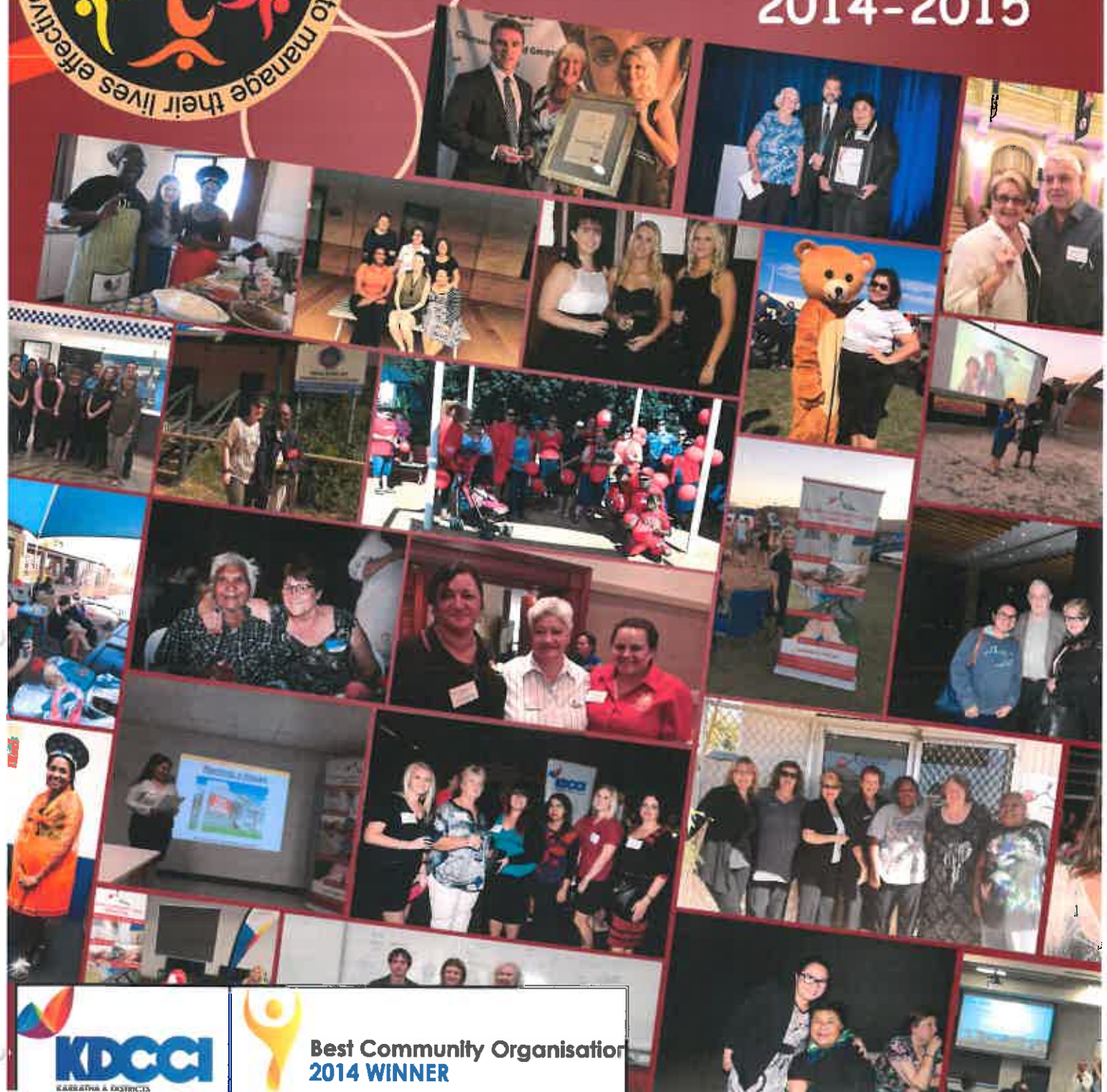


PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC.



ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015



**Best Community Organisation
2014 WINNER**

Contents

About Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.....	6
Board of Management.....	8
Vision.....	8
Purpose.....	8
Office Locations and Hours of Operation.....	8
Organisational Management Structure	9
Services	10
Legal Services.....	10
Financial Counselling Services	11
Tenancy Advocacy And Support	11
Domestic Violence Support	13
Funding	13
Organisational Review	14
Board of Management Chairperson’s Report.....	20
Chief Executive Officer’s Report	22
Service Reports	24
Legal Services.....	24
Rural Women’s Outreach Program.....	24
Indigenous Women’s Outreach Program	26
Legal Aid Officer.....	28
PPT Solicitor/s- Pilbara.....	30
Locum Solicitor – Newman	32
Financial Counselling Services	34
Financial Counsellor Karratha.....	34
Financial Counsellor South Hedland	36
Financial Counsellor Roebourne	38
Financial Counsellor Newman	40
Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service	42
National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH)	44
Pilbara Domestic Violence Outreach Service	44
Homelessness Accommodation Support Service.....	46
Homelessness Accommodation Support Service - Drug and Alcohol Strategy	48
Public Tenancy Support Service – Roebourne	50
Public Tenancy Support Service Newman	52
Tenancy Advocate and Education Support.....	54



**In Loving Memory of
Lorraine Margaret Jones**

22/08/1953 to 14/03/2015



It was with the deepest of sorrow that the Board of Management and Staff of Pilbara Community Legal Service said their final goodbyes to our cherished friend and colleague Lorraine Jones.

After a hard-fought battle with cancer, Lorraine passed away on 14th March this year.

Lorraine will remain in our hearts forever.

Lorraine left us all this beautiful message :

*"I give you this one thought to keep,
I am with you still. I do not sleep.*

I am a thousand winds that blow,

I am the diamonds that glint on the waters shore,

I am the sunlight on ripened grain,

I am the gentle autumn rain.

I am the one in the empty chair across from you,

When you awaken in the morning's hush,

*I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds in
circled flight,*

I am the soft stars that shine at night.

So do not think of me as gone,

I am with you still in each new "day dawn".

West Pilbara.....	54
East Pilbara	56
Supported Tenancy and Education Program (STEP)	58
STEP Service Provider - Karratha	58
STEP Service Provider – South Hedland	60
STEP Service Provider - Roebourne	62
STEP Service Provider - Newman.....	64
Indigenous Tenancy Advocate Service.....	66
2014/15 Financial Reports	68

Pilbara Community Legal Service recognises the traditional owners of the lands across the Pilbara region and particularly the traditional owners on which the Pilbara Community Legal Service Offices are situated. We pay deep respect to Elders both past and present.

PUBLICATION DETAILS:

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

PO Box 132

Karratha WA 6714

Tel: (08) 9185 5899

Fax: (08) 9185 6633

Web: www.pcls.net.au

About Pilbara Community Legal Service

The Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (PCLS) is a not-for-profit, government-funded community organisation that provides a range of free services which include legal, financial counselling, tenancy advocacy and support, and domestic violence advocacy and victim support. The PCLS aims to reduce legal disadvantage, increase the capacity of individuals to manage their lives effectively and ensure people understand their rights and obligations.

Over the last 22 years, PCLS has developed to be a highly valued part of the Pilbara's social infrastructure. 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 the growing concern related to social justice issues. As the socio-economic demands and the shortage of housing continued community demand brought the need for an expansion of services. As and when funding was acquired, additional offices were opened. PCLS is now a well-established service operating in four centers; Karratha, South Hedland, Roebourne and Newman. The PCLS also provides outreach services across the Pilbara region to isolated communities such as Marble Bar, Nullagine, Onslow and Jigalong.

When someone experiences a legal problem their ability to participate in social, civil and/or economic life can be severely curtailed. This is especially prominent for people who come from a low socio-economic and disadvantage background where legal problems are often the problems of everyday life and affect basic human rights such as the right to housing, employment, income support and safety from violence. Therefore PCLS is a vital community organisation for the growth of the Pilbara and with the fast-growing pace of the region, PCLS ensures nobody is left behind or struggling.

PCLS strives to provide assistance to virtually anyone who walks in the door and then targets more intensive services such as casework, advocacy, court representation, and community education to those experiencing or most at risk of social exclusion. PCLS does not only provide legal advice and assistance, but also encourages and enables people to develop skills to be their own advocates. As a service delivery strategy, PCLS makes every effort to provide information, referral and advice early to prevent problems escalating.

PCLS is not just another legal service but a valuable community service that helps people through difficult and complex situations. PCLS is one of the few community legal centres in Australia that has grown to be a holistic community service with other services complementing the legal service to assist people in their time of need.

'It is important to emphasise that the value of [the] preventative work [provided by CLCs] is far greater than the reactive costs that would be incurred in the absence of such services. The fence at the top of the cliff not only saves lives, but it is also much cheaper than the ambulance at the bottom.'

— The Economic Value of Community Legal Centres, Institute for Sustainable Futures, University of Technology Sydney, Feb 2006.

The organisation's current strategic service delivery model is the outcome of an evidenced-based, pro-active, community involved process. As PCLS provides many services the team is able to work together and deal with multiple client issues simultaneously which results in clients being put in a much better position sooner. 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 PCLS Staff and the Board of Management are confident that despite issues associated with the rapid growth of the region, they can continue to demonstrate excellence in terms of governance, program and service delivery to empower the people of the Pilbara to effectively manage their lives in relation to personal and family conflict, legal issues, mortgage and financial stress, unemployment, homelessness and family and domestic violence.

The PCLS employs a range of staff including lawyers, social workers/counsellors such as financial counsellors and tenancy support

workers. PCLS also has volunteer solicitors, barristers, law students and others working in the sector to extend the legal services. PCLS currently employs 25 full-time and part-time staff who are responsible to the Chief Executive Officer and the Principal Solicitor under the guidance of a voluntary Board of Management. 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 particular expertise working with people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

The most rewarding aspect for our PCLS Staff and the Board of Management is helping people through difficult and complex situations and dilemmas. The PCLS is unique because it provides all the support needed within the one organisation so the client is not going on a referral roundabout. It is impossible to plan for when many legal issues may arise. People do not budget for legal fees for issues like marriage breakdown, eviction or debt problems. However, PCLS ensures that every person can access the law regardless of their financial situation, social circumstances or geographic location.



Board of Management

The Board of Management is a hard-working group of community based volunteers that work tirelessly and give freely of their time.

The Board of Management is responsible for the governance of the organisation, providing leadership and strategic direction, accepting responsibility for the organisation by overseeing and monitoring and setting the direction through the strategic plan, policies and procedures. The Board of Management delegates the day-to-day management to the CEO. The Board of Management is accountable to the membership ensuring that the organisation produces results, remains solvent, and complies with all of its legal, financial, and ethical obligations.

Rozkva Brabazon	Chairperson
Joanne Pritchard	Deputy Chairperson
Stephen Gwynne	Secretary
Dale Purdy	Treasurer
Daphne Trevurza	Member
Metua Mitsy Strickland	Member
Dee Van Beek	Member
Nellie Connors	Member

Vision

"Empowering the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively".

Purpose

Provide accessible, equitable, responsible and culturally appropriate advice, support and advocacy to the people of the Pilbara.

Office Locations and Hours of Operation

Hours of operation 8.00am – 4.00pm

Karratha Office (Regional Office)

Unit 1, 2, 3 Morse Court
Welcome Lotteries House
PO Box 132
KARRATHA WA 6714
Tel: 08 9185 5899
Fax: 08 9185 6633



Roebourne Office

2 Padbury Street
PO Box 269
ROEBOURNE WA 6718
Tel: 08 9182 1169
Fax: 08 9182 1180



South Hedland Office

Unit 2, 9 Leake Street
South Hedland Lotteries House
PO Box 2506
SOUTH HEDLAND WA 6722
Tel: 08 9140 1613
Fax: 08 9172 2333

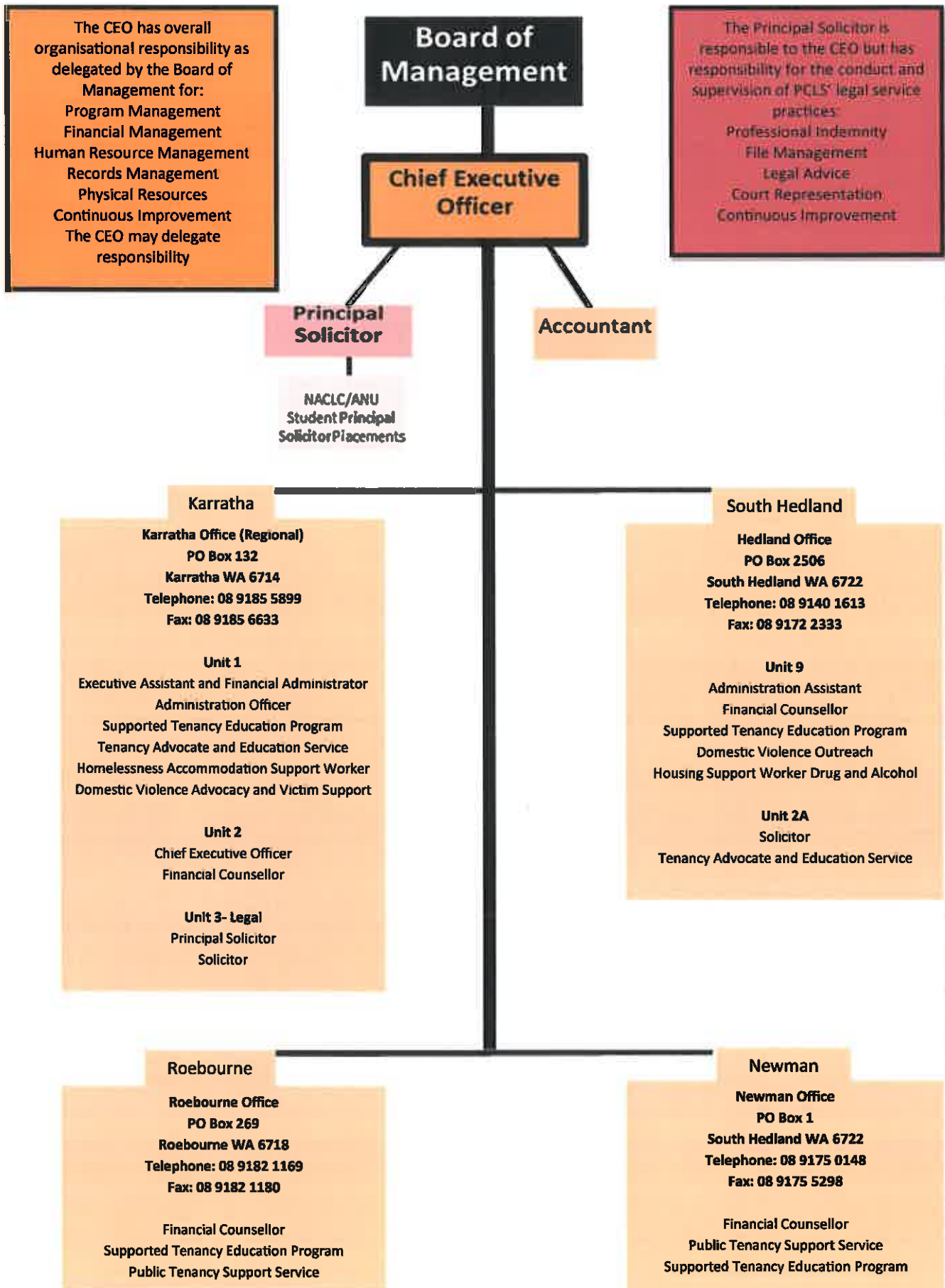


Newman Office

Unit 4, 46 Iron Ore Parade
Newman House
PO Box 1
NEWMAN WA 6753
Tel: 08 9175 0148
Fax: 08 9175 5298



Organisational Management Structure



Services

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: Federal Department of Attorney General, Community legal Service Program

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR

Karratha

The Executive Assistant is delegated responsibility from the CEO. The Executive Assistant is the supervisor of the Administration Officers and the Financial Administrator who is also responsible for the day-to-day administration of the service in the area of accounts payable, payroll, communications and resources.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Christy Reed (August 2013-current)

ACCOUNTANT

Perth

The Accountant provides financial information to management by researching and analyzing accounting data and preparing reports.

Name of Staff Member:

Ruwan Silva

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Karratha, South Hedland

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:

Karratha: Rachel Reed (Jan 2013- current);

Courtney Coburn (Relief)

South Hedland: Margaret Bowman (July 2014 - May 2015); Kesi-Maree Prior (June 2015-current); Catherine Tiongco (Relief)



RURAL WOMEN'S OUTREACH SERVICE - PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR - PILBARA

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. 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: Jo Wynaden (July 2014); Colin Baker (July 2014- current)

Funding Body: Federal Department of Attorney General—Community Legal Service Program

INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S PROJECT - PILBARA

South Hedland

This position is based in the South Hedland office and is responsible for the 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.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Leah Billeam (July 2014– November 2014); Jana Francis (January 2015– current)

Funding Body: Federal Department of Attorney General—Community Legal Service Program/ Department of Premier and Cabinet

SOLICITOR

South Hedland

This service is responsible for providing community legal education and legal casework in the East Pilbara to ensure that

people are aware of their rights and able to access relevant information and services.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Kelly Cassidy (March 2014– June 2015)

Funding Body: Federal Department of Attorney General

SOLICITOR

Karratha

This 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.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Tara Jane Torrisi (March 2014– current)

Funding Body: WA Public Purpose Trust

LOCUM SOLICITOR

Newman

This 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.

Name of Staff Member:

Karratha: Leonie Bailey

Funding Body: Australian and Securities Investments Commission



Financial Counsellors

Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman

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:

Karratha: Robert Williams (January 2009– current)

Roebourne: Carmen Scott (August 2011– January 2015); Tania Aldridge (January 2015–

current)

South Hedland: Jan Casserly (April 2012– February 2015); Jayne Jarito (March 2015– current)

Newman: Francesca Manuela (April 2009 – current)

Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support



TENANCY ADVOCACY AND EDUCATION SERVICE

Karratha and South Hedland

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.

Names of Staff Members:

Karratha: Tania Aldridge (July 2013– February 2015); Flordeliza Larrazabal (February 2015– current)

South Hedland: Sue Baker (January 2014– current)

Funding Body: Department of Commerce

INDIGENOUS TENANCY ADVOCACY & EDUCATION SERVICE

Roebourne

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 Member:

Roebourne: Samara Lee (July 2014); Jana Francis (July 2014– December 2014)

Funding Body: Department of Housing, Aboriginal Services



SUPPORTED TENANCY EDUCATION PROGRAM (STEP)

Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman

The STEP 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: Karla Kelly (July 2013-current)

Roebourne: Lorraine Jones (July 2011-January 2015); Angela Mitchell (February 2015– current)

South Hedland: Micah Buenvenida (November 2013- current)

Newman: Ettie TeMiha (January 2014-current)

Funding Body: Department of Housing

NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON HOMELESSNESS (NPAH):

HOMELESSNESS ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT WORKER (NPAH)

Karratha

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. Support is targeted to meet the needs of the individual or the family as a whole.

