



# ANNUAL REPORT

Combined Community Legal Centres' Group (NSW) Inc

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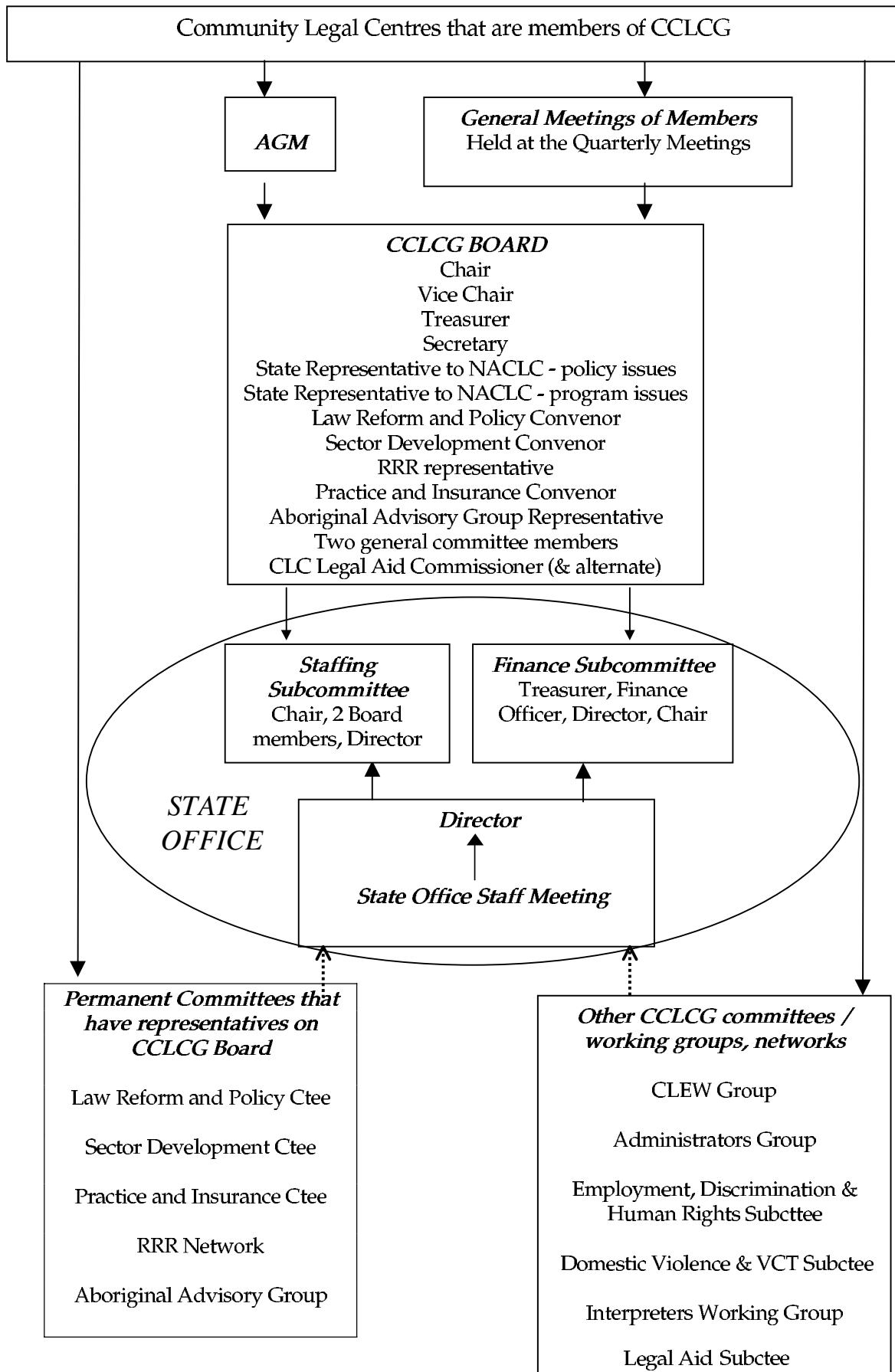
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## Organisational Structure of the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group NSW



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# About the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group NSW

The Combined Community Legal Centres' Group NSW (CCLCG) is an incorporated association consisting of, and representing, the network of community legal centres throughout New South Wales.

The objects of CCLCG include the following:

- **To assist** member centres fulfil their goals and policies, particularly through advocacy for the provision of adequate resources and education of the public about the role of Community Legal Centres.
- **To facilitate** communication and cooperation among member centres, and between member centres other bodies and to assist all member centres, especially those in remote and rural areas, to participate fully in the activities of the organization.
- **To support** member centres to advocate for people who are socially or economically disadvantaged through research, community development projects and law reform.
- **To provide** information and referral for Community Legal Centres and related agencies and disadvantaged people in need of legal services.
- **To work** co-operatively with other organizations, particularly the NSW Legal Aid Commission and relevant national networks, in relation to justice issues and the provision of community based services.
- **To assist** CLCs fulfil the strategic directions of the CLC sector.

## Chairperson's Report

Michelle Jones

I am privileged to be the Chair of the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group (CCLCG).

The CCLCG is a dynamic organisation that is critical to the law and justice sector in New South Wales. As the peak body for 39 member community legal centres (CLCs) in New South Wales, the CCLCG represents CLCs in a diverse range of community and government forums.

