



# Annual Report

2020-2021



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## Acknowledgement of Country

**We begin our Annual Report by acknowledging the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our Service operates. We would like to pay our respect to the Elders, past, present, and emerging.**

The North & North West Community Legal Service (NNWCLS) acknowledges the importance of developing strong effective relationships based on mutual respect and trust with the Australian Indigenous peoples. NNWCLS is committed to ensuring that the perspectives, values and experiences of our staff, clients and stakeholders are valued, respected and acknowledged in all levels of service delivery.

NNWCLS believe that respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands, and histories form an important basis to establish a safe and healthy environment that is sensitive towards the needs of Australian Indigenous peoples. NNWCLS is committed to creating a more inclusive and culturally appropriate environment that will ultimately create increased quality and culturally appropriate legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





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From the team of  
North & North  
West Community  
Legal Service Inc

With your smartphone, open your camera and hover your phone over the QR Code. Click on the tab that appears on your screen, and let the story begin



Scan me



The North & North West Community Legal Service Inc is funded through the Community Legal Centres Program by the Federal Attorney General and the NSW Attorney General administered by Legal Aid NSW.

We are an accredited member of the National Association of Community Legal Centres (now Community Legal Centres Australia)



# Our Armidale Team



## **Principal Solicitor**

### **Terri King**

Terri has a long history with the Service, initially beginning as a student volunteer, before commencing employment in 2009. She has a strong passion for working with survivors of domestic and family violence and sexual assault with long standing involvement in local committees and community events. She has a particular interest in Victims Services, Family Law and Estate Planning.



## **Coordinator**

### **Sandy Watt**

Sandy joined the Service in 2013 after relocating to Armidale from the North Coast. Sandy feels privileged to be the Coordinator of the Service as she reports to Legal Aid NSW and CLCNSW on all the great work that her colleagues achieve throughout each year, and of this she is immensely proud. Her love of finances, statistics and reporting against targets is certainly fulfilled within her role. Sandy's favourite pass-time is playing her piano.



## **Solicitor**

### **Stanley Tao**

Stanley graduated from the University of Sydney with Bachelor of Laws. He joined the Service after having worked with disadvantaged clients at various community legal centres previously. He is determined to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable and marginalised people within our community. Stanley is passionate about Court Advocacy, Succession Law, Employment Law and Family Law. He also enjoys playing table tennis and badminton in his spare time.





### **Solicitor**

#### **Niel van der Linde**

Niel completed his Bachelor of Laws at the University of Tasmania and his Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice at the College of Law. He completed his practical placement at a Community Legal Centre and soon realised his passion for assisting members of the community. He has a particular interest in Criminal Law, Family Law and Estate matters and joined the Service in mid 2018 after 2 years of working in private practice. Niel also has an active interest in rugby union.



### **Solicitor**

#### **Prue Bolton**

Prue completed her Bachelor of Law at the University of New England and a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice at the Australian National University. Prue has a particular interest in Family Law, Employment Law and Succession Law. She enjoys bushwalking and enjoying nature in her spare time.



### **Legal Support Officer & Bookkeeper**

#### **Donna Gilbert**

Donna finds the service that NNWCLS provides to the community is invaluable and also extremely rewarding on a personal level. Donna has been employed with the Service for 6 years in total and is now employed as a Legal Support Officer and also combines this position with bookkeeping. The most rewarding part of her job is assisting the Solicitors to enable them to provide the utmost professional service that the community need. Donna also enjoys interacting with the community and being able to help people in need. She sees being a team member of this much needed Service is a privilege.



### **Administrative Assistant**

#### **Natasha Carey**

Natasha joined the Service after completing her Higher School Certificate in 2016 locally and having worked as an Administrative Assistant and in retail for the past 4 years. Natasha has previously completed a traineeship with the Service and has since moved into the role of Administrative Assistant. Natasha has a love and passion for animals and cooking.

# Our Moree Team



## Solicitor

### Jonathan Wong

(October 2020 – May 2021)

Jonathan completed a Bachelor of Laws with First Class Honours and a Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice at the Australian National University. Prior to joining the Service, Jonathan worked in private practice and was a tutor with the University of Queensland. He has a particular interest in Succession Law, Employment Law, Consumer Protection Law, and Debt Recovery. Jonathan speaks English, Malay, Indonesian, Mandarin Chinese and Moroccan Arabic. When he is not at work, he enjoys playing Scrabble and learning new languages.



## Solicitor

### Raymond Hill

(June 2021 – August 2021)

Ray has joined our Moree office, bringing over two decades of knowledge from a broad variety of private and community legal practice including family law, victims support, civil litigation, wills and estates. Ray has substantial experience delivering culturally safe legal services to Aboriginal clients and sensitive, trauma-informed assistance to survivors of family violence and sexual assault. He takes great satisfaction from assisting with

the needs of people marginalised from access to the justice and support our legal system should be providing to everyone. In his spare time, he indulges an interest in computers, technology, gaming and the "internet of things". Occasionally he turns all the things off and goes camping.



