

DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

ANNUAL REPORT

2016 / 2017





DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

Darwin Community Legal Service is open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm, closed on public holidays. DCLS closes between xmas and new year. After-hours legal advice clinics are conducted as follows:

Palmerston Library	Monday	6:00pm - 7:00pm
DCLS Darwin Office	Thursday	5:30pm - 7:00pm
Casuarina Library	Saturday	10:00am - 11:45am

Clinics are not conducted on public holidays, most long weekends and from late December until late January.

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The major issue facing DCLS at the beginning of the year was the proposed cuts to funding provided by the Federal Government. The board worked closely with the Executive Director to manage this financial threat, including consideration of assets that could be sold and methods for reducing expenses where possible.

As a result of strategic, coordinated advocacy by the community legal sector, supported by the broader community services sector, legal profession and members of the community, the proposed funding cuts were averted. I take this opportunity to thank all those involved in this successful campaign.

At the 2016 Annual General Meeting we welcomed new board members Peggy Cheong, Samantha Chung, Megan Lawton, Kimmy Jongue and Eric Hutton. Frieda Evans, Julie Hansen and Ilonka Guse made up the remaining and continuing board members. I thank all the board members for their service. It has been most gratifying to serve with a collective group of hardworking board members, staff and volunteers over the past year.

The board has implemented the recommendations of the organisational review, which included conducting an HR project to develop updated performance standards. Other work included the design and implementation of policy and procedure documentation, accounting policies and the Code of Conduct and Practice in preparation for NACLC accreditation assessment in late 2017.

In addition to the regular board meeting agenda, short, concise training sessions have been conducted, covering topics such as the operation of the constitution, funding agreements and strategic planning. These sessions have helped the board strengthen and improve capacity.

DCLS patrons, His Honour the Honourable John Hardy AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory and Mrs Marie Hardy are most supportive and generous and, once again, hosted a function to celebrate DCLS volunteers at Government House, on 13 September 2016. Volunteers play a pivotal role in the operations of DCLS and we thank them for their service and commitment.

We gratefully acknowledge the key partnerships with the Australian Government Solicitor and Clayton Utz who provide targeted support to the community through DCLS programs.

At the end of the financial year, long-standing Executive Director, Caitlin Perry, resigned her position to pursue other opportunities and the board embarked on a recruitment process to find a replacement. DCLS has benefited greatly from Caitlin's dedication and energy for almost fifteen years and we wish her the very best in her future role.

Julie Davis DCLS Chairperson

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2016-17 was another year of change and challenge. With significant funding cuts due to take effect on 30 June 2017, we spent much of the year planning to minimise their impacts. At the same time, we worked with local and national partners to avert funding cuts, and in June 2017 we were delighted to hear that the cuts would not go ahead.

Despite the threat to our funding, we continued to provide a range of services to people in need. We reviewed and refreshed arrangements for our outreach legal advice and information clinics with the Salvation Army, continued our in-house training program, and conducted volunteer training sessions throughout the year.

Our team of solicitors and advocates responded to ongoing and new issues. Our Community Solicitors were able to provide practical advice to people affected by Centrelink's robo-debt collection process, our Aged and Disability Advocates talked to many different community groups about elder abuse and worked hard to stay up to date on issues emerging from the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Our Tenants Advice Service identified the lack of regulation of tenancy databases and not having a central bond holding authority as issues that need to be addressed in the long overdue review of the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

DCLS collaborates with legal assistance services and community organisations across the region to ensure that Territorians get the best possible access to justice. We shared community information stalls and helped organise events and activities, such as the popular *Rights On Show* art exhibition and our annual Law Week workshop for community workers, "Identifying Your Clients' Legal Problems".

As well as facilitating pro bono assistance for our clients, we have a partnership with Clayton Utz to provide an employment law service. Our partnership with the Australian Government Solicitor's pro bono program to provide a Credit and Debt legal service was put on hold during the Don Dale Royal Commission due to that

department's increased workload but will resume at the completion of the Commissions work.

We provided community legal education – via factsheets and booklets, radio programs, information stalls and community information sessions – across a broad range of topics including social security rights, elder abuse, and tenants' rights.

We hosted students on placement which can be a great opportunity for both the student and DCLS. Students bring enthusiasm, fresh opinions and gain front-line exposure to the broad range of issues on which DCLS works.

Our Green Team continued to work with staff to reduce our energy costs and minimise our carbon footprint. Through our workplace giving scheme, DCLS staff also assisted people in developing nations to establish micro-enterprise and develop critical infrastructure.

Thanks to all DCLS staff for their hard work and dedication this year, and to the board of directors members who determine the overall direction of DCLS. Special thanks to the volunteers who turn up week after week, month after month – and in some cases year after year – to help us provide free legal advice to those most in need.

We were sad to farewell Acting Principal Solicitor Mary Hawkins in March 2017 and welcomed the return of Nicki Petrou as our new Principal Solicitor. We would like to thank Mary for her commitment and contributions to DCLS and wish her well in her future endeavours.

Finally, after almost 15 years I have resigned from DCLS. It has been a privilege to work in this position for this organisation, and I thank all the staff, volunteers, stakeholders and supporters who have helped ensure DCLS's continuing role as an advocate for justice on behalf of individuals and communities.

Caitlin Perry Executive Director



DCLS SERVICES SUMMARY

DCLS is a generalist community legal service that provides free legal information and advice on most non-criminal matters. We also have several specialist services. You can phone or drop in to get information about where to get help with a legal problem. If we can't assist you we will refer you to other services in the community that may be able to help you.

General Legal Service

The General Legal Service provides information, advice and casework in relation to a wide range of non-criminal matters, including employment and consumer law, and oversees our popular after-hours free legal advice clinics.

DCLS's general legal service prioritises assistance to disadvantaged and marginalised people and communities.

As well as a broad range of civil law matters, the General Legal Services also provides specialist assistance in relation to:

Welfare Rights

Assistance to people who are unhappy with a decision made about their Centrelink payments including:

- Aged Pension
- Disability Support Pension
- Parenting Payment
- Newstart Allowance
- Youth Allowance
- Austudy and Abstudy

We can give information and advice about:

- Your rights with Centrelink
- Appealing decisions made by Centrelink
- Centrelink debts
- Income Management

In some cases we can represent you before the Tribunal hearing your case

Disability Discrimination

Assistance for people with disabilities and/or their representatives who feel they have been discriminated against because of their disability in the following areas:

- receiving goods and services
- education
- accommodation
- transport
- access to premises
- employment
- failing to accommodate a special need
- having a trained companion animal

Family Relationship Centre Legal Advice Service

Provides one-off legal information and advice to people undertaking family mediation with the Family Relationship Centre Darwin.

The Family Relationship Centre Legal Advice Service is delivered by a panel of local family law specialists. This service is administered by DCLS.

Information and referrals to the service are made through the Family Relationship Centre Darwin by phoning 8923 1400 or free call 1800 650 276, or visiting their offices at Ground Floor, 43 Cavenagh Street, Darwin.



Credit and Debt Legal Service

The Credit and Debt Legal Service is a joint initiative of the DCLS and the Australian Government Solicitor's pro bono program.

The service is provided in response to the need for specialist legal advice for people affected by credit or debt problems and in recognition of the social problems arising out of credit and debt matters.

We can provide specialist legal advice to people having problems with:

- Debt recovery
- Mortgages and repossessions
- Loans or credit cards
- Payday or unsecured loans
- Bankruptcy
- Credit reporting
- The supply of goods and services
- Any other debt or credit legal problem

The Credit and Debt Legal Service can give you information, support, referrals and legal advice about:

- Your rights with regard to a debt
- Debt recovery procedures
- Loan disputes with banks or other lending institutions
- Bankruptcy
- Superannuation claims

*ROS artwork, Happy Gum
– old growth Eucalyptus
Miniata (Darwin Woollybutt),
by Grusha Leeman*



DCLS staff

Aged and Disability Advocacy Service

The Aged and Disability Advocacy Service provides services across the Top End of the Northern Territory including the East Arnhem and Katherine regions.

We assist older people or people with disabilities and their representatives who:

- want to know about their rights and how to exercise them
- receive Commonwealth funded aged care services in residential facilities or in the community
- receive Community Home Support Program services.

Tenants Advice Service

DCLS's Tenants Advice Service (TAS) assists anyone who pays rent to live in a home in the Northern Territory. This includes private residential tenants, boarders and lodgers, public housing tenants, Indigenous community housing tenants, caravan park residents, and supported accommodation tenants. Appointments – face to face or by telephone – can be made by calling DCLS.

