



# **REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE**

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**ANNUAL REPORT**  
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## Introduction

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**R**edfern Legal Centre (RLC) provides services for an area that remains one of the most disadvantaged in Sydney.

The Centre opened in March 1977 with a volunteer staff in premises provided by the South Sydney Council. Assistance from the Council and the Federal Government enabled the employment of paid staff from mid 1977.

RLC continues to provide a general legal service to the community. It specialises in areas of law where a particular need has been demonstrated and where legal services are unavailable or inadequate. The casework and policy work of RLC concentrates on issues concerning consumer credit & debt, housing, tenancy, domestic violence, victims of crime and intellectual disability. The Centre has extended the usual casework-courtwork model and has developed an innovative, interdisciplinary approach to the delivery of legal services.

In addition to the generalist legal service the Centre currently operates the Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) and a Credit and Debt service. These specialist services are funded separately from the general legal service.

During the last 14 years RLC has initiated or has been actively involved in projects which have led to the establishment of other services: - Welfare Rights Centre, the Prisoners Legal Service, The Accommodation Rights Service, Consumer Credit Legal Centre, Campbelltown Legal Centre, Redfern Legal Centre Publishing, Streetwise Comics and IDRS.

Demand for services has continued to increase. However lack of funding prohibits RLC from expanding to meet the need. In some areas of work reductions in funding may result in cuts to services.

## **An interdisciplinary legal service**

RLC continues to deliver a legal service where the legal and social welfare problems of clients are dealt with in a complementary way. This approach ensures that clients' problems are not dealt with in a fragmented way by various professionals, that aspects of clients' problems are not ignored, and that matters are dealt with efficiently and effectively.

## **Preventative approach**

The Centre is under pressure to use its resources with the greatest efficiency and as a consequence has developed a style of legal service designed to assist the greatest number of people. Central to this is the adoption of a preventative perspective and hence a priority is given to:

- cases which may establish a precedent which benefit a particular class of clients
- community legal education
- law reform and policy work.

## **Objectives for 1989-1990**

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- **T**o provide a legal advice and referral service.
- To provide ongoing casework services to people who live or work in the RLC catchment area and who cannot afford the services of a private solicitor or obtain adequate assistance from the Legal Aid Commission of NSW.
- To identify inequalities and defects in laws, the legal system, administrative practices and society which affect RLC's clients and disadvantaged people generally, and to work for social and legal change to remove those defects and inequalities.
- To promote community legal education.

- To investigate and develop new ways of providing legal services to RLC's clients and improve access to RLC's services and to ensure that the quality of those services is maintained and improved.

## **RLC's casework service**

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### **Eligibility for casework assistance**

In general the Centre aims to undertake work which does not duplicate that of government legal aid services or the private profession. It does not act for clients who are able to afford a private solicitor.

Legal advice and assistance is provided to people and organisations who:

- cannot afford a private lawyer;
- cannot obtain adequate assistance from other legal aid services;
- fall within the Centre's geographic guidelines.

RLC's catchment area is Redfern, Alexandria, Chippendale, Darlington, Enmore, Erskineville, Glebe, Macdonaldtown, Mascot, Botany Newtown, Rosebery, Waterloo, Zetland, Camperdown, Surry Hills, Ultimo, Pyrmont. The IDRS and Credit & Debt services, which are separately funded, provide state-wide services.

Initial advice is given to people who make an appointment and/or attend at the Centre.

Follow-up work is generally restricted to those who live or work within the RLC catchment area and to specific areas of poverty law such as credit, debt, tenancy, intellectual disability, victims of crime, domestic violence, wills, immigration, consumer complaints, social security and problems of local community groups. Additional follow-up is given in areas of special interest to local people and where the expertise of Centre staff is necessary.

Guidelines can be relaxed in special cases, for example where no other legal assistance is available.

Assistance is not given in commercial matters and conveyancing, nor to landlords in tenancy matters.

Assistance is generally limited to advice only in matters such as family law, probate, workers compensation or personal injury claims where other assistance such as the services of the private profession will often be available.

### **Availability of advice and assistance**

The Centre's phones are attended from 9 am - 1 pm & 2 pm - 9 pm Monday to Friday. The Centre's doors are open from 9 am - 1 pm and 2 pm - 9 pm each weekday.

Interviews are conducted during the week at six sessions: Monday-Friday 6 pm until 9 pm and Tuesday afternoon from 2 pm until 5 pm.

Appointments with volunteer solicitors or social workers are also made during these hours. Appointments with staff for on-going matters are made during normal working hours.

Home and institutional visits may on occasions be arranged for clients who are unable to attend the Centre.

Emergency advice is given outside usual interviewing hours. There is generally a staff lawyer on duty from 9 am to 9 pm weekdays.

**Telephone advice** is given:

- to social welfare and community workers and staff of relevant government offices, seeking advice on behalf of clients, any time between 9am and 9pm.
- to any caller during advertised interviewing session times.
- in emergencies to any caller 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays.  
Calls are received from anywhere in NSW as well as interstate.

It should be noted that advice given over the telephone is in some cases as substantial and time consuming as interviews. In other cases referral is made to a more appropriate agency.

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Referrals are made to private lawyers, other legal aid bodies and other agencies.

***Court representation for victims of domestic violence***

Each Wednesday morning the Centre operates the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme at Redfern Court.

***Community Legal Education.*** Programmes for community organisations, clients, volunteers, residents, community workers are conducted regularly.

***Specialist units of legal service within the general legal service***

In early 1985, the Centre adopted a policy and structure which resulted in the establishment of specialist units of legal service within the general legal service, the aim being to develop a particular expertise among staff and volunteers in the difficult yet high demand casework areas. As a consequence specialist casework services are available during the following interviewing shifts:

Monday 6-9 pm - credit and debt

Tuesday 2-5 pm - general advice

Wednesday 6-9 pm - tenancy

Thursday 6-9 pm - social security

Friday 6-9 pm - intellectual disability.

(General services are also provided during these times).

## **Statistics**

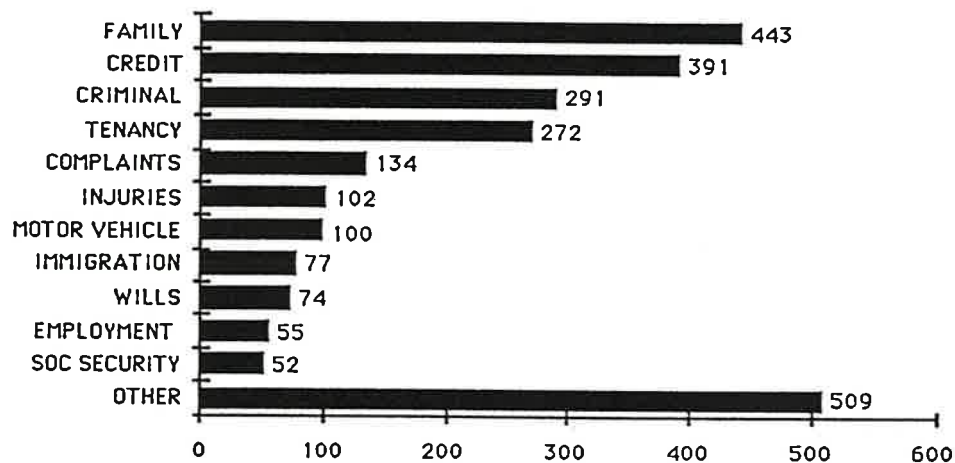
The following statistics do not include the activities of the IDRS. The IDRS has prepared its own Annual Report.

