



PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC.



Empowering the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively



ANNUAL REPORT 2011 - 2012

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Certificate of Compliance: Schedule 3

This schedule is established in respect of the 2011/2012 financial year for Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

Contact Officer: Nanette Williams

Tel: (08) 9140 1613 (S.Hedland)
Tel (08) 918555899 (Karratha)
M. 0417 180 859

The Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc certifies that:

The funds have been used for the purpose for which they were provided;

The terms and conditions of the service agreement have been met; and

The audited financial statements in respect of funds have been certified by an auditor in accordance with the Corporations Act 2001 and are attached, and

Salaries and allowances paid to staff using funds are in accordance with award salary rates or general rates in force at Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

SIGNED FOR AND ON Behalf of)

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc

By S. Gwynne (Chairperson)) 30-10-2012
S. Gwynne

In the presence of

Nanette Williams
Nanette Williams CEO

Organisational Overview: Schedule 4

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc (PCLS) provides a comprehensive range of services for the people of the Pilbara with the objective of reducing legal disadvantage, increasing the capacity of individuals to manage their lives effectively and enabling people to generally understand their rights and obligations. PCLS supports the people of the Pilbara to have a greater say in the laws and policies that affect their lives.

PCLS is a well-established and highly valued part of the Pilbara social infrastructure, operating four separate centres to deliver a wide range of generalist and specialist services across the region. The service began in a small single office in Newman in 1993. A regional office was established in Hedland under the auspices of the Pilbara Social Justice Council to address a number of needs identified by a working party who lobbied hard for funding. They conducted forums over a period of four years to address a growing concern related to social justice issues.

PCLS is a non-government non-profit organisation that plays a vital role in assisting disadvantaged people to access and engage with the legal system. It is part of a large national network of community legal service providers (NACLC) who occupy a unique position in law reform in Australia, pursuing a range of reform and public interest issues on behalf of disadvantaged people and the community at large.

PCLS currently employs 24 staff responsible to a Chief Executive Officer and Principal Solicitor. Under the guidance of a voluntary Board of Management, PCLS staff provide legal advice and representation; financial counselling; support for the homeless; tenancy education, advocacy, access and support; domestic violence victim advocacy and support; access to the 'One-Life Suicide Prevention Strategy'; and community legal and financial management education. At the root of the work are the concepts of justice, human rights and community. These beliefs affect not just the outcomes of the work but also the processes used. A rights-based, holistic, community development approach to the delivery of the service means dealing not just with the immediate presenting problems of clients, but also with other broader social issues.

The organisation's current strategic service delivery model is the outcome of an evidenced-based, pro-active, community involved process. All services are aimed at meeting the needs of clients with complex needs and/or multiple problems. This multidisciplinary approach works effectively in such instances. All services try to target emerging needs and are flexible and responsive.

All staff are sensitive to the presenting issues, they are also encouraged to promote the service by participating in local community events, meetings and networking opportunities. As a result, they have developed a good understanding of the differences in culture and languages of their communities.

Emphasis must be placed on the extraordinary changes the Pilbara region has undergone in recent years due to the ever increasing resources industries and the introduction of 'fly-in, fly-out' (FIFO) workers and the associated social issues and lack of affordable housing. Prices for rental housing in Karratha and Hedland continue to increase. There have been substantial increases in public and private tenancy disputes. In this and other ways, a large proportion of the community has become further marginalised and is struggling to survive. These are the people PCLS supports.



The demand for all services is expected to increase significantly as the population of the Pilbara escalates. The continuing shortage of affordable housing has increased the level of legal confrontation and friction in the community. Instances of domestic violence, violence restraining orders, marriage/relationship breakdown, separations and child custody cases continue to rise at an alarming rate and we are not keeping up with demand for family law assistance, with only one solicitor covering the West Pilbara and one covering the East Pilbara.

Mr Ray Bennet of Com Management undertook a sustainability review of the organisation. He states that ‘...PCLS showed many positive features, the most important of which was undoubtedly the demonstrated high level of governance, administration, documentation, training and excellent outcomes.’ He commended the CEO and staff for being ‘possibly the best managed community service in the Pilbara.’

(A) Office locations and Hours of Operation

Operating hours (8.00am-4.00pm Monday to Friday)

Regional Office (South Hedland)

Lotteries House
9/2 Leake Street
PO Box 2506
SOUTH HEDLAND WA 6722
Telephone: (08) 9140 1613
Fax: (08) 9172 2333

Newman Office

Newman House
4/46 Iron Ore Parade
PO Box 1
NEWMAN WA 6753
Telephone: (08) 9175 9930/31/32
Fax: (08) 9175 5298

Karratha Offices

Welcome Lotteries House
Units 1, 2 and 3, Morse Court
PO Box 132
KARRATHA WA 6714
Telephone: (08) 9185 5899/1611
Fax: (08) 9185 6633

Roebourne Office

3 Padbury Street
PO Box 269
ROEBOURNE WA 6718
Telephone: (08) 9182 1169
Fax: (08) 9182 1180



(B)+(C) undertaken and number of cases open and closed

Total clients seen from 01 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 through the Federal Attorney General's Community Legal Service Program:

Number of Advice only	1,818
Number of Cases Open at Period Start	281
Number of Cases Opened in Financial Year (New)	269
Number of Cases Open in Financial Year	550
Number of Cases Closed in Financial Year	301
Total number of Cases Opened and Closed	851
Number of Information only	648
Total	1499
Number of CLE Projects	9
Number of LRLP	4

(D) Duty Lawyer services and number of cases opened and closed

Please note that the Pilbara Community Legal Service does not provide a Duty Lawyer service, but the number of files opened and closed by our Rural Women's Outreach Lawyer service are as follows:

Number of Cases Open at Period Start	92
Number of Cases Opened in Financial Year	94
Total Number of Cases Opened in F/Year	186
No of Cases Closed in Financial Year	104
Total number of cases opened and closed in F/year	309

(E) Community Legal Education

The Pilbara Community Legal Service has conducted 19 community legal education sessions during the financial year. The workshops were aimed at financial management, consumer credit, tenancy and the law, legal rights for victims of family & domestic violence and information on the preparation of wills. Family law seminars covered the topics of property, children and divorce. A Seminar was conducted at the local High School to provide students with information about pursuing a career in law.

Number of CLE Projects Open at period end	5
Number of CLE Projects and Community Workshops Open in Financial Year	19

(F) Law Reform and Legal Policy

The Pilbara Community Legal Service is a member of the Women's Legal Service in Victoria.

Number of Law Reform & Legal Policy Programs open	1
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Number of Law Reform & Legal Policy Programs completed	4
Participation in the Women’s Law Reform Network telephone Link-ups	8

(G) Research

Research was conducted into family and domestic violence issues, homelessness issues, affordable housing for employees of non-government organisations, jury duty exemptions and the amendments to the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987* (WA).

(H) Access and Equity

Pilbara Community Legal Service aims to assist disadvantaged members of the community as a matter of priority. This includes people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with mental or physical impairments and people who may face discrimination in their access to services because of a particular characteristic such as age, criminal history, sexuality or gender identity.

As one of the few legal services in the Pilbara, conflicts of interest do arise. To combat this, PCLS has established referral protocols with other services providers, including Legal Aid, the Aboriginal Family Law Service, the Aboriginal Legal Service, the Employment Law Centre and other Community Legal Centres as appropriate. Clients with economic capacity are also referred to private lawyers who mainly operate in the Pilbara on a ‘fly-in fly-out’ basis.

As two of the PCLS legal positions are funded primarily for women through the Community Legal Services Program’s (CLSP) Rural Women’s Outreach and Indigenous Women’s Outreach programs, our legal staff prioritise legal advice according to this requirement to ensure that vulnerable women in need of legal services are not turned away due to conflicts of interest.

Through the referral protocols, PCLS strives to uphold its mandate of assisting the most disadvantaged whilst attempting to ensure that all community members have access to appropriate legal services.

(I) Community Development Work

PCLS policy is to carry out legal education programs with a community development approach. This enables empowerment of the target group in regard to their legal rights.

(J) Extent of volunteer and pro bono work

During the period August 2011 and June 2012, PCLS offered six work experience placements, mostly of four weeks’ duration, to students from Australian National University, Melbourne University and Deakin University. These students were studying in their final months of a Practical Legal Training course or undertaking a professional practice unit of their law degree.

Our students, Tim, Katy, Petula, Simone, Valerie and Renae took on the placements with enthusiasm and dedication and were an asset to the organisation bringing with them wide and varied experiences and backgrounds. The placements, which our organisation has been offering for more than 2 years provide law students with insight into working in remote areas and the practical challenges that are faced by local legal practitioners in a not-for-profit environment where resources



are stretched but the need very high. Tim who is now studying a Masters of Law at Oxford University in the United Kingdom has also been offered an associateship to Justice Kiefel of the High Court to commence in 2015. Katy completed her graduate law degree and accepted a full-time tenancy education position in our Karratha office commencing in July 2012 and Petula subsequently worked for us for a number of months as a paralegal. Valerie impressed us with her breadth of experience as adviser to the East Timor Government and Renae was offered a graduate policy analyst position with the commonwealth Treasury in Canberra during her placement with us. Finally, Simone has gone into private practice with a general law firm in Perth.

We have been impressed by the willingness of students to work hard, learn, ask questions and give their best to our organisation and to our clients. We wish them all the very best in their exciting new careers and thank them for their interest and for their contributions to our organisation.

(K) Training provided for Staff

The Pilbara Community Legal Service provides opportunities for on-going training of all staff via the following:

- Tenants Advice Service (TAS)
- Financial Counsellors Association of WA (FCAWA) & Financial Counsellors
- Resource Project (FCRP).
- Department of Child Protection
- Insolvency Trustee Society of Australia (ITSA).
- Australian Financial Counselling Association (AFCA)
- Financial Ombudsman's Office,
- Consumer Credit Association
- Department of Commerce
- Community Legal Centres Association WA (CLCWA)
- Department of Housing
- Employment Law Centre
- National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)
- Pilbara TAFE
- Pilbara Association of Non-Government Organisations (PANGO)
- West Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS)
- Council for Domestic and Family Violence WA
- Department of Finance
- Law Society of WA and
- Family Law Council of Australia

(L) Source, extent and purpose of any income received from other bodies

See Part (M) of the report.

(M) The names of the members of the Board of Management or the organisation and the names and brief description of the roles of the staff involved in the provision of the services.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Cecelia Brownhill – Chairwoman

PO Box 3116

SOUTH HEDLAND WA 6722



Ph: (08) 9172 2222
Email: cecilia.brownhill@warelationships.com

Stephen Gwynne – Deputy Chairperson

PO Box 182
BYFORD WA 6122
Ph: 0448 141 518
Fax: (08) 9173 4767
Email: steve@montec.net.au

Roz Brabazon – Secretary

6 Wyndham Street
PORT HEDLAND WA 6721
Ph: 0437 894 432
Email: rbrab@wn.com.au

Dale Purdy – Treasurer

650 Kestral Way
KARRATHA WA 6714
Ph: 0448 141 414
Email: dale@montec.net.au

General Members

Jane Ablett
8 Lovell Place
SOUTH HEDLAND WA 6722
Ph: (08) 9172 2865
Email: jtablet@hotmail.com

Nicky Latham
5 Cuneen Cove
PORT HEDLAND WA 6721
Ph: (08) 9173 3959
Email: nicky.latham@humansevices.gov.au

Bronwyn Elvery
P O Box 58
PORT HEDLAND WA 6721
Ph: (08) 9173 1589
Email: bronelvery@aapp.net.au



NAMES AND BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE ROLES OF THE STAFF INVOLVED IN THE PROVISION OF THE SERVICES

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING SERVICES

Newman, Roebourne, South Hedland and Karratha

Financial counsellors are responsible for providing support and advocacy for people experiencing financial difficulty with the objective of developing clients' skills, knowledge and confidence to effectively manage their financial and housing situation.

Names of Staff Members:

Newman: Francesca Manuella; 20 April 2009 (*current*)

Roebourne: Natasha Hunter; 01 July 2011-30 June 2012; Carmen Scott; 18 August 2011 (*current*)

South Hedland: Deborah Brunini; 14 May 2007-23 March 2012; Jan Donaldson; 23 April 2012 (*current*)

Karratha: Robert Williams; 22 January 2009 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of funding: \$570,900 per annum

TENANCY ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION SERVICE

South Hedland

The Tenants' Advice & Education Service (TAES) is based at the South Hedland Office. The service advocates for and supports clients seeking to access housing. The service provides tenancy education and advocacy to people in the Pilbara to ensure that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities as tenants and are able to access relevant information and services. The service assists clients to pursue their rights with government departments and appeals tribunals with an emphasis on self-help whenever appropriate..

Names of Staff Members:

South Hedland: Selina Bilton – April 2009 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Commerce

Approximate amount of Funding: \$145,186 per annum

INDIGENOUS TENANCY ADVOCACY & EDUCATION SERVICE

South Hedland

The Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy & Education Service (ITAS) is now based at the South Hedland office. The service is responsible for providing tenancy education and advocacy to people in the Pilbara to ensure that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities as tenants and able to access housing and relevant information and services.

Names of Staff Members:

Newman: Ettie Te Miha; 01 July 2011-30 June 2012

Karratha: (*Funding transferred to Karratha*) Natasha McCrae; 01 July 2011-07 Dec 2012

South Hedland: (*Funding transferred to S. Hedland*) Tanita MacDonald; 23 January 2012 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Housing, Aboriginal Services

Approximate amount of Funding: \$92,225 per annum



**SUPPORTED HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SHAP)
Roebourne, Karratha, South Hedland (.5 FTE positions)**

SHAP service providers are based in the South Hedland, Roebourne and Karratha offices. The SHAP Program is responsible for providing support to tenants to maintain their public housing tenancy, to assist families and individuals to increase their knowledge and skills to maintain stable accommodation and ensure tenants meet their overall obligations and responsibilities in accordance with their tenancy agreement.

Name of Staff Members:

Karratha: Erica James; 01 July 2011 (*current*)

Roebourne: Lorraine Jones; 01 July 2011 (*current*)

South Hedland: Beverley O'Brien; 01 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Housing

Approximate amount of Funding: \$278,954 per annum

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON HOMELESSNESS (NPAH): HOMELESS ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT SERVICE

Karratha

The Homeless Accommodation Support Service is based at the Karratha office. The service engages with and ensures that people who are experiencing homelessness are effectively linked with mainstream services to address a range of issues, including employment, health, financial management and social integration, to obtain housing and sustain their tenancy as long-term, secure and stable. The service works in collaboration with existing accommodation service providers to support clients in the transition to their own accommodation. Support is targeted to meet the needs of the individual or the family as a whole.

