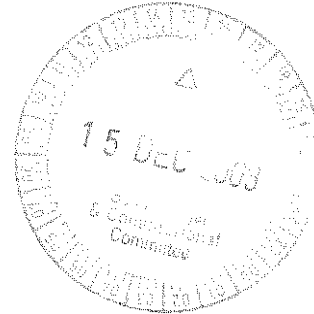




marrickville legal centre



**Ms Louise Gell
Secretary, Legal and
Constitutional References
And Legislation Committees
Parliament House
CANBERRA, ACT**

Dear Ms Gell,

**Re: Inquiry into the capacity of current legal aid and access to justice
arrangements to community need for legal assistance**

**Thank you so much for the Senate Legal and Constitutional References
Committee's interest in community legal centres' contribution to legal
assistance to the community.**

**Enclosed is a copy of Marrickville Legal Centre's 2002-2003 Annual
Report as requested by Senator Ludwig during the inquiry.**

We look forward to a fruitful exchange with your committee.

Sincerely yours,

**Janet Loughman
Principal Solicitor**

per: Maria Elena Cruz

INCORPORATING

GENERAL LEGAL
SERVICE

CHILDREN'S
LEGAL SERVICE

TENANTS
SERVICE

WOMEN'S
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
COURT ASSISTANCE
SCHEME

MARRICKVILLE
LEGAL
CENTRE

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ANNUAL REPORT

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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

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Reading the reports from the various services of Marrickville Legal Centre again shows the formidable range of activities undertaken by the staff and volunteers in pursuit of access to justice for low income and disadvantaged members of our community.

The General Legal Service has commenced an outreach program at Riverwood in order to make the Centre more accessible to people living in that area who found it difficult to get to Marrickville.

All sections of the Centre have been involved in successful community legal education activities that have proven to be most successful and well received.

The Children's Legal Service has undertaken a review of its operations and has received very positive feedback during that review. It has also been a leading player in youth justice activities and has contributed to a number of reviews.

Tenancy has had another busy year with a number of staff coming and going. Despite that we have continued to provide advice and advocacy for tenants in our area and have assisted many clients to exercise their legal rights.

The Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme has been extremely busy. I'm sure that staff were not surprised when they added the numbers and discovered that they had assisted almost double the number of women

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this year than they did last year. I'm also very pleased that the difficulties between the scheme and Newtown Local Court have finally been resolved.

Marrickville volunteered to be a pilot centre in the introduction of the Commonwealth's Community Legal Services Information System. As with all new computer systems there were plenty of adventures for all involved.

The Centre has continued its support of the collaborative work of the CLC sector. Janet, Gab and Pip were involved in the steering committee for the successful State Conference. Janet was re-elected as Chair of the NSW Combined Group again at the last AGM and Katrina is again co-convening

the sector development group along with Jane Cipants from Illawarra Legal Centre. Every service has participated in working parties and reviews and has taken leading roles in these.

I would like to thank all the staff of Marrickville Legal Centre for their magnificent contributions to the work of MLC during 2002-03 and to the directors and other volunteers for their commitment, advice, expertise and participation, without which our Centre could not function.

New challenges will continue to arise and I have no doubt that we will continue to face them.

Emra Vukovic

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

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Welcome to the 2002/3 Annual Report for Marrickville Legal Centre. One of the most enjoyable aspects of preparing the annual report is that it gives us a chance to review the multitude of activities that have occurred during the previous 12 months and, in doing so, to confirm for ourselves that we really have been very busy.

During this year we have seen an increased number of clients, begun holding outreach appointments at Riverwood, signed three year agreements for the legal and tenancy services, had precedent setting cases decided, finalised some cases and commenced others, seen clients that we have advised succeed in their cases, continued to strengthen our teams and have fun.

General Legal Service

Pip and Margie have had another busy and successful year. 1151 clients have been assisted by the General Legal Service most of them face-to-face. Our information kits are well received by clients and have been "borrowed" by other Legal Centres to form the basis of their own kits. This year our Car Crash Kits have been joined by a number of Debt and Credit kits which use plain English to explain all the relevant steps that need to be taken.

Outreach at Riverwood and daytime appointments for those who are unable to attend the Centre of an evening have proved to be very successful. We have continued to have a number of discrimination and Victim's Compensation matters as well as a range of other cases.

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Our difficulty in obtaining interpreters for cases continues. This year the fact that the Victims Compensation Tribunal (VCT) does not provide or fund interpreters for non English speaking victims of crime to allow them to attend an authorised report writer (ARW) for assessment of psychological injury was an issue of concern . This is because legislation requires that victims of crime attend an ARW, that is, a psychologist or psychiatrist accredited by the Tribunal.

Our Community Legal Education workshops have been very popular with most sessions being overbooked and additional sessions being scheduled so that people don't miss out.

Children's Legal Service

Gabrielle and Janet have been greatly assisted this year by our two very competent and energetic practical legal placement volunteers Stacey Romeo and Agnes Chan.

The Children's Legal Service has dealt with a wide range of legal matters this year including criminal charges, complaints against the police, victims compensation,

care and protection issues, education rights, employment, discrimination, breaches of civil liberties by security guards, debt recovery and civil proceedings arising from breach of duty of care of government agencies.

Policy issues addressed by the service this year included changes to civil liability laws and the police complaints system. Janet has continued to convene the Youth Justice Coalition and is a member of the Children's Court Advisory Committee. Gabrielle co-convenes the National Youth Advocates Network and was invited to join the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council.

The service has been very busy with community legal education workshops with Dulwich High, Rosemount Day Program, Links to Learning groups, Riverwood Community Centre, Tranby Aboriginal College and Belmore Young Men's Support Group all receiving workshops or presentations.

Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme

It seemed for a while that every Annual Report I would have to report that we were in dispute with Newtown Local Court. However during the past year matters have been resolved.

Cathy Loren has proven to be a very welcome addition to our team. Cathy took over attending court when we temporarily restructured positions. Although we had managed to have somebody at Court each week services to the women attending Court had not suffered, having somebody consistently in the position has enabled us to provide a better service.

Our statistics bear out the feeling that we have been assisting more women. 228 women were assisted at Newtown Court in this period, compared with 139 last year. This is an increase of 64%. We could not have done this without the sterling efforts of our support workers and the rostered solicitors all of whom we thank.

Toni took six months long service leave for the second half of the financial year. Her position was filled by Sue Sewell and she and Cathy battled the computer glitches which meant that some work was lost forever and had to be redone.

Once again we had a successful Stop Violence Against Women day and worked closely with local police Domestic Violence Liaison Officers. It is most pleasing to note that police

initiated matters now make up the bulk of our cases, a sure sign of the progress that has been made in changing community (and police) attitudes to domestic violence.

Tenancy

The tenancy team didn't have much time to bask in the glow of completing a successful expression of interest for 3 year funding. Their lack of an answering machine was an area of concern from the Department of Fair Trading but this was quickly addressed and the tenancy team are now able to get messages left by tenants when our phones are not being answered.

The team has seen quite a few changes this year. Mary's studies took more of her time and she initially reduced her hours with us and then resigned when she needed to attend university each day. Bede gained a summer clerkship with a legal firm and impressed them so much that they offered him a position. We were sad to see him go but realised that his experiences with us would stay with him as he practiced law. We were very grateful to the locums who filled the hours left by Bede and Mary resigning and

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were finally able to relax when Elizabeth arrived.

Tenancy has seen an increase in the calls they have fielded, the people they have seen in person and those they have attended the Tribunal with. They have managed to help tenants to save tenancies and

to function nearly as well as it does. Maria and her front desk volunteers are the first port of call for our clients. They field a continual stream of telephone calls and visitors. Many of these people have issues that we are not able to assist with and they need to be

sensitively referred to other agencies. Sometimes we are not the first place they have called and they are not happy at being sent somewhere else again. It is always challenging to the rest of us, when we relieve



MLC staff at end of year picnic lunch.

have won damages for tenants who have been illegally treated. We are seeing an increase in clients with mental illness and have been forging stronger links with other organisations to ensure these tenants are not treated unfairly.

Maria on the front desk, to deal with those calls that she handles each and every day.

Cecilia has continued to lead us through the financial minefields of managing the conflicting demands on our limited funds.