## Administrative Assistant

### Anne Towney

Anne has recently started work with the Service, in the Moree office. She has had a varied working life having been employed in Employment Services, Child Care, Aboriginal Land Councils, an Aboriginal Community Development Employment Program and an Aboriginal Medical Service. The positions Anne has held include Employment Consultant, Bookkeeper, Coordinator and Finance Officer. Anne enjoys working with the not for profit sector and looks forward to supporting community members through her work with NNWCLS.





Working together for our  
community respecting each  
individual through our  
service delivery



# Our Management Committee



## Chairperson

### Ms Bronwyn Pearson

Bronwyn is a multi-award-winning Human Resources specialist with more than 25 years' experience providing strategic and operational human resource advice and solutions to both the public and private sectors. Along with post graduate management qualifications in human resource management Bronwyn has achieved Certified Professional Member status with the Australian Human Resources Institute (CAHRI).

Bronwyn is skilled in strategic HR, change management, employee relations, workforce planning, performance management, organisational development, executive coaching, negotiation, mediation and specialist recruitment. Assisting businesses to navigate the increasingly complex legal requirements around employment and people management is one of her specialities.

Bronwyn believes that helping regional businesses meet their obligations as employers, as well as attracting, retaining, and developing the right staff, leads to stronger, sustainable communities. As a regionally-based business Pinnacle People Solutions' business model recognises the unique challenges individuals and businesses in regional communities face, and understands how to deal with these directly.

Giving back to the community is central to Bronwyn's business vision. Bronwyn sits on the Board of several regional organisations that share her values of integrity and commitment to community. She is the President of the North and Northwest Community Legal Service Board, and a Director on the Board of the New England Conservatorium of Music. Bronwyn was appointed Employment Facilitator for the New England and North West Region and is currently the Employment Facilitator for the Far West Orana region as part of the Local Jobs Program, an Australian Government Initiative. Bronwyn is committed to developing the long term sustainability of our regions and works with local stakeholders to establish place-based strategies to address employment challenges and provide opportunities for those who are unemployed or at risk of unemployment.

In 2018 Bronwyn won the Outstanding Business Leader category in both the Armidale Business Chamber and the New England North West Region Business Awards, going on to represent at State level.





### **Treasurer**

#### **Dr Kip Werren**

**BFA/LLB(Hons), PhD(WSU)**

Dr Kip Werren has been part of NNWCLS since 2012. Kip is a lecturer in the School of Law, University of New England. Kip has practised and continues to practise as an Accountant and a Lawyer principally in the areas of commercial law, conveyancing, asset protection, estate planning, business structures, and taxation.

Kip has completed a PhD dissertation titled *Utilising Taxation Incentives to Promote Private Sector Funded Conservation*.



### **Secretary (July 2020 – January 2021)**

#### **Ms Bronwen Jackman**

**LLM, SAB (Dip. Law)**

Ms Bronwen Jackman is a legal academic at UNE School of Law. Bronwen lectures in evidence law, employment law and property law. Her research interests include international environmental law and property law. Bronwen has extensive experience in community organisations within the New England area including the former Armidale Women's Shelter and Women's Centre. She has experience on management committees such as the Women's Shelter.

After taking a leave of absence from academia a few years ago Bronwen assumed the position of Coordinator of the Armidale Domestic Violence Advocacy Service funded by Legal Aid NSW. This position allowed her to assist women in domestic and personal violence situations and to assist them through all the processes relating to obtaining orders and going to court. It was a position that allowed Bronwen access to local magistrates, police, and court personnel. Bronwen has a commitment to social justice and a specific commitment to her community.



**Secretary (February 2021 to current)**

### **Ms Anne Rix**

**MHS; GRAD DIP/SW; GRAD DIP/ED (SEC.TEACH)**

Anne Rix is the Secretary of the NNWCLS Management Committee. She has long-standing involvement with the organisation, and greatly values its work with communities throughout the region. Anne has been employed in human services in New England North West for over 25 years and is the General Manager of New England Family Support Service. Her qualifications include Master of Human Services

Management (Charles Sturt University), Graduate Diploma in Social Welfare (NSW Rural Health Education Research Centre) and a Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary Teaching) from the University of New England. Anne worked for the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) in Partnerships and Planning, and in Ageing Disability and Home Care. In 2010, she became Director Partnerships and Planning for the New England North West Region, working closely with NGOs across the region to implement reform in child protection, targeted early intervention, and specialist homelessness services. Anne's last role in the Department was as Principal Project Officer NDIS Transition, overseeing the transfer of ADHC clients, staff, programs, and equipment to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. After leaving public service, Anne joined Homes North as Project Manager-Transformation, facilitating the Social Housing Management transfer of FACS Housing stock and tenants from the Department to the community housing provider. During the past two years with New England Family Support Service, Anne achieved significant financial growth in the organisation and expanded the number of projects delivered by the agency, including a philanthropic partnership with Mazda Foundation to deliver a drought recovery initiative throughout NENW.



