

2024-25

ANNUAL REPORT





Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

2024 ANNUAL REPORT | ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Karratha Office

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of Country

Pilbara Community Legal Service acknowledges the traditional owners of land across the Pilbara Ngarluma, Karratha; Kariyarra, Hedland; Nyiyaparli Newman, and Yindjibarndi, Roebourne.

We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and future, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture, the hopes and future of Aboriginal people in the Pilbara.

We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this region.

We would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal staff and clients that continue to guide and educate us as we work to support the community of the Pilbara.

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ABOUT US

Pilbara Community Legal
Service Inc. (PCLS) is a not-forprofit organisation established
in 1997 to help people across the
Pilbara understand their rights,
overcome challenges, and build
safer, more stable lives.
With offices in Karratha,
Roebourne, South Hedland,
and Newman, and outreach to
remote communities, we provide
accessible, culturally safe legal
and social support for people
wherever they live.

Our **holistic model** brings together legal advice, tenancy advocacy, financial counselling, domestic violence support, and migrant settlement services—offering a one-stop-shop for support and empowerment.

What We Do

- **Legal Services** Family law, domestic violence, tenancy, property, wills, and advocacy.
- **Financial Counselling** Budgeting, debt management, and access to No Interest Loan Schemes (NILS).
- **Tenancy & Housing Support** Helping people understand their rights, resolve disputes, and find stable housing.
- Family & Domestic Violence Support Crisis response, safety planning, and prevention programs like Love Shouldn't Hurt.
- Settlement Support (SETS) Helping migrants and refugees with language, employment, and community connections.
- **Redress Support Scheme** Emotional and practical assistance for survivors of institutional child sexual abuse.

Our Commitment

We believe everyone deserves access to justice, safety, and opportunity.

Through collaboration with **local communities and Aboriginal organisations**, we strengthen trust, promote inclusion, and improve outcomes for all clients.

By working together with our partners, networks, and sector leaders, PCLS continues to **create lasting change**—ensuring that every person in the Pilbara can find support, respect, and hope.





CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS) Board, I am pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report.

In last year's report, I emphasised the Board's commitment and the senior leadership team's achievements in bringing stability, fostering cohesive teamwork, strengthening processes, and articulating a clear three-year strategy. Now, in the second year of that strategy, we are seeing these building blocks come alive in tangible outcomes and renewed confidence in our trajectory.

Strategic Foundations in Practice

Our 2023–2026 Strategic Plan is structured around four strategic pillars: People & Culture, Service Delivery, Governance & Compliance, and Sustainability & Growth, underpinned by a unifying purpose: Providing inclusive legal and community services to people of the Pilbara in times of need.

This year, our achievements directly reflect progress across those pillars.

People & Culture

We have invested in professional development, leadership coaching, and team resilience-building to cultivate a supportive and inclusive environment. Staff surveys showed improved morale and engagement, and internal feedback indicates stronger alignment with our values of integrity, respect, and innovation.

We also strengthened recruitment, housing and retention strategies to respond to the challenges of regional staffing, focusing on flexibility, cultural safety and clear career pathways.

Service Delivery

Under this pillar, our focus is on delivering highquality, client-centred, accessible services. Highlights include:

Expanded Outreach & Remote Access:

We extended mobile legal outreach into remote communities, ensuring residents have face-to-face contact where possible and leveraging hybrid support options (telephone, video) elsewhere.

• New Specialist Roles:

We introduced a Family & Domestic Violence Worker in Roebourne, a Redress Support Worker, and a Financial Capability Worker in Newman to better respond to pressing local needs.

• "Love Shouldn't Hurt" Program:

We launched this prevention and education initiative in Pilbara high schools, aiming to build early awareness of healthy relationships and reduce family violence risk.

• Holistic, Wrap-Around Support:

We further embedded our integrated service model, ensuring clients experiencing intersecting issues (e.g. tenancy, domestic violence, financial distress) are supported through a coordinated response rather than fragmented referrals.

These initiatives strengthen our capacity to reach those most at risk and deliver outcomes that reflect the lived realities of our communities.

Governance & Compliance

The Board has continued to review and refine governance frameworks to ensure accountability, transparency, and robust risk management. In particular:

- We strengthened reporting lines, introduced more frequent internal audits, and improved our monitoring of compliance with funding and regulatory obligations.
- We also updated our Board induction and training processes to ensure newer members are well equipped to participate meaningfully and strategically.

Sustainability & Growth

To secure long-term sustainability the PCLS:

- Continue to diversify funding streams, including successful grant applications and strategic partnerships with an objective of reducing overreliance on any single funder. The use of "for profit" services is an active program in 2026.
- Advocated for flexible, place-based funding models that align with our integrated service approach.
- Conducted scenario planning exercises to anticipate funding shifts in the legal assistance sector and position PCLS to respond proactively.
- Tested efficiency improvements and costmanagement initiatives (e.g. shared supports, process consolidations) without compromising service quality.

Challenges & Resilience

No year is without its challenges. We continue to operate in a highly competitive regional labour and housing market with consistent pressure on staff recruitment and retention. The remote and dispersed nature of the Pilbara also continues to present logistical and resourcing constraints, especially when ensuring outreach and consistency.

Additionally, evolving sector reforms and funding uncertainties make it essential we remain agile.

The Board and leadership team remain vigilant, treating these challenges as opportunities to strengthen our adaptability, partnerships, and advocacy role.

I commend the resilience, dedication, and professionalism shown by all PCLS staff, who have maintained a client-centred focus throughout the year, often under pressure.

Outlook & Commitment for Year Three

As we enter the third and final year of our current strategic plan, the Board is committed to ensuring that the gains of years one and two are consolidated and translated into lasting impact. Key priorities will include:

- Scaling effective programs (and evaluating their outcomes).
- Deepening partnerships with Aboriginal Corporations and community groups to embed services in culturally safe, responsive frameworks.
- Strengthening PCLS's voice in sector reform processes to secure sustainable funding models for regional legal services.
- Continuing investment in systems, staff capacity, and governance to meet future demand with confidence.

Gratitude

I extend heartfelt thanks to our CEO, Joanna Collins and the entire executive and staff teams for their commitment, skill, and courage. Thanks also to my fellow Board members, whose guidance, oversight, and support continue to be invaluable.

Finally, and most importantly, I thank our stakeholders and the communities of the Pilbara for their trust, collaboration, and resilience. It is your lives and stories that drive our purpose, and we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring access to justice and community services for those most in need.

Brian Howarth

Chairperson

CEO REPORT

What an extraordinary year it has been to lead Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS). This past financial year has seen us expand our reach, strengthen our partnerships, and embed programs and systems that will sustain and amplify our impact for years to come.



Strengthening Services & Expanding Reach

One of the most significant developments has been the design and implementation of the "Love Shouldn't Hurt" Primary Prevention program, a powerful step in addressing family and domestic violence at its roots by educating Year 8 and Year 9 High School students across the Pilbara. Alongside this, PCLS has increased outreach service delivery to remote communities, ensuring people across the Pilbara—no matter how geographically isolated—can access vital legal and support services.