Name of Staff member:

Karratha: Michelle Richardson (April 2014– March 2015); Rachel Reed (March 2015– current)

Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support

HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE: DRUG AND ALCOHOL INITIATIVE– PILBARA (NPAH)

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: Janette Tallon (January 2014 – January 2015); Gretchen Ncube (January 2015– current)

Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support

PUBLIC TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICE (NPAH) Roebourne, Newman

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: Janette Tallon (January 2015– February 2015); Shirley Simpson (March 2015– current)

Newman: Ettie TeMiha (May 2014 current)

Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH INITIATIVE – PILBARA REGION (NPAH)

South Hedland

This service covers 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.

Name of Staff Member:

South Hedland: Ellysha Melville (January 2014- current)

Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCACY AND VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICE

Karratha

This service covers the Pilbara 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: Monique Ulani: (17 May 2012- February 2015); Janette Tallon (March 2015– current)

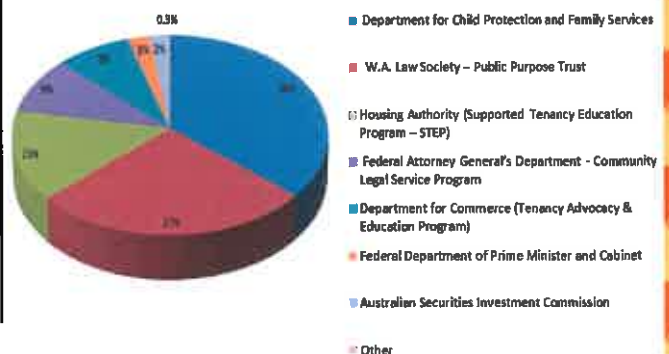
Funding Body: Department for Child Protection and Family Support

Funding 2014/15

PCLS derives funding from a range of sources, including the Commonwealth Community Legal Service Programs, other state government programs such as Department of Commerce, Department of Family and Children Protection Service and Department of Housing, as well as donations from the local governments e.g. City of Karratha and local businesses such as Rio Tinto.

Obtaining funding for PCLS is competitive, there are many hours spent on writing submission for grants and funding proposals. PCLS currently faces a challenge in remaining financially sustainable and meeting demand to minimise the further erosion of access to justice for the Pilbara’s most disadvantaged and vulnerable clients.

The Federal Government also restricted the use of funding to direct service delivery, which has excluded important preventative policy and law reform work. Regardless of funding cuts the staff at PCLS continually strives to provide assistance to anyone who walks in the door. However this can be challenging, especially with the huge demand for the services the range of programs all face. The collective effort of staff, volunteers and Board members actively lobbying and raising awareness of PCLS to give PCLS a voice and obtain sponsorship and partnerships, PCLS is again strongly positioned to move forward.



Organisational Review

Access and Equity

PCLS aims to assist low income and disadvantaged members of the community as a matter of priority. These include people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with intellectual, mental or physical disabilities and people who may face discrimination in their access to services because of a particular characteristic such as age or gender.

PCLS legal services target those who do not qualify for legal aid or those who cannot afford a private lawyer. However PCLS provides assistance to virtually anyone who walks in the door to ensure everyone has access to justice and to ensure that everyone understands their rights and responsibilities regardless of their social, economic or geographic situation. Legal Advice is given to anyone regardless of their income however more intensive services such as casework is provided for clients who are low-income and/or disadvantaged, or who are not capable for whatever reason to fully represent themselves in such situations. Other services such as domestic violence support focuses on women and children of the Pilbara and tenancy services has a focus on tenants, not landlords.

Accreditation

PCLS completed its Work Plan and certificate documents were submitted to NACLCC by the CLCWA Accreditation Coordinator Kerry Marshall.



The Work Plan greatly enhanced PCLS Policies and Procedures infrastructure and translates into benefits in terms of client services, documenting PCLS' planning and progress and other operational day to day matters.

As a result a letter of congratulations was received from the Executive Director of the Community Legal Centres Association Western Australia. The letter praised PCLS for its active and positive engagement in undertaking the

assessment process and being awarded Tier 2 for three years. PCLS was granted a non-exclusive licence to use the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLCC) certification trademark until June 2017. PCLS is required to report on its Work Plan every 6 months.

Administration and Other

Automated Telephone System

PCLS trialled an auto-mated telephone system however it was found that this system was not suitable for PCLS' clientele. PCLS has two administrative staff who attend to client phone calls in our Karratha and South Hedland offices.

PCLS Constitution

The following amendments were made and submitted to the Department of Commerce. These were:

- Item 9– to include meetings to be held by telephone and other technology.
- Clause 18 Winding Up– for the voluntary winding up of the Association to be conducted in accordance with the Act.
- Clause 18.1 Winding Up– for the distribution of surplus funds and property in accordance with the Act by deleting the words “or benevolent”.
- Clause 6 Eligibility for Membership– to include “or a paid employee of a Stakeholder who financially funds a Pilbara Community Legal Service program or service.”
- Item 3– to include the Purpose of PCLS in addition to the Objects of the Association.

PCLS Newsletter

PCLS distributes a monthly newsletter via email to all interested members of the Public. This newsletter provides an update on what is happening at PCLS as well as what is happening in the Pilbara. Karratha Administration has the task of compiling this. As a result PCLS has had many positive feedbacks about the newsletter. The newsletter will continue in 2015/16.



PCLS Website

The PCLS website is currently under construction. In 2015/16 the website will transition from Joomla to Drupal.

A visit from CLCWA



The newly appointed Executive Director of The Association of Community Legal Centres of Western Australia Helen Creed, visited Karratha, Roebourne and South Hedland PCLS offices.

Community Legal Education

One of PCLS' major marketing strategies is community legal education. Not being able to identify when they have a legal problem is one of the barriers that individuals face. In delivering community legal education, this helps individuals realise they have a legal problem and where they can go for assistance. Community legal education is an effective strategy for building people's awareness about legal issues or issues that have legal consequences, informing people about their rights and avenues for assistance and resolving these issues earlier. Conducting community legal education also provides the opportunity for individuals to ask questions which enable PCLS to see where the needs are.

Highlights for 2014/15

- NAIDOC Week Celebrations
- Newman Forum
- Australia Day Love Where You Live
- LINK Teddy Bear's Picnic
- Tenant's Rights and Responsibilities Onslow Workshop



Community Awards

- Finalist– Port Hedland Chamber of Commerce & Industry Award 2014
- Finalist—Port Hedland Community Award 2014
- Karratha and Districts Chamber of Commerce & Industry Community Service Award 2014
- Finalist– Karratha Districts & Chamber of Commerce and Industry Young Professional Award 2014
- Nominee– Australia Day Award 2015
- Finalist – Impact Measurement Awards 2015
- CEO Inducted into the W.A. Women's Hall of Fame – International Women's Day - March 2015
- Nominee—W.A. Consumer Protection Award
- Nominee- Hesta Community Awards 2015
- Nominee—Regional Achievement Award 2015



Information Technology

An IT Contract with Montec was approved for an Information Technology and Communications equipment service and support agreement for 12 months.



PCLS staff are thankful for Montec's support over the past 12 months. New IT equipment was purchased upgraded and security cameras were installed at each PCLS office location. The contract will be continued for a further 12 months for 2015/16.

PCLS also renewed a contract with BeingThere who provides videoconferencing facilities for all PCLS offices. PCLS thanks Gerry Murphy and Pam Richardson for their continued support with the set-up and training. This facility encourages communication via videoconference across all PCLS offices and also facilitates the Board of Management members to attend meetings.

Insurances

The following insurance policies were renewed:

- Commercial Motor
- Business
- Corporate Travel
- Journey Accident
- Voluntary Worker's Compensation
- Landlord's Insurance

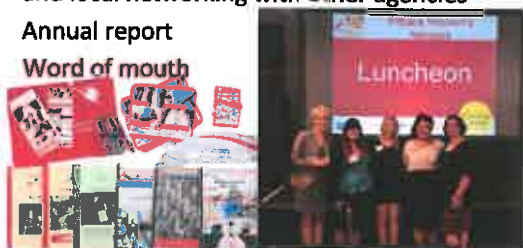
These were all arranged by the PCLS Broker–Insurance Advisernet Australia Pty Ltd. We thank them for their continued business.

The Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurances were renewed through NACL.

Marketing Strategies

PCLS uses various communication channels such as:

- Television commercials
- Social media e.g. Facebook, Twitter via the Community Law Australia campaign
- Organisational website
- Regular appearances in the media such as local newspapers, radio, local talk show programs
- Paid and unpaid placements e.g. local community directory
- Promotional materials e.g. pens, fridge magnets, enviro bags, brochures
- Communications e.g e-newsletter
- Special events e.g. NAIDOC Week, Homelessness Prevention Week, White Ribbon Day
- Networking e.g. Pilbara Business Luncheon and local networking with other agencies
- Annual report
- Word of mouth



Plans for Business Growth

PCLS is focusing on four key objectives which are:

- Client Services – Increase the scope, standard and accessibility of the service to clients. Attracting additional funding for

services. Develop clear brand identification and organisational positioning as a necessary focus in order that clients identify with the “face” of the organisation.

- Administrative Systems and Corporate Services – Increase administrative systems efficiency. Increase profile as provider of choice through media, award nominations, sponsorships and grants.
- External Relationships – Establish collaborative community partnerships to work together in new and flexible ways to meet the different needs of each person.
- Employee Support Services - Invest in staff development and wellbeing.

PCLS is focusing on improving service quality, increasing awareness and ensuring that the surrounding town/communities particularly indigenous people and their communities are healthy and enjoy the emotional and social wellbeing experienced by other Australians.

PCLS continues to monitor the needs of the community and continuously applies for grants to expand or improve the delivery of existing services or implement new services. PCLS lobbies hard with funding bodies/local government on the importance of the work PCLS does and the importance of continued funding.

PCLS plans to extend services by implementing new programs such as a diversity and social cohesion program focusing on social participation. A community migrant support service is proposed to assist migrants who have arrived within the last five years to become orientated to and integrated into Australia. A major focus of the work is on women who generally do not have the benefits of socialisation offered in the work place. Many migrants require information about migration for themselves and for family members. All of the workers are able to assist with the provision of information, which is normally in the form of explanatory booklets and forms. The service will aim to bring together the many cultural groups as they transition into the region and learn the English language. Activities would be directed on the basis of learning from one-another utilizing the cultural means of song,

dance, poetry, dance, music and cooking. Classes, workshops and information sessions would increase connectedness, friendships and learning as well as assisting them with their rights and responsibilities, issues, practices and outcomes.

Another plan is to partner with local Aboriginal Corporations for funding for provision of a Solicitor for the Roebourne office to assist with legal issues in the Roebourne community, particularly the importance of Wills which has cultural issues, or criminal injuries compensation issues and violence restraining orders.

PCLS has also engaged in the ATO's voluntary Tax Help program to assist low income and disadvantaged members of the City of Karratha and surrounding communities with their tax returns.

Research

The demands for the services are expected to continue to increase significantly as the population of the Pilbara increases. To ensure the PCLS is responsive to the ongoing and changing needs of the people of the Pilbara, as a component of the planning cycle, an environmental scan was conducted. As a consequence, the following trends were identified:

- Increased level of mortgage stress and bankruptcies due to downturn in price of Iron ore and redundancies by resource companies.
- Low income earners impacted upon due to high cost of living.
- An increase in debt more noticeable in the middle income range due to unemployment
- Increased level of relationship breakdown due to the current working and lifestyle environment – including FIFO, long working hours, shift work, isolation and high disposable incomes.
- Increased level of anti-social behaviour, family and domestic violence and other negative aspects of social, economic and environmental wellbeing associated with unemployment and high level of drug and alcohol misuse.

- Increased population and rate of FIFO across the whole Pilbara causing a breakdown in infrastructure. Discrepancies between the actual population and what is indicated by the 2006 Census means there is no accurate data available to support the need for more services, programs and infrastructure.
- High level of unemployment.

PCLS identifies unmet legal needs through a variety of techniques including:

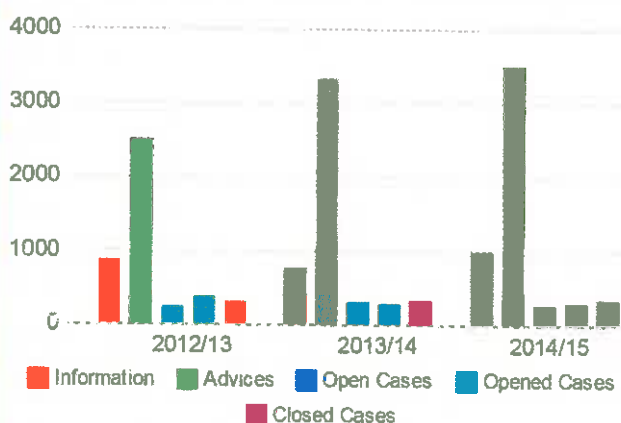
- monitoring casework patterns and statistics,
- research, including consultation with and/or surveys of clients, legal and non-legal service providers and communities
- demographic data,
- socio-economic data and reports.

Submissions, Grants and Funding Agreements

- NPAH Funding provided PCLS a one year extension to 30 June 2015 for the following services:
- Domestic Violence Outreach Initiative Pilbara Region- South Hedland
- Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker Pilbara- Karratha
- Housing Support Worker: Drug and Alcohol Initiative Pilbara– South Hedland
- Public Tenancy Support Service- Roebourne
- Public Tenancy Support Service- Newman
- Indigenous Women's Outreach Program was funded by the Department of Premier and Cabinet as opposed to the Attorney General's Department. The Department of Premier and Cabinet extended the program until 30 June 2015.
- Easternwell provided a grant for the South Hedland STEP worker to attend the National Homelessness Conference 2014.
- Lotterywest provided a grant for emergency relief.
- The Department of Child Protection and Family Services provided an extension option for the delivery of PCLS' Financial Counselling Services until 30 September 2015.
- The Department of Commerce extended the Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service for a further 12 months to June 2016.

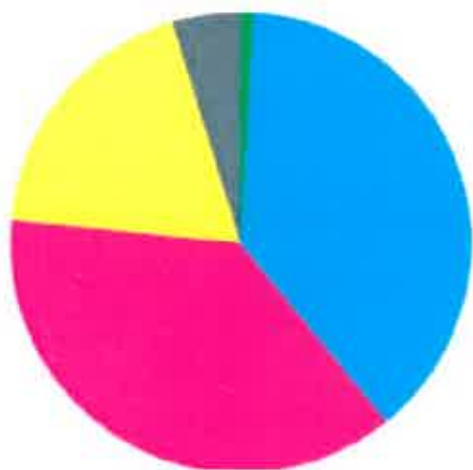
Pilbara Community Legal Service Statistical Data 2012 to 2015

Three Year Trend Report for Activities



Activity	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Information: Target set:	700	700	700
No	876	759	983
% to Target	125%	108%	140%
Advice: Target set	2000	2000	2250
No	2498	3327	3501
% to Target	125%	156%	157%
Opened Cases: Target set	300	300	300
No	382	280	294
% to Target	127%	93%	98%
Closed Cases: Target set	300	300	300
No	315	323	341
% to Target	105%	107%	115%
C.L.E.: Target set	7	10	10
No	19	25	9
% to Target	271%	250%	90%

Client Demographic by Age



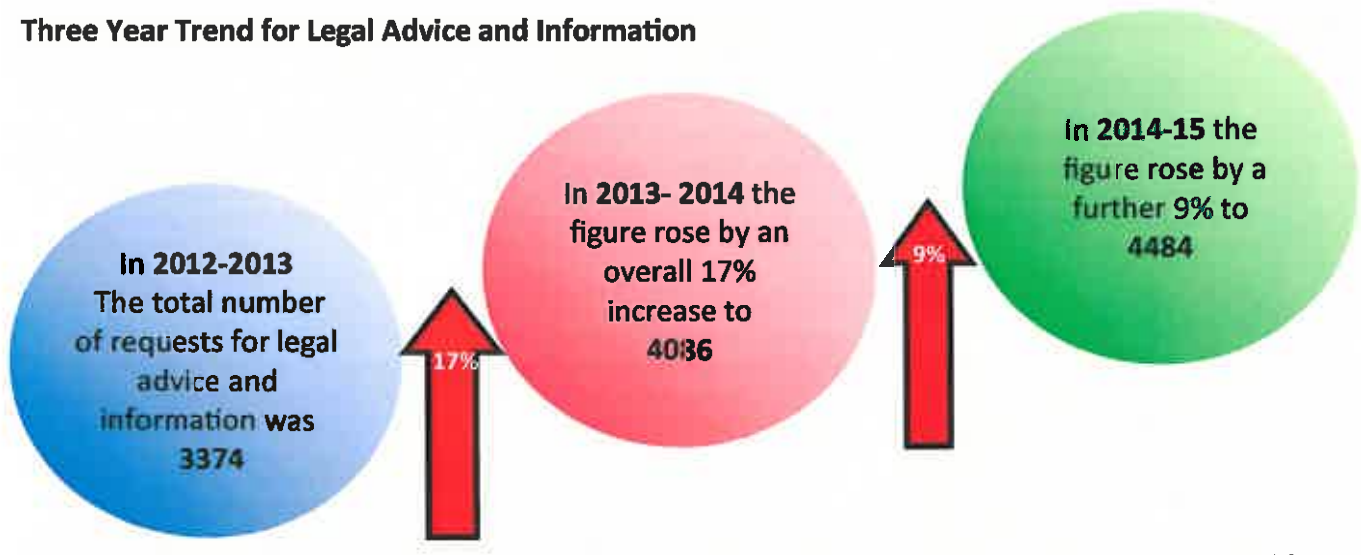
■ <18 (1%)
 ■ 18-34 (38%)
 ■ 35-49 (37%)
■ 50-64 (19%)
 ■ 65 & Over (5%)

Clients of Aboriginal or
Torres Strait Islander
Background



■ 2012/13 (26%)
 ■ 2013/14 (34%)
■ 2014/15 (39%)

Three Year Trend for Legal Advice and Information



Total Number of Male and Female Client Matter

Client Demographics 2013/14

Client Demographics 2014/15



Female (74%) Male (26%)

Female (75%) Male (25%)

Total Number of Clients Assisted in 2013/14 to 2014/15



Board of Management Chairperson's Report



Over the years, Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) CEO and staff have contributed to the social and economic benefits of the people of the Pilbara. The combination of passion, commitment and a focus on identified needs within the community has supported a much more tailored approach to individual client needs thus become the cornerstone of success for PCLS.

The service data suggests that over the last 22 years of hard work put in by respective Boards of Management, the CEO and staff; that PCLS has been extremely effective in terms of number of cases and the variety of issues presented. The challenges are ongoing.

A key element to our success as an organisation has been the determination by the board to ensure that governance and risks are managed not only in compliance with legislation but ensuring that processes put in place are targeted to the highest possible standard. Board members have been given opportunities to undertake governance, risk management and compliance training, to provide them with the understanding to enable members to act as a source of advice; but ultimately to oversee, and be accountable for the financial and legal viability of the organisation.