The State Office of CCLCG has gone from strength to strength over the past two years. This financial year the State Office was sad to farewell Julie Smith from three years as Administration and Information Officer, but was very lucky to gain Jean Parker in this position. All current staff at the State Office - Polly Porteous, Alison Aggarwal, Carol Roberts and Jean Parker - are committed, vibrant, energetic individuals who have consolidated the work of past years and developed a number of new and innovative projects, such as:

- Organising the highly successful 2005 NSW State Community Legal Centre Conference
- Established the New South Wales Legal Assistance Forum (NLAF)
- Coordinating CLCs response to the Commonwealth/State Review of NSW CLCs
- Research into the staffing conditions of all NSW CLCs and making recommendations for improvement
- Working with the Legal Aid Commission on projects such as the Co-operative Legal Service Delivery Model (CLSDM)
- Review of all State Office policies and procedures
- Redrafting CCLCG's membership guidelines, policies and constitution

On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to thank the following individuals and organisations for their continued support of the State Office during 2004/2005.

- Dennis Roach, CLC Funding Program Manager, Legal Aid Commission for his continued support of the State Office and the community legal centre program.
- Julie Bishop, Director National Association of CLCs
- Ben Benson, solicitor from Henry Davis York for his assistance with redrafting the constitution and rules for the CCLCG
- Geoff Mulherin and Sue Scott of the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW
- Louise Blazejowska and Bill Grant of the Legal Aid Commission

Special thanks to all CCLCG board members for their commitment to the State Office and the CCLCG over the past twelve months. Special thanks are due to Jane Cipants for her work on the CLC Review Steering Committee.

And finally I would like to thank the management committees, staff and volunteers of community legal centres in New South Wales; without their support and commitment we would not be in the strong position we are today.

## CCLCG Members 2004/2005

### **FULL MEMBERS:**

#### **Generalist Centres**

Albury Wodonga Community Legal Service

Blue Mountains Community Legal Centre

Central Coast Community Legal Service

Far West Community Legal Centre

Hawkesbury Nepean Community Legal Centre

Hunter Community Legal Centre

Illawarra Legal Centre

Inner City Legal Service

Kingsford Legal Centre

Macarthur Legal Centre

Macquarie Legal Centre

Marrickville Legal Centre

Mt Druitt & Area Community Legal Centre

North & North West Community Legal Centre

Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre

Redfern Legal Centre

Shoalcoast Community Legal Centre

South West Sydney Legal Centre

Western NSW Community Legal Centre

#### **Specialist Centres**

(The) Aged-Care Rights Service

Arts Law Centre of Australia

*Communications Law ceased to be a member during the financial year as NSW office closed down and the legal practice operates from Victoria*

Consumer Credit Legal Centre NSW

Court Support Scheme

Disability Discrimination Legal Centre NSW

Environmental Defenders Office NSW

HIV/AIDS Legal Centre

Immigration Advice and Rights Centre

Intellectual Disability Rights Service

National Children's and Youth Law Centre

National Pro Bono Resource Centre

Public Interest Advocacy Centre

Public Interest Law Clearing House NSW

Redfern Legal Centre Publishing

Refugee Advice and Casework Service

Tenants' Union of NSW

Welfare Rights Centre

Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women and Children's Legal Centre

Women's Legal Services NSW

(incorporating two previous members Domestic Violence Advocacy Service and Womens Legal Resources Centre)

*Working Women's Centre NSW ceased to be a member on 1 July 2005 as centre closed*

### **ASSOCIATE MEMBER:**

UTS Community Law and Legal Research Centre

## CCLCG Board 2004/2005

The CCLCG Board is composed of workers from Community Legal Centres elected at the AGM every year in November. These workers do not represent their centres but are on the Board in their individual capacity.

In May 2005 changes to the Rules and Objects introduced two new positions, Deputy Chairperson, and Convenor of Indigenous Advisory Group. Board members from November 2004 to November 2005 were as follows.

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Member centre</b>	<b>Number of Board Meetings attended (from a total of 8)</b>
Chairperson	Michelle Jones	Tenants' Union of NSW	8
<i>Deputy Chairperson (May 05 onwards)</i>	Vacant		
Secretary	Jane Cipants	Illawarra	7
Treasurer & Public Officer	Hilary Chesworth	Redfern	7
Legal Aid Commissioner	Simon Moran	Public Interest Advocacy Centre	4
State Representative to NACLCLC – Policy (also Alternate Legal Aid Commissioner)	Catherine Carney (Registered June 05)	Women's Legal	0
State Representative to NACLCLC – Program Issues	Jackie Finlay	Welfare Rights	5
Sector Development Convenor	Katrina Harrison	Marrickville	5
Practice and Insurance Committee Convenor	Janet Loughman	Marrickville	4
Law Reform & Policy Convenor	Agnes Chong	Consumer Credit	6
Rural, Remote and Regional CLCs Convenor	Angela Pollard	Northern Rivers	7
<i>Representative, Indigenous Advisory Group (May 05 onwards)</i>	Melissa Stublins	Hawkesbury Nepean	3
General member	Trish Frail Gibbs (Resigned April 05)	Warringa Baiya	1
General Member	Helen Campbell	Redfern	7
Director State Office	Polly Porteous	CCLCG State Office	8

## **Report from NSW Representative to National Association of Community Legal Centres**

*CCLCG provides two NSW representatives to the National Association of Community Legal Centres: one responsible for policy issues, and one for program issues. Catherine Carney filled the NSW policy position from 2003 until mid 2005, while Jackie Finlay came on board in the NSW program position in December 2004.*

*Jackie Finlay provided the following report.*

The National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) provides an essential forum for determining national strategies and campaigns for the sector, as well as providing essential services to CLCs. The NSW Combined Community Legal Centres' Group has once again maintained an important role in NACLC activities.

NACLC represents our interests on a national level. This year NACLC finalised difficult negotiations with the Commonwealth on the next three year service agreement and the Community Legal Services Program Guidelines. NACLC negotiated various insurance policies for our centres such as professional indemnity insurance, D&O insurance and public liability insurance. The National Risk Management Guide was revised this year, with considerable input from NSW centres via the NSW PII co-convenor Natalie Ross.

NACLC also continued to play an important role in supporting the national networks of which many of our centres are members.