Community Legal Education

DCLS can provide community legal education sessions and resources on a range of topics.

2014-2017

DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC. STRATEGIC PLAN

► OUR VISION

A community in which members enjoy and are entitled to legal and social justice.

► OUR PURPOSE

To assist people who are disadvantaged or marginalised to access justice.

GOALS

STRATEGIES

Provide high quality legal and related services

Provide legal assistance (referrals, information, advice and casework) that is:

- Appropriate
- Accessible
- Responsive

Identify obstacles to justice and options for reform

- Lobby
- Respond to policy development
- Initiate policy change and law reform
- Identify issues from clients and community
- Propose law reform

Promote understanding of legal rights and how to assert them

- Design and deliver appropriate Community Legal Education
- Disseminate CLE materials widely
- Ensure CLE is responsive to client/community needs and issues

Partner with people, organisations and community

- Initiate partnerships to meet individual and community needs
- Collaborate locally and nationally
- Network for economies of scale
- Exchange knowledge

Resource an effective, sustainable and supportive organisation

- Seek independent income
- Explore accommodation options
- Build policy capacity
- Recruit and retain accountable, supported and satisfied staff
- Meet national Community Legal Centre accreditation standards





GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE

Provide high quality legal and related services

Our team of Community Solicitors continued to provide advice and assistance in many diverse areas of law and experienced strong demand for our services. The main areas of need continued to be employment law, consumer complaints, credit and debt law, a range of civil issues and matters involving Centrelink payments.

The team have been active representing clients in multiple jurisdictions such as the Fair Work Commission, the Local Court, the NT Civil and Administrative Appeals Tribunal and Supreme Court, achieving many favourable outcomes. For some clients, it was monetary compensation for the wrong they had experienced, for others, the right to remain as the guardian of an adult child with complex issues, the Disability Support Pension or a negotiated settlement regarding debts or fines. For employment law matters, issues primarily related to unfair dismissal, general protections applications, breach of contract, bullying and discrimination.

DCLS resumed participation in fortnightly legal clinics for Salvation Army clients and began contributing to the new monthly 'super service' sessions which have been well attended. Matters often include public space issues such as trespass, banning and loitering notices, and infringements which impact disproportionately on homeless people. We also assisted with Centrelink issues, employment law, children in care matters, complaints against police and other government departments, health complaints, discrimination, domestic violence orders and other violence related matters such as personal violence restraining orders and victims of crime applications.

Identify obstacles to justice and options for reform

Our Community Solicitors participate in consultations and make submissions in relation to the operation of laws and policies, and how they negatively impact different members of the community, especially the vulnerable and disadvantaged. For example, our Principal Solicitor has been supporting the Tenants Advice Service with their lobbying for reforms to the *Residential Tenancies Act* to ensure fair and safe tenancies.

Community Solicitor Bridget McDermott



Promote understanding of legal rights and how to assert them

Delivery of effective Community Legal Education (CLE) is a priority for DCLS and an important means by which to inform the community of their rights and options on a broad range of legal issues. DCLS provided information to the community in numerous ways including information sessions, workshops and forums. A particularly effective CLE session on NT debt recovery procedures was delivered to the Somerville Money Workers Forum. Our Community Solicitors also contribute to social media and have regular, fortnightly spots on the Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) radio network. Issues covered included employment, discrimination, consumer leases, guardianship and welfare rights.

We have also conducted smaller, high-value training sessions, such as one on the Disability Support Pension for doctors, nurses and social workers from the renal health team at Royal Darwin Hospital.

We updated or commenced revision of many DCLS publications/resources, including the *All Things Equal* booklet for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex community on legal rights and resources.

During Law Week, DCLS delivered our popular workshop: 'Identifying Legal Issues for your Clients,' promoting greater understanding of the legal rights of disadvantaged individuals in contact with non-legal service providers, and avenues for resolution. The process involved a series of case studies covering credit and debt, welfare rights and employment matters and was delivered by staff from the General Legal Service, Tenant's Advice Service and the Outreach Worker.

Partner with people, organisations and community

Working in partnerships is an important aspect of the work we do. Partnerships build our capacity, and complement the expertise of our, and other agencies' staff, to ensure that we effectively reach a broad range of clients.

DCLS would like to acknowledge the contributions of our partners during the year, especially those who provided pro bono support directly to our clients Clayton Utz (employment law), the Australian Government Solicitors through the provision of our Credit and Debt Service, and of course our dedicated volunteer solicitors.

Last year, the long-standing lawyers' bible, the *Northern Territory Law Handbook*, was published as an online resource, a joint initiative of DCLS, the NT Legal Aid Commission and AustLII. This year, we celebrated the first anniversary of the online version.

DCLS co-presented with the NT Government in the delivery of its Family Safety Framework Training, a part of the Safety is Everyone's Right Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy.

During the year lawyers attended numerous networking and stakeholder meetings including the National Association of Tenant Organisations, the Employment Law Network, Darwin Regional Accommodation Action Group meetings and the National Welfare Rights Network.

Resource an effective, sustainable and supportive organisation

DCLS has an ongoing commitment to the training and development of its staff. Compulsory professional development (CPD) for lawyers means that this can be an expensive process. DCLS runs in-house training, which ensures that lawyers continue to undertake in-depth research, acquire new or enhanced knowledge, and develop and deliver high quality presentations. This results in all staff having an excellent understanding of recent developments in the law through the sharing of expertise and knowledge. Our lawyers have also delivered information about our services to other legal practitioners, and CPD through the NT Law Society, such as 'Sex, Health and the Law.'

DCLS solicitors attended a range of relevant CPD sessions, conferences and workshops including the National Association of Community Legal Centres conference and the 2016 NT CLE Network workshop.

Finally, as part of our commitment to ongoing quality and improvement, we have undertaken a review of our Volunteer Advice Clinics, forms, processes and relevant policies.

Nicki Petrou Principal Solicitor



ROS artwork, I Do Happy, by Kristen Chiggy Johnson

Examples of casework by DCLS Community Solicitors

Interest-only loan, forever

DCLS assisted a client who lives in a remote area and does not read or write. The client had taken out an interest-only loan from a bank about 11 years ago to buy whitegoods, furnishings and other household items. He did not understand the terms of the loan and despite paying a significant sum over 11 years, the principal remained unchanged. DCLS negotiated the loan with the bank which resulted in approximately half of the debt being written off, with the balance transferred to a principal and interest loan at a low fixed interest rate.

Recovering unclaimed money

DCLS were glad to reunite a client with long lost funds from his bank account. The client had at one time arranged the transfer of \$12,000 into a loan account from an account that he was closing, however, he had no record of the transaction. Despite searches, including by the bank, we were unable to find the missing money. Eventually, we located the client's money via the Australian Securities and Investments Commission unclaimed money website, and made a successful claim for this money on behalf of our client.

Fair Work Commission settlement made dismissal fairer

Our client, a person with a disability, did not have the capacity to self-represent and sought assistance on an unfair dismissal issue. They claimed to have not received fair warning and that they had been treated poorly during the investigation process. The client subsequently lodged an unfair dismissal claim, however, was unsuccessful at settling the matter at conciliation. DCLS represent the client at arbitration, which resulted in our client receiving compensation for unfair dismissal. We were happy to have had the assistance of Clayton Utz during some of this process.

Disability discrimination action improves workplace practices

DCLS assisted a client who suffers from depression and had experienced discrimination by their employer and co-workers. The matter went to conciliation in the Anti-Discrimination Commission where DCLS undertook negotiations on behalf of the client. The outcome resulted in a win-win for both sides, our client was pleased to receive an apology letter, some financial compensation and a commitment from the employer to implement a workplace cultural change program to support employees with depression and other disabilities.

Client with rare autoimmune disorder denied Disability Support Pension

Our client suffered from a rare autoimmune disorder, had severe mobility issues and difficulties with cognition. They had been refused a Disability Support Pension by Centrelink at first instance and again on internal review. We assisted the client to make an application to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The Tribunal agreed with our submission that medical evidence had been misinterpreted, and therefore the underlying condition which made our client highly susceptible to infection, on one occasion almost fatal. The Tribunal determined that our client was 'severely impaired' by their condition and agreed with our submission that their impairments warranted the granting of a Disability Support Pension, which was backdated 12 months to the date of the claim.



