

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

Annual Report
1994 -1995

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REDFERN
LEGAL
CENTRE

Introduction



With another year of achievement under our belts, Redfern Legal Centre looks forward to more outstanding advances in the areas of law reform, client services and community education.

Over the past year the centre has yet again responded to community needs and focused its resources on areas of domestic violence, tenancy, victims compensation (sexual assault), credit and debt, superannuation, unfair dismissals and drug law reform.

The Centre's objectives remain:

- to provide a legal advice and referral service.
- to provide ongoing casework services to people who live or work in the RLC catchment area and who can neither afford the services of a private solicitor nor get assistance from the Legal Aid Commission of NSW.
- to continue to identify inequalities and defects in laws, the legal system, administrative practices and society which affect RLC's clients and disadvantaged people generally, and to work for social and legal change to remove those defects and inequalities.
- to promote community legal education.
- to investigate and develop new ways of providing legal services to RLC's clients. To improve access to these services and to ensure that the quality of those services is maintained and improved.

Some of the Centre's major achievements over the past twelve months include:

- the centre was successful in another VCT claim for a former sex worker which has reinforced the findings of a previous District Court Appeal under similar circumstances.
- the centre is assisting a police woman in the Equal Opportunity Tribunal with an application against 11 fellow police officers regarding harassment and victimisation

- the centre was involved in a Supreme Court decision on “no cause” evictions where a land mark decision has impacted on Tribunal Termination Orders
 - in June 1995, after a 9 week mediation and prolonged hearing, the Commercial Tribunal handed down its decision in the State Bank Case. It determined that the Bank would be required to pay \$5 million into the Financial Counselling Trust Fund as a penalty for its breaches of the Credit Act. The penalty is the largest in the history of consumer credit matters in Australia
 - the drug reform project, commenced in July 1994, has part completed a major project aimed at securing significant reform of the criminal law relating to recreational drug use. The project has focused on immediate reforms to laws prohibiting possession of drugs, including both cannabis and ‘hard’ drugs, as well as proposals for a major revision of all laws regulating drug use and supply. The centre has attracted a great deal of media attention and thereby has contributed greatly to the debate on law reform nationally.
 - the continued work at the Sydney University SRC has led to more improvements for the students in administrative practices, internal disciplinary and review mechanisms
 - the centre successfully secured funding from the Office of Fair Trading to commence an inner city tenants service with 2 full-time workers and support staff
 - the Redfern Model for Women’s Domestic Violence Support Schemes provided the pro-forma for design and funding for court assistance schemes across the state
 - the centre continued to be involved in the Access to Justice debate on a National level, other policy areas include tenancy, credit code, superannuation, victims compensation and domestic violence.
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General Advice and Casework



The Centre has developed a style of legal service designed to assist the greatest number of people possible. Priority is therefore given to:

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

Clients can be assisted in three ways. They can be advised in person by appointment, they can be given advice over the telephone or they may receive ongoing legal assistance and representation.

The issues the Centre advises on include the following:

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|---|----------------------------------|
| • Credit | • Family law |
| • Criminal law and minor infringements
ie traffic, fine defaults, fare evasion | • Insurance |
| • Community organisations | • Legal aid |
| • Complaints against police, solicitors, govt depts | • Mental health |
| • Consumer complaints | • Motor vehicle accidents |
| • Consumer credit law | • Neighbour disputes |
| • Debts | • Prison |
| • Discrimination | • Student matters,
eg Austudy |
| • Domestic violence | • Social security matters |
| • Employment | • Tenancy |
| • Environment and planning | • Victims compensation |
| | • Wills |

Advice by Appointment

Legal advice is provided to any person attending the Centre during interview hours, Monday - Friday 6-9pm and Tuesday and Thursday 2-4 pm. Specialist advice sessions are provided in credit, debt, tenancy, and intellectual disability.

A day time service is provided for the elderly and those unable to attend at night and an outreach service is available for those unable to leave home.

Telephone Advice

The Centre provides telephone advice to:

- community workers and staff of relevant government offices seeking advice on behalf of clients, any time between 9 am and 9 pm;
- any caller from 6.30- 8.30 pm weekdays;
- any caller in emergencies 9 am to 9 pm weekdays. Calls are received from anywhere in NSW as well as interstate.
- **In 1994/95 we gave telephone advice to 3958 people.**

Casework

Legal assistance including representation is provided to people and organisations who:

- cannot afford a private lawyer
- do not qualify for legal aid from existing services
- live or work in the area serviced by RLC.

Eligibility Guidelines

Our guidelines focus on:

- where the prospective client lives
- the nature of the client's problem
- whether the client can reasonably obtain assistance elsewhere (including whether they can afford a private solicitor)
- whether the client would be able to handle the matter themselves.

Guidelines are relaxed in special cases, especially where the matter is within specialist areas or where no other legal assistance is available.

Home and institutional visits are arranged for clients who are unable to attend the Centre. The Centre can use the services of South Sydney Community Transport to assist the frail and elderly to gain access to the Centre's legal advice sessions.

Litigation will be conducted if a precedent could be established that would benefit a particular class of clients.

Clients who are capable of dealing with all or part of their problems themselves, with some guidance are encouraged and assisted to do so. Referrals are made to private lawyers, other legal aid bodies and other agencies.

Notable cases in General Casework

Discrimination

We appeared with a policewoman at a conciliation conference at the Anti-Discrimination Board concerning her complaint that members of the NSW Police Service had discriminated against her on the grounds of her sex - including sexual harassment - and her pregnancy and marital status. Our client alleges that she had also been victimised following her complaints about these matters to the Professional Integrity Unit. The matter has not settled following conciliation and we have requested the Board to refer the matter to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for hearing.

We also act for a second policewoman who alleges that she was sexually harassed at work over a period of 12 years and that her health has been seriously effected as a result. Our client's complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Board was not lodged within the required time limit and the President has yet to decide whether or not to accept the complaint.

Unfair Dismissals

Our client was a young man who was employed as a delivery /truck driver for a small business and was dismissed from his job after taking a sick day to drive his grandmother who had suffered a "turn" to hospital. He had worked for the firm for about 18 months and had taken some but not all of the sick leave to which he was entitled. We appeared for him at the Federal Industrial Relations Commission and the matter was settled.

We also appeared in the Federal Industrial Relations Commission for a single parent from a non English speaking background who had worked as a bar attendant for a small sporting club over five years. He was dismissed after the club's President told him the toilets (which he also cleaned at the beginning of his shift) were dirty. This client felt a great deal of loyalty to the club and was more concerned about the breakdown of the employment relationship than monetary compensation. The matter did not settle at conciliation and has been referred to hearing at the Industrial Relations Court.

Funeral Fund

Our client had been paying for his mother's funeral on a pre-death instalment plan and had fallen behind payments before his mother died. Prior to his mother's funeral he renegotiated the contract with the funeral fund over the telephone - agreeing to pay more for the funeral than he had originally . The Centre wrote to the fund and argued that the additional charge was invalid and the fund agreed not to seek the additional costs.

Alleged Improper Conduct by Police

Our client is not fluent in English. He alleges that while his car was stationary in a shopping centre car park another person drove his car into him. Our client telephoned to the police who arrived and spoke for some

time to the other driver and only briefly to him. A few days later our client received an infringement notice from the police and the other driver's insurance company has taken him to court for damages of \$5,000. We wrote to the Ombudsman on our client's behalf and attended a conciliation conference with the Police. The Ombudsman has declined to investigate the matter further but we have arranged for a firm of solicitors to defend the civil matter for our client on a pro bono basis.

Insurance on a Credit Union loan

Our client was medically retired as a result of a chronic anxiety disorder. He had also sought assistance prior to his retirement for a drinking problem which his psychiatrist had diagnosed as a symptom of the anxiety disorder. The insurance company who were covering his credit union loan in the event of unemployment or sickness refused liability to meet the loan payments on the basis of our client's alcohol problem. We have requested the Insurance Enquires and Complaints Ltd. investigate this matter and if necessary refer it to the General Insurance Claims Review Panel for a decision about the insurance company's liability.

Family Law

We do not normally represent clients in family law matters but we are happy to assist people from non English speaking backgrounds or with literacy problems complete their applications for divorce and especially when the divorce is not straightforward. This year we assisted an 81 year old man prepare his divorce. He had been separated from his former wife for over 55 years and no record of her whereabouts or death could be found.

Complaints and Enquiries

We complained to the Ombudsman about inappropriate remarks and inaction of police who attended our client's home after her defacto threw a can of paint varnish over her. The police had not ensured our client was not seriously injured and did not seek an AVO on her behalf. They made comments about the nice home she and her defacto had been renovating.

The matter was conciliated with the assistance of the police Customer Assistance Unit, the police officers were spoken to by their patrol commander and our client was satisfied with this process.