Julie Bishop from NACLC undertook consultations with CLCs around Australia to continue the "What is a CLC?" discussion. These discussions contributed to the Doing Justice Campaign 3 that resulted in the production of a CLC story book, "Community Legal Centres, Doing Justice, Stories of Challenge and Change", that highlights the stories of CLCs and their clients. The CLC story book should be a superb tool for all NSW centres to use to increase their communities awareness of the work of CLCs and for lobbying purposes.

Finally, I would like to thank Catherine Carney, from the Women's Legal Services NSW, for all her fantastic work over the years as Principal Solicitor of the Women's Legal Services, as a member of the National Network of Women's Legal Services and as NSW Representative to NACLC. I also want to acknowledge the incredible work undertaken by the staff of both the NSW Combined Community Legal Centres Group and NACLC.

## **Report from CCLCG Representative on the NSW Legal Aid Commission**

*Simon Moran is the CLC representative on the Board of the Legal Aid Commission, and is on the Commission Board's civil law and community funding committees. Until she resigned in June 2005, Catherine Carney was the alternate commissioner and was on the Commission Board's Family Law and Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme sub-committees.*

*This report was provided by Simon Moran*

The Combined Community Legal Centres Group and Legal Aid Commission were lead players in the establishment of the NSW Legal Assistance Forum ("NLAF"). We hope that the Forum, which will bring together the major agencies in the Justice sector in NSW, will raise the profile of the justice issues. The initial ground work for the NLAF was undertaken by CCLCG and the Commission.

Another of the innovations being pursued by the Commission is the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery Model ("CLSDM") that aims to address some of the gaps in the provision of legal services in NSW, particularly in rural and regional NSW. The pilot of the scheme was run in western and northern NSW over the past year, and the independent evaluation of the pilots recommended that the administration of CLSDM be permanently funded and rolled out across the State.

The Legal Aid Commission has implemented the majority of the recommendations of the review of its civil law section. As part of the implementation it has increased the level of services it provides to Indigenous Australians and will appoint a dedicated worker to support the expansion of these services.

## CCLCG sub-committees and working groups

CCLCG has a several sub-committees and working groups that bring CLCs together to work on common issues. Some subcommittees are permanent committees under the CCLCG Rules and Objects, with convenors having positions on the CCLCG Board, while others are less formalised. The committee and working group convenors for 2004/2005 were as follows:

<b>Sub-committee or Working Group</b>	<b>Convenor/s</b>	<b>From which centre</b>
Administrators/Coordinators	Jane Cipants	Illawarra Legal Centre
Aboriginal Advisory Group	Melissa Stubbings	Hawkesbury/Nepean CLC
Community Legal Education Worker Group	Tatiana Lozano Margaret Martin	Northern Rivers CLC Marrickville Legal Centre
Employment, Human Rights & Discrimination Subcommittee	(Emp) Linda Tucker (HR&D) Anne Mainsbridge	Kingsford Legal Centre Public Interest Advocacy Centre
Domestic Violence & Victims Compensation Subcommittee	(DV) Carolyn Bass (VC) Karyn Bartholomew & Nerissa Bradley	Domestic Violence Advocacy Service Illawarra Legal Centre
Law Reform & Policy	Agnes Chong Meredith McLaine	Consumer Credit Legal Centre Shoalcoast Legal Centre
Legal Aid	Janet Loughman	Kingsford Legal Centre
Practice and Insurance Committee	Natalie Ross Kate Wandmaker Acting Board Rep: Janet Loughman	Inner City Legal Centre Western NSW CLC Kingsford Legal Centre
Rural, Remote and Regional	Angela Pollard (Board pos)	Northern Rivers CLC
Sector Development	Katrina Harrison	Marrickville Legal Centre
Interpreters Working Group	Louise Boon-Kuo	Refugee Advice and Casework Service
Review Working Group	Katrina Harrison	Marrickville Legal Centre

The following four reports provide a snapshot of the work done by these sub-committees.

### Report from the Law Reform and Policy Sub-Committee

*Meredith McLaine*

Agnes Chong joined Meredith McLaine as co-convenor of the Law Reform and Policy Sub-Committee this year. The committee prepared or endorsed a diverse range of law reform submissions during the year, dealing with issues including provision of mental health services; transfer of management of some juvenile detainees to Corrective Services; listings of organisations as "terrorist"; and a proposed fee for debtor petitions in bankruptcy. We're pleased to advise that the latter matter, at least, was resolved in favour of the views contained in our submission!

We welcomed several guest speakers to Quarterly Meetings, who spoke on topics including the human rights implications of free trade agreements; the United Nations shadow reporting process; and the role of NSW Parliament's Legislation Review Committee in scrutinising bills for inconsistency with "personal rights and liberties".

Discussions amongst the committee led to the formation of a pro-active law reform campaign, by a working group concerned with various aspects of childrens' care and protection law and practice. The working group is now being assisted by a student researcher who is collating case-studies and preparing an issues paper. We envisage that this will be an ongoing project, with, we hope, the scope to contribute to significant law and policy reform.



## **Report from Domestic Violence Sub-Committee**

*Caroline Bass*

As convenor for the Domestic Violence Sub-Committee (DVSC) I would like to acknowledge and congratulate the DVSC on their dedication and exceptional work over the past year. Some of the issues that we have been actively addressing include:

1. Inappropriate referral of domestic violence matters to mediation
2. Police common law powers to carry firearms despite being defendants to Apprehended Violence Orders (AVO)
3. Low rate of success in section 68T Family Law Act applications (this legislation allows magistrates to make, revive, vary, suspend or discharge family law contact orders during AVO applications)
4. Legal Aid guidelines in AVOs matters
5. The low success rate of police initiated Apprehended Violence Orders in some courts
6. Investigating the Attorney Generals report on court safety.