Name of Staff member:

Karratha: Belinda Egan; 01 July 2011 to 17 March 2012; Margaret Gordon: 16 March 2012 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of Funding: \$144,534 per annum

HOMELESS HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE – DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY

South Hedland

The position is based at the South Hedland Office and provides intensive support to people where drug and alcohol issues impact on their homelessness and assists them to obtain and maintain long-term stable housing. Integration and collaboration with specialist drug and alcohol services including community drug service teams, residential services and out-patient services is a critical element to ensure coordinated treatment and service delivery.

Name of Staff member:

South Hedland: Sue Baker: 23 Jan 2012 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of Funding: \$64,281 per annum



PUBLIC TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICE

Newman, Roebourne

A full-time service is provided from the Newman office and a part-time service from the Roebourne office. The service is targeted at Department of Housing tenants facing difficulties maintaining a tenancy, and aims to prevent them reaching the point of eviction and possible homelessness. There is a strong focus on building the capacity of tenants to resolve their tenancy challenges and to enable them to sustain a long term tenancy.

Name of Staff Members:

Roebourne: Lorraine Jones; July 2011 (*current*)

Newman: Ettie Te Miha; July 2011 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of Funding; Roebourne: \$63,767 per annum; Newman: \$127,534 per annum

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH

South Hedland

This full-time service is based in the South Hedland office and provides a service to the Pilbara region. The service assists at-risk families and individuals to resolve crises. The service ensures the safety and well-being of women and children and assists them to find solutions to problems both practical and personal that have arisen due to family domestic violence. The service supports women and children who have experienced family domestic violence and as a result have accepted a referral to the service at the time of, or shortly after the issue of a police order for the removal of the perpetrator. The service is flexible in its approach and collaborates with all other service providers to maximise support for the client.

Name of Staff Member:

South Hedland: Vikki Hammon; July 2011 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of Funding: \$129,077 per annum

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY AND VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICE

Karratha

The position is part-time (50 hours per fortnight) and based at the Karratha office. This service covers the Shire of Roebourne and contributes to the Department for Child Protection's desired outcome 'that at-risk families and individuals are able to resolve crises and promote the safety and wellbeing of themselves and their family members and falls within the service delivery area of supporting individuals and families at risk or in crisis.'

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Margaret Gordon: July 2008-July 2011; Debbie Van Bakkum; July 2011-30 November 2011; Amy Liebert; 01 December 2011-16 March 2012; Monique Ulani: 17 May 2012 (*current*)

Funding Body: Department of Child Protection

Approximate amount of Funding: \$74,555 per annum



WA SUICIDE PREVENTION STRATEGY: COMMUNITY COORDINATOR – WEST PILBARA
South Hedland

This service works with communities to improve community strength and individual capacity in preventing suicide by contracting individual communities to play a part in implementing the WA Suicide Prevention Strategy. The coordinator assists communities to develop detailed community action plans and supports the implementation and review of these plans.

Name of Staff Member:

South Hedland: Shek Graham; 01 July 2011 - 18 August 2011; Kathy Nelson; 19 March 2011(*current*)

Funding Body: Centrecare WA

Approximate amount of Funding: \$140,000 per annum

SOLICITOR – EAST PILBARA
Newman

The position is based at the Newman office of PCLS and is responsible for the delivery of community legal education and legal casework to residents of the East Pilbara to ensure that people are aware of and able to access their legal rights. A focus of the position is providing legal representation to low-income and disadvantaged people.

Name of Staff Member:

Newman: Sanaz Ryan; 01 February 2011-30 June 2013

Funding Body: WA Law Society, Public Purposes Trust

Approximate amount of Funding: \$100,000 per annum

RURAL WOMEN’S OUTREACH SERVICE (PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR)
Karratha

This position is based in the Karratha office and is responsible for the supervision and delivery of community legal education and legal casework throughout the Pilbara to ensure that people are aware of and able to access their legal rights. A focus of the position is providing legal representation to women. The Principal Solicitor is the responsible person for the monitoring of file management and risk management supervision of all other legal and non-legal staff

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Ellie Gan; 11 October 2008 (*current*)

Funding Body: Commonwealth Attorney General’s Department – Community Legal Service Program

Approximate amount of Funding: \$94,676 per annum



INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S OUTREACH SERVICE

Karratha

The Indigenous Women's Outreach Service is responsible for providing community legal education and legal casework in the West Pilbara to ensure that people are aware of their rights and able to access relevant information and services. The position is based at the Karratha office to facilitate direct supervision of the Principal Solicitor.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Michael Barker; July 2009-03 April 2012; Petula Ranson; 02 Feb 2012-30 June 2012

Funding Body: Attorney General's Department – Community Legal Service Program (CLSP)

Approximate amount of Funding: \$92,572 per annum

GENERALIST (CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER)

Karratha

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for the operation of the organisation's physical, financial and human resources. The CEO is directly responsible to the Board of Management.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Nanette Williams; March 2008 (*current*)

Funding Body: Attorney General's Department – Community Legal Service Program

Approximate Funding: \$174,376 per annum

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

South Hedland, Karratha

The Administrative Assistants are responsible for the day-to-day administration of the service in the area of accounts payable, payroll, communications and resources. They provide relevant assistance to the CEO, other staff and the Board of Management as required.

Name of Staff Member:

South Hedland: Tania Aldridge; July 2011 (*current*)

Karratha: Christy Reed; July 2011 (*current*)

(N) Any other activities relevant to the work of the organisation

Regional Achievement & Community Awards

PCLS was nominated for a Regional Achievement and Community Award. Over 260 nominations were received for the award. PCLS was not selected as a finalist on this occasion, but received a Certificate of Achievement for being nominated for the 2011 Prime Super Community Group of the Year Award.

The Financial Counsellors Association – Jan Pentland Prize

The Newman Financial Counsellor – Ms Fran Manuella was awarded the prestigious Jan Pentland Prize at the financial counsellors' national conference in Melbourne. The award is presented in recognition of a financial counsellor who has excelled in a particular area.



Community Legal Education

During the 2011-12 financial year, several community legal education programs were organised. Three seminars on Wills were held, two for the Department of Main Roads WA, which were well attended. The other was a Wills Seminar and a series of three Family Law seminars which were open to the public. The family law seminars covered the topics of property, children and divorce, which make up much of the solicitors' legal caseload.

In June 2012 three legally-trained staff members presented a seminar to St Luke's High School students in Karratha. The Seminar provided the students with information about pursuing a career in law. This was very well received.

Visits by Members of Parliament

In July 2011, PCLS received a visit from the then Member of the Mining and Pastoral region – the Hon Helen Bullock MLA. The staff took the opportunity to outline to Ms Bullock the pressing issues facing residents in the community, particularly housing availability and affordability, the high cost of living and the lack of access to essential services and the need for increased funding for legal services in the region.

WA Council on Homelessness (WACH) – Ministerial Appointment

PCLS CEO Nanette Williams was appointed to the WA Council on Homelessness for a second term. The Council is made up of community services sector and academic representatives with ex-officio members from key state and commonwealth government departments. The Council supports the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the new National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH), focusing on the three key strategies of early intervention and prevention, a better integrated service system and breaking the cycle of homelessness. The Council has been instrumental in developing the vision, outcomes, guiding principles, action areas and commitment now outlined in the development of a WA State Plan.

Affordable Housing for Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Government Regional Officers Housing (GROH)

PCLS was active in pursuing the issue of Housing for NGOs via GROH and worked in tandem with the Pilbara Association of Non-Government Agencies (PANGO) to achieve this. PCLS have been fortunate in securing two NGO houses, one in Karratha and one in South Hedland. We were also able to secure one 2-bedroom unit and one 3-bedroom unit in the Karratha Lifestyle Village – Service Workers Accommodation. An application has been submitted for the allocation of a tenancy in the Service Workers Accommodation Village currently under construction in Port Hedland. This has contributed considerably to assisting the organisation in providing staff with affordable housing and with the enhancement of staff retention.

Review of Organisational Policies and Procedures

A review of all policies and procedures is being undertaken as part of the NACLAC accreditation process. Community Legal Centres (CLCs) care about their clients and are committed to ensuring that they have equitable access to quality legal services. It is because of this commitment that the state, territory and national associations of CLCs undertook the enormously challenging joint project of developing and introducing a sector-led process for the accreditation of member CLCs. The online assessment process that NACLAC has developed is easily accessible by all CLCs and contains practical assistance to support centres in achieving compliance with every requirement.



PCLS Website

Pilbara Community Legal Service officially launched our organisation's new website in February 2012. The website can be found at: www.pcls.net.au.

Information Communications Technology (ICT) Review and Plan

With the assistance of a Lotteries West grant of \$62,094, an overall review of all IT equipment was undertaken by a private consultant working closely with our IT contractor. A replacement/update plan was established for all ICT hardware and software. The project will also deliver management training in the new ICT environment and assistance with the development of new policies and procedures specific to that environment. In addition, the project proposes to deliver basic on-site ICT training to improve the computer literacy levels of all staff.

Regional Homelessness Plan Discussion Paper; Final Consultation Workshops

In conjunction with the Department for Child Protection, PCLS facilitated two final consultation workshops, one in Karratha and one in South Hedland for the purpose of discussing the development of a Regional Homelessness Plan for the Pilbara. Two plans, one for Karratha and one for South Hedland, were subsequently developed and implemented as part of the WA State Plan.

White Ribbon Day

Promotional activities were organised in both Karratha and South Hedland to highlight the White Ribbon Day message 'Say no to violence against women.' The events were made possible by sponsorship from the local government and local Resource companies which provided for a variety of activities for families. Local agencies set up stalls to promote their services and white balloons were released to commemorate and remember women who have lost their lives through domestic violence. The events were promoted by television and other advertising.

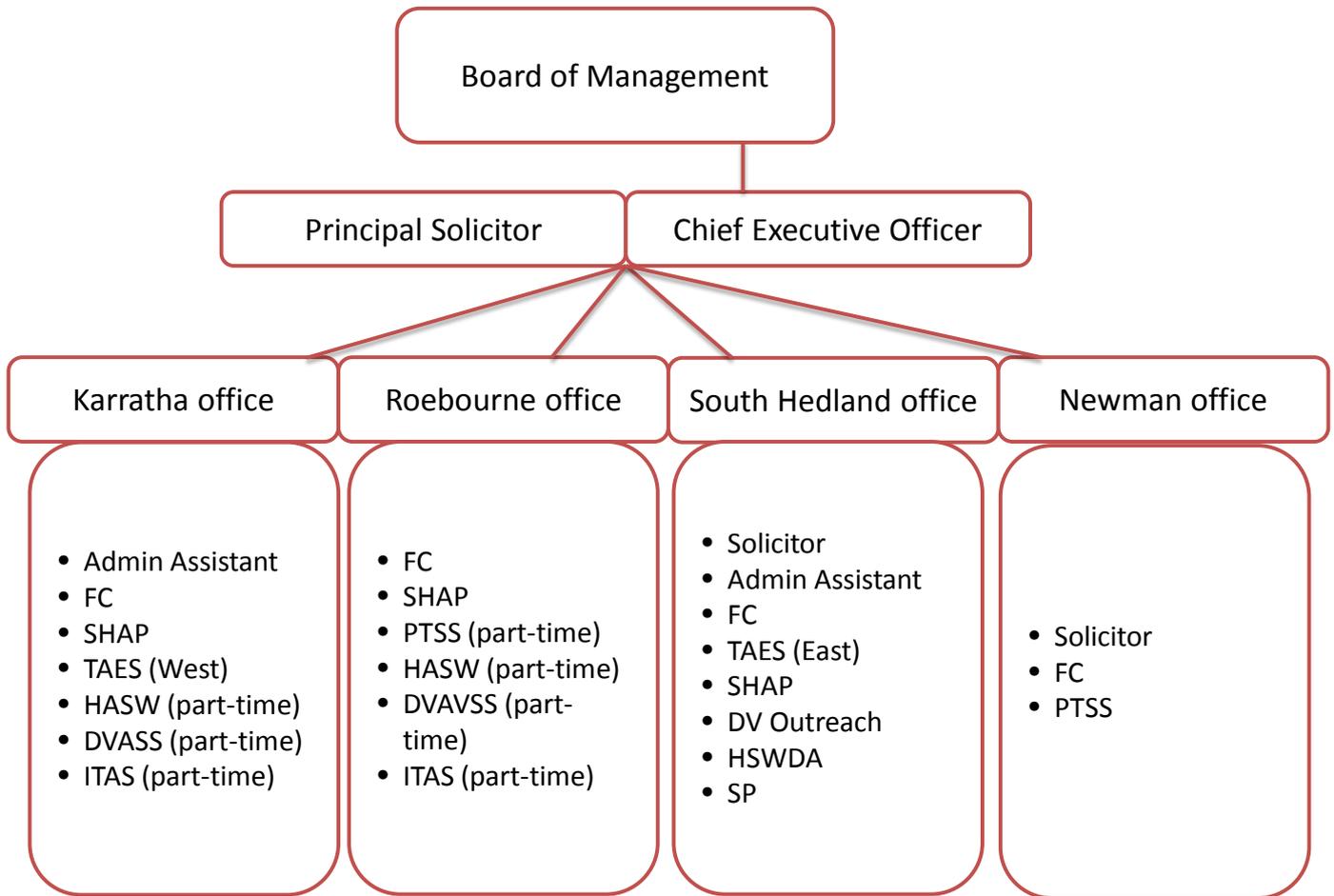
Conferences

During the 2011-12 financial year, the staff of PCLS attended the following Conferences:

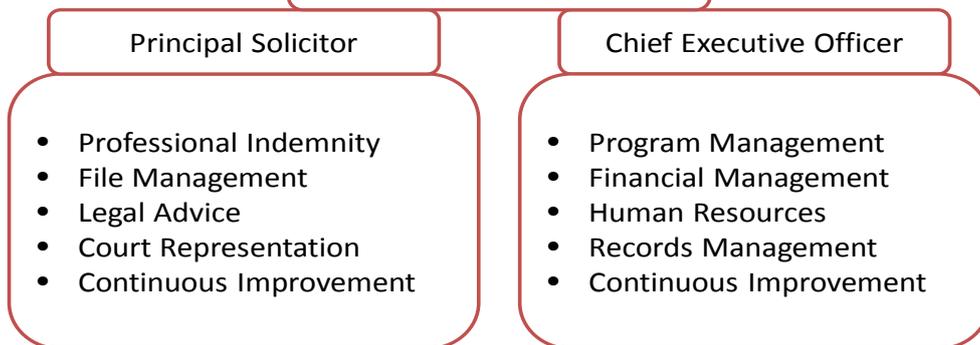
- State Financial Counsellors Conference (Perth) (FCAWA)
- The FCAWA Rural Remote and Regional Congress, Perth
- National Financial Counsellors Conference (Melbourne) (FCA)
- The State Community Legal Centre Conference (Perth) (CLCWA)
- The National Community Legal Centre Conference (Hobart) (NACLCL)
- The National Indigenous domestic Violence conference (Queensland)
- The State Tenancy conference (Perth) (TAS)
- The National Homelessness Conference (Sydney)
- The State Homelessness Conference (Perth)



Organisational Structure



Division of Responsibility



Glossary

- FC: Financial Counselling Service
- SHAP: Supported Housing Assistance Program
- PTSS: Public Tenancy Support Service
- TAES: Tenancy Advocacy & Education Service
- HASW: Homelessness Accommodation Support Service
- DVAVSS: Domestic Violence Advocacy & Victim Support
- ITAS: Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy & Support
- DV Outreach: Domestic Violence Outreach
- HSWDA: Homelessness Support Worker - Drug & Alcohol
- SP: Suicide Prevention



Chairman and CEO Report



An amazing year! Congratulations PCLS! As we move into our twentieth year delivering services to the people of the Pilbara, we take pride in the fact that during this time we spoke up for people in need. By 2011 our voice had strength and therefore our objective to reduce disadvantage was achieved.



