

Redfern Legal Centre

**ANNUAL
REPORT**
2015-2016



40 Years of Redfern Legal Centre

We turn 40 in 2017! We will be reminiscing and celebrating forty years of providing access to justice and fighting for a more equitable legal system by holding a Birthday Celebration in March 2017. We want to hear from anyone and everyone who has a tale to tell of their time with Redfern Legal Centre so we can share the rich tapestry of stories of the Centre.

To register your interest in attending the event and/or sharing a tale or two, contact Liz Clark at liz@rlc.org.au or on (02) 9698 7277.

Special thanks to DLA Piper, Ashurst and Maurice Blackburn for their generous sponsorship of this event.



Acknowledgement

Redfern Legal Centre acknowledges that we work on Aboriginal land, traditionally the home of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We pay our respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we work and in particular, to elders of this community, past and present.

Design and printing: Thomson Reuters

Redfern Legal Centre is an independent, non-profit Community Legal Centre dedicated to promoting social justice and human rights.

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Welcome from our Chair



2015-2016 was another momentous year for Redfern Legal Centre. Through diligence and compassion, our team rose above the cloud of funding cuts to deliver cutting edge, innovative legal services to those most in need.

The Centre's commitment to finding new ways to improve access to justice is demonstrated by our ground breaking Aboriginal Health Justice Partnership with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital. Our team works with medical staff to enable them to identify vulnerable clients with unmet legal needs. Through the Partnership, clients are referred to a solicitor from our team, who is located in the hospital. Our Partnership ensures that vulnerable clients with complex legal issues are provided with immediate assistance, in circumstances where they might not otherwise be able to access help. The Centre is delighted to work with the Hospital to provide holistic and immediate assistance to vulnerable clients.

The ability of the Centre to work with others enables it to be a change-maker. Our Credit and Debt Practice has developed a strong working partnership with the Australian Bankers Association. On the strength of that relationship, the Centre provided advice and guidance to the Association, in the development of industry guidelines on responding to financial abuse. Our Credit and Debt Practice was able to provide such assistance given its strong working relationship with our Sydney Women's

Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service, which assists many victims who have accumulated debts in the context of domestic violence.

The interrelationship between our teams ensures that the Centre maximises its impact. Our Employment and Discrimination Practice has worked closely with our International Student Practice, our Sydney University Post Graduate Students Legal Service and our Sydney Institute of TAFE Service to advocate for students who are exploited by unscrupulous employers. Redfern Legal Centre continues to shine a light on this endemic issue.

Each of our teams is focused on identifying systemic issues, and working for change. That change can be in the form of casework or advocacy for legislative change. For example, our Tenancy Practice was instrumental in raising a last minute amendment to the Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing – Anti-Social Behaviour) Bill 2015 to give some consideration to tenants who have disabilities and the children of tenants facing eviction.

The Centre strives to be a Centre of Excellence in each of its practice areas. It is the ability of the Centre to seek and share information that enables it to provide thought leadership for the benefit of our community. This year saw our Police Powers Practice, together with the University of New South Wales,

hold a forum on 'The Future of Police Accountability', in order to work towards achieving a fair and effective balance between police and justice enforcement powers and the rights of the individual.

Each and every member of the RLC team has achieved a great deal this year. It has been the pleasure of the Board to support and guide the Centre in these achievements. I want to give special thanks to our Chief Executive Officer, Joanna Shulman, and our Chief Operations Officer, Jacqui Swinburne, who together have shepherded the Centre through the challenges of the year and supported the staff to do what they do best - increase access to justice for our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy'.

Amy Munro
Chair of the Board

The ability of the Centre to work with others enables it to be a change-maker.



Message from our CEO

I never cease to be amazed when I sit down at the end of the financial year to write my message for this report and reflect on all that has been achieved by Redfern Legal Centre in the last twelve months.

It has been a challenging year. In the face of impending funding cuts, we have worked hard to ensure that our service was able to continue operating for the next financial year and have forged strong partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders so that we can continue providing cutting-edge legal services to our communities and clients.

As always, our pro bono partners have supported us in a myriad of ways, and knowing that we can rely on their support means so much to the staff and clients of the Centre. It is our ability to develop and maintain partnerships with law firms, government and non-government agencies that sets us apart and makes the huge volume of advice and casework that we are able to provide possible.

I am very excited about our ongoing partnership with StudyNSW and our new referral pathway with Service NSW, whereby international students with legal issues will be referred directly from Service NSW to Redfern Legal Centre. We are expecting a significant increase in referrals as a result of this new pathway. We look forward to being able to provide legal information, advice and advocacy to more students, many of whom arrive in Australia full of optimism but often find themselves in situations requiring legal advice due to limited knowledge of our laws and legal system, language barriers and lack of social and familial supports. During this financial year, our International Student Advice Service and Employment Practice have worked in collaboration, providing strong individual and systemic advocacy in relation to the exploitation of students in the workplace.

Our domestic violence team has received news of expansion under the Safer Pathway program. In this financial year we will begin operating another Local Coordination Point in the inner Sydney area where victims of

domestic violence will receive wrap-around service delivery and have options offered to them to resolve welfare and legal needs. Safety Action Meetings have proven to significantly increase safety outcomes for victims at serious threat of harm in the Waverley area and we are very much looking forward to victims of domestic violence in the inner Sydney area having access to this effective program.



We have farewelled our inaugural Police Powers solicitor, David Porter, who established our Police Powers Practice at RLC seven years ago. This service, still the only one of its kind in NSW, has led the way in driving accountability through the provision of information, advice and advocacy to people seeking to make complaints about treatment by Police. We have welcomed Sophie Parker, who will now lead this practice and make it her own. We are proud of the work we have done as a Centre in establishing this as an area of law for NSW.



This year, our tenancy and housing team have fought tirelessly for the rights of tenants, particularly for those living in social housing. Despite strong opposition from a number of community and legal groups, the NSW Parliament passed the Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing – Anti-Social Behaviour) Bill 2015 which introduced mandatory evictions for social housing tenants in certain matters and undermined the rule of law. Our service was instrumental in raising a last minute amendment to the Bill to give some consideration to tenants who have disabilities and the children of tenants facing eviction.

I want to thank each and every person who has contributed to the work of the Centre during the last financial year. I thank every volunteer who has donated their time to provide services to our clients. I thank every staff member for their dedication, passion, and commitment to our community and clients. I thank each and every one of our pro bono partners. I thank our funders and our supporters. I thank our Board for their ongoing support and guidance to myself and RLC staff at all times. To all of you, thank you for pitching in and being a part of the wonderful community organisation that is Redfern Legal Centre, that means so much to so many people. You are all part of the team and we simply could not do it without you.



Joanna Shulman
Chief Executive Officer

Our Vision

Our Vision

That Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) is acknowledged as a leader in providing quality legal services to the community.

That RLC will respond to the needs of the community through its development of core specialist skills in:

- Domestic violence;
- Credit, debt and consumer complaints;
- Tenancy and housing;
- Police and government accountability;
- Employment;
- Discrimination and human rights; and
- An advice clinic for international students.

That RLC will also provide generalist advice to clients on low incomes who experience disadvantage such as:

- People with disability;
- People that are, or are at risk of being, homeless;
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- Victims of domestic violence;
- People of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;

- Single parents;
- Young persons (under 21);
- Older persons;
- Other vulnerable people; and
- Persons recently released from prison or a psychiatric institution.

As a result, RLC will be a Centre of Excellence, providing thought leadership and cutting-edge law reform in these areas for the benefit of our community.

Our Purpose

RLC promotes social justice by:

- Providing free legal advice, legal services and education to disadvantaged people in New South Wales; in particular to residents of inner Sydney and to the groups who advocate for them; and
- Participating in activities that reduce inequalities and defects in laws, the legal system, and administrative and social practices that impact on disadvantaged people.

Our Values

- Equity and social justice;
- Empowerment of individuals and communities to enjoy their rights; and
- Respect for clients, the communities we work within, and each other.

Our Objectives

1. Legal Services

To assist vulnerable people and their advocates to access justice and the legal system.

2. Legal Reform

To identify and seek to remove inequalities in the law, legal system, administrative practices and society as a whole that affect vulnerable people by working for social and legal change to enhance respect for human rights.

3. Legal Education

To empower individuals and advocates through the provision of legal education to resolve their legal issues and assert their rights.

4. Organisational Resourcing

To sustain an infrastructure and administration that provides adequate resourcing for our activities and to effectively manage and maintain those resources.



Team RLC!

Redfern Legal Centre means many things to many people. For some, RLC is where they started their legal careers. For others, RLC's advice and support saved them from homelessness, helped them out of debt or supported them through domestic violence proceedings at Court.

No matter what RLC means to the individual, one thing holds true, that our work cannot be done without the support of a team. Team RLC is made up of an incredible network of people dedicated to working together to increase access to justice. From our volunteer solicitors and legal assistants, our alumni who have gone on to contribute to social justice more broadly, our pro bono partners and our committed donors, every member of the team plays an integral part in ensuring RLC continues its 40-year legacy of being a trusted, reliable, innovative provider of legal advice to vulnerable communities.

From a client's experience of walking through the front door and receiving a warm welcome from our volunteer legal assistants, to accessing free legal advice from our evening solicitors, to the knowledge that the law has been improved to make life a little bit easier, it is clear that RLC's team approach to increasing access to justice makes a real, lasting impact on the lives of our clients and on our community.

In a time of increased competition and decreased government funding, RLC has struggled to keep our incredible paid staff who train, advise, mentor and support our diverse team. This is why we are incredibly grateful to our generous donors. The support of our donors ensures that we can continue to support clients to find an easier path through the types of legal issues that can affect us all in our daily lives: debts, abuse, housing uncertainty, infringement on civil rights, and discrimination. We can never say thank you enough.

In the last financial year, our wonderful donors have contributed \$43,062 to support us in helping vulnerable people access the legal system and exercise their legal rights. We are particularly grateful to our generous monthly donors whose regular support provided us with a little bit more financial certainty and sustainability.

Our sincere thanks to those foundations and universities who have provided financial contributions to allow our solicitors to continue to support the most vulnerable in our community, including:

- Gandevia Foundation;
- Macquarie Group Foundation;

- University of Sydney;
- University of New South Wales; and
- UTS Law Students' Society.

Special thanks to the University of Sydney Law Revue for donating almost \$7,000 from the proceeds of their annual performance to benefit our clients. We are grateful to be part of this time-honoured tradition.

Thank you to our pro bono partners for providing technical expertise, in-kind donations, seconded solicitors and support to our clients, including:

- Ashurst;
- Clayton Utz;
- Corrs Chambers Westgarth;
- DLA Piper Australia;
- Fragomen;
- Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers;
- Henry Davis York Lawyers;
- Keypoint Law;
- King & Wood Mallesons;
- Lander & Rogers Lawyers;
- McCabes;
- Mills Oakley Lawyers;
- Norton Rose Fulbright;
- Slater & Gordon Lawyers;
- Thomson Reuters;
- Max Design;
- Microsoft;
- Spark Helmore; and
- Watts McCray Lawyers.

Special thanks to all the individual solicitors, secondees and pro bono coordinators and partners from the above firms who have provided advice, casework and advocacy to our clients and strategic support to RLC.

Partnerships

We are very proud of our partnerships with the following firms, enabling us to increase our capacity to provide access to justice to our clients:

Ashurst

Ashurst has provided invaluable support to our Credit and Debt Practice through the provision of casework advice, drafting and editing credit and debt fact sheets, providing guidance in law reform work and assisting with advocacy. Ashurst has also provided support to the Centre's fundraising program through the generous donation of training space and assisting with event management and promotion.

Clayton Utz

We continued our successful collaboration with Clayton Utz to provide advice and representation for our clients in unfair dismissal and general protections applications to the Fair Work Commission and in some entitlements and workplace discrimination matters. Clayton Utz have assisted RLC's clients with unfair dismissals, general protections, unpaid wages, discrimination and sexual harassment cases. Clayton Utz has also provided generous support to RLC's Aboriginal Health Justice Partnership during the financial year.

Fragomen

In RLC's targeted advice to International Students, effective legal advice often involves advice on student visas. Pro bono support from Fragomen, which sees registered migration agents providing advice during RLC's Wednesday evening legal clinics, is essential to the positive legal outcomes we are able to achieve for our clients.

Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers

Our domestic violence team is very grateful for the assistance provided by our pro bono partner, Gilbert + Tobin Lawyers. Gilbert + Tobin have provided advice regarding the implementation of the new information barrier between RLC's general and domestic violence teams and have developed a new administrative system for the domestic violence team.

We are particularly grateful to the following Gilbert + Tobin personnel:

- Peter Leonard, Partner and Head of Communications, Media and Data Protection;
- Michelle Hannon, Partner, Pro Bono Services;
- Jen Davidson, Assistant to Michelle Hannon;
- Tamara Sims, Lawyer, Pro Bono Services; and
- Madeline Perry, Applications Analyst.

King & Wood Mallesons Lawyers

The Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS) thanks its pro bono partner King & Wood Mallesons for its continued support of our work during the financial year. The firm has provided advice to ISTAAS on the implications of the Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing – Anti-Social Behaviour) Bill 2015 and the potential impact upon our clients who face eviction from their homes. This financial year also saw the commencement of the social housing and homelessness prevention clinic, where solicitors from King & Wood Mallesons assist on cases where social housing tenants are defending termination hearings at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal or appealing strike notices issued to them by their landlord.

