

# REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2010-2011



**Acknowledgement**

Redfern Legal Centre acknowledges that we work on Aboriginal land, traditionally the home of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. We pay respect to elders past and present.

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*REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE IS AN  
INDEPENDENT, NON-PROFIT  
COMMUNITY CENTRE DEDICATED  
TO PROMOTING SOCIAL JUSTICE  
AND HUMAN RIGHTS.*



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# REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

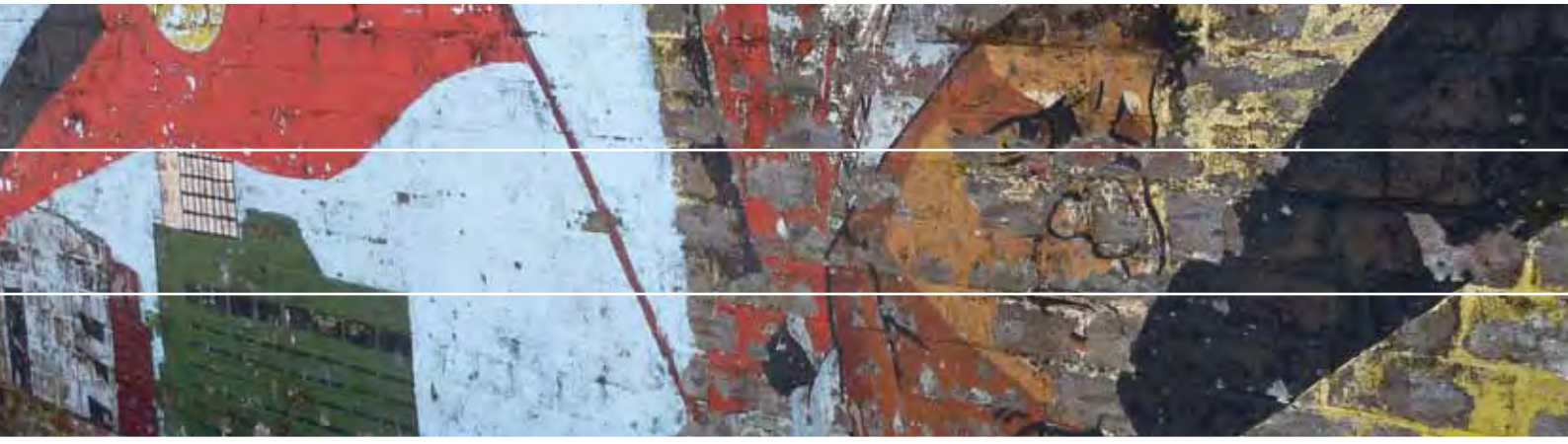
# VISION

# VALUES

*EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE*

*EMPOWERMENT OF INDIVIDUALS  
AND COMMUNITIES TO ENJOY  
THEIR RIGHTS*

*RESPECT FOR CLIENTS,  
THE COMMUNITIES WE WORK  
WITHIN AND EACH OTHER*



## OUR VISION

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

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

- > Domestic violence;
- > Credit, debt and consumer issues;
- > Tenancy;
- > Police powers;
- > Administrative law;
- > Employment; and
- > Discrimination law.

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

- > People with disability;
- > Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders;
- > People of CALD background (including international students); and
- > Students.

As a result RLC will be seen as a centre of excellence providing thought leadership and cutting edge law reform in these areas for the benefit of the 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 disadvantaged people and their representatives to access justice and the legal system.

### 2. LEGAL REFORM

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

### 3. LEGAL EDUCATION

To educate disadvantaged people and their representatives in legal rights so they can resolve problems 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.

# WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR



The need for free legal services in Australia is greater now than ever before. With over 2.2 million Australians estimated to be living in poverty and 1.1 million Australian families living in housing stress, the gap between the haves and have-nots is widening and disadvantage is increasing. Since 2000, rents have increased by 46.5%. The median rent for a single bedroom flat in Sydney is now \$400 a week, while in Melbourne it is \$289 a week. The cost of living has risen by 34% since 2000. An increasing number of people are being turned away from community services. One in 16 people were turned away from community services in 2008 - 09. These statistics, provided by the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), show the overwhelming levels of unmet need in our community.

Free legal services are fundamental to protecting the basic human rights of people who experience poverty and disadvantage in our society. More than that, legal services must be accessible and freely available to those who need them the most. One in 16 people being turned away when they ask for help is unacceptable.

For this reason, Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) conducted a strategic review during 2010 to evaluate where the greatest areas of unmet need lay in our community and how effective we are in achieving broader change in the laws and policies that affect our clients. The review resulted in us re-focussing our energies in six key practice areas: 1. tenancy and housing law; 2. employment law; 3. domestic violence; 4. human rights and discrimination; 5. credit, debt and consumer law and 6. police powers and government accountability. Our strategic review also highlighted the importance of making RLC accessible to those who need it the most.

We have already seen some significant achievements within these focus areas. We launched a report on our project to help people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities with their credit and debt problems. The project saw a 200% increase in demand for help from clients in these areas and highlights best practice in relation to community education for these communities.

Another area in which we have made significant impact is in working with victims of domestic violence, whose stories too frequently go untold. An exception to this is the high profile case of Catherine Smith, a victim of horrendous domestic violence perpetrated over a period of 30 years by her husband, Kevin Smith. Catherine reported the violence to Central Western NSW police on at least 18 occasions, with little or no action ever being taken. RLC's Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service has been supporting Catherine through the criminal hearing against her husband.

Our strategic review has driven us to prioritise law reform and systemic change more than ever, in an effort to address inequalities and barriers within the justice system that disproportionately affect our clients. Over the last 12 months we have made numerous submissions, including a submission to Treasury commenting on the proposed Credit Enhancements Bill, a response to the Australian Communications and Media Authority report, "Reconnecting the Customer," a submission to the NSW Law Reform Commission's Review of the Bail Act and many more.

Recent research commissioned by Community Legal Centres NSW shows that pay increases of up to 75% would be required for community legal centre pay to be competitive when compared with equivalent public sector positions. The community legal sector is predominantly female and the statistics force us to ask whether gender is a significant factor in the pay disparity between the two sectors. The RLC Board supports the community sector pay claim and calls upon the NSW State Government to commit to pay increases for the community sector.

Finally, I'd like to thank RLC's hardworking staff for their important contribution over the past year and to salute our volunteers, without whom, none of this year's achievements would have been possible. It has been a year of significant change for RLC and I look forward to 2011 - 2012 bringing significant positive outcomes for our clients and the community.

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

Nicolas Patrick,  
Chair

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*FREE LEGAL SERVICES ARE  
FUNDAMENTAL TO PROTECTING THE  
BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS OF PEOPLE  
WHO EXPERIENCE POVERTY AND  
DISADVANTAGE IN OUR SOCIETY.*

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# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

*“THE ONLY MAN WHO BEHAVES SENSIBLY IS MY TAILOR, HE TAKES MY MEASUREMENTS ANEW EVERY TIME HE SEES ME, WHILE ALL THE REST GO ON WITH THEIR OLD MEASUREMENTS AND EXPECT ME TO FIT THEM.”*

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

If George Bernard Shaw were alive today, I would hope that he would put Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) in the same category as his tailor.

Indeed, it has been a year of significant change for RLC.

As part of our commitment to ongoing reflection and evaluation and to developing innovative ways to respond to unmet need, RLC has spent the last year reviewing our strategic direction.

This review has culminated in a renewed commitment to focus our work on addressing the systemic causes of injustice for our clients through using strategic casework, policy and law reform activities to change unjust laws and practices.

The focus is embedded well within the philosophy of community legal centres (CLCs) and recognises that individual casework and assistance do not achieve our broader goal of equal access to justice on their own.

As part of this review, we have developed (and consolidated) specialist practices in the following areas of law:

- > Tenancy and Housing Law;
- > Discrimination and Human Rights Law;
- > Employment Law;
- > Police and Government Accountability (a new state wide service);
- > Domestic Violence; and
- > Credit, Debt and Consumer Law.

Each of these practices is supported through a dedicated solicitor and advocate (or team of solicitor and advocates), practical legal training (PLT) students and a dedicated weekly advice session. We were also lucky to secure a long-time CLC lawyer, Natalie Ross, in the new position of team leader to lead the general legal team in delivering services under this new structure.

Volunteers are also essential to the delivery of these practices. Each speciality is supported by a law firm partner who assists with casework, research and policy work on a pro bono basis. Our evening and daytime advice sessions are also delivered through specialist lawyer volunteers.

We continue to support clients who are at a particular disadvantage due to indigenous status, language difficulties and disability, even where there legal issue does not fit into a speciality area. Our offices at Sydney Institute TAFE and SUPRA continue to provide advice to students and we have seen an increased in demand from international students both at these offices and at RLC itself.

In recognising the significant potential of social media to promote social change, RLC has created a new position for a communications manager and we welcome Sophie Farrell into this role. In the last few months we have developed a twitter and facebook site and will be using these for our campaigns over the coming year.

The success of any change depends on the commitment and determination of those implementing it and I thank RLC's staff and volunteers for their extraordinary teamwork, determination and vision over the last year. It has been a fabulous year for RLC and I look forward to seeing the fruits of our labour in the years to come.

