

FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY
LEGAL CENTRES (VICTORIA) INC.



Federation of
Community Legal Centres
VICTORIA



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2016-17**

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< **Cover Photo:** Claudia Fatone of Fitzroy
Legal Service, Annie Kelly of Darebin
Community Legal Centre and Ariel
Couchman of Youthlaw attend our People's
Budget in Canberra.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We respectfully acknowledge the
traditional land of the Kulin Nation and
we acknowledge the Wurundjeri people
who are the traditional custodians of
this land.

We pay respects to their Elders past,
present and future. We recognise that
their sovereignty was never ceded and
the structural inequality created by
invasion continues to this day.

We appreciate and celebrate diversity
in all its forms. We believe diversity of
all kinds makes our teams, services
and organisations stronger and more
effective.



CHAIR AND CEO'S REPORT

Photo: Serina McDuff
(CEO) and Belinda Lo
(Chairperson)

Community legal centres fought a huge battle this year: we faced losing 30% of our federal funding. We had almost no campaign infrastructure to fight back – no digital email list, no large social media following, no budget! But, through mobilising our staff, communities and partners, CLCs across the country pulled off a successful campaign, winning the funding reversal at the last minute.

Victoria played a major role in the campaign's success. Media stories generated by Victorian CLCs in the final few months – particularly featuring personal client stories concerning family violence – were critical. So too was the sustained social media mobilisation and visuals that Victorian CLCs produced around key moments, such as the gagged justice national action and the People's Budget. Victorian CLCs were also a critical lobbying force, with Victorian MPs across all parties coming out as key advocates for the reversal.

For two years, we have been forced to fight just to retain the status quo, despite being already desperately under-resourced. But with this significant win under our belts, it is time to re-focus on the ongoing need to win sustainable funding for our sector, as well as on systemic advocacy to address the root causes of legal need.

While the sector faced the funding crisis, at an organisational level, the Federation faced financial challenges. A lack of funding saw us downsize and farewell experienced and committed staff members. We'd like to take this opportunity to specifically acknowledge the work of our departing colleagues and the outstanding contribution that they have made during their time at the Federation. Chris Atmore worked tirelessly for more than nine years as a fierce advocate across family violence and related policy, playing a key role in the most important issues and reforms. Darren Lewin-Hill ensured a consistently high media profile for the organisation and provided essential media support to members. Michelle McDonnell spearheaded Smart Justice, ensuring evidence-based criminal justice policies were at the forefront of the government and community agenda. We also farewellled Cate Edwards, who has been an incredible leader at the Federation providing crucial support for staff and members. We're lucky to stay connected with Cate in her new role at DVRCV.

Our new smaller team has still had a big impact. At a State level, we worked hard to build a case for adequate funding for CLCs. Over the course of several months, we provided advice to Government on how community legal centres could address legal need in their communities and the difference this would make to the lives of Victorians. In April 2017, the State Government announced \$14.5m over four years for community legal centres – an unprecedented outcome.

Our vision is of active and engaged citizens able to participate and shape the civil, social, economic and cultural life of their community. We know that

universal access to legal help is critical to that vision. Our priorities this year have been to: position the CLC sector as an essential part of Victoria's response to family violence; reorient Smart Justice to focus on campaigning at a time of concerning law and order policies and rhetoric; develop a shared framework for the impact we have in the community through the Outcomes Measurement Project; and provide collective opportunities for our members to respond to the major reforms underway, including changes to the way that legal assistance is coordinated, changes to government reporting processes when it comes to funding, and changes to the way that legal need is defined.

The development of our new strategic plan, following the expiration of our 2014–17 strategy, will see us build on this work, as well as strengthen our accreditation, training and development capacities.

Our campaign win this year, and the journey that took us there, has been a powerful reminder of how strong we are as a sector when we work together and in close connection with communities – including sector partners, local members and media, grassroots activists, persuadable members of the public, and especially our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners. The Federation will work hard to continue building these important relationships, working collaboratively to ensure justice and fairness for all.

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< Photo: Community members
attend the National Day of Action
event in Sydney's Belmore Park
to call for the reversal of CLC
funding cuts.

ABOUT THE FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES VICTORIA

Photo: Nick Hudson of Barwon
Community Legal Service at our 2016
CLC Symposium, Achieving Justice.

The Federation of Community Legal Centres (Vic) Inc. is the peak body for 49 community legal centres across Victoria. The Federation leads and supports excellence in the community legal sector, promotes the purpose and value of community legal centres, and advances social justice and a fair legal system.

The Federation:

- » provides information and referrals to people seeking legal assistance;
- » conducts systemic law reform and policy work to improve the justice system;
- » works to build a stronger and more effective community legal sector;
- » provides services and support to community legal centres;
- » represents community legal centres with stakeholders.

The Federation assists its diverse membership to collaborate for justice. Workers and volunteers throughout Victoria come together through working groups and other networks to exchange ideas and develop strategies to improve the effectiveness of their work.

We are the
peak body
for
49
**community
legal centres**
across Victoria

ABOUT COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES

Photo: Members attend
our 2016 CLC Symposium,
Achieving Justice.

Community legal centres are independent community organisations that provide free legal services to the public.

Our clients are those who face economic, social or cultural disadvantage and whose life circumstances are often severely affected by their legal problem. Our clients are often unable to access other legal services. We are experts in working with these clients.

Community legal centres receive funds and resources from a variety of sources including state, federal and local governments, philanthropic foundations, pro bono contributions and donations. Centres also harness the energy and expertise of hundreds of volunteers across Victoria.

Community legal centres provide effective and creative solutions to legal problems based on their experience within their local communities. It is our community relationship that distinguishes us from other legal providers and enables us to respond effectively to the needs of our communities as they arise and change.

Community legal centres integrate assistance for individual clients with community legal education, community development and law reform projects that are based on client need and preventative in outcome.

Community legal centres are committed to collaboration with government, legal aid, the private legal profession and community partners to ensure the best outcomes for our clients and the justice system in Australia.

The day to day work of community legal centres reflects a 40 year commitment to social justice, human rights, equity, democracy and community participation.

Victorian CLC Top 5 legal problem types

Family Violence
Intervention Orders

Parenting
arrangements

Fines

Traffic and vehicle
regulatory offences

Family law property

A WORD FROM OUR INTERNS

Photo: The Federation staff and volunteer team.

We couldn't wait to get started with the Federation of Community Legal Centres. Knowing how vital community legal centres are to a working justice system, we were excited to learn how the Federation helps advocate for change in the community.

Our time here has given us the benefit of working in two distinct areas.