McCabes

McCabes Lawyers are our pro bono partner for our International Student Advice Service in relation to credit and debt, consumer issues, employment, complaints against education providers, family law and housing issues. McCabes provide much needed legal support to international students who are often highly vulnerable due to their lack of resources, support networks and knowledge around their legal rights.

DLA Piper

Our Police Powers practice is very grateful for the support provided by our pro bono partner, DLA Piper. DLA have provided a seconded and invaluable advice to our Police Powers practice.

Barristers

We thank the following barristers for providing their services to our clients on a pro bono basis:

- Nick Eastman;
- James Mack;
- Natasha Hammond;
- Lucinda Wilson;
- Kevin Tang;
- Raoul Wilson SC;
- Daniel Petrushenko; and
- Alexander Edwards.



LAWYERS

Funding

RLC receives funding and in-kind support from a range of sources. We thank these departments, organisations and individuals for their ongoing support of the Centre:

- The General Legal Service is funded principally through the Community Legal Services Program, which is administered by Legal Aid NSW and the Commonwealth Attorney General’s Department;
- Legal Aid NSW funds the Care Partners service, which assists parents engaged in Parent Responsibility contracts or Parent Capacity Orders;
- Legal Aid NSW funds the Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service; as well as the Waverley Local Coordination Point, which provides victims with case coordination, threat assessment and referral to a Safety Action Meeting, if needed;
- Women NSW (part of NSW Family & Community Services) provided funding for a Domestic Violence Early Referral Service (the Yellow Card Project);
- NSW Fair Trading funds the Inner Sydney Tenants Advice & Advocacy Service;
- The Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) funds the SUPRA Legal Service through funds received from the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF);
- The Sydney Institute of TAFE funds the legal service for its students;
- StudyNSW funded the International Student Advice

Service; and

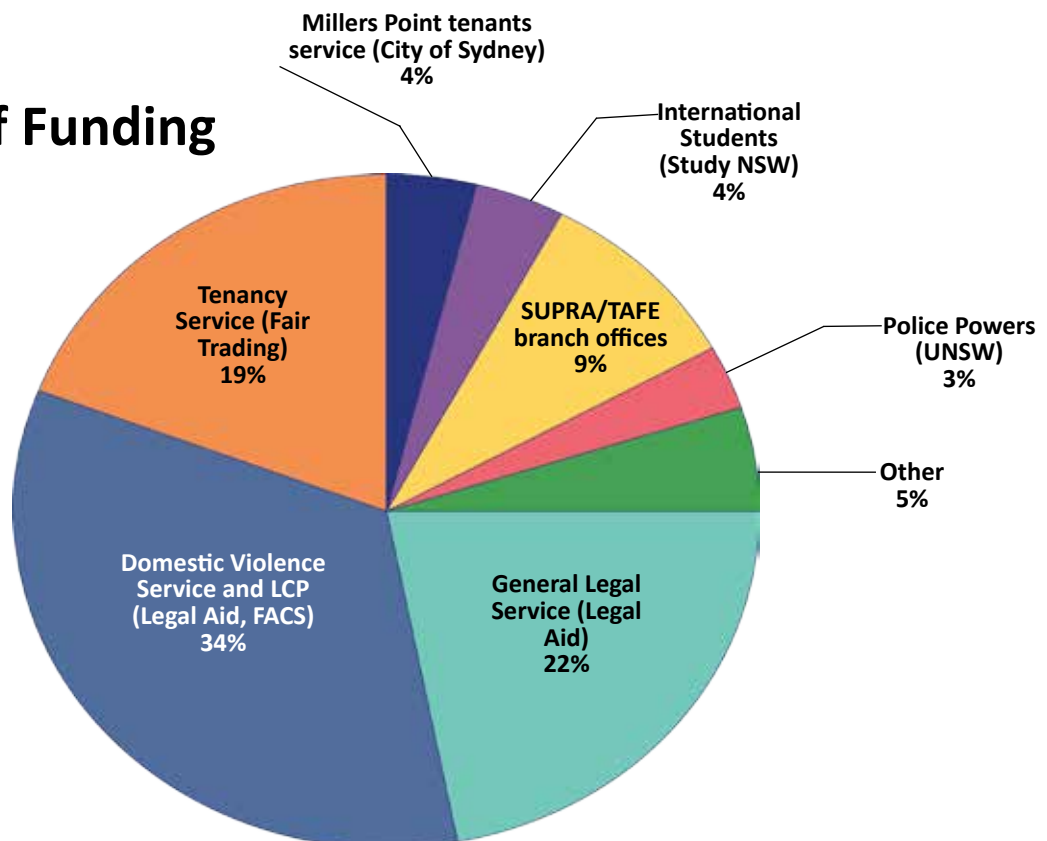
- The City of Sydney generously provides RLC with premises at no cost at Redfern Town Hall.

Grants and Donations

We thank the following organisations, foundations, universities and councils for grants, donations, and in-kind support:

- Thomson Reuters Australia support of the Lawyers’ Practice Manual and design and printing of our Annual Report;
- University of NSW sponsored our Police Powers Practice during the financial year;
- University of NSW funded a course module on Housing Law;
- City of Sydney Council provided grants for:
 - Advocacy for Millers Point tenants
 - Legal toolkit for Community Workers, and
 - Aboriginal Health-Justice Partnership
- Gandevia Foundation supported our Aboriginal Health-Justice Partnership with RPA Hospital;
- Microsoft provided discounted software;
- Max Design provided pro bono website support.

Sources of Funding



Domestic Violence

Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service



Our domestic violence team, the Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (Sydney WDV CAS) assists women and children in Court proceedings for Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) and related criminal proceedings at Downing Centre, Newtown and Waverley Local Courts. Sydney WDV CAS also hosts the Waverley Local Coordination Point (LCP) and Safety Action Meetings (SAMs), which cover the Eastern Suburbs, as part of the NSW Government domestic violence service delivery model, Safer Pathway. From September 2016 Sydney WDV CAS will receive a further increase in funding to host the Newtown LCP and SAMs, which will cover the Inner-West of Sydney.

Under the NSW Justice Strategy, Sydney WDV CAS also receives direct referrals for all female victims of domestic violence in the relevant NSW Police Force Local Area Commands.

Sydney WDV CAS continues to be at the forefront of domestic violence law reform and policy work in NSW through representation on statutory boards and committees, participation in decision-making forums, and written submissions.

During the period 2015 – 2016, Sydney WDV CAS provided assistance to 2,716 clients in 3,595 individual matters.

Sydney WDV CAS at Court

RLC's Sydney WDV CAS is based at the Downing Centre Court, and attends both Newtown and Waverley Local Courts weekly on AVO list day where we provide a holistic service to women and children victims of domestic violence.

During the financial year, 2,547 clients were involved in ADVO proceedings (2,506 of these ADVOs were initiated by police). At all three Courts, Sydney WDV CAS has an allocated 'safe room' where clients are provided with advice, assistance and advocacy regarding the orders sought on their behalf by police. On AVO list days, the Sydney WDV CAS team works together with a roster of seconded workers from approximately 50 local agencies, as well as a social worker from Centrelink who assists women to access payments, and officers from Victims Services who provide face-to-face assistance to victims at the Downing Centre Court.

Thank you to the following agencies for working together with the SWDV CAS on Court list days through the seconded worker program:

- Leichhardt Women's Community Health Centre;
- Rozelle Neighbourhood Centre;
- Warringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Service;
- The Women and Girls Emergency Centre;
- Staying Home Leaving Violence;
- Moving Out/Moving On; and
- Barnardos Family Referral Service.

Legal advice and representation is also provided to clients on AVO list day by practitioners from the Domestic Violence Practitioner Scheme, funded by Legal Aid NSW.

Thank you to the following solicitors who provide free legal advice to our clients at Court through the Domestic Violence Practitioner Scheme:

- Narelle Butler;
- Louise Coorey;
- Denise Kaiti;
- Veronica Love;
- Nanette Reuben;
- Chamindri Veitch; and
- Theo Voros.

NSW Domestic and Family Violence Reforms: It Stops Here – Safer Pathway

Waverley Local Coordination Point

In 2014 RLC's Sydney WDV CAS was chosen to implement the urban launch site of the Safer Pathway element of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Reforms. The Reforms were developed as a whole-of-government response to provide a strategic, coordinated and timely approach to assisting victims of domestic violence. Since 2014, Sydney WDV CAS's Waverley Local Coordination Point (LCP) has received referrals from NSW Police Force for all victims assessed as 'at threat' or 'at serious threat' of domestic violence in the Botany Bay, Eastern Beaches, Eastern Suburbs and Rose Bay Local Area Commands. These referrals are received through an electronic platform, the Central Referral Point (CRP), and are contacted by the LCP within 24 business hours and offered case coordination, specialist advice, assistance and referrals. Victims assessed as 'at serious threat' are placed on a fortnightly Safety Action Meeting (SAM), coordinated by the LCP, where a team of designated decision makers from agencies such as Police, Health, Education and Family and Community Services, together with local non-government agency representatives, meet to devise a safety action plan for agencies to implement on behalf of victims in order to mitigate the risk to their safety.

Feedback regarding the model, together with the first evaluation of the model by BOCSAR, has been very positive and the Safer Pathway model is now being rolled out across NSW. Sydney WDV CAS will be funded to implement its second LCP, the Newtown LCP in November 2016. The Newtown LCP will receive referrals from Leichhardt, Newtown and Marrickville Local Area Commands. A third Sydney WDV CAS LCP will commence in 2017, when the model rolls out to the Downing Centre, for referrals from Sydney City, Redfern, Kings Cross and Surry Hills Local Area Commands.



Case Study: Eliza's Story: Holistic Service Delivery

Eliza* was referred to the Waverley LCP as a victim assessed as 'at serious threat' of domestic violence after her partner, Paul, had physically assaulted her, breaking her leg and fracturing her eye socket. The LCP contacted Eliza within hours of the assault and also spoke to the hospital social worker. It was agreed that Eliza would remain in hospital until suitable accommodation could be found for her. The LCP located suitable accommodation in a refuge in a suburb at a distance from the suburb where she had lived with Paul and the LCP arranged for Eliza to be transported from the hospital to the refuge. The LCP made an internal referral for Eliza to the WDV CAS, who contacted her and updated her on the Court process and on Paul's failed bail application. The LCP made a warm referral to Victims Services for counselling and financial assistance for immediate needs and a recognition payment for Eliza. The WDV CAS also made an appointment for Eliza to get legal advice regarding the property she shared with the perpetrator, and organised for her to meet face-to-face with a social worker from Centrelink who was able to make an immediate application for benefits.

The criminal charges and AVO against Paul were listed at the Downing Centre Local Court and Eliza was invited to the pre-hearing clinic run by the WDV CAS in conjunction with the Downing Centre Prosecutors Office. On the day of the defended hearing, Eliza was assisted by the WDV CAS and on that morning Paul entered a guilty plea to a slightly amended set of facts and was eventually sentenced to a custodial sentence. After the hearing day, Eliza wrote to the WDV CAS thanking team members for the 'love and support' she had been given and informing the team that she had moved into new accommodation and had just begun a new job. Her family law matter was not finalised, but she felt confident that a settlement would soon be reached. Eliza said she was continuing with her counselling and that the refuge had assisted her into independent accommodation.

* Not her real name.

NSW Domestic Violence Justice Strategy

The NSW Domestic Violence Justice Strategy commenced on 1 July 2015. Under the Strategy, Police refer victims to their local WDV CAS via the same electronic platform used to make Local Coordination Point referrals. Sydney WDV CAS then contacts the victim within 24 business hours of the referral to offer specialist advice, assistance and referrals to appropriate agencies. Together with the implementation of the Waverley Local Coordination Point, the Domestic Violence Justice Strategy has resulted in a more than 100% increase in the number of Sydney WDV CAS clients.

This element of the Justice Strategy will be incorporated into the work of the LCPs as they are implemented by the individual WDV CASs across NSW.

Prosecutor Hearing Clinics

Sydney WDV CAS and the Police Prosecutors Office have continued to work together to provide pre-hearing clinics at the Downing Centre and Waverley Local Courts, and more recently at Newtown Local Court. The clinics are held monthly, with an invitation sent to all WDV CAS clients with a defended hearing in the following month.

The clinics provide an opportunity for victims to hear information from a trained domestic violence Prosecutor prior to their hearing date. Clients attending the clinics report they feel far more confident about giving evidence on the hearing date and are much better prepared for the ordeal of cross-examination.