The board pays tribute to our CEO who has been with the organisation for fourteen years. She has been instrumental in developing PCLS from a very small service into a major NGO with offices across the Pilbara.

The Board of Management, CEO and staff are committed to continue making a significant contribution to the lives of people in the Pilbara, despite the many challenges we have observed and continue to experience in this economic climate. The challenges include accessing

adequate ongoing funding to meet the high costs of providing services in this region, and, most importantly, to continue to develop and maintain the trust and respect of

the people we work with to further their ability to become independent and self-reliant.

To provide a tangible picture of the work staff have achieved this year I draw your attention to the following: during the financial year staff and management assisted 4,778 individuals with a total of 4,245 problem types. Staff also worked diligently under the guidance of the CEO over the same period to bring down administrative costs and time off in lieu (TOIL), to allow the organisation to become more viable financially. The Board has thus taken the opportunity to recognise these efforts by staff with "above award" salary payments and incentives through a diligent performance management process.

Also, due to diligent financial management, PCLS was in a position to purchase a house, thus providing security of tenure for any future executive staff as part of strategic forward planning for the organisation, thus further reducing ongoing operating costs.

During the year, the CEO engaged in a significant number of funding submission opportunities, with some achieving successful outcomes.

However, it is clear that in this economic environment where funding opportunities are fewer and more organisations vying for funding, some submissions did not yield the outcome we had hoped for. However, we were successful in achieving ongoing funding for all National Partnership Agreement programs, and new funding agreements were recently signed with the Department for Child Protection and Family Services going forward into 2016.

In addition, an option for a year's extension to the Tenancy Advice and Education Program with the Department for Commerce was exercised, and new agreements were signed with the Commonwealth Government – Department of The Prime Minister and Cabinet and with the Attorney General's Office under the new Commonwealth NPA for the ongoing provision of legal services across the Pilbara.

Key objectives of the 2014 Operational Plan for PCLS were achieved, and a workshop to support the final objective for "Investing in staff development and wellbeing" was facilitated by Optum (our EAP Service Provider) and attended by all staff and several Board Members.

An in-depth review of all PCLS policies and procedures and Accreditation Plan was conducted in collaboration with CEO and staff and subsequently updated. The Risk Management Plan was also updated and continues to be a work in progress to ensure that we apply control measures that encompass all possible contingencies. Some constitutional changes were adopted which have enabled the streamlining of Board meetings and applicable paperwork.

Internal review processes also saw us evaluate the Auto Attendant telephone system put in place last year, due to an adverse public response the system was abandoned in favour of a personal response to each call to allow the organisation to capture each call during work hours with a message service for after-hours calls. Video conferencing was introduced to all locations to enable staff participation in meetings and training without having to leave respective locations. A security audit was undertaken in all offices and security cameras were installed in all reception areas as a response to ensure the safety of all staff members.

The aforementioned achievements and processes have enabled PCLS to continue to offer the services and supports that the community across the Pilbara have come to know and rely on from our organisation, however, without the commitment of our dedicated staff and

management none of this would have been possible.

I would like to, at this point, to recognise and acknowledge in particular the significant contribution of a dear and well-loved colleague and team member, who passed away earlier this year, Mrs Lorraine Jones, *"she will remain in our hearts for ever"*.

Whilst the growth of the organisation has enabled PCLS to become a formidable competitor in its market niche, this has brought about both rewards and challenges. Naturally as new programs come on board, more employees are added and reporting relationships change, adding new layers to the organization. To maintain morale, all PCLS staff have been encouraged to engage in a Cultural Analysis Review, enabling a fuller picture of how the organisation is travelling across perspectives of staff, managements and the Board. Part of the review has been finalised, and a workshop with full participation of all staff and management of the organisation will take place in November 2015.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank all staff, management and Board members for your dedication and support to the community and to this organisation.

Rozkva Brabazon
Chairperson Board of Management



Chief Executive Officer's Report
Federal Department of Attorney General
Community Legal Service Program (CLSP)
Generalist



Controlling our organisation's destiny is how I have felt for the last 12 months! Of course, there's no certainty that every community service will be sustainable forever. Indeed, the dynamics in which community sector organisations find themselves to-day mean that possibly there is little choice for an organisation but to stand still – or, to put it another way, remain the same size. This may have been true a few years ago, but not now.

CEO's of not-for profits face a wide array of challenges – balancing the interests of stakeholders such as clients, staff, board members, domain regulators and government officials whilst also keeping abreast of the developments in policy and technology that affect the organisation. In the meantime, we must also compete for contracts, grants and visibility.

So, does The Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) have control over its future? I would say it does, because:

- we have a Board of Management who want our organisation to grow
- the services we currently offer are essential to the wellbeing of our community
- we grasp every opportunity to tender for new programs
- we continue to attract committed staff and,
- we are flexible, innovative and we provide an excellent service.

For me, there has never been an alternative but to work in the community sector,

because working in the community sector is about having purpose and enjoying meaningful work. Where else can one positively contribute to society and enhance the wellbeing of others?



The Pilbara Community Legal Service is unique because we offer a wide range of tailored services across four separate sites including specialised supports – support with daily living skills, services to enhance cultural, spiritual and physical wellbeing. Support with community and social engagement, independence through money and debt management, tenancy education, homelessness support, domestic violence support and legal advice.

Without a doubt, it is the diversity of our skills and experience that sets us apart. By bringing together a range of the most appropriate services and supports, we are able to combine the very best practices and approaches to deliver the most comprehensive and collaborative care for our clients who benefit from this wealth of knowledge and expertise, because we place the individual and their wellbeing at the centre of everything.

The Pilbara Community Legal Service is not discouraged by statistics and economic downturns. 2016 indicates many more changes for not-for-profits. It is important to acknowledge these changes, but I am confident that PCLS is in a good position for the future considering we already have strong foundations built to meet client needs, and, we have a 22 year history of meeting and exceeding client expectations.



To survive into the future we will need to have a diverse income stream and have a strong balance sheet with our own equity generated through assets and other resources to minimise total dependency on government grants as our primary income stream. We need to be able to sustain our presence regardless of what happens to our government grants.

To secure government funding into the future we will need to have solid business systems that enable our organisation to respond effectively to changing contracting environments. A challenge – yes, but, it's exciting because it also allows creative thinking to develop opportunities to deliver services and programs that we know are needed.

Having a clear focus and setting long-term goals will have a really positive impact in terms of remaining sustainable and managing any changes that come from the sector.

While PCLS has continued to grow over the past two decades, our vision to-day remains

as true as it did when we first opened our doors. This clear vision combined with our purpose and core values has allowed us to seek out sustainable opportunities to effectively support our clients. I believe that by growing alongside the community and adapting to their changing needs and by embracing continuous improvement policies and well-rounded feed-back processes, we have remained and will continue to remain as relevant for the next twenty years.

Thank you to a wonderful Board of Management and to a team of dedicated staff. You have been, and continue to be my inspiration.

Not a day goes by that I am not conscious of the years of planning and dreaming and the hard work and negotiations that has brought our organisation to where it is to-day. For all the problems, daily happenings, the busy work schedule, tight deadlines and doing things on tight budgets, when I leave the office at night and turn out the light, I know that we are making a difference in the community. It is a team effort and I am always grateful to be part of it and so long as I am part of it, PCLS will continue to embrace changes as opportunities to advance the cause of vulnerable people in our community and to realise our vision to empower the people of the Pilbara to live their lives effectively.

Nanette Williams
Chief Executive Officer– Karatha



Principal Solicitor's Report
Federal Department of Attorney General
Community Legal Service Program (CLSP)
Rural Womens Outreach Program



The end of the 2014/2015 financial year marks almost eight years for the Pilbara Community Legal Service having a Principal Lawyer funded under the Community Legal Services Program's (CLSP) Rural Women's Outreach Program.

It is now almost twelve months since I commenced in this position and during that period of time there has been a number of staff changes in the legal practice section.

Leah Billeam the previous acting principal solicitor left our South Hedland office in December 2014 to take up a new position as principal lawyer at Midlands Community Legal Service. Kelly Cassidy resigned her position in South Hedland in May 2015 to embark on an extended overseas holiday.

Jana Francis subsequently took up the South Hedland position with Tara-Jane Torrissi continuing in the restricted lawyer's position in Karratha. We have also been fortunate to have the services of Leonie Bailey as a locum lawyer from time to time. We have been very fortunate in being able to attract good candidates for the legal side of the organisation because usually, it is hard to attract suitable candidates away from city and metropolitan practices.

One of the difficulties that we experience in the Pilbara is the vast distances of the area. Access to legal information and representation of clients presents issues of their own. We also attend outlying areas for Outreach Services, however, still find that we

have clients who are isolated from legal assistance that one may well take for granted in urban localities.

Our client base is predominantly in the low income and disadvantaged groups, however, with the high costs of living in remote areas such as the Pilbara, families that may have both parents employed also experience financial hardship and their needs for proper legal assistance and representation and advice must also be addressed.

The service that we provide in Karratha is mainly centred on Family and De Facto Law, Criminal Injuries Compensation, Wills and Probate and general civil actions. It is the usual case that our clients have other matters in addition to their primary issue that also requires assistance and as a result the services that we provide need to expand depending on each individual client's needs. It is a rather delicate balancing exercise to assist people in the areas of funding yet also be able to assist clients where there are no other alternative options for referral.

We have had the assistance of Jana Francis in the role of unrestricted solicitor since January 2015. Jana replaced Leah Billeam as the unrestricted solicitor. In addition to her duties at Hedland, Jana also attends Roebourne on a weekly basis as part of her outreach duties.

As well as our Karratha, Hedland and Roebourne offices we also attend the Newman office on a regular basis. Outreach

services to Tom Price, Onslow, Nullagine, Marble Bar and Jigalong are also included in our provision of legal assistance.



I have found it to be a rewarding experience since commencing in July 2014 as principal lawyer, continuing the existing casework and maintaining the structured team approach to providing quality representation to our many clients. Our case load and representation has been partly instrumental in the Family Law Court determining to resume Court sittings in Karratha instead of matters being held in Perth for determination. This allows the client to have access to justice in their home town instead of having to travel to Perth and seek accommodation and outside representation to complete their legal matters.

One of the principal objectives in establishing a community based legal centre is the importance of presenting a professional and efficient perception of our practice. Through my career in both Government and private practice I have often encountered a mistaken attitude that if one is represented by a Government funded body that the representation is not up to the standard of private representation. Having experienced both sides of legal practice I know this to be totally incorrect. In the majority of matters, clients feel far more at ease with an organisation that is not profit based and provided the service and representation is of a professional level, their opinion does not

change. It has always been my view that no matter what area of practice a lawyer chooses to engage, a professional outlook and manner is always required.

With a Principal Lawyer and an Unrestricted Lawyer based in Karratha it is now generating an increased client base. The legal section endeavours to make appointments for new clients within two days of an enquiry and also services the needs of “walk in” clients with urgent problems that require immediate assistance. It is our policy that all “walk in” clients are seen and an appointment made promptly unless the situation is able to be resolved at that time.

With the Pilbara being a highly industrialised mining and commercial region, with workers travelling from interstate and intrastate, there is a great strain placed upon the family relationship of our citizens. An area of practice that is growing is the representation of partners who are unable to cope with the new lifestyle and its demands and the isolation. This frequents itself in families that experience these issues and wish to return to more familiar areas with the working partner remaining in the Pilbara. These issues regarding parenting orders and property entitlements together with the anticipated resistance to the former partner and children relocating requires legal representation. A family once regarded as high income earners now become a high income earner with a low income former partner and children, without the means to engage private representation.

The ever growing demand for legal services and the widening of our client base and places further demands on our legal resources.

Colin Baker
Principal Solicitor– Karratha

Indigenous Women's Outreach Program

Federal Department of Attorney General/ Department of Premier and Cabinet
Community Legal Service Program (CLSP)



The Indigenous Women's Outreach program provides funding for a solicitor in the Pilbara Community Legal Service South Hedland Office. The funding is provided to primarily assist indigenous women throughout the West Pilbara. Part of the role involves providing outreach services to areas around the Pilbara Regions, these include; Newman, Marble Bar, and Tom Price.

Due to the program funding a non-restricted solicitor, the South Hedland office has also had the opportunity to also be able to employ a restricted solicitor who could be supervised by both the non-restricted Solicitor in South Hedland and the Principal Solicitor located in Karratha.

The solicitor's role is to provide general advice and information to clients and the community on a variety of legal matters affecting people in the Pilbara. The main issues we assist with are family law, violence restraining orders ("VRO's"), wills and estates and criminal injuries compensation.

As PCLS is a not for profit Organisation the solicitor can only provide assistance with casework to disadvantaged clients who are low income earners. Unfortunately, As the Pilbara is a mining region, a number of clients who require assistance with legal issues fall into the medium income earning bracket and whilst we can provide advice, we cannot assist on an ongoing basis.

It is disappointing for clients who receive medium incomes as they are unable to

obtain assistance from most of the free legal services such as Legal Aid, due to the fact that most of these organisations also have an income cut off limit. Their only other option is to seek assistance from a private Solicitor however with such high fees clients find themselves unable to afford assistance leaving them with minimal options. A number of women in particular fall into this category after separation from their partner but prior to a property settlement.

The area of Family law has seemed to be the most common area that clients require assistance with. Family law matters vary from assistance with property settlements to negotiating time spent with the child between the parents. We are quite often required to assist with children matters whereby the Department of Child Protection is the applicant to the proceedings. We help assist clients in family law by preparing documentations and sending them off to the courts and appearing in the local Magistrates Court and by telephone to the Family Court of Western Australia in Perth.

Deceased Estates is another area in which we get a lot of enquiries about. The Estates of Aboriginals, who died without a Will prior to 7 August 2013, were legally required to be administered by the Public Trustee, however this is no longer the case. Aboriginals can now be administered by a person who applies and I believe this change in legislation has resulted in more clients coming to us to enquire about Estates.

The Public Trustee has now requested that a number of requirements are to be met before they are willing to act, this includes information on all assets and liabilities of the estate. If an estate does not consist of sufficient funds, the Public Trustee will not act and has no requirement to do so.

Unfortunately this is very limiting for clients who are not able to afford the up front out of pocket legal expenses associated with engaging with a private solicitor.

Furthermore, there is only a limited number of solicitors available in the Pilbara and many do not assist in this area of law and the Solicitors that do usually fly up from Perth every few months which is not efficient enough for some clients. At Pilbara Community Legal Service, we try our best to assist these clients but due to the organisation not operating a trust account, it makes us quite limited. It is difficult to administer an estate with multiple beneficiaries without access to a trust account.

Most enquiries relate to intestate estates. As such we have been actively trying to have more clients draft and sign Wills by reminding them of the importance of Wills whenever I meet with clients for advice regarding any matter.

We often have enquiries regarding Violence Restraining Orders (VRO). Our Domestic Violence Outreach program also assists clients with these matters and the application for an interim VRO. Should a VRO be contested the solicitor will work with the domestic violence worker and assist with the matter and assist clients with the final hearing to try and ensure that the best possible outcome is achieved for the client.

The solicitor funded at the South Hedland office also provides assistance to the Tenancy Advocate and Education service provider. Some tenancy matters can become quite involved with a variety of legal documents for issues such as evictions or tenancy breaches. The solicitor and tenancy advocate then works together on these matters.

Jana Francis
Solicitor—South Hedland



Legal Aid Officer
Federal Department of Attorney General
Community Legal Service Program (CLSP)



I was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Western Australia on 03 October 2013



and commenced in my role as full time Solicitor (Restricted) in the South Hedland Office on 28 October 2013, supervised by Mrs Leah Billeam, the Principal Solicitor for Pilbara Community Legal Service until her resignation in December 2014. After Leah's resignation I was then under the supervision of the new Principal Solicitor – Mr Colin Baker.

The position is both very busy and challenging. The clientele that my funding requires me to assist is primarily indigenous women who present with a wide range of legal issues.

The main service areas for the program are family law, criminal injuries compensation and wills and deceased estates. However, assistance is sometimes required outside of these areas in order to assist colleagues with legal issues that arise in other problem areas; e.g tenancy, domestic violence etc.

Due to the extensive housing issues in the Pilbara and the shortage of affordable

housing, another major area for the program is assisting Pilbara Community Legal Service's Tenancy Advocate and Education Service Worker and Financial Counsellor to represent tenants in the local Magistrates Court who may be facing termination proceedings.

Working as a team, Pilbara Community Legal Service workers are able to secure several successful outcomes for tenants, particularly where matters have already been through Court undefended and have to be appealed.

The program assists many family law clients by providing advice in areas such as property settlement, parenting and divorce. Following the initial advice, the majority of family law clients are then referred to mediation services to follow through with their family law issue if necessary.

Some family law clients require assistance with urgent Court applications. In these instances, a case is opened and then the program assists the client with the initial court work. For example, recovery orders to have children returned to the mother's care.

Often related to family law, the program also provides assistance in areas such as protection and care and violence restraining orders. For these matters, the program provides services ranging from initial basic advice through to court representation where appropriate. Like many of our clients, the program is able to assist these clients in conjunction with other organisational service areas such as the Domestic Violence

Outreach program and the Drug and Alcohol Housing Support Strategy.

The program was also assisted this year by two work experience students from Perth. The students assisted in the delivery of legal services, from basic drafting of letters to preparation for court appearances and in return the students gained valuable experience and insight into practicing in a regional legal service, working with aboriginal people.

Community legal education and policy reform submissions also comprised a small but important part of the program's service again this year, and as always, the program has worked cooperatively with other organisations and services in the Pilbara, such as the Aboriginal Family Law Service and Legal Aid W.A.

Working for a CLC in regional Western Australia is a very rewarding and worthwhile experience.

Kelly Cassidy
Solicitor (Restricted)- South Hedland



Solicitor
WA Public Purpose Trust



I commenced in the role of Solicitor (Restricted) Karratha on 5th March 2014 initially under the supervision of the A/ Principal Solicitor, Mrs Leah Billeam and then, following Leah's resignation in December 2014, under the supervision of the Principal Solicitor – Mr Colin Baker.

My role is to provide both advice and casework services to people on low incomes or experiencing other forms of social disadvantage. I am also required to ensure that all client legal data entry requirements are met and enter all relevant casework and non-casework on the Centre's database.

The position calls for prompt, culturally sensitive and accurate information to be provided to women in Family Law matters, Criminal Injuries Compensation claims and Child Protection matters, representing clients, including preparing matters and personally appearing as an advocate in family law and child protection matters.

I also attend relevant meetings and forums on behalf of the organisation and assist with enquiries from other team members.

Professional development training during the course of the year saw me attend a basic Mediation Course at Bond University (Gold Coast) 4-7 December 2014. This course introduced the basic theories, principles, skills and applications of mediation through a series of presentations, videos, role plays, demonstrations, simulations and discussions.