Administration

Without our administrative team the Centre would not be able

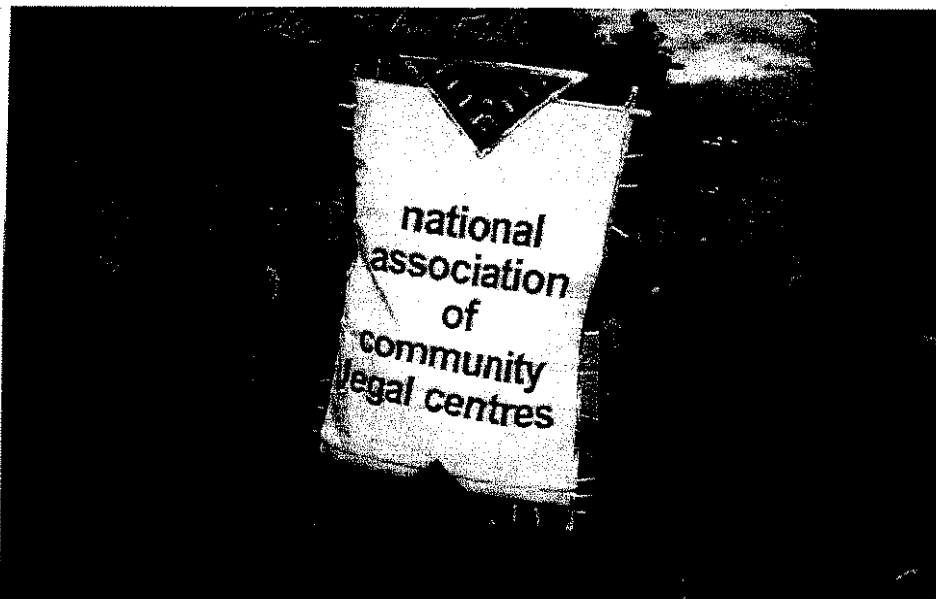
We continued our upgrade of our computer systems during the year and were able to replace our visitors' chairs and our library tables.

Marrickville Legal Centre volunteered to be a pilot centre for the Commonwealth Government in the introduction of the new Community Legal Services Information System (CLSIS) data base. What an adventure this has been!!!! The saga is far too long to go into here however I am pleased to report that after some 9 months we are finally running on the new system which is gradually

Combined Community Legal Centres Group

Marrickville Legal Centre continues to be a major player in the NSW Combined Community Legal Centres Group. Janet was re-elected to the position of Chairperson. Along with Jane Cipants from

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Children's Solicitor Gabrielle McKinnon (l); Adult Case Solicitor Pip Davis (3rd from left); and Principal Solicitor Janet Loughman (r) in Melbourne proudly bear NACLCLC banner, with other CLC workers.

being introduced across the country.

Our second Enterprise Agreement was approved by the Industrial Relations Commission on 27 September and will remain in place for two years.

Illawarra Legal Centre, I've continued to co-convene the Sector Development Group. Pip, Gabrielle and Janet were heavily involved in arranging the successful NSW State Conference last year.

We finally reached agreement with the State

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Program Managers and the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department on a three year service agreement which we signed at the beginning of the year, a little later than had been intended.

Inner Sydney CLCs Group

During the year we continued our collaborative work with the inner Sydney community legal centres – Redfern, Kingsford, Inner City and Warringa Baiya. The group developed a common referral data base; managed a project to develop an Indigenous Cadetship Scheme appropriate for the not-for-profit sector (funded by the Law and Justice Foundation); and began an update of the "Law for All" report which assessed community needs in our areas.

Management Committee

After a year of a full Management Committee last year, we lost three of our members this year. Monique Hitter accepted a position with Legal Aid and was unable to continue with us. James

McDougall and Paul White both took off for pastures greener overseas. We are currently recruiting for replacements for them.

During the year the Management Committee members assisted us with performance appraisals, sat on selection committees, mediated a dispute and continued to support the Centre in many ways. Our continuing thanks for your time and effort from all of us.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the backbone of our centre. Without them we would only be able to do a fraction of what we do. I know that just before evening advice sessions when the waiting room fills with clients (some of whom bring their friends and their children and even their dogs with them) and interpreters and I'm sure that mayhem is about to occur the sight of the friendly faces of our volunteer lawyers entering through the front door brings a sense of calm and order to the place. Within a few hours the waiting room has cleared and all clients have been advised.

Volunteers provide support in other ways as well. Support workers for the Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme, front desk assistants, Tenancy volunteers, nighttime volunteer assistants and solicitors/barristers all allow us to provide more services to our clients than we would otherwise be able to.

A conservative estimate of the number of hours provided by volunteers during the year was in excess of 3,200 hours.

In early 2004 we will be celebrating our 25th anniversary and we invite everybody to come celebrate with us.

Precious Volunteers

The Centre had at least 70 volunteers throughout the year who, collectively, contributed over 3,200 hours of work or an equivalent minimum of 460 working days.

This does not include the incalculable time and effort pitched in by our pro bono solicitors and barristers from several law firms.

Centre volunteers are mainly law and social work students, practising solicitors and barristers.

They provide valuable help in information and referral work at the front desk, court support and legal advice to the Newtown Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme, tenancy advice during Inner West TAAS Tenancy Hotline schedules, and advice during our General Legal Service advice nights.

Our Board and Management Committee members aid in the setting of the strategic direction and planning of the Centre, spearhead policy formulation, sit in Employment Sub-committees, provide moral and practical support to staff and a lot of other things.

Other Centre volunteers also help maintain our library, support us in some projects and do other administrative tasks.

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GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE

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The General Legal Service has been busy again this year and has undertaken a number of successful ventures.

The service has assisted 1151 clients over the year. The vast majority of the Centre's clients received face to face legal advice.

Staffing

The General Legal Service has a full-time solicitor, Pip Davis and a part-time solicitor, Margaret Martin and is assisted by the Centre's Principal solicitor, Janet Loughman and Children's Service solicitor, Gabrielle McKinnon. The service also receives assistance from graduate law students working as volunteers to complete the practical stage of their College of Law (or equivalent) training. This year, Stacey Romeo and

Agnes Chong have completed their placements with us and we would like to thank them for all of their help.

Our Clients

The General Legal service aims to assist those people in our community who experience barriers in accessing legal services. Our client base consists of people from non-English speaking backgrounds and those who have difficulty accessing legal services due to mental illness, disability, social and / or economic disadvantage.

The Evening Advice Sessions

The General Legal Service provides evening advice sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evening. The sessions are staffed

by volunteer solicitors, barristers and assistants and supervised by Centre staff.

Non-English Speaking Background Country of Birth

38.92% or 448 of 1151 General Service clients listed Australia as their country of birth.

The top ten countries of birth of clients from non-English speaking background are:

- 1. China*
- 2. Vietnam*
- 3. Greece*
- 4. Lebanon*
- 5. Philippines*
- 6. Fiji*
- 7. Indonesia*
- 8. India*
- 9. Portugal and Egypt*
- 10. Chile and Italy*

Tuesday evening sessions have a combination of family law and civil matters while Thursday evening sessions focus on a wide variety of legal problems including but certainly not limited to employment issues, discrimination, victim's compensation, credit and debt, consumer complaints, motor vehicle property damage,