However, we are still a long way away from resolving complex problems like homelessness, domestic violence and suicide. All need holistic, integrated solutions based on concepts of justice, human rights

and community. Not just dealing with the immediate presenting problems, but also with other broader social problems. The review of our current Strategic Plan for the three-year period 2013 to 2016 will be an evidenced-based, pro-active, community-involved process to ensure that our client profile reflects the characteristics of the people in the community who are most in need.

Over the years the number of staff has increased from seven to twenty-four, and the number of programs from six to fourteen. With this growth came the need for increased resources and a greater level of financial management and administrative support. Our membership of a number of Associations and national organisations has provided support and guidance with new initiatives, reforms and processes such as the launch of our new website, the review of our information communications technology, the accreditation process, the evaluation of programs under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, the development of a Regional Homelessness Plan for the Pilbara, the state government's indexation policy for the non-government human services sector, the new outcomes-based procurement process and the state government's initiative for 'Delivering Community Services in Partnership' policy.

We were active in our campaign for the provision of affordable housing in the Pilbara for non-government organisations (NGOs). Affordable housing is a vital component of staff attraction and retention in an area where the employment of highly skilled personnel is often lost to the more competitive resource industry. Ultimately we were successful in obtaining four houses for staff via the Government's Regional Officers' Housing (GROH) for NGOs initiative, and a further two tenancies in the new service workers' Lifestyle Village in Karratha under the Royalties for Regions initiative.

Unfortunately, GROH housing is not available for our solicitors because they are funded via the federal government's Community Legal Service Program (CLSP). Retention of these highly-skilled personnel who loyally remain with us despite huge workloads will become impossible without the provision of affordable housing, and/or an increase in the level of funding for the program. Without our solicitors, the people of the Pilbara will be further disadvantaged in regard to obtaining legal advice and representation.

From time to time during the course of the year we have been fortunate in gaining additional assistance for our Solicitor via the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) and the University of WA (UWA) Law Graduate Placement pilot program. The program provides law graduates with an opportunity to work in an isolated area with the most vulnerable clients under the supervision of an unrestricted solicitor. However, this arrangement has been negated due to the shortage of affordable accommodation for any potential graduates.



Over the last four years we were fortunate in being able to employ a locally-based law graduate. With the support and guidance of our principal solicitor, he completed his two-year restricted legal practice in January this year. However in April this year he left PCLS, possibly to something more lucrative.

A funding submission to provide a legal advice outreach service to Newman was submitted to the Royalties for Regions grants scheme. The submission was an attempt to secure funding to meet the huge demand for our legal service while assisting us to further the experience of law graduates. A Social Innovations grant application to provide a legal advice outreach service to Roebourne was also submitted. Unfortunately, both applications were unsuccessful on the grounds that they did not meet the criterion of 'innovation'. A continued effort to attract this additional funding is a matter of priority for the new financial year.

Two tenders were successful via the state government's new outcomes-based procurement process. This has resulted in the provision of a Pilbara-wide service to alleviate financial crisis funded for four years to 2016; and a regional tenancy advocacy and education service funded for the next 3 years, with the option of two one-year extensions to 2017.

A third tender under has been submitted in response to the Department of Housing's commitment to deliver lasting benefits to Western Australia through the Affordable Housing Strategy. The Department recognises that its current engagement is across a number of reform areas including the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing, the National Partnership on Homelessness and the new Disruptive Behaviour Policy requires the input and assistance of community organisations. The Department are seeking a single response, outcomes-based program that can be evaluated as 'one process'. A final decision on this tender has been delayed until early 2013.

A submission for funding for the next three years for a full-time solicitor for the East Pilbara has been submitted to the WA Law Society Public Purposes Trust. The outcome of this submission will be also known in January 2013.

We were finally able to appoint an excellent candidate to deliver our Housing Support Alcohol and Drug program in Hedland. We also took up the challenge to deliver the One-Life Suicide Prevention Strategy in the Pilbara, working in partnership with Centrecare WA.

Unfortunately, due to insurmountable conflicts of interest, we ultimately had no choice but to surrender the Case Management Coordination Service. We are pleased to note this service has been taken up by the South Hedland Women's Health Centre, therefore ensuring the service continues to be delivered in the Pilbara.

We were successful in gaining additional office space to better accommodate our team at Welcome Lotteries House in Karratha. We are currently undertaking renovations at the South Hedland Lotteries House to improve the accommodation for our expanded team there.

With funding from local government and the resources industry we were able to provide several family-oriented activities for White Ribbon Day and the One-Life Suicide Prevention Day in both Karratha and South Hedland.

Locally-based training in employment law, SHIP to SHOR data entry, CLSIS data entry, risk management, client advocacy, the 'Delivering Community Services in Partnership' policy and Introduction to Webex were provided to staff. Two homelessness forums were convened and there was attendance by various staff at the National Association of Community Legal Centres Conference,



the various state and national conferences on homelessness, tenancy and financial counselling, as well as a number of specific professional development workshops as identified by individual staff members.

Outreach financial counselling and tenancy services were provided to Tom Price and Paraburdoo by our Newman office staff and a presentation on the Department of Housing's 'Three Strikes Policy' to the Parnpajinya community was presented as a collaborative effort by the South Hedland and Newman Staff.

The CEO was appointed for a second term to the State Homelessness Council, which has agreed to work with the Department of Child Protection to review their current service standards to ensure that they conform to the 'National Service Standard' requirements under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness.

Finally, it was an honour to be present at the national Financial Counsellors Conference in Melbourne when our Newman Financial Counsellor, Ms Fran Manuella was awarded the coveted Jan Pentland Prize which is presented in recognition of a financial counsellor who has excelled in a particular area. Fran actively pursued a company whose door-to-door sales activities were subsequently determined to be unconscionable. Fran worked closely on the issue with the senior manager of ASIC's Indigenous Outreach Program, who had also been watching the company for some time but required concrete evidence in order to initiate proceedings. Fran then negotiated for a group of four lawyers from ASIC's Sydney office to visit Newman and take statements from the people that were targeted. Fran was also instrumental in negotiating with the Martu Elders and organising the lawyers to talk to the community on the reasons why they need to be wary of door-to-door sales people. Sincere congratulations are extended to Fran.

In tandem, Pilbara Community Legal Service was nominated for the Regional Achievement and Community Award and received a 'Prime Super Group of the Year Certificate of Achievement'. The general consensus is that the PCLS team are all deserving of awards for the dedication they show and the great outcomes they achieve for their clients.

PCLS is extremely grateful to all Board members and for the remarkable contribution each of them has made to the organisation and the community.



Nanette Williams
Chief Executive Officer



Steve Gwynne
Chairman



Rural Women's Outreach Program and Indigenous Women's Outreach Program

The end of the 2011-12 financial year marks almost five years for our principal solicitor, funded under the Community Legal Services Program's (CLSP) Rural Women's Outreach Program. The period marks almost four years for our second Karratha-based solicitor Michael Barker, funded under the CLSP's Indigenous Women's Outreach Program. It has been a challenging but rewarding period, not least the preceding 12 months.



PCLS targets disadvantaged people residing in the Pilbara. Experience, research and trends show us that the most socially and economically disadvantaged in our communities are also the most vulnerable to experiencing legal problems. Legal needs are not necessarily unique in the Pilbara, however access to legal advice and resources certainly are. The sheer lack of services is stark compared to urban centres.

Whilst Legal Aid may be available to those on very low incomes (mainly in criminal law) and services from private 'fly-in, fly-out' (FIFO) law firms may be accessible to those on very high incomes, the group caught in between the two extremes inevitably miss out on much needed legal advice.

Whilst our target group remains low income and disadvantaged people, PCLS has also been assisting this middle group whose rents, power and general living expenditure are exorbitant despite reasonable incomes, in an attempt to level the playing field. This in turn has meant resources are stretched and solicitors are working well above capacity.

Inevitably there are simply not enough human resources to assist everyone who seeks our services. We have improved over time at assessing need and prioritising such that the most extreme and worthy cases are given priority. It is an extremely hard call to make and many miss out. This will only be addressed with the provision of more legally qualified staff to share the caseload and who can embark upon further and more extensive preventative and educative work such as community legal education and law reform.

These matters are dictated by funding limitations and whilst we are grateful for the funding we do have, it is becoming increasingly inadequate against the ever-growing need for quality, time intensive and crisis driven legal advice services that are required in the Pilbara for clients walking through our doors every day.



This financial year has seen us farewell our Karratha-based solicitor Michael Barker on 31 March 2012. Michael was employed at PCLS since 2008 and was admitted to practice during his employment with us. He subsequently completed his two-year restricted legal practice under the supervision of our principal solicitor in January 2012. Whilst Michael's departure necessarily means a gap in the provision of legal services in our Karratha office since we now have one rather than two solicitors, Michael remains in the Pilbara and as such the skills we have imparted also remain in Karratha. Unfortunately due to funding restraints we are unable to replace Michael's position; however our principal solicitor remains in the Karratha office. After Michael's departure, the Indigenous Women's Outreach funding was transferred to our South Hedland office.



PCLS has been rapidly expanding. It is noted that the principal solicitor's annual report for 2009-10 noted an expansion in staff to thirteen across our 4 offices. Clearly the trend of growth has continued with PCLS now having twenty-three positions throughout the Pilbara. It is noted also however that of these twenty-three positions, only 3 are funded for the provision of legal services, 2 being through the Commonwealth Attorney General's CLSP which funds our Rural Women's Outreach (Karratha-based solicitor) and Indigenous Women's Program (Karratha-based to 31 March 2012 and thereafter South Hedland-based solicitor) and the third being through the Western Australian Law Society Public Purpose Trust (Newman-based solicitor). Whilst submissions were made this last financial year for 2 further legal positions to be funded, one each for our Roebourne and Newman offices, regrettably these applications have been rejected. We will continue to seek the much needed additional funding, noting that the end of the financial year saw the employment at PCLS of a Melbourne University law graduate in a tenancy position and this person is very keen to move into a legal role within the organisation. It is difficult to accept that whilst personnel with the correct skill set are within our reach, the harsh reality is that the funding simply is not there to secure this opportunity.

Our busy year has seen, in addition to legal advice and casework, community legal education activities on Wills, Family Law Children's matters, Family Law Financial matters and Divorce. We were requested to present our Wills seminar on two separate occasions to Main Roads employees at their South Hedland and Karratha offices and these were very well received with an excellent turnout on both occasions. On the other hand, our Family Law three-part series was not well attended, which was surprising given the numbers of family law clients that we assist, indicating the need for such information is clearly there in the community. We have also produced our monthly newsletter, PCLS E-Bulletin, with lots of interesting information with usually something for everyone.

Whilst the 2011-12 financial year has been a very busy year for our solicitors in terms of client contact, due to the ever-growing demand for legal services we must remember our aim of empowering our clients to manage their lives effectively. This means an emphasis on 'self-help' where possible. Whilst some clients require considerable guidance and assistance with drafting and court representation, for others simply knowing what steps to take or where to access suitable and relevant resources to address their legal need is a good start, and they are able to follow through certain legal processes with a degree of independence. Whilst not ideal or perhaps even an option for culturally and linguistically diverse or very low literacy clients, for some a push or steer in the right direction is adequate and at least a start to achieving sought after or acceptable outcomes.

Between August 2011 and June 2012, PCLS offered six work experience placements, mostly of four weeks' duration, to students from Australian National University, Melbourne University and Deakin University. These students were studying in their final months of a Practical Legal Training course or undertaking a professional practice unit of their law degree. Our students Tim, Katy, Petula, Simone, Valerie and Renae took on the placements with enthusiasm and dedication and were an asset to the organisation bringing with them wide and varied experiences and backgrounds. The placements, which PCLS has been offering for more than 2 years, provide law students with insight into working in remote areas and the practical challenges that are faced by local legal practitioners in a not-for-profit environment where resources are stretched but need very high.

Tim, who is now studying a Masters of Law at Oxford University in the UK, has also been offered an associateship to Justice Kiefel of the High Court to commence in 2015! Katy completed her graduate law degree and accepted a fulltime tenancy position in our Karratha office commencing in July 2012 and Petula subsequently worked with us for a number of months as a paralegal. Valerie impressed us with her breadth of experience as adviser to the East Timor Government and Renae was offered a graduate policy analyst position with the Commonwealth Treasury in Canberra during her placement



with us. Finally, Simone has gone into private practice with a general law firm in Perth. We have been impressed by the willingness of our students to work hard, learn, ask questions and give their best to our centre and our clients. We wish them all the very best in their exciting new careers and thank them for their interest in and contributions to our centre.