**Joanna Shulman,**  
Chief Executive Officer



## SPECIAL THANKS

### FUNDING

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

- > The General Legal Service is funded principally through the Community Legal Centres Funding Program which is administered by Legal Aid NSW and the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department;
- > The Credit and Debt Service is funded by the NSW Department of Community Services, the NSW Office of Fair Trading and the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs through its Financial Counselling Program;
- > The Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service is funded by Legal Aid NSW;
- > The NSW Premier's Department, Office for Women's Policy provides funding for a Domestic Violence Support Service;
- > The Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service is funded by the NSW Office of Fair Trading;
- > The Sydney University Postgraduate Students Service is funded by Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA);
- > The Sydney Institute of TAFE funds a service for its students; and
- > The City of Sydney provides RLC with concessional rent.

### GRANTS AND DONATIONS

We thank the following organisations for their assistance with specific RLC projects:

- > The NSW Law and Justice Foundation for funding the Activist Rights' Manual;
- > Thomson Reuters Australia for their support for the Lawyers' Practice Manual and our bimonthly e-bulletin, Redfern Legal;
- > Lord Mayor Clover Moore's Salary Trust for assistance to produce the Boarders and Lodgers Legal Action Kit; and
- > Microsoft for software.

### PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

We thank Grant Thornton for their significant assistance in developing our new strategic direction.

### BARRISTERS

We thank: Craig Biscoe; Michelle Campbell; Jamie Darams; Nick Eastman; Pat Griffin; Darren Jenkins; Katica Longin; Miranda Nagy; Daniel Petrushenko; Brenda Tronson; Adrian Williams and Michael Windsor SC.

### PARTNERSHIPS

The following firms have formed pro bono partnerships with RLC in specialist areas during the year and we look forward to opportunities to work strategically for change:

- > Gilbert + Tobin: pro bono partner for our Domestic Violence team
- > Blake Dawson: pro bono partner for our Credit and Debt team
- > Clayton Utz: pro bono partner for our Discrimination and Employment teams
- > Mallesons Stephen Jaques: pro bono partner for our Tenancy team.

We will be reporting on these and new partnerships in the coming years.

### FIRMS

We are grateful for the support during this year to the following firms, which continue to provide placements to assist with regular daytime advice sessions:

- > Artemis Legal
- > Corrs Chambers Westgarth
- > Henry Davis York
- > Keddies/Slater and Gordon
- > Lander & Rogers Lawyers

RLC appreciates the ongoing support from the following firms:

- > DLA Phillips Fox (now DLA Piper Australia) for assistance with preparation of a shadow report for the disability sector on the compliance of Australia with the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and for continuing practical support with property searches, dictation and new chairs;
- > Lander & Rogers Lawyers for advice on options for future structures;
- > Blake Dawson for advice to RLC on management; and
- > Costs Plus for support on legal costing.



# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Sydney Women's Domestic Violence  
Court Advocacy Service  
(SWDVCAS)

## ADVICE AND CASEWORK

SWDVCAS opened 1396 files during the period 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011. 2026 clients were assisted in 9103 service events during the period.

### 176 CLIENTS IDENTIFIED AS ABORIGINAL

The percentage of Aboriginal women reporting domestic violence has increased, but still remains low. Within our Aboriginal client group we continue to see a disproportionate number of Aboriginal female defendants.

*One of our Aboriginal clients spent four days in custody during the reporting period for entering a 200 metre exclusion zone in place for the protection of her ex-partner. Our client was reported as having breached the order by attending a friend's address only slightly inside the zone. Conversely, we often hear from our clients with an AVO for their protection who report breaches of exclusion orders by defendants only to be told by police 'it's a technical breach' and too difficult to enforce.*

### 689 CLIENTS IDENTIFIED AS CULTURALLY AND/OR LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE

Chinese born (62) clients continue to be our second largest client group, clients born in Thailand (36) the third largest and clients born in the Philippines (34) the fourth largest client group. There has been an increase in the number of Greek clients (29).

Overwhelmingly, the problem for women of CALD background on spousal visas is the threat of withdrawal of the defendant's sponsorship, or the defendants' claim the AVO is being sought for the purposes of our client gaining permanent residency.

## WITHIN OUR ABORIGINAL CLIENT GROUP WE CONTINUE TO SEE A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF ABORIGINAL FEMALE DEFENDANTS.

### 22 CLIENTS IDENTIFIED AS BEING IN A SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIP

SWDVCAS has had an increase in the number of clients where the other party is or has been their same-sex partner. In the previous twelve-month reporting period, the service saw only nine women who identified as being in a same-sex relationship.

### 409 CLIENTS WERE OVER THE AGE OF 50

SWDVCAS has seen an increase in the number of older women seeking the protection of a court order. Some of these clients are seeking an order against a long-term partner, others have entered more recent relationships that have become abusive and many are being abused by their adult children. Often these adult children have drug and alcohol problems and will abuse their parents for money.

*Two elderly female clients varied court orders to allow their abusive adult sons back into the family home. Another client continued to house her abusive 35 year-old son in breach of an AVO and although police were aware of the breach they were unable to arrest the son until a complaint is made. When police attended the house for a welfare check, the mother denied the son was at home.*

Some clients reported that they were under pressure from other family members to continue to house the perpetrator. For example, one elderly client and her husband allowed their 53 year-old son to live with them - even while he has continued to abuse and assault them - because of pressure from other family members who fear he would commit suicide if he was banned from the family home.

## A LARGE NUMBER OF OUR CLIENTS WHO IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A PSYCHIATRIC ILLNESS REPORTED THAT THE ILLNESS WAS EITHER BROUGHT ABOUT OR EXACERBATED BY THE VIOLENCE AGAINST THEM.

### 205 CLIENTS IDENTIFIED AS HAVING A DISABILITY

A large number of our clients who identified as having a psychiatric illness reported that the illness was either brought about or exacerbated by the violence against them. Other women reported their physical health and well being had been affected or eroded by the domestic violence.

**THE PROBLEM FOR WOMEN OF CALD BACKGROUND ON SPOUSAL VISAS IS THE THREAT OF WITHDRAWAL OF THE DEFENDANT'S SPONSORSHIP**

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP

SWDVCAS is pleased to have formed a pro bono partnership with Gilbert + Tobin, who have continued taking SWDVCAS referrals and providing support for projects. Together with Gilbert + Tobin, SWDVCAS is developing a position paper on specialist domestic violence courts and court lists. SWDVCAS has researched specialist domestic violence courts in other jurisdictions and Gilbert + Tobin solicitor, Angie McClung, has visited a specialist court in New York and has spoken to one of the presiding judges.

## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

SWDVCAS has made a number of submissions during the past 12 months, including:

Submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission 'Family Violence - A National Legal Response', which was quoted extensively in the Final Report published in November 2010;

- > Submission to the Federal Attorney General regarding the Family Law Amendment (Family Violence) Bill 2010;
- > Submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs Family Law Legislation Amendment (Family Violence and Other Measures) Bill 2011 Inquiry;
- > Submission to the Chief Magistrate of New South Wales in response to a proposed practice note 'Local Court Practice Note - Domestic and Personal Violence Matters'; and a
- > Submission to the NSW Attorney General in response to an invitation to comment on Victim Impact Statements.

SWDVCAS' submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission highlighted the need for reforms to the way in which domestic violence protection orders are dealt with in local courts and a recommendation that specialist domestic violence court lists operate in all New South Wales courts. It also argued for the need for better integration and cooperation among services assisting victims of domestic violence.

To read these submissions, visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

SWDVCAS engaged in a variety of community legal education and outreach activities over the last year including:

- > Yellow Card project presentation to police Domestic Violence Liaison Officers from 16 local area commands;
- > SWDVCAS presentation to the Family Relationship Centre;
- > SWDVCAS presentation at the Family Law and Domestic Violence Forum organised by Inner City Domestic Violence Action Ground and Redfern Waterloo Family Violence Task Force;
- > SWDVCAS presentation to Domestic Violence Liaison Officers at police headquarters; and
- > Presentation by SWDVCAS CALD worker to Domestic Violence forum organised by Redfern Waterloo Family Violence Task Force.

## MEDIA

In March 2011 the SWDVCAS Coordinator was invited to participate in a University of Technology consultation attended by Professor Julian Disney, other members of the Australian Press Council and media representatives to discuss the ethical reporting of crime from the view point of victim support agencies.

*SWDVCAS WILL CONTINUE  
TO LOBBY NSW POLICE  
REGARDING THE ADOPTION  
OF POLICIES TO ASSIST IN  
THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE  
PRIMARY AGGRESSOR*



## PUBLICATIONS

SWDVCAS published the pamphlet 'Getting an ADVO'. In February 2011 the SWDVCAS Coordinator participated in the editing and review of the new LawAccess 'LawAssist Apprehended Violence Orders Guide' a comprehensive on-line guide for those representing themselves in local court apprehended violence proceedings.

## EMERGING ISSUES

SWDVCAS casework continues to indicate that women are being wrongly arrested and charged with domestic violence offences. Because of the number of female defendants in domestic violence assault matters who identify to our service as the primary victim of the violence, SWDVCAS will continue to lobby NSW Police regarding the adoption of policies to assist in the identification of the primary aggressor (or the primary victim) when investigating domestic violence assaults. The adoption of a primary aggressor policy or assessment tool would accord with the objects of the legislation and would encourage police officers to contextualize the domestic violence and identify injuries inflicted or acts committed in self-defence, whilst still maintaining a policy of preferred arrests in domestic violence situations.