In August we welcomed combining our Quarterly Meetings with the Victims Compensation Sub-Committee (VCSC). The integration of the sub-committee meetings allows us to gain from each others experience, as well as providing a strong alliance in addressing our many interlinked issues.

## **Report from the Aboriginal Advisory Group to the CCLCG**

*Melissa Stubbings*

The NSW CCLCG Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG) was established in late 2004 as a practical way for Aboriginal workers in NSW CLCs (both identified and non-identified positions) to have a voice and be consulted on Aboriginal issues that CLCs and the CCLCG may be confronted with.

NSW AAG is an advisory body to the CCLCG. The CCLCG provides AAG annual funding which is used to bring AAG members to the Quarterly Meetings, State and National Conferences, and other events that may arise. The State Office of CCLCG provides administrative support and assists to administer an email group list on BBS for the AAG. The AAG meet face to face at the Quarterly Meetings of CCLCG.

All Aboriginal workers in NSW CLCs are eligible for membership to the AAG. A chairperson elected at the November Quarterly Meetings and their term runs for 12 months. A Terms of Reference has been developed and agreed to by the AAG.

The first business of the AAG was to propose to the CCLCG that their constitution be amended to include the Chairperson of the AAG as a voting member of the Board of CCLCG. This enabled the AAG also to have a decision making, not merely advisory role. At the CCLCG Special General Meeting in September 2005 the CCLCG Rules of Association were amended and the membership of the Board now includes the Chairperson of the AAG.

The AAG has embarked on their first campaign: Raising Awareness of Sexual Assault and Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities in NSW. Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Service agreed to auspice this campaign with direction from the AAG. As part of this campaign the AAG has met with Blond, an advertising agency specialising in women's issues, to discuss strategies for the campaign and possible sources of funding.

## **Report from the Community Legal Education Workers Group**

*Tatiana Lozano and Margie Martin and Co-Convenors of the CLEW Group*

The CLEW group continued its discussions on the importance of community legal education (CLE) in the work of community legal centres. The creativity and enthusiasm of workers facilitating CLE was well demonstrated at the State Conference Showcase of CLE in June 2005. A booklet of the presentations was produced by Simone Montgomery of the Tenants Union and Mark MacDiarmid from Blue Mountains which gave an outline of each CLE project presented summarising its aims, its target group, comments on whether the project achieved its objectives, and contact details for obtaining further information.

Throughout the year the NSW CLEW has discussed the development of protocols for CLE projects between Legal Aid and CLCs. It is acknowledged that collaboration in the delivery of CLE and the sharing of resources would benefit all. Penny Adams, CLE worker at Legal Aid, has formed the Legal Aid CLE Reference Group to have a more structured approach to CLE. There is now scope for CLCs to participate in CLE delivery to regional and remote NSW with Legal Aid CLE workers. This not only helps in the logistics of safe travel to remote areas so workers are accompanied but also enables a more regular presence of our organisations in these remote communities. For example, recently Rachel Martin (Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre) and Fiona Pace from the Legal Aid Commission traveled to the north west of the state to visit Aboriginal communities. CLEW has been invited to take part in the Legal Aid CLE Reference Group and has nominated Margie Martin (Marrickville Legal Centre) to attend their meetings.

CLEW is participating in the development of the Tenant's Union Certificate IV training modules on Community Education. Alison Aggarwal (CCLCG) and Tatiana Lozano (Northern Rivers CLC) were nominated by the Training Reference Group, and the CLEW Group to participate in the development of the Community Education modules. The training modules will provide an avenue for CLC staff to attain skills in delivering CLE projects. Therefore the possibility of CCLCG becoming self-sufficient in providing such training is now a longer term goal.

## State Office of CCLCG

The State Office resources and carries out much of the work of the Combined Community Legal Centres' Group. It oversees the CLC networks and programs in the areas of funding, human rights, advocacy and policy, management and technical advice and co-ordination for the sector.

As well as ensuring that CCLCG fulfils its many objectives, the State Office acts as a busy referral point for members of the public seeking legal advice or information about community legal centres.

This financial year the State Office farewelled our long-standing Administration and Information Officer Julie Smith who had worked with the State Office for 3 years. CCLCG remains immensely grateful for the stability she gave the office over the years and for the efficiency and good humour with which she conducted her work.

State Office staff and volunteers in 2004/2005 was as follows:

### Permanent Staff:

Director	Polly Porteous	
Finance Officer	Carol Roberts	
Advocacy & Human Rights Officer	Alison Aggarwal	September 2004 continuing
Administration & Information Officer	Julie Smith	Until July 2004
	Sophie Marsac	August – December 2004
	Jean Parker	May 2005 continuing

### Casual Project Officers and Locums:

Project Officer – NSW Staffing Conditions	Romi Slaven	March - August 2005
Locum policy officer	Cristy Clark	July – August 2004
Casual Administration & Information Officer	Anne Petrou	March 2005
Casual Administration & Information Officer	Katrina Wong	December 2004 – March 2005
Project Officer – History of CLCs	Jeremie Quiohilag	November – February 2005

### Volunteers and Students:

Sydney University Law Degree (External Placement Program)	Toshi Kawaguchi	October 2004 – February 2005
Sydney University Law Degree (External Placement Program)	Nazir Gul	March - June 2005
TAFE NSW - Western Sydney Institute, Nepean College, Kingswood College	8 students from the Events Management Diploma	Preparing for, and during, the NSW CLC State Conference, 15-21 June 2005.