A holistic approach to service provision is critical to addressing legal need because invariably such need stems from and is linked to wider issues. PCLS has continued to work with other community service providers collaboratively when in the best interests of clients. This financial year has seen an influx of crisis-driven legal assistance particularly in the area of family law but also in other areas such as homelessness, intestate deceased estates and credit and debt matters, with clients sometimes experiencing a combination of these problems at the one time. Collaboration with Pilbara Mental Health, counselling and family dispute resolution services at Population and Health and Kinway (a branch of Anglicare WA) as well as with local medical practitioners, the Department of Housing and the Department of Child Protection has seen improved service provision to clients in need of a multidisciplinary approach. PCLS's holistic approach to client need is also reflected by the manner in which our solicitors work closely where appropriate with the allied services within our own organisation such as our domestic violence support, tenancy advocacy and education, housing support and financial counselling.

Criminal Injuries Compensation (CIC) is a relatively new area of practice for PCLS. It has come about due to the receipt of funding in this financial year from the Commonwealth Attorney General's Department to assist with the disbursements such as Freedom of information (FOI) applications and medico-legal reports accompanying CIC applications. It is a much neglected area of legal assistance in the Pilbara and as such we are grateful for the funding which has provided us with the opportunity to assist some clients in this area. The funding is not recurrent however and therefore our continued ability to work in this area will ultimately be dictated once again by this issue of funding in the longer term.

2012 saw our Newman office with a fulltime solicitor for the first time since opening our doors some twenty years ago. Our solicitor Sanaz Ryan moved from our South Hedland office to Newman in December 2011 and whilst positive for Newman, this did present challenges for the continuation of face-to-face legal services in South Hedland which is our head office and has traditionally enjoyed the benefit of a fulltime solicitor. With the departure of Michael at our Karratha office, funding was moved from Karratha to South Hedland and the search for a suitable solicitor for South Hedland began. We are pleased to say that an appointment was made at the end of the financial year with a commencement date set for October 2012. We look forward to working with our new solicitor Leah Billeam in the new financial year. Leah will bring with her a great deal of experience in the area of family law.

The principal solicitor has attended a few professional development forums this financial year such as the National Association of Community Legal Centre's conference in Tasmania in late 2011, Legal Aid WA's Care and Protection training and their Summer Series covering family and civil law in February 2012. We thank Legal Aid WA for the opportunity and invitation to attend their forums at no cost. Our second Karratha solicitor Michael Barker also attended the National Association of Community Legal Centre's conference in late 2011 along with the Community Legal Centre's Association of Western Australia's training in September 2011 in Perth.

As our centre grows in staff numbers and in the numbers of clients we are able to assist, there is much catch up to do in areas such as governance, organisational and risk management. The 2011/12 financial year has seen the commencement of a compulsory system of accreditation mandated through membership of the National Association of Community Legal Centres. This has meant that in



addition to the grassroots practice we are used to delivering, a shift of focus has also been required towards the systematic and effective operation of service delivery with a need to improve and streamline policies and procedures. Whilst an onerous process, the benefits include long-term viability and vibrancy of our centre so that we can continue to offer our unique blend of services to the people of the Pilbara into the future.

Ellie Gan
Principal Solicitor

Michael Barker
Solicitor



WA Law Society Public Purpose Trust South Hedland and Newman Solicitor

The Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc advises on a broad range of matters from their offices in South Hedland and Newman, which services a large proportion of the Pilbara region. We provide initial advice in relation to any legal matters arising in the community, apart from criminal law. Generally, our main areas of service provision are in family law, criminal injuries compensation, wills, deceased estates and debts.

In many of these cases, PCLS is the only service in the area that can provide clients with information and advice in relation to their legal matters. This lack of services means that we provide assistance in a wide variety of areas.

This year has seen the move of the solicitor's position from being primarily based in the South Hedland office to the Newman office. Newman is a busy town which provides services to a number of surrounding communities in the area. This has proven to be challenging and the time taken to travel back and forth between South Hedland and Newman on a regular basis quite demanding; regardless, legal advice and assistance continues to be provided to both areas.



As the South Hedland and Newman

Solicitor, my role includes the supervision of non-legal members of staff. I undertake file reviews with the South Hedland staff on a regular basis. The South Hedland office was fortunate enough to get the assistance of a work experience student from ANU and I undertook the day-to-day supervision of this student.

Maintaining relationships and contacts within the community is essential to the success of projects, developments and programs that PCLS may undertake. We maintain a positive working relationship with a range of organisations, such as Legal Aid, Aboriginal Legal Services and the Aboriginal Family Law Services.

As part of an ongoing requirement by the Legal Practice Board, a compulsory continuing professional development scheme exists in Western Australia. During this year I attended the annual National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC) conference in Hobart as part of this requirement. Whilst living and working in a regional area has many positives, the discrepancy in services available in regional areas as opposed to in the city is very apparent. The lack of alternative legal services available to individuals in remote parts of Western Australia and the general lack of facilities available to members of the South Hedland and Newman community in particular are matters of concern. In my role at PCLS, I have been exposed to the many challenges and experiences of providing legal services in this remote area. I hope that whilst PCLS will continue to expand and develop its services in the coming year its focus will remain on its primary role of assisting the most vulnerable members of our community.

*Sanaz Ryan
Solicitor*



Financial Counselling Services

In *David Copperfield*, Dickens (via his character Mr Micawber) makes the point that matching one's expenditure to one's income is the basis for happiness. This logic was reflected in the way financial stress was dealt with in Australia until the 1970s, when the contemporary practice of financial counselling (FC) began to develop. The origins of FC can be found in the emergency relief model of providing material aid to people in need, often on the basis of their perceived 'worthiness' to receive such assistance. Although this approach persists in some circles, and there is an underlying assumption that financial difficulties arise from the imprudent practices of individual consumers, there is an increasing awareness that financial stress has its origins in multiple causes, most of which are beyond the immediate control of individuals.

Singh & Shelly (2005) point out that 'credit' is not just an economic phenomenon but reflects social, cultural and psychological factors, and that there is a lack of connection and integration of these different perspectives. They suggest further that the non-economic literature has insufficiently influenced consumer protection and consumer education practices, even though economic policy and western law are well understood within the tradition of classic sociological concepts of money and its cultural and social centrality. For many social groups, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse segments of the population, such concepts may well be more difficult to integrate into daily life, leading to low levels of financial literacy.

A Victorian study (Schetzer 2007) highlights the circumstances of people experiencing financial stress. Those who participated in the study, all of whom were clients of financial counselling services, had experienced debt-related problems, including some where legal proceedings had been issued. The participants were significantly disadvantaged, with low levels of income and had relatively modest levels of debt. Most were educated only to Year 12 level or less. More than half of the study group had sought assistance from a welfare organization, friend or other family member, and an overwhelming majority experienced difficulty in paying utility bills. Of the 90 participants in the study, 52 indicated that their difficulties were associated with other complex issues including mental illness, physical injury, disability, chronic illness, domestic violence or drug or gambling problems.

The study concluded that the earlier the contact with a FC service, the more likely it was that the participant was able to negotiate a satisfactory solution to their financial difficulties and that there is a need for appropriate referral systems to financial counsellors.¹

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc (PCLS) employs four financial counsellors, one based in each of the organisation's four offices of South Hedland, Roebourne, Karratha and Newman. Financial counsellors apply a rights-based community development approach to their work which means dealing not just with the immediate problems of clients, but also with other broader social problems. At the root of their work is the concept of justice, human rights and community. Such beliefs affect not just the outcomes of their work but the processes they use.

In the 2011-12 financial year, the PCLS financial counsellors assisted a total of 761 clients. 520 of these clients were female, 241 male. 574 of these clients were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. Predominance was in the 35 – 44 age group categories.

A tender via the state government's new outcomes- based procurement process for the provision of a Pilbara-wide service to alleviate financial crisis (which will continue the employment of four

¹ Adapted from *Livingstone, Kotnik & King*, September 2008.



financial counsellors in the region) has been successful. The service will be funded for four years to 2016.

Congratulations Fran Manuella – Newman Financial Counsellor



For a number of months, Fran actively pursued a company whose door-to-door sales activities were subsequently determined to be unconscionable. Fran worked closely on the issue with the senior manager of ASIC's Indigenous Outreach Program, who had also been watching the company for some time but required concrete evidence in order to initiate proceedings. Fran then negotiated for a group of four lawyers from ASIC's Sydney office to visit Newman and take statements from the people that were targeted.

Fran was also instrumental in negotiating with the Martu Elders and organising the lawyers to talk to the community on the reasons why they need to be wary of door-to-door sales people. Fran briefed the visitors on the Martu culture and the need for them to gain permission and acceptance from the Elders in order to take statements from community members. As Fran states, she has learnt over the years that showing the Martu Elders respect and dignity is important and they must approve anything that happens in their community.

It was a very proud moment for us all at the national financial counselling conference. Fran received much press about her award and certainly put PCLS at the forefront of the conference. Fran Manuella is sincerely congratulated by the Board of Management and her fellow colleagues on her achievement.

South Hedland service

I commenced my position with the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc (PCLS) in April 2012. The level of poverty and disadvantage facing low-income earners and Centrelink recipients in our community has been a revelation to me. I was previously oblivious to this aspect of our community. It is very rewarding and a privilege to provide them with assistance.



I have been amazed at the number of clients who present needing assistance to negotiate with creditors. I believe it would be useful and appropriate for creditors to provide information to debtors on how they might access financial counselling services in order that their situation can be addressed long before the level of the debt has come to a point where repossession is imminent. Many of the clients that present at the South Hedland office are struggling to make ends meet and have very little income left over for basic essentials after meeting their financial commitments.

Many clients require assistance with their power accounts. In the last six months, 45 applications were submitted to the Hardship Utility Grants Scheme (HUGS). Other clients cannot afford to purchase gas bottles as the price for a replacement gas bottle can cost up to \$170. This is ironic



considering that the North West Gas Shelf pipes gas to the south of the state and even ships it overseas, but the towns of the Pilbara are dependent on the purchase of gas bottles! The effect of not being able to afford these bottles means that families go without hot water and are unable to use their gas stoves. It may well be that an initiative like HUGS needs to be introduced to provide people in the North West of the state with help to purchase gas bottles, in a similar way to the assistance program provided by Alinta Gas to people in the south of WA.

In Hedland there are extremely long waiting lists for public housing with many of the homes that are currently tenanted needing urgent maintenance attention with some in states of dangerous disrepair. One positive for low-income earners is the Royalties for Regions and the Department of Housing joint venture to establish a range of affordable homes, with the next stage of the project enabling people to part purchase homes in partnership with the Department in a 40:60 shared ownership agreement. Hopefully this scheme will help alleviate some of the current housing shortages in the area.

Since commencing with PCLS, I have had the opportunity to attend the national Financial Counsellors Australia conference in Melbourne. The conference served to increase my confidence in the financial counselling service I provide.

I provide the following case study which may serve to demonstrate the type of issues that are presenting and the type of outcomes we are able to achieve:

Often people think that they have nowhere to go and there is no one to help them. This was the way one 64-year-old thought when he presented to our South Hedland office. The client had suffered a stroke in 2011 and as a result was unable to return to work. He is now on a disability pension. He was living in a caravan waiting to be allocated a pensioner unit via the Aboriginal Medical Service. As a result of his stroke, he found that he was unable to deal with some of the everyday living responsibilities, including paying his debts. He approached the financial counselling service with three letters of demand from creditors which totalled over \$30,000. With his authorisation, all creditors were approached. It was a great relief to him when we were able to reach an agreement with the creditors to waive a total of \$21,000. It was also agreed that interest would be set aside on the remainder of the debts and for him to pay the remainder at \$20 per fortnight as a direct debit from his Centrelink allowance. The client is now living in his new unit and feels he is in a much better financial position.



Roebourne service

I commenced in the role in August 2011. My background for the last 10 years has been as a Homeless and Youth Support Case Worker.

I have found the last ten months challenging but with the challenges have come a sense of achievement. I enjoy working in Roebourne. I am fortunate to have our Supported Housing Assistance and Public Tenancy Support Program service provider working with me in the Roebourne office, she has been an invaluable source of information and this has made it easier to connect with clients, especially when I first started in this position.

Roebourne's population is predominantly indigenous, living in overcrowded public housing. There is no public transport, the cost of living is high, in many instances English is the second language and



yet they have this wonderful sense of community, country, family and belonging which makes working here a pleasure.

In addition to the two full-time workers, other PCLS services providers, including our Homelessness Accommodation Support Service, Domestic Violence Victim Support Service, Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Support Service and our solicitor, all attend the Roebourne office on a regular basis. A Housing Support Officer from the Department of Housing (DOH) also attends the office every Tuesday. This has been a very successful arrangement because it has provided the Roebourne public housing tenants with a very necessary service, as well as proving to be an excellent way for us to forge strong working relationships with DOH staff.

During the past ten months the financial counselling service has assisted 143 clients. 69% were female and 31% male; 85% were of indigenous descent; 45% were in the 35-54 age group; 17% were aged between 55-64 and 16% were 65 years and over.

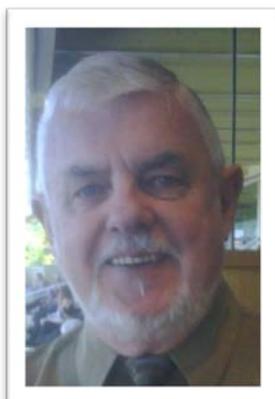
Most contacts were self-referrals. 52 clients were assisted with HUGS grants. In the months from December to June 2012, 64% of clients had electricity related issues. It is good to report that the majority of clients that we have assisted with HUGS grants have entered into Centrepay fortnightly payment agreements and while this will not completely pay their accounts, it will make it a lot easier to pay balances. It is interesting to note that there have been increases in the number of clients attending the office to notify Horizon Power of their Health Care Card number and expiry dates so that concessions can be applied. It is also important to note that Horizon Power staff, both in the call centre and the credit department, are very helpful when dealing with our clients.



Department of Housing debt-related problems, specifically rental and water consumption debts are the predominant presenting issues. The difficulty with these issues is that clients present when the debt is extremely high. Referral of clients by the Department of Housing at an earlier stage of the debt would enable the service to better assist clients and reduce the number of eviction applications as a result of debt.

I was fortunate to be sponsored by the WA Financial Counselling Association (FAAWA) to attend the national conference in Melbourne. I also attended the state financial counsellors' conference and the Rural, Regional and Remote Congress in Perth. A team-building exercise of synchronise drum-playing was really good fun for conference delegates.