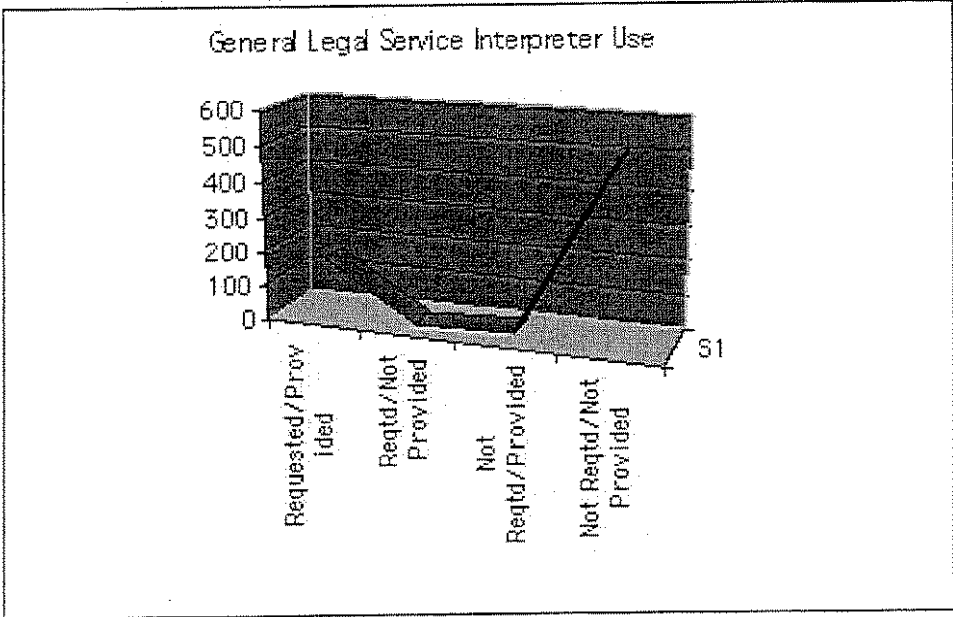
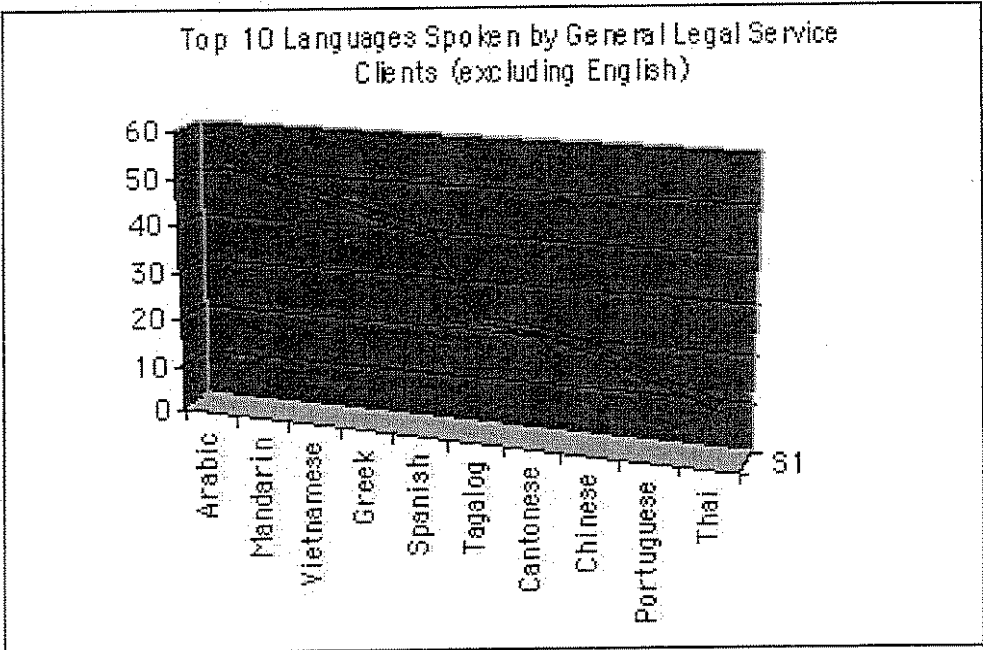
neighbourhood disputes, complaints about solicitors and other professionals and minor criminal matters.

This year has seen the update of our ever popular Car Crash Kit and the development of a Creditors Kit, a Debtors Kit and an Enforcement Kit. These kits are designed to be user friendly, with their plain English explanations of the legal issue and legal system and a set of letters that the client can use as a precedent.

The aim of evening advice sessions is to give a client basic advice and assistance with their legal problem. This may range from simply advising a client how they can best set about resolving their own problem, to explaining the meaning of a legal document or writing a letter such as a letter of demand in a motor vehicle accident matter for the

client to sign and send to the other party. It may also involve assisting a client to complete an application for legal aid or pro bono assistance. Obviously the assistance will be determined by how complicated the legal problem is and how easy it might be for the client to sort it out once they're given some advice.

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In some cases it might be appropriate, depending on the needs of the client and the nature of the legal problem, for the general legal service solicitors to follow-up the case. Alternatively, it may be appropriate for the service

to provide on going legal assistance or representation to a client. It is in that way that the evening advice sessions are not a self-contained part of the Centre, but rather, a vital part of the Centre's operations.

Case study - Victims Compensation

Marrickville Legal Centre acted for the appellant who was a victim of child abuse perpetrated by her father. The Tribunal refused leave to file an out of time application so an appeal was filed with the Supreme Court Administrative Law Division. The basis for the appeal was that the Tribunal had:

- denied the Appellant procedural fairness; and
- misinterpreted s26 of the Victims Compensation Act 1996 (the out of time provisions).

The appeal was successful. In his decision, Dowd J provided guidance on the principles to be applied by the Tribunal in determining whether to grant leave to applications relating to sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse. In particular, he determined that s26(3)(b) is the only sub-section which is relevant to such applications. The decision also affirms that the Act is beneficial legislation and should therefore be interpreted in favour of the grant of benefits to a claimant. Our client was ultimately successful in her compensation application.

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Apart from assisting clients with their individual problems, the sessions are an essential link between the centre and the community. The problems identified by the sessions often become the subject of campaigns for reforms, education programs and other activities.

Outreach Sessions and Daytime Appointments

The Centre has established an outreach service at the Riverwood Community Centre, which operates on

alternate Monday afternoons and is available to the Riverwood community.

We have established a daytime appointment scheme at the legal centre, which operates on alternate Monday and Tuesday afternoons so that we are able to offer daytime appointments in situations where this is more appropriate for the client. We particularly prioritise clients with domestic violence / sexual assault / victims compensation matters, and those clients such as the elderly or women with young children who find it difficult

to get out at night and in cases where there are "exceptional circumstances".

Casework

As stated above, much of the

on going casework for the general legal service comes from clients attending our evening advice sessions. While there is no means test imposed on our clients, their financial circumstances and whether or not it would be more

Case study - Discrimination

We are representing a woman with a complaint of sexual harassment, discrimination on the grounds of her sex and race and victimisation in the course of her employment. We assisted our client with the drafting of a complaint to the Anti-Discrimination Board and her complaint is currently being investigated.

In another matter, we are representing a man with a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of his race. He alleges that in telling our client that he should return to his country of origin, the employee of an employment agency has treated him less favourably on the grounds of his race. The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission is currently investigating this matter.

Case study - Police Complaints

"Mary" is making a complaint that the police have failed to take seriously her allegations of on-going sexual assaults by an acquaintance. Our client has an intellectual disability and it is our her belief that the police have failed to treat her properly on the basis of her disability.

appropriate to refer the client to another organisation, a private solicitor or Legal Aid are factors taken into account before a decision is made to offer on-going legal assistance.

This year, the general legal service provided on-going assistance or casework to

clients presenting with a wide variety of legal problems such as victims compensation, discrimination, debt, fines, insurance, consumer complaints and employment. Some clients required only short-term minor assistance such as the drafting of affidavits and letters or negotiation on

Case study - Consumer Complaint

"Lyla" has filed a complaint for investigation with the Australian Banking Industry Ombudsman. She received a letter of demand for \$6000 from a financial institution, asserting that this money was owed for purchases and associated charges on one of their credit cards. Lyla says that she did not ever apply for or use a credit card from this financial institution and until such time as she received the letter of demand, had been unaware of the existence of any card in her name. While this matter is still not completely resolved, the Ombudsman's hand writing expert has been able to determine that it is not our client's signature on the application form nor the credit card slips signed when the goods were purchased.

the client's behalf. Other matters, such as some of our victims compensation and discrimination matters have required on-going and more intensive legal representation. The service made a decision to target our casework this year toward clients applying for victims compensation as a result of domestic violence or child sexual assault and for clients experiencing discrimination in employment.

A snapshot of some of our casework this year is set out in this and the next pages.

Policy & Law Reform Work

In addition to strategic casework which is aimed,

where appropriate to amend laws or policies which impact unequally on disadvantaged persons, the Centre continues to lobby more generally for changes to the practices and procedures of government departments or legislation which are unfair.

For example, the Centre continues in its campaign for the adequate and appropriate provision of interpreters to clients accessing legal and other services in NSW. One issue of particular concern is the fact that the Victims Compensation Tribunal (VCT) does not provide or fund interpreters for non English speaking victims of crime to allow them to attend an authorised report writer (ARW) for assessment

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of psychological injury.

However, the legislation requires that victims of crime attend an ARW, that is, a psychologist or psychiatrist accredited by the Tribunal. We are continuing to



MLC conducted a series of successful community legal education workshops.

negotiate with the Tribunal and the Community Relations Commission to provide an accessible and equitable service to non-English speaking victims of crime. The general legal service has also written submissions calling for the equalising of the age of consent for homosexual men and another submission arguing against the rebuttable presumption of shared residence for separating parents.

The General Legal Service is also active in the Combined Community Legal Centres

Group and the various networks and continues to carry out law reform and policy work through this medium as well.

Community Legal Education

The General Legal Service has been particularly busy this year providing CLE sessions to community

groups and community workers, counsellors and TAFE students enrolled in community services courses. We have provided general sessions on the services offered by Marrickville Legal Centre and obtaining legal assistance and more

specific sessions on issues such as family law, victims compensation, wills and powers of attorney.