I then attended a two day mediation assessment course 9/10 December 2014 which involved one day of intensive practice with feedback from coaches, and then one day of assessment by role plays. The goal of the Mediation Assessment Course was to provide a fifth day of role play practice and a sixth day of formal assessment which met the current National accreditation rules for mediators and gave the mediators confidence by having a day's practice and then feedback before the day of formal assessment. The Mediation assessment course comprised of two streams (a) family stream or (b) general stream. I was assessed on the family stream. The training was very well structured and the highlight was the opportunity for us as students to associate with experienced legal practitioners who specialise in family law and practice mediation.

I was also fortunate to be able to attend at the Family Court WA Q & A which directly related to Family Dispute Resolution and Family Law, and later in the year I attended the 16th National Family Law Conference in Sydney which was as great opportunity to listen to key speakers exploring cutting edge issues confronting Family law and a tremendous opportunity to meet practitioners specialising in this field.

Numerous family law clients who had separated from their partners were assisted on an advice basis to develop, for example, a

parenting plan so that the parents could come to an agreement as to how to parent their children and who the children would spend time with. The clients were then referred to mediation services to work out long term arrangements for the children. Providing this initial advice reduced the amount of tension and fighting between separated partners which ultimately resulted in a safer and more supportive home environment for many children.

Advocating for a victim of elder abuse to successfully challenge a Department of Housing termination application in the Magistrates Court under the direct supervision of the Principal Solicitor resulted in not only the client saving her tenancy, but being offered a new property due to the sub-standard condition of the old one.

I have also gained much experience in the area of casework and advice for victims of domestic violence who were seeking violence restraining orders.

During the course of the year, I attended to 30 cases and 164 advices.

It is a pleasure working with a legal team who are committed to bridging the gap between the disadvantaged members of our community by offering free legal assistance. It has also increased my skills and understanding and I enjoy very much contributing to the legal education of our community.

Pp. Tara-Jane Torrisi
Solicitor (Restricted)- Karratha



Locum Solicitor
Australian Securities and Investments Commission



The Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) was a beneficiary of an Enforceable Undertaking (EU) imposed on three businesses by ASIC who had determined after investigation that they had engaged in unlicensed activities in many cases to vulnerable consumers including those living in remote areas such as the Pilbara. PCLS was the recipient of the funding because the Newman Financial Counsellor played a critical role in alerting the regulators to unconscionable and unfair practices that were affecting some of the aboriginal residents of the remote areas of the East Pilbara.

The funding was used to further continue the work of educating and advising Indigenous consumers on financial product and dealings with financial service providers, in particular continued education efforts on the topics of:

- Consumer leases
- Funeral insurance
- Superannuation
- Book-up and
- General information about credit and debt.

It enabled PCLS to provide the services of a Solicitor for one week per month for a period of 12 months. The service included legal advice assistance, community legal education and mediation to the community of Newman and the remote communities of the East Pilbara including Talka Warra, Yandiyarra, Marble Bar, Irrungadji, Pampajinya, Goodabinya, Youngaleena and Jigalong.

The objectives achieved by the project were:

A reduction in the level of legal disadvantage and increased capacity of individuals to manage their lives effectively through education of their rights and obligations.

Advice and assistance was provided in the areas of legal issues, including Family Law, Wills and Power of Attorney, family violence, criminal charges, tenancy and financial matters.

The service was successful in meeting the needs of some clients with complex and multiple problems.

Community Legal Education and advice was provided in a culturally sensitive manner

The lawyer engaged to provide the service to the community was an accredited mediator who was able to assist in conducting multi-party mediations in some of the remote towns and communities which not only supported individuals but also assisted in achieving a greater level of harmony within the community as a whole.

A relationship was developed with the Resource companies specifically BHP's psychologist through the BSS Employee Assistance program in Newman.

Many clients were also assisted with non-legal issues and referred to appropriate service providers such as the Department of Housing, Centrelink and Mental Health services.

The Financial Counsellor and the Locum Solicitor worked together on a number of projects during the course of the financial year, including the organisation of Community Forum which was held in the township of Newman on 17 October 2014. The forum enabled a number of Government and Non-government Agencies and the Local Authority to get together to network and present an outline of their roles and the numerous projects being run in the region. Both community members, aboriginal elders and representatives from other organisations based outside of Newman were also in attendance and gained a better understanding of the work being done in the communities of the West Pilbara.

Pp. Leonie Bailey

Locum Solicitor– Newman



Financial Counselling

Department for Child Protection and Family Services



The W.A. economy is feeling the pain associated with the cyclical downturn in the resource sector. This has been especially felt in the Pilbara where many members of the community faced issues of mortgage stress and bankruptcy and many small contractors fell into receivership. As a result, there was a dramatic change in the clients presenting to the Financial Counsellor during the financial year. Those seeking assistance with requests to banks or credit providers for moratoriums for mortgage payments or personal loans were people who would not, in previous years have ever contemplated needing the assistance of a financial counsellor.

Some unfortunately were among the thousands rendered unemployed across the resources sector since the employment high point of 2012 as the construction phase was completed on many projects. Job losses formed part of the ongoing strategy by miners to drive down operating costs in the face of sharp falls in commodity prices and such is the lack of employment opportunities now that the family provider finds himself in the financial counsellor's office in a state of anxiety and depression not knowing where to begin to resolve rapidly surmounting issues of debt.

However, stringent negotiation with a number of banks and credit providers ultimately provided some with the time they needed to work with the financial counsellor to analyse options and for most, good outcomes were achieved. Others sadly lost their homes or surrendered them to the Bank.

Some local business people also feeling the pressure of the economic downturn sought assistance to resolve multiple credit contracts and large ATO business tax debts.

Some achievements during the course of the financial year included:

- The resolution of three complex income tax debts involving instances of multiple years of un-submitted tax returns successfully resolved with the ATO.
- One complex very large business tax debt matter - client referred by local Accounting business as client had not submitted BAS Statements or paid GST for 10 years because he did not understand the requirements under his ABN. The client was released from payment of General Interest Charges and penalties which greatly reduced the debt and enabled him to make one lump sum payment followed by an agreed manageable payment arrangement for the balance of the debt.
- Assisting a client rendered unemployed after 30 years to be granted a moratorium on a mortgage while alternative employment sought. Assisting the family with budgeting their reduced income to enable payment arrangements for other debt matters. Support with a hardship utility grant and emergency relief enabled them to overcome a difficult period.
- Intestate estate - police involvement - assisting next of kin who live in Scotland with funeral arrangements, resolution of personal effects, payment of outstanding debts and finalisation of tenancy and superannuation death benefit matters.
- Working collaboratively with a team of professionals within the organisation as well as other allied non-government service providers and government departmental staff to resolve many tenancy debt matters, avoid eviction and homelessness while ensuring reduced creditor pressure and strategic negotiation for concessions and benefits.

During the Financial year 507 clients were assisted by the Karratha service and 1,542 types of financial counselling services were involved.

In October 2014, I attended the Financial Counselling Association of W.A. Conference in Perth "Justice for All". The conference was ably facilitated by Mr David Koutdsoukis who maintained his catchcry "KEFI" meaning "zest for live" throughout the conference. The keynote speaker – the Chief Justice the Hon Wayne Martin was an inspiration. I participated and enjoyed a session on Civil Law – dealing with the rough and smooth of everyday life when we explored every day legal problems that clients present with i.e. "do you have rights if you are being evicted from your tenancy"? "Can you be prosecuted if you have a Centrelink Debt"? Can you be compensated if you are a victim of crime"? "What if you have been discriminated against"? Personal Injuries Claims were covered in some length as was the Centrelink appeals process. Gerry Cleveland's workshop on "how to deal with difficult clients" was both dynamic and appropriate. His recommendation "learns to deal with yourself first"! He advised that the reason we are doing a job has to have an impact i.e. "working hard and loving it or working hard and



hating it" – basically, the development of "emotional intelligence" on which he excelled as an example.

I visited Canberra for the first time as a delegate for the Financial Counselling Association (FCA) Conference in May 2015, when it was a pleasure to hear David Tenant – a former Chair of the FCA and long-time consumer advocate take us on a 30 year journey and Fiona Guthrie, Executive Director, Financial Counselling Australia, convinced us, following lessons she learnt from her Churchill Fellowship, that debt advice services in Australia can be the best in the world. We heard about AGL's Affordability initiative, MoneyMinded online resources, the ABA's updated guidelines on financial hardship, the Insurance Code of Practice and Good Insurance. However, listening to Professor David Forbes, Director of the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health, who is a clinical psychologist and an authority on trauma, was, for me, the highlight of the conference

because he explored with us the nature of vicarious trauma and how one can protect oneself against it. Financial Counsellors and many of our colleagues work in an industry where we assist people who are under significant stress. Many clients I have personally worked with have at times displayed signs of being suicidal. This session helped me understand the emotional impact this can have on a professional worker and clarified the parameters of the role i.e. to "feel for" rather than "feel with".

The highlight of the year for me – to see the CEO of our organisation inducted into the W.A. Women's Hall of Fame at Government House Ballroom in Perth on International Women's Day. So well deserved.



The saddest day of the year was 5th June 2014, when we heard Mr Steve Glew, Executive Director, Service Standards and Contracting, Department for Child Protection and Family Services announce that government funding for the metropolitan financial counsellors would end September 2015 and funding for regional and remote financial counsellors would be extended for one more year to September 2016 following which their future would rest with the outcome of the government's regional review. We must remain positive and hope that the essential services provided by financial counsellors will not be lost to our community.

Another Financial year has come to a close and, all things considered, perhaps it is fortuitous that 2017 will also be an election year in Western Australia, providing the opportunity for both the government of Colin Barnett and the Mark McGowan led opposition to provide a long-term strategic vision for the State.

Robert M. Williams
Financial Counsellor- Karratha

Financial Counselling

Department for Child Protection and Family Support



“Empowering the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively”. To “empower” as the Webster dictionary defines is “to give power to someone” or “to promote the self-actualization or influence of”. Perspectives on empowerment strategy in social work seeks to help clients draw on personal, interpersonal, and political power to enable them to gain greater control over their environment and to attain their aspirations. Wow! What a great mission indeed! And also a huge responsibility!

Getting Started

My name is Jayne Jarito and it was March of this year when I commenced as a Financial Counsellor in South Hedland office. When I was offered of this position I reflected on our organisation’s mission statement and aligned myself with it. I have a passion to serve others and I believe it is the same passion that led me to do one of my greatest calling for this community to serve as a Financial Counsellor.



Our CEO Nanette Williams had me on-board to service the clients in South Hedland who had been getting their assistance from the Financial Counsellor in the Karratha and Roebourne office. My first week was spent for training and familiarizing myself in the role. The days were so hectic and challenging to do a full training due to the amount of clients coming in needing financial assistance. It was shocking to see how many disadvantage people in South Hedland required financial assistance.

Challenges met on my first 3 months

I assisted clients who needed to apply for the Hardship Utilities Grant Scheme (HUGS). Most of them were seeking assistance with power bills that had built up for to several reasons. Most of these clients were low-income earners who were not capable of paying the high priced power bills incurred during the summer months due to the high use of aircons. Clients who are receiving government payments are the most susceptible to fall behind with their power bill payments, therefore, a centrepay deduction is set up. For many of the clients, there is a need to increase payment of bills in order to stay up to date. Clients who have their power disconnected or pending for disconnection struggle to make upfront payments due to limited income and needing money for day to day needs such as food.

Further to assisting clients with HUGS application, I also provide supplementary and ongoing support that includes:

- Understanding how to correctly read their power bill, e.g the Average Daily Cost, this shows them how much they are consuming everyday. My clients become aware of how their bill has gone up so high and at the same time they appreciate how it changed the way they look at their bill.
- Horizon Power’s booklet “Easy Ways To Reduce Power Bill” is given and explained briefly to clients. It educates them on how to effectively use their power and tips to reduce high power costs.
- Understanding Centrelink payment and clients responsibility;

My goal is to make them realize the choices they do even in the simplest thing of using electricity, that they can change the bad habits. I give them a realistic target amount for next billing and show them how much money can be save and use for something much important.

Although most of the clients are coming for HUGS, I have found out that getting behind their power bill is just a result of a more complex financial issue for some of them. This when I encourage the client to seek further counselling. Some of them have multiple debts and have always fallen short of their budget as they juggle the bills on their hands. Some the clients have over committed themselves. This is a result of lack in financial literacy. When someone is going through financial hardship their health, families, and lives are at stake. For such reason is why there's been a great need of our Financial Counselling service.

It has been on the news recently that more than 17 Pilbara companies have declared bankruptcy, a sign of the Pilbara's economic downturn is hitting hard, according to a Hedland financial adviser. This is obviously the reason why there are increasing numbers of people seeking assistance with debt consolidation and bankruptcy. These are the people who thought they were standing on a solid ground but now lost their jobs and found themselves trapped in multiple bad debts such as high interest rate credit cards, personal loans, and mortgages. Our service is providing them the information and allowing them to think about consequences so they can make an appropriate decision for their future.

Community Outreach

IBN Annual meeting held on 20th -21st Of June 2015 at South Hedland Wanangkura Stadium. They have requested our organisation to set up a stall and offer our legal and financial counselling services to their stakeholders. It was attended by almost 700 people across the Pilbara region.



Trainings and Skills Development

- Emotional Intelligence held on the 24th of March 2015 at South Hedland Lotteries House. This training gave me a refresher course on the ability to recognize one's own and other people's emotions, to discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour.
- Accidental Counsellor held on the 11th of May 2015 at South Hedland Lotteries House. I found this very useful training for someone like me who is not a professional counsellor. It is a practical mental health training that teaches basic counselling skills and principles to people who are not trained counsellors but often find themselves in a "counselling role by accident".
- Financial Counselling Conference 2015 held on 18th -22nd at QT Hotel in Canberra. It is my privilege to be part of this prestigious event. Two of the concurrent events I attended were the "Its Super!" and "Art and Zen of Casework".



Future Directions

The Financial Counselling Service in South Hedland will continue for another year but the future is cloudy as of the recent decision made to cease all the Financial Counselling in the Metropolitan on the 30th September 2015. This free service is helping a lot of individuals to get back on track, providing options to clients who are experiencing difficulty. With this in mind, I remain optimistic and still look forward to find solution-focused techniques for my clients and to continuously invest on improving myself to provide high quality and genuine service for this community I consider home.

Jayne Jarito

Financial Counsellor- South Hedland

Financial Counselling

Department for Child Protection and Family Support



I commenced in the position of the Financial Counsellor in the Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) Roebourne office on the 02 February 2015, taking over from the previous worker Mari Carmen Scott.

During my 5 months in this role I have found there to be a large number of clients with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background that require assistance in many of the service areas that we offer at our Organisation.



As the Pilbara is a main mining region, the cost of living is higher than most other areas around Western Australia. Low income earners struggle to meet the many financial commitments they may have, such as; rent for housing, water bills, power bills, any incurred debts etc. as well as needing money left over for day to day living expenses such as food, clothing etc. Therefore they often require assistance from external sources.

The majority of our clients live in Department of Housing properties and find that even though the rent is lower than in the private sector the Department of Housing is still taking 25% of their income for rent.

In Roebourne there is limited access to some of the services that are available in Karratha or the clients may not have the resources to be able to communicate with services in other areas such as internet access or phones. It does not help the people of Roebourne that there is no daily public transport such as buses and a percentage of the clients cannot afford cars or have their licences which in turn restricts them from buying affordable groceries, clothing etc.

PCLS provides assistance to disadvantage people which means that a majority of client who come in seeking financial assistance are on Centrelink Payments. The minimal amount for Remote Allowance on Centrelink benefits does not compensate for the actual cost of living in the Pilbara.

As the mining sector has had a down turn and a quite substantial amount of people have lost their jobs this is putting more pressure on families as the income has decreased however their liabilities have not and this is causing financial stress.

During the reporting period over the last year the price on electricity has not decreased and therefore we have had a vast amount of clients requesting assistance with the Hardship Utility Grant Scheme (HUGS) to see if they are eligible to apply for the assistance.

When a client comes into our service for HUGS we are finding that they are also struggling with other financial stress whether its to do with being behind on payments for

their house or spending all their money on bills that they then require assistance for food vouchers and sometimes gas bottles.

We found we were able to increase our client's knowledge, skills and confidence both in budgeting, negotiations, concessions and benefits.

Financial counselling clients who regularly seek advice are becoming more responsible for their financial affairs and seeing this empowerment in a client is also something that can only be regarded as an achievement.

During this period we have found our clients have been attending the office when they first come into financial stress. This allows us to negotiate an affordable and sustainable payment plan to rectify their debts.

We hope that through more Community Legal Education (CLE) we can inform and educate the community on ways to lower the risks of financial problems or to recognise when you are in a financial situation so that they can continue to seek assistance from our services before it becomes a bigger and more complicated issue.



We believe that financial counselling services especially in remote locations like the Pilbara need to be continually funded to minimize the risk of family breakups, homelessness, child neglect and family violence. Rural and remote areas in Australia have limited services and cost of living in these areas put

people in a more vulnerable situation when they are faced with debts they are unable to manage effectively.

Tania Aldridge

Financial Counsellor - Roebourne

Financial Counselling

Department for Child Protection and family Support



During this financial year the Newman office experienced some complex and diverse cases. Members of the community found that their debts had escalated to a point where they were beyond their control. Some of these debts related to the increase in the electricity rate. I provide the following examples :

BHP Power Supply

In Newman, BHP is the provider of power. As a result of the increased cost of power, clients presented with debts totaling over \$10,000. We assisted these clients to negotiate a waiver of some of the debts. We also negotiated with BHP for a better way to address these presenting power debt matters with the introduction of a hardship policy. The only response we have had from BHP Power Supply to date is that they are looking to install meters in the houses that belong to the Department of Housing. How this will work and when it will take place is not known. One thing we can report is our voice is being heard and they are looking for the best way forward that will ensure that the debts of the size we have mentioned will not happen in the future.

Department of Housing

Housing debts and tenant liability is another matter of concern to our office. When we are informed that one of our clients has been allocated a house, we routinely sit down with the client to work out how much the electricity is going to cost per day.....usually $\$17.00 \times 7\text{days} = \$119.00 \text{ pw} \times 12 \text{ weeks} =$

$\$1,428.00$. Then we compare for them the cost of electricity at their Parnpajinya Reserve where they have been living before being allocated a Department of Housing house in the township. Electricity at the Parnpajinya Reserve \$40.00 wk and the power card is 50c per card. Rent is \$40.00wk....much cheaper living in the Reserve and it is only 5kl from the town.

We then work with clients to examine the rent & water and possible tenant liability they may also need to pay as a tenant of the Department of Housing. We use their Centrelink Income statements to work along with the client examining how much income will then remain for food and other daily essentials that they may need. Moreover the client who is allocated the property will have more family members move in to the house. We therefore work with the client to develop a budget taking into consideration the entire income of the household. The client is encouraged to put a Centrelink direct debt and Centrepay arrangements in place to ensure all the major costs of accepting a a Department of Housing tenancy are addressed..