Working for Change

RLC's Sydney WDV CAS team has once again been at the forefront of domestic violence law reform in NSW, through the Coordinator's membership of three NSW statutory boards, through invitations to attend domestic and family violence related consultations and round tables and through law reform submissions. During the financial year we have:

Participated in Apprehended Domestic Violence Legal Issues Coordinating Committee (AVLICC) consultations at the Criminal Law Review Division, NSW Department of Justice;

- Participated in Victims Advisory Board meetings at Victims Services NSW;
- Participated in reviewing



cases and the formulation of recommendations to government and non-government organisations as a member of the Domestic Violence Death Review Team at the NSW Coroners Court;

- Participated in making policy and law reform recommendations and providing information to the Minister for Domestic and Family Violence, as a member of the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Council;
- Participated in a consultation with officers from the Victorian Royal Commission into Domestic Violence;
- Participated in stakeholder consultations for the NSW Domestic Violence Blueprint (now released);
- Participated in Family and Community Services domestic violence stakeholder consultations;
- Participated in a consultation with Brad Hazzard, Minister for Family and Community Services, regarding ways to improve FaCS involvement with Aboriginal families;
- Participated on the Domestic Violence Evidence in Chief (DVEC) Monitoring Committee at Justice NSW (to monitor the implementation of the Criminal Procedure Amendment (Domestic Violence Complainants) Act 2014);
- Participated in research informing the Behavioural Insights Program at Justice NSW proposed amendments to conditions on NSW domestic violence orders;
- Participated in a roundtable for NSW Pilot Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme at Parliament House;
- Participated in Legal Aid and Victims

Services consultation regarding the NSW Domestic Violence Reforms;

- Conducted a survey of clients for Department of Justice's review of the Domestic Violence Evidence in Chief (DVEC) Reforms;
- Been interviewed by Dr Asher Flynn from Monash University for her research, "More than Revenge: The Scope, Nature and Impact of Revenge Pornography";
- Written a submission to the Statutory Review of the Victims Rights and Support Act 2013;
- Written an article on domestic violence and technology assisted abuse; and
- Contributed to the written RLC submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Elder Abuse.

During the past twelve months our domestic violence team members have:

- Hosted a visit by the Attorney General Gabrielle Upton to Sydney WDVCS at Downing Centre Local Court;
- Hosted a visit by Minister Pru Goward, Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault to Sydney WDVCS at Downing Centre Local Court;
- Hosted a visit by Michael Coutts-Trotter, Secretary, NSW Family and Community Services to Waverley Safety Action Meeting;
- Hosted a visit by Jodie Harrison, then Shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence to Waverley Safety Action Meeting;
- Hosted a visit from Mehreen Faruqi, Greens MP, to Waverley Safety Action Meeting;
- Hosted a visit from Trish Doyle, NSW Labor Minister to Sydney WDVCS at Downing Centre Local Court;

- Hosted visits from officials from the Department of Treasury and Department of Premier and Cabinet to Sydney WDVCS at Downing Centre Local Court;
- Hosted a visit from the All China Women's Federation to Sydney WDVCS at Downing Centre Court;
- Hosted a visit from a delegate from the Japanese Ministry of Police;
- Participated in a visit from Jenny Aitchison, Shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault and Daniel Mookhey, Member of the Legislative Council; and
- Participated in an interview with Sarah Ferguson and ABC documentary makers for background information for the documentary 'Hitting Home'.

Community Engagement

Our domestic violence team members have:

- Presented on an Indigenous issues panel at Legal Aid Family Law Conference Indigenous Issues Panel;
- Presented to students from Australian College of Applied Psychology;
- Presented to counsellors from the NSW Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Line;
- Presented community education on the NSW Domestic Violence Reforms;
- Presented on domestic violence and Court advocacy at Tranby Aboriginal College;
- Conducted domestic violence training for NSW Police Force Officers at Leichhardt and Sydney City Local Area Commands; and
- Participated in a video made by Legal Aid NSW about the 20 year anniversary of the WDVCS program.

Charmaigne Weldon's trip to the United Nations

The Sydney WDVCS team was very proud when it was announced that their team member, Charmaigne Weldon, was invited to attend the United Nations 60th Commission on the Status of Women in New York in March 2016. Charmaigne attended and presented a workshop as part of the Australian Urban Aboriginal Women Group. She reported back that she felt excited by the work that women are doing across the world, but also saddened at the many stories of human trafficking and kidnapping, especially of young women, and communities still living with high levels of domestic violence.

Right: RLC's Charmaigne Weldon on her trip to the UN with Dixie Gordon, Christine Robinson and Ashlee Donohue.



Family Law

Redfern Legal Centre has continued a productive partnership with pro bono partner Watts McCray to be able to provide specialist family law advice prioritised for women experiencing domestic violence. Experienced family law solicitors from Watts McCray are able to explain the legal system, how family Court sees parenting post-separation and the promotion of the best interests of the child.

By assisting our clients to better understand family law, it allows them to make informed choices about how to move forward after separation. We are also able to see our clients early in the family law process, which in many

instances prevents clients from having to undertake lengthy family law Court proceedings.

There is a significant gap in the provision of free family law advice for victims of domestic violence, and through our partnership with Watts McCray we are able to offer an additional layer of support to victims.

Care and Protection

Redfern Legal Centre has continued its work in care and protection early intervention through our Care Partners service. We work with clients in the early stages of matters where Family and Community Services (FaCS) have identified a risk of harm to their children.

We assist our clients in understanding the requirements of FaCS, how FaCS assesses risk and what can be done to mitigate these risks. Our work at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital also allows us to assist expecting mothers when FaCS has identified risk during the early stages of pregnancy. We are able to work with the client to navigate the child protection response with the aim that they are discharged from the hospital and are able to return home with their baby. We have continued to assist parents, grandparents and other family members in facilitating contact arrangements with children who are in out of home care.



Tenancy and Housing

Inner Sydney Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS)

The Inner Sydney Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS) provides advice, advocacy and representation to tenants across inner Sydney. Last financial year, 1,976 tenants contacted our phone advice service alone. We also connected with tenants at our outreach services, when they dropped into Redfern Legal Centre, and at duty advocacy at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

During the financial year, we assisted tenants on a range of matters, from advice on disputes about rental bonds, to complex matters where we defended tenancies in Court or the Tribunal. The enduring focus of our casework service has been to prevent renters from being evicted into homelessness and to help those that are homeless overcome the legal barriers that stand between them and a home. A large number of our clients are social housing tenants or live in transitional housing, boarding houses or share accommodation. For these renters, eviction can often lead to entrenched homelessness.

Housing (Un)Affordability

Housing is a critical issue in the community we serve. Last year, housing affordability in inner Sydney remained at historic lows, which had the effect of pushing more vulnerable tenants into substandard and overcrowded accommodation. The dearth of affordable housing also increases the pressure on the social housing system.

Relocations

The relocation of social housing tenants from Millers Point, Dawes Point and The Rocks and the sale of public housing in these areas began in 2014 and has entered its third year.

With funding from the City of Sydney, our Millers Point Tenants' Service continues to assist affected tenants and has been as busy as ever with Housing NSW adopting a harder-line approach to relocations for the tenants who remain, and some tenants receiving formal notices of termination.

In December 2015, the NSW Government announced its "Waterloo Renewal Project" which is set to see the redevelopment of many public housing blocks in the suburb of Waterloo. The Government has said that the public housing will be replaced with a combination of private, affordable and social housing. The project will affect 2000 current public housing tenants and their families. Although the details on the redevelopment are yet to be released, at the time of writing there were great concerns in the community about where tenants will be moved to, for how long, and what the area will look like if they return. ISTAAS is anticipating a significant need to support this group of tenants over the next several years.



Left to right: Kimberley Mackenzie, Jacqui Swinburne and Ned Cutcher (TU) - Public Accounts Committee Inquiry into public housing maintenance contracts.

Working for Change

This financial year was a busy year in relation to our work towards improving the legal system to assist our client groups. The news for tenants has been both good and bad.

Public Housing – Anti-Social Behaviour Bill

Despite strong opposition from a number of community and legal groups, the NSW Parliament passed the Residential Tenancies and Housing Legislation Amendment (Public Housing – Anti-Social Behaviour) Bill 2015 which introduced mandatory evictions for social housing tenants in certain matters and undermined the rule of law. Our service was instrumental in raising a last

minute amendment to the Bill to give some consideration to tenants who have disabilities and the children of tenants facing eviction.

Review of the Tenancies Act

Our service also participated in the NSW Government's five-year review of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. As part of our submission, we surveyed tenants who used our service as well as over 62 community organisations to gain their views on how the current tenancy laws are impacting upon them. In our submission and at roundtable discussions with Government, we strongly advocated for better legal protections for all tenants, particularly those living in shared housing or experiencing domestic violence. In good news for tenants, it appears that a likely outcome of the review will be changes to tenancy laws so that they better support tenants experiencing domestic violence. There are also indications that sub-tenants living in share accommodation will receive some degree of formal recognition in the new Act.



Left: RLC Tenancy Team Leader, Tom McDonald speaks to A Current Affair about the need for public housing repairs.



Media Release: Reforms to Tenancy Act will help victims of domestic violence but could go further

Redfern Legal Centre welcomes the reforms to the Residential Tenancy Act affecting domestic violence victims.

Redfern Legal Centre Tenant Advocate Mel Bradfield welcomes the reforms, “These reforms will increase safety for domestic violence victims by removing barriers to leaving a violent relationship, such as fears of financial and legal repercussions from fleeing a tenancy.

Currently co-tenants are jointly and severally liable for damages and debts in the tenancy, even in the context of domestic violence. Perpetrators of violence often use debt to coerce victims into remaining in the relationship and we need to see the law provide protection to victims under these circumstances,” Ms. Bradfield commented.

Case Study: Mariel’s Story: the Uncertainty of Share Housing

Mariel* was living in a room in an 8-bedroom house in Darlinghurst, NSW. There was no caretaker on-site and each resident rented their room through a real estate agency that had its offices down the road. Mariel signed a “license agreement” and paid rent of \$350 per week.

After Mariel had been living in the room for almost a year, her real estate agent gave her seven days notice to move out. Mariel protested that the notice wasn’t valid and she was entitled to more time. When Mariel didn’t move out, the agent changed the entry code to the front door to the house, but the other residents secretly gave Mariel the code so she could keep getting into the house.

The agent sent a locksmith to change the lock on her bedroom door, but Mariel got her own locksmith in later that day and changed the locks back.

A few days later Mariel’s real estate agent burst into her room, screamed at her to get out and started throwing her clothes into the hallway. Mariel called ISTAAS in the middle of this exchange and a tenants’ advocate spoke to the agent over speakerphone and firmly demanded that the agent leave the room immediately as she was trespassing.

The real estate agent lodged an application against Mariel in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal in an attempt to remove her from the premises. ISTAAS represented Mariel in those proceedings, which were eventually dismissed and helped her with a successful cross claim for compensation from the agent, which included the cost of getting the locksmith to change the locks back.

Importantly, the Tribunal found that provisions of the real estate agency’s licence agreement signed by Mariel and which attempted to specifically exclude the operation of the Residential Tenancies Act 2010 had no legal effect.

* Not her real name.

Credit, Debt and Consumer Complaints

Domestic Violence and Financial Abuse

Redfern Legal Centre's Credit and Debt Practice has focused on legal responses to the issue of financial abuse, meaning financial and consumer problems incurred in the context of domestic violence. During the financial year, we assisted a number of clients who had incurred significant debts or bills in the context of a controlling or abusive relationship. These financial problems represent a significant barrier to victims trying to leave abusive relationships.

RLC met with major banks and service providers to discuss financial abuse and to find a way to improve the response of "hardship" departments within banks to people experiencing financial abuse. RLC advocated to the Australian Bankers Association on this issue and helped to draft an "industry guideline on financial abuse" to inform best practice responses. This industry guideline is still in draft form and when released will assist domestic violence service providers, financial counsellors, social workers and lawyers to help negotiate appropriate hardship arrangements about loans or debts incurred in the context of financial abuse.

Case Study: Maria's Story: Legal responses to financial abuse

Maria* came to Australia from the Philippines when she was 21 years old for an arranged marriage to an Australian man 35 years her senior. When she arrived in Australia, Maria knew no one other than her prospective husband. She had no social support structure or family and was completely isolated.

Soon after her arrival, her husband became physically and psychologically abusive. He exercised control over all areas of her life, refusing to allow her to leave the house without his permission and preventing her from working or having any autonomy or independence. Any resistance by Maria was met with violence and threats of deportation.

Maria's husband took her to interviews at a number of banks and coerced her to apply for credit cards. He coached her on the answers she was to provide at the interviews and told Maria to lie about whether she worked and how much she earned. Maria ended up with a total of nine credit cards with several different banks. Her husband exercised exclusive control and possession of the credit cards and besides some basic joint living expenses; all transactions were for his benefit. Maria left the relationship with the protection of an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order and was referred by a social worker to RLC's Credit and Debt Practice for assistance relating to her debts, which were now in excess of \$40,000.

Over the course of several months, RLC negotiated with the hardship departments of each of the banks. We assisted Maria to obtain supporting evidence and wrote to each bank outlining her experience of domestic violence and financial abuse. Ultimately, each of the nine credit cards accounts were cancelled and all the debts were waived on compassionate grounds. We also helped Maria to negotiate a fee-free exit from a mobile phone agreement entered into in similar circumstances. RLC's intervention helped bring genuine relief to a young woman in an acutely vulnerable position. Maria is now living independently, working and studying.

* Not her real name.





Vocational Education and Training – misleading marketing

There has been widespread coverage of the misleading and deceptive practices of vocational education and training (VET) providers and their marketing agents. Many of these dodgy operators were specifically targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged consumers, through door-to-door sales in public housing and soliciting outside Centrelink offices. These practices were particularly widespread in Redfern and Waterloo.