This year also saw the launch of our series of workshops for community workers which involved the participation of the whole Centre in the provision of workshops on topics such as *Legal Problem Solving and Referral, Domestic Violence and Victims Compensation, Tenancy, Family Law and Young People and the Law*. The demand was so great that we developed a second calendar of workshops to be

held at the Centre and we now have plans to create a similar series early in 2004.

2002 – 2003 Volunteers

The General Legal Service would not be able to meet the demand for our services without the dedication and support of our volunteers. We are extremely grateful to our volunteers, some of whom have been with us for over 5 years. Their commitment and enthusiastic contribution to our service is inspiring. Thank you to all of you; your support and contribution to the work of the Centre has been and continues to be invaluable.

This year, one of our volunteers, Nick Yetzotis, received a highly commended award in the Law and Justice Foundation 2002 Justice Awards for his outstanding commitment and service to Marrickville Legal Centre. Nick is currently serving as Management Committee Member and is a volunteer solicitor in our evening advice sessions. We would like to thank Nick for his dedication over the years.

Many thanks to our volunteers for the 2002-2003 financial year:

Agatha Satala
Agnes Chong
Alessandra Krilis
Alex Harland
Alison Battison
Alison Ryan
Andrew Wilson
Anna Mitchelmore
Anne Day
Anne Himmelreich
Anne Pridham
Aziza Lai

Ben Lau
Brendan Sydes
Brendon Noney

Carmel Williams
Catherine McKay
Chris Blair
Chris Trieu
Corrine Campbell
Cuong Hoang

Damien Spruce
David Browne
David Harrigan
David Thomson
Delia O'Hara
Dimity Leahy
Donna Ward

Emma Keir
Eugene Schofield
Frank Loveridge

Gemma Morrow
George Papanikitas
Graeme Edgerton
Graham Jones

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Jaanki Bhandry
Jenni Smith
Jennifer Barron
Jenny Ly
Jeremy Agnew
Jeremy Cochran
Joanne Zain
Joe Daniel
John Gooley
John Liston
Jon Gale
Jonathon Callaghan
Judith Wright
Jyoty Bedi

Kevin Lynch
Kirsteen Dixon

Liesa Gorringer
Lila Talevska
Lisa Castanelli

Margaret Woods
Mario Licha
Matthew Carbines
Megan Knight
Michael Easton
Michael Forde
Michael Robertson
Monika Mellar
Monique Hitter
Nick Yetzotis
Norman O'Dowd

Peter Jones
Priya Sutton

Rachel Callinan
Rebecca Dunn
Robert McDonnell
Ruth Brebner

Silva Seferian
Simon Snow
Simone Baumgarten
Sonya Mijalkovski
Sophie Jackson
Steve Commins
Susan Jackson
Stacey Romeo

Terry McCowan

Ulysses Chioatto

Vanessa Crawford

Wayne Morrison
Wendy Pan

Yoga Kumaran

And last but definitely not least, we would like to thank the barristers who generously provide either pro bono advice, representation or accept legal briefs in complex matters in both the general and children's service. Our thanks to Kate Eastman, Sharron Norton, Steven Churches, David Hillard of Clayton Utz, Anne Cregan of Blake Dawson Waldron, Michelle Hannon and Damien Spruce of Gilbert & Tobin.

CHILDREN'S LEGAL SERVICE

The Children's Legal Service is an integral part of Marrickville Legal Centre serving a need identified by the Centre in 1979 and continuing to be met with the limited resources of the Centre's core Legal Aid Commission grant.

Staffing and Volunteers

The service employs one full-time children's solicitor Gabrielle McKinnon and the work of the centre's principal solicitor Janet Loughman contributes to the service. We were fortunate during part of the year to have the very capable and energetic assistance of Stacey Romeo and Agnes Chong, 2 practical legal placement volunteers who made valuable contributions to the work of the CLS.

Service Overview

The Children's Legal Service provides information, advice, advocacy and legal representation for under 18 year olds. Some of the legal problems that arise for our clients include criminal charges, complaints against the police, victims compensation, care and protection issues, education rights, employment, discrimination, breaches of civil liberties by security guards, debt recovery and civil proceedings arising from breach of duty of care of government authorities.

During the year the Children's Legal Service worked on a range of policy issues including changes to civil liability laws and the police complaints system. Janet convened the Youth Justice Coalition and was a member of the Children's Court Advisory Committee.

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Gabrielle co-convened the National Youth Advocates Network and during the year was invited to join the Juvenile Justice Advisory Council.

The Service presented numerous educational workshops for young people and youth workers. We developed and distributed fridge magnets to publicise our service, and contributed to the development of new brochures for the service and the centre as a whole.

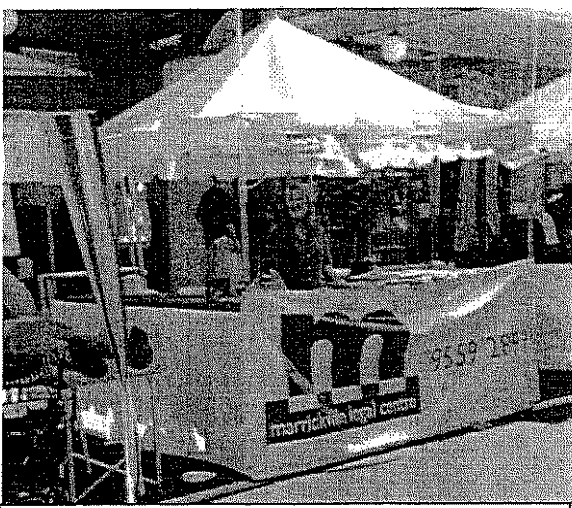
Casework

The Centre provides telephone access for young people or youth workers to a children's solicitor during business hours whenever possible. This service is frequently utilised by adults calling on behalf of children and young people, and we are constantly seeking ways to make the service more accessible to young people directly.

In order to have the capacity to provide a potentially state-wide service for public interest cases the Children's Legal Service sets priorities for cases in which we will provide ongoing representation and assistance. During the year we continued

to work with the casework priorities developed for the Centre's 3 year plan developed in March 2002, which are as follows:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, young people from Non English



Children's Solicitor Gabrielle McKinnon at the MLC stall during the 2002 Marrickville Festival.

- speaking backgrounds and young people with disabilities or high needs
- young people from within the Centre's larger local geographic area, particularly Marrickville, Campsie, Canterbury and Bankstown
- victim's compensation cases relating to child sexual assault
- administrative law

- matters, including discrimination
- problems with the use of public space by young people
- problems with the NSW care system
- complaints about police/ other government agencies
- other test case/public interest cases

Public interest litigation provides one avenue in which unfair practices of the State and others can be challenged.

The Children's Legal Centre continues to undertake casework, which challenges unreasonable administrative practices or has public interest implications.

Case study - Education

Joe and his family came to see us after Joe was suspended from school for an indefinite period because of alleged behavioural problems. Joe explained to us that he was bullied by other children at school, and that although he had sought help from his class teacher, nothing had been done. In fact Joe's teacher had constantly singled him out for ridicule in front of the other students, making things worse for Joe.

We helped Joe's family to appeal Joe's suspension which did not comply with the Department's policy and procedures for discipline. We also assisted with negotiations with the school to get Joe transferred to another class with a more sympathetic teacher, and to get his concerns over bullying treated seriously by the school.

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In order to maintain responsiveness we retain discretion to take on other matters if we can squeeze them into our workload. Emerging casework needs and priorities are identified by Centre statistics, advice requests community consultation and other research.

Thank you to our barristers

Our case work is supported by barristers who provide either pro bono advice, representation or accept legal aid briefs in very complex matters. We would like to thank Kate Eastman, Anne Healey, Sharron Norton and Jamie Trevallion who this year have given us this support.

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Law Reform and Policy Work

A significant component of the work of the Children's Legal Service is law reform and policy work which is done primarily through the Youth Justice Coalition (YJC) and the National Youth Advocates Network (NYAN).

YJC Policy Work

Some of the significant policy and law reform issues for the Youth Justice Coalition in this year have been:

Public Space and Shopping Centres

Case study - Doli Incapax

LUCY *an eleven year old girl, was charged with malicious damage after she admitted scratching a neighbour's car with the words "your car has been scratched." This had happened after an argument with her family, when Lucy was feeling very angry and upset.*

Although it was clear that Lucy had scratched the car, we explained to the police that because Lucy was only eleven, she was entitled to the presumption of 'doli incapax', that is, that she did not have the necessary intention to commit a crime.