The Centre keeps statistics in three categories:

- 1 New Files - where files are opened and continuing action on behalf of the client is required. Of course a large number of continuing files were opened prior to the 1989/90 financial year.
- 2 Advice - where advice is given at interview and no file opened.
- 3 Telephone Advice and Referral.

During 1989/90 the Centre recorded 4,520 initial client contacts. 2,020 clients attended the Centre seeking advice and the rest were given advice by telephone. 681 files were opened for continuing matters.

Telephone advice 1989-1990



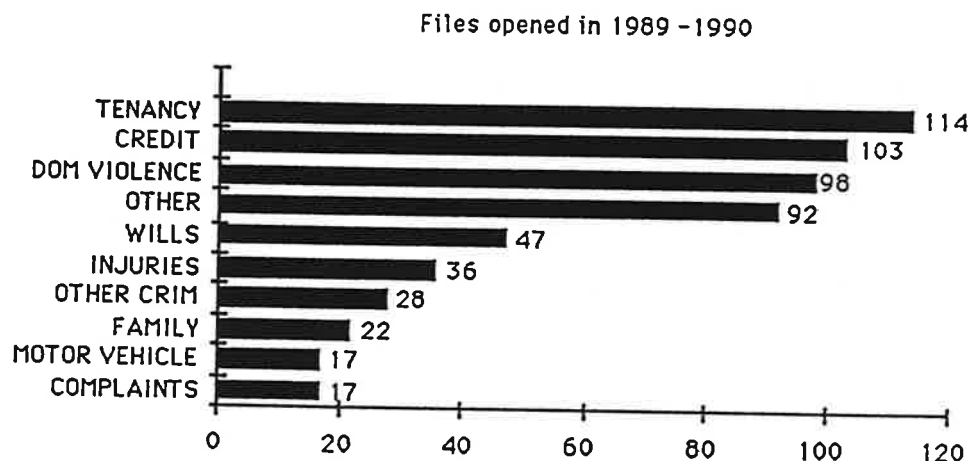
Total telephone contacts were 2,500.

The major areas of concern to people who contacted the Centre by telephone were family law (18%), credit and debt problems (16%) tenancy (11%) and criminal law (12%). As RLC is one of the few services able to give legal advice over the telephone, calls are received from all over New South Wales and occasionally from interstate.



The major areas where advice was sought by clients in person (excluding cases where files have been opened) were family law (20%), criminal law (14%), credit (10%) and tenancy (9%).

The 681 files opened by the Centre during this period include all matters where continuing action is taken by Centre staff and volunteers. Continuing action can range from a simple letter to the conduct of a major test case such as a Supreme Court Appeal.



The main areas in which the Centre opened files are set out in the above chart. The areas in which these files are opened reflect the Centre's areas of speciality including tenancy, criminal injuries compensation, domestic violence, and credit law. The Centre also prepares a considerable number of wills for pensioners in the South Sydney area who cannot afford private legal assistance.

While family law is the area where clients contact us most frequently, most such cases are referred to the Legal Aid Commission or private solicitors. These statistics do not fully represent the amount of client case work done in each area by full time and volunteer staff. The amount of work involved in some matters, such as most consumer credit litigation, far exceeds the time involved in some other matters, such as the preparation of a simple will.

## **Pro bono arrangements**

### **Frederick Jordan Chambers**

Andrew Fisher, a barrister at Frederick Jordan Chambers, co-ordinated a number of barristers who agreed to give free advice and assistance to clients referred by RLC. This scheme worked very well until Andrew Fisher left the bar. We are looking for an enthusiastic barrister to co-ordinate a similar scheme. Thanks go especially to John Basten, Andrew Fisher, Janet Manuel, Terry Lynch and Mark Lynch.

### **Clayton Utz**

Clayton Utz, solicitors, agreed in late 1988 to a pro bono scheme under which they act for up to 50 clients a year who have been referred by RLC. The scheme has been used enthusiastically and successfully and is often the only source of help that can be found for some very deserving people.

The assistance provided by these arrangements is invaluable and RLC thanks all those who are involved.

## **Public Interest Cases**

In addition to its specialist areas RLC has been involved in a number of cases which have significant public interest. These include the continuing inquest into the death of Sallie Anne Huckstepp and the enquiry into the death of David Gundy.

The inquest into the death of Sallie Anne Huckstepp commenced in January 1987. The Centre acts for Ms Huckstepp's immediate family. The matter is now in its 5th week of actual hearing time and was listed to conclude in April 1990. The hearing has exposed the seamy underbelly of steamy Sydney with allegations of State and Federal police involvement in corruption, murder, drug dealing and prostitution.

Mr David Gundy, an Aboriginal man, was shot and killed in his bedroom on 27 April 1989 by members of the NSW police SWOS or Special Weapons and Operations Section. Mr Gundy was not wanted by the police for any offence.

The Centre acted for the brothers and sisters of Mr Gundy who were refused government funding for representation at the inquest. Peter McClellan QC, Kate Traill, Lloyd McDermott

and Paul Byrne of the NSW Bar appeared at the inquest donating their services free in a case which ran over 6 weeks.

Detective Sergeant Dawson gave evidence at the inquest that his finger must have slipped on to the trigger of his shotgun and that it had accidentally discharged. The coroner found that there was no prima facie case for an indictable offence and the 6 member jury found that the shooting was accidental.

The matter continues — the Ombudsman is conducting an inquiry and the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody will investigate the incident.

## **Law Reform & Policy Work**

**T**he Centre draws upon information gained from its large caseload to alert government and the public to needed reforms of legislation and government policy. It also uses this information to further develop its own services. Specific cases of public interest may be run in order to raise awareness of the reforms required. In 1989/90 the major issues taken up concerned housing and tenancy, consumer credit, domestic violence, juvenile justice and intellectual disability. Our activities in these areas are described in the major sections of this report which follow.

The Centre also undertook law reform work in the areas described below.