VET providers and brokers premised their business on fundamentally misleading representations about the VET FEE HELP loan scheme, with many using “free laptops and iPads” as an inducement to sign up vulnerable people to unsuitable courses. We assisted a number of clients to raise complaints with course providers and a range of regulators. We ensured that a number of VET FEE HELP debts incurred by our clients were remitted at the cost of the VET provider.

RLC drafted a submission and appeared as a witness at the Senate Inquiry into the operation, regulation and funding of private VET providers. A number of our recommendations were subsequently adopted in government reforms. RLC assisted the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in their investigations into a number of these private colleges. The ACCC now has several active Federal Court prosecutions alleging systemic breaches of the consumer law.

RLC is continuing to advocate for the creation of a national “VET Ombudsman” scheme to resolve future complaints. We have strongly recommended this proposal in our submission to the ‘Redesigning VET FEE Help’ consultation, currently under review by the Commonwealth Department of Education.

Small Amount Credit Contracts and Consumer Leases

Our Credit and Debt Practice continues to highlight the misleading and exploitative practices at the heart of payday lending. These problems of unsuitable loans and extortionate interest rates are even worse in the “rental rip-off” consumer lease industry.

RLC regularly assists vulnerable consumers who have signed complex rental agreements to access basic goods, such as a fridge or washing machine. These agreements are fundamentally misleading. Consumers think they are buying the goods by instalments but in fact are locked into an agreement to ‘lease’ the good over several years, without actually owning the goods. The effective interest rate of consumer lease agreements exceeds even pay-day loans and often amounts to several hundred % or 2-3 times the retail cost of buying these goods outright.

RLC’s submission to the Commonwealth Treasury’s “Small Amount Credit Contract and Consumer Lease Consultation” called for a number of changes to the National Credit Code, to improve consumer protections in this area. The Consultation’s final report echoed a number of RLC’s recommendations and represents a broad shift away from current regulations, which continue to permit malpractice and financial exploitation. RLC is continuing to advocate to Commonwealth Treasury to implement these recommendations.

Australian Consumer Law Review

RLC’s Credit and Debt Practice has been involved with the 5-year review of the Australian Consumer Law (ACL). Our submission has proposed a number of recommendations to improve consumer protections and improve the efficiency

of the dispute resolution process.

RLC’s recommendations to the ACL review Secretariat include:

- A general prohibition on unsolicited sales, particularly through door-to-door sales and cold call telemarketing;
- A review of the effectiveness of ‘unconscionable conduct’ and suggestion that “unconscionability” is redefined as ‘unfairness’ or another more accessible term;
- The introduction of a general ‘unfair trading’ provision, to improve the capacity to address systemic misconduct;
- Removing the ‘carve out’ of insurance contracts from the ACL unfair contract terms provisions; and
- Improving the efficiency and enforceability of dispute resolution outcomes through: the implementation of an external dispute resolution process, administered by a Retail Ombudsman scheme, or an enforceable conciliation scheme, administered by consumer protection agencies.

The ACL Review Secretariat released their interim report in October 2016.

Police and Government Accountability

RLC's Police and Government Accountability practice has continued to provide legal support and advice to clients in relation to police powers and government decisions. Facilitating complaints against police is an important part of maintaining public confidence in the law and the NSW criminal justice system more broadly. This practice also advocates for a range of law reform measures with the aim of achieving a fair and effective balance between police and justice enforcement powers and the rights of the individual.

Advice and Casework

During the financial year, our Police Powers solicitor provided advice to clients in relation to a range of policy and government accountability issues including:

- Prisoners who have been denied visitor access;
- Use of excessive force by police on young people;
- Unlawful seizure and detention of property;
- Domestic violence victims' addresses being included on an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order and putting victims at risk by alerting the perpetrator to the whereabouts of the victim;
- The illegal taking of DNA samples where there was no Court order in place;
- Appealing vehicle fines issued improperly; and
- Unlawful arrests and detention.



RLC in the Media

RLC contributed to a range of media articles throughout the financial year, on issues ranging from mobile drug testing to the use of sniffer dogs. Our Police Powers Solicitor spoke on a number of occasions to radio programs, providing information on matters including police pursuits and the effectiveness of police integrity watchdogs.



Case study: Police Pursuit

RLC provided representation at a coronial inquest for the family of a young man who died in the course of a police pursuit.

The inquest considered whether the pursuit was conducted in accordance with the NSW Police Force Safe Driving Policy (SDP). The Coroner found that the pursuit was in accordance with the SDP, that police did not make contact with the vehicle, and were not directly responsible for the crash.

However, RLC's argument was that the problem was the Safe Driving Policy itself – that the SDP no longer reflects best practice in balancing the desire to apprehend suspects with the need to protect the public from injury and death during pursuits. RLC continues to advocate for review and improvement of police policy to ensure that public safety and individual rights are protected.



Working for Change

Together with the University of New South Wales, RLC's Police Powers practice held a forum on 'The Future of Police Accountability' in July 2015. We also spoke at the 'COPS Database Forum' held by the NSW Council for Civil Liberties.

RLC provided submissions for the City of Sydney Council review of Alcohol Free Zones and alcohol-prohibited areas. RLC's submission aimed to reflect the perspectives of our clients who have been disproportionately affected by these zones. These issues have affected people experiencing homelessness as they have led to increased police interaction and people have been forced out of public places, which makes service delivery more difficult. The review resulted in the removal of 62 alcohol free zones.

RLC also made a submission to the Review for Police Oversight, which was coordinated by the NSW Shadow Attorney General, Mr Andrew Tink AM. The review recommended replacing the Police Integrity Commission (PIC), the Police Division of the Ombudsman (PDOO) and the Inspector of Crime Commission with a single body responsible for reviewing allegations of police misconduct. The NSW Government approved this recommendation and RLC looks forward to working with the new oversight body, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission (LECC) in future.

Police Powers Clinic with UNSW

Our Police Powers Practice has continued working with UNSW to provide a legal clinic for law students to undertake a practical unit of study assisting our solicitor to lodge complaints.

Thank you to our pro bono partner for their generous support of the Police Powers Practice.

Discrimination and Human Rights

Working for Change

Our Discrimination Practice continued to combine casework for individual clients with law reform and advocacy on systemic issues affecting our clients and community.

We made submissions highlighting that the reactive remedies to discrimination in Australia (which require individuals to take up complaints rather than imposing a positive duty on respondents) continue to undermine the positive intentions of anti-discrimination laws. Real and lasting change will be slow to come if the system remains dependent upon individual victims to lodge complaints and face their perpetrators in potentially lengthy and traumatising proceedings.

In August 2015, we made a submission to a Senate Inquiry into the current levels of access and attainment for students with disability in the school system. We highlighted how ongoing inadequate support undermines the right for all students to have equal enjoyment and access to education. Despite anti-discrimination legislation and the introduction of the Disability Standards in 2005, students with disabilities still face significant barriers in accessing education.

The issue facing these students and many of our clients dealing with discrimination in their lives is the complaints system can be inefficient, costly and ineffective. We continued to advocate on the problem of relying on individual victims to address perpetrators of discrimination, which leads to minimal or no systemic change.

This issue was also raised in our reply to an invitation to respond to the NSW Law and Justice Committee Report – Racial Vilification Law in New South Wales as part of preparation from an Exposure Draft Bill regarding racial vilification provisions in the Anti-Discrimination Act.

There have been no prosecutions in the 26 years since the provisions creating a criminal offence for serious racial vilification became part of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act (ADA). RLC took part in the 2013 inquiry, which led to the report Racial Vilification Law in New South Wales. RLC welcomed the NSW Government's October 2015 support for the Report's recommendations; given

the provisions appear to have stagnated over several years.

In October 2015 the Attorney General indicated a draft bill would be released in early 2016 amending the ADA to add muscle to the provisions on vilification, although a draft is yet to be released at the time of writing.

Sydney Airport's Proactive Response to Disability Discrimination Complaint

Our client, Nissa Blagojevic, suffers from rheumatoid arthritis in her knees and has intermittent need for a wheelchair. When she requested a wheelchair for her arrival at Sydney Airport after an international flight and found it was not provided, she had a difficult and humiliating journey through the terminal. Nissa made a complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission. The matter was settled on confidential terms with the airline, however Sydney Airport, despite no finding against them, has decided to proactively promote best practice in accessibility for people with disability. We are now working with Nissa to promote the needs of people with disability and highlighting the positive response of the airport in reviewing its disability access procedures and asking Nissa to be involved in the review process.

Case Study: Angela's Story: Disability Access at Home

Angela* used a wheelchair and had difficulty gaining access to her apartment building when new doors were installed. Redfern Legal Centre acted for Angela in her complaint to the Australian Human Rights Commission and assisted her to reach a settlement whereby a remote access door would be installed and compensation paid to Angela. The remote access door continued to present access issues for Angela, so RLC continued to advocate to the accommodation service to argue that the terms of the settlement had not been fulfilled. We continued to advocate and negotiate with the accommodation service over a period of months until a system that allowed full access to our client was installed.

* Not her real name.





Discrimination on the basis of pregnancy or carer's responsibilities

The inclusion of a right to flexible work arrangements for employees with carer's responsibilities was greeted enthusiastically when it came into effect in mid-2013, however sadly, pregnancy and carer's responsibilities have continued to result in discrimination for many of our clients in the workplace.

Case Study: Melanie's Story: Refusal to accommodate flexible working arrangements

Melanie* had worked full-time in a front office role for a company for two years before taking maternity leave for one year. As Melanie could not yet return to work on a full-time basis, she requested returning to work part-time but was refused on the basis that the business structure could not accommodate it.

Melanie also requested that they consider a job-share arrangement but this proposal was also refused. Melanie was left in the situation of having to either resign or face the possibility of termination, as she could not return to work on a full-time basis. Melanie was subsequently asked to confirm her resignation in writing.

RLC represented Melanie in her general protections application at the Fair Work Commission on the basis that she was forced to resign because of her employer's response to her request for flexible work, and that there were no reasonable grounds for refusing the request. RLC was able to secure a significant settlement for Melanie during conciliation.

* Not her real name.

Willing to Work Inquiry

RLC provided a submission to 'Willing to Work: Australian Human Rights Commission National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability.'

RLC's submission highlighted a number of issues for our clients with Commonwealth anti-discrimination law including its limited application, difficulty with its application, the problem of costs when matters proceed to hearing and inconsistencies between the relevant laws.

The Inquiry's findings align with the experiences of RLC's clients, who have experienced dismissal where age-related matters have been an issue. Clients aged

50 and over involved with the Centre's Unfair Dismissal Advocacy Scheme still hadn't gained new employment a year after finalisation of their matters, and two thirds of those interviewed indicated that dismissal at their age put them in a position of chronic disadvantage.

The report confirmed that discrimination continues to undermine basic human rights in Australian workplaces, often with devastating and tragic consequences. Despite clear evidence of these negative impacts, not only for individuals but also on workplace productivity and the broader economy, RLC remains concerned that real change cannot occur without the active engagement of legislators to overhaul our discrimination laws.

RLC in Daily Life: Does the colour of your skin affect your chances on the rental market ?

3 February 2016

Jenna Price

There is such a battle to find somewhere to rent – the competition, the cost, and the community you want to live in.

But what if the colour of your skin made it even harder to rent?

...

Elizabeth Morley, the principal solicitor at Redfern Legal Centre, says her organisation has had a number of clients who have complained about discrimination – from the need for adjustment of premises to accommodate disability, to international students discriminated against because of assumptions about overcrowding of premises. She says there are also reports of Aboriginal people and people on Centrelink benefits being discriminated against in the private rental market.

"We have not had any matters in which anti-Muslim discrimination by the landlord or agent has been raised," she says.

But as she points out, even if these complaints were raised, there is no remedy in NSW and Commonwealth law.

"Anti-discrimination law available in NSW doesn't provide a remedy for discrimination on the basis of religion. Being Muslim doesn't meet the definition of race for the purposes of race discrimination."

"There has been much discussion over the years that this leaves significant gaps in protection of minorities in the community, more recently in the context of hate speech. This is an example of the urgent need for law reform in this area".

Employment

Unfair Dismissal Scheme

RLC continued its successful collaboration with Clayton Utz through the Unfair Dismissal Scheme, whereby solicitors provided advice and representation to clients in unfair dismissal and general protection applications to the Fair Work Commission. Solicitors from Clayton Utz also provided advice and assistance to clients in some entitlements and workplace discrimination matters. Over the financial year, 21 clients were assisted through the scheme, and solicitors from Clayton Utz provided assistance in unfair dismissals, general protections matters, unpaid wages matters, discrimination and sexual harassment cases.

Casework

Unfair Dismissal

Our client was dismissed from the clothing chain she worked for and was represented by a Clayton Utz solicitor during the conciliation of her matter at Fair Work Commission and during subsequent ongoing negotiations. Whilst there was no settlement at conciliation, we were able to negotiate a good outcome in which her employment record was changed as well as compensation provided.

Entitlements

Our client contacted RLC when she found that her employer was underpaying her. We advocated for Jean for over 12 months and with the pro bono assistance of James Mack of Level 22 Chambers, we were able to achieve a settlement on the day of the hearing in the Federal Circuit Court and our client received full payment for the amount she was owed.

