
Trevor Kuhle	-	-
Deb Allan	-	-
Sally Smith	-	-
Total Director's Remuneration	-	-

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 10: KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL COMPENSATION (continued)

(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.

NOTE 11: REMUNERATION OF AUDITORS

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Amounts received or due and receivable by auditors for:		
- auditing the accounts	<u>4,730</u>	<u>4,300</u>

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 2015:

	Note	2015	2014
		\$	\$
Cash at Bank		1,491,838	1,069,129
Investments		66,823	-
Total Cash & Cash Equivalents - Operational Funds	5	<u>1,558,661</u>	<u>1,069,129</u>

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

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Profit Attributable to the Company	510,514	185,635
Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities		
Non-cash flows in operating profit:		
Depreciation and Amortisation	53,007	48,593
Changes in assets and liabilities	-	-
(Increase)/Decrease in Prepayments	(1,520)	(64,131)
(Increase)/Decrease in Bonds Paid	(7,126)	-
(Increase)/Decrease in Trade & Other Receivables	(6,494)	(33,137)
(Increase)/Decrease in Accrued Income	2,939	3,245
Increase/(Decrease) in Trade & Other Payables	(5,325)	(42,006)
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	(3,576)	39,804
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>542,419</u>	<u>138,003</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 15: COMMITMENTS FOR EXPENDITURE

There are no known capital commitments as at 30 June 2015.

Operating Lease Commitments	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Payable		
- Not later than 1 year	111,994	113,424
- Later than 1 but not later than 5 years	43,813	144,411
Total operating leases	<u>155,807</u>	<u>257,835</u>

The operating leases are represented by:

Lease of property at 54 Mitchell St, Bendigo, expiring October 2016.

Lease of property at Suites 3 & 4/98 Nixon St, Shepparton, expiring June 2017.

Lease of 3 motor vehicles, expiring June 2015.

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.

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Ross Trust AHAKF	-	10,000
GV Grant	142,785	-
CLC	638,163	-
Clayton Utz AHAKF	210,485	132,194
LSB Family Violence Project	-	127,116
PIR Real Estate Liaison Program Grant	35,392	-
Other Small Projects	7,857	-
	<u>1,034,682</u>	<u>269,310</u>

NOTE 17: MEMBERS' GUARANTEE

Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd. is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* and is a company limited by Guarantee. member is required to contribute a maximum of \$10 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the Company. If it is wound up, the constitution states that each. At 30th June 2015, the number of members was 5.

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 2014.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

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, 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 2015 \$	Carrying Amount 2014 \$
Financial Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	(5)	1,491,838	1,069,129
Trade and other receivables		51,327	44,833
Total Financial Assets		1,543,165	1,113,962
Financial Liabilities			
At amortised cost			
Trade and Other Payables	(7)	72,138	109,553
Interest Bearing Liabilities	(9)	4,624	7,118
Total Financial Liabilities		76,762	116,671

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 2014.

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)

(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	
	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014	2015	2014
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Financial Liabilities due for payment								
Trade and Other Payables	72,138	109,553	-	-	-	-	72,138	109,553
Interest Bearing Liabilities	2,081	2,658	2,543	4,460	-	-	4,624	7,118
Total contractual outflows	74,219	112,211	2,543	4,460	-	-	76,762	116,671
Total expected outflows	74,219	112,211	2,543	4,460	-	-	76,762	116,671
Financial assets - Cash flow realisable								
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,491,838	1,069,129	-	-	-	-	1,491,838	1,069,129
Trade & Other Receivables	51,327	44,833	-	-	-	-	51,327	44,833
Total anticipated inflows	1,543,165	1,113,962	-	-	-	-	1,543,165	1,113,962
Net (outflow)/inflow on financial instruments	1,468,946	1,001,751	(2,543)	(4,460)	-	-	1,466,403	997,291

ADVOCACY AND RIGHTS CENTRE LIMITED
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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2015

NOTE 19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)

(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).

	Profit \$	Equity \$
Year ended 30 June 2015		
+1% in interest rates	14,918	14,918
-2% in interest rates	(29,837)	(29,837)
Year ended 30 June 2014		
+1% in interest rates	10,691	10,691
-2% in interest rates	(21,383)	(21,383)

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 2014.

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

NOTE 19. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS (Continued)

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 re carried 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

	Net Carrying Amount 2015 \$	Net Fair Value 2015 \$	Net Carrying Amount 2014 \$	Net Fair Value 2014 \$
Financial Assets				
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,491,838	1,491,838	1,069,129	1,069,129
Trade and Other Receivables	51,327	51,327	44,833	44,833
Total Financial Assets	1,543,165	1,543,165	1,113,962	1,113,962
Financial Liabilities				
Trade & Other Payables	72,138	72,138	109,553	109,553
Interest Bearing Liabilities	4,624	4,624	7,118	7,118
Total Financial Liabilities	76,762	76,762	116,671	116,671



Advocacy and Rights Centre Ltd,
trading as **ARC Justice**

ABN 23 082 541 240

Bendigo

54 Mitchell St

Bendigo 3550

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