We have secured new funding that has enabled us to establish additional support roles, including a Family and Domestic Violence Worker in Roebourne and a Redress Support Worker and a Financial Capability Worker in Newman. These positions reflect our ongoing commitment to strengthening local responses and meeting community needs where they are most acute.

Building Partnerships & Cultural Collaboration

Our partnerships have deepened in meaningful ways. Collaborating with Yindijbarndi Aboriginal Corporation, Karlka Nyiyaparli Aboriginal Corporation through wills workshops, and Roebourne River Aboriginal Corporation in delivering the Aboriginal Safety Program has enriched our ability to provide culturally safe, respectful, and responsive services. These collaborations are not just about service delivery, they are about building trust and walking alongside communities.

We are also grateful for the generous pro bono support from K&L Gates and Gilchrist Connell, which has bolstered our ability to serve clients and strengthened our advocacy across the sector.

Building Organisational Strength

Internally, we have continued to invest in the strength of our organisation. The Leadership Team has undertaken a development program, equipping leaders across PCLS to guide with vision, adaptability, and resilience.

The introduction and implementation of our new database, Actionstep, has been another milestone. This system has modernised our case management, streamlined reporting, and enabled us to operate with greater efficiency and transparency, ensuring our resources remain focused on delivering client-centred services.

Looking Forward

As we move into the next financial year, our vision is clear: to continue building multi-disciplinary, holistic service teams across all our locations, delivering wrap-around support for individuals and families across the Pilbara.

Gratitude

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our Executive Team, Team Leaders, and staff for their commitment, professionalism, and unyielding dedication to our clients. I also acknowledge our Board of Directors, whose guidance and support have been invaluable. Most importantly, I thank the people of the Pilbara, who place their trust in us every day and whose strength and resilience inspire our work.

With gratitude,

Joanna Collins

CEO



PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR'S REPORT

This year has seen many improvements in our delivery of legal services across the Pilbara, along with our fair share of challenges.



The most significant operational change for the organisation has been the implementation of our new case management system, Actionstep, which has now replaced CLASS, the sector-wide system used for many years. Our team have shown great patience and adaptability in navigating this transition, and I am deeply grateful for their commitment. While the changeover has not been without its difficulties, we are now beginning to reap the benefits of Actionstep, which will continue to enhance our efficiency and effectiveness into the future.

Despite some staff turnover during the period, we have maintained a strong and steady capability in both our legal and tenancy services. Importantly, we expanded our footprint by establishing a dedicated legal position at the Roebourne office and further developed our outreach program. This capacity has been greatly strengthened by our CEO's success in securing collaborative agreements with several Aboriginal Corporations, ensuring priority delivery of services to their members and strengthening our community connections.

We have also benefited from an increased level of diversity and collaboration, which has supported both sustainability and innovation. Highlights included the secondment of a tenancy advocate from Redgum Community Legal Centre in Perth to cover our Karratha Tenancy Advocate while she completed her Master of Social Work placement, and the completion of the Practice Management Course by one of our unrestricted solicitors based in Karratha, increasing the depth of PCLS's professional capacity. These initiatives, along with others, reflect our growing resilience and ability to adapt, helping ensure the strength of our future operations.

As noted in previous reports, the legal assistance sector in Western Australia is undergoing a significant funding restructure. We continue to monitor developments closely and engage in the process wherever possible. I am confident that PCLS is well positioned to play a leading role in delivering essential legal services to the Pilbara community long into the future.

Mark Jeffreys Principal Solicitor

STRATEGIC PILLARS





Sustainability and Growth





№ •— | People and Culture





STRATEGIC PILLAR: Service Delivery

Building Connections and Strengthening Settlement Support

Service Delivery – Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS)

In 2024–25, the Pilbara SETS team strengthened networks and expanded support for culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Staff engaged in national and state forums, contributing to policy and practice discussions on issues such as family violence, community capacity, and regional challenges.

Collaboration remained central, with partnerships formed with more than 30 local organisations. Additional funding enabled expansion into the East Pilbara, with outreach in Newman and new connections with local agencies and community groups.

Through these initiatives, the SETS team enhanced access to services and promoted greater inclusion across the region.



A total of 88 enrolments were recorded in multicultural swimming lessons for adults, delivered in partnership with the Royal Life Saving Society WA to promote water safety and prevent drowning.



Overall, **55** group activities were delivered, including cooking and craft classes, conversational English sessions, and swimming lessons.



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Altogether, over 600 people participated in two Harmony Week events held in Karratha and Hedland.



Food Sampling Harmony Days events



Case Study

In 2014, Ramida moved from Thailand to
Australia on a family visa to join her husband,
an Australian resident. Her settlement journey
began in Karratha, Western Australia, where
she was supported by the local settlement
service. This service helped her adjust to
a new culture, language, and way of life,
providing the foundation she needed to start
building her future in Australia.

After some time, Ramida and her family relocated to Perth, where she turned her love of cooking into a small food business. In 2025, the family moved again—this time to South Hedland. Despite being new to the area, Ramida immediately engaged with the community. She connected with the local SETS program and volunteered her time at the Well Women's Centre, becoming part of the Cooking Up a Storm initiative.

Cooking Up a Storm is a monthly program held every third Friday, where multicultural women come together to share a meal, cooking traditions, and personal stories. The program plays a vital role in helping women build new connections, form friendships, and strengthen links across cultures. It provides a safe, welcoming space for women to connect, belong, and support one another.



Ramida proudly represented her Thai heritage by leading a session on how to cook Pad Thai from scratch—a dish that was met with rave reviews. Her cooking demonstration was more than just a lesson in food; it was a celebration of culture, community, and connection.

As one of the newest members of the Thai community in South Hedland, Ramida brings energy, kindness, and a strong sense of community spirit. Despite being a busy mum of three, she remains actively involved in local programs and always looks for ways to give back. Now preparing to apply for Australian citizenship, Ramida continues to receive support from her local SETS caseworker as she works toward this next milestone in her journey.

REDRESS

Over the past year, the Redress team submitted **18 applications** to the National Redress Scheme and received **19 outcome calls**.

Of these, **17 clients** were found eligible, with payments totalling **\$1,604,307.**

Two applications were deemed ineligible; however, the team continues to advocate on behalf of these clients through appeals.

In addition, the team supported clients to register with Shine Lawyers for the WA Stolen Wages Class Action and provided information to those seeking guidance on the WA Stolen Generations Redress Scheme, announced by Premier Roger Cook at the Reconciliation Breakfast in Perth on 26 May 2025.

Through this work, the Redress team has ensured that clients are supported with care, advocacy, and clear information when navigating complex and often sensitive processes.