*Lara, a young Aboriginal woman, reported she had been assaulted by her ex-partner over a number of hours and in front of her two young children. She reported she had been choked, thrown to the ground several times during the assault, hit with an implement and forced over the back of a chair, badly twisting her neck and back. When police were called by a neighbour, Lara ran from the house to the neighbour's house. Police firstly spoke to Lara's ex-partner, who had been bitten on the finger (his own statement to police said he was bitten when he 'put his finger in her mouth') and scratched on the face by Lara during the assault. Lara was so distressed she was unable to provide a coherent statement to police on the night, and she was subsequently arrested and charged with the assault of her ex-partner, notwithstanding the fact that the ex-partner had two previous apprehended domestic violence orders (ADVO) against him protecting Lara and her children and had served two lengthy custodial sentences (one very recently) for breaching these ADVOs with violence. Only two days before the assault, Lara had been pressured by her ex-partner to go to court with an application to revoke the most recent ADVO and police had not opposed the application.*

*When Lara spoke to SWDVCAS on the day after the assault, she had many visible injuries. SWDVCAS assisted Lara to make a private application for an interim ADVO protecting herself and her children. SWDVCAS also organised for a DVPS practitioner to represent Lara at the defended hearing. When the assault charge against Lara and both ADVOs went to hearing, the charges and the ADVO against Lara were dismissed by the magistrate and an ADVO was made against the ex-partner. A costs order was also made against police.*

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: YELLOW CARD PROJECT

The Yellow Card project provides support to victims of domestic violence. When Police attend an incident they consider to be domestic violence, whether they proceed to apply for an ADVO or not, they will usually ask the victim if they would like further support. The aim of the project is to address those crucial support issues that enable victims to find services like refuges, counselling and advice about the ADVO process, family law, tenancy and other issues. The continuity of support assists in achieving ADVOs and solutions intended to break the cycles of violence. The Police pass on a yellow

coloured card with the victim's contact details to an appropriate service to provide that support. RLC deals with the yellow cards from Redfern, Surry Hills, Kings Cross, Central and The Rocks area commands. The Yellow Card project for RLC provides a valuable link between vulnerable women in the community, our Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Advocacy Service and our other legal services as well as other community support services.

**THE AIM OF THE PROJECT IS TO ADDRESS THOSE CRUCIAL SUPPORT ISSUES THAT ENABLE VICTIMS TO FIND SERVICES LIKE REFUGES, COUNSELLING AND ADVICE ABOUT THE ADVO PROCESS, FAMILY LAW, TENANCY AND OTHER ISSUES.**

# DISCRIMINATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS

## ADVICE AND CASEWORK OVERVIEW

RLC provides advice on discrimination law on Tuesday evenings and also by direct referral to discrimination lawyers, Joanna Shulman and Natalie Ross.

RLC represented an overseas student in a race discrimination complaint against an accommodation provider that settled before the hearing in the Administrative Decisions Tribunal. RLC has also assisted clients to prepare discrimination complaints to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and the Australian Human Rights Commission and represented them at conciliation conference. These discrimination cases included acting for a parent in a complaint against a school on behalf of her son who has multiple disabilities, a disability discrimination complaint by a post graduate student against a university, and a complaint on the grounds of age and disability against a local council about obstructed access to the narrow street where the client lives.

### LAW AND POLICY REFORM

RLC has been actively involved in preparing submissions to the federal government on the proposed consolidation of federal discrimination laws. This work has been done on behalf of the National Association of Community Legal Centres in collaboration with other community legal centres who work in discrimination law. RLC also met with staff from the Attorney General's Department to discuss the consolidation project.

RLC made a submission to the Australian Human Rights Commission Consultation: Protection from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and sex and/or gender identity.

RLC also made a submission to the review of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 in which it argued that the standards are not meeting their aims and have not had a significant impact on access to education for students with disability. The two major reasons for this are a lack of awareness around the standards and difficulties in monitoring and enforcing the standards.

Please see

<http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>

for a copy of these submissions.

### CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

RLC is one of the lead agencies involved drafting the shadow report to the United Nations on Australia's implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). The CRPD addresses the right of every person with disability to equality of opportunity, non-discrimination, respect for individual autonomy and full and effective participation and inclusion in society. The CRPD entered into force for Australia on 16 August 2008.

The shadow report will make recommendations to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. These recommendations will provide the basis for the United Nations recommendations to the Australian Government regarding Australia's implementation of the Articles of the Convention. The Project Group of disability and legal assistance is being provided with significant pro bono support from DLA Phillips Fox, and has undertaken consultations throughout Australia with the support of the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

RLC expects the report to be ready to go to the UN in early 2013.

For more information see [www.disabilityrightsnow.org.au](http://www.disabilityrightsnow.org.au)

*RLC IS ONE OF THE LEAD AGENCIES INVOLVED DRAFTING THE SHADOW REPORT TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AUSTRALIA'S IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD).*



## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND PUBLICATIONS

RLC has presented sessions on disability discrimination law to university and TAFE academic staff who have obligations to make adjustments for students with disabilities. RLC has also been involved in providing training on discrimination law for tenancy workers.

## MEDIA

RLC's Chief Executive Officer authored a blog for the Equality Law website, which argued for significant reforms to Australia's disability laws.

RLC has also engaged with the print media around discrimination issues, including a letter to the editor of the Sydney Morning Herald, on discrimination by employers against people with disability.

Please see

<http://www.rlc.org.au/news-html.html> for links to RLC's media work in this area.

**RLC ALLEGED  
INDIRECT  
DISCRIMINATION –  
THAT HNSW IMPOSED  
A REQUIREMENT  
ON OUR CLIENT  
THAT HE LIVE IN  
DAMP AND MOULDY  
PREMISES AND THAT  
HE WAS UNABLE  
TO COMPLY WITH  
THIS REQUIREMENT  
WITHOUT  
ENDANGERING HIS  
HEALTH.**

## DISCRIMINATION AND REPAIRS - HOUSING NSW

*Andy was a young man with multiple health issues, involving a double lung transplant. His only income was the Disability Support Pension.*

*Andy has been living in a Housing NSW (HNSW) unit since 2004. The unit has always had some problems with damp and mould, but these became severe in 2009 after water from the bathrooms of upstairs units was leaking into Andy's unit over a period of eight weeks.*

*Damp and mould both exacerbated his health condition. Andy claims that HNSW did not properly clean and repair his unit or replace the water damaged carpet. In February 2010 Andy applied for a transfer based on a medical assessment. In June 2010 he was approved for a transfer, but by December 2010 he had not been offered an alternative property.*

*Andy sought advice from RLC's Inner Sydney Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS). On his behalf they sought to expedite the transfer, or obtain private rental subsidy if a transfer property was not available. ISTAAS wrote to and telephoned HNSW on numerous occasions over a five-month period, trying to get a response about the transfer or private rental subsidy with no success.*

*Andy was then hospitalised for two weeks. RLC obtained instructions from him while he was in hospital and lodged a complaint of disability discrimination with the Australian Human Rights Commission. RLC alleged indirect discrimination – that HNSW imposed a requirement on our client that he live in damp and mouldy premises and that he was unable to comply with this requirement without endangering his health. This claim was settled at a conciliation conference, but RLC hopes it will bring about systemic change in the manner in which HNSW responds to repair requests from clients with a disability.*

# TENANCY AND HOUSING LAW

Inner Sydney Tenants' Advice and Advocacy Service (ISTAAS)

## OVERVIEW

ISTAAS has 2.6 positions split between four workers. The service is funded by the NSW Office of Fair Trading from a percentage of the interest made on tenants' bonds held by Renting Services. It provides telephone advice to tenants in Leichhardt, Botany and Sydney City local government areas. ISTAAS also provides advocacy, assistance to write appeals to social housing providers and the Housing Appeals Committee and representation in the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal.

## ADVICE

During the last 12 months the tenancy service provided 1,957 advices. Over half of those advices were to people born outside of Australia, many of those international students. Around one quarter of advices were in relation to social housing tenants. 51 advices were to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people (however this information is not collected for phone advice), 42 advices were to boarders or lodgers and 32 to homeless people.

## CASEWORK

ISTAAS takes on cases for more complex matters, such as for people facing eviction from social housing or for vulnerable people. ISTAAS also has intake criteria for systemic issues it is working to address. ISTAAS opened 137 files during this period and appeared in the Consumer, Trader & Tenancy Tribunal 67 times.

## PRO BONO PARTNERSHIP

ISTAAS has formed a partnership with the Human Rights Law Group at Mallesons Stephen Jaques (Mallesons). ISTAAS and Mallesons worked together on the Boarders and Lodgers Legal Information Kit. Mallesons provided legal checking of the guide, contributed additional content and provided printing of the kit. Many people at Mallesons contributed to the kit with Duncan Campbell providing overall coordination and support for the project. Mallesons will also be assisting ISTAAS with casework support and particularly with test case litigation.

## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

ISTAAS has undertaken a wide range law reform activity, including:

## LEGISLATIVE PROTECTION FOR BOARDERS AND LODGERS

- > Law Reform Submissions to Office of Fair Trading regarding the Residential Tenancies Act 2010. ISTAAS focussed on the exclusion of occupants in share housing and the reduction of discretion for the Tribunal to refuse to make eviction orders;
- > Consulted by Ryde Council on overcrowding and boarding houses;
- > Meeting with Greens Senator David Shoebridge about legislative protection for boarders and lodgers;
- > Meeting with Shadow Minister for Housing, Greg Pearce, about legislative protection for boarders and lodgers;
- > Mention in Hansard by Clover Moore MP regarding boarding house accommodation;
- > Meetings with Office of Fair Trading Ministers Advisors about legislative protection for boarders and lodgers;
- > Mention in Hansard by Victor Dominello, Member for Ryde, about boarding houses;
- > Met with consultants for DHADAC (Inter-Departmental Committee) at their request to discuss legislative protection for boarders and lodgers;
- > Ongoing consultation by Clover Moore's office regarding occupancy agreement model for boarders and lodgers;



## HNSW REDEVELOPMENT OF REDFERN

- › Participation in Shelter roundtable and input into Shelter submission to BEP2 plan for Redfern redevelopment;
- › Provided submission to Redfern Waterloo Authority on BEP2 plan;
- › Met with local Community NGOs about community consultation issues on local redevelopment;
- › Involvement with Groundswell on Housing NSW redevelopment of Redfern & Waterloo area;

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- › Met with the then Race Discrimination Commissioner, Mr Graeme Innes, on housing issues for international students;
- › Input into project called 'Housing pathways and outcomes of university students' - by UNSW City Futures Research Centre; and
- › Participation in round table at the Australian Human Rights Commission on International Students Welfare and Minimum Standards.

To view ISTAAS submissions visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

ISTAAS has provided a drop-in advice service for Russian speaking tenants every second Thursday afternoon. An interpreter is available and it has been an invaluable way to connect with the local Russian population.

In addition, ISTAAS has engaged in the following community legal education activities:

- › Community legal education session run for people living in boarding houses at Matthew Talbot;
- › Legal education sessions on tenancy, public housing and debts for NSW financial counsellors;
- › Training of RLC staff and local community workers on changes to the Residential Tenancy Act;
- › Training on rights and remedies for boarders and lodgers to NSW community legal centre workers and to NSW tenants advocates; and
- › An advice stall at Sydney Homeless Connect at Town Hall.

## PUBLICATIONS

ISTAAS worked on updating many resources and factsheets for the new Residential Tenancies Act 2010.

The Boarders and Lodgers Legal Kit provides new ideas on remedies that can be used for boarders and lodgers. It is also a useful tool for law reform campaign as it shows how complex the law is for boarders and lodgers in NSW.

The kit can be downloaded at [www.rlc.org.au/publications.html](http://www.rlc.org.au/publications.html)

## MEDIA

ISTAAS deals with issues that engender a great deal of public interest and has appeared in the media several times, including:

- › A Lateline interview by Joanna Shulman - Rent rises flow on to affect the homeless;
- › A Sydney Morning Herald Domain article on share housing - Sometimes, two into one won't go;
- › A Lateline interview by Joanna Shulman and Jacqui Swinburne - Overseas students still face exploitation;
- › An article on share housing in Cosmopolitan Magazine;
- › Triple J Hack Interview by Jacqui Swinburne - Students' O-Week special on share housing; and
- › A Sydney Morning Herald article - Landlords 'demanded sex' from students.

To view ISTAAS' media work, visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/news-html.html>

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### **A HOMELESS MOTHER AND HER CHILDREN**

*Our client, Sharyn, was a 48-year-old woman with five children aged between 11 and 18. Sharyn was referred to ISTAAS by the RLC Sydney Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme (SWDVCS). At that time she was homeless with three of her children. Apprehended violence orders were in place prohibiting her former husband from contacting their youngest child.*

*ISTAAS submitted an application to Housing NSW (HNSW) and later to the Housing Appeals Committee.*

*The outcome of this protracted process is one that ISTAAS is proud of. Some 18 months after Sharyn first applied for priority housing, HNSW acknowledged that she was eligible for priority housing and she was housed in a three-bedroom house with three of her children.*

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# TENANCY AND HOUSING LAW

## EMERGING ISSUES

In January 2011 the Residential Tenancy Act 2010 (NSW) came into force. Some of the emerging issues this year focus on interpretation of the new Act and developing of new case law around it, including definitions of boarders, lodgers and occupants in share housing.

Out of ISTAAS' drop-in service for Russian tenants arose the clear need for Housing NSW to improve its response to requests for repairs. ISTAAS has been working on this issue with a combination of advocacy, representation at the Consumer, Trader & Tenancy Tribunal, complaints to the NSW Ombudsman's Office and complaints to the Australian Human Rights Commission under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth). ISTAAS is continuing to work on this as a systemic issue in combination with other tenancy services across NSW.

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### **RATS IN HOUSING NSW**

*Sasha, a 75-year old Ukrainian pensioner, had contacted HNSW approximately twenty times to deal with a rat problem, which began after the house next door was demolished in 2009. Despite the rats having killed Sasha's cat and bitten him on the leg (requiring four days in hospital), as well as leaving faeces all around the kitchen, HNSW refused to send pest control, arguing this was not their responsibility. He tried to resolve the issue himself by erecting a fence costing him \$7,000.*

*After ISTAAS contacted HNSW, pest control was sent but was ineffective in exterminating the rats.*

*Following the discovery of chewed through electrical wires, an urgent hearing in the CTTT was sought as HNSW had failed to comply with the CTTT previously ordering the regular re-laying of bait. HNSW failed to be present at this subsequent hearing and informed the Minister for Housing that the problem had been resolved.*

*The CTTT awarded Sasha compensation for the distress he had suffered. HNSW eventually employed professional pest controllers and the problem was resolved.*

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### **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BEING RIPPED OFF**

*There are a steadily increasing number of international students who end up in overcrowded flats in the CBD, live in appalling conditions and are given arbitrary and immediate rent increases or evictions. As their bonds are not lodged with Renting Services and they often do not fall under the tenancy laws they find it very difficult to get their money back.*

*In one example a young female was evicted from a CBD unit at 11 pm for not being able to pay an on the spot rent increase. Having no money she was forced to walk all night to a friend's place in the suburbs, arriving at 6 am.*

*In another example, a student was told she would be sharing a room with one female. She returned from work that evening to move in and found out she had paid to reside in a basement with six males.*

*In another example, a resident was told another person was moving in and because there were no beds left she would have to share her bed. Each of these students were left without legal recourse but we were able to assist in some of the matters by successfully negotiating to have part of the bonds returned.*

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# CREDIT, DEBT AND CONSUMER LAW

## OVERVIEW

The credit and debt service has remained busy and has undergone some important changes. As part of the overall strategic review of RLC, the credit and debt service became a specialist branch of the general legal team. Thursday night evening advice sessions have become specialist consumer, credit and debt sessions, staffed by volunteer solicitors and students with expertise in the area.

RLC continues to provide a support service to financial counsellors in NSW, via telephone and email. Financial counsellors are invited to telephone RLC with any credit and debt queries they have and can be put through to a specialist credit and debt solicitor.

## CASEWORK AND ADVICE

RLC continues to provide representation and assistance to clients with consumer, credit and debt matters in our catchment area, through casework and night advice sessions on Thursday nights.

Since the introduction of the new credit laws in 2010, the credit and debt service has broadened its intake to accept referrals from financial counsellors with clients in NSW for matters arising under the new laws. RLC has been accepting referrals from across NSW, to test new aspects of the law and to enhance the support it provides to financial counsellors.

During the period, RLC assisted clients with matters arising under the following areas:

- > Consumer goods and services;
- > Identity theft and credit fraud;
- > Credit card debt;
- > Personal debts;
- > Car loan debts;
- > Hire-purchase and rental agreements;
- > Consumer, Tenancy and Trader Tribunal applications;
- > Local Court proceedings;
- > Motor vehicle accidents; and
- > Strata debts.

## PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS

The credit and debt service has formed an innovative pro bono partnership with Blake Dawson, to provide support and assistance with RLC's work in the credit and debt area. RLC has received assistance from Blake Dawson in drafting submissions and preparing publications for RLC's e-bulletin. RLC is grateful for Blake Dawson's enthusiasm for this project and looks forward to many successful collaborations over the next 12 months.

## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

As part of RLC's law reform and policy work in the telecommunications market, the credit and debt team made the following submissions during the period. These include:

- > RLC's submission on the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy's Discussion Paper on the Reform of the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman (TIO). Telecommunications services and products play an essential role in the lives of many of RLC's clients and disputes over services or billing can have a severe impact on their lives. RLC's submission made a number of suggestions for reform of the TIO, to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the TIO, which will increase consumer confidence in the services provided by the TIO.
- > RLC's submission to the Australian Communications & Media Authority - Reconnecting the Customer Inquiry. In this submission, RLC made a number of recommendations in relation to reform of the telecommunications market to improve consumer rights and protections in this area.

Copies of these submissions can be found at

<http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>



Frederica Mantel (MLC Coordinator), Joanna Shulman (RLC CEO), Carmel Tebbutt MP, Elizabeth Morley (RLC Principal Solicitor), Ingrid Van Tongeren and Brenda Staggs at the launch of "Understanding Money Matters".

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

In October 2011, the then Deputy Premier, Carmel Tebbutt launched RLC's report "Understanding Money Matters - a credit and debt project for culturally and linguistically diverse communities." In launching the report, Ms Tebbutt noted that it identified best practice for delivery of legal services into the community. The report identified unmet need for legal services, barriers to people accessing services and how those barriers can be overcome through trusted pathways of referral.