Another client who had been granted restraining orders against her ex-husband remained fearful he may still have a gun in his possession. At the conclusion of proceedings at a metropolitan local court the magistrate had recommended that her ex-husband be permitted to retain his firearms and licence. The Firearms Registry advised us that they had made a decision not to cancel the husband's licence but had placed conditions on it and were not at liberty to tell us what these were. After making further enquiries and with the assistance of the Firearms Consultative Committee in the Police Department we were able to advise our client that her husband did not have a firearms licence or a shooter's licence but a security licence with a condition that he not to have access to firearms.

Victims compensation restitution

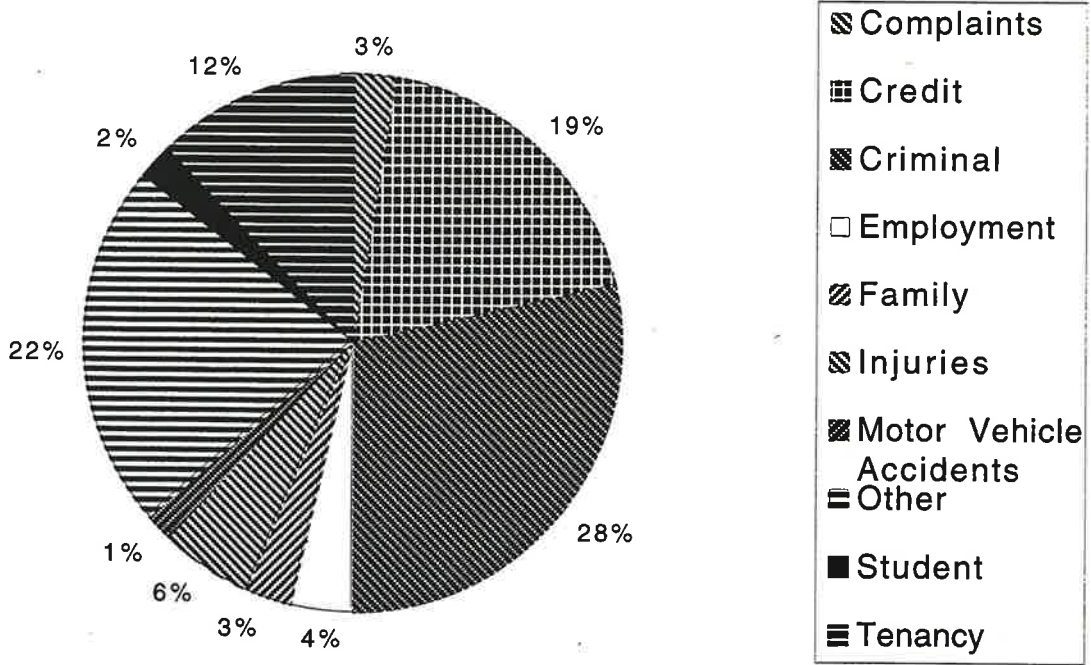
Our client was arrested in a student demonstration in 1987. A police officer allegedly injured by our client was paid \$5000 victims compensation, and the Tribunal sought to recover this amount from our client. We appeared in the restitution hearing, where our client was ordered to pay \$500.

Phoney Celebrant

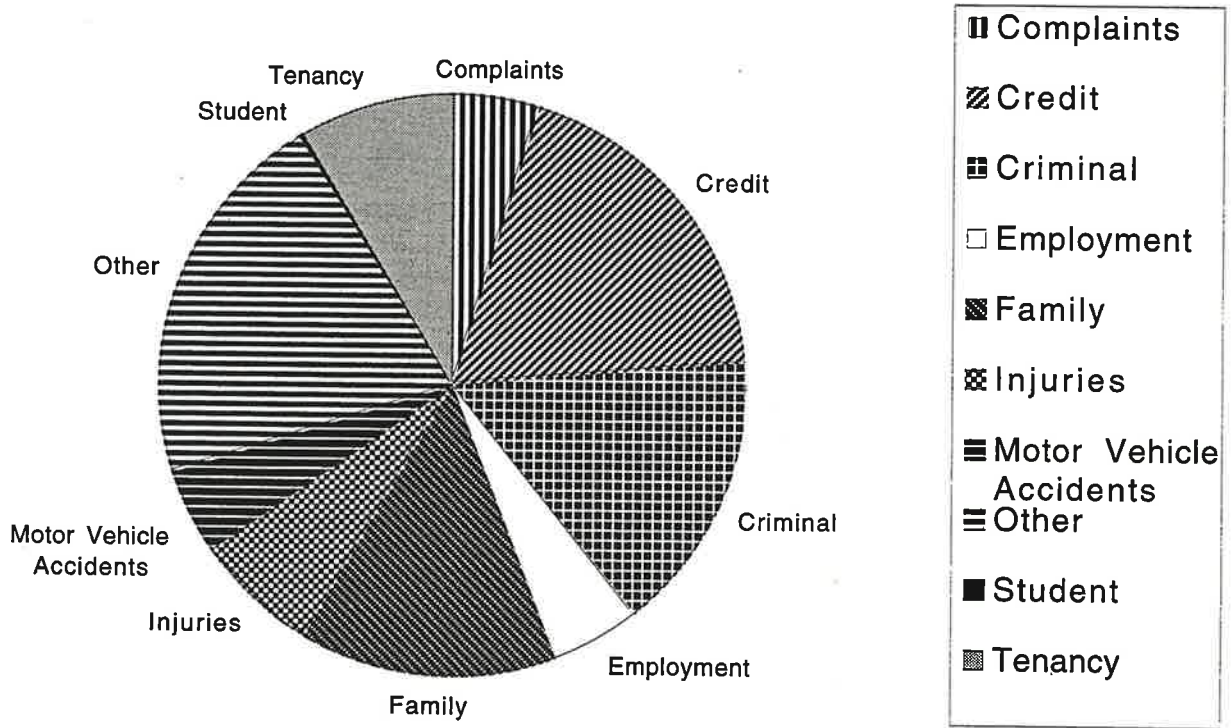
A woman who thought she was married to a Chinese man says he kicked her out of the house just before their second "anniversary", telling her the whole marriage was a sham - the celebrant wasn't licensed. The woman now has a child from the relationship, but the father is refusing to offer any support.

Casework Statistics

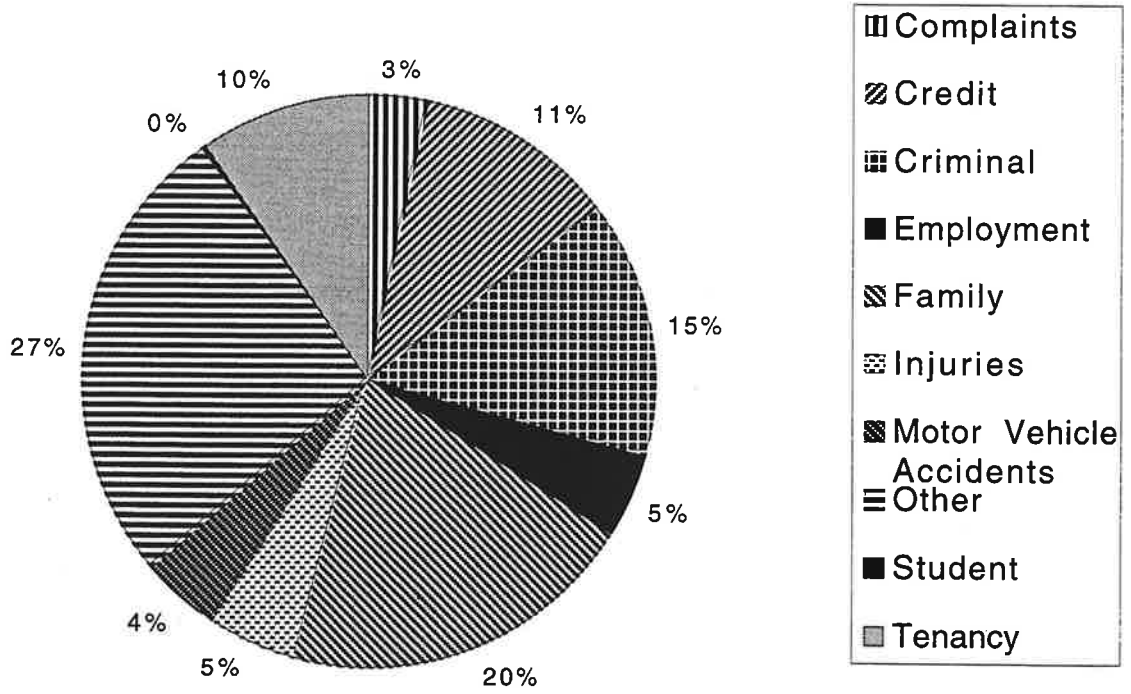
In 1994/95, 552 files were opened at the Centre. 1411 people came into the Centre for advice and 3958 people were given advice over the telephone.



Files opened in 1994/95

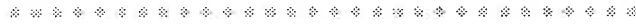


Advice given in 1994/95



Telephone advice given in 1994/95

Specialist Areas



High demand led Redfern Legal Centre to develop specialist services to address community needs. In 1994/5 the credit and debt service was expanded to include superannuation and insurance matters, general casework to include discrimination and industrial law; the women's DV court assistance scheme and the SRC Branch were maintained and the tenancy service received independent funding.