An Aboriginal woman in her 50s came to PCLS for help applying to the National Redress Scheme after suffering sexual abuse while in state care as a child. Moved through multiple foster placements, she endured abuse from adults known to her. The trauma led to lifelong struggles, including substance use and the heartbreaking removal of her own children into care. Although her children are now adults and part of her life, she says they sometimes still feel like strangers to her.

Caseload

19 — Information redress enquiries



PCLS supported her throughout the redress process — providing referrals to counselling, free legal advice through Knowmore, and internal financial counselling. After two years of anxious waiting, her abuse was formally acknowledged. She was awarded the maximum redress payment of \$150,000, along with offers of counselling, psychological care, and an institutional apology.

She chose to accept the payment but declined counselling and an apology, preferring not to revisit traumatic memories. While acknowledging that no payment can erase her pain, she expressed gratitude for the patient and compassionate support of her redress worker, who stood beside her throughout the process.

LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT

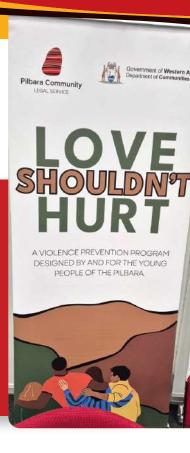
In mid-2024, the Legal and FDV teams were awarded a Primary Prevention grant to develop the **Love Shouldn't Hurt** program.

Over a four-month process, a lawyer and the Domestic Violence Team Leader worked closely with a consultant from Orange Story Consultancy to design the program.

The consultant visited the Pilbara in October 2024, meeting with stakeholders, community members, and young people to better understand their needs. Additional online consultations were held in November, with the full consultation period (28 October – 22 November) engaging more than 60 participants through:

Love Shouldn't Hurt is structured into three modules across 14 lessons:

- Healthy Relationships
- Digital Citizenship
- Consent



- 5 in-person group interviews

By March 2025, the consultant delivered the near-final package, inducting the Legal and FDV teams through an online train-the-trainer session. Final feedback was incorporated, and the lawyer and Domestic Violence Team Leader then led further training to familiarise staff with the lesson plans, content, and delivery approach.

Throughout this reporting period, the team engaged with local schools and youth-focused organisations across the Pilbara to discuss delivery opportunities. These conversations provided valuable insight into community priorities, resources, and youth needs. Several schools expressed strong interest, and by the close of the period, three settings had already confirmed delivery of the program.



Through these initiatives, the FDV team continues to grow its reach, strengthen partnerships, and deliver culturally safe, community-led solutions that support long-term safety and wellbeing across the Pilbara.



Housing Support

The last financial year continues to be challenging for families and individuals experiencing homelessness and trying to maintain their tenancies in the Pilbara. The ongoing national housing crisis coupled with the high cost of living in Pilbara put immense pressure on our clients seeking a stable place to live. Majority of our clients seeking housing support services receive Centrelink and are dependent on Social Housing due to the high cost of a private rental market across the Pilbara which is not affordable.

We have had **seven clients** that have been assisted in previous years with social housing applications finally housed in the last financial year.

The
average cost
of private rental
in Pilbara starts at:

for a studio
1 bedroom
apartment

AND UP TO

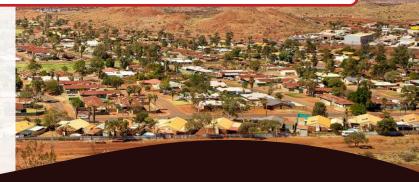
per week for
a 4-bedroom
property

 $f 265 \mid o$ individual clients assisted with housing and homelessness needs.

42 — Social Housing applications

15 | case managed tenancies

60 | support letters provided for priority housing status



Allan and Amy's Story

Allan and his partner Amy, both in their fifties, had been sleeping rough in the Kimberley before being referred to PCLS Housing Support by a local service. They were allocated a social housing property in the Pilbara but needed advocacy and ongoing support to successfully establish their new tenancy.

Arriving with only their personal belongings and no household items, Allan and Amy faced the challenge of starting from scratch. With brokerage funding, Housing Support was able to provide essential items including a fridge, washing machine, air conditioner, kitchen basics, and a cleaning kit—

helping them turn an empty house into a home. Their Housing Support Worker also guided them through their tenancy obligations, such as how to report maintenance issues, and connected them with local services for Centrelink compliance and Aboriginal health checks. To help manage finances, they were referred to a PCLS Financial Counsellor, who set up Centrelink deductions for utility bills and supported them in addressing minor debts.

Today, Allan and Amy are settled and thriving in their new home. After years of instability, they are enjoying the simple comfort of a safe, quiet life in the Pilbara — and the relief of finally having a place to call their own.

Financial Counselling

Community Education Snapshot - July 2024 – June 2025

Our Financial Counselling (FC) team helped communities across the Pilbara build confidence with money through **20** workshops, forums, and one-to-one sessions.

Over **123 people** took part — from job seekers and first-home buyers to prisoners and community members — all gaining practical tips to better manage finances and plan for the future.

Highlights:

- Biggest turnout: 25 people at the Financial Wellbeing Forum in Jigalong
- Strong regional reach: Newman: 20 participants and Tom Price: 17 participants
- Tailored support: one-to-one help for Indigenous first-home buyers: 6 and financial literacy programs in prison: 12

Flexible delivery:

large forums, small groups, and individual sessions to suit different needs

By bringing financial education into towns across the Pilbara, the FC team made learning practical, accessible, and relevant — helping people take real steps toward financial independence.





Actionstep

Service Delivery – Strengthening Systems for Better Outcomes

In 2024/25, PCLS achieved a major **milestone** in strengthening service delivery through the implementation of **Actionstep**, a new client management system designed specifically for legal service providers (actionstep.com). Actionstep replaces the outgoing CLASS database and provides a modern, integrated platform to record client information, manage cases, and generate reporting.

The new system has improved the way we record data, conduct risk assessments, and triage clients, ensuring that people receive timely and appropriate support. Enhanced reporting capability also enables PCLS to better demonstrate community need, measure outcomes, and respond strategically to service demand across the Pilbara.



By investing in smarter systems and processes, PCLS has created a stronger foundation for service delivery.

This investment ensures staff have the tools they need to provide high-quality, efficient support, while clients benefit from safer, more responsive, and more accessible services.

Actionstep



Outreach

Service Delivery – Expanding Outreach and Access to Justice

In 2024/25, PCLS operationalised a consistent outreach model, ensuring that remote communities across the Pilbara continue to have access to vital legal and support services. Regular outreach visits were delivered to Jigalong, Marble Bar, Yandeyarra, Wakathuni, and Tom Price, Corporation with the team travelling alongside the Department of Justice during Aboriginal Justice Days and working closely with the Aboriginal Corporations located in these communities.

By providing a multidisciplinary team on the ground, PCLS ensured that communities received holistic support — from tenancy and financial counselling to family and domestic violence services and legal advice — all in one coordinated visit. This approach reduces barriers, strengthens trust, and ensures access to justice is not limited by geography.

