

Combined Community Legal Centres Group (NSW) Inc.

Annual Report 2002-2003

Our Mission

NSW Community Legal Centres work for the public interest, particularly for disadvantaged and marginalised people and communities. We promote human rights, social justice, and a better environment by advocating for access to justice and equitable laws and legal systems, and through the provision of legal services including strategic casework, community legal education and law reform campaigns.

Combined Community Legal Centres Group (NSW) Inc. State Office Suite 3B, 491 Elizabeth St Surry Hills 2010

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Message from the Board

Welcome to the 2003 Annual Report. This has been another busy and productive year for the sector and the State Office. As a sector we have incorporated changes in the Commonwealth reporting process, and have faced our responsibilities under the new Occupational, Health and Safety Laws which place a greater onus on management committees to adequately support their staff and provide a safe working environment. We have continued to foster a learning and training environment as a sector with another full year of the Training and Capacity Building Programme, and have also conducted consultations with Management Committees to identify training and support to assist their governance role. We held a successful state conference, developed campaigns for the state election held in March and have participated in local and national projects and strategic advocacy on a number of important issues over the past year. We have produced new publications, re-launched the website and revived On the Record magazine. In brief, it has been a full and exciting year.

As a Board we would like to acknowledge the excellent work done by the staff of the State Office and thank each of them for their contribution over the past year. Their skills and efforts are a great asset to the sector and assist in co-ordinating our collective efforts as Community Legal Centres, and focus our attention in critical areas.

Thank you also to all the Convenors of the Committees and Sub-Committees, whose efforts provide momentum for the sector, and help us achieve our social justice and human rights goals.

Board of CCLCG, NSW

CCLCG NSW Board 2003

Steve Bolt - Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre Jane Cipants – Illawarra Community Legal Centre Fran Gibson - Kingsford Legal Centre Katrina Harrison – Marrickville Legal Centre Danaé Harvey (Nov 2002 - June 2003) - Illawarra Community Legal Centre Vedna Jivan - Kingsford Legal Centre Tracy Leahy - Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre

Janet Loughman (Nov 2002 – Aug 2003) – Marrickville Legal Centre

Deborah MacDonald - Macarthur Legal Centre Simon Moran – Public Interest Advocacy Centre Angela Pollard – Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre

Natalie Ross (Nov 2002 - Sept 2003) - Inner City Legal Centre

CCLCG Committee and **Sub-Committee Convenors**

Administrators & Coordinators Rod McGuiness Andrew Taylor Victims Compensation Joanne Moffitt **Employment** Rural, Regional & Remote Angela Pollard Human Rights & Discrimination Simon Moran Domestic Violence Robyn Gilbert

Vedna Jivan **CLEW** Trish Mundy PH Natalie Ross PH

Law Reform & Policy Frances Gibson Jane Cipants

Sector Development Katrina Harrison Sector Development

NSW State Office Staff



Brigid Inder Director



Polly Porteous Human Rights and Advocacy Officer



Julie Smith
Admin and Information Officer



Carol Roberts Administrator

Support Services

Training and Capacity Building Programme 2003

Training and capacity building sessions were held at each of the Quarterly meetings held throughout 2003. These sessions provided CLC staff with training opportunities in areas which were pertinent to their work or discussed issues which have been or will be of concern to the sector.

Quarterly Meeting and Training Session

February

OH&S Training

May

NSW Ombudsman's Office - This session looked at the current policy complaints system and ways in which the Ombudsman's office can be of use to CLCs in dealing with police.

NSW Victims Services – A look at the Victims Legislation Amendment Bill and reviews of the *Victims* Support and Rehabilitation Act and the Victims Rights Act.

August

Maximising our funding potential - How to promote our work to funders, improve our funding submissions and extend our funding base.

Office of the Public Guardian - A workshop on changes to the *NSW Guardianship Act* and issues in relation to enduring guardianship.

November

Advocacy and Human Rights - Training in systemic advocacy and use of human rights as a framework for casework and activism.