### **Dr Christine Perrott**

**BA, DipEd, MEd(Hons/medal), PhD, FACE**

Christine is a retired teacher educator passionate about social justice and protecting our heritage and natural environments. She is a volunteer with the Helping Children and Families Association (HCFA) where regular visits to at risk families with young children make clear the value of a Community Legal Service. Other volunteer commitments are Friends of the Old Teachers College (vice President), thesis editing assistance to postgraduates and member of the Duval College Senior Common Room.

In July 2021 her third book was published, 'We Survived': Collected Memories of School Days at PLC Armidale, 1936-1964, Ed. Christine Perrott, Leschenault Press.

Her recreation pursuits include going to concerts, films, galleries and museums; travel; gardening; writing letters to The Sydney Morning Herald; fishing; intricate garment knitting; reading; and daily cryptic crossword puzzle solving.





## S Paul Akon

BA (USyd); LLB (USyd); Assoc M Resolution Institute

Paul has practised law in Sydney and in Regional NSW.

In 1969, he began his law career as an articled clerk in Sydney. He was then a graduate lawyer with a large commercial firm in Sydney for five years.

In 1977, Paul started as an employed solicitor at a regional firm in Forbes, NSW. In 1978, he became a partner in that firm. He practised there, as such, for 20 years, primarily in litigation.

In 1998, Paul trained as a mediator. For the next 12 months he was engaged in a mediation project for local government in the NSW Northern Rivers region.

In 2000, Paul took up a position for three and a half years with NSW Police Legal Services as a senior lawyer. While there, he received a Commissioner's citation, the first civilian to receive such a commendation. He followed this with 18 months at the NSW Dept of Environment as a senior legal officer.

In 2006, Paul was a *locum tenens* at the Armidale Aboriginal Legal Service for the first half of the year. In July of that year Paul began as a law lecturer at UNE School of Law. Paul has been teaching there full time for the last 15 years. And, he continues to do so.

## Farewell and thank you!



## Ms Kathy Padgen

This year we bade farewell to Kathy Padgen, a most valuable, long-standing member of our Management Committee. Kathy first took office as the Secretary of NNWCLS in September 2013 and remained in that position until her resignation in August 2020.

Kathy brought to the Management Committee a wealth of knowledge and experience having worked as a Senior Case Officer for a Federal Agency working for the benefit of children and single parents; Legal Publishing and Communications; Station Manager/Public

Officer of the Armidale Community Radio Station and more recently working on a new venture to bring industry and employment to the New England Region.

Kathy always demonstrated wonderful support to the staff and during the Service's expansion in 2017, Kathy's input into the Service's growth and direction was invaluable. Kathy is a tremendous champion of NNWCLS. Her strong community involvement and sense of justice meant she was ideal for the executive role to which she gave such time and dedication.

*Thank you for the years of dedication, Kathy!*

## Our Purpose ...

- to provide advice, assistance and support to people in the North and North West region of New South Wales who have least access to the legal system and the least power to help themselves
- to provide our services in a manner that increases people's understanding of the law and their legal rights
- to deliver these services in a way that respects each individual
- to provide community education with the aim of increasing people's knowledge and understanding of the law and their legal rights
- to be responsive to the needs of the community we serve

## Our Objectives ...

- to increase access to the legal system and policy development for people from traditionally disadvantaged sectors of the population
- to help clients to be better informed of their legal and social rights and responsibilities and the options available to them
- to refer clients to other legal and non-legal services when our services are not able to assist them with their issue
- to work towards a more just, equitable and accessible society for all people
- to ensure staff in our services will maintain high standards of professional conduct and service

## Our Vision...

"To give assistance to anyone who is having difficulties accessing or is unsure how to access the legal system"





## Who do we help?

Everyone living in the north and north west of New South Wales can access our Service for free and confidential legal advice and assistance

### We can help with:



- Family Law issues (excluding property settlement, maintenance)



- Domestic Violence matters



- Consumer Complaints



- Credit and Debt issues

- Discrimination

- Employment Law



- Criminal Law



- Victims Compensation

- Wills, Power of Attorney, Enduring Guardianship



- Neighbourhood Disputes



- Probate

- Apprehended Violence Orders

### We help you if you:

- Are not sure of your legal rights and responsibilities
- Are not sure where to go for assistance
- Are unable to pay for advice from a private Solicitor

We help our community understand their legal and social rights

# Find us at our Outreach locations

## GLEN INNES

- » **Community Centre**  
268 Grey Street  
Glen Innes
- » **Glen Innes Library**  
71 Grey Street  
Glen Innes

**Glen Innes Correctional Centre**

## GUNNEDAH

- » **Go Co**  
80 Marquis Street  
Gunnedah

## GUYRA

- » **The Guyra Hub**  
160 Bradley Street  
Guyra

## INVERELL

- » **Inverell Court House**  
Otho Street  
Inverell
- » **Linking together Centre**  
16 Waratah Avenue  
Inverell

## NARRABRI

- » **Narrabri Library**  
8 Doyle Street  
Narrabri

## QUIRINDI

- » **Quirindi Home Support Services**  
Cnr Station & Dalley Streets  
Quirindi

## TAMWORTH

- » **Tamworth Community Centre**  
Cnr Peel & Darling Streets  
Tamworth
- » **Coledale Community Centre**  
2B Kenny Drive  
Tamworth