Continuing Professional Development and Conferences

During the course of the year I have attended the following continuing professional development training and conferences:

- Financial Counselling Association of WA Conference in Perth.
- The National Financial Counselling

- Association conference in Canberra
- Community Legal Service Information System Data Recording (CLISIS) training with our CEO in Karratha on 05/2/2015.
- Conscious Community Solutions Training - 24/3/2015.
- "The Accidental Counsellor Training - 11/5/2015.



Awards

During the year I was a finalist for the Rona Okely Award presented by the Hon Michael Mischin MLC, Minister for Commerce.

I am pictured below with Ms Rona Okely and Michael Mischin at a Luncheon that was held on 27 March 2015 at the University of Western Australia Crawley, Perth.



The Rona Okely Award acknowledges an individual Western Australian who has influenced and inspired the development and promotion of consumer protection and who has given their time, energy and experience for the betterment of others.

These Awards recognise and reward the positive contributions of individuals, local government authorities, organisations, businesses, and the media in continuing consumer advocacy and protection in Western Australia.

Consumer Protection is a division of the Department of Commerce and the government agency charged with creating an environment that promotes fair trading and assisting people to understand their consumer rights and responsibilities.

Consumer Protection supports consumer organisations and groups to defend the rights of consumers and help them to make better choices. These groups and the media play an important role in ensuring their communities have better access to and understanding of consumer protection in everyday situations.



I felt deeply honoured to be nominated and to be selected as a finalist.

Fran Manuela
Financial Counsellor- Newman

Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service Department for Child Protection and Family Support



I have been employed by Pilbara Community Legal Services (PCLS) since January 2014. I commenced in the role of Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service Worker in the Karratha Office on March 2015. The decision to leave my role in the South Hedland PCLS office as Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker Drug and Alcohol was a very positive move for me. I was and still am very passionate about the changes I can make and challenges I can help a victim of domestic violence overcome in their life when they feel all else has been lost.

The service assists clients in a short term capacity referred to as an 'advice' client, or provides ongoing support through case management referred to as a 'case' client. A majority of advice clients this financial year, are in the planning stages of leaving their abusive relationship or in the stage of having just left the relationship. Clients in these stages who want assistance from the program are assisted with safety and support planning, given information on housing/accommodation options and are supported to engage with other relevant support agencies (eg. legal, housing, counselling, Centrelink, child protection etc.)

I have had the pleasure of networking with local services providers who on a day to day basis are passionate about achieving the best possible outcomes for victims and their children.

However, there are many barriers that effect or lengthen positive outcomes for some clients. housing has continued to be the largest barrier for women and children seeking to leave their abuser, across all socioenconmic demographics. Often those in public housing feel unsafe to remain in their current homeor even in the same town. Housing transfers through the Department

of Housing, provides a medium to long term solution for clients. However, there is still a substancial wait for housing transfers of around 6 -24 months, which leaves clients seeking refuge either with family or in services (eg.womens refuge) in the short term.

For clients in private or company accommodation (through their partner's employer), housing continues to be a barrier when leaving the relationship as most are excluded from renting individually in the high private rental market and the long wait-times for public housing provide little short-term solutions.

Further more, client's who are non-Australian citizens, often in Australia on spousal visas, are further disadvantaged as not only are they at greater risk of social isolation with no family support, but they are excluded from accessing public housing.

Women who have sought legal strategies to help establish safety, such as obtaining a Violence Restraining Order, Parenting Order and/or Relocation Order, are faced the further barrier of long wait-times for court listings. some clients have had to wait up to 12 months for interim orders in family court matters and in some cases, the client being prevented from legally leaving town with the children whilst proceedings continue. This has resulted in one client residing in a refuge with her children for over 8 months.

Poor facilities at the Karratha Magistrates Court also mean clients are most often required to wait in the same waiting areas as their perpetrator, for extended periods of time. This makes attending court extremely daunting for clients who have experienced trauma and brings into question their access to justice if they are subjected to

further fear and emotional abuse through the process of obtaining legal support strategies.

Varying cultural and linguistic needs of clients has seen additional barriers to clients receiving equitable access to justice through legal systems and social services. In some cases, this has been due to difficulty in communicating, in which the client has not been able to adequately communicate their needs and/or understand their entitlements. In other cases, it appears that belonging to an already marginalised group, combined with poor esteem and confidence (as a result of experiencing domestic violence), leaves clients with minimal agency to advocate their needs. This has been particularly prevalent with agencies such as court, Centrelink, Department of Immigration, Department of Housing and the Child Support Agency. Extensive paperwork and processes can be overwhelming and immensely difficult for clients, which leaves victims of domestic violence particularly vulnerable to false information provided to them by their abusive partner.

For many clients still in abusive relationships, the complexity of their situation is highlighted by the fact that many want the violence and abusive behaviour to stop, however they want the relationship to continue. Information and discussion on what healthy relationships look like, what changes are required to achieve such a vision and setting realistic goals are therefore often focused on in support work with clients.

Case clients were those who required significantly higher ongoing support, most often with multi-problem and complex needs. Case clients were by large majority, still in a relationship with their abuser upon first engagement with the service and required ongoing support planning around accommodation, safety, child protection, building emotional intelligence and nurturing the needs of children, pre and post separation.

Domestic violence continues to be a complex issue, most often coexisting with economic restraints, mental health issues, substance abuse, and/or unstable accommodation.

Each client's situation is unique and different in their own way, as is their ability to work through their issues and identify their support needs .

I provide victims with court support when applying for a VRO. This is a very scary and emotional time for them and having someone with them who understands that they are feeling a great loss and an overwhelming feeling of grief support them through the process can be very reassuring . I provide information or referrals for counselling. I listen to their stories with great compassion offering all options, helping encourage them to make the biggest and most difficult decisions imaginable.

I have attended professional development training—"Practical skills in responding to people who experience domestic & family violence" this was a four day workshop and I found it empowering to listen and learn from amazing speakers with immense passion and experience in the field.

I am excited about my role, the year ahead and the challenges it will bring. The gratification of helping a family survive is the proof that this role with Pilbara Community Legal Services is vital.

Janette Tallon
Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service- Karratha

Domestic Violence Outreach Initiative– Pilbara Region (NPAH) Department for Child Protection and Family Support



I would like to acknowledge the strength & resilience of women I work for and with, thank them for their trust in me and commend them on their bravery.

My name is Ellysha Melville and I have been employed as Domestic Violence Outreach Worker for 18 months. As my time in the role increases so does the strength of the working relationships, networks and referral options. The last 12 months in particular has forged strong bonds between the Outreach service, police, The Department of Child Protection, Hedland Women's refuge, other Domestic Violence support services and court based Victim Support Services. Importantly time in the role has gone to building informal relationships and knowledge of local kinship channels which results in increased referrals to the service through unofficial channels.

Port Hedland

Domestic Violence is a big concern for our region and has the associated problems of substance abuse, poverty, homelessness, mental health strains, physical disablement, at risk children, truancy, disenfranchisement, criminality, learning disablement & alienation. Accordingly domestic violence in our communities requires regional solutions and State or National driven reform.

Locally public momentum for change is strong. Of late there have been community discussions & presentations such as the White Ribbon regional series and strengthening of the exchange of ideas between networks of government, non-government and volunteer organisations.

The new Sergeant in Charge at South Hedland Police Station Sergeant Dean Snashall has taken a hands on approach in the community and the lines of communication between the public and police are officially open. I encourage residents with feedback or ideas to make contact.

The Sergeant is also behind a move towards proactive policing after identifying five problematic Hedland houses constituting 400+ police callouts in one 12 month period. These homes are now visited during each police rotation. Grog is removed and domestic disputes and other criminality is addressed before it has an opportunity to escalate. The next step for these residents is their engagement with services such as Domestic Violence Outreach and others so they can access appropriate referrals and support.

Domestic Violence on the National Agenda

I would like to share an anecdote I read recently. Following the fatal killing of two men in 2012 – 2013 the NSW government launched the public service campaign "A Coward's Punch Can Kill", and the prime minister called for tougher penalties. This was coupled with national outrage from media outlets about the Australian drinking culture and calls for a revamp.

Since 2000, "Coward Punches" or "King Hits" have killed about seven men each year. Domestic Violence kills between eighty to a hundred women every year. Hill asks "Where's the national outrage? How many talkback hosts are railing against the culture that enables these murders? Where's the rush to strengthen domestic violence orders, which continually fail to protect women, or address numerous other systemic failings?" She also quotes our Prime Minister & Minister for Women Abbott whose response to Luke Batty's untimely death was "I'm not sure that every tragedy requires a change of policy." If we compare this response to that of the male-centric 'King Hit' campaign it appears that the murder of an Australian woman has less than 10% the political clout than the murder of an Australian man.

Workload

Over the 2014/2015 financial year the Domestic Violence Outreach Service logged 286 interactions with clients. For the same period the service received an additional 235 referrals with whom the service has been unable to establish contact due to remoteness, lack of telephone services or incorrect contact details. As such, the capacity to contact clients in this region remains problematic and its concerning to think of the 235 times a victim may have been expecting support that never eventuated.

Remoteness

Remoteness continues to be a main barrier to accessing services.

During the course of the year I was invited to attend a women's meeting in a Pilbara based Aboriginal community. The Domestic Violence Outreach service was able to provide information directly to women and relationships were forged with community members and local police. Since this outreach in March, the program has assisted five women from this community whom we would otherwise have not had contact.

The success of this outreach highlights the need for the service to work with women within their own environment and I am motivated as is my Karratha counterpart DVAVSS worker Janette Tallon to face the challenge and establish better remote service delivery. It is of particular importance that remote women can access education & services as they can be much more easily isolated by their abusers.

Brokerage

Domestic Violence Outreach Brokerage was utilised in a variety of ways this year to support women and children safety & security after experiencing domestic violence. Clients were assisted with vehicle repairs (often the damage was caused by the perpetrator) & fuel to enable the family to leave, provision of mobile phones and credit for safety purposes & to allow the client to maintain contact with support services, police & license checks to support job seeking & insurance claims, changing house locks and other home security measures, provision of child-centric professional services, flights to support

relocations to various parts of Australia, medicine & doctors' fees, emergency food & clothing, furniture removal, rental & bond support and payments to secure short stay accommodation.

What you can do.

When bullies win we all lose. We lose her laughter, her confidence and her contribution when she is silenced and shamed. It is a difficult thing to ask if things are OK in someone's home – to ask a person if they are a victim of Domestic Violence. But I implore you to ask. Silence sustains the violence.

Your enquiry might be the first & only time this person has had their welfare asked after. It might be the only time they've heard that there is someone who cares or that there is help.

If you see someone with a black eye or bruising enquire as to how it occurred. Explain that you are asking because it is very rare for accidents to cause facial injuries.

Offer tangible help /assistance / support – or if you cannot – provide the name / phone number / address of a person or agency or refuge that can.

Don't be afraid to phone the police when you see or hear domestic abuse. The police would much rather attend and deescalate a situation that attend a violent crime.

Make it your goal to let people know they have a safe friend in you.

Ellysha Melville

Domestic Violence Outreach Initiative– Pilbara Region (NPAH)- South Hedland



Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker– Pilbara (NPAH) Department for Child Protection and Family Support



I commenced in the position of Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker (HASW) on 11 February 2015, taking over from the previous worker Michelle Richardson.

This role has provided me with an opportunity to attend events such as Pilbara Womens Luncheon, Impact Measurement awards and other local events in town which was a good chance to do networking to find out what services and assistance is available for my clients.



I have found my position to be quite challenging due to funding cuts, housing availability and clients not willing to engage effectively, but it has also been rewarding by the positive outcomes that I have been able to achieve for a majority of my clients. It is a great feeling to see the appreciation my clients have for me when I am able to get them housed or when an issue with their housing has been positively resolved.



On any given night in Australia 1 in 200 people are homeless

The Homelessness Accommodation Support Worker (HASW) focuses on 3 key strategies:

- Prevention and early intervention to help lessen the impact of homelessness.
- Breaking the cycle of homelessness to help people get back on their feet, find stable accommodation and obtain employment.
- A better connected service system that will

build more connected, integrated and responsive services which strives to achieve sustainable housing, and improve economic and social participation of those at risk of homelessness.



The HASW provides services to the Pilbara Region and liaises with organisations around these areas such as Department of Housing (DOH). The program is allocated 10 properties by DOH each financial year for homeless clients who are eligible to be housed. A majority of my clients are only secondary homeless which is where they are living in over crowded accommodation or couch surfing. The HASW supports housed clients over a 12 month period to help them maintain and sustain long term tenancies through assistance with:

- Sourcing suitable accommodation.
- Establishing homes- furniture/household effects.
- Tenancy specific support to help maintain their tenancy- maintenance, independent living skills etc.
- Resolving financial issues
- Referrals to Centrelink accessing, education, Employment and training where possible.
- Linking clients to local health services.

Although the program has been successful, the provision of the service relies purely on receiving funding each financial year. The announcement of contract renewal only months before the expiration date of the previous contract's expiry date created uncertainty and negative impacts for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. It was unclear as to whether the program would be refunded this financial year. As a result, The Department of Housing did not accept any new applications after the 27th March 2015. This created difficulties for the delivery of the program as I was not able to guarantee clients seeking assistance for homelessness support or accommodation.

The program received three referrals for clients after March who wanted to be considered for the program, however I could only fill out the applications and keep them on file until I was informed of the continued funding. During this time a client was struggling immensely and had to relocate to Broome in order to find housing so they no longer required assistance on the program. Although it was a positive outcome as the client was housed, she was not able to receive the 12 months support that the program provides. Fortunately our contract was renewed and I was able to advise the two client's still needing support of the good news and send the forms off for processing. It is essential that funding renewal continues as it not only helps clients to be housed, but also puts a stop to homelessness by providing them with the information and skills to be able to sustain long term tenancies effectively.

During my time in this position I have noticed the Pilbara has a lack of emergency accommodation and because of this, a lack of rooms available in the ones we do have. Men have no emergency accommodation options with the closest being in Perth. This makes it difficult for families seeking shelter as they can only assist women and children leaving men with nowhere to go. The high loss of jobs this year, especially in the mining sector, has left people with minimal housing options. This is due to loss of employment related

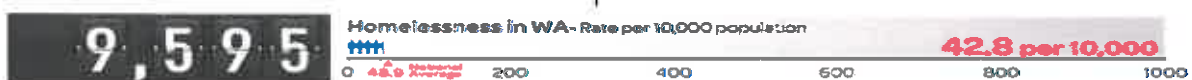
housing or the inability to afford high priced rent in the private market irrespective of the drop in rental prices. The option for them to go on to the public housing wait-list could mean years of waiting before they are offered a property.

One client came in seeking emergency accommodation for her three children, herself and her husband until they could be assisted to get to Perth. I advised them that there is no emergency accommodation for men therefore only the mother and the children could be assisted to reside at one of the emergency shelters. The client's husband needed to find accommodation elsewhere, e.g. with friends. This put the family in a difficult situation as being separated during this stressful time was not a good option. Luckily they made contact with a former friend who assisted them with accommodation until they could get to Perth.



This financial year I have successfully exited six clients who finished their 12 months support period and effectively showed that they were able to sustain and maintain their tenancies independently. I have housed seven clients who are currently still undergoing their support period, however are already showing they have the skills to efficiently uphold their tenancies with minimal assistance. Three clients have been assessed this financial year to be on the HASS waiting list for housing in the next financial year.

Rachel Reed
Homelessness Accommodation Support Service Worker—pilbara—Karratha
 Photos courtesy of Homelessness Australia <http://www.homelessnessaustralia.org.au/>



Housing Support Worker Drug and Alcohol Initiative (NPAH) Department for Child Protection and family Services



My name is Gretchen Ncube; I commenced in the position as Homeless Housing Support Service – drug and Alcohol Strategy (HSWDA) in January 2015.

This financial year we have managed to house 10 clients through the programme. All the clients housed have successfully maintained their tenancy with the ongoing support of the programme. The outline of the programme is to case manage on an average of 10 clients at a time for a 12 month period.

The HSWDA programme is allocated 10 houses a year through the Department of Housing. One of the major challenges we faced this year was the low turnover of houses by the Department of Housing due to maintenance requirements of the vacant houses which made the waiting period following an allocation of a tenancy very long. This is the most critical time as most clients get frustrated and impatient. It is therefore important that we work collaboratively with the client's and their Drug and Alcohol counsellors to ensure they remain focused and motivated.

I meet with the Department of Housing fortnightly to discuss client applications, and progress tenancy allocation status. This is a good initiative as it ensures that all information is established on time and any issues that may arise are resolved as quickly as possible. This year saw an increased rapport between HSWDA and the Housing Officers at the Department of Housing. This meant that from the sign up day we work together to establish and resolve issues that affect client's

tenancies. It is also helpful because, where previously the clients never warmed up to the 'Housing Mob' – which is how they tend to refer

to the Department, but instead, saw us working together and as a result they respond better to their Housing Support Officers making it easier to prepare reports, request assistance and achieve better outcomes.

The HSWDA programme has brokerage funding which allocates approximately \$500 to each client. The funds go towards assisting clients with their bond and initial rent, or the purchase of other household items and basic commodities. However, it is never enough when considering the high cost of living in the Pilbara. The local community are extremely generous with donations of furniture for clients to establish a home, but here again, the cost of transport and/or storage of donated items can bring a whole range of extra problems for the service provider.

The cost of furniture to buy retail is high in the Pilbara and is just not accessible for our clients. To date, we have been able to furnish the homes of all clients through donated furniture. Some clients may need more than others, every case is a different. We have used the goodwill of family members and local agencies to transport the furniture when the clients move in. This can be a nightmare to co-ordinate at times especially over the Christmas period and during cyclone season. Moving furniture in 40 degree heat is not easy however when we work alongside the clients to put their home together, it makes it all worthwhile. I also ensure that the client is equipped with all the knowledge of how to keep up good standards in their new home.

I work closely with counsellors and service providers of allied local agencies. There is so much I could not do if it were not for their help. Some of the Agencies I would like to mention are Pilbara Mental Health Drug Service, Bloodwood

Tree D&A Service, Bunara Maya Hostel, Youth Accommodation Program, Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Health Service, DOH, DCP case workers, Mission Australia, Yaandina Family Centre, Rose Nowers Early learning Centre, FMG Hamilton Camp' Foundation Housing and the Aboriginal Hostel. I would also like to acknowledge my PCLS colleagues who also work tirelessly for our clients. I usually refer my clients to our Financial Counsellor and Domestic Violence Outreach.

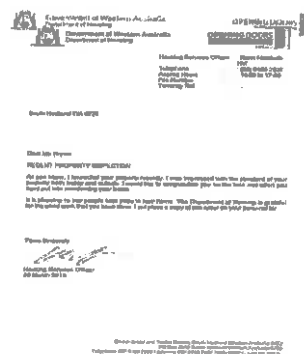
I have found a large percentage of our clients that are referred to the service are Aboriginal women and children, they bring with them a range of complex issues Domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse issues, mental health issues, legal issues due to substance abuse, anti -social behaviour, health, unemployment, learning difficulties due to FASD, sexual abuse, school attendance in young children these are just some of the complex issues that face most of our clients.