Management Committee Project

One of the greatest challenges faced by the community sector is community management. While the principles of community engagement and accountability should continue to be aspired to, in reality most Management Committees struggle with establishing effective community management structures, particularly in the administration of their roles as employers.

In addition, new Occupational Health and Safety legislation requires a higher level of skill and policy frameworks for community organisations, with clear liability for Management Committee's who fail to fulfil their responsibilities as employers.

Like other community organisations, CLCs face the challenges of community management, particularly in the areas of staff management and human resources, industrial issues and responsibilities as employers, clear distinctions between governance and management and the tendency for those roles to be blurred.

In addition, many CLCs have Management Committee members who are staff or volunteers of other CLCs. While this may assist with familiarity of issues within legal centres, Centres are identifying that this may also create limitations in the range and diversity of experience and perspectives being brought to

management committees. It can also create an environment susceptible to actual or perceived conflicts of interest. Most CLCs lack sufficient policies and procedures to deal in practical ways with this environment

In 2002 the State Office worked with Joanne Moffitt, Convenor of the Employment Sub-Committee, to develop and distribute a quantitative survey to all CLCs regarding the needs of management committees. The responses showed a number of issues in relation to the training and capacity of management committees.

Based on these findings and the ongoing issues for management committees we recieved a small amount of funding from the Law and Justice Foundation to conduct consultations with CLCs – urban, rural, specialist, generalist. Michelle Jones was employed to conduct the consultations and prepare a report. Some key issues were:

- Most Management Committee members have not had any formal training for their role, and those that had received training described it as basic information about the organisation.
- The majority of MC members requested annual training to assist them to better fulfil their role. Specific areas requested for training are financial management; roles and responsibilities as employers including legal and industrial responsibilities.
- Management Committee members were confused about their roles as employers and had a poor understanding of their ultimate responsibility in relation to legal, industrial and financial issues.
- Most Management Committees acknowledged their composition was a compromise between getting enough people on the Board, as opposed to the skills needed for community management.

The State Office will continue to work on the Management Committee Project and hope to work with centres to find systemic solutions to some of these challenges.

OH&S

New laws affecting the way CLCs operate came into effect in September 2001, bringing extra obligations to meet Occupational Health and Safety standards within centres. The legislation requires Centre's to put systems in place which identify, assess, control and/or eliminate health and safety risks as well as to consult employees about health and safety matters.

Centres were offered an introduction to the legislation at the November State Conference and again during the February Quarterly Meeting this year. Centres are required to establish a mechanism for employees to report health and safety concerns or incidents to management and ensure that they are acted on. They must also carry out workplace inspections, identifying and eliminating as far as practical, any potential hazards.

Staff of the State Office appointed an Occupational Health and Safety officer who attended training in June this year. Following the training, the office established an OH&S policy, carried out an inspection and created a register to report any incidents.



Publications

Women and Law Election Agenda

This resource was developed in collaboration with a number of CLCs and other community organisations for the 2003 NSW State Election.

The issues identified are organised under 5 key areas:

- Access
- Gender Equity
- Participation
- Legislative Reform
- New Initiatives

The Agenda was an initiative to establish a common ground amongst CLCs and other NGOs in relation to gender equality and women's human rights.

The state election provided an opportunity to develop the agenda however, its implementation goes far beyond the election timeframe and we hope it will form part of the justice and gender program for this parliamentary term.

Financial Guide for NSW Community Legal Centres

In recent years the financial administration of Legal Centres has become more complex, specialised and demanding. CCLCG produced the Financial Guide in response to sector concerns about the GST, record keeping, computerised accounting systems and the level of expertise required for the management of

finances in legal centres. This excellent guide was written by Deborah MacDonald, Financial Administrator at the Macarthur Legal Centre, and CCLCG Treasurer.

It is a comprehensive resource covering every facet of financial management with check lists, policies, and practical assistance for administrators.

On the Record and State Office Website

This year saw the relaunch of the CCLCG website which had been out of action since late 1998. The new site is streamlined, giving people access to the most important information – what we do, how to contact our centres, and our latest publications – in an easy to navigate format. All NSW centres are welcome to post information on the State Office website.