## TENTERFIELD

- » **Tenterfield Community Hub**  
204 Rouse Street  
Tenterfield

## UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND

- » **Uni4me office**  
– near the Commonwealth  
Bank ATM

## WALCHA

- » **Walcha Community Hub**  
21E Fitzroy Street  
Walcha

## WEE WAA

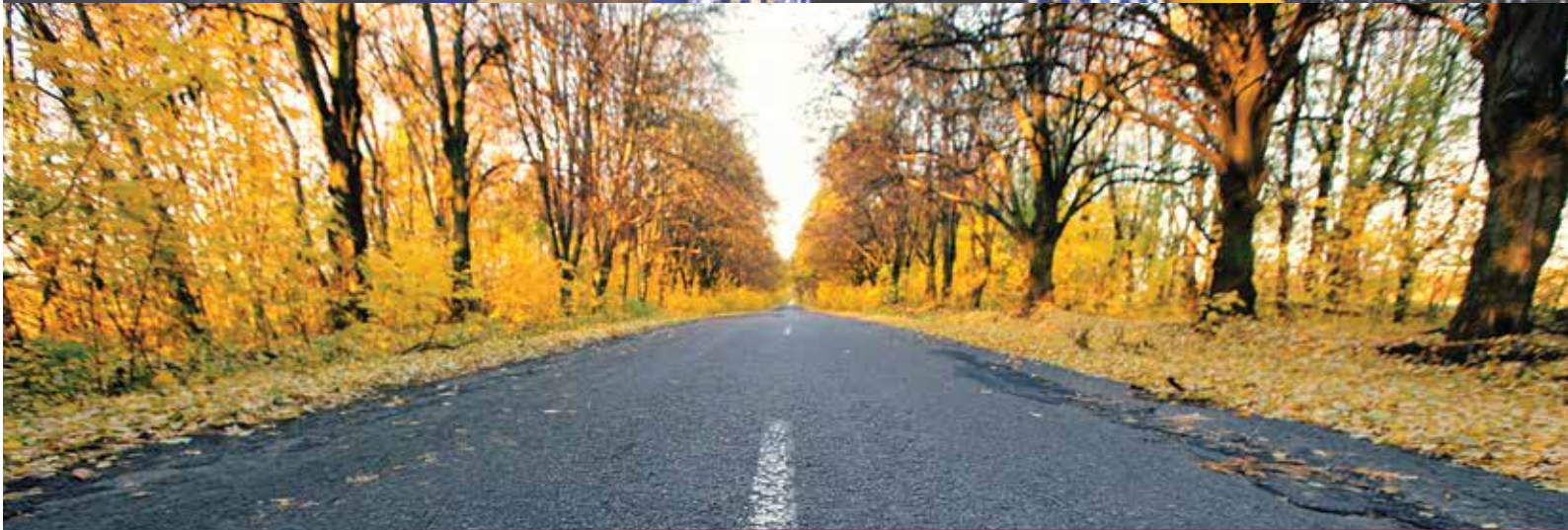
- » **Wee Waa Library**  
106 Rose Street  
Wee Waa

## WERRIS CREEK

- » **Werris Creek Library**  
59a Single Street,  
Werris Creek

Our catchment  
stretches across  
99,144 sq klms





Removing barriers, giving rural  
areas access to free legal advice



# History

## The North & North West Community Legal Service Inc (NNWCLS) was established in April 1993.

The Service was initially known as the Armidale Community Legal Service and was run solely by volunteers and lead by Jennifer Crew.

In 1995 Jennifer Crew, Ted Wright, and Rhonda Weinand began research and consultation with the community to establish the need for a funded Community Legal Centre to service the whole New England and the north west regions of NSW. The resulting submission to the Commonwealth Government was successful and the North & North West Community Legal Service Inc was created. The Service was officially opened by Rt Hon Ian Sinclair in Armidale on 22nd April 1996.

With the office based in Armidale, Outreach clinics were soon established to service the communities throughout the catchment of the New England and north and north west of NSW. The Service began as a generalist service, and continues to be today, allowing for advice

and assistance to be given across a large scope of problem types.

In April 2002 the Service became the auspice for the Northern Regional Tenant Resource Service (NRTRS) and in October 2002 became the auspice for the New England and Western Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service (NEWTAAS). The sudden growth in the Service required it to relocate from shared accommodation in the Armidale Neighbourhood Centre to its own premises in the Minto Building in Rusden Street Armidale. It also opened offices in Dubbo and Broken Hill for the tenancy service, both co-located with the Community Legal Centres in those cities.

From July 2004 to September 2005, the NNWCLS took on the temporary auspice of the Western Aboriginal Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service, with offices in Dubbo, Broken Hill and Bourke. In April 2005, the NNWCLS became the auspice for the Armidale Community Cottage.





In September 2005, the Western Aboriginal TAAS was handed over to an Aboriginal organisation, MurdiPaaki Regional Enterprise to auspice, and in January 2006, the Northern Regional Tenant Resource Service self-incorporated to become an independent Service, Northern Links.