To displace this presumption the police needed to prove that Lucy knew that the act was criminally wrong, rather than merely naughty.

After lengthy negotiations and written representations, the police finally conceded that they did not have evidence to prove their case against Lucy and the charges were withdrawn.

The children's solicitors are active members of YJC - Janet Loughman acted as convener of the YJC; and NYAN - Gabrielle McKinnon acted as co-convener of NYAN during this period.

The Coalition continued its work in relation to the promotion of the rights of young people in public spaces and shopping centres. The Shopping Centre Protocol Project, funded by the Juvenile

Justice Crime Prevention
Division of Attorney Generals
as a joint project between
YJC and the Youth Action
Policy Association (YAPA)
was completed during the

charged with trespass from
shopping centres in NSW.
Growing evidence and
experience suggested that
alternative methods could
be successfully adopted in

Case study - Employment

Barry and Ahmed were employed as casuals with a fast food franchise and had been working in the same store for a couple of years. During this time they had gotten on well with the manager, and had been given a lot of responsibility.

Unfortunately for the boys, the franchise was taken over by a new owner and manager, who brought in new staff, and within weeks Barry and Ahmed were fired after some vague allegations about dishonesty. The new owner refused to provide a proper explanation, or to pay the wages earned by the boys in their last weeks of work.

Barry and Ahmed explained to us that they wanted to find another job as soon as possible, and needed a decent reference which would clear their names. They also wanted to get the pay that was owing to them without delay.

With the invaluable assistance of John Gooley, our volunteer solicitor and employment law whiz, a favourable settlement was negotiated and finalised with the new owner within a few days, saving the boys from having to go through lengthy proceedings for unfair dismissal.

year (but with a launch of the Protocol not until October 2003).

The project was initiated due to the increasing number of young people banned and subsequently

working with young people such as the development of a protocol. Clear guidelines are developed to ensure there is an agreed, mutual understanding of appropriate standards of behaviour expected of young people and

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security officers and consistent responses used where there are breaches of those standards.

The Shopping Centre Protocol Project developed a guide called *Creating the Space for Dialogue*. The guide outlines the steps for developing a local protocol which is responsive to different community needs and characteristics while maintaining essential principles of fairness and natural justice.

Police Complaints and the Ombudsman

We continue to be frustrated by experiences with an inaccessible and ineffectual complaints process for young people in relation to police. We continued to work with YAPA on a more systemic approach so that complaints from young people and youth workers can be made through the YJC enabling meetings to be held with the Ombudsman and other key policy agencies to discuss issues and trends, and propose more effective resolution of complaints.

The Impact of Fines on Young People

YJC continued to monitor the

impact of unpaid fines (usually transport fines) on young people and the work of the State Debt Recovery Office. As a joint research project with Rosemount Youth and Family Services YJC began a qualitative research project investigating a range of issues in relation to young people and transport fines including impact



Artwork done by Amy Fenech doing work experience at MLC.

of unpaid fines on their well being.

Changes to the law of negligence - Civil Liability Act

YJC made a submission to the Premier expressing concern

about the impact of changes to the law of negligence as outlined in the Civil Liability Act and the proposed Civil Liability (Personal Responsibility) Bill.

Age Discrimination

YJC made a submission to the Commonwealth government's proposal to introduce age discrimination legislation which was supported by YJC but which did not go far enough in promoting non-discriminatory practices. One significant omission was in relation to youth wages with the government proposal that children and young people be paid lesser wages for equal work because of their age. "YJC rejects this completely and considers that provision for lower pay for equal work is grossly discriminatory and breaches Australia's obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child."

State Election '03

YJC contributed to discussion and campaign planning around law and order issues in the lead up to the NSW

state election.

Community Legal Education

The Children's Legal Service conducted a wide range of community legal education workshops, and promotional work for the service including the following:

- Workshops on legal issues for young people at Dulwich High, Rosemount Day Program, Links to Learning groups; Riverwood Community Centre and Belmore Young Mens Support Group;
- A presentation and discussion on juvenile justice issues for 50 students at Tranby Aboriginal College
- 2 presentations on Children and the Law in the Law for Non Lawyers series run by RLCP
- Contributed to 2 workshops run by the Intellectual Disability Rights Service for the Police Joint Investigative Response Team (JIRT) on children with intellectual disability and competence to give evidence in court.

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Evaluating and Promoting the Children's Legal Service

In late 2002 we carried out a survey of youth and community workers about their use of the telephone advice service provided by our Children's Legal Service.

We developed an interview survey with some open and closed questions and a volunteer carried out the phone survey. Twenty eight local / regional youth organizations were contacted and participated in the survey.

Of the 10 respondents who had used the service, 7 were complimentary and described it as positive, helpful and respectful. Young person friendly language was used when explaining legal issues. Several people expressed gratitude that the service existed and that it was valued. Some of the problems identified included encountering an answering machine and long waiting time on the phone – one client had waited 20 minutes

Given our funding and staffing constraints we unfortunately could not offer a 24 hour phone advice service. But we

did ...

- make the centre mobile phone more accessible to the CLS solicitor whenever she is out of the office;
- produce fridge magnets;
- began developing a catchier brochure.
- a mail out with a letter explaining our service, fridge magnets, cards, pamphlets and CLE flyer.
- began outreach drop-in advice service at Riverwood Community Centre on a fortnightly basis.
- include a Young People, Rights and the Police workshop in the Centre series of workshops for community workers.

We also conducted a client survey of the service over a 4-week period during the year by telephone and by mail. The client survey was carried out by a volunteer to provide some independence from paid staff. On the whole our clients were very happy with our service. Some of their comments were:

"The service is quick and

good."

"Well explained, easy to understand."

"Helped me to understand my situation a lot."

"Long way from home."

"Before the outreach program at Riverwood it was extremely difficult but it's much better now."

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TENANCY SERVICE

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A new year a new approach

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In our report for 2001 – 2002 we announced that we had been successful in gaining 3 year funding from the Department (now Office) of Fair Trading for the Inner West Tenancy Advice and Advocacy Service. We were saddened that we had lost our project worker funding but were looking forward to increasing access of Inner West tenants to our service.

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Under the new funding agreement there are new service delivery requirements. We are required to spend 75% of our time on providing tenancy advice and associated casework; 15-20% of our time on community education activities and 5-10% of our time on additional functions associated with service delivery and compliance with funding requirements.

We continue to be very busy with boarders and lodgers and are dismayed that another year has passed without us being able to celebrate the passing of legislation to give boarders and lodgers legal rights. As the “gentrification” of the Inner West continues and boarding houses are sold and become single family dwellings we continue to see boarders and lodgers denied affordable and accessible dispute resolution and being subject to arbitrary eviction, the ever present threat of eviction, harsh and oppressive house rules and reliant on the goodwill of boarding house owners to retain the basic human right to shelter.

As well as boarders and lodgers we continue to speak with and see a range of other tenants with a wide variety of issues. Just when we think we’ve seen every issue there could be the phone rings and it is something new. We’ve

continued to provide community legal education, outreach and have participated in various meetings and working groups.

from 2 – 5pm, Tuesdays 1 – 4pm, Wednesdays and Thursdays 2 – 5pm and Fridays 9am – 1pm. Following

Tenancy Case Study One

Bill had been living in his Ashfield Department of Housing premises for many years and had always paid his rent in full and on time. He was an aged pensioner and joked with the tenancy workers that he was almost as decrepit as some of the fittings in the flats.

The Department made repairs to the smoke alarm and faulty electrical wiring then attempted to charge Bill for them. They actually deducted the amount from his rent account and placed him in rental arrears. Bill was obviously distressed by this happening.

He came to see us to ask if there was anything we could do to help him. We wrote to the Department and managed to get them to reimburse his rental account and to acknowledge that they should not have charged him in the first place.

Following our experience we spoke with other TAAP services and found that they were also seeing other offices of the Department of Housing attempting similar things under their "rechargeable repairs account". A submission on this practice was prepared and sent to the Ombudsman.

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Casework

We have changed our telephone advice hours again in order to better meet the needs of our clients. We now provide advice on Mondays

concerns from the Department of Fair Trading that we did not have an answering machine or dedicated tenancy phone line we secured a virtual answering machine that now takes messages from tenants in

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our catchment area – although we find that many other people leave messages despite being told that unless they are tenants they cannot be answered.

We have managed to continue to operate the Tenants' Union

Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal.

We have provided written materials to 578 clients on a broad range of relevant subjects.