Joining the Federation at the tail-end of a two-year outcomes measurement project, we worked to research and finalise key areas of the outcomes measurement framework, which will help CLCs identify and track their effectiveness at achieving their goals. Being able to work on this project provided insight into the difficulties CLCs face while providing community-centred services.

On the advocacy and policy team, we were able to get a first-hand view of how systemic issues within society are changed. We saw strong and fierce advocacy for justice, and learned how to guide and shape campaigns. Time was spent researching issues, writing reports and promoting campaigns and events.

We also answered the client referral phone service where anxious community members called seeking help. It was rewarding when we could connect them with a service that could help, and challenging when faced with situations where there was simply no resource available. It reinforced the reality that CLCs help so many people, and need crucial resources in order to be able to help so many more.

Our previous legal experience has primarily been informed by private law, meaning we were a bit naïve as to what kind of work the Federation did at the outset. However, through our time here we have developed a deep respect for their amazing work. It has been humbling and meaningful to take part, and to learn how the law can be used as a tool to positively impact communities.

Rachel Hovenden and Marianne Tolentino
University of Melbourne Student Interns

“We also answered the client referral phone service where anxious community members called seeking help. It was rewarding when we could connect them with a service that could help, and challenging when faced with situations where there was simply no resource available.”

“We saw strong and fierce advocacy for justice, and learned how to guide and shape campaigns.”

FEDERATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

CHAIRPERSON

Belinda LO (Eastern Community Legal Centre)

TREASURER

James Ferguson (KPMG)

SECRETARY

Kristen Wallwork (Springvale Monash Legal Service)

GENERAL MEMBERS

Zana Bytheway (JobWatch)

Jackie Galloway (Peninsula Community Legal Centre)

Ben Zika (Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre)

Clare Sauro (Arc Justice) (From 14 October 2017)

VICTORIAN MEMBERS OF NACLAC ADVISORY COUNCIL

Jackie Galloway

Serina McDuff

FEDERATION INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

Emily Sinclair

Serena Trezise

Rachel Hovendon

Katherine Lo Presti

Ryan Donaghey

Paola Vega

Seveni Perera

Alex McGhee

Marionne Tolentino

FUNDING AND SUPPORT

FUNDERS

Victoria Legal Aid Community Legal Services Program

Victoria Legal Aid Community Legal Centre

Innovation & Transformation Fund

Legal Services Board

Myer Foundation

Department of Premier & Cabinet

Federal Attorney-General's Department

IN KIND AND PRO BONO

Innovative Knowledge Development & Jill Toovey

Gadens

Russell Kennedy

Herbert Smith Freehills

City of Melbourne

Allens Linklaters

Clayton Utz

Collins Biggers & Paisley

Maddocks

SPONSORSHIP/DONATIONS

Reichstein Foundation

VCOSS

Salvation Army

FEDERATION TEAM

CEO

Director of Engagement

Director of Policy and Advocacy

Finance Officer

Accreditation Coordinator

Project Manager – Outcomes Measurement

Project Manager – Specialist-Generalist

Serina McDuff

Melanie Poole

Katie Fraser

Deborah Wilson

Jen Missing

Rohan Thwaites

Michael Tamblyn

Departing Staff

Project Manager – Bridging the Distance (Temporary project)

Project Manager – Wanting Justice (Temporary project)

Communications Manager

Manager, Operations and Support

Senior Policy Advisor

Senior Policy Advisor

Office Coordinator

Finance Officer

Bonnie Renou

Catherine Moran

Darren Lewin-Hill

Cate Edwards

Chris Atmore

Michelle McDonnell

Veronica Hopkins

Lakmini Welaratne

FEDERATION MEMBERS



Photo: Nick Hudson of Barwon Community Legal Service, Dan Stubbs of Inner Melbourne Community Legal, Belinda Lo of Eastern Community Legal Centre, Serina McDuff of the Federation and Lisa-Maree Stevens of Murray Mallee Community Legal Service at our Sector Strategy Session.

GENERALIST CENTRE MEMBERS

Barwon Community Legal Service; Brimbank Melton Community Legal Centre; Casey Cardinia Community Legal Service; Central Highlands Community Legal Centre; Darebin Community Legal Centre; Eastern Community Legal Centre; Fitzroy Legal Service; Flemington & Kensington Community Legal Centre; Gippsland Community Legal Service; Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre; Hume Riverina Community Legal Service; Inner Melbourne Community Legal; Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre; Monash Oakleigh Legal Service; Moonee Valley Legal Service; Murray Mallee Community Legal Service; Northern Community Legal Centre; Peninsula Community Legal Centre; Southport Community Legal Service; St. Kilda Legal Service Co-Op; Springvale Monash Legal Service; West Heidelberg Community Legal Service; WEstjustice Community Legal Centre; and Whittlesea Community Legal Service.

SPECIALIST CENTRE MEMBERS

AED Legal Centre; Animal Law Institute; Asylum Seeker Resource Centre; Consumer Action Law Centre; Disability Discrimination Legal Service; Emma House Domestic Violence Services; Environmental Justice Australia; Family Violence Prevention And Legal Service (Victoria); First Step Legal Service; Human Rights Law Centre; Intouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence; JobWatch; Justice Connect; Law And Advocacy Centre For Women; Melbourne University Student Union Legal Service; Mental Health Legal Centre; Refugee Legal; Seniors Rights Victoria; Social Security Rights Victoria; Tenants Union Of Victoria; Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service Co-Op; Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service; Women's Legal Service Victoria; Youthlaw; and Young Workers Centre.

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Domestic Violence Resource Centre



Photo: Jill Prior of Law and Advocacy Centre for Women speaking on our Progress 2017 Panel: Defending Justice, Rejecting Tough on Crime.

VICTORIAN COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE SERVICES 2016-17

Client Demographics

Total clients **52,255**

AGE

22% 25-34yrs

35% 35-49yrs

18% 50-64yrs

GENDER

40% Male

58% Female

INCOME



63% less than \$31,199/yr

15% \$31,200 - \$64,999/yr

11% No income

Services overview

47,768 instances of advice for Individuals

35,170 instances of information for Individuals

81,877 referrals for individuals

31,903 representation services for Individuals

Education

1,180 CLC activities delivered

60 CLC resources

This data is taken from CLASS over a transitional period for the financial year 2016-2017. There have been significant changes in data standards and definitions, impacting the consistency of data.

HELP THE COMMUNITY ACCESS LEGAL ASSISTANCE



CAMPAIGN SUCCESS: EQUAL JUSTICE

Photo: Serina McDuff of the Federation addresses the crowd at Belmore Park in Sydney on the National Day of Action.

A week before the Federal Budget was handed down in May, we received the fantastic news that the federal funding cuts had been reversed. This came after two years of intense campaigning from CLCs across Australia, with hundreds of CLC staff giving huge amounts of their time and energy to keep the pressure on the Federal Government. The critical role of Victorian CLCs has been especially noted, as has the excellent leadership of NACLCL particularly in lobbying Federal MPs.