Training has continued throughout the year with teleconferences held monthly and conducted by FCAWA solicitor Ian McDonald. Risk management training was provided our principal solicitor and employment Law training by the Employment Law Centre of WA.



Karratha service

I commenced in the position with PCLS on 22 January 2009. I am now in my fourth year and meeting the challenges of the role day by day.

A question in our six-monthly progress reports for the Department of Child Protection, who provide the funding for our financial counselling services, asks us to provide an overview of our achievements. My response to this question simply states that helping people manage their income, put food on the table, avoid power disconnection, avoid losing



their home, keeping the bailiff from the door, negotiating for them with creditors and the bank when they feel overwhelmed, referring them to areas where they can get school books, uniforms and computers for their children's schooling, referring them to social workers and mental health counsellors and legal advice, listening to them and earning their trust, taking away the fear and the helplessness, are all the things that add up to the daily achievements for a financial counsellor. Daily statements from clients such as 'you're the first person I have talked to that has given me any hope'; 'my mind is so much more at ease now'; 'I have never had to ask for help before'; 'I didn't know which way to turn'; and 'I was seriously thinking of ending it all'. How can we measure these achievements in words!



Housing issues and utility grants continue to dominate the scene in Karratha. Whilst the town is growing in leaps and bounds thanks to the financial input by the Royalties for Regions scheme, the plight of the under-privileged continues to dominate matters presented by assistance seekers through my office. I can see no wisdom in the state government increasing the price of electricity and then increasing the HUGS entitlements to correspond. All that is being achieved is prolonging people's reliance on welfare payments. This money (\$150M – 43,283 HUGS grants) would be far better spent on introducing a solar panel scheme to be fitted on all public housing roofs so that the tenants could avail themselves of free electricity compliments of the abundant sunshine that is always available in this state, particularly the north-west. The savings would be two-fold inasmuch the tenants would be able to put food on the table for their families and it would also give them something extra to meet the high cost of living in the Pilbara.

It is no longer low-income people that present with a range of financial issues. More enquiries now come from middle-income earners in regard to debt relief, utility grants and bankruptcy. I foresee a very demanding time looming for financial counsellors from October onwards as the weather in the Pilbara warms up!

PCLS has been trying for the last 12 months to encourage the Department of Housing to refer those clients who are falling into arrears to our financial counselling services. To date this has not occurred. As a consequence, when Department of Housing tenants do present, their debt to the Department is at a point where they are faced with a court hearing for an eviction order. Eviction orders placed on public housing tenants usually means homelessness for the evicted family. The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) is looking to reduce homelessness by 50% by 2020, so eviction of public housing tenants into homelessness is defeating this objective. Early referrals to financial counsellors would at least give us a chance to help these tenants to avoid homelessness.

Debt is caused when a client does not have enough money to manage their commitments, or when they are not managing the money they do have well enough. Financial counsellors are able to assist in both these scenarios because we have the financial products to assist clients to overcome difficult financial episodes in their life, to work with them to help them manage their income and their commitments and to provide them with ongoing support to bring their financial situation to a point where they can manage. For this reason, I urge the Department of Housing to work with financial counsellors to assist their tenants.



During the course of the year I attended both the state and national financial counsellors' conference, both of which provided a range of excellent speakers and workshops. As a financial counsellor working in the Pilbara where private rentals are in the vicinity of \$1200 - \$2000 per week and where the purchase of a family home is way out of reach for most families, I was very relieved at the state financial counsellors' conference to hear Jeannette Barrington speak on the Department of Housing's new 'Rental Pathways Scheme' for tenant who have become 'over-income'. On a lighter note, it was a delight to listen to the 'Spirit of Streets Choir' and hear their stories of homelessness and recovery.



Newman service

I am in my fourth year in the position and have during the last two years studied hard to achieve my Diploma of Community Services (Financial Counselling). 2013 will therefore hopefully see me achieve full accreditation by the Financial Counselling Association WA. I was also deeply honoured to be presented with the national association's Jan Pentland prize which is a fairly prestigious award within the financial counselling fraternity.

During the 2011-12 financial year, we have seen a range of diverse case work. During preceding years, our client group has been predominantly Aboriginal clients. While this is still the case, there is now a marked increase in the number of people of other ethnicities which is indicative of the changing face of the Newman township.

During the course of the year, I have been working with other financial counsellors towards the introduction of ATM reforms in remote Indigenous communities. We were delighted when the Deputy Prime Minister and Treasurer the Hon Wayne Swan MP, and Minister for Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs the Hon Jenny Macklin MP, announced a commitment by the Australian banking sector and Australia's two major independent ATM providers to deliver an arrangement to voluntarily provide free ATM transactions. People living in approximately 76 very remote Indigenous communities with a Customers or Cashcard ATM will have access to free ATM transactions. The Customers and Cashcard ATMs were selected because they are located in very remote Indigenous communities (based on indicators of remoteness provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics), they are located in a community store, and residents have no access to alternative banking facilities. This measure will be rolled out with an education and information campaign delivered to affected communities commencing in October 2012. The Newman office staff were happy to assist in providing this information to those of our clients living in the remote community of Jigalong.

Following work done with ASIC to educate members of the Parnpajinya community on the dangers of door-to-door salespeople, I actively worked with the National Association to produce 'Do Not Knock' stickers. Consultation was held with local Aboriginal Elders to ensure that they agreed to the use of the Aboriginal 'snake' featured circling around the knocking hand on the stickers. These stickers are being distributed to all indigenous communities in the Pilbara.

For the last 18 months, along with our Public Tenancy Support Worker, I have been travelling to Tom Price and Paraburdoo to provide a much need service to these two towns. Clients from the Wakathuni community (attached to the town of Tom Price) have accumulated very large ambulance debts for the transfer of members of the community to the Tom Price hospital. The St John's



Ambulance has passed the debts on to debt collection agencies. There is little hope that these debts will be paid by the community which may affect the provision of the service. To date nine members of the Parnpajinya community and two members of the Wakathuni community have agreed to take out an annual subscription for the ambulance service, which may help minimise future debts. Similar negotiation is continuing with other isolated Aboriginal communities to ensure that they are in a position to utilise the ambulance service when it is needed. Our new contract with the Department of Community services does not provide for the delivery of a financial counselling service to Tom Price and Paraburdoo. They will therefore be serviced as a telephone outreach service from our Newman and Karratha offices. In the meantime, the CEO is negotiating with Rio Tinto and the Shire of Ashburton to see if they will assist with the establishment of a financial counselling service in this area.



Most of the clients that present have a multitude of debts, all of which have arisen due to their lack of understanding of the value of money and how to manage it. Unfortunately, I see many people who have become burdened with so many debts that they recede into a safe place in their minds, ignore the debt and spend their money on unnecessary incidentals. Regrettably, others with accumulated multiple debts become very suicidal. A number of appointments and education about budgeting enables these clients to get payment arrangements in place, usually via their Centrelink income. In many instances we are able to negotiate with the creditors to have some debts waived in order to bring their commitments to a point where they are manageable from the income they have. The clients are then provided with ongoing support to help them sustain these payments until such time that their debts are depleted.

I thoroughly enjoyed participating in both the state and national financial counsellors' conference in Melbourne and also the Financial Counsellors' Association of WA Rural, Regional and Remote Congress in Perth in March 2012.

Jan Donaldson
Financial Counsellor
South Hedland

Robert (Bob) Williams
Financial Counsellor
Karratha

Carmen Scott
Financial Counsellor
Roebourne

Fran Manuella
Financial Counsellor
Newman



National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH): Homelessness Accommodation Support Service



The Karratha Homelessness Accommodation Support Service is one of eighty new specialist homelessness services operating across WA to provide support to assist people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to obtain accommodation and sustain their tenancy in the long term. The service also helps to stabilise 'at risk' tenancies and address the issues impacting on the tenancy. Some domestic violence victims are assisted to return to their home when it is safe for them to do so. More importantly, the service seeks to minimise the impact of homelessness on children in order to break the cycle of intergenerational homelessness.

The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) has been critical in providing the opportunity to initiate reform to the existing homelessness service system in WA. NPAH services do not operate in isolation but rather are provided by specialist homelessness services with specific expertise in supporting people who are homeless or at risk. The roll-out of the NPAH has brought both the National Affordable Housing Agreement (NAHA) and the NPAH specialist homelessness services together to work collaboratively with mutual clients and has provided the impetus for specialist homelessness services to work in an integrated manner with mainstream services.

The diversity of WA and the unique issues across the regions require customised approaches. Under the *State Plan on Homelessness 2010-2013: Opening Doors to Address Homelessness*, regional plans have been developed across WA to implement an integrated service system responding to homelessness at a local level.

Since the commencement of the program in July 2010, 60 clients in the Pilbara have been assisted out of homelessness. Of these, 46 were female and 14 male. 80% were of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. Three of these clients had mental health issues, four had drug and alcohol issues, and 7 had other medical issues. Predominance is in the single female with children category (25-34 and 35-44 age groups).

The main reason these clients sought assistance was due to domestic and family violence, especially the women presenting with children. 33% of female clients nominated domestic and family violence as their main reason for seeking help. This equates to 24% of all clients. For males, housing crisis, 'rent too high' and financial crisis were the main reasons for seeking assistance. Family breakdown and 'unable to live at home' were the most common reasons given by young people. One in four people nominated housing crisis as their main reason for seeking assistance, suggesting urgent action is needed on housing affordability. 37% nominated financial difficulties and by far the largest proportion of clients were on Centrelink benefits. In almost all cases, some aid or brokerage was provided. To date all clients being supported by the program have sustained their tenancy for more than 12 months.

The major challenge for the service is the lack of public housing and the high cost of private rentals in the Pilbara. As a result, homeless clients are required to wait many months before they are allocated housing. For example, a homeless client referred by the Department of Health was assessed and the paperwork sent to the Department of Housing in April 2011. She was allocated a property in May 2012 and was then forced to accept a one-bedroom unit despite the fact that she has a young daughter and needed a two bedroom unit. The young daughter has thus been forced to



move in with her paternal grandmother. The lack of emergency housing and the one-week maximum stays allowed at the local Women's Refuge make it impossible to find homeless clients interim accommodation. The issue of tenancy overcrowding then becomes a major concern.

On a more positive note, considerable community support has been demonstrated through the donation of furniture, household effects, baby clothes and baby items for a young homeless mother with a new baby. A local contractor whose contract was ending donated three complete households' of near-new furniture, white goods and televisions. Because of the lack of storage space, they also assisted with the delivery of these items directly to newly-housed clients.

The service provider was sponsored by the WA Council on Homelessness to attend the 7th National Homelessness conference in Melbourne and the inaugural state homelessness conference in Perth. Both conferences proved invaluable in providing a better understanding on a range of systems, social and clinical supports and at both conferences the message was clear that persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.

The NPAH expires on 30 June 2013. The future of the program beyond this date remains uncertain. The uncertainty of ongoing funding creates a problem for those of us working in this area in regard to whether or not we should begin searching for more secure employment. In the time the program has been operating, it is apparent that the goal for 2020 is within reach, and for this reason it is hoped that following the independent evaluation and audit by the Auditor General, both the Commonwealth and state Government will commit to maintain funding for the continuation of this vital program.

Margaret Gordon
Homeless Accommodation Support Worker



Homelessness Accommodation Support Service: Drug and Alcohol Strategy



I commenced employment with Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc in February 2012. My first priority was to familiarise myself with my role. With the assistance of a work colleague a brochure outlining the objectives and processes for the program was developed. This proved to be an invaluable tool for initial networking meetings with local agencies.

The next step was to get out into the community and network. I contacted local community agencies to let them know about the program. One of the agencies was Pilbara Mental Health Drug and Alcohol Service. As a result, I have developed a strong relationship with their counsellors. I am now able to refer clients to the counsellors as a first point of service for our program. I made contact with the Department of Housing, the Department of Child Protection, Wirrika Maya, Bloodwood Tree, the Sobering-up Centre and Strong Families, to name just a few. Because the Homelessness Accommodation Support Service Drug and Alcohol Strategy was a new initiative for the Hedland community, it was important to establish links with all these agencies.

I have been fortunate to attend a number of training sessions since I commenced with PCLS. The first I attended was a week-long course from the 12-16 March presented by the government of Western Australia's Drug and Alcohol Office called 'Introduction to Alcohol and Other Drugs'. This course was fantastic and really helped my understanding of this new area, working with people with drug and alcohol issues.

I have not as yet undertaken accredited personal development training in tenancy law and advocacy. The course scheduled for the beginning of the year was cancelled due to illness of the facilitator. I believe the next training program is now scheduled for November this year, when I hope to attend. As a result, I also unfortunately missed out on the training seminar on 'SHIP to SHOR Data Entry', because the dates coincided. I subsequently attended a half-day's training in SHIP to SHOR locally. However, I believe more training will assist me to better understand the software. This has been arranged for November this year. In the interim and with the assistance of a colleague I have completed my report entries.

Other training sessions I have attended are a 'Grant Writers' workshop and a 'Working with People with Complex Needs' workshop, both of which were held at the South Hedland Lotteries House. I believe both these training sessions were complimentary to my role.

Most clients in the program are women with children, predominantly of Aboriginal descent. A great deal of time is needed to support clients to meet their alcohol and drug counselling appointments. Ongoing contact with the Community Mental Health Counsellors helps to ensure the client's maintain attendance. This also helps to ensure that clients are interconnected to both services.

A number of issues have been resolved with the Department of Housing. We have successfully changed the Department's requirement for the assessment process for the HASWDA program, which called for the client to provide three support letters even though they had already done so as part of their priority housing assessment process. Clients of the program are required to be priority listed in order to be accepted on the Program, in which case, support letters had already been provided and were on file with the Department.



I found it very time consuming trying to locate new support letters. The agencies who had already supplied support letters for the client would get frustrated with a second request for another support letter for the same client. After discussion with the Department of Housing, it was agreed that details of the caseworker from the relevant agency dealing with the particular client's case would suffice. This would enable the Housing Department officer to follow up by phone or email if more information was required from them for the application. This has been a very positive change. Regular monthly meetings with representatives from the Department of Housing's South Hedland office to update and discuss each client's progress have been introduced. These meetings provide an opportunity to discuss the client's general engagement with the program. Agreed guidelines for new clients housed via the HASWDA program sees the introduction of six-month tenancy inspections to see how clients are settling in.

Clients are introduced to the PCLS financial counselling service which assists them to pay their rent by regular Centrepay deductions and provides them with ongoing support with budgeting to ensure that any potential arrears are avoided. Ongoing support and information for the maintenance of an alcohol-free household is provided, because some clients have a negative history with Department of Housing and therefore need constant support to ensure that they sustain their tenancy.