TENANTS ADVICE SERVICE

The Tenants Advice Service (TAS) helps people who pay rent to live in a home in the Northern Territory. This includes people living in private residential properties, public housing, Indigenous community housing, caravan parks, supported accommodation and boarders and lodgers.



A student on the Democracy Dash visiting DCLS office.

Provide high quality legal and related services

TAS provides high quality services to as many clients as possible, as efficiently as possible.

As the only specialist tenancy advice service in the NT, TAS is in high demand with many people seeking legal information, advice and casework. Casework is multi-faceted and can include significant amounts of legal research, negotiations, preparing Tribunal applications, documentation and advocacy.

Many clients have complex needs which require significant time and resources. We give priority to the neediest clients and matters likely to test the scope of tenancy law and public housing policies.

TAS achieved many successful outcomes in the past year aiding some of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community.

The most common issues relate to:

- Repairs and maintenance
- Tenancy termination
- Rental arrears
- Bonds
- Shared houses



Identify obstacles to justice and options for reform

Practical examples of this work during the year include:

- Engaging with the Real Estate Institute of the Northern Territory (REINT) and the Commissioner of Tenancies (COT) to raise awareness and seek an investigation into repeated issues of non-compliance with the *Residential Tenancies Act* by real estate agents producing invalid property condition reports
- Conducting a thorough review of various public housing policies and draft tenancy agreements to make reform recommendations in submissions to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DoHCD)
- Casework and detailed advices on matters that delivered a greater understanding of tenancy law in the NT and the setting of precedents. This included a widely reported case of compensation awarded to a tenant for a burglary and the landlord's failure to provide reasonable security
- Contributing to the *Choice* magazine national rental survey
- Consulting with stakeholders including the NT Department of Attorney General and Justice, REINT, Agents Licensing Board, community legal centres, National Association of Tenants Organisations (NATO) and the COT on the regulation of residential tenancy databases
- Conducting a survey of tenants to determine the impacts of residential tenancy databases
- Delivering a workshop on residential tenancy databases during Law Week to raise awareness of the need for reforms
- Making a submission to NT Department of Attorney General and Justice seeking improved regulation of residential tenancy databases in the NT, the establishment of a bond board and a review of the *Residential Tenancies Act*
- The TAS Team Leader was appointed a member of an inaugural Customer Advisory Council set up by Power and Water Corporation to represent tenants.

Promote understanding of legal rights and how to assert them

TAS actively markets its service and promotes an understanding of the legal rights of tenants and their protection.

Examples include:

- Partnering with agencies including the NT Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NTCAT), DoHCD, community legal centres and support organisations to provide people with information on how to seek assistance from TAS
- Developing and distributing a promotional leaflet to public housing complexes
- Visiting Indigenous communities and networking with other community legal services to gain referrals
- Working with media to provide education on tenancy law and public housing policies through multiple radio programs including 'Law Spot' hosted by the Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA)
- Providing information to journalists and conducting interviews
- Presenting an in-house training session to DCLS staff on new procedures at the NTCAT for making small claims applications
- Conducting information sessions for NAIDOC week, Charles Darwin University orientation week and in Smith Street mall for International Tenants Day
- Delivering a tenancy law training session to representatives of community support organisations as part of Somerville's Money Workers Network Forum
- Co-presenting with the NT Legal Aid Commission (NTLAC) at classes on tenancy law to adult migrants at CDU
- Working with NTLAC to update the tenancy sections of the online Law Handbook.

ADAS advocates Janet Brown, Yasmin Lad and Trudy Lee



Partner with people, organisations and community

TAS networks extensively to strengthen relationships and progress our strategic objectives. When appropriate, TAS refers clients to other services and receives referrals.

Key activities include:

- Working with partner organisations including NT Shelter, National Shelter and NATO
- Attending the Katherine Regional Accommodation Action Group meetings
- Attending the Salvation Army Outreach Program and the Darwin Regional Accommodation Action Group meetings.

Resource an effective, sustainable and supportive organisation.

The TAS team consists of two solicitors and one advocate.

The team meets weekly and works closely with other DCLS lawyers holding regular file review meetings. TAS provides regular reports to the DCLS board and funding bodies.

Abhishek Jain TAS Team Leader and Solicitor

TAS Case Studies

Security deposit returned

TAS assisted a client whose previous landlord refused to refund their security deposit and overpaid rent at the end of the tenancy. The client felt that the landlord had acted dishonestly and held little hope of getting the money back. Acting on the client's behalf, TAS initiated an application at NTCAT and represented during the lengthy proceedings.

The application was successful, and the client had the deposit and overpaid rent refunded.

Termination of lease on unsafe property

TAS assisted a client who was pregnant and had concerns about the danger of slipping and falling in her bathroom which was being flooded with water. TAS advised her that she could terminate the tenancy without penalty because the premises were unsafe and uninhabitable. The client terminated her lease, but her landlord made an application to NTCAT to dispute her termination.

TAS represented our client at the hearing and successfully argued that the flooding of the bathroom was a safety issue.

Clearing an unfair debt

TAS assisted a client to wipe a rental arrears debt of more than \$23,000 with their private landlord. The client had fallen into arrears because of an unfortunate change in circumstances and had been paying the landlord's utilities charges when they should not have been. The client's family had to live in the home for an extended period with serious unattended repairs and maintenance issues.

We helped the client frame a compensation claim to NTCAT and represented in a compulsory conference at which we convinced the landlord to cancel the arrears debt.



AGED AND DISABILITY ADVOCACY SERVICE

ADAS provides advocacy, education and community awareness activities across the Top End of the Northern Territory. We work with people receiving Commonwealth Aged Care Services, people with disabilities and their advocates helping them to understand their rights and have them met.

Key elements of our work

- Helping our clients understand changes to consumer-directed care and the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme
- Operating the elder abuse information line, a dedicated free call number for people seeking advice
- Participating in key National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) consultations in preparation for assisting people with appeals through the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT)
- Delivering education sessions to a broad range of clients, agencies, businesses and community groups across the NT
- Our team conducted several strategic planning sessions to review our vision, mission, core values and strategic objectives. Through this process, we identified areas of need and developed an improvement plan.

Elder abuse information line

The elder abuse information line has been operating for almost two years and continues to receive a steady stream of calls from across the Territory. Most calls come from women suffering from financial and psychological abuse.

ADAS made a submission to the Australian Law Reform Commission's Inquiry 'Protecting the Rights of Older Australians from Abuse' and is closely following proceedings.

ADAS has played a lead role in raising awareness around elder abuse issues in the NT and we will be doing more work in this area next financial year.

There are 5 recognised forms of elder abuse:

- 1. Psychological*
- 2. Financial*
- 3. Neglect*
- 4. Physical*
- 5. Sexual*



Promote understanding of legal rights and how to assert them

The ADAS team provided education sessions to seniors groups, staff and residents of aged care facilities, culturally and linguistically diverse groups, students and the general public.

We travelled widely, visiting many regions including East Arnhem, Katherine and Bathurst Island.

National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and National Disability Appeals Project

This year the NDIS scheme was rolled out in East Arnhem and for people living in supported accommodation in Darwin. ADAS advocates have been attending local information sessions delivered by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) to stay abreast of emerging issues.

According to official estimates, there will eventually be 6,500 people in the Territory with NDIS agreements. ADAS is well placed to make a significant contribution, assisting people to navigate the transition from existing care arrangement to obtaining services and support under the NDIS scheme.

Our team has been involved in discussions with lead agencies about ADAS assisting people who need to make appeals to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). We expect announcements in relation to this next financial year.

Issues covered for seniors included:

- Aged care fees
- Choice and decision-making
- Financial management
- Support services for the vulnerable or isolated

Issues covered for people with disabilities included:

- Accommodation
- Finances
- Independent living
- Service gaps
- Getting ready for the NDIS

Issues covered in relation to elder abuse included:

- Different types of elder abuse
- Identifying elder abuse
- How to refer and respond to elder abuse

The following case studies demonstrate some of our work

(names and places have been changed)

Assistance moving into Aged Care

Betty, an elderly woman, living alone in a remote area, was referred to ADAS by her Aged Care Assessment Team. Betty was concerned that she could no longer manage to live alone and was having difficulty with the process of applying for permanent residential care.

Our advocate helped Betty gather and submit the information required and liaised with aged care agencies on her behalf. After a short time, Betty was given accommodation at her preferred facility.

Safety and security

Bill, an elderly man, was referred to us by a social worker from the Royal Darwin Hospital. The social worker suspected that Bill was suffering from elder abuse and that family members were accessing his bank account and taking his money.