Jean Parker  
Administration and  
Information Officer



Polly Porteous  
Director



Alison Aggarwal  
Advocacy and Human rights  
Officer

## Strategic Action by the NSW CLC sector

In 2003 NSW Community Legal Centres came together to formulate 5 key strategic directions:

1. Funding
2. Capacity Building
3. Gaps in Legal Services
4. Human Rights
5. Strategic Service Delivery

In February 2005 we held a planning day for the sector, which started developing a 3-year Action Plan. When the Joint Commonwealth / NSW Review of NSW CLSP is complete, the Action Plan will incorporate relevant recommendations from the Review Report and will provide a blue-print for NSW CLCs into the future.

Following is a brief summary of the strategic work undertaken by CCLCG and our members during 2004/2005.

### **CCLCG STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: 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.*

#### ***Commonwealth Community Legal Services Program***

The Commonwealth CLSP provided approximately \$5million to 32 NSW community legal centres for the 2004/2005 financial year. This was an increase of 2.2% on the previous year, in other words, a small indexation increase.

The 2005-2008 Service Agreement for CLCs was negotiated by the National Association of Community Legal Centres, the various State CLS Program Managers and the Commonwealth Attorney-Generals' Department. CCLCG is pleased with the final service agreement which we believe simplifies some reporting requirements for the sector.

#### ***NSW Community Legal Services Program***

CCLCG provides annual Budget Submissions to the NSW Government, via the NSW Legal Aid Commission. Our Budget Submissions have focussed on increasing core funding to the least funded community legal centres. This year we were again unsuccessful in our bids for increasing core funding in the NSW Budget. Instead the NSW Government passed on 2.7% indexation increases to 31 legal centres (and the State Office) for the period 04/05. This brings the amount of funding from the NSW Community Legal Services Program to just over \$4million.

CCLCG enjoys a great relationship with the State CLSP Program Manager Dennis Roach, and we are grateful for Dennis's ongoing support for the 32 organisations that receive funding through this program.

#### ***Joint Commonwealth and State Review of NSW Community Legal Centres***

The long-awaited Joint Commonwealth and State Review of NSW Community Legal Services Funding Program commenced during 2005 and is still ongoing. CCLCG representatives on the Review panel were Jane Cipants and Polly Porteous. With the final Report not yet complete, CCLCG cannot report on key findings. However we can state that we are hopeful that the Review will lead to improvement in the funding for Community Legal Centres in NSW in the immediate future.

## **CCLCG STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: Capacity Building**

*CCLCG 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.*

### **Quarterly Meetings**

CCLCG continues to run four 2-day sector-wide meetings a year (in August, November, February and May). The "quarterlies" provide an opportunity for all the CCLCG committees to meet on a regular basis. They include casework meetings, sector development meetings, compulsory Practice and Insurance meetings (for all principal solicitors), community legal education worker group meetings, and also General Meetings of CCLCG members which make key strategic decisions.

Subsidies are made available to regional community legal centres for travel into Sydney to participate in the quarterlies. The quarterlies are therefore an invaluable opportunity for community legal centres throughout the state to network, share skills, and provide direct feedback to the State Office of CCLCG regarding our work.

### **Aboriginal Advisory Group of the CCLCG**

The Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG) was established as an advisory body to the CCLCG in 2004. The AAG's members include all Aboriginal staff working in NSW CLCs and is convened by Melissa Stubbings. The AAG provides a practical way for Aboriginal workers in NSW CLCs to have a voice and be consulted on Aboriginal issues that CLCs and the CCLCG may be confronted with. The AAG meet face to face at the Quarterly Meetings of CCLCG. CCLCG has now established an annual budget of \$5000 to resource the AAG. The CCLCG State Office also provides administrative support for meetings and ongoing communication.

For more information about the work of the AAG, see the AAG report by Melissa Stubbings under 'Reports from Key CCLCG sub-committees'.

### **Training organised by CCLCG**

One afternoon of each Quarterly Meeting is set aside for training for CLC workers. This year the following training sessions were run.

<b>Quarterly Meeting</b>	<b>Training</b>	<b>Trainers</b>
August 2004	Board Governance and Staff Performance Management	Bradfield Nyland
	Dealing with Difficult Clients	Bernie Brown from North Sydney Health
February 2005	OH&S Compliance for CLCs	Workcover
	Anti-Terrorism Laws	Dale Mills (UTSCLC), Agnes Chong (Consumer Credit) and Alexis Goodstone (PIAC)
May 2005	Train the Trainer – Human Rights	PIAC

## ***Training Reference Group***

In early 2005, CCLCG State Office set up a Training Reference Group for the Not-for-profit legal sector, drawing together trainers and training coordinators

- Law Access NSW
- Womens Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme
- Tenants Union of NSW
- Public Interest Advocacy Program
- Legal Aid Commission of NSW
- CLCs

The aim of the Group is to provide opportunities to share and coordinate training throughout the not-for-profit legal services sector. The group has met twice, and there have already been some developments of joint training sessions between sectors. In addition, CCLCG has used the Group to develop a bi-monthly training calendar for CLCs which draws together upcoming training opportunities and faxes it to all our members.

## ***NSW State Conference***

CCLCG organised the NSW CLC State Conference, titled, "We're Still Standing!" on 20-21 June 2005. The conference was an opportunity for NSW CLCs, along with other parts of the legal sector to engage in debates and issues, reflect on the history of CLCs and look to the future.

The range of issues discussed at the conference included:

- How new federal anti-terrorism laws have removed legal safeguards such as the right to silence;
- How the proposed federal industrial relations reform could mean the removal of workers' legal rights to challenge unfair dismissals;
- New housing policies which are reducing the security of tenure for tenants in public housing.
- New laws and policies affecting those on welfare payments and reducing access to basic services such as banking, health care and legal services, and are affecting rural, regional and remote communities;
- There are also active debates on new legal initiatives such as circle sentencing, which are being trialled as alternatives to the courts for Aboriginal communities.