Tenancy

In 1995 the Centre received funding from the Office of Real Estate Services (now the Department of Fair Trading) to run the Inner City Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service. Wednesday night has been maintained as a specialist advice night for tenants with an advice line five days per week plus ongoing casework. The Centre will continue its involvement with the Tenancy Legal Working Party of the Combined Community Legal Centres Group. This group comprises community legal centres and tenancy organisations who focus on tenancy law reform. Issues worked on in 1994/5 by RLC staff include:

- submissions to the Residential Tenancies Act Consultative Committee on a regular basis.
- submissions regarding the proposed Local Government (Boarding and Lodging Houses) Amendment Bill 1994.
- co-writing of the share housing survival kit soon to be released by RLCP. The kit was produced with the assistance of Sydney Uni SRC, the Office of Real Estate Services and RLCP
- follow up submissions to the National Tenant/Landlord Legislative Benchmark consultancy.
- further negotiations with the Office of Real Estate Services on the model structure for new tenants advice services
- finalisation of the Private Members Bill - a significant law reform initiative, a wholesale revision of existing legislation.
- further negotiations with the Tenancy Commissioner on problems arising from the rent receipting system used by the Department of Housing. The Department of Housing is exempt from the sections of the Residential Tenancies Act 1987 relating to rent receipts. Public Housing tenants do not receive accurate records of rent paid and owed. During 1994 a new receipting system is to be introduced and hopefully will be more satisfactory.
- Monitoring the decisions of and applications of procedures of the

Residential Tenancies Tribunal. As a consequence the Centre has run a number of appeals from the RTT relating to issues of procedural fairness.

The Centre also:

- represented the CCLC group on the Residential Tenancies Act Review Committee. This committee has been established to advise the Tenancy Commission on the application of the Act.
- held discussions with officers of the Department of Housing regarding rent arrears, and termination, notices
- was a member of the Public Housing Task Force co-ordinated by South Sydney Council and formed to develop proposals which may address some of the major problems concerning residents in the public housing estates. This task force later received an award from the Royal Australian Planning Institute.
- is represented on the Tenants Union's Board of Directors, keeping abreast of issues in law reforms and campaigns, locally and state-wide.

Waverley Tenants Service

This service was set up in 1992 by the Centre on request by Waverley Council. After 12 months the service was transferred to ECHO Neighbourhood Centre. Redfern Legal Centre continued in an advisory role on Waverley Tenants Service Management Committee and ultimately assisted the service in securing funding from the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Programme.

Notable Tenancy Cases

Swain v Residential Tenancies Tribunal
Supreme Court decision on "no cause" evictions

This matter was initially in the Residential Tenancies Tribunal in 1994 and decided by the Supreme Court early in 1995. A landmark case for tenants, Rolfe J found that the Tribunal does have the power to refuse to terminate a tenancy even though there has been a valid notice of termination for no grounds. The judge decided that the Residential Tenancies Act obliges the Tribunal to have regard to the "circumstances of the case" before granting orders for possession.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that this has led to the Tribunal delaying orders for possession where the tenant presents evidence that they have had difficulty finding alternative accommodation or have medical/family reasons why they need to be located in a certain area. Redfern Legal Centre Tenants Advice Service recently assisted a tenant to present an argument that in her circumstances the Tribunal should refuse to make orders for possession at all. The tenant was successful in her submission.

Department of Housing v Custance
Eviction stopped

Our client was a public tenant at Hurstville. Due to a summary cancellation of her rental rebate, she was in substantial rent arrears. The Department had taken eviction proceedings at the Residential Tenancies Tribunal. Our client had received no notice of this hearing and so did not attend. Orders for possession were granted by the Tribunal in her absence. The Department of Housing had obtained a warrant and were seeking to evict our client, despite significant problems with the cancellation of her rebate. We were able to negotiate with the Department not to execute the warrant and to reassess her rental rebate. Arrangements were then made for our client to pay back the arrears in instalments.

Myers v Cox
Rent reduction for flooded flat

The tenant lived in a strata block in Darlinghurst. For almost twelve months there had been a leak in the ceiling of his apartment which caused flooding to the kitchen and lounge room, making these areas of the premises uninhabitable when it rained. Ongoing requests for repairs by the tenant had not resolved the issue. The real estate agent claimed it was the body corporate's responsibility, the body corporate claimed it was the landlord's. We assisted the tenant to make an application for rent reduction and for compensation for damage to his belongings. The tenant was successful in the Tribunal and was awarded over \$2500.

Tuglu v Kirrawee Guest House
Non-English Speaking Occupants and contracts

Our client was a boarder at a guest house. She had only just arrived in Australia and did not speak or read English. She had no written agreement for her occupation. Each week when she paid her rent she was issued with a rent receipt which stated that she had to give 7 days notice to quit or forfeit her bond. Our client gave 2 days notice and the landlady refused to return her bond, claiming that our client was bound by the terms on the rent receipt. We argued that our client could not be bound by these terms as she did not speak or write English, and thus could not understand what she was agreeing to. The landlady agreed to refund our client's bond in full.

Domestic Violence

The Centre co-ordinates and resources the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme (WDVCAS).

The WDVCAS is the specialist court support scheme, which has been operating since March 1990. This Scheme is an innovative attempt to provide a range of legal and support services to women seeking Apprehended Violence Orders (AVOs) through Redfern Local Court. The Scheme is considered unique amongst court support schemes in that it provides an integrated legal and non legal service at the court itself.

Underpinning the Scheme is the belief that the combination of solicitors and support workers will provide a more effective service than either solicitors or support workers working independently.

The Scheme is built upon an interactive and co-operative relationship between solicitors and support workers from 17 different local community agencies and 3 Community Legal Centres. The Scheme operates every Wednesday at Redfern Local Court. The services of a solicitor and two support workers are made available for women seeking AVOs who would otherwise appear unrepresented.

The Scheme is now accepted as an ongoing commitment of the Centre and the following action has been taken:

- The Workers Guide has been updated and submitted to and training sessions for court support workers continue to be run.
- A Domestic Violence Resource manual has been developed with the help of funding from the Office of Status of Women to improve casework management and new organisations have been invited onto the roster.
- The Redfern Magistrate has been successfully lobbied to put pressure on police to improve the representation of women at Redfern Court.
- A joint submission with other CLC's was submitted to the Department for Women and the Legal Aid Commission to fund Women's DV court assistance schemes across the state
- Submissions to Attorney General regarding the functions of the Domestic Violence Advisory Council (DVAC)
- RLC is represented on the Domestic Violence Sub committee of the combined Community Legal Centres Group. issues dealt with during the last year include submissions re legislative review, perpetrators programs and funding for Court assistance schemes.
- Submissions were prepared and sent to both Commonwealth and State Governments seeking funding for a program to fund Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes throughout NSW. The submissions have been followed up by significant lobbying. This work has been conducted in conjunction with the Combined Community Legal Centres Domestic Violence Sub- Committee.

Victims Compensation

One solicitor's position has continued to focus on providing assistance to victims of sexual assault. In 1994/95 there have been a number of successful appeals from determinations of the Victims Compensation Tribunal to the District Court.

The Centre is assisting a large number of women seeking compensation in

relation to domestic violence. These applications have raised a number of questions of law which have yet to be determined.

The Centre has continued its commitment to working with survivors of child sexual assault. This has also involved the preparation of a number of "secondary victim" applications in relation to family members.

The Centre liaises regularly with members of the NSW Sexual Assault Committee. This Committee shared the Centre's concerns about the processes and decisions of the VCT and made personal and written submissions to the Tribunal.

RLC is represented on the Victims compensation sub committee of the Combined Community Legal centres group. during the las year it made sub missions and lobbied about the proposed changed to the law.

The issue of restitution has continued to cause problems. The centre has argued that in some cases recovery should not be attempted on the basis that it may cause further trauma to the victim. Submissions have been prepared in conjunction with Campbelltown Legal centre and sent to the Chairman of the Tribunal and the Registrar. The matter has also been taken up with the Attorney General.

Notable Cases

The Centre took on 50 new cases last year. Among those are a number domestic violence victims and survivors of child sexual assault.

Some of our victories included:

One woman was awarded the maximum compensation of \$40,000 for damages resulting from a long history of childhood abuse.

One woman, a former sex worker was awarded \$40,000 for damages suffered from a client who inflicted both psychological and physical injuries upon her.

Wills

In 1994, the Centre revised it's wills policy. Until December 1994, a solicitor from the Public Trustees office attended the Centre on the second Wednesday of each month to take instructions and draw up wills for clients. Upon review the Centre decided to refer clients seeking wills to private solicitors and arranged cheap consultations with local solicitors.

Credit and Debt

State Bank section 86 Credit Act

In a s.86 application, a lender effectively begs forgiveness for a breach of the Act in relation to regulated personal loans, and the borrowers present evidence and argument aimed at retaining the maximum penalty,

effectively relieving all affected borrowers from liability to pay some or all of the interest.