Bill could not find his keycard and requested support to obtain a new one. Once Bill had given our advocates authority to act on his behalf, they arranged a new card, delivered it to Bill and gave him advice on keeping his accounts safe.

Communication

Mary, the parent of a child with autism who was having problems with another child at her school contacted ADAS seeking advice. Mary had spoken to the Principal but felt that they weren't communicating well and that her concerns hadn't been taken seriously.

Our advocates met with Mary, and it was agreed that they would contact the Principal and explain Mary's anxiety. The Principal acknowledged the concerns, met Mary again and the issue resolved.



Locked in the house

A man contacted our elder abuse information line concerned that his neighbour appeared to be neglected by the niece who lives with him. He said that the occupants of the house (along with several domestic animals) remained inside all day with the windows shut and that there were often sounds of fighting. We advised the caller that he should report the matter to the local clinic who agreed to conduct welfare checks.

Looking for food

We received a call from a service provider concerned that an elderly man in a remote community was being financially abused and neglected. Family members did not appear to be adequately providing care, and the man was wandering the community unkempt and looking for food. ADAS referred the issue to the Aged Care Assessment Team who addressed it.

Model an inclusive, respectful equitable and satisfying work environment

The ADAS team meets regularly for casework and team meetings, staff meetings and in-house training sessions.

Promote an accessible, visible and responsive organisation

ADAS participated in local community events to promote our service as widely as possible.

At events, we provided information designed to be simple and easy to understand. Our printed materials are reviewed on an ongoing basis, and new ones created as the need arises.

We maintained effective, productive relationships with a range of government and community agencies, attending key events and meetings including:

- Older Person Advocacy Network (OPAN) teleconferences
- Aged Care Quality Agency meetings
- Darwin Aged and Disability Services (DADS) network
- Federation of Ethnic Community Councils Australia (FECCA) consultations
- Zero Tolerance Forums
- International Day of Persons with a Disability
- National Disability Service (NDS) forums
- NDIS Essential Briefings and Participant Pathways
- Harmony Day
- Wellness and Reablement Workshop

Lorraine Gibbs Team Leader/Senior Advocate

Feedback from our clients

"I don't think I would have got the result so quickly without the assistance of the advocates. This was great help for us at a very difficult time for us."

"The advocacy team are always very helpful and I always head straight to them when I have a problem."

"Many thanks for understanding my concerns and helping accordingly."

"Having you involved has brought results that weren't happening until then!"

"I would like to thank the advocates for all their support. I really do feel that things are on the mend now. Much appreciated and thank you."



1100 Attendees
at community information sessions

OUTREACH WORKER'S REPORT

The Outreach Worker networks and connects across the community, establishing cooperative relationships with legal, arts and community service organisation, government departments, Indigenous communities and culturally and linguistically diverse communities. The Outreach Worker also coordinates the annual human rights themed art show, *Rights on Show*.



LegalAidMatters (reverse funding cuts to CLCs campaign) supporters attending DCLS's Law Week workshop

Key achievements this year included:

Assisting the Principal Solicitor to coordinate and present the Law Week workshop 'Identifying legal issues for your clients.' Seventy people attended, providing positive feedback and referrals.

Applying for Community Benefit Fund and Public Purposes Trust grants for special activities and purchases including DCLS waiting room toys, children's furniture and Law Week resources.

Promoting DCLS services and *Rights on Show* by distributing brochures, fact sheets, using social media to publicise events and highlighting the contributions of our supporters and partners.

Engaging with a broad range of groups by presenting Community Legal Education (CLE) and information sessions at:

- Mi-Place
- Top End Mental Health Coalition
- Day2day Living
- Carers NT
- Royal Darwin Hospital
- Darwin High School
- Charles Darwin University
- Mental Illness Fellowship of Australia NT
- Mandatory Rehabilitation services
- Family Planning NT
- Somerville Financial Counsellors
- Money Workers Forum
- Darwin Aged and Disability Services (DADS)
- Department of Human Service's public forums
- Henbury School

Representing DCLS on organising and planning committees:

- Through care
- Darwin Regional Accommodation Action Group meetings
- International Women's Day organising committee
- Palmerston and Rural Youth Services
- Somerville service provider meetings

Updating resources in collaboration with ShelterMe, Headspace, Supportlink NT and assisting with DCLS fact sheet updates and media releases.

Running stalls at:

- Darwin and Casuarina High Schools
- Northern Territory Electoral Commission's 'Democracy Dash'
- World Refugee Day
- Multicultural Council NT Open Day
- NAIDOC week
- Homeless Person's Week
- Youth Week
- Youth Homelessness Matters Day
- Close the Gap
- International Women's Day
- Charles Darwin University O Week
- World Hepatitis Day
- Supreme Court Open Day
- Homelessness Prevention Week

Reaching out to diverse communities by engaging with the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory, Melaleuca Refugee Centre and the Red Cross Refugee Network.

Engaging in community activities with partners including Top End Women's Legal Service North Australian Aboriginal Family Legal Service, Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission, Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission, Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory.

Hosting *Rights on Show* public program including tours for Saltbush, The Administrator of the Northern Territory, DCLS staff, community groups and schools.



ROS artwork, A Turtle Life, by Matthew Brown

Coordinating, scripting and co-presenting

the regular Law Spot radio program with Top End Aboriginal Bush Broadcasting Association (TEABBA) Radio. Focus issues this year included changes to laws, people's rights and responsibilities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer rights, credit and debt, welfare rights and tenancy.

Participating in the NT Community Legal Education Network (CLEN), sharing CLE resources and networking with Community Legal Centres and services and representing DCLS on the organising committee of 2017 CLEN workshop.



RIGHTS ON SHOW 2016

The theme for the 22nd annual *Rights on Show*, 'Happiness: people, passion, purpose, place' generated an eclectic response from remote artists, community groups, domestic violence survivors, asylum seekers, prisoners, schools, disability groups and local artists. The exhibition attracted over 250 entries, evidence of the strong community support that this event has.

ROS artwork, Happy Dingo, by Kylie Wallace-Smith

Interpretations of the theme touched on mental health, chronic disease, incarceration, poverty and addiction as barriers to sustaining happiness. Many entries focussed on small day-to-day events that supported the artist's happiness, such as a photograph of a baby's foot, a giant metal sunflower, a stained glass bed and a painting of a dog clad in a Santa hat.

Public program

The 22nd annual *Rights on Show* opening night was a huge success with around 250 people attending.

Larrakia elder Gary Lang began proceedings a heartfelt Welcome to Country. Master of Ceremonies Ben O'Loughlin presided over formalities with finesse and comedian Amy Hetherington delivered an impressive speech about happiness.

Guided tours were conducted for visitors and special guests including DCLS Patron, His Honour the Honourable John Hardy AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory and his wife, Mrs Marie Hardy.

During the exhibition, we also welcomed a broad range of visitors including groups from Henbury School, Saltbush Mob and Charles Darwin University's Adult Migrant English Program.

Top: ROS artwork, *Family*, by David Nicholls
Bottom: ROS artwork, *Men On Horseback*, by Christopher Scott





ROS artwork, Happiness with Peace, by Marianne Foster

Rights on Show 2016 Award Winners

Rights on Show Award

Dennis Bezzant

Human Rights Award

Marianne Foster

Ian Tranthem Award

Darwin Middle School

Senior School Award

Afroditi Kapsalis

Primary School Award

Anula Primary School

Judges Commendation

Jane Anderson

Judges Commendation

Janelle Fisher

Highly Commended

Polly Johnstone

Highly Commended

Debra Kroon

People's Choice Award

Becky Hedland-Thomas

*Darwin Community Legal Service
would not be able to host Rights
on Show without the generous
support of our volunteers,
sponsors and the artists who
enter their amazing art.*

Coordinator

Saskia Strange

Hanging Team

Matthew van Roden, Hannah Sketch Illingworth,
Saskia Strange, Aiko Strange, Kerrie Taylor,
Yasmin Lad, Trudy Lee and great assistance
from others

Steering Committee

Caitlin Perry, Sarah Pirrie, Saskia Strange,
Frieda Evans, Shilo McNamee, Julie Hansen

Judges

Paul Johnstone and Linda Joy

Master of Ceremonies

Ben O'Loughlin, William Forster Chambers

Welcome to Country

Gary Lang

Guest Speaker

Amy Hetherington

Music

The Cracks

Sound

Colin (Simmo) Simpson

Poster, invitation and catalogue design

Tarzan Designs Jungles

Printing

Copytime Darwin

Catalogue introduction

Kris Keogh



ROS artwork, Turtle Magic, by David Nicholls

Thank you to our generous sponsors

Bunnings Darwin Airport
Darwin Visual Arts Association
Natasha Fyles MLA
Lauren Moss MLA
NT Anti-Discrimination Commission
NT Aids and Hepatitis Council
NT Bar Association
Northern Centre for Contemporary Art
NT Legal Aid Commission
Paul Johnstone Gallery
Tactile Arts NT
The Cavanagh Hotel
The Exhibitionist
The Roma Bar
William Forster Chambers
Gerry Wood MLA

Thanks to all DCLS staff and volunteers

Aiko Strange, NT Anti-Discrimination
Commission staff, Matthew van Roden, Kerrie
Taylor, Tamara Spence, Andrew Smith, Trudy Lee,
Sue Brownlee, Yasmin Lad, Cassandra Deon-
Wierda, Louie Dowell-Wise, Rebecca Preston,
Svetlana Macabuhay, Marguerite Bowen, Ninik
Stroud, Steve Flynn and many others, who helped
clean, serve drinks and spread happiness.