In May 2007, the North & North West Community Legal Service moved to new premises in Faulkner Street, Armidale while NEWTAAS remained at the Minto Building and from 1st July 2010, NEWTAAS also successfully self-incorporated.

The Service remained in Faulkner Street until October 2017 when additional funding was received, giving the Service an opportunity to expand its current staffing levels requiring larger premises. The office is now located at 215 Beardsley Street which is in a busy area of Armidale giving

great exposure to the community and easy access for clients. With expansion in staffing levels came growth into new regions. Currently our Outreach Program has extended to 19 clinics each month in 13 towns and is covering more distances and population base than ever before.

In 2019, using State One Off Funding that was granted to the Service in 2017, a branch office was set up in Moree. This is a significant expansion of the Service's current service delivery, and one that allows the Moree community and surrounding districts with high legal need, ongoing support.

Opening this branch office has taken the Service to new heights, and while much growth and change has occurred for the Service since its inception, our values and mission remains the same:

*"To create a fairer, more just society by providing free and confidential legal advice and support to all"*

#### MOREE



#### ARMIDALE





# Chairperson's Report

*The North and Northwest Community Legal Service (NNWCLS) has had another noteworthy year of outstanding work and service to our communities.*

2021 has certainly gone above and beyond to raise the barriers and challenges to our service delivery, and I am so proud of the Coordinator, Principal Solicitor and team in continuing to deliver excellent service to clients across the region under difficult circumstances. As we continue to move to the "new normal", I am excited to see how the service continues to evolve and develop to ensure the needs of our communities are met into the future.

Throughout the ups and downs of 2020-2021, staff have adjusted superbly to transitions required by the ever-changing cycle of lockdowns starting and lifting. While some services had to be cancelled or rescheduled during lockdown periods, others were able to be increased and brought forward. This included funding being made available for a Social Worker, which enabled the provision of wrap around care for our clients who regularly also have non-legal needs. From the other side of the coin, the efforts of Terri King and Sandy Watt to increase publicity of the service, including networking with other support services and local counsellors and psychologists to encourage potential clients to seek us out for legal assistance, have significantly increased referrals.

I wish to particularly note the success of our new web platforms. Clients are more easily able to connect with the service online outside of work hours, and this has enabled us to increase our reach significantly. The other aspect is the client



survey, and I refer you to the Coordinator's Report for an excellent summary of those notable outcomes. It is essential for the service to be collecting both quantitative and qualitative data in this way, as it provides a strong basis for considering future strategy including service offerings and target cohorts within our catchment.

Funding remains a challenge, as additional government support during COVID tapers off and the previous cuts to our funding begin to bite. I will continue to advocate on behalf of the service to restore our previous funding so that our wonderful staff are able to continue the excellent service that they provide to the widest number of clients possible. Due to financial and mental health pressures of COVID and lockdowns, many are struggling, and we have an obligation and commitment to assist with the legal side of these struggles as much as we are able.

I particularly thank Principal Solicitor Terri King for her tireless work in 2021 and wish her all the best for her parental leave over the next 12 months. Acting Principal Solicitor Niel van der Linde has big shoes to fill, and I am certain that he will exceed all our expectations.



It has been an honour and privilege to Chair the NNWCLS Management Committee once again this year and witness the dedication and considerable efforts of staff to not only continue, but extend, services. I am continually inspired by both the wonderful achievements of NNWCLS, and the unswerving dedication of its staffing team and Management Committee.

Congratulations to all of you.

**Bronwyn Pearson**  
**CHAIRPERSON**



# Principal Solicitor's Report

*I find the process of preparing my report for each AGM to be one of reflection, gratitude and growth.*

This year as I prepare my report, I find this to be more relevant than ever, having recently cleaned through my office, which has happily housed the last 12 years' Service history, of which I have had the privilege of participating in, before I take parenting leave for 12 months.

The process of cleaning through my office, was one of discovery as I encountered newspaper articles of past events, projects and successes, staff photographs, correspondence and support, cards and gifts from clients and past volunteers, notes from meetings and correspondence. It truly felt like opening a time capsule, and it took me right back to my days working part-time as Administrative Assistant. Wow has our organisation grown and grown and grown!

Our capacity to assist clients has never been so great. Our policies and procedures have never been so thorough or relevant. Our IT systems have evolved, allowing for increased connectedness between staff and clients. The way our Solicitors keep and maintain their files has improved dramatically. I think it is safe to say, that the Service has grown, matured and flourished, thanks to the hard work of staff and the funding opportunities presented to us.

Every year brings about new challenges, hurdles and barriers, of which we work tirelessly to overcome. Of course, the last 12 months have been no different. Initially, we were all working remotely, outreach circuits and the Court Liaison Program could not be offered in person. Community Legal Education Projects were cancelled



or rescheduled, and clients were being serviced by telephone. As we moved into the new year, we were able to return to our offices, and outreach circuits. We began booking in Community Legal Education and seeing clients in person. As much as moving to a remote working model required flexibility and patience from our staff, returning to the office and face to face service delivery demanded the same. Happily, we transitioned and adapted to meet the increasing demand on our Service.