Long Service Leave

RLC benefited during the financial year from the weekly assistance of a seconded solicitor from Corrs Chambers Westgarth. The assiduous calculation work of the solicitor was central to our assistance to a client with an extensive long service leave claim. The NSW Industrial Relations Commission initially rejected the claim but the calculation work undertaken resulted in the Commission re-investigating and making a finding in favour of our client.

Redundancy Claim

RLC successfully argued for transitional employment for a client in her redundancy claim. Our client had worked for her employer for nine years. The company changed ownership and six months later, she was made redundant. We assisted our client with her letter of demand to the new employer and she received a redundancy payment for the nine years of service.



Case Study: Arun's Story: Unfairly dismissed when assaulted at work

Arun* worked in a warehouse for several years. After getting into a confrontation with a co-worker, he was dismissed. Arun insisted that he did not instigate the confrontation and while he spoke up for himself when he was shouted at, he walked away when the co-worker assaulted him. Arun needed medical treatment and reported the matter to police. The employer dismissed both Arun and the co-worker on the basis of a zero-tolerance policy for fighting in the workplace.

RLC represented Arun in his unfair dismissal application to the Fair Work Commission. Despite an initial approach of the respondent to provide no compensation, the matter eventually settled for 10 weeks' pay.

*Not his real name.



Advocacy Issue: Domestic violence victims face workplace discrimination

17 December 2015 – *Redfern Legal*

Victims of domestic violence are vulnerable to workplace discrimination, potentially amounting to exclusion from work.

RLC has published a position paper identifying how victims of family and domestic violence experience discrimination, outlining proposed legislative changes to address this.

Furthermore, with increasing community awareness of the extent and cost to the community of domestic violence, and a recent Fair Work Commission decision, there may be cause for some hope for law reform in the future.

When consolidation of discrimination laws was actively under consideration by the Federal Government in 2012, there were calls for domestic violence to be included as a protected attribute in discrimination law.

This was highlighted by RLC in our submission to the Senate Finance and Public Administration Committee's Inquiry into Domestic Violence in Australia, calling for further protections for victims of domestic violence to be implemented into the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth).

RLC's recommended protections include paid domestic violence leave, flexible-working arrangements without a minimum period of service and adverse action protections.

RLC noted that domestic violence and taking steps to escape domestic violence often negatively impacts upon a victim's employment, which is essential to safeguard a person's economic independence. Their ability to work, perform and be safe at work is often compromised by domestic violence.

RLC supports the inclusion of 'status as a victim or survivor of domestic or family violence' as a protected attribute under Commonwealth anti-discrimination law and the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth).

Protecting the employment status of clients who are victims or survivors of domestic violence is a high priority for Redfern Legal Centre, in line with our commitment towards supporting the continued self-determination of vulnerable clients wherever possible.

International Students Service

Redfern Legal Centre's International Student Service is the only specialist legal service for the 80,000 international students that live and study in NSW. With the support of funding from StudyNSW, RLC has been able to maintain an ongoing relationship with the international student community, strengthening our reputation for providing specialist legal advice, advocacy and casework in relation to the complex socio-legal problems impacting upon this community.

Over the last financial year, it has become increasingly evident that international students in NSW are experiencing a high incidence of workplace exploitation and chronic underpayment, due to the adoption of exploitative business models by many employers. This has led to a significant increase in the number of students seeking legal advice and ongoing casework assistance from RLC.

Students have continued to seek advice for a range of diverse and complex legal issues, including but not limited to: tenancy and housing; disputes with education providers, visa exploitation, minor criminal matters, domestic violence and divorce. We have continued to provide support and advice to international students from any university or educational provider in New South Wales. We have been able to provide high quality legal assistance to our clients with the generous support of our pro bono partners, Fragomen and McCabes Lawyers. In addition, RLC is proud of our new relationship with Services NSW that positions RLC as the first point of reference for international students experiencing legal issues in NSW. RLC is the only non-government legal service provider receiving referrals in this way through Services NSW.

Casework

During the financial year, RLC's International Student Service has advocated and negotiated outcomes on behalf of students in relation to issues including:

- In share housing matters, as they can fall between the cracks of the various Acts, between being defined as tenants or boarders/lodgers. Even when the law does offer international students protection, it is often too slow and cumbersome, with dates set for hearings months after the student has returned home.
- Refund for underpayments or non-payment of wages where students were employed;
- Payment of superannuation contribution for the student's period of employment;
- Refunds from education providers for failure to deliver the course of study as per a written agreement;
- Resolving enrolment issues where students were at risk of deportation

due to the education provider's failure to comply with the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2002 framework;

- Seeking orders from the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal where landlords and unregistered boarding house operators sought to illegally withhold security deposits and overpaid rent from tenants and boarders;
- Negotiated reduced or nil payment in credit and debt matters for students.

Employment Exploitation

The significant increase in our statistics of international students experiencing workplace exploitation indicates a wave of companies engaging in increasingly opportunistic business models taking advantage of the influx of foreign students. Many employers employ international students (and vulnerable migrant workers) with a specific intent to exploit their lack of understanding of Australian workplace laws and rights

and their precarious migration status.

RLC assisted 142 students during the financial year who had been targeted by exploitative employers and achieved important outcomes for clients often involving significant compensation for non-payment or underpayment of wages.

Many students fear reporting their employers for entitlement breaches and underpayments due to a mandated student visa policy limiting their work hours to forty hours per fortnight. Chronically underpaid students, many of whom work over the hours each fortnight in order to compensate for an illegally low wage, fear that their employers will report them to the Department of Immigration for breach of visa conditions if they ask for fair pay or make a complaint.

RLC has worked with the media to draw public awareness to this systemic issue. During the financial year, a number of media pieces profiled the work of our International Student Service and the experiences of the clients we assist.



RLC in the Media: Background Briefing Radio National ABC – Taken to the cleaners: International Students underpaid, exploited

Friday 3 June 2016, Ann Arnold

The 7-Eleven underpayment scandal has put the exploitation of international students in the headlines, but the abuse is far more widespread than that, particularly in the cleaning industry. Ann Arnold investigates.

It's late on a Saturday, and the first division men's rugby union game is underway at Mosman Rugby Club on Sydney's affluent North Shore. It's an idyllic setting: a tree-ringed field with a picket fence on a headland that juts out into the harbour.

Two slightly bewildered graduate students from Colombia, Kelly and Arturo, are watching on.

Kelly laughs and says she thinks the game is a bit rough: 'I'm trying to understand how it, um, how it works.'

She is also trying to understand how our employment system works. Kelly and Arturo worked as cleaners in 2014 – they cleaned the rugby clubhouse once a week among other jobs on a daily schedule. But for three months, they received no payment from the cleaning contractor who hired them. And they still haven't.

International students are being exploited in their part-time jobs, and the issue goes far beyond the 7-Eleven scandal.

Students often have limited English and little understanding of our systems. And if they're being underpaid and struggling to get by, often work more than the 40 hours a fortnight permitted on a student visa. Many are reluctant to challenge employers, and reluctant to seek help.

Sean Stimson is a lawyer acting for international students at Sydney's Redfern Legal Centre. He has no doubt about the scale of the problem.

'7-Eleven is the tip of the iceberg. There are so many companies that are doing this, if we were to calculate all those individual numbers or multiple numbers, we know that we are going to soon exceed the figure that 7-Eleven has. And that's just within New South Wales. If we look at what's happening nationally, then the numbers are absolutely huge.' ...

Case Study: Peter's Story: 7-Eleven Cash Back Scheme

Peter* was an international student who contacted RLC about concerns that he was being significantly underpaid and exploited by his manager at 7-Eleven. Peter worked in his job for one month and was paid no superannuation, annual leave, annual leave loading or sick leave. He was also asked to give part of his pay back to his employer in cash in exchange for his employer not reporting him to the Department of Immigration and to be allowed to keep his job. Peter's employer brazenly threatened him in writing using the app Wechat.

Peter's experience mirrored that of other international students in NSW who also were subjected to this unjust 'cash back' scheme used by 7-Eleven. This tactic is designed to avoid the controls put in place by the Wage Fairness Panel, an independent panel established in 2015 after ABC's Four Corners revealed rampant and systemic exploitation of 7-Eleven staff by employers.

* Not his real name.

Tenancy and Housing

During the financial year, RLC has seen an increase in international students presenting with housing and tenancy issues. Whilst the unaffordability of housing in Sydney is by no means a new issue for students, a booming market is offering “cheap”, but unsuitable, accommodation to students new to Australia and unfamiliar with NSW tenancy legislation.

Many international students find it incredibly difficult to secure affordable accommodation. Students often reside in unsafe, rundown premises housing large numbers of students for high rents. Many of these premises are managed by a “head tenant” – a person who applies to rent a property under the guise that they will be living there, but then sublets the premises to many other sub-tenants with the intent of making a profit.

This situation creates a multitude of legal issues for international students including: difficulties in having security deposits and or overpayments reimbursed at time of departure from the property and a lack of security and safety.

Problems with Education Providers

We have seen an increase in the number of international students who are experiencing issues with their educational provider. Complaints from students fall into three main categories:

- Refund complaints handling procedures;
- Transfers to another education provider; and
- Education agent misconduct.

Complaints against education providers typically involve international students who are enrolled in a packaged course who want to change providers due to poor quality teaching, unsupportive learning environments and unfair treatment by teaching staff. Students request a refund of their remaining year’s tuition fees paid upfront and are often refused due to harshly drafted refund policies of the education provider.

RLC continues to advocate on behalf of international students to resolve disputes with education providers as a matter of urgency as the students often

have a short time frame within which to resolve a dispute, as any delay could impact on the expiry of their student visa.

The Australian Consumer Law (ACL) sets out additional obligations that education providers must comply with. While education providers may be in compliance with the Educational Services for Overseas Students Act and the National Code, they may still fail to discharge their obligations under the ACL.

International Educational Reform

RLC is involved in round table talks with peak bodies involved in international student education in Australia, on issues of reform and support for international students through legal support services.

Case Study: Mindy’s Story: Advocating to Education Providers

Mindy*, a young international student, was seventeen years old when her enrolment was cancelled due to non-attendance at class. The Department of Immigration had also sent her a notice of intention to cancel her student visa and she was given five days to respond.

Mindy came to RLC unaware of her rights and the obligations of education providers in circumstances where a student’s enrolment is being considered for cancellation. RLC was able to quickly assess her case and identify issues with the way that the education provider had monitored attendance and their method of informing Mindy that her enrolment had been cancelled.

After intensive negotiations with the education provider, RLC was able to successfully arrange for Mindy to be re-enrolled and prevent the Department of Immigration from cancelling her student visa.

*Not her real name



Legal Education

RLC has provided and continues to provide legal education to new international students during university orientation that highlights the most common legal issues experienced by international students and the possible legal remedies available to them.

Sydney University Postgraduate Students Legal Service

The RLC branch office at the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) is funded by SUPRA, through the University from the compulsory Student Services Amenities Fee paid by students. We provide legal services to postgraduate students from any of the University of Sydney's seven campuses. We also provide regular legal and strategic advice to the five Student Advice and Advocacy Officers employed by SUPRA to handle student's academic or welfare matters. The service also provides assistance to the other staff and office bearers of SUPRA.

Casework & Advice

Educational Legal Issues

As our legal service is independent from the University we can advise and represent students in matters concerning the University. Mostly this is in the area of Intellectual Property where the service provides independent advice on contracts prior to the assignment of rights.

Credit, Debt and Consumer Complaints

The legal service receives a large number of enquiries about consumer contracts, credit and debt matters. Many of these are in relation to consumer contracts with telecommunications service providers for mobile phone or Internet services. The legal service has been able to negotiate successful outcomes for students in a range of matters in these areas.

Traffic and Motor Vehicle Offences

Students often come to RLC with penalty

notices for road traffic and motor vehicle regulatory offences. This is because many are inexperienced drivers and may not be completely familiar with the road rules, and they tend to have older or less well maintained vehicles, due to lack of money. For this last reason they are also less likely to be able to pay a penalty notice. A significant number of clients elect to go to court and plead guilty.

During the year RLC either represented or assisted these clients, in person or by drafting their written pleadings. Overwhelmingly, the involvement of RLC resulted in very favourable outcomes for these clients. In addition, we successfully represented a number of students in defended hearings.

Motor vehicle accidents

A large number of students seek advice to recover damages and/or defend claims for damages following motor vehicle accidents. The financial impact can be significant for students who rely on their vehicles and earn a small income or have limited financial resources. The service has

assisted clients to obtain compensation for the damage done to their vehicles or to defend matters taken against them. It has also assisted students to successfully enforce orders obtained and recover the money awarded.

Employment

Many students are working outside the University to supplement their other income (usually parental support, scholarships or part time University employment in their departments). The legal service has negotiated on behalf of many students to recover wages and entitlements, and assisted them to resolve concerns about working conditions.

Tenancy and Housing

The legal service has provided advice, and conducted negotiations on behalf of students in relation to housing related matters. It has also provided assistance (or arranged advocacy) for students with complex tenancy matters at the New South Wales Civil & Administrative Tribunal.