### **Criminal Justice**

Early in 1990 at the State Conference of Community Legal Centres a decision was made to direct the efforts of NSW legal centres in relation to criminal justice policy through an organisation named the Campaign for Criminal Justice (CCJ). A staff member of RLC has been involved in the production of regular bulletins for the CCJ containing items of topical

interest and in assisting to co-ordinate the finances of and subscriptions to the *CCJ Bulletin*. Members of the CCJ have provided speakers for public meetings as well as producing the *CCJ Bulletin* and being available for media comment on criminal justice issues of importance in the State. A staff member is the alternate on the Legal Aid Commission's Prisoners Legal Service Advisory Sub-Committee.

### **Privacy**

The Centre took part in the debate preceding the amendment to the Privacy Act to regulate credit reporting. This included meetings with the Minister for Consumer Affairs and various discussions with the director of the Credit Reference Association during 1990.

### **Social Security**

RLC made submissions to the Commonwealth Government re amendments to the Social Security Act affecting de facto relationships.

### **Contingent Legal Aid Fund**

An RLC staff member represented the Combined Community Legal Centres Group on the working party that was established by the Legal Aid Commission of NSW to consider the proposal to establish a contingent Legal Aid Fund in Australia. A paper on the issue was given at the 1990 National Community Legal Centres' Conference.

## Media

The Centre's activities have attracted attention from the media with television appearances being made by staff members on housing and credit issues, radio interviews on women's rights, housing, credit and criminal justice and newspaper reports covering the ambit of our specialities.

The media has conducted a number of interviews with staff for educational purposes, such interviews and comments appearing in Sydney metropolitan newspapers and journals further afield.

Staff and volunteers have had articles published in the *Legal Services Bulletin*, *Law News*, *Law Society Journal* and *On The Record* in an array of specialities.

## Links with other organisations

**RLC** has extensive involvement in local, state-wide and national organisations working in the interests of people with legal and related problems. Working with these organisations has enabled RLC to work more efficiently in that it can prevent unnecessary duplication by co-ordinating with other services, can target its services and identify unmet areas of need.

Community involvement in the operation of the Centre takes place in a number of ways.

- At a formal level, the Centre has made provision for the inclusion of local community members on its Management Committee.
- Input from Community organisations is invited during the annual review and evaluation.

- The Centre acts as a resource to local groups and obtains feedback on the needs and priorities of local residents. It has specific links with the following organisations: South Sydney Committee of the Australian Assistance Plan, South Sydney Domestic Violence Committee, South Sydney Womens Centre, South Sydney Community Aid, . It also has frequent contact with other welfare agencies in the area such as , The Shop Family Support Service, Inner Sydney Regional Council, the Factory (youth service) and numerous others.

RLC is involved with the following state-wide organisations:

- Youth Justice Coalition,
- Editorial committee of the Lawyers Practice Manual
- Management committee of the Consumer Credit Legal Centre. RLC's Credit Unit works closely with CCLC to co-ordinate delivery of casework services and to work jointly on research, submissions and campaigns.
- Management committee of Redfern Legal Centre Publishing Limited
- Domestic violence committee of the Women's Co-ordination Unit.
- Tenant's Union of NSW.

### **Combined Community Legal Centres Group**

RLC is a member of the NSW Combined Community Legal Centres Group. RLC sends a representative to the monthly meetings of this Group. RLC has contributed to the work of the following subcommittees of the Combined CLC group:

- Consumer credit
- Management issues
- Professional indemnity insurance
- Community legal education workers group
- Domestic violence
- On the Record editorial committee
- Tenancy Working Party of the Tenants' Union of NSW and the Combined Community Legal Centres,
- Superannuation
- Practice issues
- Development of uniform statistics across CLCs.

RLC is involved with the following national organisations:

- Consultative Committee to review the Residential Tenancies Act
- The Australian Financial Counselling and Credit Reform Association (AFCCRA) is the national body for financial counsellors, credit advocates and others interested in advocating on behalf of consumers of credit. Both RLC's consumer credit solicitors are involved with AFCCRA and one was elected secretary for 1988 - 1989. RLC has made important contributions to AFCCRA campaigns on the reform of the Credit Act, credit over-commitment, consumer credit insurance and class actions.
- One solicitor is on the executive of the Consumer Law Association - National.

## **The Intellectual Disability Rights Service**

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**I**n 1980 a group of RLC volunteers became concerned about the legal problems of people with an intellectual disability. They found that these people often suffer violation of their legal and human rights. Breaches of the rights of people with an intellectual disability have in the past often gone unrecognised, and even where the breaches were recognised they often went unremedied.

In 1986 RLC received funding from the Federal Department of Community Services and the NSW Department of Youth and Community Services (as they were then) to operate a full-time service for people with an intellectual disability. Funding for Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS) is still predominantly from these sources, i.e. the Federal Department of Community Services and Health and the NSW Department of Family and Community Services.

IDRS is a service for people with an intellectual disability to advance their rights in the community. It does this through:

### **Legal advice and casework**

In 1989/1990 our lawyers gave advice in response to hundreds of requests for assistance, particularly in the areas of guardianship, property management/exploitation, wills, employment, criminal matters, caregiver rights/duties, sexual harassment/assault.

### **Education**

A large number of legal rights courses were run for people with an intellectual disability, disability workers, service managers and parents of people with an intellectual disability. Planning was begun on a major conference on Rights at Work, which would involve people with an intellectual disability from all over New South Wales.

### **Reform Activities**

Submissions were made or worked on in relation to a number of matters affecting people with an intellectual disability, including employment rights, accommodation, behaviour management, discrimination and sexual assault.

### **Links with other organisations**

IDRS is represented on:

- NSW Women's Co-ordination Unit consultative committee on sexual assault of people with an intellectual disability
- Community Legal Education working group
- Equal Employment Service steering committee.

### **IDRS Publications**

In addition to existing publications, work was undertaken on two new books. The Legal Rights Teaching Kit - for use by trainers and disability workers in teaching people with an intellectual disability about their rights and responsibilities.



Question of Rights - deals with the rights of people with a disability in areas such as money management, employment, voting, crime and the justice system.

Plans were formulated for an innovative rights magazine for people with an intellectual disability.

Two booklets were developed dealing with sterilisation of women with an intellectual disability - one aimed at doctors, the other at women with an intellectual disability.

The IDRS has a management committee. It includes representatives of the NSW Council for Intellectual Disability and RLC (see below). Advice to IDRS is also obtained from the members of a consumers' committee known as the Rights Forum. This forum is also represented on the IDRS management committee.

### **IDRS Management Committee**

Jill Anderson, Janene Cootes, Carl Craber, Jane Frazer, Stan Kelly, Denis Mockler, Maurice Mastrantonio, Daria O'Mara, Gordon Renouf, Paula Rix, Helen Wilson.

## **Credit and Debt Service**

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### **Consumer Credit Policy**

Two staff solicitors specialise in credit and debt law. They coordinate RLC's Credit and Debt Service. The following list details law reform activities undertaken by the service.