Since returning to the office, we have begun our Social Worker program, offering an unprecedented service in the organisation's history, thanks to a unique funding opportunity arising from COVID-19. We aim to provide increased holistic care for our clients, recognising that rarely are we presented with a client who faces only a legal issue, and that a social worker is best placed to assist the client in meeting their non-legal needs.

Similarly, we were presented with a funding opportunity that allowed for the development of a website extension. Allowing Service users the opportunity to work through a user-friendly survey, at their leisure, to move towards booking an appointment with our staff. This unprecedented form of contact allows users the flexibility to contact our office outside of opening hours, without having to phone our office.





Our Moree office was able to open its doors to the public, much to the delight of our Moree staff, Anne and Jonathan. Although this has been briefly interrupted; by staffing

changes, as we welcomed our Solicitor Raymond, and the declaration of the township of Moree as a COVID hotspot. But again, our staff remained resourceful and diligent and service delivery was subsequently modified for this period, rather than cancelled.

We have seen significant increases to legal demand in our catchment. We have seen increases of up to 20% in the overall total clients assisted for Armidale and Moree, 20% being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, overall 26% reported experiencing family or domestic violence and homelessness had increased to 8%. In addition, our statistics showed that we were exceeding our targets substantially, as our staff have worked overtime and extended their diaries to meet this increase in legal need..

As the financial year comes to an end, we find ourselves in a position of impending uncertainty. Previous cuts to our funding have begun to impact on service delivery, leading to a decrease in outreach circuit locations and frequency. The addition of the Moree office, has led to increased assistance specifically to the Moree community, including the extension of the Court Liaison Program, but also to our catchment community at large, with notable increased assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This project will cease in mid-September if further funding cannot be obtained, much to the detriment of some of the most vulnerable within our catchment.

As the current funding cycle draws to an end, we are hopeful that our previously slashed funding can be restored to allow for continued or better yet, increased service delivery options.

As I bid farewell to the office for 12 months, I feel content that we have sound systems and practices in place, optimistic about the future of the Service and the ability of our team, but also a little nostalgic and sad to be missing out on opportunities, events and growth of an organisation I feel inherently connected to. However, I am grateful to have the opportunity and support of my workplace to take time to begin my family and I look forward to my return in the new year.

**Terri King**  
**Principal Solicitor**



# Coordinator's Report

*I was once asked what sets the community legal sector apart from other business enterprises. My response was simple - "Those enterprises make the money, our sector makes the difference".*

This year NNWCLS has certainly continued to make a difference in people's lives during, what has been, another difficult year living with COVID-19. I'm immensely proud of my workmates who, despite the challenges on service delivery, have continued to perform strongly; working toward our vision to provide everyone with legal service opportunities.

This year is the 2nd year of our 3-year funding cycle and is a funding cycle that represents less money to our Centre than in previous years. However, we continued to provide our extensive service delivery program throughout our catchment (even during lockdown), ensuring no regions within our footprint got left behind.

The Cashflow Boosts received from Government this year came as welcome relief to our budget, while new funding grant opportunities from the Attorney General, The Hon. Mr Mark Speakman, assisted in addressing our increased demand resulting from COVID. This new money from the Attorney General saw the addition of a Social Worker to our organisation, plus the opportunity to upgrade digital processes for triaging. Furthermore, the approval to carry over State One Off Funding by Legal Aid NSW allowed our new branch office in Moree to open, further assisting in meeting the increased demand on our Service.

**How do we measure demand increase:** DATA IS EVERYTHING: When I speak of meeting increased demand, this is where our back-of-house processes come into



play as we evaluate our data collected from stakeholders, along with our own data, to inform us of our path moving forward. While this information shapes our direction for service delivery, the data from our Client Surveys provides information on the quality of service we are providing.

Firstly, our region was demonstrating some alarming increases in the need for Psychology/Counselling assistance as mental health issues were on the rise since COVID-19. There were real concerns with an increase in the risk of homelessness for our community, while the risk of family/domestic violence had significantly increased as the difficulty in breaking the cycle of violence from lockdown was occurring. We were informed that legal problems were being ignored while financial survival was a priority.

**How did we respond:** Our Principal Solicitor, Terri King, increased our connection to other service providers, even during lockdown, to promote the work that we do for the abovementioned demographics at high risk. I corresponded with all Psychologists/Counsellors in our region informing that more of our community than ever before will be reaching out to them for help, and I asked that they warmly refer clients with legal issues to our Service. I heavily promoted our work via radio throughout our catchment, while reminding of our work in the F/DV space. Terri increased our reach



through our Facebook page and our website. The services of our Social Worker were further promoted to fill the gaps for free mental health support, guidance and advocacy in our region.

**What were the results:** Our own data collected, as demand was increasing, was astounding and reflected the evaluation from Stakeholders and further informed us that our promotional work was spot-on to the issues of our catchment. We saw significant increases across the recognised at-risk demographics while our overall client numbers increased by 20%.