Throughout the campaign, we leveraged our collective networking power, mobilising partners from across the legal, family violence and community sectors to highlight the critical value of CLCs. Together we lobbied MPs across all parties, supported the state governments to raise concerns, and coordinated media coverage across national and local media with a focus on client stories.

“These cuts are also happening at a time when more women than ever before are asking for assistance to leave violent relationships.”

Helen Matthews, Principal Lawyer of Women’s Legal Service Victoria in the Courier

There is an opportunity to now turn our hard-fought win into an ongoing strategic campaign for proper support for the community legal sector, and this is what we are now focused on doing. We are making it clear that we greatly welcome the reversal of the cuts, but that we need sustained funding for the legal assistance sector. We are also continuing to grow

and build our relationships across sectors, including through events such as the People’s Budget, where CLCs were able to lead a powerful cross-movement civil society space, in calling for a public policy agenda that recognises universal access to legal assistance as critical.

“All the way through they supported me. They supported me through the magistrates’ court and gave me advice on the family court.”

Family violence survivor, Kim, speaks to the media on the importance of Eastern Community Legal Centre

The Federation recently won a Reachtel competition for \$10,000 worth of polling into attitudes about the legal assistance sector. We are working with our counterparts around Australia and with NACLCL to ensure that we shape the questions together and collaborate on how to use this critical research going forward.



Photo: Joanna Fletcher of Women’s Legal Service, Dan Stubbs of Inner Melbourne Community Legal and Serina McDuff and Melanie Poole of the Federation at a press conference with Fair Agenda.

LOCAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

📺 *‘Legal service for unrepresented women likely to be dropped over funding cuts’*

Women’s Legal Service Victoria
ABC News, December 2017

📺 *‘Eastern Community Legal Centre in Healesville faces closure because of state, federal funding stoush’*

Eastern Community Legal Centre
Lilydale & Yarra Valley Leader, January 2017



📺 *‘Darebin Community Legal Centre says federal cuts will affect 500 vulnerable clients’*

Darebin CLC
Preston Leader, March 2017

📷 Federal and State MPs with staff at the Darebin Community Legal Centre. Photo: Josie Hayden



📺 *‘West Heidelberg Community Legal Service may be forced to turn away family violence victims’*

West Heidelberg CLC
Heidelberg Leader, March 2017

📷 West Heidelberg Community Legal Service chief executive Mick Geary with volunteer Usueli Ntuwah (left), principal lawyer Stephanie Price (right) and client Judith Smith. Photo: Sarah Matray



📺 *‘Dreyfus pledges to reverse ARC Justice Cuts’*

ARC Justice
Bendigo Advertiser, April 2017

📷 ARC Justice executive officer Hayley Mansfield with Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre legal practice manager Clare Sauro. Photo: Jason Walls



📺 *‘Fairer cut is needed’*

Goulburn Valley CLC
Shepparton News, April 2017
📷 Kaz Gurney, Managing Lawyer of Goulburn Valley Community Legal Centre Photo: Thomas Moir

“Every line in a budget is about our lives and communities, and we will measure this budget in terms of what it does to make our society more just, fair, safe, equitable and inclusive – including by tackling family violence and Aboriginal over-incarceration.”

Antoinette Braybrook opening address



PEOPLE'S BUDGET

Photo: Over 70 organisations attend our People's Budget in Canberra

On the Monday before the Federal Budget, the Federation brought over 70 organisations representing over 5 million people together to present a positive alternative to the budget – a People's Budget.

We initiated this event – with key support from NALCLC, CLCNSW, Getup and many others – because access to a community legal centre is vital for a just and fair society. Budgets should make our society fair for all, not just the 1%. We also knew that it was important to connect the work of community legal centres to a broader narrative about the society that we want. Budgets are about people and the choices we make. They are an expression of our values as a society. This was about civil society voices coming together around a vision of society based on justice, fairness and equality.

Annie Kelly (Darebin), Claudia Fatone (Fitzroy), Antoinette Braybrook (FVPLS) and Ariel Couchman (YouthLaw) spoke powerfully during the event, covering issues such as family violence, youth homelessness, rising incarceration of Aboriginal women and the role of CLCs.

“I witness daily the resilience and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. When they tell their stories – of lives devastated by family violence, or by prison, or homelessness, or unemployment and discrimination – we listen. We have the solutions and we will keep fighting for them.”

Antoinette Braybrook opening address

In a powerful moment of solidarity across sectors and social movements, the entire crowd celebrated the CLC funding reversal, cheering the CLC representatives in attendance. Others shared their recent campaign wins too, such as stopping efforts to remove 18C. We also heard from artists, unions, community lawyers, students and people in the aid sector about what a People's Budget would look like to them.

“A People's Budget would find the \$200m we need for community legal services.” – Claudia Fatone, Fitzroy Legal Service

“A People's Budget would intervene early in young lives, not throw them in prison.” – Ariel Couchman, Youthlaw

The effort put in online by CLC staff all around Australia was phenomenal. Whether you attended the event, sent in a story or supported #peoplesbudget on social media, you made this event a success. We were covered in a major paper in every state and featured on the evening news.



Photo: Victorian CLCs and NALCLC colleagues attend our People's Budget in Canberra.

TWITTER HIGHLIGHTS

[@WomensLegalVic](#) May 8

Ongoing and secure funding to #familyviolence services so agencies are not having to fight for vital funding every few years. #peoplesbudget

1 21 18

[@GetUp](#) May 8

The #peoplesbudget wraps up with energy and determination from over 72 organisations representing over 5 million people

4 8

[@NATSILS_](#) May 8

#PeoplesBudget - calling for budget decisions that prioritise vast unmet needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ppl.

9 4



[@GippscCLS](#) May 9

Free legal services to all who need it! #fundequaljustice #PeoplesBudget #Budget2017 @NALCLCComms @CommunityLawVic @AnglicareVic

2 5

[@vanbadham_](#) May 8

My solidarity and respect to Community Legal Centres. If we don't defend them, who'll be left to defend us. #auspol #equaljustice

106 162

[@Change_Record](#) May 8

A #PeoplesBudget would invest in communities not prisons #Budget2017

23 15

FEDERAL BUDGET

The Federal Budget confirmed the success of the funding campaign and formally included an additional \$39 million for Community Legal Centres, and \$16.7 million for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, thereby reversing funding cuts that the Federal Government had been pushing over the last two years.