- RLC staff participated as one of four national consumer group representatives on the consultative committee to the Standing Committee of Consumer Affairs Ministers on consumer credit law reform. Submissions on a number of points were prepared
- We played a major role in the production of a submission by a coalition of Australia's leading consumer groups on the Credit Bill 1989.
- We participated in the consultative processes on the proposed NSW credit legislation.
- We presented papers at the Australian National Financial Counsellors and Credit Reform Association Conference in Adelaide 1990 on credit law reform, the use of guarantors, and consumer credit insurance.
- We followed up two submissions to the Business and Consumer Affairs inquiry into Point of Sale Finance and Insurance Practices. This has involved liaison with the department and various banks and finance companies.
- We contributed to the debate on class actions legislation from the point of view of consumers. A report entitled "*Commonsense Guide to the Class Actions Debate*" was released in late 1989.
- We used our survey of the consumer credit insurance market to lobby the Federal Minister for Consumer Affairs and the Trade Practices Commission to establish an inquiry into the market.

- A staff member resourced the Waltons Action Group, an effective lobby group based in Victoria. He met with the Trade Practices Commission and produced various submissions designed to protect consumers from those unjust loans.
- A substantial submission to the NSW Attorney General in response to a government Discussion Paper on tribunals was prepared jointly with the Consumer Credit Legal Centre and Macquarie Legal Centre on behalf of NSW Community Legal Centres.
- In conjunction with the Australian Consumers Association and others, RLC conducted the first National Insurance phone in.

### **Advice and Casework**

RLC's Credit and Debt Service provides direct legal services to the public on credit matters. It also provides legal consultancy services to financial counsellors, other credit workers, community workers, and government. The Service aims to provide a comprehensive casework, education, law reform and policy service.

In 1989/90, the Centre assisted over 500 clients with consumer credit and related matters. In many cases the issues involved in a given individual's case are of great importance to consumers as a whole.

While many cases are conducted by our staff solicitors, counsel is briefed where a grant of legal aid has been made. Our sincere thanks are offered to the following barristers for their great assistance and patience:  
John Basten, Terry Lynch, Michael Windsor, Julian Millar, Mark Lynch and Andrew Fisher.

### **Civil Penalties**

The Credit Act encourages credit providers to comply with the important disclosure provisions of the Credit Act by imposing a "civil penalty" on credit providers who fail to comply. In most cases a credit provider who fails to comply

loses its right to recover the credit charges (interest) that would otherwise be payable. The credit provider can then apply to the Commercial Tribunal to seek reinstatement of the lost charges.

Five of our clients instructed us to commence proceedings against Garendon Investments Pty Ltd, a financier of timeshare agreements in the Port Macquarie area. Garendon does not hold a credit provider's licence. In our view its loans are regulated by the Credit Act. Our argument, if successful, will cause the company to suffer an immediate civil penalty totalling \$20 million. The onus will then be on Garendon to convince the Commercial Tribunal to reinstate some of that amount. Our client's oppose Garendon's application on the basis that the tactics in selling the timeshare finance were unfair.

- In *Custom Credit Corporation Limited v. Commercial Tribunal of NSW (1990) ASC 56-007* the Supreme Court further clarified the powers of the Commercial Tribunal of NSW.
- In *Mercantile Credits Limited v. Barber & Ors (1990) ASC 55-988* our client was relieved of \$10,000 in credit charges.
- In *AGC Ltd v. Minenko (1990) ASCP 55-980* Commercial Tribunal clarified its powers in matters involving civil penalties and set out requirements for applications by credit providers for relief from the consequences of statutory breaches. They must comply with the rules of natural justice and provide the affected debtors with the grounds and particulars of the company's claim.

#### **Unjust contract cases and other Credit Act matters**

The Centre acted on behalf of a number of borrowers who applied to the Tribunal for relief from unjust contracts.

- In *Sullivan v. Waltons Credits Limited (1990) ASC 55-976* and *(1990) ASC 56:023* (where very old debts were still being claimed and on which credit life insurance policies were still continuing). The Commercial Tribunal declined to determine that the financial arrangements were caught by the Credit Act. Nevertheless the decision and its subsequent review in the Supreme Court have caused the creditors to reassess many of their claims. This has benefited a very

substantial number of consumers, most of whom are age pensioners. The Court has widened the definition of "course of dealing" so that it is a more useable term.

- *Jordan v W. Berkman P/L* a matter which settled in the Commercial Tribunal, has helped lead to the withdrawal of W. Berkman P/L's application for a credit provider's licence after our complaints to Business and Consumer Affairs.
- Two Supreme Court actions against two major banks to re-open unjust guarantee contracts were settled, thereby saving our clients' sole assets - their homes.
- A second test case against AGC Credit Line was run in the Commercial Tribunal. Our client was trying to prove that the Credit provider could not recover any monies alleged to be owing due to a failure to comply with the Credit Act at the commencement of the loan. Our client was satisfied with the settlement.

## **Housing and Tenancy**

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### **Advice and Casework**

**W**ednesday night has been maintained as a specialist tenancy session.

In October 1989 the new Residential Tenancies Act 1987 came into force. This Act substantially altered the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants previously governed by the Landlord and Tenant Act.

The Centre's work in 1989/90 has largely consisted of advising tenants on the new legislation and assisting them to enforce their rights under the legislation.

20% of all files opened by the Centre during this period were in relation to tenancy problems and approximately 10% of all clients who seek advice from the centre in person or by telephone are in tenancy related difficulty.

The Centre undertook a significant amount of work for a group of tenants in Camperdown in properties owned by Prince Alfred Hospital. These tenants had carried out a battle for many years in relation to their tenancies and Supreme Court proceedings for possession were instituted against the tenants in late 1989.

After extended negotiations between the residents group, Redfern Legal Centre, the Hospital and the Department of Housing, the proceedings were finally settled and all those tenants who asked to be rehoused were offered accommodation in the nearby area with the Department of Housing. The tenants were later awarded the 'Tenants of the Year' Award by the Tenant's Union in recognition of their efforts.

The Centre has dealt with a dramatic increase in the numbers of public tenants seeking assistance and believes that this demand has been created by policy and administrative changes within the Department of Housing.

The provisions of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1948 relating to protected tenants are still in force and are not affected by the Residential Tenancies Act.

The Centre continues to act for and advise protected tenants on their rights and assists them to negotiate with landlords where appropriate.

Significant staff time has been spent providing back-up legal advice and assistance to housing and community workers.

The demand from tenants for assistance is increasing, possibly due to the introduction of the Residential Tenancies Act and the withdrawal of funding to the local para-legal tenants services.

RLC is experiencing difficulties and is extremely stretched in its ability to meet the need in this area. The Centre has been required to respond to many complex and urgent matters as well as provide advice and assistance to tenants and community workers.

During 1991 RLC will explore options in order to develop comprehensive services to tenants in response to local demands. This will involve liaison with community agencies and negotiation for funding.

### **Housing and Tenancy Law Reform**

During the last 14 years a significant proportion of RLC's clients have been tenants and as a consequence the Centre has a strong commitment to law reform and policy work in this area.