Moreover, referrals from other community support services increased by 30% while referrals from Counselling Services increased by 482 client services. This data captured demonstrates that we work flexibly with the changing landscape of our clients' needs, and we effectively promote our Services to the current trends and legal need.

**What did our clients say:** Our Client Surveys, and tracking the life-cycle of each participating client, gave us valuable insights into our work. We learned that our staff's interaction with clients again this year was of high standard for both interpersonal engagement and legal services provided. Clients' heartfelt, additional comments at the end of Surveys was a wonderful reminder that we are a lifeline for most of our clients and, although we track our statistics for our Service direction, our clients' positive experience is our goal.

As we move through this funding cycle our sector starts the conversations of what our next funding cycle may look like for Centres. We have learned that the funding made available to Legal Service Providers may remain the same, however

its allocation may be through Tender for at least one stream of funding, while another stream may be on a commissioning process. Our Peak Body, CLCNSW has attempted to gain an understanding of how our last cycle was allocated, knowing that the matrix used to distribute the funds is paramount for understanding the next allocation, and an invaluable tool when Centres set their targets. It is feared that a "one-size-fits-all" approach (that is outcomes orientated) may be adopted, which doesn't speak to the varying legal needs of, for example, a rural and regional Centre compared to our city sister Centres. We will watch this space very closely and source any additional funding that our criteria meets.

Nearing the end of this year we were honoured to have the Community Legal Centres Program managers from Legal Aid NSW (virtually) visit our Centre. It was clear that Mia Zahra and her team held our Centre in high regard. Mia expressed her appreciation in our openness of Service operations to herself and her team, and she extended congratulations to our organisation on our ever-increasing successes.

In closing, I wish to extend to my workmates the highest of praise for tremendous work achieved this year. Our ability to remain flexible in the face of adversity that is COVID-19, and thrive in this current difficult climate, speaks to each and everyone's dedication to your position and to the part you play within NNWCLS.

This year we did make a difference!

**Sandy Watt**  
Coordinator





# The Work of our Legal Service

**The North & North West Community Legal Service Inc is a free and confidential legal advice and assistance service.**

We provide advice, assistance and support to people living in the New England and the north and north west region of NSW. We help those who have least access to the legal system and the least power to help themselves. We aim to help clients to be better informed of their legal and social rights and responsibilities and of the options available to them.

Our office is based in Armidale, with the recent opening of a branch office in Moree. We provide legal advice, information, casework and some Court Representation. We also operate an extensive Outreach Circuit Program throughout our catchment, supporting a population base of approximately 181,555 people over an area of 99,144 square kilometres.



Our Outreach Circuit consists of monthly visits to Walcha, Werris Creek, Quirindi, Gunnedah, Narrabri, Wee Waa, Inverell, Glen Innes, Glen Innes Correctional Centre,

Tenterfield, Guyra and the University of New England. While our clinic in Tamworth is run on a fortnightly basis as the need is high in this region and more frequent visits are required. We operate 2 separate clinics while visiting Tamworth, Inverell and Glen Innes to ensure ease of accessibility to residences at either ends of these towns.

Our Outreach Program is far-reaching! In travel time alone, our Legal Staff spends up to 41 hours every month in the car enroute to their clinics. This is certainly a commitment from our Solicitors giving these community members the opportunity to have face to face appointment time for legal advice.

However, when face to face appointments aren't possible for clients, we offer telephone appointments to everyone in our catchment taking away any possible barrier that may impede our communities' opportunity to seek legal help. Furthermore, home, hospital, or nursing home visits are made available to our most vulnerable clients ensuring accessibility to everyone.





In addition to our Outreach Program, we also operate a Court Liaison Program in Armidale every Monday on list day. Because of its success, and the benefits to Court users on the day, we have extended this Program to Tenterfield each month.

NNWCLS has expanded significantly since 1993 and when considering Service growth, much consideration is given to the vulnerable demographic of our regions as well as indications of high domestic and family violence statistics in communities. We ensure that, for these regions, we have a prominent presence and an accessible location, while maximising promotional exposure keeping everyone well-informed of the work that we do. Stakeholder feedback also forms a large part of this research as we work collaboratively with other organisations to maximise services for our clients while strengthening referral pathways throughout our catchment.

Expanding our Service to our vulnerable communities is paramount. We've recognised that legal problems are particularly prevalent among socially disadvantaged groups and are especially elevated for people with multiple types of socioeconomic disadvantage, as our catchment statistics suggest. Research indicates that it is more likely that people experiencing multiple disadvantages are also experiencing multiple legal problems, confirming that our Generalist legal service is a perfect fit for our catchment.

In addition to advice and representation services, we also offer legal education sessions to our communities and groups. Our aim to increase people's knowledge and understanding of the law and their legal rights demonstrates the holistic approach we strive for in legal service delivery.



**TRAVELLING**  
up to —  
**34,000** kms   
each year

# COVID19 – Ongoing flexibility

As COVID-19 continued to move throughout our country again this year, with cases worldwide on the rise, the flexibility of service delivery that we demonstrated last year served us well again this year.