The report discusses Stage 1 of an outreach project. In 2009 - 2010 RLC (in co-operation with Marrickville Legal Centre) ran a series of community legal education events in the Marrickville local government area for CALD community groups. Following the training and events RLC statistics showed a 200% increase in people from CALD backgrounds seeking legal advice and assistance on debt and credit problems. There were also increases in the proportion of young people and elderly people seeking advice and assistance.

RLC is now continuing to extend the project into the Botany, City of Sydney and Leichhardt local government areas. It welcomes requests from organisations working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the area for training, presentations and informal information sessions.

## PUBLICATIONS

During the period, RLC began publication and distribution of our Financial Counselling *Tidbits*, which are short fact-sheet style updates on matters of interest in the credit and debt area. *Tidbits* have proven to be very popular amongst financial counsellors and our mailing list has grown substantially since it was first introduced.

Previous releases of *Tidbits* can be found at <http://www.rlc.org.au/publications/financial-tidbits.html>

## MEDIA

RLC has maintained an active voice in the media in relation to credit and debt issues. Its comments have been published in the Sydney Morning Herald, the Australian Financial Review, El Semanario Espanol, and the Daily Telegraph.

For more information on RLC's media work in this area, visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/news-html.html>

## EMERGING ISSUES

The credit and debt service anticipates that the next year will be an exciting time. It is seeing more matters that fall under the new credit laws and it will be interesting to see how consumer credit providers respond to their new responsible lending obligations. Similarly, RLC looks forward to seeing how the external dispute resolution schemes will apply the new laws to disputes that come before them.

Reform to the payday lending market is another hot topic in this area and RLC strongly supports the proposed reforms to the new credit laws that will cap the fees and charges that can be applied to payday loans. Similarly, RLC supports the proposed reforms that will introduce a 48% cap on interest for consumer loans.

A potential obstacle for the next 12 months in this area will be the backlog of work that the Financial Ombudsman Scheme (FOS) is experiencing. Currently, the wait time at FOS for a caseworker to be allocated to a dispute is around 6-12 months. It is concerning that as FOS's workload has increased with the introduction of the new credit laws, funding to meet the demand for FOS's services has not.

The telecommunications industry has been the focus of much campaign and policy work during the period, and RLC looks forward to the implementation of many of its recommendations and those of other consumer groups to increase consumer protections in relation to telecommunications products and services. Telecommunications Service Providers have acknowledged the need for reform of the sector, and are in the process of revising their industry code. It is expected that this will be accompanied by significant regulatory reform to the industry over the next 12 months.

Finally, RLC expects that consumer issues and bill disputes in the energy sector will increase. As prices rise, more people will struggle to pay their bills. RLC will be watching developments in the retail energy market with much interest as reforms to pricing are rolled out.

# POLICE AND GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

## OVERVIEW

'Police powers' is an area that covers elements of criminal law, civil litigation and legislation like the Police Act and the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act [LEPRA]. The aim of the area is to promote scrutiny of law enforcement as an end in and of itself, not just as a way to successfully defend criminal charges.

RLC's police powers practice made a significant expansion in March 2011, appointing a full time solicitor, David Porter, and receiving the support of a dedicated group of Monday night volunteers. Monday night advices routinely deal with complaints about members of the NSW Police Force from both victims of crime and defendants in criminal prosecutions.

RLC has also expanded its' administrative law practice. Much of the work done in this area relates to Freedom of Information law and privacy. RLC also advises on a wide variety of cases raising issues of natural justice and procedural fairness. RLC's administrative law practice works closely with RLC's tenancy team to bring an additional perspective to the actions of both Housing NSW and the New South Wales Police Force towards clients in public housing.

In recognising that there is no other free legal service in NSW specialising in these areas, both practice areas operate on a state-wide basis. RLC continues to develop fruitful relationships with lawyers and community workers across the state, seeking to provide advice and assistance to clients, and the sector as a whole.

## ADVICE AND CASEWORK

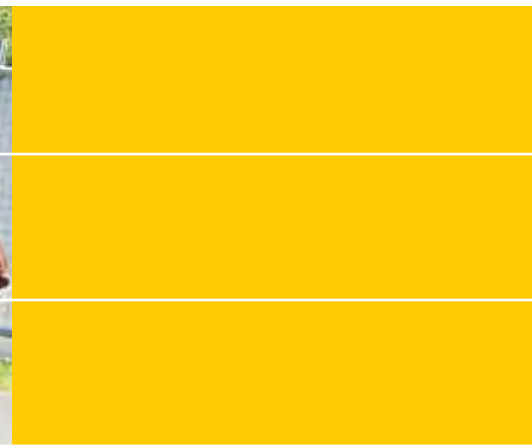
The police powers/administrative law practice deals with a range of legal and justice issues, including:

- > Complaints under Part 8A of the Police Act 1990 (NSW) - these are formal complaints about police conduct and include complaints made to the Ombudsman. Each Monday RLC advises on several police complaints, whilst continuing to seek reform of the police complaints system.
- > Government Information (Public Access) Act 2008 (NSW) applications to NSW Government agencies and subsequent internal reviews, complaints to the Information Commissioner and Applications to the Administrative Review Tribunal. Many NSW government departments experienced 'transition issues' when switching from the Freedom of Information Act 1989 to the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2008, on 1 July 2010. RLC assisted many people in pursuing their information requests.
- > Civil actions against the State of New South Wales for the intentional torts of wrongful arrest, false imprisonment and assault and battery. RLC is currently investigating and advising on a series of wrongful arrests, which are being pursued in tandem with complaints under the Police Act 1990 seeking disciplinary action against the officers involved.
- > The lawfulness of government debt collecting practices remains of great concern. Increasing emphasis on budgets has meant that some government departments have chosen to pursue citizens for debts that are not good at law and may never even have been owed in the first place. In the past year has challenged the power of the Department of Victims' Services to pursue debts that were never proven, more than 15 years after proceedings were commenced.

- > Complaints, internal departmental reviews and Administrative Decisions Tribunal applications under the Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act and the Health Records Information Protection Act - the amount of personal data held by government agencies is something that concerns a great number of our clients. In the past year, we have acted for: a victim of crime whose medical information was provided to the accused without subpoena; and a client who could not get the Police Force to destroy prejudicial documents that were kept simply because the Police Force was uncertain whether it was legally allowed to destroy them.
- > RLC has been building a knowledge base of internal police procedure and agitating for further transparency and accountability from the Police Force by lodging GIPA requests for Police Force procedure and policy documents such as complaint guidelines, Police Prosecutions Standard Operating Procedures and the Code of Best Practice for Information Management. When combined with previously available material, RLC is able to articulate the police conduct issues to a much greater degree than the client could without our help.

## PARTNERSHIPS

RLC sought the feedback and expert guidance of lawyers, barristers, policy advisers and academics throughout the year, including: the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, the Homeless Persons' Legal Service, the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law and the New South Wales Council for Civil Liberties. The assistance of the reference group enables RLC to remain attuned to a variety of emerging issues in police powers.



## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

RLC has made strong submissions to a variety of law reform consultations and parliamentary inquiries over the past year, including:

- > The NSW LRC Penalty Notices consultation
- > NSW Sentencing Council consultation on expansion of the jurisdiction of the Local Court
- > NSW LRC Review of the Bail Act 1978

To view these submissions, visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

Police powers and government accountability are topics of interest to people in all sections of the community. Over the past year, RLC has provided legal information, referrals and a keen listening ear to groups including:

- > The Fact Tree Youth Service, Waterloo
- > Glebe Youth Service
- > Alexandria Park Community School
- > Sydney Secondary College

These sessions provide the opportunity for individuals to develop an understanding of the fundamental principles governing police powers, particularly on the street. RLC is able to build a measure of trust with community workers and locals, trust that gives people enough confidence to tell us their stories. These sessions greatly assist us in assessing the extent of underreporting of police misconduct because of perception of bias and fear of reprisal.

## MEDIA

Police powers is a topic that generates periodic media interest and RLC has attempted to make an informed contribution to public discussion over the past year, conducting radio and press interviews with Radio 2SER, Radio 2UE, the Daily Telegraph, Central Magazine and the Sydney Morning Herald. The consistent element in all issues discussed this year has been alcohol. We have repeatedly argued that a law and order response to alcohol-related violence is insufficient to deal with the endemic issue of alcohol abuse in Australian society.

Visit <http://www.rlc.org.au/news.html> for links to RLC's media work in this area.

Harbourlife Concert



# EMPLOYMENT LAW

## ADVICE AND CASEWORK OVERVIEW

RLC provides employment law advice each Tuesday evening and demand has been consistently high. Megan Cameron is the RLC employment lawyer and she was welcomed back from parenting leave in May 2011.

The most common employment problems included unfair dismissal, underpayment of wages, disputes about redundancy and redundancy payments, disputes about conditions and entitlements, bullying and sexual harassment. Other issues advised upon were workplace assaults, sham contracting arrangements, disability discrimination and discrimination on the ground of criminal record.

## PRO BONO PARTNERSHIPS

RLC recently formed a partnership with Clayton Utz to provide representation in unfair dismissal applications for RLC clients. Clients receive initial advice at our Tuesday evening advice service and assistance completing an application for unfair dismissal. The client then has a second appointment with a volunteer solicitor from Clayton Utz and that volunteer solicitor represents the client at the Fairwork Australia conciliation conference. The volunteer solicitor can also advise the client about a deed of release if the claim is settled. The volunteer solicitors are trained and supported by Megan Cameron.