The Federation was in Canberra for the Federal Budget and while we celebrated the reinstatement of our funding, we also expressed deep concerns about the punitive measures that have been proposed by the Government for welfare recipients. The Federation's CEO, Serina McDuff, was interviewed in the Parliamentary press gallery after the Budget was handed down. Her comments were covered by the Seven and Nine networks, and in the print media.

Following the release of the Budget, the Federation joined with NACLC colleagues and with our members Annie Kelly of Darebin and Ariel Couchman of Youthlaw to attend a morning tea to celebrate the campaign, which was held by the Labor Party caucus.

VICTORIAN STATE BUDGET

While our Federal Budget efforts were centred on public campaigning, at a State level we were providing critical input to the internal budget process – building a case for why community legal centres should receive funding to help their communities.

Over the course of several months, we provided advice to Government on how community legal centres could address legal need in their communities and the difference this would make to the lives of Victorians.

In April 2017, the State Government announced \$14.5m over four years for community legal centres.

With demand up and community legal centres currently having to turn away thousands, this funding means that Victorians who are struggling to make ends meet, or facing crises in their lives caused by family violence, unemployment, consumer scams and insecure tenancies will now have hope of getting the support that they need.

The Budget also provided an additional \$50 million for family violence legal assistance, to be shared by Legal Aid and CLCs over four years. The budget also supported an expansion of services for the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria, and the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service.

“The increase in funding for community legal services is a much welcome boost. Legal support at a time of crisis in people’s lives can be the difference between making it through, or losing everything.”

CEO Serina McDuff in Federation Media Release on the State Budget

FEDERATION INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICES

The Federation provides a direct information and referral service for the public via telephone and our website communitylaw.org.au. Our contact details are widely listed as a referral point for CLCs and we assist around 1,500 callers each year, helping them to obtain the right legal assistance for a range of legal issues. Common legal issues include employment law, family law, family violence, consumer issues, fines and traffic offences and tenancy.

Our website hosts and provides links to CLC websites, as well as information on finding legal assistance and information. Over the year the site received over 240,000 page views and more than 66,000 visitors.

1,500+
people were
assisted
by our referral
line in 2016-17



SMART JUSTICE

Photo: Antoinette Braybrook of the Aboriginal Family Violence and Prevention Legal Service Victoria speaks on our Progress 2017 Panel: Defending Justice, Rejecting Tough on Crime.

FEDERATION PANEL AT PROGRESS 2017

“DEFENDING JUSTICE, REJECTING TOUGH ON CRIME”

In June, the Federation hosted a panel event at the Progress 2017 conference, focused on how we need to transform the justice system if we want to tackle inequality and injustice.

A lineup of incredible CLC speakers and experts generously gave their time to participate in the panel. Moderated by Serina McDuff, the panel featured Antoinette Braybrook of FVPLS, Karly Warner of NATSILS, Jill Prior of the Law and Advocacy Centre for Women and Anat Shenker-Osorio, a key featured speaker of the conference and a renowned international communications expert.

Antoinette, Karly, Jill and Anat spoke about the damage that the dehumanising ‘tough on crime’ narrative is doing to people and the community.. They told powerful stories of the lives destroyed by this narrative, and especially talked about the impact on Aboriginal women.

Anat spoke about the need to avoid passive language. “People don’t ‘go’ to prison – they’re sent there!” she said. She also stated that we need to avoid sentences such as “incarceration rates are rising” and instead point to who is making these decisions.

Karly and Anat made the point that everyday people who are experiencing immediate fear – whether real or perceived as a result of sensationalised tabloid stories – will not be persuaded to change their minds by just being told the ‘facts’. We need to speak in a language that people can internalise and imagine.

A very clear message from all panellists detailed the need for Aboriginal and other lived experience voices to be centered when it comes to reframing ‘tough on crime’ rhetoric and telling stories of injustice – as well as of strength and resilience – in our communities. The panel called on non-Indigenous organisations to not just use their logos for legitimacy, but to come to them with an idea and truly partner.



Photo: Panellists at our Remaking Justice Symposium: David Moore PhD, Astrid Birgden PhD, Dr Heather Holst of Launch Housing and Professor Arie Frieberg.

REMAKING JUSTICE SYMPOSIUM

Victoria's progress on reducing reoffending by strengthening rehabilitation and reintegration of people with lived experience of prison was the focus of the Remaking Justice symposium, held on 25 August 2016.

The symposium was convened by Smart Justice, a coalition of 35 organisations led by the Federation of Community Legal Centres, who work together to promote evidence-based justice policies.

A keynote presentation by Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass MBE focused on her September 2015 report, *Investigation into the rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners*. She examined progress on the report's 25 recommendations to address the high level of reoffending, excessive prisoner numbers, and an unsustainable prison system that currently costs Victoria more than \$1 billion a year.

The symposium also heard from Attorney-General Martin Pakula on the future of the justice system, Rod Wise of the Department of Corrections on current operational issues and an expert panel on how the system can be remade and improved.

The well-attended symposium was a further step in a much-needed public conversation to turn the justice debate away from punitive and costly policies that don't work to evidence-based approaches that build community safety.

There was especially good feedback for the panel, which featured people with lived experience of prison. Taking this feedback on board, the Federation has continued to focus strongly on ensuring that voices of people with lived experience are heard in discussions about the impact of the criminal justice system.



Photo: Ombudsman Deborah Glass at our Remaking Justice Symposium.



ADDRESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE

Photo: Joanna Fletcher of Women's Legal Service and Belinda Lo of Eastern Community Legal Centre spoke about family violence reform at our 2016 CLC Symposium, Achieving Justice.

The Royal Commission into Family Violence has seen unprecedented commitment from the Victorian Government to implement all 227 recommendations handed down by the Commission in March 2016.

In August 2016, the Federation was invited to join the Steering Committee to provide advice to Government on the implementation. Drawing on the expertise of our members, we have worked to ensure that legal services are seen as a critical part of the service response to family violence. This has been a particularly important role, as the Royal Commission did not make an express recommendation relating to legal assistance. We have therefore participated in all forums, including co-design workshops, Steering Committee meetings and consultation sessions to provide advice and information on the current services provided, the level of demand, and the need for legal assistance in the design of new responses.

Throughout the year, we arranged for our members to present to the family violence team within Premier and Cabinet on the specialist family violence legal response provided by community legal centres. A new member Working Group was also established to provide ongoing leadership on the implementation.

We have worked collaboratively with Victoria Legal Aid and the family violence sector to provide consistent advice to Government, highlighting the importance of legal assistance and the need for adequate funding. Legal services have been noted as fundamental elements of the service system in the 10-year plan and the State-wide Concept for the Support and Safety Hubs identifies legal support as the number one priority identified in consultations.

In April 2017, the State Budget provided \$50m for family violence legal assistance services, including dedicated funding for community legal centres.