Another big setback for D&A clients is the influence of relatives; who come to their homes and drink which always results in wrecked property and damage which the client becomes liable for. I have put up a suggestion to make all homes allocated to the clients to be Alcohol Restricted upon sign up. This will immediately deter the drinking "mob". We have also ensured that the D&A clients are housed away from where binge drinking takes place as close proximity to this behaviour sets them up to fail. This has resulted in clients being housed in more secure units.

A large percentage of our clients are traditional people who have limited skills in living in a domestic environment. This can bring along a range of problems for them maintaining their tenancy. As an advocate for them I can help them to achieve this by working closely with them on a regular basis. I have built a rapport with the clients in the initial months before they are housed. I do regular home visits and liaise with their Housing officer on their behalf to discuss any problems the tenants may have. We have

also provided new tenants with basic information in a brochure form which outlines for them how to keep their home clean.

With the permission of the client, I provide below a copy of letter she received from her Housing Support Officer complimenting her for the good upkeep of her home. This is a woman who 12 months ago was homeless and now she has a perfect drug and alcohol free home for her family and the cycle of alcohol addiction is broken. This shows how the programme is really important as it turns people's lives around,



I believe this service will continue to grow. People are doing a complete turn around and living an alcohol free life. I have a client who is a mother of 2 young children. She was housed 2 months ago and during a home visit, the client told me that she used to use drugs to be high but now her new high is watching her kids running around in their yard and happy. It is moments like this 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.

Gretchen Ncube
Homelessness Housing Support Service, Drug and Alcohol Initiative—South Hedland

Public Tenancy Support Service (NPAH) Department for Child Protection and Family Support



Angie Mitchell's position with the organisation was initially as the Public Tenancy Support Service. The following trends were identified during Angie's time.

The Department of Housing's general waitlist can be up to seven years however we have assisted people with securing a tenancy during this period. A client had been on the waiting list since 2009. Retaining a position on the public waitlist requires ongoing commitment which can be difficult for some as they do not have a fixed address.

In the reporting period of July– March we had a majority of referrals from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support for families seeking assistance with completing their Department of Housing applications and supporting single parent families with their housing issues or tenancies that have been at risk for eviction.

Maintenance is always an ongoing issue. However since the Department of Housing has engaged in new contractors there has been an improvement in response times for repairs such as leaking taps and blocked drains.

There have been a number of achievements in this period too. We are pleased to see people who have been on the waitlist for years finally housed. We are able to assist them with the establishment of their tenancies with the help of the local church.

Previous and continued education on the

emphasis of reporting maintenance issues within a three day timeframe has seen an increase in the tenants attending the office to report maintenance on our direct phone line to Housing Direct. We also continue to educate and provide home care and education kits to clients with a new tenancy and those that have been referred due to unsatisfactory standards. The cost of purchasing these kits on a Centrelink income when setting up a house can be unattainable for some.

We had a client who was referred for unsatisfactory yard standards and at risk of losing her tenancy due to breaches by the Department of Housing however with some brokerage we were able to access a skip bin and as a result we are pleased to report that we were successful in saving her tenancy and also put strategies in place so that she could maintain the yard in future.



I was excited about the challenge when I started and looked forward to engaging with clients to assist them to realise their rights and responsibilities in relation to sustaining and maintaining their tenancies. This also involved constant liaison with appropriate service providers and Aboriginal Corporations to aim for positive outcomes. The clients were great – very compliant and grateful for assistance as they realised and understood that they could make a difference to sustaining their tenancies if they complied with regulations.

For the first two weeks I spent the majority of my time going through Policies and Procedures – to make sure I understood expectations and responsibilities to deliver sustainable outcomes based program. Within this time it was International Women’s day and the CEO Nanette Williams invited me to join her and participate in an interview on Women in the Pilbara – and how far we have come to reach our standing in the Community.

Following two weeks personal leave with family in Cairns; I was back in the role and learning again. CLSIS (Community Legal Service Information System) data base had definitely floated out the window and SHIP to SHOR (funding body’s reporting system) not far behind it. My co-workers were so busy it was difficult to get consistent training – coupled with only working a two and a half day week it was hard to get my head around the different components and ensure they were entered correctly into CLSIS. I attended training for SHIP to SHOR with the Department for Child protection and Families in Perth in May and this was very beneficial and greatly assisted my reporting abilities.

At the beginning of April, I was referred my first client by the Financial Counsellor. I was accompanied by the Roebourne STEP worker to visit to the client in her home. We addressed the issues with the client to enable her to put plans in place to reduce her risk of losing her tenancy and to expedite her application for priority transfer. I attempted to make weekly follow up calls and visits, but this proved difficult due to the client not always being home and her mobile phone without credit. Shortly after, I was referred two further clients, both with quite different issues. One client was living in difficult circumstances with a child and the other applying for a tenancy transfer due to the

addition of her ailing Mother to her household.

The second client was self-referred and I was able to follow through with most of her issues which related to maintenance, rent arrears and disconnection of her power due to having at one stage abandoned her property. I supported and acted as advocate for the client in having her maintenance issues attended to in a timely manner. The client had been waiting for her property to be made secure since December but wasn’t aware she needed to continuously follow up. We worked together and the client attended a session with the financial counsellor who assisted her to maintain her rental payments and arrears with Horizon Power. The client very happily returned to the property when the maintenance was done and the property was safe and secure.

The current emerging issues continue to be overcrowding of houses caused by the shortage of housing in the Roebourne/Wickham area. Ongoing maintenance continue to be an issue although with new contractors they are completed with timeframes. However houses are still offered to new tenants with outstanding maintenance issues. We also continue to find clients have deductions from their accounts to various charities, funeral plans or life insurance which can be difficult to follow up on and often they are reluctant to discontinue the deductions despite the clients not having the funds to pay. Clients are referred to other services at PCLS such as the Financial Counsellor to ensure better outcomes.

Shirley Simpson

***Public Tenancy Support Service –
Roebourne***

Public Tenancy Support Service Newman Department of Family and Child Protection Services



The vision of Pilbara Community Legal Service is: "Empowering the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively" which was exactly our aim during the last financial year – to assist tenants and others to maintain their tenancies by providing on-going support, advocating, and giving practical aid in all areas of their tenancy. Preparation and determination are two main factors when it comes to helping our clients. Perseverance, a positive and active characteristic helps us to keep going beyond what we have already done. It is no wonder that American author Newt Gingrich once penned, "Perseverance is the hard work you do after you get tired of doing the hard work you already did".



That is the one element which I believe helped me to remain steadfast and positive during this past service year despite the continuous opposition of an irritant which has caused a lot of frustration and exasperation to us in our quest in reaching goals for our clients. But in spite of it all our clients remain joyful and are happy with our assistance. As always it is challenging when we have to confront the unwanted visitors' of whom the tenant would like us to move on. By using the tenancy agreement we are able to move them on. Some come back, but not for long and then another lot come for a visit. As long as they are quiet and not damaging the property they are allowed to stay according to the last instructions from Housing Authority. The problems start when alcohol is taken to the property. On the other hand we have our achievements and successes during the reporting period.

Following are various SHIP entries of clients who have been housed during the reporting period, one of which is a successful transfer applicant due

to anti-social behaviour. The last one is a successful appeal which overturned the Department's decision to strike the client from the waiting list:

Client #1 - 13/03/2015 After living in cramped, shared and unhealthy conditions at the reserve this client and her family have finally been housed. Client came to the office to "Thank us" for our support and that they have finally got their house. We congratulated them and wished them all the best.

16/03/2015 Facilitated the GROH officer with TA signup with the client. Assisted the client to open an electricity account with Newman Electricity Billing [NEB]

Client #2 - 14/05/2015 moved into her rental property on 13/5/2015. We took 2 chairs for her today and asked if she would like to go on the PTSS program, which she did. We emailed the referral form and the DOH Consent form to DOH. The new tenant was provided with cleaning cloths, garbage bags, sugar soap and a padlock for the side gate to stop intruders.

Client #3- January 2015 Client came to inquire about her house that has recently been allocated to her.

Client #4 - 21/04/2015 We received an email with a Letter of Offer of Accommodation from DOH for the client. We assisted the client to complete the forms, and we emailed them to the SCSO DOH. We received a confirmation email from the SCSO advising that the HSO will sign the client into the allocated property on Tuesday 28 April 2015.

Client #5 - 27/05/2015 Client came to the office with the receipt for the in-going fees. Next - The PHSO did the sign-up and provided the tenant with the keys to his house.

Client #6 - 26/05/2015 Client received a call from

DOH requesting him to attend the DOH office to complete and sign a Tenant Vacating Form stating he has left the previous rental property due to being transferred to another unit. We advised the client that we will hold the completed form and hand it to the PHSO tomorrow. Client handed his property keys back to the DOH. Client has transferred to another property due to antisocial behaviour.

Client #7 - 03/03/2015 Client came to the office with an advocate from Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation [AAC] to inform us that she has been removed from the DOH waiting list. We telephoned the DOH regarding the tenancy status of the client and were informed that the client was listed in 2011 and was withdrawn from the list in October 2014. We enquired as to the reason for the withdrawal but a reason could not be provided. We ascertained that the reason may have been because the client in her attempts to find a place to stay while waiting for her house was continually moving from one place to another of which she confirmed that was the case. Therefore she would not have been receiving any mail that came from the Department. We assisted the client with the Housing Appeals Mechanism Request Form [to appeal the DOH decision to remove the client from the waiting list.

05/03/2015 We emailed the form and the Letter of support and other documents to the DOH.

11/03/2015 Wrote and sent a Progress letter to the client to inform her of the process of the appeal and what to expect.

31/03/2015 Received a letter from the DOH regarding their decision to withdraw the client from the waiting list. The case is being reviewed and we are expecting further advice in the mail regarding the outcome of the Tier 1 Review.

31/03/2015 AAC requested a copy of the letter we received from the DOH for or mutual client. We emailed it to them.

24/04/2015 Email to DOH for an up-date on the progress of the client's Tier 1 Review. We were advised that the appeal is still being assessed by the Team Leaders

25/05/2015 Received a letter from DOH advising that the clients Tier 1 appeal that was lodged had been successful. Client is now back on the wait list.

Following is the home of a PTSS tenant whose story goes back to 2010 and will fill 4 pages if written down. We will only go back to 4 months ago when she was at last housed by DOH. Due to constant home visits since accessing the property she is managing to keep her house up to standard. We have provided full support and she is engaging very well. She is a fine example to others and is managing to keep the visitors' at bay with a few reminders from the service provider. We are in the process of providing furniture for her home through the DOH. We utilize furniture left at other DOH properties. The lawn was up to the fence line but we were able to find a contractor to cut her lawn, front and back yards for \$65. Tenant was happy to pay that amount.



Client requested detergent for the floors with "nice smell" We gave her container of eucalypt detergent now stored in cupboard. We will be placing Task Cards in our PTSS client homes which will be attached to the wall of each respective room. i.e. kitchen, lounge, bathroom, toilet etc. Constant reminders.



Front yard - lawn recently cut. Both yards very tidy.



Back yard. No rubbish

This tenant is determined not to let her home go the way the other one did 6 years ago. It was once said that: "Victory is the child of preparation and determination." – Sean Hampton – American actor. And this tenant has determination. She is one of our Martu elders. We are so proud of her.

Ettie Te Miha

Public Tenancy Support Service- Newman

Tenancy Advocate and Education Service— West Pilbara Department of Commerce



My name is Flordeliza Larrazabal and I commenced in the position of Tenancy Advocate and Education service provider on the 12th February 2015. During my first 3 months I was busy training, getting use to a role where I am acting on behalf of the tenant instead of the Lessor as I was in my previous role in the private real estate industry.

There was much to learning about Department of Housing, their policies, and how they operate.

I found myself for the first 3 months busy dealing with mainly Department of Housing and helping clients with applications for housing and helping them resolve maintenance issues.

What my role consist of is giving advice to clients, trying to lead them in the right direction for whatever issue they are having revolving around their tenancy, whether that be a maintenance issue, bond release or applying for a house .

Karratha has been going through a difficult period due to the downturn in the iron ore industry. Many people were rendered unemployed and as a result, much of my time during this financial year was spent providing advice on how tenants can go about ending their tenancy agreement, which, in some instances required me to provide them with representation through the court. Because people were being made redundant and there were not many

opportunities for alternative employment, some people found themselves in a situation where they had no choice but to pack up their belongings and move back to their original homes in the city. I was successful on several occasions in my negotiations with the Lessor/agency on behalf of clients who found themselves in this situation, and, as a result, they were granted early release from their lease agreement. However in most occasions, this would only come about when the court hearing date had been set.



Since taking on the position, I organised and presented a work shop in Onslow which went a long way to create an awareness of our services and the outreach we provide to the town. As part of the workshop, I created a slideshow that starts from renting a property, signing the lease agreement and collecting the keys to returning the keys, outlining each step along the way that a tenant takes when renting a property and what could possibly occur. The workshop also discussed the topic of rental payments, maintenance, property condition reports, breach notices, termination if none payment

of rent, break lease and ending a tenancy agreement. Since my visit, I have a number clients from Onslow that I now assist and advise. In addition to providing outreach to Onslow, I also attend at our Roebourne and similarly assist clients there.

I believe tenancy education is a vital service as not many people understand the importance and legal aspects of signing a lease agreement, the rules they need to follow, understanding what their rights are as tenants and what they are liable for, especially the people who are new to renting a property.



I very much enjoy the role and there are many good outcomes achieved for clients. I look forward to another interesting year.

Flordeliza Larrazabal
Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service –
Karratha



Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service— East Pilbara Department of Commerce



I commenced in the role of Tenancy Advocate in January 2014 I have found the work to be both challenging and rewarding. Over this time, I have learned so much in regards to tenancy but I am aware that the opportunities to learn more are endless. Low numeracy and literary skills can have a negative effect on a client's ability to manage their tenancies successfully. However, I have found that if you can establish a good solid relationship with the client from the beginning, they feel more comfortable coming to our office when they are feeling overwhelmed with any issues regarding their tenancies.

92% of our clients are Aboriginal people who are 'Department of Housing' tenants. The Matriarch of the family tends to be the one who approaches The Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) for assistance with tenancy issues. This can be the Mother or Grandmother who will then face court if they have received a breach for rent arrears/tenant liability or water arrears. My heart goes out to some of these women who are embarrassed by the ordeal of facing court when the only crime these women are guilty of is not having the ability to say no to their family and extended family. As the Aboriginal culture is to share everything with your family, this can mean your home too. In some cases this can lead to devastating outcomes for the client.



The younger generation appears to be less respectful and usually under the influence of alcohol and drugs. In some circumstances they are the main cause of thousands of dollars' worth of damages to the client's property. The charges are placed on the tenants account and due to the Pilbara's inflated maintenance charges can mean a client is facing up to, in one case, \$30,000 and termination of their tenancy. Unfortunately, for

the tenant, there is nothing they can do as they are liable for the charges. I am passionate about my client's right to a fair hearing in regards to their issues, though while our local magistrate and the Department staff are sympathetic to the issue they have no choice but to rule within the Residential Tenancy Act.

Some of the other areas we have focused on this year are; transfer/applications vacated T/L housing applications, support letters for priority application, and follow-ups on maintenance/bond issues. We have run education programs for the property standards and 3 strike policies, while also providing literature on how to keep a tenancy. We have attended housing sign-ups for new tenants and used this to provide hands on education for our clients including the importance of ongoing property inspection reports.

As previously mentioned, most clients are tenants of the Department of Housing however there has been a small increase in private tenancies due to the financial downturn in the Pilbara. These are mostly clients seeking to terminate the tenancy due to financial hardship. The 238 matters in this reporting period, only a small % of them are private tenancies. The loss of rent subsidy is the main reason for our clients wanting to end their tenancy. The landlords also feel the pressure of the downturn, as they still have to pay a high mortgage from the boom times. Looking at Port and South Hedland, there are plenty of empty houses. The landlords are aware that they need to retain their tenant in order to avoid their house sitting idle for months with no income.

On a more positive note, our local Aboriginal clients now have more choices in housing. When compared to other areas of WA, the prices are still quite high. However some have come down from \$1000 per week to \$350/\$400, which is fantastic news for our struggling locals. The cost

of food and amenities is also quite high in the Pilbara but it is more realistic and does encourage people to stay in town, rather than using the Pilbara for work and spending money elsewhere. Osprey Village in particular has made a great impact on the low to medium income earner.

I was able to attend a meeting with local Labor MP Stephen Dawson to discuss possible changes in assisting our clients. He suggested a round table meeting with The Department of Housing's Regional Manager, Police, PCLS and two other NGO's. That meeting took place at the MP's office in South Hedland. One issue that was discussed during this meeting was the alcohol restriction notices. I've had clients' remark 'they are not worth the paper they are written on, as the aforementioned younger generation gets drunk and removes them. The police have remarked on implementing signs, which are harder to remove, and dispatching teams to problem houses to remove the alcohol from LRP. This will provide more protection for the older clients. This issue



and discussions will be ongoing and I will be reporting the outcomes.

We have attended court on over 60 occasions for tenancy matters. I must admit this year is a little easier as, during my first year I was unsure of my capability of representing someone. Convinced that I was going to have a heart attack before entering the courtroom I found that the use of Herbal Rescue Remedy and Lavender oil helped me greatly. A discovery I then shared with an acting Regional Recovery Officer from The department of Housing, as he was as nervous as I had been previously. It was then that I realized we are all doing the best we can.

This has been an extremely busy year between clients, continued professional development workshops, outreach to Newman and reporting commitments.

In the Pilbara we do things differently. We roll

with the challenges and keep our sense of humour when trying to implement some ridiculous new policy or procedure that sounded great on paper when presented in Perth or Canberra but does not have the same result in regional areas. One example is the survey we have been asked to give our clients to fill in and send back to the funding body. This does not seem unreasonable to a major city where literacy and numeracy are not an issue, however in Hedland the majority of our clients are not confident in that regard. I feel this adds another layer of distress to their already mounting list of burdens. I would think that before a new policy is implemented to the Pilbara, the person in charge of the proposed change should come and spend some time here before putting pen to paper.

I love it when we have visits from politicians and every effort is made to make the situation look shiny, even our clients. The politicians indulge in a beautiful lunch in one of the hotels, everyone joins hands and together they sing Kumbaya – what a marvellous job we are doing! I would suggest they come on a real visit to some of the homes dealing with real issues and then go back and implement a policy that is suitable for a regional area like ours.

As workers, we try to hold back tears when we see a client's distress, knowing our aim is to get on with the job of providing the best possible service we can to the rest of our clients. The PCLS mission statement is to empower the people of the Pilbara to manage their lives effectively. I try to remember that every day as sometimes I have a tendency
To mother my clients!