Special thanks to

Supreme Court of the Northern Territory,
Sheriff Daniel McGregor and staff and
MSS Security

VOLUNTEER REPORT

DCLS was established by volunteers and continues to rely on volunteers to ensure our services are as widely available as possible. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we can provide accessible and free legal advice on a broad range of matters to people in the Darwin region.



ROS artwork, Interwound With Nature, by Jade Anne Curran

It has been particularly difficult maintaining our roster of volunteers this year with many leaving Darwin or having changes in their employment impacting upon their available time. Whenever possible DCLS promotes volunteer opportunities at events and meetings as well as on social media.

Volunteer lawyers provide free legal advice at one of our three after-hours advice sessions each week. Local barristers and solicitors are assisted by a number of non-lawyer volunteers who provide administrative and research assistance to the volunteer lawyers at each advice session. It's rewarding for the volunteers and helps people get access to justice.

Throughout the year our free legal advice sessions have been well attended and many clients have been assisted by our volunteers generously providing their time and expertise.

Our annual event to thank our volunteers took place on Tuesday 13th September 2016. The function was hosted by His Honour the Honourable John Hardy AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory, and Patron to DCLS. We gathered at Government House and enjoyed a sociable evening.

Maureen Wright Volunteer Coordinator

VOLUNTEERS 2016/2017

Thanks to our dedicated volunteers

Svetlana Abella

Feyisola Abiodun

Elsa Adshead

Kathryn Baumeister

Marguerite Bowen

Lee Campbell

Anne Marie Chin

Jessica Cox

Geraldine Cusher

Judith Davison

David Desilva

Ahmad Dostizada

Michelle Duggan

Emma Farnell

Jackie Fryar

Rachel Gleeson

Anne Marie Hardwick

Elisha Harris

Ron Hope

Matthew Hubber

Bahareh Jaber

Carmen Jap

Jacinta Johnson

Leanne Kerr

Ron Lawford

Charmaine Lentija

Ian Lindsay

Greg Macdonald

Bridget McDermott

Mirjana Medic

Sarah Morris

Sarah Morton

Stella Noor

Joy Onyelead

Peter Orr

Lachlan Peattie

Bill Piper

Katherine Shaw

Tamara Spence

Azmi Thayil

Dylan Walters

Melanie Warbrooke

Caitlin Weatherby-Fell

Tammy Wong



PRO BONO ASSISTANCE FOR DCLS



ROS artwork, Spirit of Place, Boab Trees, by Rosemaree Jane Ludlow

Thanks go to:

- Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) Darwin who assisted us in relation to a number of legal matters throughout the year.
- Clayton Utz Darwin for assistance with employment matters and the use of their rooms.
- Barrister Miles Crawley of William Forster Chambers who has accepted a pro bono brief in a client's ongoing fraud matter.
- Tommi Husband of Peoples Choice Credit Union Darwin for his assistance in two matters.

DCLS SOCIAL CLUB

The DCLS Social Club had a fun year with various activities including:



- A Darwin Harbour cruise
- Lunch at Chow restaurant
- Lunch and Christmas party at Hanuman restaurant
- Harmony Day staff lunch at DCLS
- Various morning and afternoon tea functions to farewell staff, welcome new staff, celebrate case victories or birthdays.

Abhishek Jain
Social Club Committee



DCLS STAFF 2016/2017

Caitlin Perry
Executive Director

Mary Hawkins
Acting Principal Solicitor
(until March 2017)

Nicki Petrou
Principal Solicitor
(from March 2017)

Lisa Lock
Administration Manager
(from March 2017)
Acting Executive Director
(March – May 2017)

James Courtney
Marketing and
Communications Manager
(from November 2016)

Sue Brownlee
Executive Assistant
(September 2016 – March 2017)

Dianna Burley
Systems Manager
(until April 2017)

Maureen Wright
Front desk/Volunteer
Coordinator

Erith Carr
Casual Admin Worker
(from March 2017)

Saskia Strange
Outreach Worker

Priscilla Lavery
Community Solicitor

Bridget McDermott
Community Solicitor
(from August 2016)

Tamara Spence
Community Solicitor
(from August 2016)

Joni Gear
Casual Community Solicitor
(until October 2016)

Tenancy Team

Abhishek Jain
Tenants' Advice Service
Team Leader/Solicitor

Andrew Smith
Tenancy Solicitor

Katherine Shaw
Tenant Advocate
(from January 2017)

Aged and Disability Team

Lorraine Gibbs
Team Leader and
Senior Advocate

Janet Brown
Aged and Disability Advocate

Trudy Lee
Aged and Disability Advocate
(from September 2016)

Yasmin Lad
Aged and Disability Advocate
(September 2016 to April 2017)

Gail Marsh
Casual Aged and Disability
Advocate (various)

DCLS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016/2017

The board of directors has responsibility for the governance of Darwin Community Legal Service. It oversees the strategic direction of the organisation, monitors performance and accountability, maintains viability, and ensures compliance with legal requirements and ethical standards.

Members appointed to fill casual vacancies are appointed until the next AGM. The 2016 AGM was held on 31 October 2016.

For the period of this report, the following people volunteered their time and skills fulfilling these responsibilities.

*Members are elected
for two years.*

Julie Davis
Chairperson, member for full year

Frieda Evans
Treasurer and Public Officer, member for full year

Mieke Dixon
Secretary, resigned AGM 2016

Julie Hansen
Secretary, appointed AGM 2016, member for full year

Ilonka Guse
Resigned February 2017

Peggy Cheong
Appointed September 2016

Kimmy Jongue
Appointed September 2016

Eric Hutton
Appointed September 2016

Samantha Chung
Appointed AGM 2016

Megan Lawton
Appointed AGM 2016

Ippei Okazaki
Resigned October 2016



WORKPLACE GIVING SCHEME

DCLS staff are committed to assisting people in third world countries. We contribute our small change to the 'Purple Kiva Pig' which sits on our fridge in the communal staff room.

Kiva is an international nonprofit with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty.

Donations are given in the form of a loan, which is repaid over time, then loaned to another person, creating a cycle of support. A loan is generally \$25, and the concept is that multiple lenders contribute small amounts to meet the full amount required to purchase or construct the items needed.

DCLS staff decide which projects our donations support. We usually support small sanitation and water projects.

DCLS staff are committed to positive change and actively engage in activities that promote and improve human rights. When next visiting DCLS feel free to contribute your small change to our 'Purple Kiva Pig' or start a Kiva account of your own!



GREEN TEAM

Once again, DCLS has pledged its commitment to reducing its carbon footprint, as we strive to minimise our use of resources. We encourage staff to 'read from the screen' and only print where necessary. We also load our printer with waste paper for printing of drafts, and use recycling bins for non-confidential waste throughout the office.

FUNDING 2016/2017

DCLS receives funding from the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government, as well as donations, grants and sponsorships from a range of sources.

The Commonwealth Government provides and the Northern Territory Government's Department of Attorney-General and Justice manages funding for our general legal service.

The Aged and Disability Advocacy Service is funded by:

- Commonwealth Department of Social Services National Disability Advocacy Program
- Commonwealth Department of Health National Aged Care Advocacy Program
- Commonwealth Department of Community Home Support Program
- NT Department of Health Disability Services Program

Funding for the Tenants' Advice Service is managed by the NT Department of Attorney-General and Justice.