Another resource relaunched this year was On the Record, a journal of NSW CLC activities. On the Record has been in publication since 1987 but this is the first edition to be published in almost three years. The editorial committee started work on the publication in May and it was published, thanks to the design assistance of Blake Dawson Waldron, in Autumn 2003.

The next edition of On the Record is due out in April 2004.



Advocacy and Human Rights

Human Rights has been identified by the sector as one of our key strategic directions over the next 3 years. This year we have further implemented human rights within our sector.

Centres are increasingly exploring the use of a human rights framework in our work as legal advocates, we are re-orienting our social justice activities as human rights activism, and have taken steps to look at a human rights framework in relation to community legal education.

New Position at State Office: Advocacy and Human Rights Officer

In 2003 we re-oriented the Law Reform and Policy position to a broader and more inclusive position of advocacy and human rights. In May, Polly Porteous commenced work at the State Office as the Advocacy and Human Rights Officer.

The position involves supporting and developing the capacity of community legal centres through training and resource material to undertake systemic advocacy, law reform and advocacy using a human rights framework and systemic analysis.

The Advocacy and Human Rights Officer works with the Director and others in community legal centres throughout NSW, to strengthen the understanding human rights and initiating human rights projects in the CLC sector.

Using human rights in case-law

Community legal centres are increasingly using human rights in their case-work. Training sessions at National CLC Conferences and CCLCG Quarterly meetings have encouraged CLCs to use human rights instruments and ideals in their case-work. Some examples from the past year include:

- A nationwide HREOC class action run by Illawarra Legal Centre against the Commonwealth Government over its failure to collect child support payments
- Several cases run by PIAC involving the indefinite detention of refugees, resulting in six clients being released from detention
- Race, sex and disability discrimination cases run by several generalist legal centres, as well the Disability Discrimination Legal Centre.

Submissions

This year NSW Community Legal Centres made many submissions to various Government inquiries including:

- Anti-terrorism legislation and police powers.
- Victims Compensation Tribunal procedural fairness.
- Family Law Joint Custody inquiry
- Senate Inquiry into Legal Aid and Access To Justice
- NSW Legal Aid Commission Review of Civil Law Program
- Charities Bill 2003

Projects and Campaigns

ECOSOC accreditation

With the assistance of Kingsford Legal Centre and the NSW State Office, the National Association of Community Legal Centres is now accredited with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). This gives Australian community legal centres the right to send delegates to United Nations conferences and meetings. So far the Disability Discrimination Legal Centre and the Australian Refugee Rights Alliance have used the accreditation to attend UN meetings.

The Women's Report Card - National CEDAW Project

The 2002 meeting of the National Human Rights Network (NHRN) agreed to actively participate in the National CEDAW Project - *The Women's Report Card*. As many NHRN members are from NSW and the CCLCG Director is Convenor of the network, the State Office co-ordinated promotion of the project amongst CLCs, and created opportunities for them to participate in the project throughout NSW and CLC networks nationally.

An initiative of the Women's Rights Action Network of Australia, the Report Card documents the experiences of women and analyses gender equality and women's human rights in Australia.

The State Office assisted in promoting the project to CLCs and our networks in NSW and across Australia, and ensured that CLC's from NSW, Western Australia, and the Northern Territory attended the CEDAW training workshop.

We have supported the production of The Women's Report Card Training Kit and have printed copies for CLCs many of whom have expressed an interest in participating.

The Women's Report Card Project will produce two reports:

- A community report with state and territory analysis, as well as a national overview of issues for women in Australia which will provide the most up to date information on gender equality and women's human rights in Australia
- An NGO Shadow Report to be considered by the United Nations CEDAW Committee alongside the Australian Government's Report.

The community report will become a resource for NGOs in their advocacy and lobbying efforts, issue-based campaigns, funding submissions, and movement building amongst and between sectors and women's NGOS across Australia. A summary of this document will be translated into a number of community languages

The community consultations & development of the report will provide the material from which we will draw the Australian NGO CEDAW Shadow Report. It is hoped the project will be able to send representatives of this project to the United Nations at the time the Australian Government's Report and our NGO report are considered by the CEDAW Committee.