The conference concluded with the launch of the NSW Legal Assistance Forum by the Hon. Bob Debus, NSW Attorney-General of NSW. The Forum brings together the NSW Legal Aid Commission, the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, Law Society of NSW, the Bar Association of NSW, the Coalition of Aboriginal Legal Services, Law Access NSW and the NSW Community Legal Centres, to provide a more coordinated response to justice issues in NSW.

The Conference was attended by over 200 members of NSW community legal centres, members of the judiciary, lawyers from the government and private sectors, academics and community workers. Of the total number of attendants, 22 were from RRR centres and 11 from the Aboriginal Advisory Group (2 of whom were also from RRR centres).

The generous support from 8 pro-bono law firms, the Law Society of NSW and the Law and Justice Foundation, enabled the participation of a large number of participants from rural, regional and remote areas and Aboriginal CLC workers. The overall conference budget was met without a surplus or a deficit.

The State Conference Planning Committee steered the development of the Conference programme and structure, as well as organised individual workshop sessions. The Planning Committee consisted of representatives from different CLCs as well as representatives from the CCLCG RRR Network, the CCLCG Board and the CCLCG Director.

The conference reaffirmed the strength and vitality of the CLC sector in continuing its work in the public interest.

## **CCLCG STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: Gaps in Legal Services**

*There are critical gaps in the availability of legal services particularly in rural, regional and remote areas of NSW. 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.*

### ***NSW Legal Assistance Forum – launched in June 2005***

In February 2005 CCLCG and Legal Aid NSW discussed the idea of a stakeholder forum – the NSW Legal Assistance Forum - which aims to “continuously improve service delivery to socially and economically disadvantaged people through better alignment of planning, program design and service delivery by providers of legal assistance services”. The Law and Justice Foundation NSW offered to provide funding for a 12 month project officer to get the proposal up and running. In June 2005, at the conclusion of the State CLC Conference, the NSW Attorney-General launched the NSW Legal Assistance Forum. CCLCG is very excited about NLAFF as we believe that collaboration between legal service providers is essential to working towards a more just society.

### ***Legal Aid Commission***

CCLCG works closely with the Legal Aid Commission NSW as a fellow legal service provider in NSW. The CCLCG representatives on the Legal Aid Commission, Simon Moran and (alternate) Catherine Carney ensured that legal centre views were expressed to the Commission.

### ***ATSILS***

The tendering-out of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services nationally was of concern to NSW CLCs as many felt that the tender process may see less money available for the ATSILS which would have an impact on the workload of CLCs and other legal services. CCLCG kept centres in touch with the issues (particularly through the Aboriginal Advisory Group) and also made links with the Coalition of Aboriginal Legal Services.

### ***Law and Justice Foundation NSW***

CCLCG has an important relationship with the Law and Justice Foundation on many levels.

The Foundation provides a significant number of grants to legal centres for various projects including community education, research, centre publicity material, and translation of information into community languages. As just one example, the Law and Justice Foundation provided a small grant to CCLCG for subsidising attendance by rural and regional workers to the State CLC Conference (see section on State Conference in this Report).

Members of CCLCG also attended meetings of the Foundation's Legal Referral Forum and the Data Digest Steering Committee.

In addition, CCLCG sponsors an award as part of the Foundation's NSW Justice Awards. The Award is presented to an individual who, in a voluntary capacity in a NSW community legal centre, has demonstrated outstanding commitment to improving access to justice in NSW.

The 2004 Combined Community Legal Centres Group Award was presented to Rosemary Kayess for her long-term volunteering at the Disability Discrimination Legal Centre. Rosemary Kayess has been a voluntary member of the NSW Disability Discrimination Centre Management Committee for 10 years and its Chair for eight of these. She regularly works on submissions and funding applications, writes academic papers on disability and human rights and has participated in a number of United Nations meetings relating to the proposed international convention on human rights for people with disabilities.

A High Commendation was awarded to Mike Steinfeld who has worked as a volunteer solicitor at Kingsford Legal Centre since 1984. He gives pro bono advice across all types of law, on victims compensation, personal injury, credit and debt, social security, unfair dismissal, workers' compensation and family and criminal law matters. He also conducts the clinical legal education program at Kingsford and has been a patient, experienced mentor to scores of students.



L to R: Mike Steinfeld (Highly Commended) Kate Eastman (previous year's CCLCG Award recipient), Rosemary Kayess (CCLCG Award 2004), David Hanson (Nominee)

### ***Law Society of NSW***

CCLCG maintained contact with the Law Society through inviting them to become members of NLA, and also through their pro bono division. In 2005, CCLCG Director Polly Porteous became an Associate Member of the Law Society for the express purpose of being able to keep in touch with events of the Law Society.



## **CCLCG STRATEGIC DIRECTION 4: Human Rights and Advocacy**

*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 and within the Community Legal sector.*

In 2005 CCLCG undertook a range of advocacy initiatives and strengthened the capacity of NSW CLCs to implement a human rights and social justice based approach to their work at both the State and national level.

### **Advocacy**

CCLCG made the following submissions:

#### Federal

- *Inquiry into Mental Health*, Senate Select Committee on Mental Health (May 2005)
- *Inquiry into Unfair Dismissal Policy in the Small Business Sector*, Standing Committee on Employment, Workplace relations and Workforce Participation (April 2005). Sharlene Naismith and Linda Tucker also appeared before the Committee on behalf of CCLCG (May 2005).
- Endorsement letter of NSW CLCs' response to the *Government's Discussion Paper, 'A New Approach to the Family Law System'*, (January 2005)
- Supporting letter to PIAC's Submission on the Review of Terrorist Listings under the *Criminal Code Act 1995*, made to the Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD (January 2005)

#### New South Wales

- *Magellan Trial Project in NSW*, letters sent to the Minister for Community Services, Commissioner for Children and Young People, Family Court, NSW Attorney General, NSW Legal Aid Commission (March 2005)
- Letters to the Community Justice Centres on mediation policies in domestic violence cases (December 2004)
- Letter of response to the Attorney-General's *Review of Victims Legislation* (December 2004)
- Letter to the NSW Attorney General Department, responding to the *Legal Fees Review Panel* (February 2005)

In response to the draft of legislative changes introduced as part of the Australian Government's anti-terrorism measures, CCLCG has kept the NSW CLC sector informed of developments, provided training on the laws and their implications for CLCs at the February 2005 Quarterly Meetings and contributed to submissions prepared by NACLC. CCLCG also appeared, along with NACLC, before Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD (June 2005).