As per Section 388 of the *Legal Profession Act 2006*, DCLS received an allocation of funds from the Legal Practitioner Fidelity Fund. These funds contribute towards general operational and staffing costs.

We received a grant from the NTG's Community Benefit Fund to purchase children's toys and furniture for our waiting and interview rooms.

Rights on Show 2016 received sponsorship and donations from a range of local services and suppliers, without which our human rights themed art show would not be possible.

*Thanks to all our funders
and sponsors.*



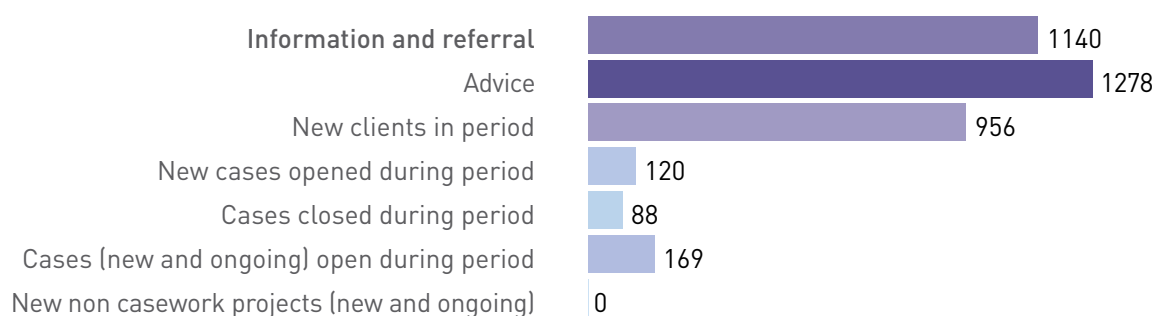
STATISTICS 2016/2017

In order to meet its reporting requirements DCLS collects statistics about its work on two separate databases.

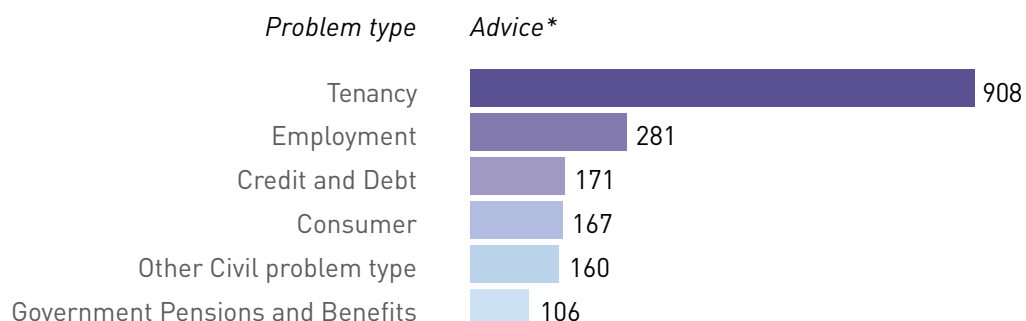
- Aged Care Advocacy and Disability Advocacy Service statistics are kept on a database designed and maintained by DCLS
- All legal services statistics are kept on CLSIS, a database designed and maintained by the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department. CLSIS was replaced by a new client data base in 2016/2017

Legal Services 2016/2017

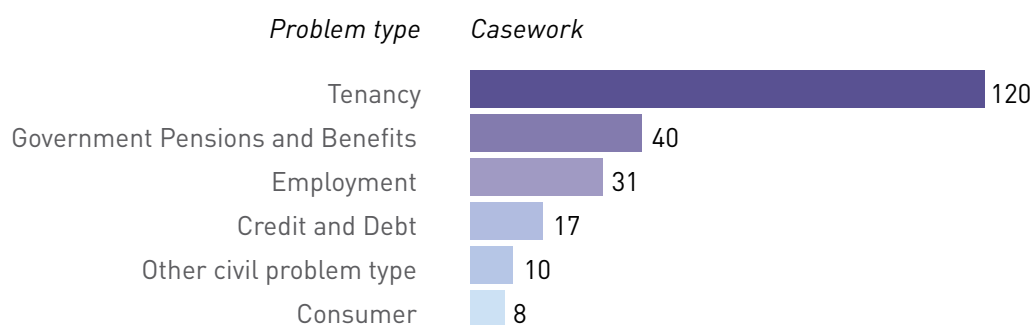
Summary of legal assistance



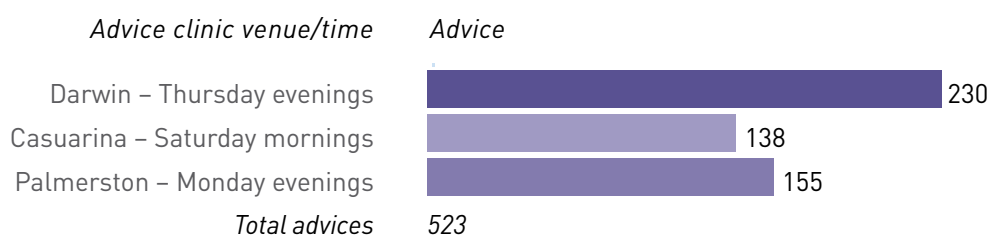
Most common problem types – advice* (these figures refer to number of times we provided advice in relation to each problem type NOT the number of clients)



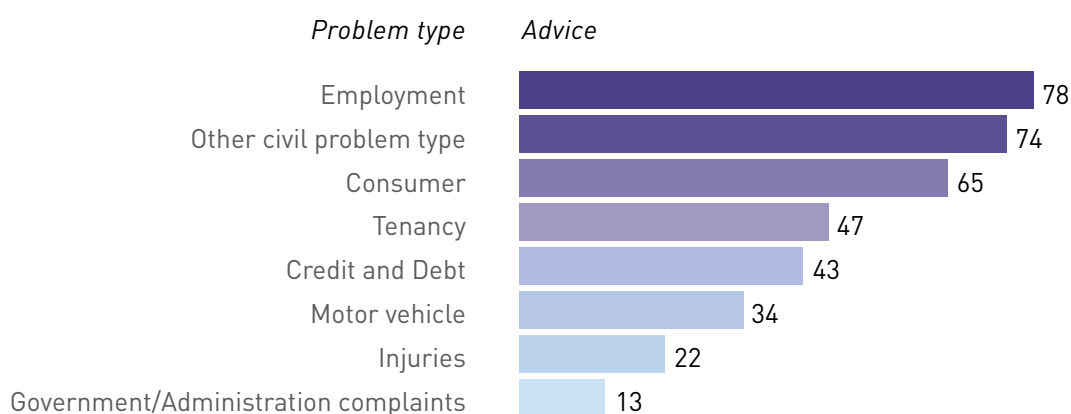
Most common problem types – casework undertaken (includes new cases and cases already open)



Advice provided by volunteer solicitors at after-hours advice clinics



Most common problem types at after-hours advice clinics



DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INCORPORATED

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2016 / 2017



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BOARD'S REPORT

30 June 2017

The board presents its report on Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated (the 'Association') for the financial year ended 30 June 2017.

1. General information

Board members

The names of board members throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

Julie Davis – Chair	Member for full year
Frieda Evans – Treasurer	Member for full year
Mieke Dixon – Secretary	Resigned AGM 2016
Julie Hansen – Secretary	Appointed AGM 2016, Member for full year
Ilonka Guse	Resigned February 2017
Peggy Cheong	Appointed September 2016
Kimmy Jongue	Appointed September 2016
Eric Hutton	Appointed September 2016
Samantha Chung	Appointed AGM 2016
Megan Lawton	Appointed AGM 2016
Ippie Okazaki	Resigned October 2016

Principal activities

The principal activities of the Association during the financial year were to provide free legal and advocacy services to disadvantaged and marginalised people in and around the top end of the Northern Territory.

Significant changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

2. Operating results and review of operations for the year

Operating result

The deficit of the Association for the financial year amounted to \$ 29,178 (2016 surplus: \$ 222,118).