Initiated by the Centre, this application by the State Bank of NSW dealt with a vast array of breaches of the Credit Act by the Bank. The breaches affected over 300,000 borrowers in NSW and ranged in severity from breaches of the Act caused by the Bank's involvement in timeshare lending schemes to instances of the Bank illegally collecting millions of dollars in revenue from borrowers. The case was the most comprehensive investigation of a major Bank's personal lending practices carried out in Australia.

In June 1995, after a 9 week mediation and prolonged hearing, the Commercial Tribunal handed down its decision. It determined that the Bank would be required to pay \$5 million into the Financial Counselling Trust Fund as a penalty for its breaches of the Credit Act. The size of the penalty, the largest in the history of consumer credit matters in Australia, reflects the size of the Bank's contravention of the law and the improper nature of a range of its consumer lending practices.

In addition to the civil penalty, during the course of the hearing the Bank was forced to correct most of its overcharging practices and to refund to borrowers amounts the Bank had properly overcharged them. In addition, the borrowers represented by RLC received very favourable settlements of their individual complaints against the Bank's conduct.

The Centre's successful involvement in cases such as this has had a significant impact on forcing credit providers to review the lending "culture" of their institutions. In the light of such cases the majority of credit providers have taken their compliance obligations under the forthcoming Uniform Credit Code extremely seriously.

Limitation periods

RLC has fielded a large number of complaints from borrowers in relation to attempts by Credit Corp (and other debt buyout companies such as Alupka or Debt Management Buyout) to collect numerous alleged debts incurred outside statutory time limitation periods. Credit Corp have bought a large number of old AGC or Citicorp debts and have been taking steps to pursue or enforce these debts in circumstances where they are commonly out of time. Debtors in such cases have often made life decisions on the basis of their belief that the debts were written off, and commonly suffer extreme hardship when Credit Corp make out-of-time attempts to collect the debts.

In *Credit Corp v Hutchings* RLC successfully argued that for the purposes of the Limitation Act the 6 year time period during which a creditor had to commence proceedings ran from the date of the breach of the contract and not from the date on which the breach of the contract was quantified. Credit Corp was out of time in commencing proceedings

Notable Credit Cases

The Centre acted for a large number of clients who had been unjustly treated by banks or finance companies. All of these matters were settled to our clients' satisfaction before they reached the point of judgement by a court or tribunal. They include:

- RLC commenced proceedings in the Commercial Tribunal in *Raillon v AGC* on behalf of our client who argued that the AGC "credit line" facility which he was sold as the means of getting credit for the purpose of purchasing a motor-bike was in breach of the Credit Act 1986 in that in the circumstances in which the credit was sold it was a regulated loan contract and not a continuing credit contract as alleged by AGC. The matter was ultimately settled by AGC, however the arguments put forward in that matter have been useful in assisting debtors with similar complaints.
- RLC acted in a number of matters where debtors alleged that in circumstances where their cars which had been financed by credit providers were repossessed, they were sold at auction for significantly less than the "best price reasonably obtainable" which credit providers are bound to get under the Credit Act 1984. In *Ford Credit v Meller* our client was offered a favourable settlement by the credit provider after RLC's arguments were presented. RLC were able to similarly settle other such matters without having to proceed to litigation.
- In *AGC v Ngo* RLC argued before the Commercial Tribunal that it was a relevant consideration for the Tribunal in a section 86 reinstatement of credit charges application by AGC that AGC was in receipt, and had the benefit and use of, refunded insurance premiums which related to a consumer credit contract where the linked insurer had remitted those premiums to AGC in breach of the Credit Act 1986. The matter was settled before determination. In response to this matter RLC discovered that such conduct was a practice within the industry which was in breach of the legislation. The matter was referred to the Department of Consumer Affairs for investigation.
- RLC acted for a guarantor in relation to a lease agreement with AGC. In arguments before an arbitrator in the Local Court in *AGC v Genat* we were successful in showing that the formula provided in the standard AGC contract for calculating the amount due to the credit provider in the event of default under the loan had been incorrectly calculated and applied by AGC. The arbitrator held that the amount owed by Genat to the AGC under the contract should be reduced from approximately \$15,500.00 to \$1,000.00.
- A 69 year old pensioner was charged over \$3,000.00 for the alleged use of electricity for a six year period. The retrospective charges had occurred as a result of a six dial meter being recorded as a five dial meter. This led to

the last digit on the meter readings being dropped off as the reading was entered into the computer. RLC succeeded in having the charges reduced to \$230.00

Timeshares

The Centre maintained its involvement in representing clients with timeshare disputes. RLC successfully settled on very favourable terms two matters involving clients who had purchased timeshares which had been financed by the State Bank of NSW. RLC has continued to advise large numbers of the 2,300 borrowers affected by the Garendon's Credit Act breaches. The Garendon section 86 application, which was jointly commenced by RLC with Kingsford LC was successful argued by Kingsford LC in the Court of Appeal, and has now been referred to the Commercial Tribunal for decision.

Unjust Contracts

Injustice surrounding consumer lending remained a target for the Credit and Debt Service. Issues which have been taken up on a casework and policy basis include:

- sexually transmitted debt (where one partner in a relationship becomes financially committed to pay the debts of the other even though he or she gets no benefit from the credit);
- timeshare lending by the use of unfair sales tactics;
- unconscionable sale of consumer credit insurance;
- unjust or unconscionable guarantees; and
- financial and insurance packages associated with motor vehicle sales.

The Centre has particularly taken on a number of cases where consumers in a weaker bargaining position vis-a-vis a credit provider as a result of mental illness or drunkenness have argued that their contracts were unjust in the circumstances that they were entered into.

In various matters the Credit Act, Credit (Home Finance Contracts) Act, Trade Practices Act, the Fair Trading Act and the Contracts Review Act have been utilised and their bounds tested.

Alternative Dispute Resolution Forums

RLC represented clients, prepared submissions for clients and oversaw matters for others, in relation to complaints that consumers had with insurance companies and superannuation funds before the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal, the General Insurance Complaints Panel and the Life Insurance Complaints Service. In *Samuels v Zurich* RLC represented a consumer before the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal in relation to complaints that the personal superannuation plan he had been sold had

been misrepresented to him. He ceased contributions to the fund and was advised by the Fund that he had forfeited over \$7000 in past contributions. In an argument as to whether the SCT had jurisdiction to hear such a complaint it became apparent that the enacting legislation for the SCT was flawed. New legislation has been drafted to correct this flaw.

Credit Policy & Reform

During 1994/95 RLC was involved in a number of credit related and consumer policy issues, including:

- continued lobbying on a national Uniform Credit Code which is to regulate the provision of all types of credit across the country. After the introduction of the Code by most State Parliaments the Centre was involved in the process of deciding what the regulations and transitional provisions for the new Code should be. The introduction of the Code will create sweeping changes across the country to the manner in which Credit is provided. These changes require that community workers and community legal centres be in a position to effectively isolate problems and to advocate on behalf of consumers, and RLC has a solicitor on a steering committee for Community Legal Centres to make such preparations.
- A solicitor from the Centre continues to play a significant role in the campaign of a local community action group (Coalition Against Removal of Bank Services) seeking alternative banking services for the Redfern/Waterloo area following the closure by the Commonwealth Bank and the St George Bank of their branches in the area.

The Centre prepared or made significant contributions to the following submissions during the year:

- NSW Department of Consumer Affairs' review of the Motor Industry Regulation;
- Prices Surveillance Authority inquiry into Bank fees and charges;
- The General Insurance Code of Conduct;
- Regulations for the Uniform Credit Code;
- The jurisdiction and the operation of the Superannuation Complaints Tribunal;
- Breaches of consumer credit insurance law by insurers;
- lobbying for consumer interests in the insurance and superannuation industries, including for Codes of Conduct and effective dispute resolution bodies. The Centre has monitored, through its case-work, the effectiveness of those bodies;
- RLC has been involved in consultations with other pro-consumer

organisations in relation to national policy on a range of financial services issues. These consultations have included the Australian Financial Counsellors' and Credit Reform Association, the Australian Federation of Consumer Organisations, the Australian Consumers' Association; and

- A Centre solicitor was a member of the Law Society of NSW Consumer Law Committee.

Resource Worker - Financial Counselling Services Project

As part of its Credit and Debt Service, the Centre provides resource worker services to Financial Counsellors and other community workers who have direct dealings with clients in financial difficulties.

The work involved includes:

- answering telephone inquiries from financial counsellors and providing backup to their casework;
- acting for clients referred by financial counsellors;
- providing resources eg. memos on issues that arise re casework, law reform and legal practice;
- drawing issues out from financial counsellors' work (ie policy work).