Tenancy Case Study Two

Mei Lin *a widow with several children, had left her premises at Burwood and was being pursued by her landlord for \$5000 for damages to the premises. He claimed that her children had blocked up the plumbing with sandwich bags and chipped the enamel off the bathtub. He also claimed that she had destroyed the blinds in the flat.*

The more Mei Lin resisted his bullying "settlement" tactics the higher his claim for damages grew. We provided Mei Lin with extensive advice and assisted her to prepare for her appearance at the CTTT.

Despite her fear of the landlord Mei Lin was able to represent herself at the CTTT and was very pleased when all she had to pay was \$420. She was not happy that the landlord continued to threaten to 'appeal' to the Supreme Court although as time went on and no 'appeal' happened she relaxed and was able to put the experience behind her.

hotline on a weekly basis thanks to our volunteers.

This year we have given initial advice to over 1250 clients on a wide range of issues again predominantly focussing on termination, repairs, rental bond and the workings of the

We have had interviews with 97 clients with approximately 15% of these interviews being interpreted.

102 clients have been assisted in preparing for cases at the CTTT and we appeared at the CTTT for 14 clients.

Tenancy Case Study Two

Jennifer had lived peacefully in her Strathfield residence for four years. Her landlord returned from overseas, illegally evicted the upstairs tenant and then moved in himself. Following that he commenced a program of harassment aimed at getting Jennifer to move.

He verbally and physically abused Jennifer, 'relocated' her goods and denied her access to services that had come with the premises. Jennifer's health began to suffer and she was most upset when she came to see us.

We assisted Jennifer to lodge a claim for compensation due to stress and suffering, illegal rent increase and orders requiring the landlord to stop his harassment. The landlord took retaliatory action by lodging a claim for rent arrears and a \$10,000 claim for damages.

Both of the landlord's claims were dismissed. Jennifer received \$4,000 in damages and agreed to vacate the premises at a date that was suitable for her.

Tenancy Case Study Three

Marco and Luis were in a desperate state when they came into the office. The two brothers had very little English but this did not impede their message from coming across. They had been violently assaulted, locked out of their premises, had all their belongings destroyed or stolen and had been forced to spend three cold nights in a small sedan.

We applied to the Tribunal at once. The physical injuries were being handled by another agency. Our interest was with the breaches specific to their tenancy including the lockout and the loss of their goods.

At the Tribunal the Member found that the brothers were tenants and that their lease had been illegally terminated by the head-tenant. Further, the Member, in accordance with our submissions, granted damages for hardship and suffering as well as for the goods which the head-tenant had disposed of. The amount of compensation awarded to the brothers totaled over \$4000.

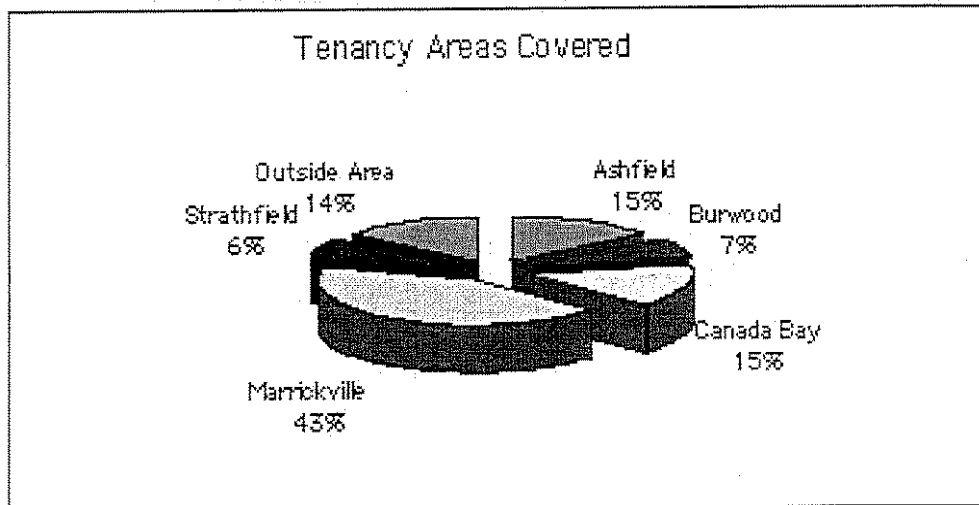
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Community Legal Education

We continued to hold community legal education sessions this year. We held information stalls for students at TAFEs; presented sessions to Adult Migrant English classes,

in Burwood one fortnight and Exodus Foundation in Ashfield on the alternate fortnight.

Lack of attendance at both venues has meant that we have temporarily ceased outreach while we review how and where we could better reach



community workers and groups of tenants; distributed publicity and information and attended community festivals.

members of the community who might not otherwise be able to access our service.

Outreach

Outreach continues to be a challenge for us. Following the closure of the Ashfield Migrant Resource Centre we tried to provide outreach services at a number of different locations. For a while we visited Woodstock Community Centre

We conducted a survey of local community organisations to discover their level of knowledge of our services and have sent each organisation information on what we can offer them and their clients.

Tenancy workers

We have seen a deal of change in our tenancy team during the

year. Mary Flaskas decreased her hours and then left us to pursue her studies. Bede Haines, who was working part time with us while he completed his legal studies, gained a summer clerkship with a legal firm who then offered him a permanent position that he accepted. Some wonderful locums enabled us to continue providing services to tenants while we had vacancies. Our thanks to Louise Buchanan, Vivianna Villamar, Greg Brown and Shane Neagle for their versatility and enthusiasm.

We were pleased to welcome Elizabeth De Freitas to the team in June and look forward to working with her.



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NEWTOWN WOMEN'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SCHEME

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Overview of the Year

As usual it was a varied and challenging year at the Newtown WDVCS with a few bouquets thrown in along the way. We welcomed Cathy Loren in July who took over a temporary restructured position attending Newtown Court. Our DVCAS co-ordinator Toni took long service leave for 6 months during the year and our locum Sue Sewell took over the co-ordination of the scheme.

Toni was able to focus on a return to work plan while continuing to negotiate through the dispute with Newtown Court. This provided a relatively stable period for the scheme and negotiations continued with the Attorney Generals Department.

We ran a successful Stop DV

Day Event at Marrickville Metro in April and we were fortunate to have the Centre's tenancy and children's workers assist at the stall.

The level of support offered to our clients was markedly increased during the period and this has created quite a demand on the service. There is less and less time available for law reform, community development and education.

Indeed, the policy makers themselves deferred the implementation of changes to Pt15A of the Crimes Act and the Police Standard Operating Procedures were also deferred until 2004.

On another more urgent note the Legal Aid Commission's current policy regarding grants

of legal aid in contested apprehended domestic violence orders was reduced to cover only de factos; ex defactos; spouses, ex spouses and intimate relationships as of right. Any other category of relationship that accords with the definition of domestic relationship under Pt 15A of the Crimes Act (NSW) must be applied for under the exceptional circumstances category in order to receive a grant.

This creates more demands on the WDCAS and the client. To illustrate, a client with a psychiatric disability, who was making an application against her son (who had previously been jailed for assault) had to go through the process of application under exceptional circumstances with all its attendant documentation as evidence of the category. We hope that the Legal Aid Commission extends their policy to be aligned with the definition of domestic relationship under Pt 15A of the Crimes Act.

Newtown WDV CAS

The WDV CAS continues to represent and advise women complainants and cross claimants in AVO matters on

list day at Newtown Court. The aim of the scheme being to offer support, assistance and legal representation to women seeking to take out apprehended domestic violence orders before, during and after the court process. The scheme relies on the support of seconded community workers and solicitors who act on a pro bono basis. Workers also liaise closely with the Marrickville and Newtown Police DVLO's and appreciate the crucial role they offer us in assisting women obtain the best possible outcome for protection.