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the board:

Board member:


Julie Davis Chair

Board member:


Frieda Evans Treasurer

Dated this 19th day of SEPTEMBER 2017

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenue	1,510,812	1,837,572
Other income	1,124	1,199
Employee benefits expense	(1,146,602)	(1,186,409)
Rent	(133,700)	(139,538)
Repairs and maintenance	(1,579)	(11,995)
Other premises costs	(12,385)	(34,824)
Communications	(15,645)	(18,241)
Office overheads	(20,817)	(14,365)
Insurance	(20,674)	(19,525)
Finance, audit and accounting	(77,826)	(88,558)
Library, resources and subscriptions	(16,519)	(16,299)
Travel	(21,560)	(24,788)
Program and planning	(41,267)	(45,231)
Minor equipment	(19,640)	(7,121)
Depreciation	(12,900)	(9,759)
(Loss)/Surplus for the year	(29,178)	222,118
Total comprehensive (loss)/income for the year	(29,178)	222,118

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

30 June 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
ASSETS			
<i>CURRENT ASSETS</i>			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	1,641,295	1,007,882
Trade and other receivables	3	2,213	15,151
Other assets	4	35,929	25,105
Total Current Assets		1,689,437	1,048,138
<i>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</i>			
Property Plant and Equipment	5	51,698	64,598
Total Non-Current Assets		51,698	64,598
Total Assets		1,741,135	1,112,736
LIABILITIES			
<i>CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>			
Trade and other payables	6	118,092	99,225
Employee entitlements	8	73,936	61,940
Other liabilities	7	629,756	11,621
Total Current Liabilities		821,784	172,786
<i>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</i>			
Employee entitlements	8	71,350	62,771
Total Non-Current Liabilities		71,350	62,771
Total Liabilities		893,134	235,557
Net Assets		848,001	877,179
EQUITY			
Reserves	9	124,028	116,422
Retained earnings	10	723,973	760,757
Total Equity		848,001	877,179

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:			
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,511,217)	(1,802,022)
Interest received		7,397	14,878
Receipt from grants		2,124,198	1,815,449
Other receipts		13,035	20,920
Net cash provided by operating activities	11	633,413	49,225
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Acquisition of plant and equipment		-	(74,357)
Net cash provided by (used by) investing activities		-	(74,357)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:			
Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held		633,413	(25,132)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year		1,007,882	1,033,014
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	2	1,641,295	1,007,882

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of Preparation

This financial report is a special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Act* (NT) 2003. The Board has determined that the not-for-profit Association is not a reporting entity because in the Board's opinion, there are unlikely to exist users who are unable to satisfy all of their information needs. The Board has identified that special purpose financial reporting meets the needs of the Association and those of most funding bodies of the Association.

The financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(b) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. Cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the asset.

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

Leasehold improvements are amortised over the shorter of either the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful lives of the improvements.

(c) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

(d) Employee entitlements

The provision for employee entitlements relates to amounts expected to be paid to employees based on legal and contractual entitlements and leave utilization. The policy is to provide for long service leave when employees reach 5 years of continuous employment. Expected wage rates are used in the calculation of the provisions.

(e) Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the Association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured.

(f) Trade and other payables

Trade creditors and other payables, including bank borrowings and distributor payable, are recognised at the nominal transaction value without taking into account the time value of money.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

(g) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(h) Revenue and other income

Revenue is recognised when the amount of the revenue can be measured reliably, it is probable that economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity and specific criteria relating to the type of revenue as noted below, has been satisfied.

Revenue is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and is presented net of returns, discounts and rebates.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

Grant revenue

Grant revenue is recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income when the Association obtains control of the grant, it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the entity and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably. Unspent grants are transferred to an appropriate liability account.

(i) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

(j) Going concern

Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated is dependent on various Northern Territory and Federal Government Departments for the majority of its revenue used to operate the business. At the date of this report the Board members have no reason to believe these Departments will not continue to support Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated.

(k) Reserves

The fund reserves are as follows:

Maternity reserves

This reserve is used to record funds set aside for future maternity costs of the Association's employees.

Redundancy reserves

This reserve is used to record funds set aside for future redundancy costs of the Association's employees working on specific period contract engagements.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

2	Cash and cash equivalents	2017	2016
		\$	\$
	Cash on hand	300	300
	Cash at bank	1,640,995	1,007,582
		1,641,295	1,007,882
3	Trade and other receivables	2017	2016
		\$	\$
	CURRENT		
	Trade receivables	696	2,316
	Deposits	500	500
	GST receivables	11,017	12,335
		12,213	15,151
4	Other assets	2017	2016
		\$	\$
	CURRENT		
	Prepayments	35,929	24,320
	Accrued income	-	785
		35,929	25,105
5	Property Plant and Equipment	2017	2016
		\$	\$
	Furniture and Equipment Cost	27,333	27,333
	Less: Accumulated depreciation	(14,670)	(6,470)
		12,663	20,863
	Leasehold Improvements Cost	47,024	47,024
	Less: Accumulated depreciation	(7,989)	(3,289)
		39,035	43,735
	Total Cost	74,357	74,357
	Less: Accumulated depreciation	(22,659)	(9,759)
		51,698	64,598

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

6 Trade and other payables	2017	2016
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	11,571	21,086
Deposits	-	966
GST payable	40,467	7,996
Accrued expense	49,142	46,423
PAYGW payable	16,912	14,089
Contingent Liability/Legal Fees	-	8,665
	118,092	99,225
7 Other liabilities	2017	2016
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Unexpended grants - other	8,140	11,621
Unexpended grants – Northern Territory Government	621,616	-
	629,756	11,621
8 Employee Entitlements	2017	2016
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Annual leave provision	73,936	61,940
	73,936	61,940
NON-CURRENT		
Long service leave	71,350	62,771
	71,350	62,771



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

9 Reserves	2017 \$	2016 \$
Maternity reserve	14,181	7,781
Redundancy reserve	109,847	108,641
Total	124,028	116,422

Movements of reserves are as follows:

Maternity reserve		
Beginning balance	7,781	20,762
Transfer from/(to) retained earnings	6,400	(12,981)
Ending balance	14,181	7,781
Redundancy reserve		
Beginning balance	108,641	136,462
Transfer from/(to) retained earnings	1,206	(27,821)
Ending balance	109,847	108,641

10 Retained Earnings	2017 \$	2016 \$
Retained earnings (accumulated losses) at the beginning of the financial year	760,757	497,837
Surplus/(deficit)	(29,178)	222,118
Transfer from/(to) reserves	(7,606)	40,802
Retained earnings at end of the financial year	723,973	760,757

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the Year Ended 30 June 2017

11 Cash Flow Information

	NOTE	2017 \$	2016 \$
(a) Reconciliation of cash			
Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to items in the statement of financial position as follows:			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	1,641,295	1,007,882
(b) Reconciliation of result for the year to cash flows from operating activities		2017 \$	2016 \$
Reconciliation of surplus to net cash provided by operating activities:			
(Deficit)/surplus		[29,178]	222,118
Cash flows excluded from surplus attributable to operating activities			
Non-cash flows in surplus:			
- net gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment		-	-
- depreciation		12,900	9,759
Changes in assets and liabilities, net of the effects of purchase and disposal of subsidiaries:			
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		2,938	12,477
- (increase)/decrease in prepayments		[10,824]	5,284
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables		18,867	[24,579]
- increase/(decrease) in other liabilities		618,135	[133,740]
- increase/(decrease) in employee benefits		20,575	[42,094]
Net cash provided by operating activities		633,413	49,225

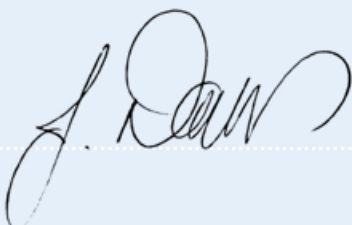



BOARD'S DECLARATION



In our opinion:

1. the accompanying financial report as set out on pages 3 to 11, being a special purpose financial statement, is drawn up so as to present fairly the state of affairs of the Association as at 30 June 2017 and the results of the Association for the year ended on that date;
2. the accounts of the Association have been properly prepared and are in accordance with the books of account of the Association.
3. there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the Board by:

Board member 
Julie Davis Chair

Board member 
Frieda Evans Treasurer

Dated this  day of  2017

Independent audit report to the members of Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying special purpose financial report of Darwin Community Legal Service ("the Association"), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes and the Board's Report.

In our opinion, the special purpose financial report of the Association presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

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

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Association's reporting requirements. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated and should not be distributed to parties other than Darwin Community Legal Service Incorporated. Our opinion is not modified in respect of these matters.