Access and Equity



The Centre continues to be committed to the access and equity policy adopted in 1991, which was formulated to address the legal needs of non-English speaking people who have a high representation in the area. In 1994/5 the Centre:

- conducted access and equity training for all incoming volunteer solicitors and legal assistants ;
- produced a multilingual leaflet advertising the Centre's work. This has been translated into five community languages - Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, and Vietnamese;
- spread information about the Centre's services through articles in ethnic media;
- conducted cross-cultural communication training for all staff and volunteers of the Centre.
- provided community legal education to specific NESB groups through Botany Migrant Resource Centre, South Sydney Community Aid, and the Adult Migrant Education Service
- participated in South Sydney Council's Migrant Information Day
- continue participation in the Inner Sydney Migrant Interagency
- participated in the Combined Community Legal Centre's Access and Equity consultation

The Centre's Access and Equity Group continued to meet regularly. This group has continued to lobby against the user-pays system proposed by the Ethnic Affairs Commission and the Telephone Interpreter Service for interpreter services in Community Legal Centres. The Committee also commenced work on establishing a referral list of solicitors who speak languages other than English.

Members of the Access and Equity Group during this period were Beth Jewell, Vaia Proios, Kylie Kilgour, Jackie Saisithidej, Lokki Woo, Helen Sarlas, Katherine Biber, Mehera San Roque, Sarah Crawford, Joanne Murphy.



Pro Bono Arrangements



Redfern Legal Centre utilises the services of over 100 volunteer students, solicitors and barristers each week. All of these people give their time for free.

Every Tuesday afternoon rostered solicitors from the following firms give general law advice to clients who cannot attend the centre in the evening for advice. These clients are commonly elderly or single parents - the centre endeavours to provide legal services for sectors of the community.

The rostered firms are:

Hunt and Hunt (Jemima Brewer solicitor), Henry Davis York (Odaria Finemore solicitor) and Cowley Hearne (Peter Le Guay).

Every Thursday afternoon rostered solicitors from Blake Dawson Waldron under the supervision of RLC solicitors provide specialist legal advice in consumer credit, bankruptcy, insolvency and insurance issues.

Clayton Utz, solicitors, agreed in late 1989 to a pro bono scheme under which they acted for up to 50 clients referred by RLC per annum. The scheme has proved to be the only source of legal representation available to some clients. The scheme has now been markedly expanded and Clayton Utz have undertaken to do up to one million dollars worth of work free.

A number of barristers have provided free advice and representation for our clients. These include Andrew Haesler, Janet Manuel, Leonie Flannery, John Basten, Gerard Craddock, John Berwick, Sylvia Winters, David Mallon, David Nelson, Stephen Norish, Chris Whitelaw and Terry Lynch.



Community Legal Education

Redfern Legal Centre's community legal education (CLE) program aims to address the needs of individuals within the community as well as community workers, social workers, lawyers, teachers etc.

CLE for members of the public

It is considered essential to the preventative approach to legal services that members of the public be informed of their rights and obligations so that they can develop self-help skills. Initiatives in this area include:

- various seminars on credit and debt, tenancy, family law, domestic violence, anti-discrimination law, neighbourhood disputes, motor vehicle accidents and the legal system. These seminars were well attended
- talks at hospitals to sexual assault survivors
- Law for Non Lawyers. Staff have remained involved with the RLC Publishing sponsored course, "Law for Non Lawyers." which is open to members of the public
- Centre workers have appeared on local and national radio, ABC television and in newspapers to take up issues such as sexual assault, credit, access to legal justice, tenancy, victims compensation and domestic violence
- dissemination of legal information. The Centre has distributed information about the range of legal services to community organisations, workers, groups and individuals
- a solicitor has continued to resource a number of the metropolitan sexual assault services in relation to victims compensation issues and the law regarding sexual assault. This has included continued participation in the Royal North Shore's Sexual Assault Centre court preparation seminar for survivors of sexual assault

CLE for professionals

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

Initiatives include:

- Presentation of a paper entitled "Court Support Schemes - Improving Women's Access to the Legal System." at the Domestic Violence

Conference in Brisbane and a conference organised by the Institute of Criminology.

- Presentation of a paper outlining the Redfern Court support model for the State Domestic Violence Committees Conference held in May
- providing training to Grant in Aid workers on domestic violence
- A talk to the Phillipine Association on legal process in New South Wales (20 participants)
- A presentation of a 'Women and Housing Law' seminar for the Women and Law Conference (50 participants)
- Co-presentation of the workshop 'Communicating with people from a non-English speaking background' for RLC volunteers and community workers
- Ongoing training for financial counsellors and legal centre volunteers in areas such as the Credit Act and non regulated contracts.
- Liaison with RLC Publishing in connection with the Editorial Committees of the Lawyers Practice Manual and the Law Handbook. Centre staff and volunteers continue to write and review previous contributions to these and other RLCP publications;
- Inhouse training and regular talks for volunteer staff on various areas of poverty law. RLC receives Law Society accreditation for these talks (MCLE points);
- Provision of comprehensive training workshops for court support workers to effectively assist women applying for Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders. Training sessions have been held in Sydney and outside the metropolitan area;
- Provision of training sessions and workshops for tenancy workers in the metropolitan area;
- Provision of information sessions for community workers about the Victims Compensation Tribunal;
- Provision of training in various administrative areas to other community legal centre workers;
- Provision of training and resources to other community legal centre workers in administrative and management practices.

Publications

Initiatives include:

- Publication of an article on domestic violence for the Thai Women's Association which was published in Thai newspapers.

- Domestic Violence Resource Manual
- Contributions to publications regarding civil liberties particularly in relation to the criminal law. The best known of these include "The Activists Rights Handbook" and "If you are arrested";
- Preparations and contribution to a large number of publications where the objective is to provide the public with information that demystifies the law. The best known of these are "The Law Handbook, and the "Debt Survival Guide" and "The Tenants Rights Manual".

Access to Legal Services

The following initiatives have been pursued:

- the Access and Equity Committee's promotion of the Centre to isolated migrant communities
 - targeting communities through ethnic media
 - representation on the Family Court Access and Equity sub-committee
 - work with the combined community legal centres of New South Wales access and equity sub-committee which concentrated on Access to Justice issues for all people from a Non-English Speaking Background and particularly women
 - the Centre worked with the Australian Council of Social Services Law and Justice Committee on their access to justice policies.
-

Students' Legal Service



University of Sydney SRC Branch

Redfern Legal Centre University Of Sydney Students Representative
Council Branch Office

1994/1995 Report

The University of Sydney SRC Branch Office of the Redfern Legal Centre has been opened for over 4 years. The office is funded by the Students Representative Council who have contracted Redfern Legal Centre to provide a student legal service.

The Branch Office operates in accordance with the agreement between the SRC and the Redfern Legal Centre Directors. It is open three days a week and is staffed by a solicitor from the Redfern Legal Centre. Pat McDonough is the current SRC Branch Office Solicitor. From time to time during periods of leave she is replaced by locum solicitors appointed by Redfern Legal Centre. The Principal Solicitor of Redfern Legal Centre and other Centre workers are available on call to provide additional advice and assistance. Only undergraduate students are eligible for assistance.

The Branch Office is covered by the Redfern Legal Centre professional indemnity Insurance.

During the last year, work undertaken by the Redfern Legal Centre Branch Office is as follows:



Casework Statistics

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In 1994/95 71 files were opened at the SRC . 105 people came to the SRC for advice and 14 people were given advice over the telephone.

'File' means that the matter required more than one-off advice or referral so that a file was opened for the conduct of the matter.

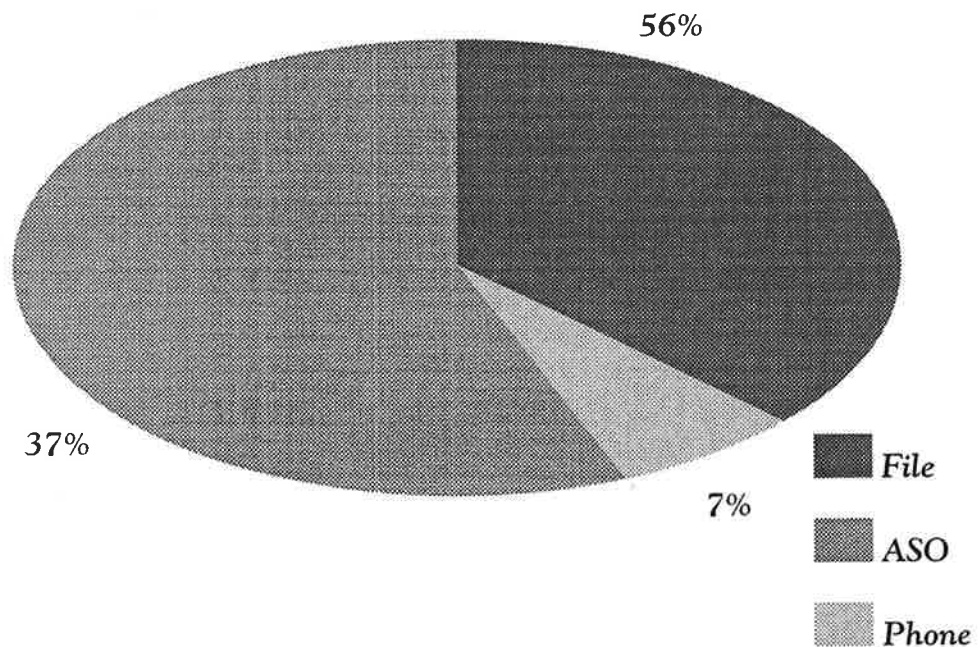
'ASO' means that the student saw the solicitor once for advice or referral and that an Advice Sheet Only was completed ie. no file was opened.