Case Work

During the period 228 women were assisted at court. This is a significant rise from the previous year where only 139 clients attended the WDV CAS. There was also a significant increase in client contacts at 648 as opposed to 287 for the previous period. Many Police matters have at least three return dates at court. Whilst 228 client contacts occurred at the legal centre either prior to or after court, the figure also reflects the increased level of service that is being offered to our clients. All women who attend the scheme, both private and police initiated applications now receive

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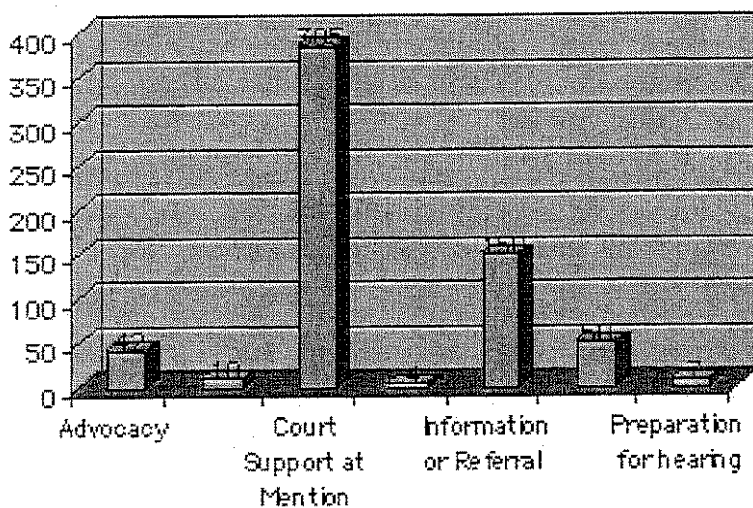
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written letters informing them of the outcome from court. They also receive information about other support services for referral, as well as information about victims compensation.

access remained stable at 33% of all client contact. That figure reflects the broader demographics of the local government area. However this year, NESB access has dropped markedly to only

Service Provided



The increase in police initiated applications at 81% also reflects a welcomed broader trend of police involvement in domestic violence matters. Scheme workers have also appreciated the cooperative working relationship that has developed at the local area commands in Marrickville and Newtown. We do note though, that there has been a marked decrease in women of culturally diverse backgrounds accessing the scheme. While the previous period saw a decrease in the number of women attending court, NESB

17% of all client contacts with the four highest groups being Vietnamese, Portuguese, Chinese and Arabic.

We are pleased to note though, that there has been a 6% increase in Aboriginal women accessing the scheme. However overall, both these groups of client contacts remain low. They do not reflect the broader demographics of the area and may require a concerted community education campaign to encourage access to both the police and the scheme.

Disability client contact though, increased markedly from 7 to 54.

As with previous years the majority of client contacts occurred at court, with 66% of all client contacts occurring at Newtown Court. Whilst court support was offered in only 1.5% of client contacts at hearing, the scheme still continues to negotiate with the police prosecutor at the Downing Centre in the hope that women can arrange to meet with the prosecutor prior to their hearing. For contested hearings in privately initiated AVOs, we continue to refer women to our pro bono schemes. The Newtown Scheme has never been able to offer an acceptable level of support for hearings since the court made the decision to list hearings at the Downing Centre. We simply do not have the resources to refer workers. We will though, continue to improve liaison with the Chief Police Prosecutors Office with

Client Contacts

Of 648 total client contacts,

52 or 8% are ATSI clients,

111 or 17% are NESB clients

54 or 8% are clients with disability while

392 or 61% are police-initiated AVOs

the aim of referring women for pre hearing conferences.

Training And Recruitment

The WDVCS could not survive without the assistance and cooperation of our

wonderful, committed seconded community workers. During the period we thanked and farewelled Bernie McGee, Rebecca Sainsbury, Miriam de Freitas, Truc Nguyen, Yen Nguyen and Slava Cruz.

Thank you so much for your contribution to the success of the WDVCS.

We recruited five new workers to the scheme - all workers attended the two day training program at DVAS, as well as follow up training on the operations of the scheme at court. During the period, four support worker forums were convened and workers were brought up to date on new file management systems in line with the professional requirements of the Legal

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Centre and were briefed about court operations. We also organised training opportunities and continued to implement the Distance Learning Package, developed by DVAS. Most workers have now completed three modules.

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Marrickville/Leichhardt Domestic Violence Committee

The local committee only met for six months during the period, this was due to the unexpected leave of both the WDVCS Coordinator and the VAW Regional Specialist Worker. We did, however undertake some preliminary preparation for developing a referral list of specialist DV counsellors.

Most DV clients are eligible to receive 20 hrs free counselling provided under the Victims Services Scheme, regardless of whether they had applied for victims compensation. We gained a commitment from 20 counsellors accredited under the scheme to be specifically trained in DV in return for participating on the specialist referral list. This will be a continuing project of the committee.

We also had several speakers address the committee during the period. Topics included the Health Departments new post natal screening protocol for DV; the use of the Police Standard Operating Procedures and a list of DV Offences under the Crimes Act; the Department of Housing's Co-ordinated Crisis Team and DOCS Policy on DV.

We also participated in the joint Local Domestic Violence Committees Forum for the Central Sydney VAW region which was Coordinated by the regional specialist, Matina Mottee. We would also like to extend our thanks to the Newtown Neighbourhood Centre for providing the meeting room for our meetings and community forums throughout the year.

Police Liaison

The scheme has maintained a good working relationship with both DVLOs from Marrickville and Newtown Area Commands. We have made the effort to have regular meetings outside the court time so that we can discuss strategies to improve service delivery. Both DVLOs have attended support worker meetings to discuss court procedure and training issues.

We have had input into Marrickville Police's Domestic Violence Strategy which includes recommendations regarding DV kits, NESB training issue and joint training ventures.

We have decided not to implement the police DV incident card until trials of that project are completed in the Burwood Area. Early indications from this trial indicate an increased work load for the court assistance scheme and they have made preliminary recommendations that extra follow up workers be allocated where the card is implemented. As stated last year, DVLOs continue to have enormous strain placed on their positions and have little status to be able to effect change. Some DVLOs are expected to perform normal duties as well as maintain the specialist position, resulting in little time to redress service delivery issues such as service of summons, court returns; breaches of AVOs, enforcement of orders and the use of interpreters. Also, in an ideal world; local police prosecutors would be allocated time to both see clients prior to court and to attend meetings with

the DVLOs and scheme workers to improve working relationships at court.

Submissions, Reports And Other Activities

- Conducted Community Legal Education at Marrickville Family Support Service
- Marrickville/Leichhardt DV Committee Submission - NSW AG's
- Conducted Community Legal Education Forum on Domestic Violence
- Participation in the NSW WDV CAS Conference
- Interview with 2SER on DV, Stop DV Day and MLC
- Participation in the Review of the Quarter Way to Equal Report by the AG's
- Participation in working group on upgrading of WDV CAS positions under the new SACS Award
- Paper on Police Liaison and DV for Marrickville Area Commands DV Strategy
- Participation in the NSW Refugee Councils Consultation on DV with New Arrivals
- Presentation of Marrickville/Leichhardt DV Committee's Work at the Combined Forum

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Committees And Working Groups

- Newtown Court Users Forum
- Central Sydney Prevention of Violence Against Women's Reference Group
- Combined Community Legal Centres DV Sub Committee
- NSW Network of Women's Domestic Violence Court Assistance Schemes
- Convenor Marrickville/Leichhardt DV Committee

Marrickville Legal Centre thanks the following workers, solicitors and organisations who participated on the Newtown WDV CAS during the period:

Marrickville Family Support Service
Barnardos
Leichhardt Women's Health Centre
Jeans Place
Marian Centre
Centre Care Glebe
Alive Program
May Murray Neighbourhood Centre
Elsie Women's Refuge
Domestic Violence Advocacy Service

Wirringa Baiya
Blake, Dawson and Waldron
Gilbert and Tobin

Community Workers:

Christine Daniels
Slava Cruz
Miriam De Freitas
Liberty Rawson
Truc Nguyen
Yen Nguyen
Tracy Robinson
Lisa Windon
Rebecca Sainsbury

Bernie McGee
Rosemary Cunningham
Natasha Keppie
Litza Diak
Rosie Lee
Merryn Jones

Solicitors:

Rachel Martin
Belinda Russon
Vanessa Crawford
Anne Cregan
Monique Hitter

FINANCIAL REPORT

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

A.B.N. 53 699 012 017
A.C.N. 002 059 485

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 30 JUNE, 2003

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2003</u> \$	<u>2002</u> \$
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Cash	5	290,522	238,349
Receivables		5,755	3,705
Prepayments		10,186	4,150
		<u>306,463</u>	<u>246,204</u>
<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	6	18,533	24,521
Prepayment		26,352	28,112
		<u>44,885</u>	<u>52,633</u>
<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>		<u>351,348</u>	<u>298,837</u>
<u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>			
Creditors & Accrued Expenses		33,039	32,846
Deferred Grants		18,404	1,760
Provisions	7	125,614	118,536
		<u>177,057</u>	<u>153,142</u>
<u>NON-CURRENT LIABILITY</u>			
Deferred Grant	12	26,352	28,112
<u>TOTAL LIABILITIES</u>		<u>203,409</u>	<u>181,254</u>
<u>NET ASSETS</u>		<u>\$147,939</u>	<u>\$117,583</u>
<u>EQUITY</u>			
Accumulated Funds		<u>\$147,939</u>	<u>\$117,583</u>

The above Statement of Financial Position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes.