We partnered with Victoria Legal Aid, DV Victoria, Women's Legal Service Victoria and the Law Institute of Victoria on a submission to help guide the development of the information sharing regime. This collaboration continues on the implementation of the regime.

The Federation has also worked with VLA to identify a shared vision for the role of the legal assistance sector in responding to family violence and is in the process of joint planning on legal triage models.



Photo: Serina McDuff with Leanne Sinclair of Victoria Legal Aid at the launch of the Victorian Government's landmark Family Violence Plan, launched by Premier Daniel Andrews.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN VICTORIA

The Victorian Access to Justice Review further highlighted the severe lack of funding for legal assistance services across Victoria, and recognised how crucial community legal centres are in addressing people's legal and non-legal needs.

The Victorian Government announced an Access to Justice Review in October 2015. The aim of the Review was to identify ways to improve access to justice for Victorians with an everyday legal problem and ensure that everyone can get the legal help they need, including people who can't afford a private lawyer.

The Federation met with the Review team on several occasions and worked with members to develop a detailed submission. We explained the critical role that CLCs play, the unique and holistic approach to meeting legal and non-legal needs that we offer, and the insights and innovations that we continue to drive. Member centres also made important submissions to the Review. The final Report of the Access to Justice Review was released by the Department of Justice and Regulation on 4 October 2016.

The Review Report made 60 recommendations. Several of these acknowledged the critical role of community legal centres, who, along with statutory services such as Legal Aid, form a mixed model of legal assistance. The Report dedicated a chapter to integrated services, highlighting several best-practice examples of innovative service design pioneered by CLCs, including Health Justice Partnerships and Outreach models. The Review Report recommended that Government should make it a priority to support the integrated services that CLCs offer.

The Review Report also made recommendations relating to the coordination of the legal assistance sector. The Federation worked with members to provide a response to the Review Report, highlighting that there is great opportunity to embed collaboration across the legal assistance sector.

The Report also highlighted the fact that legal assistance services remain drastically underfunded. This adds to the volume of prior reports that have similarly made this clear. The Report recommended a significant increase in funding at both State and Federal levels.

In May 2017, the Government announced funding to implement some of the recommendations, including supporting expansion of the VLA website and Legal Help telephone line and increasing alternative dispute resolution services for small claims at VCAT.

'Community legal centres have led the way in integrated service delivery, from Health Justice Partnerships providing legal assistance in health settings to working alongside financial counsellors. We're glad to see the report has acknowledged the effectiveness of this approach.'

Serina McDuff in Federation Media Release, May 2017.

The Federation will continue to encourage Government to provide ongoing funding support for integrated services, such as Health Justice Partnerships, delivered by community legal centres, consistent with the Review recommendations. A new member Working Group is providing ongoing leadership on the implementation of the Review.



COLLABORATION: WORKING GROUPS AND NETWORKS

Photo: Neophytes
Network members

15+
active groups
and networks
with over
300 participants

ACCESS TO JUSTICE WORKING GROUP *Convenor: Serina McDuff*

The Access to Justice Working Group was established for Federation members to provide leadership on the major changes impacting legal assistance, including collaborative service planning, measuring legal need, coordination of legal services and accountability requirements. The Working Group has provided critical leadership for the future vision of legal assistance, building collaboration across the legal assistance sector and how we best ensure community legal centres continue to fight for justice, and achieve a fairer community for all into the future.

HUMAN RIGHTS WORKING GROUP *Convenor: Dr Russell Solomon*

The group's Terms of Reference cover the full range of legal issues relating to human rights and social justice, however with a strong focus on the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The Charter Review has been the subject of some discussion over the past year, particularly around what reform might come from the Government's Response.

Restraints on children with disabilities in schools continues to be an area of ongoing concern and a member of the group has been very involved in seeking to have the regulations under the Vic Education and Training Reform Act changed.

With one of our members being the expert adviser on the Law Council of Australia's Justice Project we have gained insights into the nature of this project. We are asking our members to submit any examples of good practice to the Project's staff.

INFRINGEMENTS WORKING GROUP

Convenors: Lucy Adams (Justice Connect); Shifrah Blustein (WEstjustice); Joanne Parkin (UnitingCare ReGen)

The Infringements Working Group (IWG) is a joint-working group of the Federation, Victoria Legal Aid and the Financial and Consumer Rights Council. The IWG involves 36 member organisations.

Our highlights last financial year, included:

1. Fines and family violence – building on the IWG's high impact work in 2015-16, we advocated with the Department of Justice and Regulation to include 'family violence' as a special circumstance from 1 July 2017. Together with the family violence sector, we made extensive submissions as part of the Victorian government's consultation process on a proposed family violence infringements scheme. The proposed scheme, which will likely start in 2018, was heavily amended in response to the input.

2. Implementing infringements reform – the IWG maintained our leadership role in Victoria's fines reform process through the Infringements Standing Advisory Committee and ongoing work with decision-makers at the Department of Justice and Regulation. This included submissions about Work and Development Permits, emphasising the need for appropriate 'work-off rates' (which were amended consistently with the IWG's feedback) and a mechanism for dealing with large fines debts, particularly those stemming from toll fines (this work is ongoing).

3. Staying on track for fairer fares & fines – we worked closely with the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources and Public Transport Victoria to improve approaches to people with special circumstances. In addition to workshops within the Department of Transport, the IWG helped to develop and deliver 17 information sessions for all public transport authorised officers to build their understanding and ability to respond appropriately to people experiencing special circumstances. As a result of our work, the Department of Transport has developed some strong policies and mechanisms to help address people's fines at the earliest possible point. It is currently considering two further IWG submissions addressing the need for improved concession entitlements, and stronger options to prevent infringements for people experiencing special circumstances or who have no income.

4. Infringements aren't the answer to homelessness

– the IWG worked hard to stop the City of Melbourne from pushing through proposed tougher local laws in response to rough sleeping. Based on IWG members' daily involvement with Victorians who have been caught up in a complex, inefficient infringements system, we highlighted the risks of the proposed laws, including the ineffectiveness of using fines to respond to homelessness. The decision on the proposed laws, initially due in May 2017, has been adjourned three times, and the IWG is hopeful that Melbourne will reclaim its role as a leader in considered responses to homelessness and avoid going down this costly and ineffective path.

TENANCY WORKING GROUP

Convenor: Yaelle Caspi (Tenants Union of Victoria)

The Tenancy Working Group is convened by the Tenants Victoria (formally Tenants Union of Victoria) and includes representatives from Victoria Legal Aid, a number of community legal centres and other services who undertake tenancy work. The Group meets every two months to discuss problems in tenancy law and practice; emerging issues; and common work and joint advocacy, particularly advocacy in relation to the RTA, Office of Housing and VCAT. A major focus for 2016-17 was identifying issues of shared concern for the review of the Residential Tenancies Act (including an internal appeals mechanism for VCAT) and the Ombudsman's review into the practice of allocating maintenance charges to tenants in public housing. The working group also collaborated on submissions about application fee waivers for VCAT and changes in VCAT's practice for obtaining documents on behalf of clients prior to a VCAT Hearing.