A highlight of the year was the collaboration with Ripple Narratives, a Sydney-based storytelling and film company (ripplenarratives.com), who

travelled with the team to Jigalong.

Ripple Narratives recorded short videos to promote PCLS services and document the outreach program, capturing the voices of communities and the impact of delivering justice where it is needed most.



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STRATEGIC PILLAR: Sustainability and Growth

Family and Domestic Violence Support

A key highlight of the year was the partnership with Robe River Kuruma Aboriginal Corporation (RRKAC).

This collaboration combines cultural knowledge and cultural safety with FDV expertise to build the capacity of Aboriginal Family Safety Officers. The Program is a culturally secure family violence prevention program for Aboriginal parents with children aged 0-5 years or expecting parents. In August 2025, PCLS employed a Family Violence Project Coordinator to lead the development and delivery of the program. An Aboriginal Safety Worker joined the team in September. PCLS provides supervision and specialist guidance, ensuring Aboriginal-led solutions are supported by professional expertise. The program will aim to educate parents about healthy relationships and parenting skills, the impact of family violence on children's development, and empower them to utilize available support services.

Together, this approach is building stronger, safer communities and embedding sustainable prevention and early intervention strategies and reflects a genuine commitment to Aboriginal-led initiatives.

The FDV team also partnered with Share the Dignity and Little Things for Tiny Tots, enabling women and families to access essential items such as period care, hygiene products, and baby supplies. These partnerships extend the impact of PCLS brokerage and reduce barriers for clients by connecting them with vital support directly.





In the Media:





Pauline's Story

Pauline, an Aboriginal woman and mother of three, recently separated from her partner. With his job providing their home, she faced losing her housing too — but with help from her workplace and the Karratha Service Workers Accommodation program, she was able to secure a safe place for herself and her children.

Like many women leaving violent relationships, Pauline experienced an escalation in abuse as her ex-partner tried to regain control. Having never dealt with police before, it was hard for her to start making reports, but she knew staying silent was more

dangerous. With support from the Legal and FDV teams, she applied for a Family Violence Restraining Order (FVRO), which made it easier to seek protection. Police also began doing regular drive-bys to reassure her, and in time her ex-partner was caught breaching the FVRO — more than 60 times.

The violence also caused repeated damage to Pauline's home. To help her feel safe again, the FDV and Tenancy Support teams arranged for new security doors and screens to be installed. For just \$2,684, we were able to give Pauline something far more valuable — a renewed sense of safety, security, and peace of mind for her and her children.

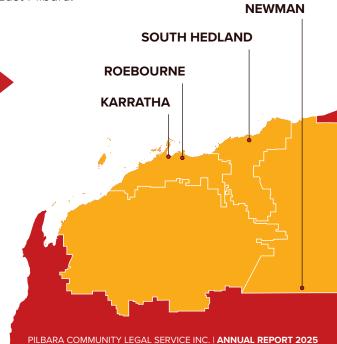
Expanded satellite services

In 2024/25, the Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) team strengthened its reach and impact across the Pilbara through innovative service delivery and partnerships.

By relocating a position from Karratha to Newman for a defined period, the team engaged with more than 50 referrals in 10 months, embedding support in Newman and surrounding Aboriginal communities. This flexible approach enabled services to respond where the need was greatest, while continuing to explore sustainable ways to meet demand across the East Pilbara.

To further strengthen accessibility, the FDV team secured an extension of the Domestic Violence Advocate Victim Support Service contract, placing a dedicated support worker in Roebourne. This position not only increases access for clients but also supports the local multidisciplinary team to meet growing service demand. PCLS now has multidisciplinary teams based at all 4 office locations across the Pilbara.

PCLS now has multidisciplinary teams based at all **4 office locations** across the Pilbara.





Partnership with Karlka RNTBC

The Financial Counselling team worked closely with Karlka Nyiyarparli RNTBC (Karlka) members on financial wellbeing matters as part of the partnership developed between the two organisations.

Karlka members receive priority access to Financial Counselling and Domestic Violence services, when Karlka have member days. Karlka co-locates with PCLS when they visit Karratha.

This partnership marked a milestone achievement in collaboration and joint outreach, with Financial Counselling and Domestic Violence Team members participating in two key events held in Karratha during the financial year.

From the appointments received, the main issues raised by Karlka members included financial budgeting, debt negotiations, and assistance with power bills.

With growing awareness of this partnership, PCLS team is excited to support Karlka members on their journey towards a stronger financial wellbeing in the future and improved family outcomes.



Legal

Growing our capacity

This year, PCLS proudly celebrated the success of a solicitor who completed her Restricted Practice period and went on to achieve the **Practice**Management Course. This milestone not only enabled her to step up as Principal Solicitor when needed but also showcased the power of investing in our people. Her journey reflects the supportive environment at PCLS — one that nurtures growth, builds confidence, and creates genuine career pathways.



Achievements like this strengthen our organisation's **future capability** while showing our team that their aspirations can be realised here in the Pilbara.





Building Knowledge Through Wills Workshops

The Legal Team contributed to the sustainability and growth of our services by delivering targeted community workshops designed to build knowledge and empower decision-making.

A highlight was the Wills Workshop, delivered in partnership with Karlka Nyiyarparli RNTBC and Mutual Trust, which provided community members with tailored guidance on succession planning and legal rights.

This collaboration enabled participants to make informed choices, protect their families' futures, and strengthen intergenerational wealth security. By combining cultural knowledge with legal expertise, the workshops not only addressed an important community need but also demonstrated the value of partnerships in expanding reach and impact.

Through initiatives such as these, the Legal Team is building stronger foundations for sustainable communities while reinforcing PCLS's role as a trusted partner in supporting long-term wellbeing and justice.



STRATEGIC PILLAR:

Governance and Compliance

Strengthening Standards and Accountability

In March 2025, an assessor visited PCLS on-site as part of the reaccreditation process. Following this comprehensive review, PCLS successfully achieved accreditation for a further three years, reaffirming its commitment to accountability, compliance, and the delivery of high-quality

services to the community.

Accreditation

This Centre is accredited by

PCLS has undertaken significant work to strengthen its governance and compliance systems in line with the **National Accreditation Standards** for **Community Legal Centres** With the support of an external consultant, all existing policies and procedures were reviewed to ensure alignment with accreditation requirements, the incorporation of best practice, and the ongoing strengthening of organisational governance.

This process led to the development of a Quality Management and Governance Framework, the establishment of a Quality and Safety Committee, and the creation of an online portal providing staff with easy access to policies and procedures. The portal also embeds a continuous improvement cycle and version control, ensuring policies remain current, transparent, and responsive to emerging needs.

Through these achievements, PCLS has **strengthened** its governance foundations, ensuring the organisation remains **resilient**, **transparent**, **and well-positioned** to meet both sector standards and community expectations into the future.



Prioritising Work Health and Safety

PCLS strengthened its commitment to governance and compliance over the past year by investing in comprehensive work health and safety initiatives to protect staff and ensure safe service delivery across the Pilbara.