'Phone' means that advice or referral was given by phone and no file was opened.

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SRC Statistics for 1994/95

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Appointments

285 appointments were made each of approximately 1 hour

Major Issues and Cases***Discrimination***

A discrimination claim by a dentistry student was finally resolved. The final outcome meant not only a transfer to another Faculty of choice and compensation for the Student, but guidelines were put in place which will assist all students with a disability in the future. The file for this matter was opened in 1992. The ongoing pro bono assistance provided by Barrister Chris Ronalds was in the form of attendance at a Conciliation convened by the Anti Discrimination Board and the drafting of numerous correspondence.

Ongoing legal advice is provided to the President of the SRC in regard to a discrimination complaint made to the Human Rights Commission against the University

Defamation

As a result of a libellous article placed in Honi Soit, a large claim for compensation was made to the SRC. Whilst the matter was successfully resolved, the negotiation between the Redfern Legal Centre and the claimant required an extraordinary amount of time. Lengthy Pro bono assistance was also provided by Barrister, Mark Lynch

Austudy

Another complaint was made to the Commonwealth Ombudsman about a matter previously rectified by the Ombudsman where a student had been refunded an amount of money which had been wrongly collected by Austudy for an alleged debt that the student did not in fact owe. Months later debt collectors and the Austudy office were hounding him for the money again. Garnishee action was commenced and a letter was sent to the Tax Office demanding they collect the money from any refund our client might be eligible for. Our client's explanations were unheeded and only the Ombudsman's intervention resolved the matter. We understand that after realising the error, Austudy informed the Ombudsman's Office that they would not be sending our client a letter of apology, nor would they contact the Taxation Office to withdraw the garnishee because the Tax Office normally contacts them before acting on a garnishee !

A matter was successfully argued before the Student Assistant Appeals Tribunal (SART) where a student had opted out of a supplement loan when he realised that such a loan was detrimental to him. He withdrew his application as provided for under the Students Assistant Act, but Austudy refused to accept his withdrawal using the wrong sections of the Act as reasons for this action. SART reversed Austudy's decision.

Another student with an Austudy overpayment, lodged an appeal for waiver on the grounds of administrative error. Whilst awaiting the outcome of the appeal, he was harassed constantly by DEET staff either through threatening letters or telephone calls to his home. DEET staff are in the same building and on the same floor as the Austudy Assessors and have access to any information they require. Our client was informed that they were a different Department, quite separate from Austudy and whilst they could obtain any information directly from Austudy, it was easier to ring him at home. This conduct continued despite the fact that Redfern Legal Centre were on the record as representing this student and therefore any contact should be made through this office. Submissions made on behalf of student were subsequently successful, and the debt was waived.

Provision of ongoing legal advice has been provided to the Education Research Officer and Welfare Officer on Austudy matters such as appeals to SART and AAT. DEET are now appealing to AAT, successful SART decisions determined in the students favour. This new trend has increased the complexity and volume of casework and has serious implications as DEET are represented by the Commonwealth Government Solicitors, whereas, Austudy students are not eligible for legal aid.

University Matters

A medical student who had been referred by the University to the NSW Medical Board and subsequently appealed the Board's decision to the District Court was referred to Clayton Utz for pro bono representation. Submissions are to be made to the Faculty of Medicine, (through the SRC) requesting the adoption of procedures which allows students appeal rights through the University, rather than being forced into a very expensive and legalistic jurisdiction.

After a meeting between staff of the SRC, the Redfern Legal Centre solicitor and the Registrar, the University is currently investigating complaints by 2 students in regard to the alleged serious misconduct of an Academic.

Ongoing legal advice and support was provided to the SRC Education Research Officer in regard to the University Student Disciplinary Procedures. A complete set of procedures was provided to the University which covered every contingency including students' rights principles, definitions, interview guidelines, investigation guidelines, etc.

Pro Bono Referrals

In addition to the barristers and solicitors mentioned above, the following matters were conducted on a Pro bono basis:

Representation of a student accused of malicious damage to an animal, to wit a mouse, was undertaken by Barrister, Janet Manuel. This required a

conference and a full day hearing at Balmain Local Court.

A student who was a victim of domestic violence, was represented in a defended hearing by Barrister, Sylvia Winters. The student was successful in obtaining a restraining order against the perpetrator.

A student charged with negligent driving was represented by Clayton Utz, a large law firm on a pro bono basis. Claytons are also representing a student charged with offensive language.

Thanks also to Barristers, Neil Williams, Chris Whitelaw and Leonie Flannery who have willingly provided pro bono advices in a range of matters involving students.

Legal Education

The Branch Office Solicitor has been responsible for the following;

- Provision of legal advice for the publication of the Counter Course Handbook
- Organisation of a presentation by Barrister, Mark Lynch, to present a session to Honi Soit editors on defamation law.
- Organising and staffing of a stall at Orientation Week
- Assistance and provision of backup to the SRC President in regard to matters such as the HIV/HepB case,
- Ongoing provision of legal advice to the SRC Education Research Officer and the Welfare Officer in regard to matters such as Austudy, tenancy and the re-writing of the students' disciplinary procedures.
- Participated in the induction of the locum Education & Research Officer.
- Participated in the induction of Honi Editors
- Visited Cumberland College and provided legal advice to the Students' Union Resource Officer. Provision of ongoing legal advice is now provided by telephone.
- Provide legal advice to students working on the Tenants Union Hotline Service

The Intellectual Disability Rights Service (IDRS)

IDRS was established in 1986 as a result of efforts made by volunteers at Redfern Legal Centre who had been active in advocating for the rights of people with an intellectual disability for about five years prior to 1986.

The fundamental objective of IDRS is to advance the rights of people with an intellectual disability, and to ensure that they have the same rights and the same opportunities to exercise their rights as other people in the community.

To achieve this objective IDRS provides legal advice as well as individual and systems advocacy to people with an intellectual disability their families and advocates. In addition IDRS conducts education sessions for people with an intellectual disability, their families, carers, service providers and advocates, as well as producing a number of publications.

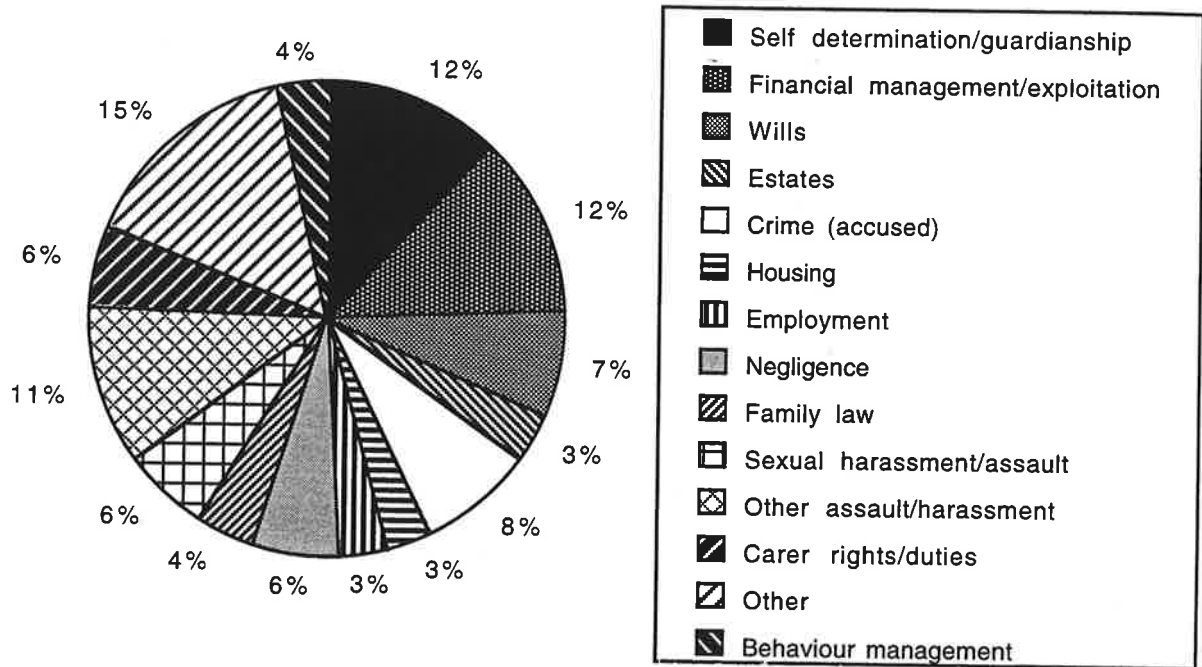
A new phase in the development of IDRS occurred with the introduction of the New South Wales Disability Services Act (1993) and its Disability Services Standards. The inaccessible nature of accommodation in which IDRS has been working, means that the Service was unable to comply with some Disability Standards and was eligible to apply for Transition funding to reach compliance. The Transition Plan prepared by IDRS proposed several major changes which hinged on IDRS operating from accessible premises. Obtaining suitable premises for IDRS has necessitated a move from Redfern Legal Centre and formal separation from RLC as our auspicing body.