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

A.E.N. 53 699 012 017
A.C.N. 002 059 485

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2003

Annual Report 2002-2003

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2003</u> \$	<u>2002</u> \$
Operating Revenue	2	588,509	583,066
Interest Received		13,169	8,316
		701,678	591,382
Less			
Administration Expenses		87,462	74,331
Client/Community Servicing Expenses		13,022	20,728
Occupancy Expenses		18,191	15,778
Staff Expenses		552,647	566,586
		671,322	677,423
 OPERATING SURPLUS		 30,356	 13,959
Accumulated Funds brought forward		117,583	103,624
ACCUMULATED FUNDS carried forward		\$147,939	\$117,583

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE
 (A Company Limited by Guarantee)
 A.B.N. 53 699 012 017
 A.C.N. 002 059 485

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2003

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2003</u> \$	<u>2002</u> \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES & GOVERNMENT GRANTS			
Receipts from clients/legal costs awarded/community		113,908	213,147
Government Grants		644,818	601,466
		<u>758,726</u>	<u>814,613</u>
Payments to creditors and employees		(715,529)	(748,139)
NET CASH FLOWS		<u>43,097</u>	<u>66,474</u>
Interest Received		13,169	8,316
NET CASH FLOWS FROM ALL ACTIVITIES		<u>56,266</u>	<u>74,790</u>
Payments for property, plant & equipment		(4,093)	(17,040)
NET INCREASE IN CASH HELD		<u>52,173</u>	<u>57,750</u>
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		<u>238,349</u>	<u>180,599</u>
CASH AT THE END OF THE FINANCIAL YEAR	5	<u>\$290,522</u>	<u>\$238,349</u>

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Notes.

MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

A.B.N. 53 699 012 017
A.C.N. 002 059 485

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2003

Annual Report 2002-03

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
	\$	\$
<u>INCOME</u>		
Grants - Legal Aid Commission	140,596	127,864
Commonwealth	221,790	191,408
State		
- Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service	216,112	221,111
- Domestic Violence CAS	66,320	61,083
	644,818	601,466
Unspent Grant brought forward	1,378	13,090
Other Grants	5,150	2,360
Casework Income		
T.A.A.S. Subsidies/Refunds	4,834	1,529
Legal Costs Received	12,702	29,176
C.L.S.I.S. Project Reimbursements	2,120	-
Consultancies	4,708	421
Interest Received	13,169	8,316
Membership Fees & Donations	137	374
Rental Income	10,500	10,500
Sundry Income	2,162	227
Workers Compensation Claims	-	23,923
	701,678	691,382
Less		
<u>EXPENDITURE</u> - Schedule	671,322	677,423
<u>SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u>	\$30,356	\$13,959

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SCHEDULE OF EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE, 2003

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
<u>Administration Expenses</u>		
Advertising	840	494
Audit Fees	3,040	2,500
Bank & Financial Charges	1,571	1,684
Committee Expenses	401	274
Computer Expenses	18,355	9,548
Depreciation	10,081	15,841
Equipment - Minor	5,174	1,884
Insurance - General/P.I.	6,196	6,498
Levies	3,347	3,573
Postage/Courier	2,434	2,327
Reallocation - Grants Received from Accumulated Funds	4,428	-
Stationery/Office Supplies	6,107	4,459
Subscriptions/Library	9,890	10,575
Sundry Expenses	314	672
Telecommunications	15,284	14,002
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	87,462	74,331
<u>Client/Community Servicing Expenses</u>		
Catering/Venue Hire	840	-
Community Development	1,058	1,347
Interpreters	1,023	4,856
Non-recoverable Disbursements	1,521	3,220
Printing/Production	6,170	8,475
Travel/Accommodation	1,175	1,673
Volunteers' Expenses	1,235	1,157
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	13,022	20,728
<u>Occupancy Expenses</u>		
Cleaning	1,974	480
Electricity	1,776	1,881
Rent/Leasehold Expenses	12,722	12,470
Repairs/Maintenance	1,080	134
Security	639	813
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	18,191	15,778
<u>Staffing Expenses</u>		
Conferences/Seminars	5,821	6,321
Consultants	2,836	3,750
Other Salary Related Expenses	2,785	-
Practising Certificates	2,390	4,313
Staff Training	2,941	1,344
Superannuation	44,182	38,674
Supervision/Counselling	2,441	496
Wages/Salaries	483,771	508,864
Workers Compensation Insurance	4,480	2,824
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	552,647	566,586
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$671,322	\$677,423

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LIKELY DEVELOPMENTS

At the date of this Report, the Committee is not aware of any matter or circumstances that have arisen since 30 June, 2003 which would significantly affect:

- (a) likely developments in the operations of the Company; or
- (b) the expected results of those operations.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' BENEFITS

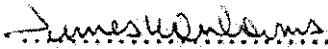
Since 30 June, 2002 no Committee Member has received or become entitled to receive a benefit because of a contract made by the Company or related body corporate with the Committee Member or with a firm of which he or she is a Member, or with a Company in which he or she has a substantial financial interest.

COMMITTEE REMUNERATION

All Committee Members act in an honorary capacity. No fees are paid or payable and no statistics kept on attendances.

Signed at Marrickville this 18th day of August 2003.


.....
Committee/(Director) Member


.....
Committee/(Director) Member

SANDRA D. GROLLMUS

Registered Company Auditor
Registered Tax Agent

7 BURRANEER CLOSE
HURSTVILLE 2220
TELEPHONE 9546 7366
FAX: 9546 2267

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF
MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE
(A Company Limited by Guarantee)

SCOPE

I have audited the Financial Statements of MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE (A Company Limited by Guarantee) for the year ended 30 June, 2003 as set out on pages 5 to 13. The Company's Committee Members are responsible for the Financial Statements. I have conducted an independent audit of these Financial Statements in order to express an opinion on them to the Members of the Company.

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

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

AUDIT OPINION

In my opinion, the Financial Statements of MARRICKVILLE LEGAL CENTRE are properly drawn up:

- (a) so as to give a true and fair view of the Company's state of affairs as at 30 June, 2003 and its result and cash flows for the financial year ended on that date; and
- (b) comply with the provisions of the Corporations Act 2001; and
- (c) in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.
- (d) All information, explanation and assistance necessary have been given.


SANDRA GROLLMUS

Registered Company Auditor
Registered No. 1254

Signed at Hurstville this 12 day of August 2003.

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COMMITTEE'S/(DIRECTORS') DECLARATION

The Committee/(Directors) Members declare that the Financial Statements and notes thereto, set out on pages 5 to 13:

- (a) comply with Accounting Standards and the Corporations Act 2001;
- (b) are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the Company's state of affairs as at 30 June, 2003, and its result for the financial year ended on that date; and
- (c) at the date of this Declaration there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Company will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

McRoss

.....
Committee/(Director) Member

James Williams

.....
Committee/(Director) Member

Signed at Marrickville this 18th day of August 2003.

STAFF AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MLC Staff 2002 - 2003

Maria Elena Ang
Information and Referral Officer

Jesse Booth
Tenancy Advice & Advocacy

Toni Brown
Women's Domestic Violence Court
Assistance Scheme

Pip Davis
Generalist Solicitor

Elizabeth De Freitas
P/T Tenancy Advice & Advocacy
from Jun '03

Sandy Eager
P/T Tenancy Advocacy & Access

Mary Flaskas
P/T Tenancy Advocacy & Access
until April '03

Vivianna Villamar
locum Tenancy Worker
March - May '03

Shane Neagle
locum Tenancy Worker
May - June '03

Greg Brown
locum Tenancy Worker
June '03

Louise Buchanan
locum Tenancy Worker
February - April '03

Bede Haines
P/T Tenancy Advice & Advocacy
until Feb '03

Katrina Harrison
Coordinator

Cathy Loren
Domestic Violence
Court Assistance Scheme from July
'02

Sue Sewell
locum DVCAS Coordinator
March - June '03

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Janet Loughman
Principal Solicitor

Margaret Martin
P/T Generalist Solicitor

Gabrielle McKinnon
Children's Solicitor

Cecilia Urbina
Financial Administrator

Polly Porteus
Indigenous Cadetship Project
Worker
from February '03

Management Committee

Lisa Castanelli

Monique Hitter (resigned)

James Koulouris

James McDougall (resigned)

Natalie Ross

Emra Vukovic

Andrew Wilson

Paul White (resigned)

Nick Yetzotis