CCLCG also began a research project on identifying systemic issues in the NSW care and protection systems, which will continue into 2005-2006.

CCLCG provides regular information on federal and state level government inquiries, and other advocacy opportunities to NSW CLCs. Advocacy networks were also strengthened through meetings with groups outside of CLCs (e.g. ACTU, Lee Rhiannon (NSW Senator) etc.).

### **Human Rights**

CCLCG contributed to the work of the National CLC Human Rights Network, for example commenting on the Australian Government's draft report to the UN Committee Against Torture (December 2005); contributing to the Australian NGO Report and meetings with the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (February 2005) and associated meetings with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs (June 2005); and contributing to the Australian NGO Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

CCLCG contributed to the PIAC Human Rights Project, by sitting on the Advisory Board on behalf of NACLC and attending the Training-of-Trainers session in Sydney on 25 May 2005, which was also attended by several of the NSW CLC staff. The training further developed the capacity of CLC staff to incorporate human rights training in their advocacy and CLE.

CCLCG also held an Indonesian Human Rights Forum, in conjunction with Redfern Legal Centre (November 2005), to share experiences on how to provide effective community legal services in challenging situations such as armed conflict.

## **CCLCG STRATEGIC DIRECTION 5: Strategic Service Delivery**

*We will advocate for, and continue to use, "Strategic Service Delivery". This is the practice of addressing systemic injustices through a multi-disciplinary approach including strategic casework, community legal education advocacy and law reform.*

By supporting centres in their CLE and law reform and policy work, CCLCG has actively promoted strategic service delivery to the CLC sector throughout the financial year.

Centres highlighted the strategic nature of their work when making submissions to the Joint Commonwealth and State Review of CLCs in late 2004. In our submission, CCLCG argued that the strength of CLCs (and what differentiates us from other legal service providers) is the way in which our casework / advice informs our policy and our community education.

This "strategic service delivery" model, which is underpinned by a community development model, builds on the connections between CLCs and the communities they serve. It also stems from the advantage of the CLC model being client-focused, which enables an array of strategic activities to be targeted to a particular client issue.

At the CCLCG sector planning day held in February 2005, 'Strategic service delivery' was one of the two strategic directions to which specific focus was given. The sector identified the need to strengthen the multi-disciplinary approach through:

- cooperative and coordinated litigation
- developing a common language and approach throughout the sector on human rights, and
- integrating a human rights and social justice approach into CLE projects.

Actions to meet these objectives were identified for future years.

# ***Financial Statements***

SANDRA D. GROLLMUS

Registered Company Auditor  
Registered Tax Agent

7 BURRANEER CLOSE  
ALLAWAH 2218  
TELEPHONE 9546 7366  
FAX 9546 2267

## INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

To: The MEMBERS

### **Scope**

I have audited the financial report of the COMBINED COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES' GROUP (N.S.W.) INC. for the financial year ended 30 June 2005. 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, the 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 (N.S.W.) INC. as at 30 June 2005 and the results of its operations for the year then ended.

Dated at Allawah this 19 day of August 2005.



SANDRA GROLLMUS  
Registered Company Auditor  
Registered No. 1254

Combined Community Legal Centres (NSW)  
 Suite 3B, Briard House  
 491-493 Elizabeth Street  
 Surry Hills NSW 2010

Balance Sheet

As of June 2005

<b>Assets</b>		
Cash on Hand		
CBA Cheque Account	\$6,404.96	
Cash Management Account	\$150,659.00	
Fixed Deposit	\$34,772.66	
Petty Cash	\$150.00	
Total Cash on Hand	<u>\$191,986.62</u>	
Accounts Receivable		\$250.00
Bonds-electricity		\$200.00
Non-Current Assets		
Office Equipment		
Office Equipment @ Cost	\$25,687.17	
Accum Depreciation - Office E	(\$24,713.81)	
Total Office Equipment	<u>\$973.36</u>	
Bond premises-Elizabeth St		\$5,000.00
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>\$5,973.36</u>
Total Assets		<u>\$198,409.98</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>		
Current Liabilities		
Accrued expenses		\$4,365.30
Holiday Pay Accrual		\$9,877.87
GST LIABILITIES		
GST Collected from Customers	<u>\$22.73</u>	
Total GST LIABILITIES		<u>\$22.73</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>\$14,265.90</u>
Other Current Liabilities		
CLEW TRAINING MONEY		\$2,692.23
Wage Packaging Accounts		
Alison Aggarwal	<u>\$383.53</u>	
Total Wage Packaging Accounts		<u>\$383.53</u>
Combined Group Funds		
CLC Group Funds	\$27,692.77	
Indigenous Advisory Group fund	\$2,493.00	
Administrators Trust money	\$545.00	
State Conference	\$4,857.91	
Prov-Publications printing	\$3,209.06	
Review	\$4,232.15	
PII Reserve	<u>\$14,816.86</u>	
Total Combined Group Funds		<u>\$57,846.75</u>
LAC-MSP project funds		\$12,695.36
Provisions		
L.S.L. Provision	\$3,057.52	
Other leave provision	\$22,471.00	
Prov'n - equipment & fitout	\$3,985.00	
Prov for recruit costs	<u>\$2,000.00</u>	
Total Provisions		<u>\$31,513.52</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities		<u>\$105,131.39</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>\$119,397.29</u>
Net Assets		<u>\$79,012.69</u>
<b>Equity</b>		
Accumulated Surplus		\$85,858.73
Accumulated Surplus-MSP		\$5,523.24
Current Year Surplus		<u>(\$12,369.28)</u>
Total Equity		<u>\$79,012.69</u>