Community legal education

The legal service has provided community legal information and education sessions both at the main Camperdown campus and at external campuses such as Camden. Topics covered have included intellectual property, traffic offences and fines, consumer contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), motor vehicle accidents (property damage), tenancy, privacy law, and employment. The service has also produced a range of legal fact sheets in areas of special interest to postgraduate students.

Publications

We contributed the Legal Section of the 2016 Postgraduate Survival Guide. This included legal information on matters of interest to the postgraduate student population including Intellectual Property, Contracts, Privacy, Consumer Law, Tenancy and Fines. We also contributed the Intellectual Property Law Section of the Thesis Guide.

Working for Change

The Legal service has contributed to external submissions written by the SUPRA staff and Council members on matters relevant to postgraduate students and international postgraduate students, and to internal policy submissions written by SUPRA staff and Council members in relation to a variety of proposed changes to University Policy and Rules.

Case Study: Kim's Story: Exploitation of International Students at Work

Kim* was an international student. She saw an ad for a part time position in the window of a shop at her local shopping centre. The owner said she would give her a trial and if that worked out OK she would hire her. She told Kim she would pay her \$20 an hour once her trial period was completed. Kim worked 20 hours the first week. The owner told her she was doing well and if she kept up the good work her trial period should end soon. Kim worked 20 to 30 hours every week for the next 3 weeks but every time she mentioned being paid she was told she was still on her trial period. When Kim said she did not want to work there anymore unless she was being paid the employer threatened to report her to the Department of Immigration. With assistance from the legal service, Kim was able to recover pay and other entitlements for the hours she had worked.

Case Study: Will's Story: Landlord refuses to return bond

Will* was an international student. When he left the place he was living the landlord refused to give him back his bond. Will took the landlord to NCAT and the landlord was ordered to pay it back to Will. The landlord told Will that he wasn't going to pay him back because there was nothing he could do. With the service's assistance, Will was able to take enforcement action and obtain a garnishee order against the landlord's bank account into which Will used to pay his rent. Once the bank was served the garnishee order, Will successfully received his bond money back in full.

Case Study: Kathy's Story: Motor Vehicle Accidents and Debt

Kathy* had been driving her car on a multiple-lane road when another driver, who was in the left-turn-only lane, suddenly decided to go straight and hit the side of her car. The other driver told Kathy it was her fault and that she would have to pay for his damages. The other driver then sent her a quote for \$3,250 and started calling and texting her demanding payment. Kathy came to the legal service very distressed. The legal service was able to explain the law to Kathy, and the other driver, and encouraged the other driver to place the matter in the hands of his insurance company. With the legal service's help, Kathy did not have to pay and was able to have her car fixed by the other driver's insurance company.

Case Study: Hannah's Story: Underpayment at Work

Hannah* worked part time in an office for 4 months. One day her boss told her she was fired, as she had not been performing in the role. They told her they would pay her in lieu of notice and deposit this into her bank account along with her entitlements on the next payday. Despite contacting her boss many times after that, Hannah did not receive any money. Upon reviewing her case, the legal service found she was not only owed her accrued leave and the notice period, but that she had been paid less than the minimum wage during her employment. With the legal service's assistance, Hannah was able to recover her unpaid entitlements and the underpayments.

* Not their real names.



Sydney Institute of TAFE Legal Service

Redfern Legal Centre provides the staffing (solicitor and legal assistant) for a part time legal service which operates out of the TAFE Ultimo college, but supports all colleges and campuses comprising Sydney Institute, including:

- Eora College;
- Design Centre Enmore;
- Gymea College;
- Loftus College;
- Petersham College;
- Randwick College;
- St George College; and
- Ultimo College.

In addition to face-to-face appointments at Ultimo, the service provides telephone advice where required, and visits to other campuses are scheduled during the academic year.

We assist students facing a wide range of legal issues and focus on providing support for vulnerable students, often in partnership with student counsellors.

Tenancy and Housing

Students often approach us for advice in relation to rental agreements and shared

housing arrangements. International students in particular, with little knowledge of local practices, have fallen foul of scams requiring the payment of deposits on non-existent apartments or on apartments with dubious ownership. We have also assisted students in having essential repairs completed and in clarifying their legal status in a shared housing situation.

Consumer Complaints

Issues can often arise in relation to the supply of goods and services to consumers and we have assisted students, who are often experiencing financial hardship, to pursue appropriate remedies either directly with the supplier or through dispute resolution entities such as NSW Fair Trading or the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman. We have provided assistance in diverse matters including incorrect motor vehicle parts ordered online, defective laptop repairs, excessive mobile phone bills and the unscrupulous practices of a private education provider.

Employment

Many TAFE students have issues with employers past and present and we have provided advice across a range of employment issues, including unpaid

entitlements, the requirements of a safe workplace, an employer attempting to redefine a permanent employee as a casual and whether an independent contractor was, in fact, an employee. We ensure students fully understand their rights under relevant legislation and industrial instruments and how best to pursue complaints.

Traffic and Transport Fines

In addition to a large number of minor traffic matters, we have assisted many students who have received penalty notices for not having the appropriate train ticket concession proof in their possession. The extent of the fine is quite significant for people with limited resources and we have helped clients draft requests for review of the penalty as well as explaining the Work and Development Order scheme, for which TAFE incidentally is a sponsor organisation.

Thank you to our TAFE PLTs:

- Emma Beale
- Kenneth MacLeod
- Rebecca Li
- Megan House



Case Study: Andy's Story: Driver Avoids Conviction and Keeps Licence

Like many students, Andy* wasn't always 100% diligent in dealing with his mail. When he did get round to opening a particular letter one day, he discovered that his driver licence had been suspended with effect from that very day, as he had failed to pay a long-outstanding parking fine. Within hours of opening the letter, Andy proceeded to pay the fine using State Debt Recovery's automated phone system.

Later the same evening, Andy was pulled over by police for a random breath test, which proved negative. However, on checking his licence status, police discovered that his licence remained suspended. Unfortunately for Andy, he had failed to heed the advice of Roads & Maritime Services that, after paying the fine, he should check with them to ensure that his licence suspension had been lifted before driving again. His payment had not yet been fully processed through the system.

Police at the scene appeared sympathetic, but a few days later Andy received a Court Attendance Notice for Drive While Licence Suspended, a charge that carries a mandatory licence suspension upon conviction. Andy was very anxious to keep his licence.

We advised Andy that he should attend Court, plead Guilty and request leniency, given the unique set of circumstances surrounding the offence. We advised him to prepare carefully for his Court appearance and gave him guidance on what to say in Court and what documentation to have available to support his request for leniency. The best-case scenario was that the Court would show leniency by not entering a conviction, allowing him to keep his licence. After Court, Andy excitedly called us to say that he had followed our advice and the magistrate had dealt with the matter speedily by dismissing the charge without proceeding to conviction.

*Not his real name.

Case Study: Rose's Story: Centrelink Debt

Rose* was a mature age student who had suffered a workplace injury 15 years ago, for which she was awarded a very modest amount of weekly compensation. A few years later she underwent a major operation for a serious medical condition and started receiving the Disability Support Pension (DSP). The DSP payment amounts were reduced by the small workers compensation payment, as per the relevant legislation.

In 2013, following major changes to the workers compensation regime in NSW, Rose's compensation payments unexpectedly increased dramatically pending a re-assessment of her work capacity, and for a period of approximately 3 months Rose received both the DSP at the existing rate and the increased workers compensation payment. This was a very confusing period for Rose, who faced many health issues, and by the time the situation had been clarified, Rose had incurred a Centrelink debt of over \$5,000.

We provided assistance to Rose who unsuccessfully challenged the requirement to repay this debt internally within Centrelink and also at the Social Services & Child Support Division of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). We then drafted detailed submissions, highlighting Rose's deteriorating health and financial hardship, to support Rose's appeal to the General Division of the AAT. Prior to the hearing, Centrelink offered to settle the matter on favourable terms, to Rose's relief.

*Not her real name.

Aboriginal Health Justice Partnership

Redfern Legal Centre's Health Justice Partnership (HJP) with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital continues to grow. During the financial year we assisted over 100 patients, providing them with accessible legal advice within the hospital setting and providing ongoing casework. Where clients have legal and non-legal issues that fall outside RLC's core areas of expertise, we make warm referrals to other legal services, welfare support services and to our pro bono partner, Clayton Utz.

An important part of fostering a successful health justice partnership is making sure both partners can identify the co-occurrence of medical and legal issues. We continue to provide training to hospital staff in how to identify unmet legal needs in patients.

We have assisted clients in relation to a wide range of legal issues, including:

- Tenancy and housing issues;
- Domestic violence;
- Debt;
- Employment;
- Family law; and
- Care and protection.

By being based at the hospital, we are able to provide immediate legal assistance to clients who may not usually be able to access services. For example, new mothers who have family law or domestic violence legal needs may not be able to access legal advice at any other time than when they have attended the hospital for their medical needs.

Evaluation

In December 2015, Dr Liz Curran of the Australian National University Canberra conducted an evaluation of the first six months of operation of the RLC Aboriginal Health Justice Partnership.

The evaluation consisted of two different surveys that were designed based on the immediate aims of the service:

- To provide effective early legal intervention to Indigenous people who may not otherwise access legal advice;
- To build capacity amongst health professionals to identify legal issues; and
- To improve health outcomes for clients.

The two surveys included:

- A client feedback survey (a 5-minute survey completed by patients after they had seen the solicitor); and
- Pre and post training professional development evaluations (completed by medical staff that undertook legal training by the HJP solicitor).

After receiving advice, 100% of clients surveyed stated that they felt less stressed now that they knew more about their legal situation.

After attending training, 88% of medical staff surveyed felt that they now had the required skills and knowledge to effectively identify legal issues experienced by patients as a result of the training.





Case Study: Adam's Story: Fines Waived for Homeless Patient

Adam* told his health professional that the government had removed money from his bank account. As the health professional had been trained in identifying legal issues, she was aware that the RLC solicitor could provide assistance.

Adam was able to see the solicitor at the hospital straight away after his medical appointment. RLC's solicitor determined that there was a garnishee order from the State Debt Recovery Office for unpaid fines. As Adam was homeless, the solicitor advised that his fines could be written off under the legislation.

RLC's solicitor contacted the State Debt Recovery Office immediately and advocated for Adam. The money was deposited back into his account that day, and further outstanding fine debts were removed.

If it wasn't for the increased capacity of Adam's health professional to identify legal issues and for immediate access to RLC's solicitor, due to her being based within the hospital, it is unlikely that Adam would have been able to access legal advice in relation to his debt issue.

*Not his real name.



Redlink Outreach Project

In July 2015, Redfern Legal Centre collaborated with Legal Aid NSW to establish a weekly law clinic at the Redfern Housing Estate.

The collaborative law clinic is part of the RedLink Outreach Project, developed in 2014 by the NSW Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS). The project emerged out of a need to provide better, more integrated services to social housing tenants in an attempt to provide early intervention and try to break the cycle of disadvantage by providing wrap around services where the need is greatest. The RedLink Outreach Project operates from the McKell Building on Walker Street, Redfern, and is serviced by social workers, community workers, lawyers, financial counsellors, and health professionals. Core partners include but are not limited to: City of Sydney Council, Redfern Neighbourhood Advisory Board (NAB), Sydney Local Health District, Family and Community Services NSW and Legal Aid NSW.

RedLink aims to tackle complex and entrenched problems such as social isolation, debt stress, intergenerational disadvantage, and alcohol and drug dependence.

Since the clinic opened on 29 July 2015, RLC and Legal Aid NSW have delivered over 280 services to 103 clients. Operating every Tuesday, the clinic is staffed alternately by solicitors from RLC and Legal Aid NSW. Lawyers provide 4-6 hours of legal advice each session, responding to range of complex client needs including problems with employment, inability to pay fines, tenancy issues, and discrimination.

Case Study: Hong's Story: Fined for Failure to Attend Jury Duty

Hong* presented at the RedLink Law Clinic requesting assistance to get a fine annulled. Hong was an aged pensioner and did not speak English. She attended the clinic with a family member to interpret.

Hong had received a fine for failing to attend jury duty, and with enforcement costs, her debt totalled almost \$2000. Overseas for most of the enforcement period, she had been issued with a property seizure order.

Hong explained that 10 years earlier, she had been called for jury duty. Worried about her very limited English language skills, she sent a request that she not be summoned – citing the primary reason as a lack of proficiency in English. During an upgrade of the Court information keeping systems, Hong's request was lost.

A lawyer at the Clinic successfully arranged for Hong's fine to be annulled on the basis that she was elderly and vulnerable.

* Not her real name.



Our Education, Engagement and Communications

Community Events

This year, we participated in a wide range of community events in our catchment area, including Homeless Connect and the Yabun Festival. We had stalls at two NAIDOC Week events, at the Aboriginal Medical Service and at the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence. These events gave RLC staff and volunteers the opportunity to meet with local residents and discuss how we could assist with their legal needs.

Community Worker Alerts

We sent several Community Worker Alert emails to community service providers about our work and about legal developments. These continue to be very popular, with over 2500 subscribers across NSW.

Community Worker Training Program

Our Community Worker Training Program moved to a partial cost-recovery footing. RLC made this change reluctantly, as the only way we could continue our highly popular legal webinars within our current funding.