These measures reflect PCLS's proactive approach to risk management and compliance, embedding safety into everyday practice. By prioritising staff wellbeing and safety, PCLS ensures that its workforce can deliver vital community services with confidence, resilience, and security.

Work Health and Safety Highlights 2024/25:

- CCTV systems installed across offices to strengthen staff and visitor security
- Investment in fit-for-purpose 4WD outreach vehicles equipped with GPS, all-terrain tyres, safety packs, and two-way radios for safe travel to remote communities.
- Rollout of Safe T Cards, 24-hour monitored personal safety devices for lone workers, home visits, and remote office staff.





'From the Desert to the Sea' - Teeka Skeen



The artwork was designed by a former employee and artist, **Teeka Skeen**, Jaru Kija woman from Halls Creek and Turkey Creek, East Kimberley region, WA. Teeka's art reflects the journey of Reconciliation **'From the Desert to the Sea'** celebrating old ways and new ways.

PCLS is eagerly awaiting formal approval of the RAP from Reconciliation Australia. Once endorsed, it will stand as both a practical framework and a cultural commitment — guiding us to strengthen relationships, respect, and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Pilbara.



STRATEGIC PILLAR: People and Culture

PCLS - Supporting the Next Generation of Social Workers

Between February and May 2025, PCLS was proud to host its third social work student, Irine Tombe, from Griffith University in Brisbane. Irine joined us in the Pilbara for her final placement, working across our FDV, Housing, and Financial Counselling teams.

During her time with us, Irine quickly became a valued part of the team. She brought fresh ideas, energy, and a genuine passion for helping others — and in return, she discovered a love for both the work and the Pilbara itself. Since completing her placement, Irine has now graduated, and we're excited to follow her journey as she embarks on her career in social work.

At PCLS, hosting social work students is more than just a placement program — it's part of our culture. Students bring enthusiasm and new perspectives that challenge us to reflect on our service delivery, while also taking on cases, projects, and meaningful tasks that support our teams. For our leaders, it's also an opportunity to mentor, strengthen professional practice, and build leadership skills.

We're proud to play a role in shaping the next generation of social workers and look forward to welcoming many more students in the future.



66

Prudence Martawidjaja, Lecturer in Social Work at the Western Australian Centre for Rural Health (WACRH), said:

Through our partnership with PCLS, we have been able to place social work students in the Karratha and Hedland offices. These placements give students valuable handson experience in regional practice while strengthening support for local people and services. By hosting students, PCLS not only adds value for clients and staff today but also helps build the future social work workforce for the Pilbara.

Irine Tombe

Completing my placement at the Pilbara
Community Legal Services has been one of the
most rewarding and unique experiences. I will
never forget it. As a Social Work student, I had the
privilege of working across different departments,
including Family and Domestic Violence, Housing,
Migration Support, and Financial Counselling.
Each area provided me with valuable insights into
the diverse challenges people face and the many
ways social work can create meaningful impact.

My time in the Family and Domestic Violence team was especially significant. Working as a Family Domestic Violence caseworker I developed skills in case management, advocacy, and client-centred practice, while also learning the importance of cultural sensitivity and trauma-informed approaches. The guidance, encouragement, and knowledge shared by my supervisor and the team played a key role in my growth and helped me build both confidence and professional competence.

I also had the unique opportunity to work across three different offices in three towns, which allowed me to experience how services are delivered in different communities. Meeting clients, supporting them through difficult times, and witnessing positive changes in their lives was incredibly rewarding. I particularly valued home visits, where I was able to connect not only with clients but also with their families, land, and communities. These experiences reinforced my desire to work in smaller, close-knit communities, where relationships and genuine connection are at the heart of my practice.

I will always remember my placement at Pilbara Community Legal Services with gratitude. It has shaped my professional identity and highlighted my passion as a Social Worker. I hope to one day return and continue contributing to the communities that welcomed and taught me so much.

Social Work to me is planting a seed even if I don't see it grow, I trust that it will.



Investing in a Skilled Local Workforce

PCLS is committed to developing a strong, sustainable local workforce by creating career pathways and investing in staff training across a range of disciplines. This year, four staff members undertook traineeships in Business Administration, Human Resources Management, and Financial Counselling, reflecting our commitment to both individual growth and organisational capacity.

Our Human Resources trainee has, within six months, contributed to staff support through special projects, compliance tasks, and documentation while completing a Certificate IV in Human Resource Management. This experience has strengthened workplace skills, confidence, and fostered a positive organisational culture.

A major focus has been the expansion of our Financial Counselling (FC) team, with three new staff joining across the Pilbara. Two FC trainees commenced their Diploma of Financial Counselling in South Hedland and Karratha, while a Financial Capability Worker in Newman began training through the Financial Literacy Education skill set. These programs provide accredited qualifications and practical experience, building the next generation of skilled financial counsellors for the region.

The wider FC team also engaged in ongoing professional development through conferences, sector forums, and clinical supervisions, ensuring they remain well-informed and connected to best practice.



the Pilbara.

Financial Counsellor Trainees Lora Lui & Jean Nshimiyimana



By investing in local traineeships and professional development, PCLS is not only strengthening service delivery but also creating meaningful career pathways. This approach ensures the organisation can continue to meet community needs with confidence, knowledge, and care, while contributing to a more resilient community services workforce across

Loraini Ratu Balavu, Human Resources Trainee:

"As a Human Resources Trainee at PCLS, I have contributed to staff support through special projects, compliance tasks, and documentation. I am currently completing my Certificate IV in Human Resource Management, which has strengthened both my skills and my confidence in the workplace.

What I enjoy most about my role is the opportunity to assist wherever I am needed and to contribute to a positive, supportive work environment. I aspire to build a career in Human Resources where I can continue to help people grow and succeed in their roles. Working at PCLS is especially rewarding because I am part of an organisation that values its staff, invests in professional development, and makes a real difference in the community."



McCusker Intern Program

Over the past 12 months, PCLS hosted two McCusker interns who delivered meaningful contributions through short-term projects.

One intern developed a comprehensive social media policy, improved audience engagement, and strengthened data analytics, directly enhancing PCLS's branding and digital presence. The second intern explored options for client feedback systems, laying the foundation for future initiatives that will ensure client voices are central to service design and improvement.

The program not only supports the professional growth of emerging leaders but also provides not-for-profit organisations with access to fresh ideas, specialised skills, and research capacity. For PCLS, the McCusker interns have contributed to tangible outcomes, strengthening organisational visibility, improving client-centred practice, and reinforcing the value of collaboration between universities and the community sector.





Living Our Values – Collaboration and Growth

PCLS is committed to supporting the professional development of its people while ensuring continuity of service for the community. This year, our Karratha Tenancy Advocate undertook the final three-month practicum of her Master of Social Work. To support this opportunity, Redgum Justice in Perth partnered with PCLS by seconding their Tenancy Advocate to provide a FIFO service during this period.