CLCs can participate in the Women's Report Card Project by:

Joining State-based working groups

- Promoting the project through CLC networks and members
- Providing case studies
- Attending community consultations
- Preparing short submissions
- Distributing the general survey in your community

Human Rights research – Australia's compliance with the Convention Against Torture

Following a seminar run by Amnesty International Legal Network NSW in May a small group of lawyers and activists were inspired to research Australia's compliance with the Convention Against Torture. We do not have a nation-wide definition or crime of "torture" as applied to domestic acts in this country. Some states and territories do have the crime of "torture" in their Crimes Acts, but there is a lack of consistency across jurisdictions. The research group, facilitated by the CCLCG Advocacy and Human Rights Officer, is preparing a discussion paper to be ready by the end of 2003.

Cuts to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board

PIAC and Kingsford Legal Centre convened a series of meetings to discuss funding cuts to the ADB. Many CLCs were concerned by the cuts as they appeared to be directed toward the research and policy function of the ADB, which has produced valuable reports on issues such as the Government's compliance with anti-discrimination laws, Hep C discrimination, and racial stereotyping in the NSW media.

Community Legal Education and Human Rights Education

The Community Legal Education Workers (CLEW) subcommittee met regularly in 2002/2003 and worked on a variety of projects, many with a human rights focus. Their activities included:

- Human Rights Education training sessions at Quarterly CCLCG meetings
- Innovative Community Legal Education National Conference workshop
- Human Rights Education in Sri Lanka and in Australia - National Conference
- Legal theatre workshop National Conference



Conferences

State Conference

Strategies for Justice was the title of the NSW CCLCG State Conference in 2002. The two-day conference was aimed at developing greater skills within the sector and helping centres to promote their work and agenda to the wider community.

Around 100 people from legal centres, government departments, non-government organisations and community campaigns attended the conference that was held at the YWCA in Sydney last November.

The first day of the conference provided delegates with the opportunity to build their skills and learn about some of the pertinent issues effecting CLC work. The second day challenged the NSW Government's law and order agenda that was dominating the 2003 election campaign.

There were two reports launched during the conference, the research report, 'My time is not a gift to Government' and the 'Women and the Law Election Agenda'.

The next State Conference will be held in November 2004.

Activating Human Rights Conference July 2003

The Advocacy and HR Officer and the Director attended the Activating Human Rights Conference in Byron Bay.

The Director was invited to provide human rights and advocacy training for 40 young people as part of the youth on Justice Program at Conference. From the training the young people developed 3 campaigns and produced resolutions then presented to the Federal Minister for Youth

World YWCA International Women's Training Institute July 2003

The Director was a resource person and facilitator for the advocacy program for the World YWCA International Women's Training Institute held in Brisbane in July 2003. 30 women from 9 different countries attended the advocacy and human rights training.



Financial Statements

Independent Audit Report

Scope

I have audited the financial report of the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group (NSW) Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2003. The Members of the governing body are responsible for the financial report. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the members.

My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements and relevant statutory and other requirements, so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Organisation's financial position and the results of its operation.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, financial report presents fairly, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and the Funding and Performance Agreements the financial position of the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group (NSW) Inc. as at 30 June 2003 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Dated at Hurstville this 15th day of July 2003.

Sandra Grollmus

Registered Company Auditor

Sprolling

Registered No. 1254



Balance Sheet As of June 2003

Assets	
Cash on Hand	
CBA Cheque Account	\$11,711.80
Cash Management Account	\$116,381.53
Fixed Deposit	\$31,650.87
Petty Cash	\$100.00
Total Cash on Hand	\$159,844.20
Sundry Debtors	\$1,971.62
Interest Receivable	\$809.96
Bonds - electricity	\$200.00
Non-Current Assets	
Office Equipment	
Office Equipment at Cost	\$23,507.18
Accumulated Depreciation - Office E	-\$16.659.94
Total Office Equipment	\$6.847.24 \$5.000.00
Bond premises - Elizabeth St	
Total Non-Current Assets	\$11,847.24
Total Assets	\$174,673.02
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Sundry Creditors	\$300.00
Accrued expenses	\$3,628.04
Holiday Pay Accrual	\$4,157.09
Total Current Liabilities	\$8.085.13