In preparation for 'leaving home' IDRS will become an incorporated association in July 1995. Transition funding has been approved and IDRS anticipates operating in new premises and in full compliance with the New South Wales Disability Services Act (1993) from the beginning of 1996.

As this is the last RLC Annual Report which will include IDRS as part of Redfern Legal Centre, we gratefully acknowledge the support (and space) provided by RLC Directors, Management Committee and Staff over the last nine years. It's been just the best start a community organisation like ours could have. Thank you.

Rights advice and casework

During the year to 30 June 1995 our lawyers gave advice in response to 624 requests for assistance from all over New South Wales. Requests for advice covered a wide range of issues, as shown in the following chart:



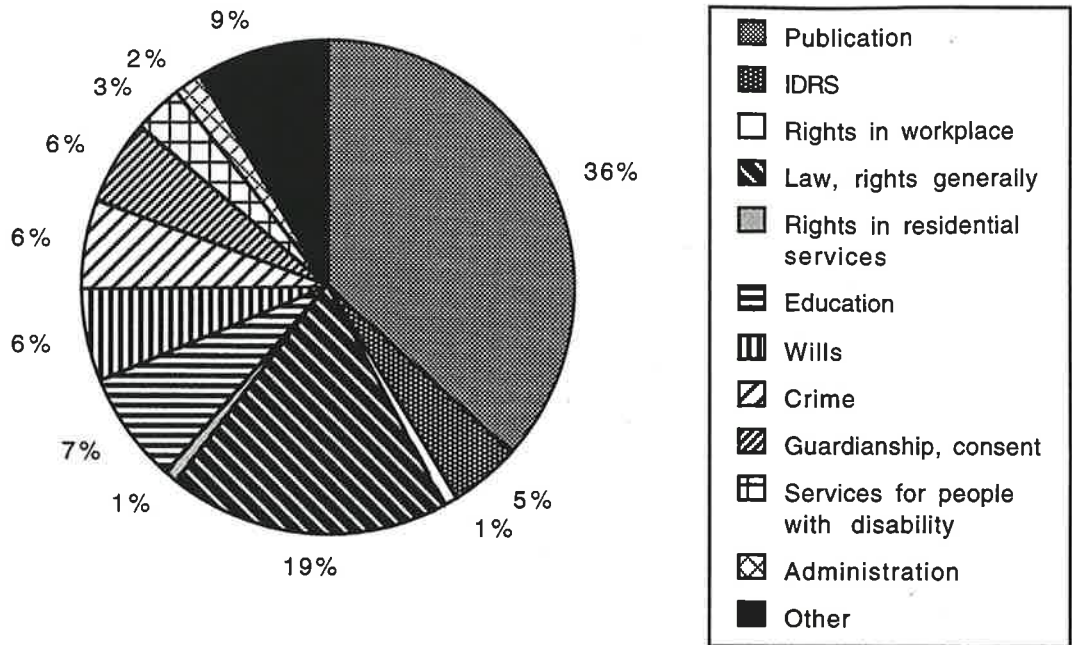
Nature of matter, 1994/95

IDRS deliberately limits the amount of casework undertaken in an effort to ensure time is available for campaign work, policy and law reform and to encourage and assist mainstream agencies and solicitors to provide services for people with an intellectual disability.

Information requests

In addition to the rights advice and casework provided by IDRS solicitors, staff recorded a total of 306 requests for information during 1994/5. The majority of requests came from disability workers (64%) but requests also came from people with a disability (5%), relatives (8%), students (6%) and others (15%).

The following chart shows the main subjects of inquiries received during the year:



Education

Promoting an awareness of rights

Rights are of little value unless people are aware of their own and others' rights, are willing to respect rights, know what to do if rights are infringed, and have the confidence to pursue their rights. To this end, IDRS provides education programs and develops resources for people with an intellectual disability, their families and advocates, disability workers and lawyers. In 1994/95 IDRS provided 54 education sessions attended by a total of 1133 people, lasting a total of 303.5 hours.

Over the past year, the focus of IDRS education sessions has changed significantly. In keeping with the development of a campaign focus, much of our education work now centres on sessions directly relating to campaign areas. Over the past year much of this has been in the area of delivering education sessions to criminal justice personnel.

IDRS has in the past delivered one and two day training courses to Department of Community Services workers on legal issues. In April 1995 this work was handed over to the Australian Catholic University, although IDRS still maintain involvement in the on-going development of the course content.

Resources

During the year, the fifth issue of *Rights for All* - a magazine for people with an intellectual disability - was produced. The sixth issue will be out very early in the new financial year.

The second edition of *Rights in Residence* - A guide to the law and rights of people with intellectual disability in supported accommodation was completed during the year and will be published in July 1995. As the demand in residential services for residents' rights to be acknowledged, defined and protected has increased, the need for management and staff of accommodation services are now much likely to see residents' rights as something they need to think about every day. *Rights in Residence* provides a practical guide to: self determination, freedom from abuse, freedom of movement, money management, personal possessions, privacy and confidentiality, relationships and sexuality, residency agreements, household decisions, and complaints.

A second edition of the *Legal Rights Teaching Kit* was also completed. The kit is designed as a tool for disability workers and educators (including people with a disability) to teach people with an intellectual disability about their rights and responsibilities. It is designed to be presented by two co-trainers - a person with an intellectual disability and one without. The kit contains: eight 2 hour session outlines, master copies of hand-outs, quizzes, games and warm-up exercises, recommended resources and background reading.

Campaigns

IDRS decided to move to a campaign style of working in order to take a more pro-active and systemic approach to the problems faced by people with an intellectual disability and for staff to work together more as a team. We decided that the criminal justice system was an area of priority due to the over-representation of people with an intellectual disability in prison and before the courts as alleged offenders, and the problems victims face getting redress through the criminal justice system. We believe that people with an intellectual disability are in a particular position of vulnerability. It was also considered a good time to be working in this area because of the current NSW Law Reform Commission reference into the area.

IDRS identified three areas on which to concentrate - co-ordination of agencies, training of criminal justice personnel and advocacy for people who come into contact with the system. In all these areas, IDRS looks at the issues for both victims and alleged offenders.

In addition, IDRS decided to continue working on a range of other issues in which we had developed expertise and interest, namely sterilisation of adults and children, boarding houses, guardianship and financial management and the operation of the Community Services (Complaints, Appeals and Monitoring) Act.

Law and policy reform

Law and policy reform has concentrated on issues in the criminal justice system, but in particular the following:-

- working on a report on violence against women with disabilities with the NSW Department for Women.
- lobbying for an inter-agency committee to deal with issues of co-ordination and responsibility of various agencies
- participation on a committee to oversee implementation of the recommendations of the Puplick report which looked at people with intellectual disability in the prison system.
- negotiations with various agencies for education of criminal justice personnel.
- submissions to Law Reform Commission reports.
- lobbying the government to reinstate the dock statement
- lobbying against the introduction of the NSW Community Protection Bill
- lobbying against the proposed changes to the Victims Compensation Act
- lobbying for the community placement for the former residents of Riverglade
- work in the area of people living in boarding houses
- work in the area of the role of the new Community Services Commission

Friday Night Duty

IDRS solicitors undertake RLC evening duty on Friday nights. Although Friday night was established as a specialist 'intellectual disability' night we rarely have many inquiries in that area. Despite the difficulties with getting clients or volunteers to turn up, we are especially indebted over the last year to a small 'hard core' group of volunteers - many thanks to Donna Daleo, Janet Williams, Victoria Hiley, Bernadette Allar and Victoria Fisher. We've had a lot of fun, learnt a lot from each other and consumed unimaginable amounts of jelly bears and worms courtesy of Janet.

Community Liason & Networkers



Redfern Legal Centre workers are members of the following committees of the CCLCG

- Combined Community Legal Centres Group (NSW):
- Domestic Violence Committee,
- Legal Aid Committee,
- National Legal Aid Working Party,
- Combined CLC Access & Equity Committee
- Practice Issues Committee,
- Tenancy Legal Working Party,
- Professional Indemnity Insurance Committee,
- Management Needs Working Party,
- Community Legal Education Workers Group,
- Funding Resource Committee, (work on this committee led to negotiations with OLAFS concerning the strategic planning for CLC funding at a national level.)
- Editorial Committee of "On the Record"
- Consumer Credit Committee,
- NSW Administrators Group.