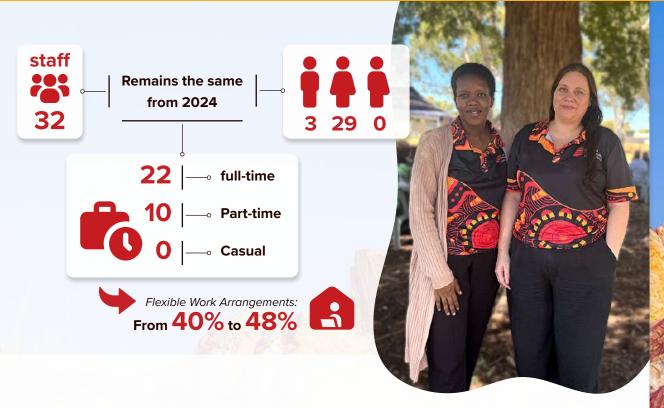
This collaboration ensured uninterrupted tenancy support for clients while fostering stronger relationships and knowledge sharing between the two organisations. The secondment created a valuable exchange of skills and perspectives, delivering benefits for both PCLS and Redgum Justice, and reinforcing the sector's commitment to working together in the best interests of the community.



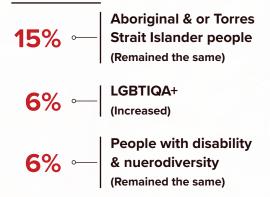


Our People: Who we are

12-month Reflection

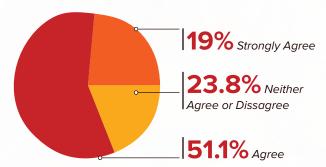


Diversity:

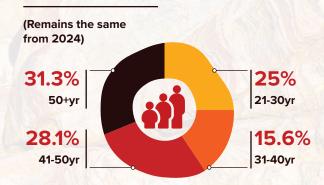


Authenticity in the Workplace:

(Bringing your authentic self to the workplace)



Age Diversity:



Ethnicity:





PCLS Workforce Profile

Who are we? job groups, skill levels, experience, age, gender and length of service can help you gain some insight into the skills and capacity of your current workforce



87% *─* Women

13% ─ Men

15% — Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander employees

6% ← Employees with a disability

44 ⊶ Average age

94% — With formal qualifications

Job Groups

- Executives
- Team Leaders
- Coordinators
- Solicitors
- Advocates
- Financial Counsellors
- Support Workers
- Administration

- 4 Traineeships
- 2 | Student Placements
- 1 Secondment
- 3 | Internships





EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

SETS – Celebrating Culture and Building Connection

In **March 2025**, the SETS team marked Harmony Week with events in Karratha and Hedland. Families and community members came together to enjoy cultural performances, creative activities, and shared food — celebrating diversity and building connections across cultures. Both events fostered inclusion, encouraged participation, and strengthened local partnerships.





In **October 2024**, the SETS team presented at the Northwest Multicultural Forum and Festival in Karratha, their session focused on strengthening social cohesion across the Pilbara and sharing insights into the challenges newcomers face — from isolation and language barriers to limited community networks. The team emphasised the importance of inclusive, community-based services that build trust and meaningful connections between newcomers

and long-term residents. At the accompanying festival, SETS also hosted a lively craft stall where children contributed to a collaborative community artwork and explored painting in a welcoming, inclusive space.

FDV

Over 2024/25 period the FDV team were on the road a lot, travelling between offices and locations further afield to participate in professional development. Professional development has been offered to FDV staff online and in-person and for skill development to keep up to date with best practices and enhancing the way we deliver support.

The team participated in over 20 trainings, including:

- A range of Domestic Abuse Resource and Training (DART) s
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth mental health
- Protective Behaviours training
- Primary prevention training
- A range of DV Alert trainings

FDV support workers in Hedland Newman commenced a micro-credential course in Understanding and Responding to Family & Domestic Violence in Society through the University of Western Australia. The course takes a public health model to FDV and is available for health, social and legal service professionals.

"I started the UWA micro-credential course on 23 April, along with another team member. It's been a valuable opportunity to deepen my knowledge and reflect on how we respond to FDV in our work. I'm finding the content both challenging and insightful, and I can already see how it's strengthening my practice. I'm grateful for the chance to build on my skills in a way that directly benefits the clients and

Clare McKelvey, Domestic Violence Support Worker Hedland

community we support"

Hedland Family Violence Action Group PCLS is an active member of the **Hedland Family** Violence Action Group (HFVAG), a collaborative network of local services and community members working together to raise awareness and act against family violence. PCLS contributes to the planning and coordination of key community initiatives, including the **Hedland Says No to** Family Violence March. This annual event is one of the largest and most significant community demonstrations in the region, bringing people together to stand in solidarity, raise awareness, and promote a united message that family violence has no place in our community. Being on the planning committee for such an important event allows PCLS staff to play a meaningful role in driving change and supporting collective efforts to create a safer and stronger



StopDV Conference Participation

In November 2025, the DV Team Leader and Chief Executive Officer attended the **StopDV Conference**, joining sector leaders and practitioners from across the nation. The conference provided an important opportunity to network with like-minded professionals, explore innovative practices, and engage with emerging evidence that continues to shape the rapidly evolving FDV sector.

The organisation showcased its **Integrated Case Management Model (ICMM)** through a conference poster presentation. The presentation emphasised the value of ICMM in community legal centres and other organisations operating under diverse funding arrangements.

The **Love Shouldn't Hurt** program was also publicly displayed for the first time, generating considerable interest. Delegates were particularly curious about the program's consultation



process, the development of its resources, and the adaptable nature of its delivery. Discussions were also held with research bodies regarding opportunities to strengthen the evidence base for grassroots initiatives such as Love Shouldn't Hurt, reinforcing their necessity and impact within the community.

16 Days in WA

PCLS played an active role in the 16 Days in WA campaign across the Pilbara region.

In Hedland, the **Hedland Family Violence Action Group (HFVAG)** coordinated a series of community-focused events. These included a community movie night screening 'It Ends With Us', an awareness stall at the Hedland shopping centre, and a roundtable discussion that brought together service providers, resource sector representatives, and community members to address the ongoing challenges of family and domestic violence in the local area.

In Karratha, the **Women's Health and Wellness Event** was held once again, offering practical information and support to women in the community. The event featured short talks and workshops facilitated by Ora Wellness, Pilbara



Therapy, Pilbara Cosmetics and Beauty, and Aligned Health and Lifestyle. A wide range of service providers also contributed, including the Pilbara Family and Domestic Violence Network (PFDVN), the Country Women's Association (CWA), Anglicare, Hope AOD, and other organisations supporting women experiencing, or leaving, family and domestic violence.