The Responsibility of Management and Those Charged with Corporate Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Act NT and has determined the accounting policies used as described in Note 1 are appropriate to meet the needs of the Association. Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as Management determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, Management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the responsible entities either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with corporate governance are responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

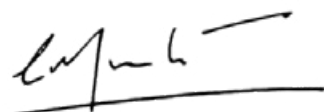
As part of an audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of responsible entities' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Merit Partners

Merit Partners



MunLi Chee
Partner

Darwin

22 September 2017

meritpartners.com.au

Disclaimer on Additional Financial Information – Income and Expenditure Statements

The additional financial information presented in the following pages 16 to 27 has been compiled by Darwin Community Legal Services Incorporated.

No audit or review has been performed by us and accordingly no assurance is expressed. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on the additional financial information and no warranty of accuracy or reliability is given.

To the extent permitted by law, we do not accept liability for any loss or damage which any person may suffer arising from any negligence on our part. No person should rely on the additional financial information without having an audit or review conducted.

Merit Partners

Merit Partners

Darwin

22 September 2017



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

30 June 2017

	2017 \$	2016 \$
INCOME		
Sale of goods	4,461	5,825
Interest income	7,397	14,878
Member subscriptions	127	109
Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund	12,000	14,286
Donations	4,385	1,310
Recoveries	917	1,043
NPA Community Legal Centre Grant	664,021	722,116
ADT - NDAP	333,065	321,603
ADT - NACAP	202,129	199,494
ADT - CHSP	32,020	31,392
ADT - NT DOH	87,355	85,324
Less: ADT Unexpended grants	(144,262)	-
TAS	303,235	311,317
Other grants	4,880	129,918
Other income	206	156
Total income	1,511,936	1,838,771
LESS: EXPENSES		
Accounting fees	9,154	12,124
Archiving costs	4,261	4,493
Auditors remuneration	4,996	18,900
Bad debts	-	-
Bank charges	898	882
Cleaning	10,886	11,546
Computer expenses	5,244	4,265
Depreciation	12,900	9,759
Electricity and water	6,806	5,886
Equipment < \$5,000	19,640	7,121

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

30 June 2017

...Continued	2017 \$	2016 \$
Freight and cartage	-	71
Insurance	20,674	19,525
Leave pay	20,575	(42,094)
Legal fees	-	-
Meeting expenses	1,888	12,985
Memberships	10,353	9,258
Motor vehicle expenses	5,498	7,444
Postage	1,519	1,645
Practice certificates	2,819	2,634
Printing and stationery	7,745	7,876
<i>Rights on Show</i> expenses	11,975	12,367
Refit and relocation expenses	3,358	17,392
Repairs and maintenance	1,579	11,995
Salaries	1,027,906	1,125,688
Staff training and development	3,889	2,281
Subscriptions	1,904	2,548
Sundry expenses	(6,071)	(3,008)
Superannuation contributions	94,231	100,533
Telephone	15,644	18,241
Travel	16,062	17,345
Consulting and professional fees	63,675	57,534
Advertising	17,418	9,326
Rent	133,700	139,538
Conferences	9,988	10,553
Total Expenses	1,541,114	1,616,653
(Deficit)/Surplus	(29,178)	222,118

DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INCORPORATED

JOB REPORTS



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Community Legal Centre Funding (National Partnership Agreement)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
CLC Recurrent Funding	\$732,846
Unexp Grant Tf/CLC Approv Surp	-\$68,825
Interest Earned	\$1,108
Total Income	\$665,129
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$341,944
Contractors/Consultants	\$18,780
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$8,649
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	-\$1,124
Superannuation	\$31,199
*Org Management Services Exp	\$252,735
Staff Training and Development	\$1,403
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$3,481
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$718
Insurance/Contents/PL/MV	\$1,279
Library Purchases	\$151
Memberships	\$220
Practicing Certificates	\$1,888
Travel/Service Delivery	\$991
Motor Vehicle Running Expenses	\$706
Venue Hire ~ Advice Sessions	\$711
Interpreters	\$293
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$723
Client Disbursements	\$37
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$344
Total Expenses	\$665,129
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0

* Organisational Management Services are levied against all DCLS programs to recover costs associated with: Management and Administrative Support, Insurance, Repairs and Maintenance, Cleaning/Gardening, Utilities, Communications, Stationery/Resources, IT Support, Audit and Accounting Fees, Shared Motor Vehicle Costs, Governance Costs.



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Disability Advocacy Program (NT Department of Health)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
Interest Earned	\$274
ADRT/NT DHF Disability Grant	\$87,355
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR	-\$20,778
Total Income	\$66,851
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$37,573
Contractors/Consultants	\$180
Tfr to Prov for Redundancy	\$0
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$921
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	\$867
Superannuation	\$3,420
Org Management Services Exp	\$21,361
Staff Training and Development	\$114
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$121
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$138
Telephone	\$138
Travel/Service Delivery	\$1,100
Accommodation/Service Delivery	\$204
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$419
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$79
Software	\$215
Total Expenses	\$66,851
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: National Aged Care Advocacy Program (Clth Dept of Health)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
Interest Earned	\$634
ADT/DSS/NACAP Grant	\$202,129
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR	-\$48,078
Total Income	\$154,685
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$86,938
Contractors/Consultants	\$416
Tfr to Prov for Redundancy	\$0
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$2,132
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	\$2,006
Superannuation	\$7,914
Org Management Services Exp	\$49,427
Staff Training and Development	\$264
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$280
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$320
Telephone	\$320
Travel/Service Delivery	\$2,544
Accommodation/Service Delivery	\$473
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$968
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$183
Software	\$498
Total Expenses	\$154,685
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: National Disability Advocacy Program (Dept of Social Services)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
Interest Earned	\$1,091
ADT/DSS/NDAP Grant	\$348,065
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR (NDAP Training)	-\$15,000
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR (NDAP)	-\$67,790
Total Income	\$266,366
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$149,707
Contractors/Consultants	\$716
Tfr to Prov for Redundancy	\$0
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$3,671
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	\$3,454
Superannuation	\$13,628
Org Management Services Exp	\$85,113
Staff Training and Development	\$455
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$482
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$551
Telephone	\$552
Travel/Service Delivery	\$4,382
Accommodation/Service Delivery	\$815
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$1,668
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$315
Software	\$858
Total Expenses	\$266,366
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Commonwealth Home Support Program (Clth Dept of Health)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
Interest Earned	\$100
ADT/HACC CHSP	\$32,020
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR	-\$7,616
Total Income	\$24,504
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$13,772
Contractors/Consultants	\$66
Tfr to Prov for Redundancy	\$0
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$338
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	\$318
Superannuation	\$1,254
Org Management Services Exp	\$7,830
Staff Training and Development	\$42
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$44
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$51
Telephone	\$51
Travel/Service Delivery	\$403
Accommodation/Service Delivery	\$75
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$153
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$29
Software	\$79
Total Expenses	\$24,504
Net Profit (Loss)	-\$0



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Tenants Advice Service (NT Dept Attorney-General and Justice)

	2017 \$
INCOME	
Tenants Advice Service Grant	\$332,762
Interest Earned	\$641
TAS Unexpended Grant C/Fwd > FYR	-\$29,528
Total Income	\$303,876
EXPENSES	
Wages and Salaries	\$170,902
Annual Leave/Tfr to Provisions	\$2,333
Long Serv Lv/Tfr to Provisions	\$3,058
Superannuation	\$16,106
Org Management Services Exp	\$104,086
Staff Training and Development	\$599
Conferences (Incl Travel and Ac)	\$1,827
Staff Recruitment and Advertising	\$1,251
Library Purchases	\$101
Practicing Certificates	\$712
Travel/Service Delivery	\$1,433
Accommodation/Service Delivery	\$134
Interpreters	\$66
Prog Advert/Marketing/Publication	\$1,208
Minor Equipment <\$5000	\$60
Total Expenses	\$303,876
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: NDIS Appeals

	2017 \$
INCOME	
NDIS Appeals Grant	\$64,000
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR	-\$64,000
Total Income	\$0
EXPENSES	
Total Expenses	\$0
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0



INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Elder Abuse Prevention Program

INCOME	2017 \$
Elder Abuse Program Grant	\$300,000
Unexpended Grant Deferred >FYR	-\$300,000
Total Income	\$0
EXPENSES	
Total Expenses	\$0
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT

Reporting Period: July 2016 to June 2017

PROGRAM: Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund

	2017 \$
INCOME	
LPA Grant	\$12,000
Unexpended Grant B/Fwd <FYR	\$285
Total Income	\$12,285
EXPENSES	
Org Management Services Exp	\$12,285
Total Expenses	\$12,285
Net Profit (Loss)	\$0



NOTES

DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

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