Sue Baker
Tenancy Advocacy and Education Service – South Hedland

Supported Tenancy and Education Program Department of Housing



I have worked for Pilbara Community Legal Services for the past 2 years in the position of Support and Tenant Education Program (STEP). This program is voluntary and is specifically designed to assist and educate public housing tenants to maintain and sustain their tenancies and to avoid possible eviction.

We receive referrals from The Department of Housing for clients on the Support and Tenant Education Program Information System (STEPIMS). We can also suggest to Department of Housing clients that we may feel will benefit from going on the program. Unfortunately due to the Department of Housing changing over to a new client system at the same time as the introduction to STEPIMS there has been a delay in referrals this financial year. Also due to Step being a voluntary program the tenants do not always want to go onto the program, the ones that we do not see often are the Tenants that have had disruptive behaviour complaints. These tenants tend to not take up offer for referrals, even though the information has been given to them at their first meeting with the disruptive behaviour management unit when they are investigating the complaints. What can then sometime happen is these Tenants get more disruptive behaviour complaints resulting in them getting three strikes. The tenants may then present to us but by then it is too late for us to accept referrals for them because once they have been issued with 3 strikes the Department of Housing would already have

commenced court proceedings to evict them. These tenants can be referred to our Tenancy Advocate.

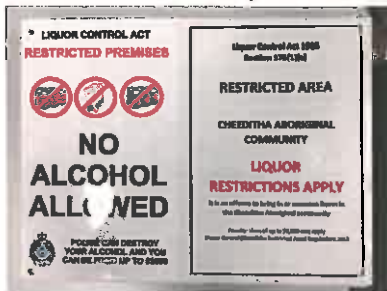
STEP is there to educate the clients by engaging with the clients on a weekly basis. Together we agree on action plans with goals for them to make improvements with their tenancy issues within a certain timeframe. The plans are formulated by using the Department of Housing "keeping my home matrix" as a guideline to what areas we need to concentrate on improving. The issues that could place a tenancy at risk are as follows:

- Property standards;
- Overcrowding/visitors;
- Water rent/ arrears;
- Tenant liability arrears; and
- Disruptive Behaviour complaints.

We also work with Department of Housing applicants that are currently on top of the waiting list and are nearing to the time of being housed. These clients will be referred by Department of Housing for us to work with them to educate them on what their requirements will be once they are housed. Once they are allocated a property we will continue to work with them until we feel that they have a better understanding of what is required of them.

Step also assists clients to apply for a Liquor Restricted Premises Notice if the tenant has received one or more strikes for Disruptive Behaviour or the tenant requests for their property to be alcohol free. We educate the

clients so that the client is well aware of their obligations under the very strict Liquor Act before we proceed with the application. We currently have one client with a Liquor Restriction license for their premises in place.



The Step program has access to brokerage which we use to resolve some of the presenting issues of the tenants. We can use the brokerage to pay for skip bins, purchase cleaning products and for the removal of unregistered cars. The brokerage allocated is an amount of \$5000.00 that is used by all four STEP workers throughout the financial year. I feel that this amount is not sufficient as we are funded to have at full capacity a total of 70 clients between us. Our clients regularly present with issues that may require us to use brokerage and we had used all our brokerage before the end of this financial year.

Since July 2014-June 2015 we have received only 7 referrals to the Step program. There have been 15 exits and reasons these were exited are:-

- 1 failed to commit to program
- 3 Vacated/unsuccessful
- 1 unsuccessful
- 7 successful
- 1 partially successful
- 1 was withdrawn
- 1 due to imprisonment

What I find to be one of our biggest challenges is to get our clients to understand that whenever they have family move in and stay for extended periods of time, they need

to add them onto their rent assessment forms and then get them to help pay towards the cost of maintaining their premises by completing Rent Deduction Scheme forms. What happens on a regular basis is family come to stay, do not help around the house and do not offer any financial assistance to the tenants. We then have tenants who are then at risk of losing their tenancies as their standards decline and sometimes damages occur at the property and never gets reported within the expected timeframe. Our clients find the task of cleaning up after visitors leave too hard for them and sometimes are unable to rectify whatever may have happened whilst visitors there.

Another big challenge for the past year has been non engagement of some clients that really do need the help but are just not engaging as much as they are required to.

I have attended training and information forums which has increased my professional development and enabled me to better assist our clients. The courses are listed below:-

- Department of Housing Community Forum-Roebourne Sept 2014
- Conversations for life-Karratha November 2014
- Mental Health in the workplace-Karratha November 2014
- Emotional Intelligence-South Hedland March 2015

I have thoroughly enjoyed working in my position at PCLS and now look forward to the year ahead.

Karla Kelly
Supported Tenancy and Education Program
Karratha



Supported Tenancy and Education Program Department of Housing



Support and Tenant Education Program (STEP) is a service provided to tenants who are experiencing difficulties managing their tenancy and/or may be at risk of losing their home. STEP is an intervention program that may assist clients facing eviction or it can serve as a tool to provide early education to clients and empower them to maintain a good tenancy with the Department of Housing.

I have been working as a STEP service provider in Hedland since November 2013. During this time, I have experienced some successes and failures that have made me who I am today. Step by step, little by little, I have improved my ways and developed my understanding on how to help clients who are in need of this service. I have learnt that helping clients doesn't actually mean that you do everything for them; instead you empower and inspire them to do the things that they are meant to do and should have been doing in order to keep a good stance with the Department of Housing. Thus, the saying goes;

"Give a man fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime"

In almost two years I was able to open 18 cases and close a total of 17 cases (including cases taken over from previous STEP/SHAP service provider Tanita Murray. Some cases were closed as successful; some cases were closed due to the length of time the client had been on the program and some closed

due to non-engagement by the client.. Unsuccessful exits are driven by many challenges such as clients' not engaging, unwillingness to follow through action plans; eviction due to unpaid arrears or disruptive behaviour and the worst is elder abuse. There are two root causes for these problems; they are the lack of care from clients themselves and their family/extended family and no education or late education.

Through STEP and by working alongside the Housing Property Service Officers we may be able to inspire change and see improvement. The change we expect does not necessarily have to be seen straight away. However, if we continuously empower and inspire our clients 'change is inevitable'. It may not be visible now, but if the desire for change is strong it will surely affect people generation after generation.



Professional Development

For the past year, I was blessed to be given the opportunity attend the 8th National Women's Indigenous Conference in Cairns where Indigenous people all around the world gathered and agencies who provide services across Australia. Unfortunately, most speakers only talked about their entrepreneurial businesses. However, I met

two Aboriginal Elders from Roebourne who started a program called 'Strong men and Strong Women'. Their program focuses on empowering their people through continuous support and different activities to help them avoid drug and alcohol abuse. They encourage their people, families and friends and have had great results. They were very kind and very welcoming. I was so blessed to be with people who accepted and embraced me as their own.

I also had a chance to attend cultural awareness training in Perth – "Communicating and Connecting with Aboriginal Clients". This training was very informative and eye opening. It has given me a broader understanding about the cultural differences, different languages, different groups and much more.



STEP Future Plans:

I desire to conduct more Educational Events/ Tenancy Information Session during the 2015/16 financial year through film showing and morning teas.

I would like to thank The Pilbara Community legal Service Board of Management for all the wonderful opportunities I have been given. This has been a big learning experience for me. I look forward to many more years with the organisation.

Micah Tablac

Supported Tenancy Education Program - South Hedland



Supported Tenancy and Education program Department of Housing



I commenced in the STEP role at Roebourne in February this year, having moved across from Public Tenant Support position. STEP has been operating on a full time capacity in Roebourne since June 2014. Previously the role was undertaken by Lorraine Jones who sadly passed away in March this year.

The STEP program is an early intervention program provided by the Department of Housing to assist tenants who require support, case management and education with their tenancy, participation in STEP is voluntary.

The STEP program assists tenants that have been referred due to arrears, breaches for property standards, disruptive behaviour or education around sustaining and maintaining their tenancy. Working collaboratively with the Department staff and the client is paramount to the success of the program. We work together to discuss and educate on what can be done to sustain the tenancy and develop action plans to instigate changes that we can work together to meet agreed outcomes and empower the client to avoid similar issues in the future and avoid eviction. Participation in the program can be from six weeks where minimal intervention is required, clients mainly requiring assistance with education and information to maintain their tenancy or intervention lasting six months where the support required is intensive due to the high risk of eviction.

Participating in the STEP program involves weekly home visits to the client to discuss

the issues affecting their tenancy and putting strategies in place to overcome the risk to their tenancy. Building a relationship that is respectful and transparent is essential to work together to meet the desired goals to sustain and maintain their tenancy. Majority of referrals have a successful outcome on the program in sustaining and maintaining their tenancy. However there are some clients that are difficult to engage with or are unwilling to participate in STEP despite dedicated and collaborative support and ultimately eviction is imminent. With the shortage of public housing in the Pilbara this is of a real concern as often it is other family members that take them in, putting their own tenancy at risk of overcrowding and family conflict.

Referrals this 2014/15 period were very few with only six. Clients referred to STEP; however since the permanent appointment of a Housing Services Officer (HSO) for the Roebourne/Wickham area we have seen an increase to 8 clients. This number is expected to increase over the next year with regular house inspections and follow ups by the HSO to reach the target of 20 clients per annum.

Regular six week meetings occur at the Department of Housing involving the Team leader, and housing support officers where the ongoing participation of the client in the STEP program is discussed. When the client has managed to meet all goal objectives with a favourable outcome the client is successfully exited from the program.

The last 12 month have seen 6 clients exited successfully from the STEP program and of the 8 current clients it is anticipated that they will also be exited successfully. We have had clients referred for minimal debt that could have escalated if left unaddressed; with the assistance of STEP they have entered into payment arrangements and are now in credit. We currently have clients that are at risk of eviction due to property standards, disruptive behaviour complaints and arrears, these tenants have required more intensive support and education and are more of a challenge. Quite often there can be other influences such as substance abuse affecting their ability to effectively manage their tenancy. Therefore engaging with appropriate services is required to work collaboratively to sustain their tenancy.

During the course of the year I have attended the following Forums and Professional Development:

- Department of Housing Community Forums held in Roebourne that inform tenants of their tenant obligations, Roebourne
- Domestic Violence Forum, Karratha
- Caring Community Circle Meeting Workshop, Roebourne
- Emotional Intelligence ,Hedland

With the dedication of a permanent Housing Services Officer in the Roebourne/ Wickham area and the STEP program, we look forward to another year of empowering tenants to improve their capacity and capabilities to manage their tenancy successfully.

Angela Mitchell

***Supported Tenancy and Education Program-
Roebourne***



Supported Tenancy and Education program

Department of Housing



Author Denis Waitley once said: *“Determination gives you the resolve to keep going in spite of the roadblocks that lay before you”* . . . this was a mind-set for me during the year - to be determined to carry out my role as the STEP service provider in Newman for the benefit of our clients’. At times this proved challenging, but not impossible. Preparation and determination were at the forefront along with patience and perseverance.

Delivering the Supported Tenancy Education Program (STEP) is an important role that needs much patience and perseverance, remembering that when we are working with the Aboriginal clients’ “culture” is involved which can cause some problems in some of our clients’ households. The extended families who converge on the homes of our clients’ can at times get out of control and cause a lot of damage, stress and concern for the tenant, who is quite aware that the onus will always fall back on them which is why the tenant liability facility is set up with the Housing Authority at the beginning of their tenancy.

The client requests the assistance of the STEP to assist with moving on unwanted and out of control visitors to the property. The STEP service provider is able to do this with some success by using the tenancy agreement made between the tenant and the Housing Authority, stipulating that they are putting the legal tenant’s tenancy at risk, which could result the tenant and their family being rendered homeless. The question is how can we overcome this ongoing problem?

The answer to this question surfaced during the first six-weekly management review meeting with the Housing Authority’s Manager Housing Services (MHS) who clarified the STEP contract requirements and the responsibilities of agencies.

HPSO and STEP officer to look at strategies where

they can assist one another to enable the success of the action plan in place i.e. assisting the moving on of unwanted visitors through the tenancy agreement.

MHS – advised that deliberate and malicious damage will no longer be tolerated and any clients or out of control visitors that continue to damage the property while participating in the STEP program the Dept. will be actively seeking the return of the property. Because of the requirement of fortnightly visits to the client it is expected that the support worker will contact the HPSO and advise of any continued damage.

The over-all aim of STEP is:

- to assist tenants’ to increase their ability to maintain stable households and to independently manage their tenancies resulting in long-term self-sufficiency and pride in their homes”.
- provide early intervention and support through education, [i.e in home skills, financial responsibilities – managing their rent and utility accounts – self- advocacy] case management, referrals to other agencies and reminding them of their responsibilities, obligations and rights under the Residential Tenancy Act and the Tenancy Agreement as an ongoing exercise.

Once a client is accepted on to the program, the following requirement must continue:

HPSO does not stop managing their tenancies once a client is on STEP but use the time with tenants to reiterate and follow up tenancy accountability so that tenants are receiving the same message. More open and regular contact between STEP officer and housing officer to ensure success of action plan or re-assess and adjust where required.

The following excerpts are from the minutes of a recent STEP meeting:

- *If properties are over occupied, as long as the rent is being paid, there is no damage and there is no nuisance coming from the property we (the Department will not interfere. We want to let the tenants know that The Pilbara Community Legal Service and The Department of Housing have a good relationship with each other and we (PCLS and Housing) Department) maintain communication in regard to what is happening.*
- *Newman is having trouble currently with unwanted visitors at Department of Housing properties. Tenants are required to move these people on but sometimes have trouble doing so. The STEP service provider has assisted with some of these 'move on's and used the Tenancy Agreement to do so. HSO's are also to have a conversation with the tenants regarding this and ensure they understand they are putting their tenancy at risk. If people are constantly at the premises, advise them that they will need to go onto the Rent Deduction Scheme and start contributing towards the household expenses.*

This process has been followed in the past and will be continued in order that other extended householders accept the fact that they have to contribute to the rental and other associated costs of the tenancy. Every effort is made to include them and have them complete the appropriate forms as required by the Housing Authority.

Due to the referrals being mainly for property standards and family issues, some of the main activities during the year have included showing the clients how to clean their homes and give them continual reminders regarding their obligations to the Department of Housing.

Further suggestions by the Manager Housing Services to the STEP Service provider was that honest conversations take place with the clients' about their tenancies and their responsibilities; the need to demonstrate tasks and develop strategies to assist tenants to understand their household tasks i.e. provide them with a daily and/or weekly task list with pictures and place

these in appropriate rooms i.e. bathroom, kitchen etc.

When it comes to choosing the cleaning products STEP service providers are required to be mindful of choosing top range, high cost products because a tenant may think she/he will have to replace with same product, but it would be too expensive for the client to purchase, so they may not bother to replace at all because of cost. STEP service providers are therefore encouraged to consider generic home brands when purchasing products for the cleaning kits.

These are pictures of two homes of Newman STEP clients':



This STEP tenant has been away due to his wife's illness. His grandchildren have been care-taking the house. The 'before' condition of this property was really bad, but this is a photograph taken showing a marked improvement of engagement. The tenants who are continuing to upgrade the garden area.



Rubbish at a STEP clients property Side view of same property Hallway Kitchen of same property

This tenant is trying her utmost to keep up with standards. She is due for a transfer and knows what is expected of her to be approved. Doing well but still more room for improvement.

In conclusion, my aim is to be determined to continue to carry out the requirements and the responsibilities of my role toward my clients' by way of the three 'Ps' – Preparation, Patience and Perseverance. The latter is meaningful. French poet and novelist, Victor Hugo once wrote, "Perseverance, secret of all triumphs". He was not wrong!

Ettie Te Miha

Supported Tenancy Education Program-Newman

Indigenous Tenancy Advocate Service Department of Housing



The Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Service ("ITAS") was funded via a grant from the Department of Housing (DOH) – Aboriginal Housing Services. The position was based in our Roebourne office from 1 July 2014 to 31 December 2014. Unfortunately the grant for this program was discontinued by the Department of Housing – Aboriginal Services at the end of 2014.

ITAS assisted indigenous clients with accessing DOH properties and supported them to maintain and sustain their tenancies. As the waitlist for properties in the Pilbara is typically around 3-4 years, a very common enquiry from clients was for the service to assist them to determine their status on the waitlist.

ITAS would regularly assist clients living in DOH properties who presented with breach notices. This would sometimes involve court attendance depending on the breach. A common breach clients received was for not paying rent or not paying enough rent. Clients would often need assistance to set up direct debits from their Centrelink payments for rent but often forget to update these amounts if and when their rent increased. This would put them into debt which accumulated quickly and resulted in a breach from the DOH.

Clients had difficulty keeping on top of their rent for a number of reasons however one common issue was failure to complete and submit the required rental subsidy form. It is a requirement of DOH that tenants complete

a rental subsidy form each year and/or whenever their circumstances changed. Failure to submit the rental subsidy form in time results in the Department increasing their rent to the current market rent. As the market rent in the Pilbara is typically 3-4 times the rent usually paid by the tenant, arrears accumulate very quickly. Whilst the rental subsidy forms are mailed to tenants, they often don't check their mail and/or cannot read and so missing out on the return of the rental subsidy form by the due dates occurred very often. Furthermore, clients did not seem to understand the rental subsidy process. As DOH calculate rent based on how many people live in the property and their respective incomes, if someone moves out, the rent is reduced. However to do facilitate this, the Department requires a rental subsidy form to be completed. Clients would often attend the office paying large amounts of rent and on investigation; we would establish that they were paying rent that was calculated on the income of numerous people who had left the property a long time ago.

Another area of common assistance was appeals. If a client damaged the property and maintenance was performed, the tenant was charged this as tenant liability. There are a number of maintenance issues that are not to be charged to the tenant such as if damaged was caused by domestic violence or a break in. Clients often attended the office with a breach for outstanding tenant

liability. After discussion with the client about the damages, it was often determined to be a charge the tenant should not have received. The client would then be assisted to appeal the charges through DOH's appeal process.

The major problem for our clients is a lack of understanding of their lease and DOH policies. It is a real shame the program is no longer funded as it was found it very beneficial for those clients who constantly fell into arrears or accrued large debts simply because they did not understand their lease, how rental subsidies worked and their rights to appeal any unfairly applied tenant liability.

Jana Francis
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Service



Board of Management

Treasurers Report



I have pleasure in presenting the audited Financial Reports of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. for the Financial Year 2014/2015.

I have extracted the following summary details from the financial reports to provide an overview of the financial position of PCLS

Cash at Bank

PCLS began the financial year with \$540,855 in the main operating accounts and \$1,186,516 in term deposits. At the end of the financial there was \$842,372 in the main operating accounts and \$1,099,347 in term deposits. An overall increase in cash position of \$214,348.

There was decrease over the previous year of \$87,169 in the term deposits, or a 7.9% decrease, notwithstanding the fact that we purchased a property – 4 Greet Court, Karratha at a cost of \$402,949.