Work involved the following:

- Response to the government report recommending the phasing out of protected tenancies.
- Dissemination of advice to tenants and community organisations on tenants' obligations in response to the creation of a register of protected tenants.
- Being contracted to prepare the report "Good Housekeeping" on the mechanisms available for appeal and review of the decisions of the state and territory housing authorities. This was prepared for the Federal Government as part of the review of the Commonwealth State Housing Agreement.
- Preparation of a submission to government arguing that the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 should extend legislative protection to boarders and lodgers
- Discussions with the Department of Housing on the application of policy, particularly in relation to applications for rehousing by victims of domestic violence.
- Member of the Review Committee established to advise the Tenancy Commissioner on the application of the Residential Tenancies Act. This involved preparation of written and oral submissions.
- Member of the Tenancy Legal Working Party of the Combined Community Legal Centres and the Tenants Union. The major work taken on by this group during 1990 was the conduct of a survey of the Residential Tenancies Tribunal, and participation in a review of the Residential Tenancies Act. This involved preparation of a major report and submission. (The survey findings highlighted a number of issues for tenants, notably the lack of adequate assistance and representation.)
- Provision of back-up advice and assistance to housing and community workers in the area.



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## Victims of Crime

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**W**ith the creation of the Victims Compensation Tribunal in February 1988, RLC's practice in this area has expanded rapidly. The majority of cases reflect the nature of the South Sydney area and arise from victims of street offences.

RLC has continued to maintain its substantial practice in the area of applications to the Victims Compensation Tribunal.

There are two aspects to the practice, the first is the existence of a number of applications on behalf of local residents who have been victims of street assault and the second is a specialised service offered to victims of sexual assault. The former are conducted primarily by volunteers under the supervision of the staff solicitor whilst the latter are the responsibility of the Victims of Crime solicitor. Because of the sensitive nature of sexual assault it is considered important to have consistency of a single solicitor dealing with the client.

The victims of crime solicitor works closely with the Sexual Assault Centre at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and frequently provides telephone advice to sexual assault counsellors.

Although most applications are routine, there are some which raise points of law and have required extensive argument in the Tribunal.

The victims of crime casework has led to the development of VICTER - a computer legal expert system designed to facilitate the progress of an application. Thanks must go to the Law Foundation for their assistance with this project.

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## Domestic Violence

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The Centre has for a number of years offered assistance and legal representation to women experiencing domestic violence. Prior to the creation of the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme this assistance was provided on an ad hoc basis and court representation depended on the availability of a Centre solicitor. As the number of women seeking apprehended violence orders at Redfern Court increased it became a matter of concern that a solicitor was frequently unavailable and many women were attending court unrepresented. Equally of concern was the fact that even when a solicitor was present, the number of clients made it impossible for that solicitor to ensure that each client was given appropriate referrals to community agencies, to fully explain the court process and to protect her from harassment by the defendant within the court building.

In November 1989 this problem was raised at a meeting of the South Sydney Domestic Violence committee and a decision was made to establish a roster of solicitors and local community agency workers one morning a week (summons list day) at the Redfern Local Court.

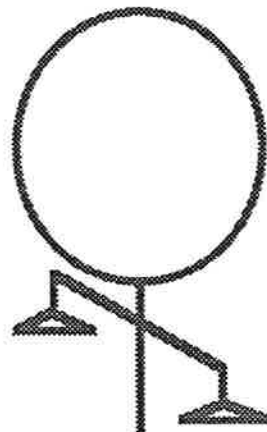
Intensive planning and training occurred throughout late 1989 and 1990 and on March 14 (incidentally RLC's birthday) the WDVCS commenced operation.

The Scheme is considered to be unique among court support schemes currently in existence. The role of the support worker is not merely that of hand holder but is integral to the provision of legal representation. The support worker takes initial instructions for the solicitor, explains the court process and investigates the client's non legal needs. This latter responsibility ensures that appropriate referrals are made to the Department of Social Security, Department of Housing, Domestic Violence Support Groups, one to one counselling, or other local services.

Contrary to most other models of court support, all support workers are employed by local agencies and participate in the

WDVCAS as part of their paid employment. The close working relationship between solicitor and support worker is also central to the operation of the scheme. It is an extension of legal centre philosophy that there be no artificial distinction made between legal and non legal problems.

The Scheme represents the co-operation of a number of different agencies, although the RLC provides a co-ordinating role. The solicitors are provided by Redfern Legal Centre, Kingsford Legal Centre and the Domestic Violence Advocacy Service while the support workers are drawn from South Sydney Women's Centre, the Shop Family and Children's Centre, South Sydney Community Aid, D4 Darlinghurst, Randwick Family Support Service and East Garden Health Centre.



Since March, the Scheme has been operating very successfully. Referrals are made by the Chamber Magistrate at the point of issuing the summons. Clients are also referred by the Court on the morning. Redfern Court staff have provided the Scheme with the exclusive use of the unused traffic court which means that tea and coffee, toys for children, and most importantly an area away from the defendant can be provided to clients of the scheme. As many as twelve women have been represented on any one morning.

In May 1990 a successful submission was made to the Law Foundation for the provision of funds to properly evaluate the Scheme. This project should be concluded in April 1991.

It is hoped that a positive evaluation will result in the Scheme being transferred to other courts.

Finally the Scheme, although in its infancy, has attracted attention. In April 1990 a paper was presented by the RLC solicitor to the National Forum on Domestic Violence Training, outlining the nature and operation of the Scheme.

### **Other Initiatives**

RLC's Victims of Crime solicitor has been involved in a number of initiatives at both the state and local level.

The South Sydney Domestic Violence Committee is a group of community and government workers, representatives of both Waterloo and Redfern Police Stations, the local Chamber Magistrate, and residents, all of whom work with victims of domestic violence and/or have a specific interest in violence against women in the home. It has achieved results in a number of different areas relating to domestic violence, including education, case discussion, lobbying, compiling a resource list for local doctors and establishing a therapeutic group for survivors. The Committee forms part of a state-wide network of local committees, which operate with the assistance of the Women's Co-ordination Unit and NSW Domestic Violence Committee. The same solicitor is a member of the Legal Sub-Committee of the NSW Domestic Violence Committee and a regular observer of the State Committee.

Major initiatives include:

- convening of the legal working party for the development of the NSW Domestic Violence Strategic Plan which was recently launched by the Premier of NSW
- the establishment and ongoing involvement in the evaluation of the WDVCS (see above) It is hoped that this project, in addition to improving the service currently offered, will provide valuable research findings in the area of policing and court procedure which will assist in lobbying for reforms in these areas
- involvement with the Attorney General's Dept concerning the development of guide-lines for court support schemes

- 
- consultations with the Department of Housing concerning their rehousing and allocation policy as they relate to victims of domestic violence
  - membership of the Coalition for Domestic Violence Crisis Services - a lobbying group aimed at introducing adequately funded crisis intervention services in NSW
  - involvement with the Legal Sub Committees review of s 562 of the Crimes Act (apprehended violence orders).