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**WHEN OUR CLIENT  
FAXED A MEDICAL  
CERTIFICATE TO HIS  
EMPLOYER HE WAS  
SACKED BY TEXT  
MESSAGE WITHIN  
AN HOUR.**

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## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

RLC made a submission to the Law Reform Commission on Family Violence and Employment and Superannuation. In this submission we argued for reforms to unfair dismissal, discrimination and superannuation legislation to acknowledge the experiences of victims of domestic violence.

For a copy of the submission see <http://www.rlc.org.au/about-us/submissions.html>

RLC's Chief Executive Officer is one of the Community Legal Centre representatives on the NSW Legal Assistance Forum Employment Law Working Group, which is looking at gaps in employment law services in NSW.

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND PUBLICATIONS

RLC produced a new publication on employment law in the "Hot Topics" series issued by the State Library's Legal Information Access Centre.

[http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/hot\\_topics/](http://www.legalanswers.sl.nsw.gov.au/hot_topics/)

## EMERGING ISSUES

Clients who experienced employment-related discrimination had an expanded range of legal options open to them this year, following the introduction of a cause of action for employment-related discrimination (and other forms of adverse action) in the Fair Work Act. A significant number of clients were advised on the option to make a 'general protections' application, where they might previously have only been able to make a complaint to a human rights body. General protections applications are conciliated by Fair Work Australia and then heard by the Federal Magistrates Court. Unlike federal human rights matters, general protections applications protect the applicant from costs orders in most circumstances. While the jurisprudence in this area is still emerging, the costs protection available to applicants makes it a very attractive option for many clients.

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### EMPLOYEE SACKED BY TEXT MESSAGE

*Our client, Ali, a migrant to Australia, was employed by a small business as a manager. He worked very long hours without overtime payments and assumed responsibility for the business when the owner made frequent overseas trips.*

*After Ali had been employed for about a year a close family member committed suicide. Ali requested two weeks leave so that he could attend the funeral. While overseas, Ali was contacted every day by his employer and he returned to work in Australia earlier than planned under pressure from his employer.*

*About two months later, after being called to work twice during his Christmas holiday leave, including on Christmas Day, Ali became ill. His doctor advised him to have some time off work to recover. When our client faxed a medical certificate to his employer he was sacked by text message within an hour. He was not given any payment in lieu of notice and he was not paid his accrued annual leave.*

*RLC's Tuesday evening volunteer solicitors helped Ali to complete and lodge an adverse action application with Fairwork Australia and an RLC solicitor represented our client at the conciliation conference. The case settled with a payment to our client.*

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# BRANCH OFFICE

Sydney University Postgraduate  
Representative Association (SUPRA)  
Legal Service

## OVERVIEW

The SUPRA branch office of RLC has remained busy and has undergone some important changes over the past year. As part of the overall strategic review of RLC, the SUPRA Legal Service became a specialist branch of the General Legal team.

The SUPRA Legal Service provides legal services to postgraduate students from any of the University of Sydney's seven campuses, including the affiliated campuses of the Sydney College of the Arts, The Conservatorium of Music, Orange Agricultural College and Camden Farms.

The SUPRA Legal Service provides regular legal and strategic advice to the four Student Advice and Advocacy Officers employed by SUPRA who deal with a variety of issues concerning students such as academic or welfare matters. The SUPRA Legal Service maintains a close link with and provide assistance to the other staff and office bearers of SUPRA in relation to any other legal matters that may arise, for example by providing advice in the areas of Intellectual Property or Defamation Law to office bearers or those involved in preparing SUPRA publications.

## CASEWORK AND ADVICE

The SUPRA Legal Service continues to provide representation and assistance to students on all external legal matters. As the Legal Service remains independent of the University, it is able to advise students on internal University matters and can represent students in conflicts with the University.

In terms of matters directly related to the University, advice and casework has mainly been provided in the following areas:

- > Intellectual property law;
- > Administrative matters;
- > Discrimination matters; and
- > Privacy law.

In terms of matters external to the University, advice and casework has mainly been provided in the following areas:

- > Consumer goods and services;
- > Credit and debt matters;
- > Criminal law;
- > Employment;
- > Fines;
- > Government and administrative matters;
- > Motor vehicle accidents;
- > Road traffic and motor vehicle regulatory offences; and
- > Tenancy.

The SUPRA Legal Service is also able to refer more complicated matters to our specialist services at RLC.

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

The SUPRA Legal Service has provided community legal information and education sessions to a number of students in the areas of intellectual property, traffic offences & fines, consumer contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), motor vehicle accidents (property damage), tenancy, privacy law and employment.

In addition the Legal Service has produced a range of legal facts sheets in areas of special interest to postgraduate students, specifically in the areas of intellectual property, fines, consumer law, contracts (specifically telecommunications service provider contracts), and privacy law.

## PUBLICATIONS

The SUPRA Legal Service contributed the Legal Section of the 2011 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.

## LAW AND POLICY REFORM

The solicitor has also been involved in an advisory capacity in the SUPRA work in these areas. Specifically, the service has contributed to both external submissions written by the SUPRA staff on matters relevant to postgraduate students and to internal policy submissions written by SUPRA staff in relation to a variety of proposed changes to University Policy and Rules.

# BRANCH OFFICE

TAFE (Sydney Institute)  
Legal Service

## OVERVIEW

The legal service at the Sydney Institute of TAFE is provided by RLC and operates as a branch office. The service is funded by the Sydney Institute of TAFE Student Association and is based at the Ultimo campus.

Legal services are available to students who are members of the Student Association and eligible TAFE staff at the eight colleges of Sydney Institute of TAFE: Eora, Enmore College of Design, Gymea, Loftus, Petersham, Randwick, St George, and Ultimo. There are over 74,000 students enrolled at the Sydney Institute of TAFE.

The TAFE Legal Service is able to liaise closely with TAFE counsellors and teachers to provide an effective crisis management plan to ensure that students' legal needs are addressed within the context of their general welfare.

RLC entered a contract to provide this legal service at the beginning of 2008. The legal service at the Sydney Institute of TAFE is the only legal service based at a TAFE college in Australia. The student population has high levels of disadvantage in accessing legal services. Recent statistics confirm that many students have disabilities or are from CALD backgrounds.

## ADVICE, MINOR ASSISTANCE AND CASEWORK

The TAFE Legal Service is staffed by one solicitor, who works three days per week and is employed and supervised by RLC. The TAFE Legal Service solicitor, Brenda Staggs, has been working at the Sydney Institute of TAFE since April 2009. The TAFE Legal Service is covered by RLC's professional indemnity insurance.

The solicitor provides advice in a broad range of areas. The most common legal issues advised on are consumer complaints, credit and debt, criminal law, family law, domestic violence, sexual assault, employment, motor vehicle accidents, discrimination and tenancy. Face-to-face appointments are available at the solicitor's office in the Students Association. Telephone appointments are also available where clients are unable to attend in person.

As well as providing legal advice, the solicitor provides minor assistance to clients by helping with drafting letters and forms, negotiating with third parties and referring clients to Legal Aid and private solicitors.

The solicitor provides ongoing casework services in a limited number of cases. In deciding whether to take on a case, the solicitor weighs available resources, expertise and factors such as the availability of other assistance and the likely outcome if assistance is not provided. As many legal problems may affect a student's ability to continue studying, a large amount of the casework is aimed at enabling students to continue their studies.

Self-representing clients are provided with advice regarding court procedure and assisted with the preparation of court documents and statements.

Many appointments made this semester were related to family law disputes including domestic violence. Most clients with family law issues came from a CALD background. TAFE Legal Service was the students' first point of call in addressing their issues.

## COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

The solicitor also undertakes community legal education with the intention of increasing students' ability to avoid legal problems and raising awareness of the availability of legal assistance when problems arise. The TAFE solicitor also attended various open days at the colleges to inform students about the service.

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### **STUDENT SEEKS FAMILY LAW ADVICE WHILE HUSBAND IN JAIL**

*Tina, a student, came to the TAFE Legal Service seeking advice about a divorce while her husband, Paul, was in gaol. In the meantime, Paul filed an Application for Orders asking for frequent contact with their children as well as Orders preventing Tina from taking the children from the family residence. Some of these Orders were impractical for her to comply with. TAFE Legal Service was able to find Tina a family lawyer to assist (initially on a pro bono basis) and to apply for legal aid for the student to attend the Court proceedings.*

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### **BEDBUGS, COCKROACHES AND 9 STUDENTS IN 2-BEDROOM UNIT**

*The TAFE Legal Service assisted Michael, a student who was living in a 2-bedroom unit in Ultimo and was being charged \$200 per week to share the accommodation with 9 other students. The unit had bed bugs and was cockroach infested. The landlord evicted Michael with no notice and kept \$500 in "bond and key" monies. The TAFE Legal Service assisted him in obtaining the deposit back. It was obvious during the negotiations that Michael needed Legal Services as the other party was using tactics to intimidate our client.*

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# OUR CLIENTS AND SERVICES

## STATISTICS

### INFORMATION AND ADVICE

Information activities:	2599
Number of advices undertaken:	3643

### CASEWORK

Number of files opened:	1945
Number of files closed:	1650

### PROJECTS

Community legal education projects:	117
Law reform projects undertaken:	78
Community development projects	44

### CLIENT GROUPS

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients	6.8%
Culturally and linguistically diverse clients (103 different countries of origin)	30.1%

Most of our culturally and linguistically diverse clients came from: China, Philippines, India, Thailand, Vietnam, Greece, Indonesia, Russia, Japan and Bangladesh.