## Combined Community Legal Centres (NSW)

Suite 3B, Briard House  
491-493 Elizabeth Street  
Surry Hills NSW 2010

### Profit & Loss Statement

July 2004 through June 2005

<b>Income</b>	
Core Funding Received	\$225,600.00
LAC-review	\$1,817.60
Bank Interest Received	\$10,038.79
Release of Review Provision	\$1,821.53
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>\$239,277.92</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Staffing Expenses	
Salaries	
Direct Salaries	\$106,853.80
Leave Expense	\$6,288.21
Staff entitlement prov/LSL	\$134.75
<b>Total Salaries</b>	<b><u>\$113,276.76</u></b>
Salary Sacrifice expense	
Smith, Julie-Sal sacrifice	\$1,600.00
Roberts, Carol-sal sacrifice	\$7,454.41
Aggarwal, Alison-salary sacrif	\$7,670.70
Porteous,P-Sal sacrifice	\$3,452.22
<b>Total Salary Sacrifice expense</b>	<b><u>\$20,177.33</u></b>
<b>Total Staffing Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$133,454.09</u></b>
Salary On-Costs	
Superannuation	\$11,457.27
Workers Comp Insurance	\$6,066.22
Staff related expenses	
Staff Training & Development	\$1,762.45
Staff Recruitment	\$693.37
Conferences	\$2,624.97
Occupational Health & Safety	\$465.13
<b>Total Staff related expenses</b>	<b><u>\$5,545.92</u></b>
<b>Total Salary On-Costs</b>	<b><u>\$23,069.41</u></b>
Operating Expenses	
Premises	
Rent	\$22,509.40
Other Premises Costs	
Heat, Light & Power	\$966.70
<b>Total Other Premises Costs</b>	<b><u>\$966.70</u></b>
Office Overheads	
Legal expenses	\$105.95
Postage & Couriers	\$894.54
Printing & Stationery	\$7,359.20
P&S Annual Report	\$1,345.45
Software	\$1,730.09
Equip repairs & maintenance	\$4,152.52
Office Expenses	\$894.47
<b>Total Office Overheads</b>	<b><u>\$16,482.22</u></b>
Communication	
Telephone	\$5,521.20
Fax	\$486.13
Internet	\$490.92
Web expenses	\$395.00
<b>Total Communication</b>	<b><u>\$6,893.25</u></b>
Financial & Accountability	
Accounting & Audit Fees	\$1,903.00
Bank Charges & Interest Paid	\$352.00
GST rounding account	\$0.19
Insurance - General	\$2,119.11
Directors & Officers insurance	\$363.64
<b>Total Financial &amp; Accountability</b>	<b><u>\$4,737.94</u></b>
Library, Resources & Subs	\$2,410.59
Travel	\$4,857.27
Program & Planning	
Board Expenses	\$5,431.32
Consultants-project	\$4,900.00
Meeting expense-room hire	\$6,535.63
Indigenous Adv Group	\$4,999.98
Planning Day	\$1,968.18
Review	\$3,639.13
Sector Strategic Planning	\$2,690.91
<b>Total Program &amp; Planning</b>	<b><u>\$30,165.15</u></b>
Office Assets	
Purchase of Equipment <\$1000	\$1,254.54
<b>Total Office Assets</b>	<b><u>\$1,254.54</u></b>
Depreciation/capital equipment	\$3,206.09
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$93,483.15</u></b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b><u>\$250,006.65</u></b>
<b>Operating Profit</b>	<b><u>(\$10,728.73)</u></b>

Combined Community Legal Centres (NSW)

Suite 3B, Briad House  
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Surry Hills NSW 2010

Profit & Loss Statement

July 2004 through June 2005

Other Income	
Conference 2005	\$14,936.36
Conference cruise	\$1,627.27
Donations	\$4,500.00
CCLCG fees 04/05	\$13,530.00
Release MSP Provisions	\$1,363.64
Total Other Income	<u>\$35,957.27</u>
Other Expenses	
CCLCG Expenses	
CCLCG quarterly RRR attend	\$7,893.34
CLEW - RRR attendance 1/4's	\$1,741.96
Special RRR meeting 8/7/04	\$1,077.21
CCLCG meeting speakers	\$250.00
CCLC meeting interpreters	\$620.00
CCLCG t/f excess funds to pro	\$1,947.49
Total CCLCG Expenses	<u>\$13,530.00</u>
PROJECTS	
Disbursements-APLA	\$1,000.00
LJF Awards	\$640.55
Total PROJECTS	<u>\$1,640.55</u>
CONFERENCE EXPENSES	
Conference-venue hire/equip	\$3,916.36
Conference-supplies	\$1,627.38
Conference-phone	\$384.30
Conference Catering	\$8,733.53
Conference Interpreters	\$381.82
Conference Speakers	\$350.00
Conference Travel RRR	\$2,518.18
Cruise Expenses	\$2,145.45
Conference - entertainment	\$363.64
T/f excess Conference funds to	\$642.97
Total CONFERENCE EXPENSES	<u>\$21,063.63</u>
MSP EXPENDITURE	
MSP-consultants	\$1,363.64
Total Other Expenses	<u>\$37,597.82</u>
Net Profit/(Loss)	<u>(\$12,369.28)</u>



**Combined Community Legal Centres' Group (NSW) Inc**

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Surry Hills 2010

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