## **Community Legal Education**

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**T**he community legal education programme takes two forms -

### **Community legal education to members of the public**

It is considered essential to the preventive approach to legal services that members of the public be informed of their rights and obligations so that they may be able to develop self help skills.

### **Community Legal Education (CLE) Group**

During 1989/90 RLC trained volunteers to provide talks/seminars on various legal issues to various community and other organisations. This markedly expanded the amount of community legal education RLC was able to offer.

The volunteer group is currently producing a video on the policies and operations of the Centre which will be used for training new volunteers.

The CLE group and staff have, in response to the findings of a survey of local community organisations, developed a new community legal education programme. Seminars have been prepared on a number of topics, including credit and debt, tenancy, family law, immigration, domestic violence, anti-discrimination law, neighbourhood disputes, motor vehicle accidents and the legal system. Seminars have been provided for the general community and to specific organisations upon request.

During 1989/90 talks, lectures, workshops and materials have been provided for community workers, clients, students, professional and community groups.

#### **Law for Non Lawyers**

Staff have taught various sections of the RLC Publishing sponsored course, "Law for Non Lawyers." which is open to members of the public.

#### **Publications**

Staff and volunteers prepare and contribute to a large number of publications where the objective is to provide the public with information that demystifies the law. The best known of these are "The Law Handbook" and the "Debt Survival Guide".

#### **Media presentations**

Centre workers have appeared on radio, television and in the press to take up issues such as sexual assault, credit, tenancy, intellectual disability.

**Professional training**

Given the development of particular case-work areas within the Centre, staff have considered it important to impart this specialist knowledge to other professionals. This dissemination of information has improved the skills of other workers dealing with similar client groups.

Initiatives include:

**Consumer Credit** The presentation of practice papers to the professional staff of the Legal Aid Commission Offices in Sydney's western suburbs.

**Domestic Violence** As part of the development of the Womens' Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme a solicitor from the Centre trained community and refuge workers in the law relating to domestic violence. Several workshops have also been presented to local domestic violence committees.

**Government and Non Government Agencies** Staff of RLC regularly provide legal education on specialist topics to organisations such as the Departments of Family and Community Services, and Probation and Parole Service, to charitable organisations such as St Vincent de Paul and the Sydney City Mission, to financial counsellors, Adult Migrant Education Service and Telecom apprentices.

**Lawyers** RLC staff liaise regularly with RLC Publishing and are on the Editorial Committees of the Lawyers Practice Manual and the Law Handbook. RLC staff and volunteers continue to write and review previous contributions to these and other RLCP publications.

**In house training** RLC also runs regular talks for volunteer staff on various areas of poverty law. We have received Law Society accreditation for these talks (MCLE points).

## General Social Welfare Services

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**S**outh Sydney Council provides RLC with a full-time social worker who is responsible for a range of social welfare matters, including counselling and referral, social security, community liaison and development.

RLC has a policy of regularly taking social work students on placement as part of their training. These students work under supervision of the full time social worker, and are involved in casework, research, community development and advocacy.

**Legal Assistants** While these remain predominantly law students, there are a number from other disciplines, e.g. health, social work, welfare and management. The Centre regularly takes students from the Student Initiatives in Community Health Project.

### South Sydney Youth Advocacy Programme

In the beginning of 1989 RLC, in conjunction with the Youth Justice Coalition, the Sydney City Council's Youth Advisory Committee and the Redfern, Waterloo and Surry Hills Police stations, established a training programme for police and youth workers.

In October 1989, with funding from South Sydney Council, the programme instigated a pilot volunteer roster to provide an advocacy service at the local police station for young people arrested in the South Sydney municipality.

In May it was decided by the programme's committee not to resume the scheme. This decision was made because of the failure during the pilot period - despite the assurances of support from Superintendents of local police stations - of young people to access the programme, a lack of resources



to administer the programme and a recognition that there was a need to increase awareness of services provided by police and local community services.

It appears that work will be needed to improve the relationship between police and community services, especially in the knowledge of each others roles and responsibilities. Proposals to achieve this have been discussed following the establishment of an ongoing forum which aims to find ways of improving links between the two groups.

RLC thanks South Sydney Council for its support in this programme.

### **Juvenile Justice**

In November 1988 it was decided that, although RLC did not have sufficient resources to provide representation for juveniles in the Children's Court, it would attempt to promote community education and the role of non-lawyers in responding to the legal needs of youth in the South Sydney area.

RLC's social worker has been involved in the establishment of an ongoing consultative process with Redfern Police Station. This has involved presenting seminars at police training days, an orientation session for all new police officers to the area and the establishment of an ongoing case conference session.

In these sessions we have addressed issues concerning juvenile justice, the pressures faced by juveniles at school, unemployment and family matters, with a specific focus on Aboriginal youth.

These initiatives are an attempt to link local community services and the police in increased co-operation and 'problem sharing'.

### **Immigration**

Social work students prepared a report on the needs in the area for advice and assistance with immigration. As a consequence, training for community workers concerning the

new laws has been completed and a volunteer advice service is being considered.

## **Local Issues**

The Centre's social worker has specific responsibility for community liaison and acts as a contact point for local agencies to provide information and feedback on individual and community needs. Legal staff with expertise in particular areas regularly consult with relevant local groups (such as the South Sydney Domestic Violence group) to obtain user feedback on the Centre's services.

Co-operation with the various welfare and community agencies ranges from regular participation with a service, to contact over particular issues, exchange of news etc. It also includes providing legal advice for the organisations or their clients. There are frequent cross-referrals.

The Centre works with a range of "inter-agency" groups and committees, including:

- South Sydney AAP (the local general Inter-Agency)
- Inner Sydney Migrant Inter-Agency
- South Sydney Youth Services Committee
- South Sydney Domestic Violence Committee
- Redfern-Waterloo Police Community Consultative Committee
- Youth Justice Coalition
- South Sydney Family and Childrens Services Inter-Agency
- Financial Councillors Association of NSW.

Work with these groups includes issues and projects of common concern, such as:

- Organisation of a roster at Redfern court for representation of victims of domestic violence in conjunction with a non-legal support worker.
- Development of the Youth Advocacy Programme
- Assistance with legal problems relating to community organisations.

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## **Staffing and Management**

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### **Management**

Redfern Legal Centre is a company limited by guarantee. It has a board of directors who have delegated many of their functions to the Centre Management Committee.

Staff are responsible for the daily management of the Centre and are responsible to the Management Committee.

The Centre's legal practice is formally conducted by the principal solicitor, Ben Slade.