We value our connections with local services, and did not want fees for training to weaken these links, so we implemented a sliding scale of webinar fees according to the size of the agency. We also ran four face-to-face training workshops in Redfern, on topics relating to domestic violence and Housing NSW, free of charge.

To streamline the payment system for both RLC and community agencies, we

implemented an annual subscription option. This has been very popular, with over twenty agencies and several individual community workers taking out subscriptions.

Webinars

We delivered five webinars, and made recordings of the webinars available to those who registered to attend, and to all our subscribers. This has proved to be a popular way of engaging with our training for those with busy schedules.

RLC delivered customised workplace training for two agencies:

- Barnardos Youth Services: half-day training on navigating the legal assistance sector and on Safer Pathway domestic violence reforms.
- Mountains Youth Services Team: half-day training on supporting under-18s in police interviews.

Legal Toolkit for Community Workers

RLC received a grant from the City of Sydney to deliver the Legal Toolkit for Community Workers project. This project provided community workers with practical skills on Housing NSW appeals and on conducting domestic violence safety assessments. We conducted small group activities to maximise skill development, and post-training surveys to gauge impact. 85% of participants reported that they felt moderately or much better equipped to address legal issues following the training. We have had feedback from community workers three months after the training that they have assisted at least 60 clients using

the skills they developed during the training, demonstrating the efficacy of the program.

Community Worker Feedback

Some feedback received from some of these workshops and webinars:

- *“Thanks for the webinars. They’ve been helpful for our team who cover areas from Central Coast - Grafton - Moree - Broken Hill and Dubbo. You’ve made specialised training very achievable for us.”* Kristen, Regional Manager
- *“The presenters didn’t waste time - the information was clear and presented well. Great workshop – thanks.”*
- *“Using the Assessment tool, I was able to help a client understand that she was being impacted by DV and elaborated on her options for support and safety planning.”*
- *“Good to know RLC is still there – ‘fighting the good fight’.”*

Communications

Over the last financial year we have consolidated our communications work. We were lucky enough to have a Fundraising Manager join RLC's team and work alongside our community engagement and communications staff. Having a group of staff dedicated to the promotion of the work of RLC has made an enormous difference to our efforts to tell the world about why access to justice for vulnerable clients is important.

Our media enquiries have grown steadily and our relationships with journalists have strengthened and consolidated. People are engaging with us on social media in more dynamic ways, indicating that people really care about the issues that are affecting the communities we serve.

Moving into this new financial year, we want to focus on harnessing the power of human stories: the stories of the incredible staff, volunteers and alumni of RLC, as well as the stories of those who experience barriers to accessing justice.

If you have a story you'd like to share about your time with Redfern Legal Centre or about your experience of a legal issue to advocate for systemic change email liz@rlc.org.au - we'd love to hear from you.



Our Clients and Services (Statistics)

During the financial year, Redfern Legal Centre assisted a total of 5,040 individual people through the provision of 8,671 separate incidences of legal advice and/or casework.

Due to the holistic service delivery model employed by Redfern Legal Centre, clients may receive casework services from a number of practices, and therefore, be counted in more than one set of statistics.

In addition, our Volunteer Legal Assistants provided 1,944 occasions of information and referral, ensuring clients were able to connect with services appropriate to their legal and non-legal needs.

General Legal Team

Our General Legal Team assisted 1,499 clients in a total of 1,578 advices and cases. This team comprises of our:

- Police Powers Practice;
- Credit, Debt and Consumer Complaints Practice;
- Employment and Discrimination Practice;
- International Student Advice Service;
- Health Justice Partnership; and our
- Care Partners Service.

Casework Demographics

*Excludes Domestic Violence Team clients.

- 11.9% of clients identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- 49.4% of clients were born outside Australia
- 14.4% of clients were over 65
- 26.3% of clients indicated they are living with a disability

Top 5 Issue Areas – International Students

- **Tenancy;**
- **Disputes with education providers;**
- **Immigration;**
- **Consumer complaints; and**
- **Employment.**

Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association Legal Service (SUPRA)

We provided 353 incidences of advice/and or casework to students. The top five issues of concern to students were:

- Government and administrative complaints;
- Intellectual property;

- Civil law contracts;
- Tenancy; and
- Employment.

Sydney Institute of TAFE Legal Service

We provided 177 incidences of advice and/or casework to students. The top five issues affecting TAFE students were:

- Family law;
- Tenancy;
- Employment;
- Fines; and
- Traffic offences.

Domestic Violence Team

Our domestic violence team assisted 2,716 clients in 3,595 individual matters.

Tenancy Team

- Our Tenancy Team advised and/or represented 1032 clients in 2086 advices and cases.
- 31% of our tenancy clients lived in social housing.
- We provided 48 clients with on-the-spot advice at the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

The top five issue areas for our tenancy clients during the financial year were:

- Termination (eviction);
- Repairs;
- Compensation;
- Bond; and
- Rent reductions.

Millers Point

We provided 1,412 advice sessions to tenants through our Millers Point advocacy service during the financial year.

- 31% of our clients were born outside Australia
- 65% of our clients identified as having a physical or mental disability
- 64% of our clients were over the age of 65.

Our Board of Directors



Amy Munro Chair

Amy Munro is a barrister practising from Eleven Wentworth in Sydney. Prior to being called to the bar, Amy was a Senior Associate in the Dispute Resolution Group at Mallesons. Amy began her association with RLC as a volunteer in 2002, moving on to become a Tenant Advocate with the Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service and the Project Manager of the Share Housing Survival Guide. Amy was elected to the Board in 2010.



Tamara Sims Secretary

Tamara Sims is a lawyer in Gilbert + Tobin's Pro Bono practice. Her practice covers human rights, administrative law, discrimination, native title, victim compensation, tenancy, guardianship, refugee claims and Aboriginal Stolen Wage matters. Prior to joining Gilbert + Tobin, Tamara worked in the community legal sector practising criminal law, undertaking policy and law reform work and community legal education particularly in matters involving people with intellectual disability. Tamara first became involved with RLC as a volunteer legal assistant, then worked with the Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service and the Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service before becoming a Director.



Peter Stapleton

Peter Stapleton, a retired partner of Ashurst, remains active in social justice. Peter was instrumental in establishing Blake Dawson Waldron's (now Ashurst) national pro bono practice. Peter was initially involved with Redfern Legal Centre as a volunteer when it was established. Peter was Chair of RLC for a number of years. Despite his grey hairs, Peter still assists the Centre to achieve its primary goal of helping disadvantaged persons access justice. Peter is a Director of Aboriginal Legal Services NSW/ACT and is the Chairman of the National Pro Bono Resource Centre. Peter was awarded the Justice Medal in 2006.



Kristin Van Barneveld

Kristin began volunteering at RLC in 2005 as a student and went on to provide evening advice as a solicitor on employment matters. Kristin has been a Director since 2006. After many years working at the University of Sydney, Kristin has since worked for various unions providing legal, industrial and policy advice. Kristin is currently Director of Policy and Research at the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU).



Paul Farrugia

Paul Farrugia is a partner in a small suburban legal firm. Paul graduated from the University of Sydney with an LL.B. Paul has been involved with RLC since 1978 as a volunteer solicitor, Management Committee member and a Director. In recognition to his service to RLC, Paul received the Law Society Pro Bono Solicitor of the Year Award in 1993.



Alison Aggarwal

Alison Aggarwal is a Principal Advisor/Manager on gender equity at the Australian Human Rights Commission. She has worked on the Australian Defence Force Cultural Reform project, lead the work of the Sex Discrimination Team and previously was a Senior Policy Officer with the Social Justice Unit. Prior to that she has worked on advocacy, law reform, policy and human rights issues with community legal centres in Australia and women's human rights NGOs in the Asia Pacific region. Alison provides human rights training in Australia and internationally.



Sally Giblin Observer

Sally Giblin is a Board Observer on the RLC Board as part of The Observership Program, which facilitates the involvement of young, talented and energetic individuals in a structured experience on not-for-profit boards. Sally is a Senior Manager at PwC Experience Centre, where she consults on customer experience to government, corporate and not-for-profit clients. With multi-disciplinary experience across corporate (PwC's Experience Centre, David Jones), not-for-profit (Young UN Women Australia, Caritas Australia), and social enterprise (40K Group), Sally has particular interests in customer experience design, design thinking, shared value, social justice, social impact and social innovation.

Our Volunteers

Redfern legal Centre has a proud history of being started on the smell of an oily rag, with one paid staff member and a group of passionate, dedicated volunteer lawyers, who wanted to make a difference by ensuring that vulnerable people could access the justice system. From that humble but inspiring beginning, we have grown to be lucky enough to have a general legal team, a tenancy team, a domestic violence team and branch offices with solicitors that are as passionate as that first group of volunteers were about access to justice and increasing equity under the law. But the real stars of Redfern Legal Centre are still our volunteers.

Our Volunteer Legal Assistants are nothing short of incredible. They work part time jobs to support themselves financially, they overload subjects at uni, they undertake social justice internships and they still manage to find time, energy and dedication to turn up every week to assist our clients at Redfern Legal Centre. Our Legal Assistants are the first face our clients see when they walk through the front door, and they are the first voice on the other end of the phone. Being in a situation where you require legal advice can be terrifying, and a reassuring smile and a warm welcome go so far in making that process feel less daunting. Our legal assistants are able to provide that reassurance to our clients and for this we cannot thank them enough.

Our Volunteer Solicitors come into the Centre at 6pm, often after a long day in another job, and stay well into the night providing legal advice to people that ordinarily would not be able to access it, because they are passionate about the law and they are passionate about social equity. With limited funding, there is no way that Redfern Legal Centre could have the capacity to assist as many clients as we do without the tireless contribution of the many talented and dedicated Volunteer Solicitors that work with us.

We are fortunate enough to have practical legal training students, specialist interns, and tenancy and domestic violence specialist volunteers who dedicate their time to support specific teams. Without the contribution of our specialist volunteers our capacity would be much diminished.

But the importance of volunteer contributions to the Centre is not purely related to capacity, it is about the culture of Redfern Legal Centre. Volunteers bring a fundamental belief in the principals that Community Legal Centres were built upon and reinvigorate our workplace and our community. Their energy and enthusiasm is infectious and reminds us of the core principals that underpin our work. For this we say thank you. We simply could not do this without you.

A special mention goes to Ella Semega-Janneh and Zoe Alder-Bishop for their work in the role of Communications and Volunteer Manager during the financial year. Ella and Zoe are both greatly missed by the RLC team!



Aaron Perera
Adriana Abu Abara
Adrienne Michael
Ahmed Taleb
Alena Wilson
Alex Edwards
Alex Tieu
Alexandra Lachsz
Alexandra Roach
Alexandra Rose
Alice Wilson
Allison Lenard
Ally Hammond
Amanda Brooker
Ameisa Konneh
Ammy Singh

Amy Munro
Andrew Fletcher
Angela Wong
Angela Harvey
Angela Kintominas
Anna Butler
Anna Pejovic
Anna Talbot
Anupam Parashar
Aritree Barua
Athurshen Jeyakumaran
Atra Ardekani
Autumn Rose Servatkova
Ava Hancock
Belinda Cheung
Bella Van Leer

Ben Day
Bianca Holliday
Bianca Montgomery-Hribar
Brad Mariano
Brendon Francis
Brian-John Attard
Brigid McManus
Bronte Sevil
Carolyn Ledinh
Caron Wadick
Carrie Zhang
Cassidy Cockle
Catherine Young
Cecilia Ngu
Celine Thompson
Charlotte van Beek

Christopher Gall
Christina White
Christine Weekes
Christopher Larkins
Christopher James Hills
Claire Stimpson
Clarence Ma
Costa Argyrou
Dalyna Khong
Damien Pang
Dani Pontes
David Sulan
Dean Tyler
Della Yuan
Donna Foley
Eda Gunaydin



Edwina Still
 Ekaterina Magin
 Elaine Mee Yeo
 Elizabeth Le Breton
 Elizabeth Clark
 Elizabeth Jones
 Eloise Kneebone
 Emma Liu
 Erika Aligno
 Ferdous Bahar
 Fiona Aroney
 Fiona Holdsworth
 Fiona Manning
 Gavin Raichman
 Georgia Pick
 Georgina Rullis
 Georgina Meikle
 Gila Segall
 Gillian Tam
 Hannah Bellwood
 Hellen Leang
 Holly McDonald
 Ida Nursoo
 Ilkay Antepuzumu
 Ingrid Ibbett
 Ingrid Weinberg
 Irene Fu
 Isobelle Waller
 Ivan Li
 Jack Orford
 Jacqui Hopley
 Jaime Heap
 Jake Edwards
 Jamie Hutchinson
 Janet Simpson
 Jason O'Neill
 Jaspreet Singh Nagra
 Jean Caddle
 Jennifer Wu
 Jennifer Zhan
 Jennifer Zadel
 Jennifer Garrick
 Jenny Kojevnikov
 Jenny Yeung
 Jeremy Tjeuw
 Jessica Quinn
 Jessica Werro
 Jessie Shu
 Ji-Beom Jang
 Jia Yi Lee
 Jimmy Ngo