Redfern Legal Centre appreciates the invaluable assistance that is provided by the workers at the NSW Community Legal Centres Secretariat. Centre staff contribute to numerous community and other organisations and are on the following committees and working parties:

- ACOSS - Law and Justice Committee
- National Association of CLC's
- Australian Consumers Association
- Australian Financial Counsellors and Credit Reform Association
- Financial Councillors Association of NSW
- Tenants' Union Board

- Residential Tenancies Act Review Consultative
- Committee and Public Housing sub-committee
- Legal Aid Commission Prisoners Legal Service Advisory Sub Committee
- South Sydney Council Public Housing Task Force
- Inner Sydney Migrant Inter-Agency
- South Sydney Domestic Violence Committee
- South Sydney Family and Children's Services Inter-Agency
- South Sydney Community Aid Co-operative
- "The Shop" management committee (Waterloo/Redfern Family and Children's service)
- Law Society of NSW: Council, Consumer Law Committee (Chair), Domestic Violence Committee, Pro Bono Committee, Public Affairs Committee, Aboriginal Justice Committee, Human Rights Committee, Professional Development and Practice Management Committee, Professional Conduct Committee, Equal Opportunities Committee, Specialist Accreditation Board.
- NSW Sexual Assault Committee

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The Centres Management Structure



Redfern Legal Centre is a company limited by guarantee and has six elected directors who have delegated responsibility to the Centre Management Committee. This Committee is made up of 5 staff members, 6 volunteers (at least 2 practitioners and 2 legal assistants) and 4 others, at least one of whom is from a local community organisation and one who is not a lawyer. At least one of the members of the Management Committee must also be a Director of the company. The management committee meets on the second Monday of each month.

DIRECTORS

<i>Member</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Stamatia Stamatellis (secretary)	Community Worker
Virginia Bell	Barrister
Nigel Vertigan (chair)	Solicitor
Peter Stapleton	Solicitor
Clare Petre	Social worker
Gerard Craddock	Barrister

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Occupation</i>
Sadie Harmer	Student
Katherine Biber	Student
Mehera San Roque	Student
Sarah Nielson	Student
Frances Gibson	Local resident/ Solicitor
Bridget Godwin	Solicitor
Toni Brown	Local resident/ Community Worker
Paul Farugia	Private Solicitor
Clare Petre	Social Worker
Mary Perkins	Co-ordinator RLC
Denele Crozier	Administrator
Pat McDonough	Solicitor RLC
Simon Cleary	Solicitor RLC
Paula Rix	Cordinator IDRS

STAFF

Denele Crozier - administrator
Steve Bolt- solicitor (general casework), drug law reform project officer
Simon Cleary - solicitor (credit)
Penny Quarry - solicitor (credit)
Susan Davitt - principal solicitor
Harriet Grahame - solicitor (victims compensation)
Ingrid Gubbay - locum solicitor (victims compensation)
Sisko Heikonen - administrative officer
Robyn Holden - company secretary
Beth Jewell - community worker
Pat McDonough - solicitor (SRC Branch Office)
Mary Perkins - co-ordinator
Gina Schien - administrative officer
Jason Mumbulla - systems officer
Kylie Kilgour - tenancy worker
Grant Arbuthnot - tenancy worker
Gavin Butler - statistics

Paula Rix - co-ordinator IDRS
Shaun Keys-Byrnes - solicitor IDRS
Carol Pein - educator IDRS
Penny Harrington - administrator IDRS
Lynette Byrnes - solicitor IDRS
Ted Smeaton - educator IDRS

Volunteers



Normally we get some volunteers to report on "what its like to volunteer at Redfern Legal Centre". This year is different - I am going to report on what its like having volunteers work at RLC.

There are three kinds of volunteers;

- 1) the ones that come do their shift and leave
- 2) the ones that come do their shift and come to all the social events
- 3) the ones that come do their shift and come to all the social events and join the Management Committee.

There is room for all sorts at RLC. We are in awe of the devotion displayed by all our volunteers. Special thanks goes to the night time vols who turn up at RLC even during the winter months. Below is the list of hundreds of vols we wish to acknowledge and thank.

A special thanks goes to our volunteers on Management - giving up their Monday nights once a month to help RLC direct itself in the world. We are very proud that Redfern Legal Centre often has to hold elections because so many people want to be on our management committee.

Volunteers in 1994/5

Angela Abrahams, Jemima Adams, Roxanne Adler, Shauna Alexander, Fiona Allison, Mark Anstee, Paul Argent, Grant Arbuthnot, Warren Armstrong, David Ball, Kate Ballantyne, Paul Bamier, Irene Baghoomians, Robert Balzola, Cynthia Banham, Fiona Barker, Elissa Baxter, Dominic Beckett, Katherine Biber, Nicole Blundell, Zarina Braybrooke, Sean Brennan, Susie Breuer, Lindsay Brooker, Chandrani Buddhipala, Wally Cheung, Lilian Chai, Myra Cheng, Simon Clarke, Claire Corney, Gary Cowan, Sarah Crawford, Roslyn Cruse, Richard Chia, Phoebe Chow, Alice Chow, Eliza Coluquhoun, Celina Creek, Helen Dakin, Greg Davoren, Lisa de Ferrari, Janine Desaxe, jane Eccleston, Henregh Delir, Jooliet Dimond, Bridget Docherty, Amity Durham, Paul Farrugia, Melanie Faithful, Michelle Fitzgerald, Phillipa Gaffney, Vicki Gallagher, Katherine Gardner, Michael Gibson, Bridget Godwin, Conrad Gray, Kate Gardner, Sari Galapo, Simon Gallant, Jenny Gentles, David Gibbons, Chris Grant, Alison Haines, Richard Hardy, Lisa Hall, Loris Hendy, Lisa Hill, Malcolm Galwey, Sam Hickson, Sam Hudson, Mark Hunter, Antonio Ibanez, Ellison Jang, Muhuntham Kanagaratnam, Brian Kelleher, Tebby Khutsoane, Susanna Khouri, Kylie Kilgour, Susan Lyons, Diana Lazarus, Donna Lawlor, Kylie Molnar, Emma Maloney, Manal Maurice, Andrea May, Maeve McCarthy, Trish McDonald,

Michelle McGrath, Roger Mattar, Linda Meyns, Daniela Marks,
Julie Mahoney, Louise McDermott, John McIntosh, Sheila McMahon,
Ian Newbrun, Ross Nicholas, Paula Nassif, Sarah Nielsen, Fiona O'Neil,
Martin O'Reilly, Victoria Pitt, Bonny Puszka, Tom Reeve, Pam Richards,
David Robb, Jill Robertson, Tom Roche, Alexis Roitman, Anita Sharma,
Matilda Sbrizzi, Peter Stern, Jackie Salsithidej, Peter Savvas,
Kirsti Samuels, Mehera San Roque, Helen Sarlas, Suzanna Sarlas,
Andrew Silk, Tanya Smart, Justin Smith, Meena Sripathy,
Konstantinos Stellos, Peter Stern, Sarah Tafari, Melissa Taylor,
Sue Thomas, John Valarezo, Elizabeth Van, Kate Van de Zandt,
Susannah Vicars, Nigel Vertigan, Jane Weber, Danielle Woolley,
Tim Wallace, Julie Walsh, Leonie Walton, Donna Wiltshire, Jeff Ward,
Mary Whitehead, Sandy Wright, Michael Windsor, Ruth Wylie,
Joanne Wing, Carolyn Wyatt, Albert Yuen.

Finances



Funding

Redfern Legal Centre receives funding from various Federal, State and Local Government offices. These include South Sydney Council, the Legal Aid Commission, the Department of Community Services (NSW), The Federal Bureau of Consumer Affairs, Department of Consumer Affairs NSW, Office of Real Estate Services and the Office of Status of Women. We thank these organisations for their continued support.

Donations

The Centre also receives income from donations and costs in successful cases. Donations were received from Limiatis, F.L. & H.S. Perrottet and D. Suarez.

Redfern Legal Centre Limited Profit and Loss Account 94/95
ended 30 June 1995

	\$	\$
INCOME	1995	1994
Gross Profit from trading	1622	2,294
Consulting Fees	0	4,071
Interest	26,856	18,441
Recoveries	38,168	14,230
Other Revenue	5,949	22,502
Grants	869,549	812,850
Donations	160	1,480
TOTAL	942,304	875,868

EXPENSES

Accountancy	1,726	2,372
Activities	1,422	4,545
Auditors remuneration	6,896	6,827
Bank Charges	1,653	1,324
Consultancy Fees	5,399	19,813
Depreciation	9,370	8,682
Disbursements	2,276	743
Fitout	0	0
Furniture	0	0
Grant Expenditure	0	0
Insurance	4,324	4,419
Loss on Theft	100	0
Office Supplies	17,694	9,002
Office Equipment	25,884	15,405
Printing, post & stationery	54,643	57,262
Purchase for resale	0	240
Repair's & Maintenance	3,849	2,911
Reprinting	1,623	2,294
Salaries & Wages	688,360	641,536
Staffing Expenses	19,890	20,106
Subscriptions	12,373	12,017
Sundry Expenses	3,067	2,644
Superannuation	10,906	20,559
Telephone	15,146	16,419
Travelling Expenses	10,418	11,402
Rent	7,000	7,000
<hr/> Total Expenses	<hr/> 904,019	<hr/> 867,477
<hr/> Net Profit for the year	<hr/> 38,285	<hr/> 8,391

REDFERN LEGAL CENTRE

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NSW 2016

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