### GENERAL ADVICE AND CASEWORK (TOP 10 ISSUE AREAS)

Domestic Violence	
Tenancy	
Credit & Debt	
Employment	
Government/Admin Law complaints	
Consumer complaints	
Fines/Road Traffic Offences	
Motor Vehicle Accidents	
Police complaints	
Discrimination	

### SYDNEY WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURT ADVOCACY SERVICE

Total client contacts:	9103
Clients assisted:	2026
First contact at court:	918
Referred by police:	1078
Client identified as Aboriginal:	176
CALD clients:	689
Clients with a disability:	205

### INNER SYDNEY TENANTS' ADVICE AND ADVOCACY SERVICE

Advices:	1957
CTTT Appearances:	67
Born outside Australia:	1016
ATSI:	51
Social housing tenants:	483
Boarder/lodger:	42
Homeless:	32

### SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SRC BRANCH (CLOSED 31 DECEMBER 2010)

Total advices/cases	72
Fines/traffic offences	12%
Employment	10%
Criminal Law	10%
Motor Vehicle	9%
Credit & Debt	5%

### SYDNEY UNIVERSITY SUPRA (POSTGRADUATE) BRANCH

Total advice/cases	264
Govt/admin complaints	25%
Civil (process, contracts)	23%
Consumer complaints	8%
Tenancy	8%
Intellectual Property	5%

### SYDNEY INSTITUTE OF TAFE BRANCH

Total advice/cases	197
Family law and child support	24%
Motor Vehicle/traffic issues	12%
Govt/admin complaints	11%
Tenancy	10%
Criminal Law	9%



# OUR VOLUNTEERS

Alana Lathrope  
 Alex Chidzey  
 Alex Rosales  
 Alexandra Doyle  
 Alicia Boothby  
 Amber Kelly  
 Andrew Bauman  
 Angela Wong  
 Anna Hutchinson  
 Anna Kerr  
 April Grenquist  
 Ashna Taneja  
 Ben Dummett  
 Ben Paull  
 Brendan Hull  
 Candence Catt  
 Caragh Calder-Potts  
 Carl Hagon  
 Carla Di Giusto  
 Carmen Terceiro  
 Cherissa Zhou  
 Claire Bready  
 Claire Harris  
 Corinna Lee  
 Dale Mills  
 Daniel Andreallo  
 Daniel Ward  
 David D'Souza  
 David Vallance  
 Dennis Mak  
 Edmond Chu

Effie Shorten  
 Eleanor Doyle-Markwick  
 Elias Attia  
 Elisabeth Johnson  
 Elizabeth Rees  
 Emilia Lukeman  
 Emily Keon-Cohen  
 Emma McKibben  
 Eugenia Baydikova  
 Eunice Lee  
 Felicia Nevins  
 Flora Zaydenberg  
 Frosanna Kelso  
 Gabriella Mesiti  
 Genevieve Schulz  
 Gerald Seeto  
 Gillian Tedder  
 Grant Mason  
 Guitang Lu  
 Hannah Bruce  
 Heath McCrossin  
 Heather Choi  
 Heidi Nash-Smith  
 Henrietta Farrelly-Barnett  
 Heran Kim  
 Iresha Siriwardana  
 Jada Lam  
 Jane Waddell  
 Jane Wurth  
 Janice King

Janice Padovani-Ginies  
 Jemma McLaughlin  
 Jennifer Hoy  
 Jennifer Kwong  
 Jennifer Parbery  
 Jennifer Garrick  
 Jenny Radford  
 Jessica Chiu  
 Jessica Ng  
 Jessica Stirling  
 Jessie Ingle  
 Jo Dodds  
 Jo Seto  
 Joann Yap  
 Joanne Wong  
 Jonathon Hozack  
 Joseph Haddad  
 Joseph Scimone  
 Julia Gendelman  
 Julia Zboromirsky  
 Jurga Jablonjkiene  
 Karen Beck  
 Katayoun Sadeghi  
 Katie Kossian  
 Kayhan Oncu  
 Kelvin Keane  
 Kiara Rodara  
 Krysten Mansell  
 Laura Costello  
 Lauren Chockman  
 Lauren Goodson

Lewis D'Avigdor  
 Lily Luo  
 Lorylene Osorio  
 Louise Rigozzi  
 Malcom Charlton  
 Marcia Ruf  
 Margaret Chan  
 Mark Stratton  
 Matthew Ashworth  
 Matthew Ting  
 Melanie Lim  
 Melini Pillay  
 Merylyn McClung  
 Michael McCoy  
 Michelle Mai  
 Misa Han  
 Nadine Fitzpatrick  
 Natasa Bogunovic  
 Natasa Reurts  
 Nelson Guo  
 Nicole Seale  
 Nina Ralph  
 Patrick Boyle  
 Patrick Hodgetts  
 Penny Cookson  
 Phil Winterton  
 Phillipa Kerr  
 Pia Riley  
 Polina Oussova  
 Priyanka Rajan  
 Rachel Wright

Rawan Abdul  
 Rita Caruana  
 Roxana Zulfacar  
 Sadia Khan Sheikh  
 Sarah Young  
 Scott Hanrahan  
 Sean Behringer  
 Simon Lindsay  
 Simon Rudd  
 Siobhaun Kennedy  
 Sophie Jaggard  
 Stefanie Vogt  
 Stephanie Millen  
 Stewart Mills  
 Subhaga Amarasekara  
 Sue-Ellen Hills  
 Sumedha Rathi  
 Sylvia Croaker  
 Tanem Taskin  
 Tara Imrie  
 Taryn Morrison  
 Tom Barbat  
 Tom O'Brien  
 Uliana Korchevskaya  
 Vivian Chen  
 Vivianne Schwarz  
 Wenny Theresia  
 Winston Headford

*RLC volunteer talking to members of the public.*



*RLC volunteers setting up the stall, ready to give information about credit and debt and domestic violence, at Summer on the Green.*





RLC is fortunate to have a dedicated team of volunteers who work tirelessly to enable us to provide a service to the community.

Our Volunteer Legal Assistants are the first point of contact for our clients. Their compassion and professionalism is unparalleled. Our Volunteer Solicitors come to us with a wealth of knowledge and experience and contribute time outside of their highly demanding lives to provide the majority of our advice. Our Practical Legal Training Students work tirelessly behind the scenes - contributing through research projects and follow-up casework. Our Pro Bono partners dedicate time, expertise and resources to assist us to provide advice to our clients.

To all our volunteers, we extend our gratitude - we look forward to working with you all again over the next year to continue to provide this important service to our community. Volunteers are the lifeblood of RLC and we simply couldn't run without you.

**Sophie Farrell,**  
Communications & Volunteer Manager



#### **THE STORY OF A VOLUNTEER**

*I first heard of the great work undertaken at RLC when I was studying for my undergraduate law degree. While I had wanted to get involved at the time, juggling study and work (and trying to maintain a life at the same time) didn't leave me much time to commit to their volunteer program.*

*Once I was admitted as a solicitor and spent some time in practice, I thought that I should put my legal skills to use outside of the office and contacted RLC to get involved.*

*Working as a volunteer is challenging, interesting and incredibly rewarding. Much of the advice that is sought by the people I see is outside my area of expertise, but the work forces me to move outside of my area of knowledge and continuously gain new skills. The evening supervisors are of great assistance - they are ready to help and genuinely care about the clients' needs. Given the amount of matters undertaken by RLC, I have found this really refreshing.*

*Gaining excellent work experience has been a bonus, but it is the interaction with clients and feeling that I may be able to help them, that continues to strengthen my commitment to the volunteer program. Many of the people I see are overwhelmed by the legal process and scared of enforcing their legal rights. Many simply don't know what their legal rights are. Many of RLC's clients experience language barriers or mental health concerns.*

*One of my most memorable experiences was when a client came back in to see me and thank me for the work that I had undertaken for him. I had drafted a letter to an insurer on his behalf. He came back to tell me that he had achieved the result he wanted and was incredibly pleased with the work RLC had done for him. That experience was just as rewarding for me as winning a large-scale commercial claim in the Supreme Court, because I felt as though I had really made a difference.*

*Katie, Volunteer Solicitor*

**MANY OF THE PEOPLE I SEE  
ARE OVERWHELMED BY  
THE LEGAL PROCESS AND  
SCARED OF ENFORCING  
THEIR LEGAL RIGHTS**

**VOLUNTEERS ARE  
THE LIFEBLOOD OF  
RLC AND WE SIMPLY  
COULDN'T RUN  
WITHOUT YOU**

# OUR STAFF

## PERMANENT AND FIXED TERM STAFF:

Natalie Bradshaw	Tenancy Adviser
Megan Cameron	Solicitor
Hilary Chesworth	Administrator
Nicholas Comino	Volunteer Coordinator
Sophie Farrell	Communications and Volunteer Manager
Tatiya Hastie	SWDVCAS Specialist Worker
Maggie Hayes	Solicitor, SRC branch
Jodie Lee	SWDVCAS Assistant Coordinator
Rebecca Louttit	SWDVCAS Admin Officer
Kirrillie Moore	Senior Solicitor
Elizabeth Morley	Principal Solicitor
Donna Polletti	SWDVCAS Court Advocate
David Porter	Solicitor
Penny Quarry	Senior Solicitor
Natalie Ross	General Team Leader
Michelle Schonstein	Solicitor
Joanna Shulman	Chief Executive Officer
Susan Smith	SWDVCAS Coordinator
Brenda Staggs	Solicitor, TAFE NSW branch
Jacqui Swinburne	Tenancy Coordinator
Lee Taylor	SWDVCAS Assistant Coordinator
Sue Thomas	Tenants' Advocate
Phoenix van Dyke	Tenants' Advocate
Ingrid van Tongeren	Solicitor, SUPRA branch
Wendy Wang	Admin Officer
Charmaine Weldon	SWDVCAS Specialist Worker
Rochelle Zats	SWDVCAS Specialist Worker