The Management Committee meets monthly and receives reports from subcommittees and staff. It is responsible to the board of directors of Redfern Legal Centre Ltd. for the policy and management of the Centre. At least one member of the Management Committee must be a Director.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the general direction and policies of RLC. The directors receive copies of staff reports, minutes of staff and management meetings (the Intellectual Disability Rights Service, Credit & Debt Financial Counselling Service, and of the Redfern Legal Centre itself) and meet when required, at least once a year.

At regular intervals (not more than 12 months apart) weekend conferences are held to evaluate and review the policies and services of RLC and to plan future activities.

These conferences are attended by directors, management committee members, staff, volunteers (solicitors and students), representatives from local community organisations and others. Resolutions of these meetings have the status of recommendations to the Management Committee.

All sections of RLC report to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

## Directors

Philip Burgess, Clare Petre (resigned), Nigel Vertigan, Peter Stapleton, Crash Craddock.

## RLC Management Committee

Clare Petre, Stamatia Stamatellis, Nigel Vertigan, Anne Flahvin, Nick Kidd, Janice Connelly, Clare Farnan, Penny Musgrave, Paul Mavramatis, Mary Perkins, Pam Anderson, Gordon Renouf, Frances Gibson.

## IDRS

### IDRS Staff

Jim Simpson	Solicitor and Co-ordinator (left for Public Guardian's office in April 1990 for 5 months).
Margaret White Clare Petre	Solicitor (locum from April 1990) Co-ordinator (part-time from April 1990).
Kim Rosser Margo Maneschi	Solicitor (left in May 1990) Solicitor (from June 1990)
Penny Harrington Denise Mowbray 1990)	Administrator (on six months leave from April 1990) Administrator (locum from April
Jenny Klause	Community Educator
Carol Pein	Community Educator (part-time)
Shauna McIntyre	Community Educator (left in May 1990)
Ted Smeaton	Community Educator (from June 1990)
Helen Wilson	Project Worker (until December 1989)

### **IDRS Casual Educators**

Max Howlett and Margaret White

IDRS staff are members of:

- Disability Advisory Council of Australia
- Self Advocacy NSW
- Board of NSW Council for Intellectual Disability
- Disability Council of NSW

### **RLC staff**

Barbara Aston	Secretary/word-processor operator (part-time).
Gina Schien	Replaces Barbara
Gail Luxford	Typist/word-processor operator (part-time)
Berit Hamilton	Gail Luxford's temporary replacement while on leave without pay.
Frances Gibson	Solicitor general casework/tenancy
Jane Goddard	Solicitor casework/sexual assault and domestic violence
Mary Perkins	Co-ordinator/policy worker Housing/tenancy.
Mick Hillman	Social worker employed by South Sydney Council to work at RLC
Andrew Miles	Replaced Mick Hillman early in 1990.
Pam Anderson	Administrator(temporary)
Gordon Renouf	Solicitor consumer credit policy and advocacy
Ben Slade	Solicitor casework/consumer credit advocacy/ Principal solicitor from July 1989.

**Casual Staff**

Sue Bowrey, Cathy Reid, Camilla Hughes, Simon Lake, Amanda Davies, Sandra Maude, Inez Ryan, Jane Meikle, Elizabeth Devine.

**Locum Solicitors**

Janet Loughman, Nanette Rogers, Margo Maneschi.

**Volunteers**

Volunteers are essential to the services provided by RLC, the Centre wishes to thank the following people for their work. (Sorry if we have forgotten someone.)

**Volunteer Librarian**

Joan Walker.

**Volunteer Solicitors**

Micheline Dewdeney, Sue Hansen, Paul Farrugia, Christopher Conelly, Will Stubbs, Kendall Odgers, Steven Gollege, Robyn Beaney, Peter Velez, Dino Farronato, Peter Stern, Amrit Macintyre, Michael Windsor, Malcolm Carr, Alexis Hailstones, Clare Farnan, Gillian Clyde, Nuala O'Leary, Rod Smith, Julian McVittie, Connie Ceremides, Julie Robb, Julian Miller, Joanne Collings, Leonie Flannery, Chris Komor, John Canning, Joanne Maxwell, Penny Musgrave, Mary Whitehead, Michael Gibson, Caroline Seagrove, Peter Skinner, Maryanne McMahon, Stuart Hammond, Kylie Nomchong, Anthony Anderson, Sheila Begg, Loris Hendy, David Godwin, John Conlan, Helen Taranto, Matthew Barnard, Barbara Dobosz, Nigel Vertigan, Soraya Mir, Cynthia Bluett, Alex Grosart, Sarah McNaughton, Margo Maneschi, Carol Hilderbrandt, Helen Wilson, Margaret Simpson, John Gaudin, Janice Connelly, Linda de Silva, Con Haralambis, Paul Kozub, Helen Wilson.

## Volunteer Students

Michael O'Kane, Tony Stamford, Hanna Schuster, Anita Pollard, Grant Arbuthnot, David Stewart, Melissa McAdam, Colin Murphy, Matilda Sbrizzi, Lee Spano, Rachel McCallum, Haley Katzen, Astrid Alfaro, Nick Kidd, Camilla Hughes, Pat Foster, Lici Inge, Jessica Rowe, Abigail Jones, Miranda Stewart, Deborah Frew, Anna Fomin, Danielle Woolley, Simon Lake, Jeannie No, Penny Brown, Ann Flahvin, Doug Craig, Iain Anderson, Dom Beckett, Michael Mulligan, Catherine Hawkins, Nicholas Potten, Sarah Mayo, John Mulquiney, Simeon Beckett, Andrew Carter, Kate Halliday, Anthony Anderson, Ben Heuston, Tim Leach, Patrizia Anzellotti, Marcus Elliot, John Gaudin, J. Mackie-Schneider, Joanne Casburn, Daphne Anderson, Tim Fox, Lynette Ireland, Mike Ticher, Eduardo Laginha, Ross Sullivan, June Rozen, Sue Bowery, Nicole Rycroft, Peter Slade, Steven Bolt, Steven Bull, Fiona Murphy, Anne MacMahon, Bruce Windsor, Christine Kanellakis, Juliette Hromas, Tony Cusack, Victoria Hiley, Atzmon Ronen, Kerrin Hong, Michelle Cutler, Sheila McMahon, Jacqueline Barrett, John Haig, Elizabeth McMullen, Catherine Pitts, T. Thurairajah, Simon Lake, Regina Herro, John Charles, Kate Guilfoyle, Ruth Stephenson, Jane Kaye, Greg Curtain, Michael Parker, Francia Zapata, Malcolm Cameron, Janine Smith, Shaunagh Sullivan, John Simpson, John Paulkis, Richard O'Keefe, David Shum, Trevor Drake, Peter van Djk, Inez Ryan, David Brownie, Jane Williams, Sarah Alpers, Amanda Garland, Tom Roche, Dinh Tran, Maggie Wong, Paul Zawa, Susan Yeomans, Anthony Ventura, Millisa Eaton, Lucille Hughes, Caroline Penfold, Stephenie Wonders, Jennifer Scott, Baiba Lingeberzins, Julia Baird, Nicola Callander, Donna Lawler, David Roberts, Aviva Imhof, William Vahl, Angela Ward, Anastatia Lyins, Suseela Durvasula, David Gibbon, High Stowe, Nicole Abadee, Andrew Goffe, Sonja Marsic, Mary Sweeney.