On occasions, the Department of Housing are reticent to house certain clients via the program, especially if there is a 'bad tenancy' history. These are the clients for whom advocacy is crucial to convince the Department that the previous behaviour was due to drug or alcohol abuse, and the reformed client, with the support of the program, is in a better position to meet their responsibilities as public housing tenants.

It is a constant challenge to keep clients who are susceptible to drug abuse motivated to continue their counselling and remain drug free while they await the allocation of a house which, because of the housing demand, can be quite protracted. Ten houses per financial year are allocated to the program, but to date in the South Hedland area, only one client has been successfully housed. A further four applicants await allocation. However these clients are remaining alcohol and drug free. Ongoing dialogue is maintained on their behalf with the Department of Housing in regards to progress on their applications. The long waiting periods are indicative of the crucial need in the Pilbara for an affordable public housing strategy.

I believe this service will continue to grow when people know that being free of alcohol and drugs can see them safely housed. The one client that has been housed is doing really well. She has successfully passed two housing inspections so far, her children are attending school regularly and she loves her new home. During a recent home visit her seven year old gave me a big hug and smile. Moments like that makes the job worthwhile! I look forward to the coming year with PCLS and will endeavour to support my clients to the best of my ability. I feel fortunate to work with such a great team.

Sue Baker
Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker, Drug and Alcohol



Public Tenancy Support Service

The Public Tenancy Support Service (PTSS) assists the Department of Housing tenants at risk of eviction. The service visits tenants in their homes on a regular basis to help sustain their tenancies through support, advocacy and appropriate referrals to financial counselling and other services.

In 2011-2012 the PTSS operated in Roebourne and Newman. The Roebourne service is delivered by Lorraine Jones in a part-time capacity, complementing her part-time SHAP role. In Newman the PTSS is provided full-time by Frost Allen. Frost Allen commenced with Pilbara Community Legal Service on 21 June 2012. The Newman PTSS report was therefore provided by the previous PTSS worker, Ettie Te Miha.

Roebourne service



In Roebourne we have had another busy year with lots of goals achieved with our clients. In the past year I have assisted 17 clients under the PTSS and have eight cases open currently. Additionally I have assisted over 100 'walk-in' enquiries and made referrals to appropriate services as required.

The free phone that has been set up in the foyer of the Roebourne office for clients to call Housing Direct for maintenance requests continues to be a popular and effective service. Roebourne is a predominantly Aboriginal community and very few people have landlines. Clients can call Housing Direct themselves and we record details of the request on each client's file for future reference. This process is very empowering for clients and recording the requests has meant that it is easier to follow up with Housing Direct when repairs are not attended to in a timely manner, or when workmanship is unsatisfactory. For repairs to water leaks, this process has allowed me to accurately pinpoint the date from which tenants should receive a concession on their water bill.

Early intervention is the key to success. For this reason the service has been working closely with the Department of Housing to ensure vulnerable tenants are referred to PTSS for support as early as possible following problems with their tenancies being identified. A Home Care Package has been developed utilising some of the brokerage funds. These are presented to the clients as a gift and they are then educated on the use of the different cleaning products around their home. This type of practical education has been extremely successful.

As an ongoing process, clients are also educated on the Department of Housing's policy in regards to the calculation of rent. As this is not a straightforward calculation it is important to explain to clients them how and why changes to their situation, income and household composition can impact on the amount of rent they are required to pay.

I believe that the PTSS has assisted in giving confidence to our clients and provides them with the support needed to maintain a safe and secure tenancy for their family.

*Lorraine Jones
PTSS Worker, Roebourne*





Newman service

Pilbara Community Legal Service's motto is 'to empower the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively', and in the case of the Tenancy Support Service, that is exactly our aim - to assist tenants to maintain their tenancies by providing on-going support, advocating, advising and giving practical aid in all areas of tenancy to those referred to our service by the Department of Housing. I work predominantly with clients from the Aboriginal communities and I am required to support 10 clients every 6 months. Referrals are received from the Department of Housing who identify clients in need of support because their tenancy is at risk for a number of reasons. For example, property standards, anti-social behavior and debt are common problems which put tenancies at risk. Initial assessments are carried out jointly with me, the Department's Housing Support Worker and the tenant. I also work closely with our Newman Financial Counsellor when there are issues of debt management.

For example, an issue arose regarding tenant liability when a tenant was charged for the spraying of cockroaches at her rental property. The tenant organized a pest controller to attend to the problem as the pest controller sent by the Department of Housing had not been effective. The controller hired by the tenant believed that the previous pest controller had never undertaken the work, since the pests were still very apparent and a sticker indicating the date and the company who undertook the work was not affixed to the wall of the power box of the property in accordance with the procedure for all Pest Control companies. We appealed to the Department of Housing and the tenant liability charges were overturned.



When a client is referred because their property standards are unacceptable, we assist in many areas to educate them on how to improve their property standards, both internal and external.

For example, a tenant was referred for overcrowding at her property. The tenant had applied for a tenancy transfer to a larger home, however the Department was also concerned about her property standards. On each home visit, we advised the tenant that the Department would not consider her request for a transfer until she was able to demonstrate that she could keep her current home clean and tidy and avoid further breaches. With encouragement and support from her family, the PTSS and the community, the tenant made a big effort to clean up and clear the rubbish. The tenant placed the rubbish from around her property into bags kindly provided by a local cleaning company and used the community trailer provided by The Bloodwood Tree Association.

We showed the tenant how to clean the interior of her house and provided her with cleaning equipment and detergents. On our next visit, there was a distinct improvement and the client engaged very well with the PTSS. She was very proud to show us the ceiling fans and vents that were now clean. She was commended on her efforts on both the interior and exterior of the property. The tenant's request for a transfer to a larger property is now being considered favorably by the Department of Housing.

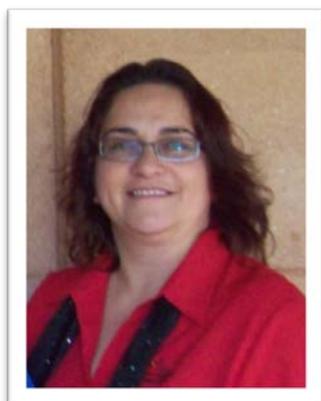


When given the correct guidance and direction tenants soon realize that it is for their own benefit that they need to address any tenancy issues that arise, thereby becoming self-sufficient and able to sustain their tenancies. I would like to thank PCLS and the Department of Child Protection for the PTSS, it is making such a difference for many families in Newman.

Ettie Te Miha
PTSS Worker, Newman



Domestic Violence Outreach Service



The Domestic Violence Outreach (DVO) Service provides an important program in the Pilbara and in the lives of women and children living in fear. The service provides face-to-face and telephone crisis intervention to assess the needs and safety of women and their children.

The majority of DVO referrals are sent from the Pilbara Protection Coordinator, whose role is to vet all Incident Reports and email the relevant cases to the DVO Service. Referrals are also received from Victim Support Services, Acacia Support Centre, Relationships Australia, Frontier Services, Department of Child Protection (Parenting Support Services), Women's Refuges and Chrysalis Support Services (Geraldton). There are also incidents of self-referral.

During the 2011-12 financial year, 179 referrals were received, and 62 were assisted. The service was unable to assist 117 referred clients because there was no means of contacting the victim. Of the 62 referrals assisted, 31 identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 28 identified as another ethnicity, 2 identified as culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and one was of unknown background. There are a large number of unassisted referrals, which appears to be a common occurrence with other DVO services. Many women do not have access to mobile phones or, when their partner becomes abusive the mobile phone is smashed. Many of the Incident Reports do not have the victim's contact number listed. This is an ongoing training issue for WA Police.

The DVO Service brokerage has been a vital component of the service. The brokerage has provided mobile phones to women who are not able to contact police and other emergency services, flights to Perth for women and children fleeing from violent situations, bond and rental assistance to maintain sustainable tenancies, clothing and other household items. One referral agent has commented that the DVO brokerage 'saves lives'.

The Hedland and Newman Women's Refuges have been very helpful in responding to enquiries regarding the clients' engagement with them. They have also facilitated the DVO Service to stay in contact with the victim when they do not have a mobile phone.

It was interesting to note during attendance at the NPAH Homelessness Forum in Perth that women and children fleeing family domestic violence are the largest cohort accessing crisis accommodation. This is certainly the underlying issue in the Pilbara. Women who are escaping from violent relationships are not able to pay the enormous costs for flights or hotel rooms so their only alternative is to either stay in the violent relationship or go to refuges for respite.



There are currently no support or domestic violence programs in the Pilbara for men. There needs to be a legal shift to compel men who have committed these crimes to attend such programs. Communicare Breathing Space in Perth is the only facility in WA that enables men to address these issues. They provide telephone counselling for remote clients and a 12-week live-in program.



In conjunction with the Aboriginal Family Law Service, a White Ribbon Awareness Day event held at the South Hedland Lotteries House. Approximately 30 people attended. The CEO of the Bloodwood Tree facilitated as MC and a local Minister said a wonderful prayer before white balloons were released, signifying the women and children who have lost their lives through family domestic violence. The event also gave a local woman the opportunity to share the tragic story of how she lost her daughter in 2010 and now courageously raises her granddaughter.

Family domestic violence affects the entire community. It inhibits the growth of children and too often they become perpetrators, as they have seen this behaviour role-modelled. We must constantly strive to change this cycle through education, providing relevant programs for men, women and children and giving Indigenous people the opportunity to create their own framework so these issues can be addressed in a holistic way with which they can identify.

Vikki Hammon
Domestic Violence Outreach Service



Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service



During the 2011 - 12 financial year, the Domestic Violence Advocacy Victim Support Service assisted 40 individuals, all women, with domestic violence victim support. The predominant demographic of clientele were women aged 20-35 with young dependent children. A further 48 children were also involved in support through their parent's engagement. Of the 88 women and children assisted through this service during the year, 64 identified as Indigenous and a further eight from linguistically diverse backgrounds.

This service operates on a case and advice basis, whereby clients are able to receive either one-off advice or safety planning assistance or on-going support and case management. Advice cases are most common for victims seeking to relocate to other areas when leaving a relationship or when requiring assistance filing a Violence Restraining Order (VRO) post-crisis. Case management is most often required when individuals are still engaging with the perpetrator and/or have a multitude of identified issues including children in care of the Department of Child Protection (DCP), homelessness, family breakdown, post-traumatic stress and/or substance abuse.

This service operates by assessing client needs, identifying support options and offering assistance and referral based on client desires. An example of this support model can be seen in a client who is experiencing fear and anxiety-like symptoms after leaving a domestically violent relationship. We would seek to discuss with client what they are experiencing and assist to identify possible support options such as domestic violence counselling, grief counselling, accessing family support and/or a GP appointment. We would then assist the client to action their chosen support options.

All clients are provided with individual safety planning advice and strategies which enables them to identify risks and empower them to take action in preventing abuse. It is believed this has a significant impact in reducing risk and harm to clients. Collaboration with other services such as the police, DCP, the courts, women's refuges and counselling services ensures clients have all possible support before, during and after abuse occurs, which enhances the client's ability to end and overcome domestically violent relationships.

During this financial year, 21 clients were referred or assisted in dealing with the Department of Housing, 11 clients received court support, 13 were assisted in dealing with the police, nine were referred for domestic violence counselling, 10 were referred for legal assistance and 13 were assisted in accessing emergency or crisis accommodation. Five women successfully and safely left their abusive relationships and a further eight women received assistance after fleeing to Karratha on leaving their domestically violent relationships. Two women and their children were successfully housed with the Department of Housing and a further three referred to the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) Program. Several clients have utilised the collaboration of service provision through participation in the Strong Families Program and a further two women have sought to pursue a claim for Criminal Injuries Compensation with our solicitor.

Difficulties in service provision were experienced because of the lack of external support options for clients experiencing domestic violence. This includes a lack of emergency and affordable housing; lack of public and affordable transport; poor living affordability and subsequent social isolation; low confidence in police response times; length of time of legal proceedings with respect to criminal charges and family law matters; and a lack of rehabilitation programs for perpetrators. Homelessness is a predominant trend for victims leaving violent relationships with a severe lack of



housing options. The local refuges only have the capacity to accommodate women for a period of one week and the Department of Housing's priority assistance waitlist is around two years' long. The majority of clients seek to stay with family and friends where possible, commonly causing overcrowding and risks to personal safety through anti-social behaviour and substance misuse by other household members.

In December 2011, this service hosted White Ribbon Day which included a family fun day held with the aim of creating community awareness, advocacy and action on domestic violence. Over 50 families attended the event and received information on services within the area.

Monique Ulani
Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service



WA One Life Suicide Prevention Strategy: Community Coordinator – Pilbara Region



The WA Suicide Prevention Strategy outlines a significant state government and community commitment to suicide and self-harm prevention. The strategy has been developed from an analysis of almost 20 years' of data on suicide and self-harm in WA, a comprehensive literature review of suicide prevention research and an extensive state-wide consultation process. This strategy is aligned with the National Suicide Prevention Strategy: Living is for Everyone (LIFE) and provides a framework and governance structure to guide initiatives in WA for the future.

The Minister for Mental Health is responsible for leading the strategy. The Minister gave new direction and responsibility to a revised Ministerial Council for suicide prevention whose membership has been drawn from suicide prevention experts, community, corporate and government organisations and people who have been impacted by suicide. Centrecare was appointed to assume responsibility for the day-to-day work of the Ministerial Council for Suicide Prevention, the development and delivery of community awareness initiatives and the coordination of training, research and evaluation of suicide prevention strategies across WA.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc is the host agency for the Community Coordinator position in the Pilbara. I commenced in the position in mid-March 2012. As soon as I could, I visited Centrecare in Perth for more of an insight into the role. I met with Centrecare's One Life Suicide Prevention Strategy Network Coordinator Fiona Moritz, and Centrecare's Agency Coordinator Clive Elliot. I was given an over view of the strategy and more specific information on the Community Coordinator's role and the expected outcomes for the Pilbara region. There was much reading to do and much information to digest in order to gain a clear understanding of the role.

Locally employed Community Coordinators support WA communities by working with community members and agencies in mapping existing suicide prevention activities and determining the need for future initiatives. This work will then inform the development of community action plans which will outline the additional supports required, how these can be resourced and how individuals, groups and organisations can work more collaboratively to reduce the number of suicides.