ACCESS TO INTERPRETERS WORKING GROUP

Convenor: Suzy Fox (St Kilda Legal Service)

The Access to Interpreters Working Group oversees the funding allocated to CLCs for Interpreters through VITS Language Loop and Auslan services. The funding allocation for interpreters has not increased over the years, despite an increase in community need for these services. This year also saw an increase in the dollar amount and number of CLCs requesting funding. Given the limited amount of funding available, the working group established a new process for CLCs to request funding and the method with which this funding is administered.



Photo: Neophytes Network members

NEOPHYTES NETWORK

Convenors: Connie Chen (Eastern Community Legal Centre) and Lee Carnie (Human Rights Law Centre)

The Neophytes Network is now in its second year. We are an information-sharing and support group for new and young CLC lawyers. This year, we have organised professional development opportunities targeted at new and young CLC lawyers at each of our meetings. These have included:

- » Duty lawyer advocacy training with barrister Sarah Keating
- » Practical advocacy workshop with barristers Zubin Menon and Angie Wong
- » Policy & campaigning workshop with Lucy Adams from Homeless Law and Daniel Webb from the Human Rights Law Centre
- » Cross-cultural awareness training with Roshan Bhandary from the Intouch Multicultural Centre against Family Violence
- » Project presentations from alumni from the Adaptive Leadership Program

We also share key resources with all new and young CLC lawyers on our closed Facebook page, from upcoming trainings to subscription updates, events, referral databases and working groups.

THE INTEGRATED LEGAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK

Convenor: Sarah McMahon (Justice Connect)

The Integrated Legal and Social Support Network meet bi-monthly to discuss issues relating to collaborative service delivery in legal practice settings. With an increased interest in integrated practice models in Community Legal Centres across Victoria, the group's membership has grown over the past year.

This year the group focussed on:

- » shared learnings about integrated practice
- » the impact of family violence reforms
- » training and research opportunities
- » measuring the effectiveness of the work
- » promoting integrated practice models

Over 2016-17, the primary project of the group has been the Integrated Practice Toolkit which tackles professional obligations, subpoenas and mandatory reporting as they relate to integrated practice settings. It is currently being finalised.

LEAD AND SUPPORT EXCELLENCE



Photo: Wayne Muir of Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service at our 2016 CLC Symposium, Achieving Justice.



Photo: Member CLCs at our Sector Outcomes Measurement Framework consultations.

IMPACT AND INNOVATION

85 workers from 39 centres **engaged** with the sector Outcomes Measurement Framework consultations



OUTCOMES MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK PROJECT

CLCs make a significant impact. We increase access to justice for our clients and advance social justice with our communities. The outcomes we achieve greatly outstrip our limited resources. While all these statements are true, CLCs need the skills and resources to effectively monitor and evaluate our work so we can further improve our service delivery and better understand and evidence our impact.

The ability to capture outcomes is also a key part of retaining a strong identity as a sector. We know that if we can't define and articulate outcomes for ourselves, then others will be all too happy to do it for us.

The Federation's Outcomes Measurement and Evaluation Capacity Building Project has supported seven Victorian CLCs with training and expert assistance to develop and begin to implement organisational monitoring and evaluation systems.

We have also developed a sector-wide Outcomes Measurement Framework, in consultation with Victorian CLCs. The Framework articulates the common outcomes that Victorian CLCs work towards and provides guidance for how they can be measured. This Framework will give us the power to further define our role in creating a fairer society. It time, it could also enable shared measurement of outcomes across multiple CLCs to demonstrate our collective impact.

While this particular project will end in November 2017, thanks to support from the Legal Services Board the Federation will have a new, in-house impact co-ordination function to support centres in using the Framework.

“Great chance to interact with colleagues and transform our thinking about our work to focus more on outcomes.”

- Consultation session participant.





Photo: Murray Mallee Community Legal Service 21st birthday celebrations



Photo: Shen Narayanasamy of Get Up and Daniel Webb of the Human Rights Law Centre present at the 2016 CLC Symposium, Achieving Justice.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

GENERALIST - SPECIALIST CLC PROJECT

For the thousands of Victorians who are facing a life crisis of some sort every day, the most powerful and effective response often includes some kind of legal help. People need to be able to access this help immediately and effectively, because the more time a person's legal problems remain undiagnosed or unresolved, the more serious the consequences are on that person's life. Whether or not someone can access justice can make all the difference between whether they make it through a tough time okay, or whether they continue to deal with devastating ripple effects.

Recognising this, community legal centres are striving to work strategically to ensure that people get the right help before their legal problems get worse.

But what is the right help and how does the CLC sector ensure their clients get it? That's what this project seeks to explore. Driven by CLCs for CLCs and funded by Victoria Legal Aid's Innovation and Transformation Fund, the Project asks how Generalist CLCs – with their unique and powerful connection to community – and Specialist CLCs – who have deep expertise on particular legal fields and/or particular cohorts – can best work together.

With extensive consultation and research complete, CLCs will now run pilots which will explore innovative ways to increase the flow of expertise and knowledge between Generalist and Specialist CLCs, and improve client pathways between the two, ultimately ensuring that CLC clients get the timely assistance they need.

IMPROVING ACCESS FOR RRR CLCs

The Federation received some funding in 2016–2017 to implement video-conferencing in RRR centres. CLCs that have been part of this project saw the installation of some video conferencing equipment to enable staff to participate in meetings without having to travel great distances. In addition, the equipment has other capabilities which assist with in-house meetings and planning sessions. This is helping to ensure that the opportunities for connection and collaboration between CLCs can still be strong and consistent, regardless of geographical distance.

ACCREDITATION TO ENSURE CONSISTENT QUALITY CLC SERVICES

The National Accreditation Scheme (NAS), an industry based certification process for CLCs, was introduced by the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) in 2010 to enhance sector capacity to develop and implement effective management systems and to improve outcomes for clients and the broader community.

The NAS is currently in Phase 2, which is due to finish in March 2019. Twenty-four Victorian CLCs have completed self-assessments and site visits in Phase 2. Victorian CLCs have demonstrated a strong commitment to the NAS. The Federation is committed to support and work with Victorian CLCs in building a culture of continuous improvement as CLCs progressively embed continuous quality improvement in routine CLC management, planning and evaluation processes.