REDRESS EVENTS







Annual on country bush meeting
Yule River 2024



Hedland careers expo

Department of Justice open days

National Redress Support Services
Forum 2024

Indigenous health and wellbeing conference 2025

Redress Support – Strengthening Voices and Building Connections

In 2024/25, the PCLS Redress Support team strengthened awareness of the National Redress Scheme and deepened connections with communities and sector partners. Highlights included co-hosting a NAIDOC event in Karratha with Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation, contributing to the On Country Bush Meeting at Yule River, and engaging with more than 1,300 delegates at the Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Conference in Adelaide. The team also participated in the national Redress Support Services Forum in Brisbane, sharing insights on survivor support and policy.





These activities built capacity, promoted collaboration, and ensured community voices remain central to shaping responses to historical and ongoing harm.

Homelessness Week August 2024

During Homelessness Week 2024, PCLS partnered with **Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation** (Roebourne), **Gumala Aboriginal Corporation** (South Hedland), and a range of **local service providers** to host two community events — one in Roebourne and another in South Hedland.

With the support of a **Shelter WA** and **Lotterywest** grant, the events provided attendees with hygiene bags, healthy food, and information on available supports. Beyond meeting immediate needs, the activities also raised awareness of homelessness as a growing issue in the Pilbara.



The events created valuable opportunities for community members to connect with service providers including Horizon Power, Healthy Minds, and the Department of Housing, fostering collaboration and strengthening pathways to support.



The Housing team — Elainne, Mary
Lisa, and Angie — travelled to the
Gold Coast to attend the National
Homelessness Conference.
With over 500 participants in
attendance, the conference was a
powerful gathering of voices united
by a shared commitment to ending
homelessness in Australia and
advocating for continued investment in
housing support services.



Financial Counselling

In June 2025, the PCLS Financial Counselling Team and FCAWA co-hosted the **Financial Counselling WA Regional Conference** in Newman, bringing together almost 60 participants from government, service providers, and community partners.



FINANCIAL COUNSELLORS' ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A highlight was the visit to **Jigalong**, where participants sat in a yarning circle with Elders and community members, gaining firsthand insights into local challenges. Key issues raised included housing shortages, unreliable utilities, and the need for employment and training opportunities.

By holding the forum in the region, the FC team helped ensure discussions were grounded in community realities — making it a week of genuine connection, learning, and collaboration.



It was truly a week of learning, connection, and collaboration — one that will help shape **more responsive and practical approaches** to financial counselling across the Pilbara and beyond.

Legal Team – Empowering Communities and Expanding Access to Justice

Throughout 2024–25, the Legal team at PCLS continued to focus on **strengthening access to justice** by delivering practical, culturally responsive, and community-driven services across the Pilbara.

A highlight was the **Wills Workshop** delivered in partnership with **Karlka Nyiyarparli RNTBC** and **Mutual Trust**, which provided community members with tailored guidance on succession planning and legal rights. This collaboration ensured participants could make informed decisions and protect their families' futures.



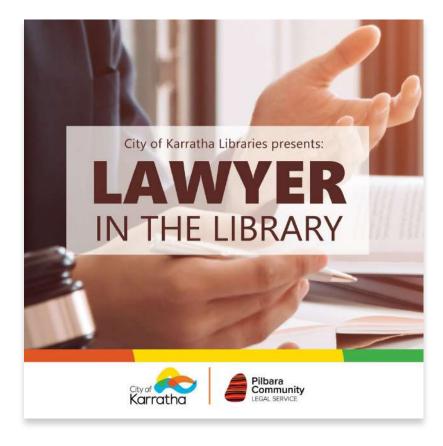


The team also piloted **Lawyer in the Library**, an after-hours event at the City of Karratha Library, co-presented by a lawyer and tenant advocate. This initiative brought legal advice into a familiar

community space, increasing accessibility for people who may not otherwise engage with formal services.

Community legal education remained a cornerstone of service delivery. Sessions were delivered at the Dampier Elderly Breakfast, Turner River Rehabilitation Centre, and Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation, covering legal rights and practical supports in everyday contexts.

The Legal team also joined the **Department of Justice Aboriginal Open Days**, travelling as a multidisciplinary team with colleagues from across PCLS programs to Newman, Tom Price, Jigalong, Panggurr, and Onslow. This outreach model ensured holistic service delivery, combining tenancy, financial counselling, family and domestic violence support, and legal assistance in one place for community members.



Together, these initiatives reflect PCLS's commitment to empowering communities through knowledge, collaboration, and access to justice. By meeting people where they are — from libraries to remote communities — the Legal team is breaking down barriers, building trust, and ensuring that legal support is accessible to all.

National Conference - The Law and More, Canberra

In September 2025, the entire PCLS Legal Team travelled the furthest distance among Community Legal Centres to attend the **The Law** and **More conference** in Canberra — a clear demonstration of our commitment to advancing access to justice in the Pilbara.

The conference brought together over 500 participants from across Australia, including lawyers, advocates, policy specialists, social workers and Centre staff, under the theme

'The Law and More'.



The Law and More

Key streams included:



"Working Holistically"
(integrated services, outreach,
community legal education),



"Navigating Laws and Systems",



"Staying Strong and Sustainable", and



"Looking to the Future".

At the event, PCLS presented a poster showcasing **Love Shouldn't Hurt**, our primary prevention program. This provided an opportunity to highlight our efforts in preventing family and domestic violence, engage with peers, share our model, and gather feedback to improve its impact.

LOVE SHOULDN'T HURT

Through our attendance and contribution, PCLS reinforced its dedication to empowering community members, strengthening collaboration with the sector, and ensuring that our work remains aligned with national best practice as we seek to broaden access and justice for those we serve.

Recognition

PCLS was recognised across this year for their **commitment to community**. High quality service delivery and impact.

- Pilbara for Purpose Awards Finalists
- Champion Leader CEO Joanna Collins
- Empowered Voices, Tevita Naroba and Sara Makeham
- Walking Together PCLS and Karlka Nyiyarparli RNTBC
- Winner Tevita Naroba, Financial Counselling Team Leader
- Seven News Media Community
 Achievement Awards
- Semi Finalist Community Group

 Award

- Finalist Konica Minolta Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Community Achievement Award
- Karratha and Districts Chamber of Commerce and Industry Business Excellence Awards
- Finalist Community Impact Award:
 Best Community Organisation
- Finalist Emerging Lawyer Law Society
 Awards Bianca Lambert; Finalist
 Regional Practitioner of the Year, Mark
 Jeffreys Law Society Awards; Finalist
 Community Legal Centre of the Year,
 Attorney General Awards



CORPORATE SERVICES

Corporate Services Key Achievements



Sustainability and Growth:

The long-term sustainability of programs has been a focal point.

A detailed cost analysis provided insight into the true costs of program delivery. This provided the basis for negotiation of increased funding to realistically cover future costs.



Governance and Compliance:

Data visualization has been built into financial reporting, facilitating understanding of data and decision-making processes.



Service Delivery:

Client facilities have been refreshed throughout the period to create comfortable and appropriate meeting areas. A call queuing system has been implemented to improve the response to incoming calls.