I have engaged with the community in Hedland and have managed to make some connections in Karratha. All the agencies I have approached in Hedland have all had very positive outcomes and I have key people who wish to be involved in the Health and Wellbeing Committee. However the difficult side of the engagement process is the many stories of suicide from people wanting to share their personal experiences - usually that they have had a family member commit suicide. This really reinforces that this strategy is necessary in our community and we do need to make as many people aware as possible and all work towards bringing change and reducing suicide rates.

I have engaged with Centrecare a number of times and they are always very helpful. I feel I have a better understanding when I am there and that I am on the right track, as everyone approaches the strategy differently and it should be community driven. At times, I naturally feel a little neglected in my role which I guess is an issue of isolated living that all services in the Pilbara have to deal with. The Coordinators at Centrecare say they are always there to help and only a phone call away. Plans



are in place for monthly consultation conference calls with the next one scheduled for 1 August 2012.

I am in the process of organising a community forum; however I am having a few difficulties with tying it all together for both Hedland and Karratha. I have engaged with Glen Mitchell a well-known radio commentator and an ambassador for the One Life Strategy. Glen has agreed to come to the Pilbara on 14 August. It was quite difficult getting a venue at Welcome Lotteries House in Karratha and securing a date that is suitable for all the guest speakers. The Oz Help Team were committed to attend to provide a 1-hour talk on suicide in the afternoon. Unfortunately, due to their busy schedule they are unable to participate. As a result, we will hold the Hedland forum as scheduled but delay the proposed Karratha forum until November when Oz Help will be available. I am also planning to engage with the mental health team at the hospital to assist me with the forum in Hedland. I am also proposing to hold an evening forum with Glen Mitchell with wine and cheese to perhaps assist us to engage with men.

I have enquired about sponsorship via BHP to bring another ambassador to the Pilbara. I have in mind an 18-year-old young man, a sportsman and high achiever, who attempted suicide. He has earned a reputation for engaging well with young people on the subject. Hopefully if we are successful in securing the sponsorship, he will agree to speak to the upper high school, the behaviour centre and YIC in South Hedland which may be very helpful in light of recent events in the community which saw a young 18-year-old sports star from a well-known family tragically end her life.

Should we be successful with the grant application to BHP, it is proposed that this engagement be extended to Newman, as BHP also operates out of the Newman area. I am currently working on the preparation of the grant application which is quite involved and needs to be submitted by November. If we are successful the project can commence in early 2013.

I really feel that young people telling their story to other young ones is pivotal, as even when we think young people have support processes in place and knowledge of helplines etc, they still become overwhelmed when having suicidal thoughts and do not know what to do. This is where the value of young people being exposed to suicide prevention is paramount as they can then perhaps recognise symptoms in their friends and encourage them to seek help.

We are hopeful that a direct outcome of the forums will see the development of Health and Wellbeing Committees. I will then be able to work with them to develop and implement a local community One Life Suicide Prevention Strategy.

*Kathy Nelson
Community Coordinator
WA One Life Suicide Prevention Strategy*



Regional Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service



At the beginning of this financial year I was busy providing assistance to a tenant residing in a caravan park. The tenant came in with Eviction Notice with no ground specified. I have previously helped Caravan Park tenants at the State Administrative Tribunal (SAT). Those who did not seek a hearing at SAT were offered a new lease at the caravan park.

I have closed several successful cases and the Tenants' Advice Service (TAS), Department of Commerce (DOC) and SAT have been very helpful and cooperative.

I was at one stage in a panic mode, as the TAS Advice Line was temporarily unavailable to provide information or advice services to the regional tenant advocates. I believe the TAS Advice Line is invaluable and it was good news when TAS found a new solicitor and recommenced their services.

In September 2011, the Domestic Violence Officer (DVO) and I travelled to Newman to disseminate about our program and services. We were invited to the 'Blue Shed' at the Parnpajinya Community where I talked about the importance of putting more than one household member on the lease so that the tenancy is protected should something happen to the head tenant. I also provided information on the new anti-social behaviour provisions ('strikes'). The attendees were much more concerned about how to get a house, as they were either sleeping rough or staying in overcrowded conditions. I made referrals to our Newman office where appropriate.

I also participated in an orientation organised by the Hedland Senior High School. A group of students with their teacher and school coordinator had an excursion at the South Hedland Lotteries House where I gave an overview of the PCLS services. I have attended the International Tenancy Day Forum and State Tenancy Conference. Both conferences were productive as it developed a closer relationship between stakeholders and involved thorough discussion with the attendees.

As the demand for houses continues to grow and the cost of private renting in the Hedland area is ridiculously high, it seems like an endless battle for people who to try and sustain their tenancy, and for those who are waiting to be housed by the Department of Housing. I am pleased that by networking with other service providers, there is now an understanding of the impact that housing problems can have on other areas of life. I will continue to work with the community to ensure that people are prioritised according to need and the most appropriate avenues for assistance are utilised.

Selina Bilton
Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service, East Pilbara



Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Support Service



I commenced in the position as the Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Support Worker at Pilbara Community Legal Service on 23 January 2012. The position is responsible for providing tenancy education and advocacy to Indigenous people in the Pilbara to ensure that they are aware of their rights as tenants and are able to access relevant information and services in regard to their public housing tenancies.

Areas covered include Port Hedland, South Hedland, with visits to Roebourne and Karratha on a regular basis with outreach to Onslow as the need arises.

Over the last financial year assistance has been provided to public housing tenants on a range of matters. Clients who have left a public housing tenancy present with vacating debts attributed to tenant liability. Sometimes it transpires that some of these debts are due to the neglect of maintenance by the Department of Housing during the tenancy.

The majority of clients report their maintenance issues to the Maintenance hotline. Clients are required to constantly follow up on their maintenance issues because they do not receive a response from the Department. In many instances the maintenance is never carried out. After four or five times of reporting the matter, they give up. Unfortunately, the outcome then is that the tenant is made liable for a vacating debt attributed to their negligence.

The general wait list for public housing in South Hedland is currently six years or longer and four years or longer for those who are 'priority' listed. Providing these statistics to a sole-parenting mother of three who is living in a car, or to a 65-year-old man who is homeless and living day-to-day searching for somewhere to live, or to a family moving from one household to another, is extremely hard. Hopefully, the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness programs will continue to help minimise such situations.

For example, a client who had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer was referred to our Homelessness Accommodation Support Service. The client was homeless and sleeping rough in a shaded area behind the local Post Office. Within one month of referring the client to the Homelessness Service he was successfully housed. The client was also referred to other support services to assist him manage his new home and his illness.

The Department of Housing's appeals process is sometimes challenging for those clients who are not able to positively articulate their case. Assistance and support is provided to clients at the appeal process if research determines that the client has grounds for an appeal. The process can provide a positive outcome. There have been times when a substantial debt has been reduced when a clear case to do so is put to the Appeals Panel. The Debt Discount Scheme also serves to encourage the early payment of debts to the Department of Housing

Regular networking meetings with the Department of Housing's staff have been proposed. To date however, these meetings have not eventuated. Networking Meetings between local tenancy support services and the Department of Housing would facilitate the exchange of important information such as changes to the Department's policies, meeting new staff members and clarifying issues of concern within the community. Such interagency meetings would go a long way towards building a



relationship and working together to achieve the goal of empowering of the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively.

During the course of the year, the following personal development training was undertaken

8 February 2012	Culture Awareness
3 April 2012	Grant Writing
12 - 13 April 2012	Residential Tenancy Law for Community Workers (TASWA)
24 April 2012	PCLS Networking Morning Tea
15 June 2012	Centrelink Networking Lunch
25 June 2012	YIC Networking Meeting
26 June 2012	Employment Law Training
28 June 2012	Picnic in the Park – Aboriginal Family Law

The service is also involved with organising and participating in the following future community events and additional training:

5 July 2012	NAIDOC Community Fun Day
9 August 2012	Picnic In The Park – Aboriginal Family Law
10 August 2012	Homelessness Persons Week
14 August 2012	Suicide Prevention Day Forum
14 August 2012	Suicide Prevention Night Forum
22 - 24 August 2012	TASWA – Housing Discrimination
30 - 31 August 2012	First Aid Course – Red Frontier

As the Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Support Worker I will continue to encourage clients to identify and understand the problems or challenges they face, so that they can become self-determined and reach their own outcomes based on their Aboriginal terms of reference. Many presenting clients have literacy and numeracy difficulties. I assist these clients with housing applications, compiling documents and liaising with the Department of Housing on their behalf if they are not comfortable to do themselves. During these engagements with clients, assistance is intergraded with education, translating various aspects of Department of Housing policies as they connect to the particular circumstances of each client. The aim is to bring about increased knowledge for the clients that will empower them to be more actively involved in their future tenancy situations.



*Tanita MacDonald
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Support Service*



Supported Housing Assistance Program

The Supported Housing Assistance Program (SHAP) is an initiative of the Department of Housing to assist their tenants to avoid losing their tenancy. The Department refer their tenants to the SHAP Program if there are instances of anti-social behaviour, rent arrears, property standards, tenant liability debt or water debt.

The SHAP service providers then provide these tenants with ongoing support, advice and education in regard to their responsibilities under their Tenancy Agreements. The SHAP service also provides advice, advocacy, information and referrals to other services that they may require.

The SHAP Program also helps to educate and empower the tenants on how best they can sustain and maintain their tenancies as well as teaching them how to communicate better with the Department of Housing, which in turn then gives the clients the confidence to speak to the Department of Housing on their own behalf. Quite often when a client is referred to the SHAP Program, the communication between the client and the Department of Housing is quite fractured. Upon exit from the SHAP Program these communication issues have usually been rectified.

During this financial year the SHAP Program has been provided from three separate locations in the Pilbara Erica James fills the role on a fulltime basis in Karratha. Lorraine Jones provides the service in Roebourne on a part-time basis and Beverly O'Brien provided the service in a full-time basis the Hedland area.

The Funding Agreement for the delivery of the SHAP service in the Pilbara expires in September 2012. A tender under the government's new outcomes-based procurement process has been submitted to the Department of Housing. The Department recognises that its current engagement is across a number of reform areas including the National Partnership on Remote Indigenous Housing, the National Partnership on Homelessness and the new Disruptive Behaviour Policy requires the input and assistance of community organisations. The Department are seeking a single response, outcomes-based program that can be evaluated as 'one process'. A final decision on this tender has been delayed until early 2013.

Karratha service



I have been providing the SHAP service in Karratha on a full-time basis for two-and-a-half years. Since July 2011, 20 referrals have been received from the Department of Housing. 10 clients have been successfully exited with minor issues, 8 successfully exited and two clients exited due to non-compliance with the program.

The current SHAP client base is 11 clients with 9 vacancies. During the course of this financial year, there has been a marked reduction in the number of referrals received from the Department of Housing's Karratha office and to date we have not been provided with a list of clients who are waitlisted for the Program. This may be indicative of the fact that tenants of the Department are not breaching their tenancy agreements. The ongoing six-weekly SHAP Reviews, conducted with the Department of Housing has been an asset to the program.



The SHAP Program plays an integral part in assisting many families who are at risk of losing their tenancies. The program has had many clients successfully exited.

During the twelve months the following areas of professional development have been undertaken:

- Risk Management
- State Tenancy Conference
- Specialist Homelessness Services Conference “*Leading the Road Home*”

Attending this training has enabled me as the SHAP service provider to assist clients with increased competency, awareness and professionalism.

I take this opportunity to thank Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc for giving me the opportunity to attend training that provides me with improved knowledge and skills to better assist our SHAP clients. I thoroughly enjoy my position and I look forward to continuing being able to educate and assist clients in need in the months ahead.

Erica James

SHAP Service Provider, Karratha

Roebourne service



The part-time position of SHAP Service Provider in Roebourne has a full caseload of ten clients. In addition, clients are waitlisted for the program.

Building a relationship with the client is vital before approaching them about the issues which have led to them being referred to SHAP. Building trust and respect are of the utmost importance if we are to succeed and reach our goal of maintaining sustainable tenancies. Educating the client on what needs to be achieved and how it will affect their lives is important. Everything from completing a subsidy form for the Department of Housing to applying for Centrelink payments needs to be fully and clearly explained to the client.

As the SHAP Service Provider in Roebourne, I attend SHAP Reviews with the Department of Housing every six weeks to discuss and jointly assess our clients’ progress and agree on what may still be required of them to maintain their tenancy in the future. Keeping clients informed of their progress and seeing the growth in their confidence is very rewarding.

I have attended the following professional development seminars during this financial year:

- Working with people with complex needs
- Managing disruptive behaviour
- North West Housing Pathways

Lorraine Jones

SHAP Service Provider, Roebourne



South Hedland service



I get great pleasure from my role as SHAP Service Provider when I see what clients can achieve when they are treated fairly. Currently I have a full caseload of 20 SHAP clients. SHAP Reviews with the Department of Housing take a place regularly. It is very rewarding when a struggling family is granted a brand new home under the state government's 'New Living Program' in South Hedland, when they have for years been struggling to maintaining the upkeep of a dilapidated older home.

The biggest issue for most of the SHAP clients with whom I work is maintenance. Due in part to staffing issues at the Department of Housing, maintenance requests are often been ignored to the detriment of the clients. There is also a shortage of maintenance workers which means that there is a long wait time between reporting an issue and having it attended to.

This year I have attended the following professional development seminars:

- Employment Law Workshop
- Emergency Relief Training
- Advocating for Public Housing Tenants Training
- Tenancy Law for Community Workers Training

Many of my clients have literacy problems and need help to understanding the contents of letters they have received from Department of Housing, especially when they have applied for a transfer and cannot understand the reason that their application has been declined. I continue to work closely with our South Hedland Financial Counsellor and make mainly regarding tenant liability debts and Horizon Power bills.

Beverly O'Brien
SHAP Service Provider, South Hedland



Independent Audit Report



For the full details of our services visit our website: www.araluen.com.au



Araluen Accountancy
is a CPA Practice

PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30th 2012

Scope

I have audited the accompanying financial report for the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc which comprises the Committee's Report, Statement of Financial Performance, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to the Financial Statements (including Statement of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory notes), Income and Expenditure Statement, and the Statement by Members of the Board of Management for the financial year ended June 30th 2012.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Governing Committee of the Corporation is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the Financial Report in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations). This includes responsibility for the design, implementation and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the Financial Report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditors Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the Financial Report based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the Financial Report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the Financial Report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the Financial Report, whether due to fraud or error. In making these risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Corporation's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Corporation's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Governing Committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the Financial Report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I followed applicable independence requirements of Australian professional ethical pronouncements.