CLC SYMPOSIUM 2016 ACHIEVING JUSTICE: COMMUNITY LAW IN A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

On 14 October 2016, the Federation hosted an intensive day-long Symposium, focused on imagining the future for the CLC sector and setting strategic goals. We asked: what will our justice system look like in 2026? How will legal assistance, strategic advocacy and technological innovation shape the path we take? What are some 'dangerous ideas' for the future of CLCs?

The conference drew a strong crowd from Federation member centres and stakeholders, with Victoria Legal Aid, VCOSS and community legal centres all contributing to a vibrant plenary panel on the future of achieving justice for communities, including the implications of Victoria's Access to Justice Review.

These sessions were complemented by excellent concurrent presentations on driving change through combining advocacy and litigation, using technology to improve access to legal help, improving the cultural responsiveness of community legal centres for Aboriginal people, and capturing data from the national community legal sector through the new CLASS system.

SECTOR STRATEGY SESSION

The Sector Strategy Session brought together Federation members to discuss the major changes impacting legal assistance, including collaborative service planning, measuring legal need, coordination of legal services and accountability requirements. Members took the opportunity to explore and discuss strategic questions regarding the purpose of community legal centres and our vision for the next 10 years. There was a shared commitment for collaboration across the legal assistance sector to challenge social inequalities, fight for justice, and achieve a fairer community for all. A new Working Group was established to provide leadership of this vision and the systemic changes currently underway that will impact the future of legal services.



Photo: Federation members attend the Sector Strategy Session.

REGIONAL, RURAL AND REMOTE: RRR NETWORKING DAY

RRR Network Convenor: Bruce Mapperson, Gippsland Community Legal Service.

The RRR Network provides an opportunity for workers at regional, rural and remote CLCs to share information, support one another, identify opportunities for collaboration, and coordinate their work. The Network meets every two months via phone.

In October 2016 the Federation supported a RRR Network Day to provide an opportunity for RRR workers to meet in person. The day was well attended, with more than 20 workers from RRR CLCs in attendance, including managers, lawyers, community development and education, and admin staff from all the regional CLCs. Presentations included an update on CLASS, updates from VLA on its Orbit project and updates from the Federation on family violence policy work and the Access to Justice Review.

“The RRR days are very important for us to connect and network with other CLC’s. It may be the only in-person contact for the year, and they are very valuable.”

The RRR Network has continued to meet on a bi-monthly basis via teleconference. As a Network, we have undertaken work on identifying likely challenges to participation by members in our meeting. We will continue to work with the members, along with the support of the Federation, to enhance representation and participation in our network and meetings.

Thank you to all those who have participated, your contribution to the RRR Network has been much appreciated.

CORONIAL MATTERS WORKSHOP

In June 2017, the Federation partnered with Gadens to host a workshop on coronial law and process, designed for community lawyers and pro bono sector partners.

Fifty-five lawyers packed out the venue to hear Meghan Fitzgerald from Fitzroy Legal Service and Andrew Imrie of the Victorian Bar speak about why coronial services are important to the community and how community lawyers and pro bono may provide assistance.



Photo: Meghan Fitzgerald of Fitzroy Legal Service presents at our Coronial Matters Workshop.



Photo: Shorna Moore, Ebony Blake and Joseph Nunweek from WESTjustice at our Continuing Professional Development Day (CPD Day)

SIXTH ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

This year saw the sixth Adaptive Leadership Program delivered to the sector by Jil Toovey. This year’s program was also the first time that the program was co-facilitated by the program’s alumni. Jil spent an extensive amount of time working with the alumnus to build their facilitation skills to deliver the program. The Federation on behalf of the sector would like to thank Jil for her continued commitments to working with and developing the sector.



Photo: Member CLCs at our Continuing Professional Development Day (CPD Day)

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY (CPD DAY)

The CPD day held in March, was an opportunity for lawyers in the sector to showcase how they are serving their communities. They were able to share their innovative practices along with their business and professional skills.

CLC staff who presented on the day shared:

- » their vision, ideas and thinking behind the School Lawyer Program and how CLC staff with an innovative idea respond to their communities turn the an idea into action.
- » the opportunities and challenges of using their legal practice background in delivering integrated services to the community.
- » their expertise and practical strategies on capturing and evaluating casework outcomes, and then how the findings and results of the evaluation helped to shape different and more effective approaches to service delivery.

We are also grateful to external presenters from the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner and Victoria Legal Aid.

1,180 community legal education activities and **60** CLC resources delivered



FINANCIAL REPORTS YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

	Note	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
INCOME			
Victoria Legal Aid - Recurrent	6(a)	691,222	703,204
VLA - ERO State	6(a)	47,228	71,415
VLA - ERO Extra	6(a)	-	-
Victoria Legal Aid - Other Income	6(b)	149,935	51,237
Grant Income - Other Projects		295,370	206,995
Other Income		56,152	63,124
Interest		26,890	23,094
		<u>1,266,797</u>	<u>1,119,069</u>
EXPENDITURE			
Employee benefit expenses		832,723	833,269
Occupancy expenses		21,480	20,709
Operating expenses		50,270	70,966
Project related expenses		351,966	180,649
		<u>1,256,439</u>	<u>1,105,593</u>
Profit before income tax		10,358	13,476
Income tax expense		-	-
Profit after income tax		<u>10,358</u>	<u>13,476</u>
Retained Profits at the beginning of the financial year		314,345	300,869
Retained Profits at the end of the financial year		<u>324,703</u>	<u>314,345</u>

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 30 JUNE 2017

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

	Note	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	2	1,368,878	1,369,385
Trade and other receivables	3	12,620	27,795
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>1,381,498</u>	<u>1,397,180</u>
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	4	-	-
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>1,381,498</u>	<u>1,397,180</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	5	91,246	133,500
Amounts received in advance	6	929,007	857,487
Provisions	7	32,959	66,883
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>1,053,212</u>	<u>1,057,870</u>
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	7	3,583	24,965
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>3,583</u>	<u>24,965</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>1,056,795</u>	<u>1,082,835</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>324,703</u>	<u>314,345</u>
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Retained profits		324,703	314,345
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		<u>324,703</u>	<u>314,345</u>

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

	Note	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Receipts from Gov't Grants - recurrent		690,634	677,092
Receipts from Gov't Grants - non-recurrent		426,138	597,161
Receipts from Other Sources		202,336	336,502
Interest received		33,065	20,185
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		<u>(1,352,680)</u>	<u>(1,105,094)</u>
Net Cash provided by operating activities	8	<u>(507)</u>	<u>525,846</u>
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Payments for purchase of property and equipment		-	-
Net Cash provided by (used in) investing activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		<u>(507)</u>	<u>525,846</u>
Cash at the beginning of the year		1,369,385	843,539
Cash at the end of the year	2	<u>1,368,878</u>	<u>1,369,385</u>

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The accompanying notes form part of this financial report.