## Administration & Finances

**R**edfern Legal Centre Limited Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 30 June 1990.

	1989 - 1990	
Gross Surplus transferred from trading account	(523)	4,043
<b>INCOME</b>		
Donations	1,972	2,657
Consulting fees		0
Lecture fees	9,442	0
Grants	568,086	527,602
Interest received	26,875	27,190
Recovered costs	13,535	19,711
Sundry income	2,329	5,890
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>622,762</b>	<b>579,007</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>		
Accountancy	934	3,918
Annual leave provision	10,662	10,678
Auditors' remuneration	7,091	7,339
Bad and doubtful debts	1,054	0
Bank charges	1,036	465
Casual labour	0	0
Cleaning	0	0
Conference expenses	848	0
Consulting fees	25,434	9,187
Depreciation	4,769	5,858
Electricity	245	0
Entertaining	0	0
Fitout	16,232	43,713
General	3,184	3,034
Grant expenditure	21,432	4,601
Insurance	3,712	1,456
Loss on disposal of non-current assets	0	0
Office	2,108	0
Photocopying expenses	1,758	1,717



Printing postage and stationery	5,178	6,711
Rent paid	3,225	0
Salaries and wages	428,120	424,568
Repairs and maintenance	2,300	1,275
Staffing expenses	26,137	22,241
Subscriptions	6,190	9,532
Sundry	4,302	3,680
Superannuation	100	100
Telephone	18,205	14,379
Travelling, fares etc	11,167	10,761
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>605,423</b>	<b>585,213</b>
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS</b> transferred to profit and loss account.	<b>17,339</b>	<b>(6,206)</b>

RLC's general service is funded principally through the Legal Aid Commission of NSW. The Commission receives its funds for distribution to Community Legal Centres from the Federal and State Departments of the Attorney-General.

In addition to this, RLC receives financial support from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services for the Credit and Debt financial counselling service. This year (1989/90) the Department decided to fund only at 88/89 level. This is the second year there has been no increase from this funder. With the reduction of service anticipated we applied to the Australian Financial Counselling & Credit Reform Association for funding to supplement for the shortfall and they gave us a grant for 1990.

We have also worked hard this year applying for one-off grants. We received funding from the Law Foundation of NSW to computerise applications for Victims Compensation. Mary Perkins obtained a small grant to produce *Good Housekeeping* (a summary of the mechanism enabling the public to seek review of the decisions of State and Territory Housing Authorities). This has now been published and is contained in a publication called *House Rules*.

South Sydney Council continues to make an important contribution to RLC. The Council pays for the social worker position and provides premises, electricity, cleaning, maintenance and a contribution to stationery and printing.

RLC also received generous donations from clients, community groups and volunteers. In the absence of funding

levels which keep pace with inflation, these donations are becoming vital to the Centre's survival. We thank all those who have contributed to the Centre.

### **Donations Received**

Michael Ahrens, Ms Catchpole, Ms Strickland, Murill Martin, Mrs Reid, Ena Johnson, Andrew Haesler, Mr Foley, Mr & Mrs Franklin, Mrs Adams, Mrs Chennie, Mrs Dawson, John Walker, Natalie Connelli, Theresa Hartley, G. Funnel, Mrs Barcon, Col Barnes, Gillian Barlow, Mr & Mrs Shuttleworth, G. Callender, L. O'Donnell, Felicity Baldry, Anne Smith, Mr/Mrs Furney, Connie McPherson, Mike Hanna, Gordon Woods, Duk Wong, Mr Bashit, Denise Stevens, Mr & Ms Redroff, Mr Dyke, Sue Pringle, G. T. Levi, Mr Daly, Social Work Department of Sydney University, Mrs Telfer, Mrs Shiu, Mr & Ms Trundall, Marcel Novelton and Blake Dawson Waldron, solicitors.

In these times of fiscal frugality donations are more than welcome. RLC would like to thank everyone for their contribution.

### **Funding of IDRS**

During 1989/90 IDRS received core funding from the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health (\$123,591) and the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (\$77,620).

In addition the Services received \$18,713 from the NSW Department of Family and Community Services to conduct training programmes for disability workers on the legal aspects of intellectual disability.

### **Additional project funding**

- \$45,127 from the Department of Community Services and Health towards the publication of a rights magazine for people with a disability (to be published in 1991)
- \$16,500 from the Department of Community Services and Health towards organising a conference about rights at work for people with a disability (held in September 1990)

- \$15,000 from the Legal Aid Commission of NSW for the purchase of capital equipment.
- \$6,912 from the Law Foundation of NSW towards the production of a new publication - Questions of Rights (to be published in 1991).

### **Last But Not Least...**

Special thanks to Barbara Aston, Mick Hillman, Paul Farrugia and Micheline Dewdeney.

Barbara Aston joined the Redfern Legal Centre in May 1988, as the secretary. Barbara made significant contributions to the organisation of Redfern Legal Centre's equipment, services and stationery ordering. She is now working for the Accommodation Rights Centre.

Mick Hillman worked at the Redfern Legal Centre as the social worker since 1987. He left Redfern and Australia to return to his native land. His contribution to the Centre has been staggering.

Micheline Dewdeney was a volunteer solicitor with the Centre for nine years, coming to the Centre regularly on Tuesday afternoons. Her commitment to the Alternative Dispute Resolution Bulletin and Committee made it impossible to continue with us.

We would like to thank those listed above for their enormously valuable contribution to our organisation. We wish them all luck in the future. RLC and legal centres everywhere are indebted to their depth of knowledge and experience.

Paul Farrugia has been a volunteer at the RLC since 1980. During that time he has been the mainstay of the Tuesday afternoon advice session. Without his weekly contribution we would not have the option of this day-time session. This session is essential in an area where many clients are frightened to go out at night. In 1988 he was awarded a Sydney City Council Community Service award in recognition of his voluntary service at RLC. Thanks, Paul, for your vital contribution.

## Publications

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**T**he Centre has produced the following inhouse publications:

***The Workers Guide.*** A manual providing the information necessary for support workers involved in the Womens Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme

***National Resources List.*** A list of resources produced by all community legal centres in Australia

***Information Sheets.*** Several pamphlets for the general public outlining their rights in a number of areas

***Good Housekeeping .*** A report describing mechanisms of appeal and review of the decisions of the State and Territory Housing Authorities.

***Protecting Your Pocket.*** A comprehensive submission on proposed consumer credit legislation prepared in conjunction with the Australian Consumers Association and others.