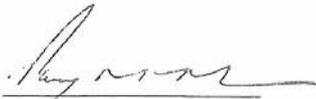
The audit opinion expressed in these statements has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Pilbara Community Legal Service are properly drawn up:

1. so as to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs as at 30th June 2012 and the surplus of income over expenditure for the financial year ended on that date;
2. in accordance with the provisions of the Association's constitution; and
3. in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.

Signed at Roleystone this 29th day of October 2012



Ray M'Manus CPA

ARALUEN ACCOUNTANCY
57 Ridgehill Rise
Roleystone WA 6111



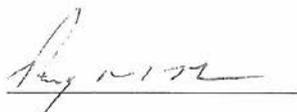
AUDITORS INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION
TO THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT OF
THE PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC.

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2012 there has been:

- (i.) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001, and the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Regulations 2007 in relation to the audit; and
- (ii.) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Name of Firm: Araluen Accountancy

Name of Principal: Raymund McManus



Date: 29th October 2012

Address: 57 Ridgehill Rise,
Roleystone WA 6111



Financial Statements

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

**Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2012**

Guidera Consulting

121 Regency Drive
Thornlie WA 6108

Phone: 08 9467 7380 Fax: 08 9459 1895
Email: steveng@guideraconsulting.com.au



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Compilation Report to Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

We have compiled the accompanying general purpose financial statements of Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc., which comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Equity, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2012, a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes. These have been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting framework described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

The Responsibility of the Committee of Management

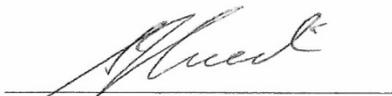
The Board of Management is solely responsible for the information contained in the general purpose financial report and has determined that the accounting policies used are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Association's Constitution and are appropriate to meet the needs of the Board of Management for the purposes of complying with the Association's Constitution

Our Responsibility

Our procedures use accounting expertise to collect, classify and summarise the financial information which the committee of management provided, in compiling the financial statements. Our procedures do not include verification or validation procedures. No audit or review has been performed and accordingly no assurance is expressed.

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

The general purpose financial statements were compiled exclusively for the benefit of the board of management. We do not accept responsibility to any other person for the contents of the general purpose financial statements.



Steven Guidera
Guidera Consulting
121 Regency Drive
Thornlie WA

29 October, 2012



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511

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Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Board of Management's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Your Board of Management submit the financial accounts of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2012.

Board of Management Members

Steve Gwynne - Chairperson
Cecelia Brownhill - Deputy Chairperson
Roz Brabazon - Secretary
Dale Purdy - Treasurer
Jane Ablett
Nicky Latham
Bronwyn Elvey

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were the provision of the following services throughout the Pilbara region including Hedland, Newman, Roebourne and Karratha:

- Domestic Violence and Victim Support Service;
- Domestic Violence and Outreach Service;
- Legal assistance to victims of Family Violence;
- Solicitor - Legal Advice - Family Law;
- Tenants' Education and Advocacy Service;
- Indigenous Tenancy Support Service;
- Financial Counselling Services;
- Supported Housing Assistance Program;
- Indigenous Womens Program;
- Rural Womens Outreach Lawyer Program.
- Family and Domestic Violence Case Management Coordination.
- Homelessness Housing Support Service
- Public Tenancy Support Service
- Housing Support Service Drug and Alcohol
- One-Life Suicide Prevention Strategy Community Coordinator

Significant Changes

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

Indemnifying Officers and Auditor

No Indemnities have been given or insurance premiums paid, during or since the end of the financial year, for any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Association.

Board of Management Members and Executive Officers Emoluments

No Board of Management member has received or become entitled to receive during or since the end of the financial year, a benefit or contract made by the Association with the Board of Management member or an entity of which the Board of Management Member has a substantial financial interest.

Auditors Independence Declaration

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Board of Management's Report
For the year ended 30 June 2012

An Auditors Independence declaration for the year ending 30 June 2012 has been received and forms part of this financial report.

Operating Result

The surplus from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to

	Year ended 30 June 2012	Year ended 30 June 2011
	\$	\$
Surplus from ordinary activities	298,665	184,044
Less transfer to Grants Refundable Liability	(127,857)	(21,036)
Plus transfer from Grants Refundable Liability	<u>21,036</u>	<u>25,967</u>
Surplus attributable to the Association	<u>191,844</u>	<u>188,975</u>

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Board of Management on:



Chairperson : Steve Gwynne



Secretary: Roz Brabazon

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's
Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Statement of Financial Performance
For the year ended 30 June 2012

	Note	2012 \$	2011 \$
Revenues from ordinary activities	2	2,381,038	2,357,635
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	3	(49,621)	(77,923)
Other expenses from ordinary activities		(2,032,752)	(2,095,668)
Surplus / (Deficit) from ordinary activities		298,665	184,044
Transfers to Asset Reserve		(105,333)	(128,017)
Transfers From Grant Refundable Liability		21,036	25,967
Transfers to Grant Refundable Liability		(127,857)	(21,036)
		0	0
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities		0	0
Surplus attributable to members of the association		86,511	60,961

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's
 Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2012

	Note	2012 \$	2011 \$
Current Assets			
Cash assets	5	1,072,199	867,506
Receivables	6	64,678	87,667
Other		34,695	19,054
Total Current Assets		1,171,572	974,227
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	7	304,921	275,560
Total Non-Current Assets		304,921	275,560
Total Assets		1,476,493	1,249,787
Current Liabilities			
Payables	8	264,578	215,017
Current Tax Liabilities	9	7,975	29,013
Provisions	10	132,390	133,085
Total Current Liabilities		404,943	377,115
Non-Current Liabilities			
Provisions	10	32,733	25,699
Total Non-Current Liabilities		32,733	25,699
Total Liabilities		437,676	402,814
Net Assets		1,038,817	846,973
Equity			
Reserves	4	676,940	571,607
Retained Surpluses	15	361,877	275,366
Total Members' Funds		1,038,817	846,973

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<hr/>		
Cash Flow From Operating Activities		
Receipts from customers	2,374,055	2,433,359
Payments to Suppliers and employees	(2,078,360)	(2,070,060)
Interest received	14,332	12,916
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (note 2)	310,027	376,215
Cash Flow From Investing Activities		
Payments for Assets	(105,334)	(135,332)
Proceeds from Sale of Assets	0	0
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (note 2)	(105,334)	(135,332)
Net increase (decrease) in cash held	204,693	240,883
Cash at the beginning of the year	867,506	626,623
Cash at the end of the year	1,072,199	867,506

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's
 Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Statement of Cash Flows
For the year ended 30 June 2012

2012

2011

Note 1. Reconciliation Of Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Cash at the end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

Cash at bank	710,540	549,970
Provisional account	15,162	14,417
Term Deposits	150,000	150,000
Bigsky Term Deposit	118,076	110,870
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy	73,421	43,327
CBA Debit Card	5,000	0
Electronic Clearing Account	0	(1,077)
	<u>1,072,199</u>	<u>867,506</u>

Note 2. Reconciliation Of Net Cash Provided By/Used In Operating Activities To Net Profit

Operating profit (loss) after tax	298,665	184,044
Depreciation	75,973	77,923
Changes in assets and liabilities net of effects of purchases and disposals of controlled entities:		
(Increase) decrease in trade and term debtors	7,348	88,640
Increase (decrease) in trade creditors and accruals	(57,259)	(36,319)
Increase (decrease) in employee entitlements	6,339	51,412
Increase (decrease) in sundry provisions	(21,039)	10,515
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>310,027</u>	<u>376,215</u>

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2012

Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

The financial report is a general purpose financial report that has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board and the requirements of the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006 [CATSI Act]

The financial report covers Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. as an individual entity. Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. is an association incorporated in Western Australia under the CATSI Act.

The financial report of Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. complies with all Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) in their entirety.

The following is a summary of the material accounting policies adopted by the economic entity in the preparation of the financial report. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(A) Basis of Preparation

First-time Adoption of Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. has prepared financial statements in accordance with the Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) from the 1 July 2005.

The accounting policies set out below have been consistently applied to all years presented. The entities have however elected to adopt exemptions available under AASB 1 relating to AASB 132: Financial Instruments: Disclosure and Presentation, and AASB 139: Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement. Refer the Notes for further details.

Reporting Basis and Conventions

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs modified by the revaluation of selected non-current assets, and financial assets and financial liabilities for which the fair value basis of accounting has been applied.

(B) Accounting Policies

Income tax

Pilbara Community Legal Services Inc is recognised as a Tax Exempt charitable organisation by the Australian Taxation Office. Hence there is no requirement for the association to pay income taxes. Hence, no tax effect accounting applies to these Financial Reports.

Property, Plant and Equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost or fair value less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

a) Plant and equipment

Plant and equipment is measured on the cost basis less depreciation and impairment losses.

These financial statements are audited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.



Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2012

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount from those assets. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of the expected net cash flows that will be received from the assets employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have not been discounted to present values in determining the recoverable amounts.

Subsequent costs are included in the asset's carrying amount recognised as a separate asset, as appropriate, only when it is probable that the future economic benefits associated with the item will flow to the company and the cost of the item can be measured reliably. All other repairs and maintenance are charged to the income statement during the financial period in which they are incurred.

b) Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets including buildings and capitalised leased assets, but excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight line basis over their useful lives to Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are:

Class of Asset	Depreciation Rate %
Leasehold improvements	[4-30%]
Plant and equipment	[20-40 %]
Other plant and equipment	[10-30 %]
Motor vehicles	[18.75-25 %]

The assets residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each balance sheet date.

An assets carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

Gains and losses on disposal are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in the income statement.

Financial Instruments

a) Recognition

Financial instruments are initially measured at cost on trade date, which includes transaction costs, when the related contractual rights or obligations exist. Subsequent to initial recognition these instruments are measured as set out below.

b) Loans and receivables

Loans and receivables are non-derivative financial assets with fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

c) Held-to-maturity investments

These investments have fixed maturities, and it is the company's intention to hold these investments to maturity. Any held-to-maturity investments are stated at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

d) Financial liabilities

Non-derivative financial liabilities are recognised at amortised cost, comprising original debt less principal payments and amortisation.

g) Derivative Instruments

Derivative instruments are measured at fair value. Gains and losses arising from changes in fair value are taken to the income statement unless they are designated as hedges.

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For the year ended 30 June 2012

e) Fair Value

Fair value is determined based on current bid prices for all quoted investments. Valuation techniques are applied to determine the fair value for all unlisted securities, including recent arm's length transactions, reference to similar instruments and option pricing models.

f) Impairment

At each reporting date, the committee members assess whether there is objective evidence that financial instrument has been impaired. In the case of available-for-sale financial instruments, a prolonged decline in value of the instrument is considered to determine whether an impairment has arisen. Impairment losses are recognised in the income statement.

Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, the committee members review the carrying values of its tangible and intangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the assets fair value less costs to sell and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the assets carrying value over its recoverable amount is expensed to the income statement.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the liability for employee entitlements arising from services rendered by employees to balance date. Employee entitlements expected to be settled within one year have been measured at the amount expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus related on-costs. Employee entitlements payable later than one year have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash out flows to be made for those entitlements.

Provisions

Provision are recognised when Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that the outflow of economic benefit will result and that the outflow can be measured reliably.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and Cash Equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks or financial institutions, other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within short term borrowings in current liabilities on the balance sheet.

Revenue

Revenue from the sale of goods is recognised upon the delivery of goods to customers.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking in to account the interest rates applicable to the financial assets.

Grant revenue is recognised when the right to receive a grant has been established

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon the delivery of the service to the customers.

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

Goods and Service Tax (GST)

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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. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the balance sheet are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the cash flow statement on a gross basis, except for the GST component of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with changes in presentation for the current financial year.

a) Critical accounting estimates and judgments

The committee members evaluate estimates and judgments incorporated into the financial report based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and internally.

Key estimates - Impairment

The committee members assesses impairment at each reporting date by evaluating conditions specific to the group that may lead to impairment of assets. Where an impairment trigger exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is determined. Value-in-use calculations performed in assessing recoverable amounts incorporate a number of key estimates.

No impairment has been recognised for the year ended 30 June 2012.

Key judgments - Doubtful debts provision

The committee members believe that the full amount of the debt is recoverable and no doubtful debt provision has been made at 30 June 2012.

Note 2: Revenue and Other Income

Revenue:

Interest revenue	14,332	12,916
Other income	3,128	7,327
Grants Received	2,336,079	2,130,205
Service Generated Income	5,275	207,187
Brokerage Income	22,224	0
	2,381,038	2,357,635

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Note 3: Surplus from Ordinary Activities

Surplus (Deficit) from ordinary activities before
income tax has been determined after:

Charging as Expense:

Depreciation of non-current assets:

- Plant and equipment	<u>75,973</u>	<u>77,923</u>
Total depreciation expenses	<u>75,973</u>	<u>77,923</u>

Note 4: Reserves

Balance at the beginning of the reporting period

General Reserve	109,094	109,094
Asset Reserve	<u>462,513</u>	<u>334,496</u>
	<u>571,607</u>	<u>443,590</u>

Increase (decrease) in reserves during the reporting
period:

Asset Reserve	<u>105,333</u>	<u>128,017</u>
	<u>105,333</u>	<u>128,017</u>

Balance at the reporting date

General Reserve	109,094	109,094
Asset Reserve	<u>567,846</u>	<u>462,513</u>
	<u>676,940</u>	<u>571,607</u>

Nature and purpose of each class of reserve:

- General Reserve

The general reserve records funds set aside for the future expansion of the economic entity

- Asset Reserve

The Asset reserve records funds that have been used to purchase Fixed Plant & Equipment and Motor Vehicles from accounting profits. This is consistent with the program funding basis that the association operates as Asset spending is not expensed from accounting profit, but is expended from program funds.

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Note 5: Cash assets

Bank accounts:		
Cash at bank	710,540	549,970
Provisional account	15,162	14,417
Term Deposits	150,000	150,000
Bigsby Term Deposit	118,076	110,870
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy	73,421	43,327
CBA Debit Card	5,000	0
Other cash items:		
Electronic Clearing Account	0	(1,077)
	<u>1,072,199</u>	<u>867,506</u>

Note 6: Receivables

Current

Trade debtors	3,294	84,353
Grant receivable	58,206	0
Interest Receivable	3,178	3,314
	<u>64,678</u>	<u>87,667</u>

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