Joanna Wilcox
 Jonathon Savery
 Joyce Shi
 Judith Read
 Karina Ko
 Karolyn Liu
 Kate McCallum
 Kate Luckman
 Kate Goninan
 Kate Hehir
 Kathleen Carmody
 Kathryn Farrar
 Katie Davern
 Katie Pearce
 Katrina Clark
 Ken Raphael
 Kenneth MacLeod
 Kripi Bhatt
 Krishna Nand
 Laura Joseph
 Laura Jaurigue
 Lauren Mendes
 Lauren Davies
 Lauren Moscovis
 Lauren Musgrave
 Leanne O'Reilly
 Lily Shang
 Lily Jones
 Linda Needham
 Llewellyn Spink
 Lola Windyayu Imawan
 Lucy Cannon
 Luis Izzo
 Lyndon Burke
 Malake Kheir
 Margaret Jones
 Margaret Whish
 Mariana Carrasco
 Marianna Zaunders
 Mark Callender
 Marlo Miranda Slavin
 Matt Lady
 Matthew Byrnes
 Matthew Kozlowski
 McKenzie Moore
 Meadhbh Cacciaguidi-Fahy
 Megan Hosiosky
 Melinda Bolton
 Melissa O'Dwyer
 Michael Windsor
 Michael Gibson

Michael Chan
 Michael Quach
 Miles Ma
 Musood Darwish
 Natasha Moulton
 Nathan Chu
 Nathania Pereira
 Nawsheen Choudhury
 Nelson Guo
 Ni Gao
 Nicholas Read
 Nicholas Simpson
 Nicholas Ngai
 Nicholas Adams
 Nicholas Condylis
 Nicola Boiteux
 Nicola Alroe
 Nicola Colagiuri
 Nicole Sammel
 Patrick Trieu
 Paula Stafford
 Paulina Fusitu'a
 Philip Chan
 Philippa Noakes
 Rachael Li
 Rachel Strickland
 Rachel Williams
 Rebecca Beijia
 Rebecca Byun
 Rebecca Li
 Riana Head-Toussaint
 Rita Caruana
 Rory McLeod
 Rosie Victoria Phillips
 Roy Chen
 Ruimin Gao
 Ruth Sullivan
 Sarah Horton
 Sambavi Seeramaran
 Samuel Harold Lavery
 Samuel James Molloy
 Sarah Bond
 Sarah Loewy
 Sarah Elise Horton
 Scott Calnan
 Shantell Bailey
 Sharfah Mohamed
 Shayne Beckham
 Shelby Van Ooran

Shona Scully
 Simon Rudd
 Sionea Breust
 Slavisha Grabovickic
 Smeetha Jayakumar
 Sonia Elise
 Sonia Flaherty
 Soo Choi
 Sophie Kaiko
 Stanley Viatos
 Stefanie Vogt
 Sun Shuning
 Susan Zhuang
 Susan James
 Tahni Whybrow
 Teresa Dellagiacomma
 Tehneya Deweerd
 Tess Gibney
 Therese Hartcher
 Thivakaran Ragunatha Sarma
 Thom Gardiner
 Thomas Van Kints
 Tim Capelin
 Timothy Bye
 Tina Papa-Case
 Tiru Vallal
 Toks Ogundare
 Tom Baena
 Toobah Abbas Choudhari
 Trent Morfis
 Uliana Korchevskaya
 Vanja Bulut
 Vasili Maroulis
 Victoria Karraz
 Victoria Gordon
 Victoria Dart
 Winnie Liu
 Winnie Ma
 Xiang Li
 Zeinab Farhat
 Zeinab Zein
 Zoe Bennett

Our Staff

Permanent and Fixed Term Staff

Inner Sydney Tenancy Advice & Advocacy Service

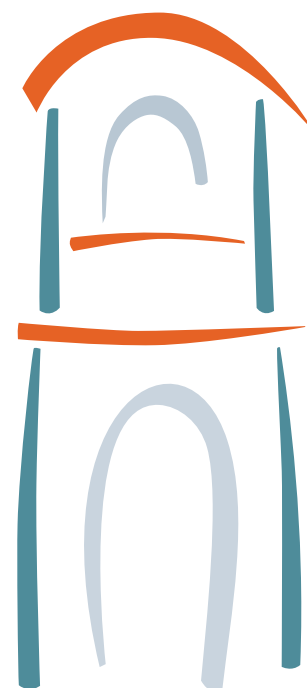
Lindsay Ash	Tenants' Advocate
Melanie Bradfield	Tenants' Advocate
Natalie Bradshaw	Tenants' Advocate
Jake Edwards	Tenants' Advocate
Kimberley Mackenzie	Tenants' Advocate
Tom McDonald	Tenants' Advocate
Jacqui Swinburne	Tenancy Coordinator, Chief Operations Officer

Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service

Nicola Boiteux	Intake & Referral Officer
Kath Chegwiddden	Assistant Coordinator
Tanja Djordjevic	Specialist Worker
Sophie Farrell	Safety Action Meeting Coordinator
Tatiya Hastie	Specialist Worker
Helen Shelton	Assistant Coordinator
Susan Smith	Coordinator
Janice Waring	Assistant Coordinator
Charmaine Weldon	Specialist Worker
Alena Wilson	Intake & Referral Officer
Rochelle Zats	Intake & Referral Officer

General Team

Zoe Adler Bishop	Communications and Volunteer Manager
Hilary Chesworth	Administrator
Liz Clark	Fundraising Manager
Trevor Collier	Solicitor TAFE Branch
Will Dwyer	Credit and Debt Solicitor
Sue-Ellen Hills	Project Officer Care Partners
Nick Manning	Community Engagement and Education Officer, Front Desk Supervisor
Louise McDermott	Employment and Discrimination Solicitor
Elizabeth Morley	Principal Solicitor
Nicholas Ngai	International Students' Service Solicitor
David Porter	Senior Solicitor, Police Powers and Administrative Law
Ella Semega-Janneh	Communications and Volunteer Manager
Joanna Shulman	Chief Executive Officer
Sean Stimson	International Students' Service Solicitor
Linda Tucker	Employment and Discrimination Solicitor
Ingrid van Tongeren	Solicitor SUPRA Branch
Wendy Wang	Administration Officer
Rebekah Wong	Solicitor TAFE Branch



Casual Staff

Inner Sydney Tenancy Advice & Advocacy Service Team

Matthew Butt	Tenancy Advisor
Melissa Chen	Tenancy Advisor
Max Dixon	Tenancy Advisor
Rafael Mazzoldi	Tenancy Advisor
Marianna Zaunders	Tenancy Advisor
Tom Kiat	Tenancy Advisor
Jake Edwards	Tenancy Advisor

Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service

Nicola Boiteux	Admin Assistant
Katie Davern	Information & Referral Officer
Natalie Egan	Admin Assistant
Brigid McManus	Admin Assistant
Amelia Pace	Admin Assistant
Alena Wilson	Admin Assistant

General team

Aritree Barua	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Melinda Bolton	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Michael Chan	Locum Solicitor
Jack Fu	Cleaner
Therese Hartcher	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Elizabeth Le Breton	Project Officer
Ivan Li	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Jessica Liang	Admin Assistant
Brad Mariano	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Ida Nursoo	Locum Solicitor
Medha Singh	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Shona Scully	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Janice Yeung	Legal Assistant
Catherine Young	Supervisor, Day Information Service

Consultants

Adaptive Solutions	IT support
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Our Financials

Directors' Declaration

**REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE
ABN 31 001 442 039**

DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 8 - 19, are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
 - (a) comply with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulations 2013*; and
 - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2016 and 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.
3. Pursuant to Schedule 1, Section 7(3) of the *NSW Charitable Fundraising Regulations 2008*;
 - (a) the Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of income and expenditure of the company for the year ended 30 June 2015 with respect to fundraising appeals;
 - (b) the Statement of Financial Position is drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at 30 June 2015 with respect to the fundraising appeals;
 - (c) the provisions of the *Charitable Fundraising Act (NSW) 1991* and the regulations under the Act and the conditions attached to the company have been complied with for the year ended 30 June 2015; and
 - (d) the internal controls exercised by the company are appropriate and effective in accounting for all income received and applied by the company from any of the fundraising appeals.

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

Director:



Amy Munro

Dated this

14th day of October

2016

Auditor's Report



PITCHER PARTNERS
ACCOUNTANTS • AUDITORS • ADVISORS

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INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Redfern Legal Centre, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the directors' declaration.

Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Act 2001* and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the company'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 company'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.

Auditor's Report



PITCHER PARTNERS

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE**

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001*.

Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report of Redfern Legal Centre is in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001*, including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2016 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

Report in Accordance with Section 24 of the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991

In our opinion:

- (a) the financial statements of Redfern Legal Centre show a true and fair view of the financial results of charitable and fundraising activities for the year ended 30 June 2016;
- (b) the financial statements and associated records of Redfern Legal Centre have been properly kept during the year in accordance with the Charitable Fundraising Act 1991;
- (c) money received as a result of charitable and fundraising activities conducted during the year has been properly accounted for and applied in accordance with the Act; and
- (d) there are reasonable grounds to believe Redfern Legal Centre will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Mark Godlewski

Partner

14 October 2016

PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

Comprehensive Income

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE
ABN 31 001 442 039

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
Revenue	3	2,479,020	2,410,233
Less: expenses			
Advertising expense - program related		(2,476)	(9,809)
Consultancy - program related		(67,137)	(73,989)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	4	(23,253)	(22,414)
Employee benefits expense		(2,134,362)	(1,990,363)
IT support		(30,652)	(32,319)
Occupancy expense		(62,794)	(67,117)
Repairs and maintenance expense		(2,335)	(3,122)
Telephone		(25,959)	(25,436)
Travel & Accommodation		(23,306)	(22,831)
Other expenses		(78,204)	(83,081)
		<u>(2,450,478)</u>	<u>(2,330,481)</u>
Surplus		28,542	79,752
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income		<u>28,542</u>	<u>79,752</u>

Financial Position

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE
ABN 31 001 442 039

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
Current assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	835,115	804,267
Receivables	7	39,387	50,235
Other financial assets	8	500,000	500,000
Other assets	10	<u>23,102</u>	<u>18,318</u>
Total current assets		<u>1,397,604</u>	<u>1,372,820</u>
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	<u>32,477</u>	<u>39,723</u>
Total non-current assets		<u>32,477</u>	<u>39,723</u>
Total assets		<u>1,430,081</u>	<u>1,412,543</u>
Current liabilities			
Payables	11	522,738	564,627
Provisions	12	<u>357,222</u>	<u>333,856</u>
Total current liabilities		<u>879,960</u>	<u>898,483</u>
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	12	<u>103,906</u>	<u>96,387</u>
Total non-current liabilities		<u>103,906</u>	<u>96,387</u>
Total liabilities		<u>983,866</u>	<u>994,870</u>
Net assets		<u>446,215</u>	<u>417,673</u>
Equity			
Retained surplus	13	<u>446,215</u>	<u>417,673</u>
Total equity		<u>446,215</u>	<u>417,673</u>

Equity Changes

**REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE
ABN 31 001 442 039**

**STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	Retained Surplus \$
Balance as at 1 July 2014	337,921
Surplus for the year	<u>79,752</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year	<u>79,752</u>
Balance as at 30 June 2015	<u>417,673</u>
Balance as at 1 July 2015	417,673
Surplus for the year	<u>28,542</u>
Total comprehensive income for the year	<u>28,542</u>
Balance as at 30 June 2016	<u>446,215</u>

Cash Flows

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE
ABN 31 001 442 039

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
Cash flow from operating activities			
Receipts from funding agreements and grants		2,647,680	2,157,681
Receipts from other income sources		31,582	269,822
Payments to suppliers and employees		(2,675,134)	(2,489,885)
Interest received		<u>42,727</u>	<u>42,422</u>
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities		<u>46,855</u>	<u>(19,960)</u>
Cash flow from investing activities			
Payment for property, plant and equipment		<u>(16,007)</u>	<u>(23,922)</u>
Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities		<u>(16,007)</u>	<u>(23,922)</u>
Reconciliation of cash			
Cash at beginning of the financial year		804,267	848,149
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held		<u>30,848</u>	<u>(43,882)</u>
Cash at end of financial year		<u>835,115</u>	<u>804,267</u>

Awards and Nominations

Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Program (TAAP) Awards

- Kimberley MacKenzie won the TAAP Star People's Choice Award for saving one client's tenancy five times!

2015 Law and Justice Awards

- Pro Bono Partnership Award Nomination
- Community Legal Centres NSW Award Nomination

2016 Redfern & Waterloo Volunteer Awards



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- Subscribe to Redfern Legal's monthly ebulletin – via our website www.rlc.org.au
- Volunteer with us – www.rlc.org.au/jobs-volunteers
- Donate to support our work

Generous support from individuals, foundations, law firms and others is vital for RLC to continue providing its services. Your contribution helps RLC provide free legal advice services to people who would not otherwise be easily able to access the justice system.

Donate online at www.givenow.com.au/redfernlegalcentreappeal or call us on (02) 9698 7277 to make a donation.

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.



Redfern Legal Centre

73 Pitt Street, Redfern NSW 2016

Phone: (02) 9698 7277, Fax: (02) 9310 3586, info@rlc.org.au, www.rlc.org.au





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