Other Current Liabilities	
CLEW Training money	\$2.692.23
Wage Packaging Accounts	¥2.072.23
Inder, Brigid	\$233.45
Total Wage Packaging Accounts	\$233.45
Combined Group Funds	<i>\$233.13</i>
CLC Group Funds	\$20,574.04
Administrators Trust money	\$545.00
State Conference	\$4,214.94
Prov - Publications printing	\$3,209.06
Review	\$6.053.68
PII Reserve	\$15,268.88
Total Combined Group Funds	\$49.865.60
LAC-MSP project funds	\$14,059.00
Provisions	. ,
L.S.L. Provision	\$5.097.88
Other leave provision	\$22,471.00
Prov'n - equipment and fitout	\$3,985.00
Prov'n for recruit costs	\$2,000.00
Total Provisions	\$33,553.88
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$100,404.16
Total Liabilities	\$108,489.29
Net Assets	\$66.183.73
Equity	
Accumulated Surplus	\$41,111.71
Accumulated Surplus-MSP	\$5,523.24
Current Year Surplus	\$19,548.78
Total Equity	\$66,183.73



Profit and Loss Statement

1st July 2002 through to 30th June, 2003

Income		Web expenses	\$160.00
Core Funding Received	\$220,422.38	Total Communication	<i>\$9,268.93</i>
Bank Interest Received	\$7,529.34	Financial & Accountability	
Service Fee Income	\$2,500.00	Accounting & Audit Fees	\$18,465.02
Sale of Publications	\$40.91	Bank Charges & Interest Paid	\$516.20
Sundry Other Income	\$160.00	GST rounding account	\$7.11
Total Income	\$230,652.63	Insurance - General	\$3,653.06
Expenses		Total Financial & Accountability	\$22,641.39
Staffing Expenses		Library, Resources & Subs	\$885.69
Salaries		Travel	\$2,038.02
Direct Salaries	\$92,994.26	Program & Planning	, , ,
Leave Expense	-\$864.34	Board Expenses	\$3,046.90
Staff entitlement prov/LSL	\$2,499.87	Meeting expense - 1/4 room hire	\$2,096.00
Total Salaries	<i>\$94,629.79</i>	Total Program & Planning	\$5,142.90
Salary Sacrifice expense		Office Assets	, , ,
Inder, Brigid - salary sacrifice	\$9,973.08	Computer equip/software	\$1,391.64
Fishwick, Elaine - sal sacrifice	\$3,075.49	Total Office Assets	\$1,391.64
Total Salary Sacrifice expense	\$13,048.57	Depreciation/capital equipment	\$6,960.55
GST credits on wage packs	-\$629.19	Total Operating Expenses	\$81,959.49
Salary On-Costs			
Superannuation	\$9,490.27	Total Expenses	\$211,103.85
Cents per klm	\$63.32	Operating Profit	\$19,548.78
Workers Comp Insurance	\$3,578.85	Other Income	
Supervision	\$1,884.55	Conference 2002	\$4,409.02
Total Salary On-Costs	\$15,016.99	Released Conference prov	\$3,053.43
Staff related expenses		CCLCG Fees 02/03	\$11,586.36
Staff Training & Development	\$570.92	Total Other Income	\$19,048.81
Staff Recruitment	\$2,310.40	Other Expenses	
Conferences	\$4,196.88	CCLCG Expenses	
Total Staff related expenses	<i>\$7,078,20</i>	CCLCG quarterly RRR attend	\$2,685.87
Total Staffing Expenses	\$129,144.36	CCLC Group expenditure - other	\$8,900.49
Operating Expenses		Other Expenses Conference	
Premises		Conference-venue hire	\$1,040.00
Rent	\$20,416.69	Equipment	\$330.00
Other Premises Costs		Conference salaries	\$1,460.00
Heat. Light & Power	\$939.82	Conference super	\$131.40
Repairs & Maintenance	\$130.85	Social Events	
Total Other Premises Costs	\$1,070.67	AGM drinks	\$147.73
Office Overheads	·	Lunches	\$2,927.27
Donations	\$200.00	Publicity & Information	
Legal expenses	\$39.00	Printing	\$507.50
Postage & Couriers	\$1,063.12	Postage	\$14.18
Printing & Stationery	\$5,423.26	Overheads	
Equip repairs & maintenance	\$4,643.45	Meeting expenses	\$95.91
Office Expenses	\$774.18	Speaker fee	\$281.82
Total Office Overheads	\$12,143.01	Stationery	\$295.40
Communication	Ţ.=/5.V.	Accommodation & travel	\$231.24
Telephone	\$6,949.17	Total Other Expenses Conference	\$7,462.45
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Fax	\$509.76	Total Other Expenses Net Profit/(Loss)	\$19,048.81