Operating Surplus

The surplus for the financial year was \$594,356 a decrease on the previous year of \$24,594 or a 4.1% decrease

Total Operating Revenue

Total revenue received during the financial year including surplus grant money from the previous year was \$3,279,468 – an increase over the previous year of \$89,913 or a 2.7% increase

Total Operating Expenses


Total expenses incurred during the financial year was \$2,685,112 - an increase over the previous year of \$114,507 or a 4.2% increase. There was a 6.9% increase in salary costs during the year.

Members Funds

The members' funds at the 30th June 2015 stood at \$2,174,478, up from \$1,775,568 as at 30th June 2014

Dale Purdy

Treasurer



2014/15 Financial Reports

**Pilbara Community Legal
Service Inc.**

ABN 43 336 581 511

**Financial Statements
For the year ended 30 June 2015**

Guidera Consulting

Level 29, 221 St Georges Terrace

Perth WA 6000

Phone: 08 9467 7380 Fax: 08 9459 1895

Email: steveng@guideraconsulting.com.au

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

2015

\$

2014

\$

Contents

Board of Management's Report

Statement of Comprehensive Income

Detailed Balance Sheet

Statement of Cash Flows

Notes to the Financial Statements

Income and Expenditure Statement

Statement by Members of the Board of Management

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members

Compilation Report

The accompanying notes 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 2015

Your Board of Management submit the financial accounts of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

Board of Management Members

Roz Brabazon - Chairperson
Joanne Pritchard - Deputy Chairperson
Steve Gwynne - Secretary
Dale Purdy - Treasurer
Daphne Treverza
Dcc Van Beek
Nellie Connors
Metu Mitsy Strickland

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 Karatha:

- Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service;
- Domestic Violence Outreach Service;
- Services to Alleviate Financial Crisis - Financial Counselling Services;
- Homelessness Housing Support Service;
- Housing Support Service Drug and Alcohol;
- Public Tenancy Support Service;
- Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Service;
- Indigenous Women's Outreach Program/Outreach Legal Services Pilbara
- Rural Women's Outreach Program
- Legal Aid Legal Officer
- Legal assistance to Victims' Rights;;
- Supported Tenancy Education Program:
- Tenancy Advice and Education and Service;
- WA Law Society – Public Purpose Trust;

Significant Changes

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

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Board of Management's Report

For the year ended 30 June 2015

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

An Auditors Independence declaration for the year ending 30 June 2015 has been received and forms part of this financial report.

Operating Result

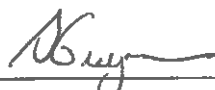
The surplus from ordinary activities amounted to:

	Year ended 30 June 2015	Year ended 30 June 2014
	\$	\$
Surplus from ordinary activities	594,356	618,950
Less net transfer to Grants Refundable Liability	(195,446)	(107,120)
Surplus attributable to the Association	398,910	511,830

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



Chairperson: Roz Brabazon



Secretary: Steve Gwynne

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	Note	2015 \$	2014 \$
Revenue		3,279,468	3,189,555
Gross profit		3,279,468	3,189,555
Distribution expenses		(17,265)	(13,912)
Marketing		(113,389)	(106,322)
Selling expenses		(230,241)	(243,339)
Administration expenses		(2,324,217)	(2,207,032)
Profit before income tax		594,356	618,950
Income tax (credit) expense		0	0
Profit for the year		594,356	618,950
Retained profits at the beginning of the financial year		1,331,979	820,149
Total available for appropriation		1,926,335	1,439,099
Other appropriations		(194,447)	(107,120)
Retained profits at the end of the financial year		1,730,888	1,331,979

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Current Assets		
Cash Assets		
Cash at bank	815,365	483,890
Term Deposit CBA 1	16,949	16,472
Term Deposit CBA 2	682,398	670,044
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy	0	31,922
CBA Debit Card	27,007	25,043
Term Deposit CBA 3	400,000	500,000
	<u>1,941,719</u>	<u>1,727,372</u>
Receivables		
Accrued Income	1,939	9,394
Trade debtors	0	2,750
	<u>1,939</u>	<u>12,144</u>
Other		
Tenants' bond	12,988	13,408
Prepayments	59,429	47,605
	<u>72,417</u>	<u>61,013</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>2,016,075</u>	<u>1,800,529</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<hr/>		
Non-Current Assets		
Property, Plant and Equipment		
Leasehold improvements	205,936	198,954
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(83,935)	(69,444)
Furniture & Fittings at cost	385,456	372,050
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(287,360)	(243,847)
Motor vehicles - at cost	332,610	332,610
Less: Accumulated depreciation	(185,986)	(137,110)
	<u>366,720</u>	<u>453,212</u>
Other		
Land & Buildings - 4 Green Court	402,949	0
	<u>402,949</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Non-Current Assets	<u>769,668</u>	<u>453,212</u>
Total Assets	<u>2,785,743</u>	<u>2,253,741</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
ABN 43 336 581 511
Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Current Liabilities		
Payables		
Unsecured:		
Trade creditors	16,083	22,082
Other Creditors	3,000	1,200
Accrued Wages & Superannuation	75,672	59,211
Superannuation Payable	12,564	3,205
Grants Refundable Liability	195,446	107,120
Tenant Bonds	4,108	3,988
Brokerage - Unspent 30th June	17,006	47,617
	323,879	244,425
Current Tax Liabilities		
GST payable control account	61,206	14,398
Input tax credit control account	(21,201)	(30,427)
Amounts withheld from salary and wages	19,939	19,183
	59,944	3,155
Provisions		
Provision for annual leave	115,168	140,280
Provision for long service leave	83,817	39,251
	198,986	179,531
Total Current Liabilities	582,809	427,110
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provisions		
Provision for Long Service Leave	28,456	51,062
	28,456	51,062
Total Non-Current Liabilities	28,456	51,062
Total Liabilities	611,265	478,172

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 681 511

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Net Assets	<u><u>2,174,478</u></u>	<u><u>1,775,568</u></u>
 Members' Funds		
Reserves		
General Reserve	109,094	109,094
Asset Reserve	334,496	334,496
Accumulated surplus (deficit)	<u>1,730,888</u>	<u>1,331,979</u>
Total Members' Funds	<u><u>2,174,478</u></u>	<u><u>1,775,568</u></u>

The accompanying notes 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 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
<hr/>		
Cash Flow From Operating Activities		
Receipts from customers	3,264,318	3,156,070
Payments to Suppliers and employees	(2,494,015)	(2,650,707)
Interest received	25,356	24,369
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities (note 2)	795,658	529,732
 Cash Flow From Investing Activities		
Payment for:		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(423,335)	(134,325)
Net cash provided by (used in) investing activities	(423,335)	(134,325)
 Net increase (decrease) in cash held	214,348	395,407
Cash at the beginning of the year	1,727,371	1,331,964
Cash at the end of the year (note 1)	1,941,719	1,727,371

The accompanying notes 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 2015

2015

2014

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	815,365	483,890
Term Deposit CBA 1	16,949	16,472
Term Deposit CBA 2	682,398	670,044
Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy		31,922
CBA Debit Card	27,007	25,043
Term Deposit CBA 3	400,000	500,000
	1,941,719	1,727,371

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

Operating profit (loss) after tax	594,356	618,950
Depreciation	106,880	60,066
Changes in assets and liabilities net of effects of purchases and disposals of controlled entities:		
(Increase) decrease in trade and term debtors	14,829	(9,116)
Increase (decrease) in trade creditors and accruals	(75,985)	(157,565)
Increase (decrease) in other creditors	754	27,882
Increase (decrease) in employee entitlements	(3,151)	(10,485)
Net cash provided by operating activities	637,683	529,732

The accompanying notes 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 2015

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 Associations Incorporation Act 1987.

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 Associations Incorporation Act 1987.

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 Association by the Australian Taxation Office. Therefore 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) Property

Freehold land and buildings are shown at their fair value (being the amount for which an asset could be exchanged between knowledgeable willing parties in an arms-length transaction), based on

The accompanying notes 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 2015

periodic, but at least triennial, valuations by external independent valuers, less subsequent depreciation for buildings.

Any accumulated depreciation at the date of revaluation is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the net amount is restated to the revalued amount of the asset.

b) Plant and equipment

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

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 association 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.

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

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

Class of Asset	Depreciation Rate %
Buildings	[2.5%]
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.

The accompanying notes 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 2015

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 Association'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.

Impairment of Assets

At each reporting date, the Board 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,

The accompanying notes 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 2015

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)

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 Board 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 Board 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 2015.

Key judgments - Doubtful debts provision

The Board members believe that the full amount of the debt is recoverable and no doubtful debt provision has been made at 30 June 2015.

The accompanying notes 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 2015

Note 2: Events Subsequent to Reporting Date

Since the end of the financial year there have been no events subsequent to reporting date that will impact the financial position of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Incorporated.

Note 3: Auditors' Remuneration

Remuneration of the auditor of the Association for:	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Auditing or reviewing the financial report	4,960	4,745
	=====	=====

Note 4: Brokerage from Department for Child Protection Family Support

At 30th June 2015, the following Brokerage monies received from the Department for Child Protection Family Support during the 2014/2015 financial year remained unspent and have been carried forward to the 2015/2016 year. These amounts are included in Brokerage – Unspent 30th June in the Balance Sheet

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Domestic Violence Outreach Worker	0	23,648
Homeless Accommodation Support Worker	1,466	2,345
Housing Support D&A	5,455	11,214
PHSW Newman	2,764	3,376
PHSW Roebourne	2,160	2,987
STEP	5,161	3,520
White Ribbon Day	0	527
	-----	-----
Total	17,006	47,617
	=====	=====

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Income		
Interest received	25,356	24,369
Prior year surplus brought forward	154,211	112,348
Other income	5,305	27,022
Grants Received	3,089,596	3,023,456
Service Generated Income	0	26,506
Brokerage Income	5,000	(24,146)
Total income	<u>3,279,468</u>	<u>3,189,555</u>
Expenses		
Salaries	1,765,709	1,643,564
Occupational Superannuation	153,931	138,416
Staff Training	110,874	106,322
Other Staffing Costs	2,515	0
Accounting and Audit fees	20,390	21,463
IT Support	79,126	62,136
Insurance - Public Liability and Other	18,331	26,155
Advertising and Recruitment Costs	17,265	13,912
Travel, Accommodation, Motor Vehicle	110,688	129,604
Material, resources and equipment	3,708	(880)
Rent	114,332	133,366
Office Running Costs	170,326	214,329
Client Disbursements - Brokerage	42,203	29,010
Unspent Brokerage - Refundable	17,006	0
Administration	707	0
Depreciation	58,004	53,208
Total expenses	<u>2,685,112</u>	<u>2,570,605</u>
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	<u>594,356</u>	<u>618,950</u>
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	0	0
Net profit attributable to the association	<u>594,356</u>	<u>618,950</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Items recognised directly in equity:		
Net increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	0	0
Increase (decrease) in retained profits due to:		
Transfer to Grants Refundable	(195,446)	(107,120)
Total revenues, expenses and valuation adjustments attributable to the association and recognised directly in equity	(195,446)	(107,120)
Total changes in equity of the association	398,910	511,830

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. - Administration

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Expenses		
Salaries	328,079	287,284
Occupational Superannuation	28,266	24,782
Staff Training	23,930	17,256
Accounting and Audit fees	20,390	21,463
IT Support	436	850
Insurance - Public Liability and Other	210	1,760
Advertising and Recruitment Costs	16,689	12,322
Travel, Accommodation, Motor Vehicle	15,644	13,977
Material, resources and equipment	217	2,765
Rent	465	250
Office Running Costs	64,865	63,884
Administration	(499,191)	(446,593)
Total expenses	0	0
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	0	0
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	0	0
Net profit attributable to the association	0	0
Total changes in equity of the association	0	0

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. - Other PCLS Income

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015	2014
	\$	\$
Income		
Interest received	25,344	24,353
Other income	2,689	7,123
Service Generated Income	0	26,506
Total income	<u>28,033</u>	<u>57,982</u>
Expenses		
Office Running Costs	<u>1,035</u>	<u>948</u>
Total expenses	<u>1,035</u>	<u>948</u>
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	26,998	57,034
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net profit attributable to the association	<u>26,998</u>	<u>57,034</u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. - Lotteries West Grant NPA

ABN 43 336 581 511

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2015

	2015 \$	2014 \$
Income		
Grants Received	10,000	0
Total income	<u>10,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Expenses		
Client Disbursements - Brokerage	5,078	0
Total expenses	<u>5,078</u>	<u>0</u>
Profit from ordinary activities before income tax	4,922	0
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	0	0
Net profit attributable to the association	4,922	0
Items recognised directly in equity:		
Increase (decrease) in retained profits due to:		
Transfer to Grants Refundable	(4,922)	0
Total changes in equity of the association	<u><u>0</u></u>	<u><u>0</u></u>

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ABN 43 336 581 511

Statement by Members of the Board of Management

For the year ended 30 June 2015

In the opinion of the Board of Management the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Detailed Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes to the Financial Statements:

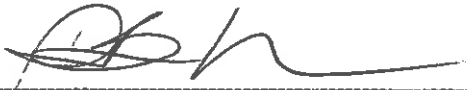
- 1. Presents fairly the financial position of The Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, mandatory professional reporting requirements and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board.**
- 2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the organisation will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.**
- 3. The Board of Management and The Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. have complied with the obligations imposed by its constitution and the terms and conditions of each Service Agreement entered into during the 2015 financial year.**
- 4. The information reported in the Statements of Income and Expenditure for the Secondary Family Support - Services to Alleviate Financial Crisis incorporating the Hedland Financial Counselling, Karratha Financial Counselling, Newman Financial Counselling and Roebourne Financial Counselling programs have been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department of Family and Children's Services Ministerial Body.**
- 5. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Supported Tenancy Education Program (STEP) has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department of Housing.**
- 6. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Tenancy Advice and Education Program has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department of Commerce.**
- 7. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Generalist Program, the Indigenous Women's Outreach Program, the Rural Women's Outreach Program and the Victim Support Service funding has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial Transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Community Legal Service Program – Office of the Department of Attorney General.**
- 8. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Domestic Violence Advocacy and Victim Support Service (DVAVSS) has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department for Family and Children's Services Ministerial Body.**
- 9. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the Indigenous Tenancy Advocacy Service (TAES) has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department of Housing – Aboriginal Services.**
- 10. The information reported in the Statements of Income and Expenditure for the programs funded under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH) – the Homelessness Housing Support Service, the Housing Support D&A Strategy, The Public Tenancy Support Service (Newman and Roebourne) and the Pilbara Domestic Violence Outreach Program have been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the Department for Family Children's Services**

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

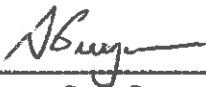
Ministerial Body.

11. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for The W.A. Law Society – Public Purposes Trust program has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with The W.A. Law Society – Public Purposes Trust.
12. The information reported in the Statement of Income and Expenditure for the ASIC Home Essentials Enforceable Undertaking has been prepared from proper accounts to present fairly the financial transactions for the financial year ending 30 June 2015 and the payments in the statement are in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Service Agreement with the ASIC Home Essentials Enforceable Undertaking.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management and is signed for and on behalf of the Board of Management



Chairperson: Roz Brabazon



Secretary: Steve Gwynne

**PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC
INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED JUNE 30th 2015**

Scope

I have audited the accompanying financial report for the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc which comprises the Committee's Report, Income & Expenditure Statement, Detailed Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to the Financial Statements (including Statement of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory notes) and the Statement by Members of the Board of Management for the financial year ended June 30th 2015.

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, to the Federal Attorney General's Department in relation to the Rural Women's Outreach Program. 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.

Basis of accounting and restriction on distribution

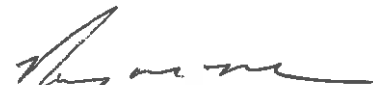
Without modifying my opinion, I draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling those charged with governance reporting responsibilities under the Constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.

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

Auditor's Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report presents, in all material respects, the financial position of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. as at 30th June 2015 and of its financial performance for the year ended on that date and complies with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the accounts.

Signed at Roleystone this 22nd day of September 2015


Ray M Manus CPA

ARALUEN ACCOUNTANCY
57 Ridgehill Rise
Roleystone WA 6111

**AUDITOR'S CERTIFICATION STATEMENT
(WHOLE ORGANISATION)
For the Year Ending June 30th 2015**

I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge, information and belief that, in my opinion, the attached financial statements of the **Pilbara Community Legal Service Incorporated** for the period **1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015** comprising the Committee's Report, Statement of Profit and Loss and Comprehensive Income, 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 Governing Committee are based on proper accounts and present fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, the financial position of the Pilbara Community Legal Service Incorporated as at **30 June 2015** and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended.

AUDITOR

Signature:



Full Name:

Raymund Anthony McManus

Name of Organisation

Araluen Accountancy

Membership:

1861367 CPA

Date:

September 22nd 2015

Auditors Certification

Name of Organisation: The Pilbara Community Legal Service Incorporated

Financial Year Period: 01/07/2014 to 30/06/2015

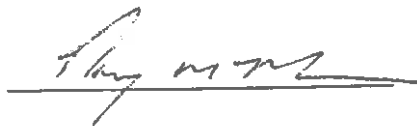
I hereby certify that:

- a) I am not a principal, member, shareholder, officer, employee or accountant of the organization or of a related body corporate as defined in Section 9 of the Corporations Act 2001;
- b) In my opinion, the attached financial statements which comprise a Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Financial Performance, a Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements of the above-mentioned Organisation for the stated Financial Year Period are:
 - Based on proper accounts and present fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and
 - In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement (the Pilbara Community Legal Service Incorporated and Legal Aid Western Australia) a copy of which has been made available to me, in relation to the provision of community legal services.
- c) The Statement of Financial Performance is provided in respect of Funds for all Funding Categories.

This is an unqualified audit report.

Unless written under separate cover, I hereby certify that, in my opinion, there is no conflict of interest between myself and the Organisation or its Management Committee.

Signed by:



Date:

22nd SEPTEMBER 2015

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 2015, 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 Board of Management

The Board of Management is solely responsible for the information contained in the general purpose financial statements and the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information.

Our Responsibility

On the basis of information provided by the Board of Management, we have compiled the accompanying general purpose financial statements in accordance with the financial reporting framework described in Note 1 to the financial statements and APES 315 Compilation of Financial Information.

We have applied our expertise in accounting and financial reporting to compile these financial statements in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards. We have complied with the relevant ethical requirements of APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants.

Assurance Disclaimer

Since a compilation engagement is not an assurance engagement, we are not required to verify the reliability, accuracy or completeness of the information provided to us by management to compile these financial statements. Accordingly, we do not express an audit opinion or a review conclusion on these financial statements.

The general purpose financial statements were compiled for the benefit of the Board of Management who are responsible for the reliability, accuracy and completeness of the information used to compile them. We do not accept responsibility for the contents of the general purpose financial statements.



Guidera Consulting
Level 29, 221 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA

23 September, 2015