People and Culture:

Safety was a focus in 2024/25 with the acquisition of monitored vehicle and personal safety devices, and the installation of an enclosed Reception in the Karratha office. Ergonomic soft refurbishments have continued through offices, and additional workstations have been added for visiting team members.

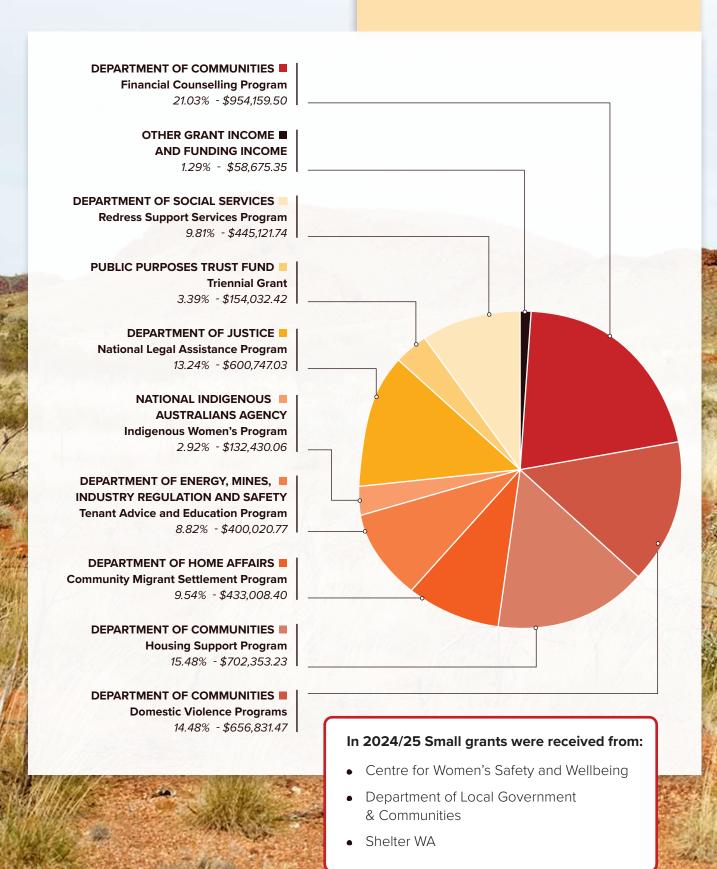
Financial Overview

PCLS is reporting a \$100,883 profit for the 2024/25 period comprising a \$98,609 operating loss plus \$199,492 other income and expenditure. Other income and expenditure includes profit on the disposal of fleet vehicles, and loss on disposal of equipment assets. The 2025/26 Budget indicates that the organization is well positioned for future operation. At 30 June 2025 net assets were \$3,918,300 including cash and cash equivalents of \$2,385,204.

All funding agreements and associated expenditure budgets have been reviewed for the 2025/26 and 2026/27 period to ensure ongoing program delivery is fully funded. The organization continues to invest reserve funds, with own source revenue streams funding being utilized to improve facilities and service delivery

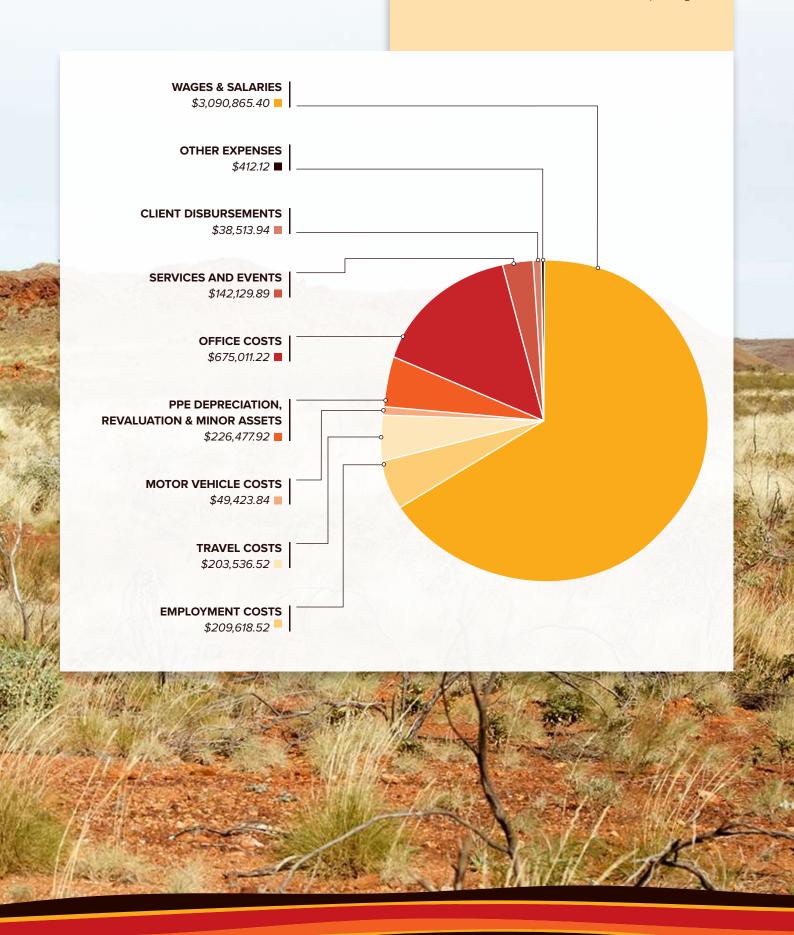
Funding Sources

Total income recognized was \$4,741,949, including grant and program funding of \$4,537,380. comprising:



Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year was \$4,635,989 comprising:





SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS

PCLS is proud to be supported by **local**, **State and Federal Government**, **Industry peak bodies** and partner with **Registered Native Title Body Corporates** (RNTBC).

- Yindjibarndi Nation Limited
- Karlka Nyiyaparli Aboriginal
 Corporation RNTBC partnership for
 Wills workshops, financial counselling
 and family and domestic violence
 services
- Robe River Kuruma Aboriginal
 Corporation RNTBC partnership to deliver Aboriginal Family safety program
- ProBono Legal work thanks to K&L Gates and Gilchrist Connell for providing Pro Bono legal assistance to PCLS throughout 2024/2025
- Ripple Narratives a majority-owned Aboriginal creative agency specialising in film making, photography, and a range of other creative services provided Pro Bono services to PCLS to capture their Outreach across the Pilbara.
- McCusker Centre for Citizenship Interns – Client Feedback and Social Media project

- **FMG** grants sponsorship for SETS
- **BHP** supporting PCLS in Newman
- Road Safety Commission
- Department of Justice
- Department of Communities
- Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety
- Womens Legal Service WA
- Shelter WA
- PFDVN
- Department for Home Affairs
- Department of Social Services
- Regional Development Australia
- Office of Multicultural Interests grant for Harmony Day events
- Goldfields Community Legal Centre