## CASUAL STAFF:

Nicholas Anderson	Tenancy Adviser
Cadence Barkelew-Catt	SWDVCAS Assistant
Kathleen Chegwidde	SWDVCAS Assistant
Robert Chiarella	Tenancy Adviser
Emily Christie	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Siew Cooper	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Chantel Cotterell	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Alex Edwards	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Jack Fu	Cleaner
Claire Harris	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Susan James	Locum Solicitor
Uliana Korchevskaya	Tenancy Assistant
Klara Major	Project Officer
Rafael Mazzoldi	Tenancy Adviser
Dale Mills	Locum Solicitor
Madeleine Rowley	Supervisor, Day Information Service
Louie Supan	Admin Assistant
Tammy Wong	Tenancy Adviser
Rosaline Yusman	Supervisor, Day Information Service

## CONSULTANTS

Meerkat Computer Services	IT support
Judith Stubbs & Associates	Organisational Review
Grant Thornton Services (NSW) Pty Ltd	Strategic Plan

# OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

RLC is a company limited by guarantee. It has a Board of six elected directors who have delegated responsibility for day-to-day management to the Executive Officer.

## DIRECTORS



### NICOLAS PATRICK

#### Chair

Nicolas Patrick is Pro Bono Partner and Head of Pro Bono for Europe, Middle East and Asia Pacific for DLA Piper. He sits on the board of PILCH NSW, New Perimeter (DLA Piper's non-profit affiliate dedicated to delivering pro bono in developing and post-conflict countries) and the advisory board of the Human Rights Law Centre. His main area of practise is human rights. Nicolas commenced as a volunteer with RLC in 1999 and was elected to the board in 2003.



### 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 and undertaking policy and law reform work and community legal education particularly in matters involving people with an intellectual disability. Tamara first became involved with RLC as a volunteer legal assistant, then worked with SWDVCAS and ISTAAS and is current a Director of the Board. Tamara also sits on the board of the Intellectual Disability Rights Service. Tamara has qualifications in law and arts from the University of New South Wales.



### KRISTIN VAN BARNEVELD

After completing an Economics (Social Science) degree and a Masters of Labour Law and Relations,

Kristin van Barneveld submitted her doctoral thesis in 2004 and gained her legal practising certificate in 2007. Kristin worked in industrial relations academia research and teaching for more than a decade before taking on various industrial/legal roles in the union movement. Kristin is currently Deputy National Secretary of the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) and is directly responsible for the Political, Industrial, Research and Legal (PIRL) work of the CPSU, as well as being part of the Executive team responsible for the overall operation of the union. Kristin first started volunteering at RLC in 2005 as a student, providing night advice on employment matters. Kristin has been a Director of the RLC Board since October 2006 and is also currently a Director of AGEST (Australian Government Employees' Superannuation Trust).



### PETER STAPLETON

Peter Stapleton was instrumental in establishing Blake Dawson Waldron's (now Blake Dawson)

national pro bono practice, a firm he joined in 1983. Peter is a Director of Aboriginal Legal Services (NSW/ACT). Peter began his relationship with RLC as Chair for many years in the 1980s and continues on as a Director of the Board today.



### PAUL FARRUGIA

Paul Farrugia is a partner in a small suburban legal firm. He 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 board member. In recognition of his service to RLC, Paul received the Law Society pro bono solicitor of the year award in 1993.



### AMY MUNRO

Amy Munro is a senior associate with Mallesons Stephen Jaques where she led the development of a

national education program for the legal profession on international humanitarian law and international criminal law. She began her association with Redfern Legal Centre in 2003 as a Tenant Advocate with ISTAAS, moving on to become the Project Manager of the Share Housing Survival Guide in 2004 and being elected to the board in February 2010.

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE  
ABN 31001442039

## DIRECTORS' DECLARATION

The directors of the company declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 8 - 20, are in accordance with the *Corporations Act 2001* and:
  - (a) comply with Accounting Standards in Australia and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*; and
  - (b) give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2011 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.

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

Director:

  
-- Nicholas Patrick --

Dated this

25<sup>th</sup>

day of

October

2011

# AUDITOR'S REPORT



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111 Market Place  
Sydney NSW 2000  
Australia

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Sydney NSW 2001  
Australia

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[enquiries@pitcherpartners.com.au](mailto:enquiries@pitcherpartners.com.au)

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& Auditing Institute of Chartered Accountants  
Australia | U.K. | U.S. | Canada | Europe

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

## **INDEPENDENT AUDIT 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 2011, and the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity and Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended on that date, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the directors' declaration.

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

The directors' of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Corporations Act 2001*. This responsibility includes establishing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

### *Auditor's Responsibility*

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance 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 in the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the directors, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

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

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# AUDITOR'S REPORT



PITCHER PARTNERS

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

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT 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*.

*Auditor's Opinion*

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

- (i) giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2011 and of its performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the *Corporations Regulations 2001*.

Mark Godlewski

Partner

25 October 2011

PITCHER PARTNERS

SYDNEY

# FINANCIAL POSITION

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE  
ABN 31001442039

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	175,652	200,562
Receivables	1,229	1,166
Other financial assets	481,144	454,028
Other assets	<u>10,562</u>	<u>11,054</u>
<b>Total current assets</b>	<u>668,587</u>	<u>666,810</u>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		
Property, plant and equipment	<u>28,622</u>	<u>32,216</u>
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<u>28,622</u>	<u>32,216</u>
<b>Total assets</b>	<u>697,209</u>	<u>699,026</u>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		
Payables	185,834	199,000
Provisions	<u>195,410</u>	<u>197,753</u>
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<u>381,244</u>	<u>396,753</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		
Provisions	<u>94,770</u>	<u>85,836</u>
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<u>94,770</u>	<u>85,836</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<u>476,014</u>	<u>482,589</u>
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>221,195</u>	<u>216,439</u>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained surplus	<u>221,195</u>	<u>216,439</u>
<b>Total equity</b>	<u>221,195</u>	<u>216,439</u>



# COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE  
ABN 31001442039

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	2011	2010
	\$	\$
<b>Revenue</b>		
Other income	<u>1,758,440</u>	<u>1,797,726</u>
	<u>1,758,440</u>	<u>1,797,726</u>
<b>Less: expenses</b>		
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(24,131)	(24,605)
Employee benefits expense	(1,543,507)	(1,489,100)
Finance costs	-	(153)
Printing, stationery and postage	(19,631)	(32,573)
Telephone, facsimile, internet	(20,027)	(20,630)
Insurance	(11,492)	(10,649)
Subscriptions	(10,174)	(15,882)
Program related expenses	(47,940)	(107,206)
Other expenses	<u>(76,780)</u>	<u>(110,966)</u>
	<u>(1,753,682)</u>	<u>(1,811,764)</u>
<b>Surplus / (deficit)</b>	<u>4,758</u>	<u>(14,038)</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income</b>	<u>4,758</u>	<u>(14,038)</u>

# CASH FLOWS

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE  
ABN 31001442039

## STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2011

	2011 \$	2010 \$
<b>Cash flow from operating activities</b>		
Receipts from customers	100,727	96,321
Operating grant receipts	1,607,601	1,593,722
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,734,997)	(1,774,189)
Interest received	49,835	41,029
Finance costs	-	(153)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities</b>	<u>23,166</u>	<u>(43,270)</u>
<b>Cash flow from investing activities</b>		
Payment for property, plant and equipment	(20,960)	(15,877)
Payment for investments	(27,116)	(21,862)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) investing activities</b>	<u>(48,076)</u>	<u>(37,739)</u>
<b>Cash flow from financing activities</b>		
Repayment of borrowings	-	(1,196)
<b>Net cash provided by / (used in) financing activities</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,196)</u>
<b>Reconciliation of cash</b>		
Cash at beginning of the financial year	200,562	282,767
Net increase / (decrease) in cash held	<u>(24,910)</u>	<u>(82,205)</u>
<b>Cash at end of financial year</b>	<u><u>175,652</u></u>	<u><u>200,562</u></u>

# GET INVOLVED

## GET INVOLVED

- > Find Redfern Legal Centre on facebook  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Redfern-Legal-Centre/256169181079984>
- > Check out Redfern Legal Centre Volunteers on facebook  
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Redfern-Legal-Centre-Volunteers/239369679433369>
- > Follow us on twitter  
[http://twitter.com/#!/RLC\\_CEO](http://twitter.com/#!/RLC_CEO)
- > Donate to support our work  
<http://www.everydayhero.com.au/charity/view?charity=1625>
- > Subscribe to Redfern Legal, our free bi-monthly e-bulletin by emailing us at [bulletin@rlc.org.au](mailto:bulletin@rlc.org.au)
- > Volunteer with Redfern Legal Centre - find out more at <http://www.rlc.org.au/volunteer.html>