	Retained Earnings (\$)	Total (\$)
Balance at 1 July 2015	300,869	300,869
Surplus attributable to the entity	13,476	13,476
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2016	<u>314,345</u>	<u>314,345</u>
Surplus attributable to the entity	10,358	10,358
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2017	<u>324,703</u>	<u>324,703</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

NOTE 1: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic). The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity. The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuation of non-current assets. The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in preparation of this financial report.

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

b. Income Tax - The Association is exempt from paying income tax by virtue of Section 50-45 of the Income Tax Assessment Act, 1997. Accordingly, tax effect accounting has not been adopted.

c. Property, Plant and Equipment - Furniture and equipment are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all furniture 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.

d. Employee Entitlements - Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. Provision is made for the Association's liability for long service leave from commencement of employment.

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. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

f. Impairment of Assets - At the end of each reporting period, the entity reviews the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is an indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying value over its recoverable amount is recognised in the income and expenditure statement.

g. Revenue - Revenue is brought to account when received and to the extent that it relates to the subsequent period it is disclosed as a liability. **Grant Income** - Grant income received, other than for specific purposes, is brought to account over the period to which the grant relates. **Deferred Income** - Unspent grant income received in relation to specific projects and events is not brought to account as revenue in the current year but deferred as a liability in the financial statements until spent for the purpose received. **Interest Revenue** - Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest rate method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument. **Donations** - Donation income is recognised when the entity obtains control over the funds which is generally at the time of receipt. All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

h. 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 Taxation Office (ATO). Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the assets and liabilities statement.

i. Economic Dependence - The entity receives a significant portion of its revenue from Victoria Legal Aid. At the date of this report the Committee has no reason to believe Victoria Legal Aid will not continue to fund the entity.

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017**

	Note	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
NOTE 2: CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS			
Cash on hand		14	244
Cash at bank		363,697	571,386
Term Deposit		1,005,167	797,755
		<u>1,368,878</u>	<u>1,369,385</u>

NOTE 3: TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES			
Accounts Receivable		585	18,266
Prepayments and Sundry Receivables		10,371	1,690
Accrued Bank Interest		1,664	7,839
		<u>12,620</u>	<u>27,795</u>

NOTE 4: PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT			
Furniture and fittings - at cost		129,908	129,908
Less accumulated depreciation		(129,908)	(129,908)
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTE 5: TRADE AND OTHER PAYABLES			
Creditors and accruals		69,118	84,876
Salary and wage accruals		22,128	48,624
		<u>91,246</u>	<u>133,500</u>

NOTE 6: AMOUNTS RECEIVED IN ADVANCE			
Victoria Legal Aid (ERO) - Extra - Future Years		115,342	115,342
Victoria Legal Aid (ERO) - State (unused)		179,100	90,190
Victoria Legal Aid (recurrent)		-	588
Total Generalist Funds carried forward	6 (a)	<u>294,442</u>	<u>206,120</u>
Victoria Legal Aid (Outcomes Measurement Program)		142,081	244,768
Victorian Legal Aid (S&G CLC project)		395,052	152,300
Total VLA Project Funds carried forward	6 (b)	<u>537,133</u>	<u>397,068</u>

VLF		18,502	-
AG Bridging the Distance		-	130,000
DPC - FVSC		30,558	-
Smart Justice		38,558	38,260
Wanting Justice		9,814	86,039
		<u>929,007</u>	<u>857,487</u>

6(A) RECONCILIATION OF VLA GENERALIST FUNDS				
	VLA (\$)	VLA SACS ERO State (\$)	VLA SACS ERO Extra (\$)	Total (\$)
Funds Brought Forward - 1 July 2016	588	90,190	115,342	206,120
Funds received	690,634	136,138	-	826,772
Funds utilised (net of interest)	(691,222)	(47,228)	-	(738,450)
Funds Carried Forward - 30 June 2017	-	179,100	115,342	294,442

VLA (ERO) - Extra includes funds carried forward from 2016: \$44,703, 2015: \$38,215, 2014: \$25,927 and 2013: \$6,493.

6(B) RECONCILIATION OF VLA PROJECT FUNDS			
	OMP (\$)	S&G CLC (\$)	Total (\$)
Funds Brought Forward - 1 July 2016	244,768	152,300	397,068
Funds received	-	290,000	290,000
Funds utilised	(102,687)	(47,248)	(149,935)
Funds Carried Forward - 30 June 2017	142,081	395,052	537,133

	2017 (\$)	2016 (\$)
NOTE 7: PROVISIONS		
Current		
Provision for annual leave	32,959	66,883
	<u>32,959</u>	<u>66,883</u>
Non-Current		
Provision for Long Service Leave	3,583	24,965
	<u>3,583</u>	<u>24,965</u>

NOTE 8: RECONCILIATION OF CASH FLOW FROM OPERATIONS WITH PROFIT		
FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES AFTER INCOME TAX		
Profit after income tax	10,358	13,476
CASH FLOWS EXCLUDED FROM OPERATING PROFIT ATTRIBUTABLE TO OPERATING ACTIVITIES;		
Non-cash flows in profit:		
- Depreciation	-	2,716
Changes in assets and liabilities;		
- (Increase)/decrease in trade and other debtors	15,175	67,348
- Increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(42,254)	49,550
- Increase/(decrease) in amounts received in advance	71,520	389,402
- Increase/(decrease) in provisions	(55,306)	3,354
Net cash provided by Operating Activities	<u>(507)</u>	<u>525,846</u>

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY
LEGAL CENTRES (VICTORIA) INC. ABN 30 036 539 902**

OPINION

I have audited the accompanying financial report, of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc., which comprises the assets and liabilities statement as at 30 June 2017, statement of changes in equity, statement of cash flows and the income and expenditure statement for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and the certification by members of the committee.

In my opinion, the accompanying financial report of Federation Of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc.:

- gives a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- complies with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic).

Sean Denham | Dated: 25th October 2017
Suite 1, 707 Mt Alexander Road, Moonee Ponds VIC 3039

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2017

The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements. In the opinion of the committee the financial report as set out on pages 1 to 8:

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Belinda Lo

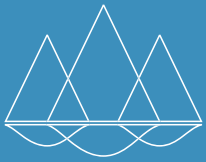
Belinda Lo, Chairperson
Dated: 13th October 2017

Kristen Wallwork

Kristen Wallwork, Secretary
Dated: 18th October 2017

- Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. as at 30 June 2017 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
- At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

PASSION LED US HERE



Federation of
Community Legal Centres
VICTORIA

Federation of Community Legal Centres (Victoria) Inc

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