Strategic Directions 2002-2005

Funding

Our funding priorities include maximising opportunities within the existing Commonwealth and State Funding Program to increase funding, to seek additional funding from alternative sources and to secure and expand our funding base overall

Human Rights

Recognising that human rights and social justice are defining principles for the sector, we will further promote respect for and understanding of human rights in the community. We will pursue training in human rights education and instruments for the sector, and will contribute a distinctly CLC voice to current debates on a local, national, regional and international level and advocate to incorporate international human rights laws and treaties into Australian domestic law.

Gaps in Legal Services

We are aware of critical gaps in the availability of legal services particularly in rural, regional and remote areas of NSW. We will research these issues to identify the needs and issues for communities with no or diminished access to legal services.

We will work closely with our primary 'legal' partners – Legal Aid Commission, the NSW Law Society, and Aboriginal Legal Services - to ensure the most appropriate legal services are provided. This may include establishing more Legal Aid Regional Offices, new CLCs, additional Aboriginal Legal Services or new models as yet unexplored.

Strategic Service Delivery

Strategic Service Delivery is the notion and practice of addressing systemic issues and injustice through a multi-disciplinary approach including strategic casework, community legal education advocacy and law reform.

CLCs have always held the dual roles of providing access to the legal system as 'service providers' and being advocates, bringing about changes to the legal system where it is found to be inaccessible or inequitable.

Capacity Building

As an organisation, Community Legal Centres' can only bring about our vision by paying attention to our skills, capacity and institutional processes and health. We are committed to learning, evaluation, skills development of staff and volunteers, as well as critical reflection. We will develop and support training and capacity building programs for staff and volunteers and seek funding and other opportunities to create further support for training and skills development in the sector.



Combined Community Legal Centres of NSW

Generalist Centres

Blue Mountains Community Legal Centre Central Coast Community Legal Centre Community Legal Service for Western NSW Far West Community Legal Centre Hawkesbury/Nepean Community Legal Centre Hunter Community Legal Centre Illawarra Legal Centre Inner City Legal Centre Kingsford Legal Centre Macarthur Legal Centre Macquarie Legal Centre Marrickville Legal Centre Mt Driutt and Area Community Legal Centre North and North West Community Legal Service Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre Redfern Legal Centre Shoal Coast Community Legal centre South West Sydney Legal Centre

Specialist Centres

The Aged-Care Rights Service Arts Law Centre of Australia Communications Law Centre Consumer Credit Legal Centre NSW Inc. Court Support Scheme Disability Discrimination Legal Centre (NSW) Domestic Violence Advocacy Service **Environmental Defenders Office** HIV/AIDS Legal Centre Immigration Advice and Rights Centre Intellectual Disability Rights Service National Children's and Youth Law Centre National Pro Bono Legal Resource Centre Public Interest Advocacy Centre Redfern Legal Centre Publishing Refugee Advice and Casework Service Tenants' Union of NSW Welfare Rights Centre Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Woman's Legal Centre Woman's Legal Resources Centre The NSW Working Woman's Centre