As directed by NSW Health orders we continued working from home until January 2021, after which time we transitioned from our virtual service delivery back to face to face operations. The efficiency that staff demonstrated when first moving to working from home was equally as impressive when opening our doors again to our community. Our electronic systems that were swiftly created while working from home were seamlessly morphed when returning to the office.

Since returning to the office we saw a significant increase in demand on our services with increases across all service types, compared to a 2-year average ie:

- Ph advices increased by 132 appoints.
- Representation increased by 172
- Court services increased by 12
- Legal Tasks up by 47 services

New policies and workplans were created to guide the management and safety of our staff and clients as we resumed face to face work. We registered our organisation with Service NSW for QR Code check-in to assist with contract tracing should an outbreak occur in Armidale.

There is no doubting the new challenges that staff and businesses face while living with COVID-19. However, with our passionate and well-synergised team, that is willing to go above and beyond to provide our community with ongoing legal support, no matter the working environment, will always see our community connected to free legal assistance. After all, that has been our purpose and objective for the past 28 years!

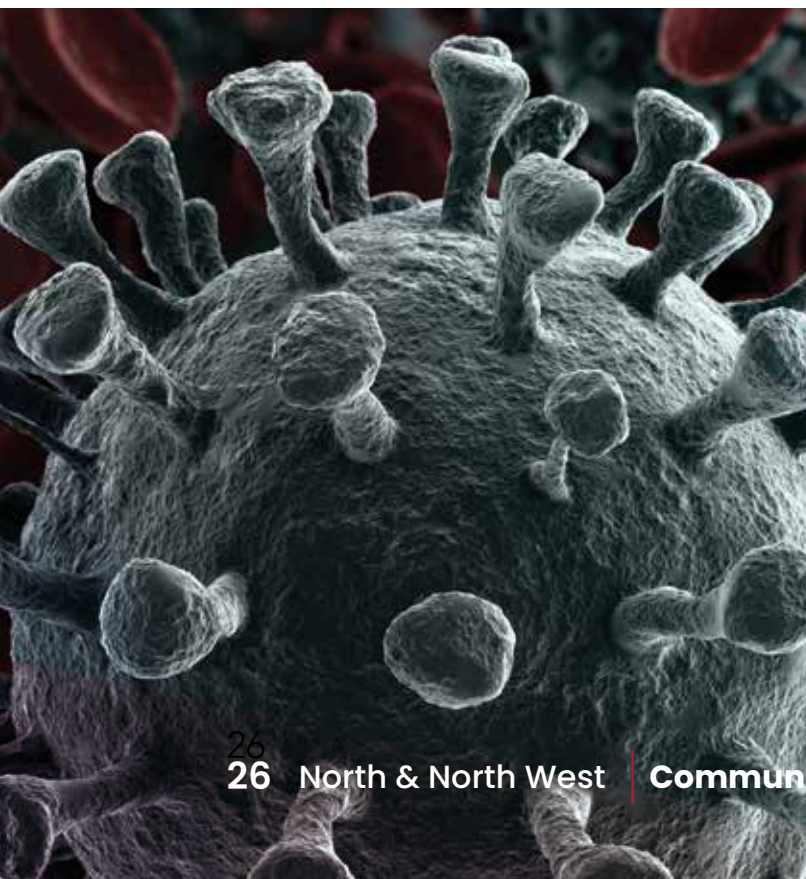
*Congratulations everyone!*

## LOOKING AHEAD:

Cases spiked again in NSW, which saw our region given 6 hours to comply with stay-at-home orders from 7th August 2021. Impressively our staff were on the front foot, and our virtual doors were ready to be opened come 9:00am.

## CURRENT GLOBAL STATISTIC OVERVIEW:

Worldwide confirmed cases to this year are 225.02 million, with 4.6 million recorded deaths. Australia recorded 75,324 cases, with 1,098 deaths. (Global estimations as of 14th September 2021, according to World Health Organization Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard)







# Our Statistic Profile

In 2020/2021 the North & North West Community Legal Service:

assistance to  
**774**  
clients



 Provided referrals  
and information to  
**897**  
clients

Opened  
**520**  
New representation services



Closed  
**452**  
Representation services



Engaged in  
**4**  
Law Reform activities



**577**  
legal advices



Provided court  
representation to  
**36**  
clients



Provided  
**30**  
Legal education projects



Provided legal tasks to  
**72**  
clients

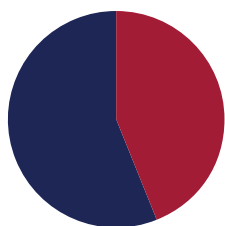


Engaged  
**59**  
stakeholders for  
planning purposes

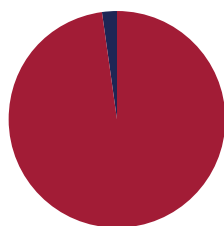




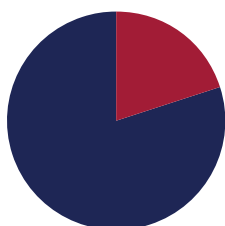
## Of these clients assisted..



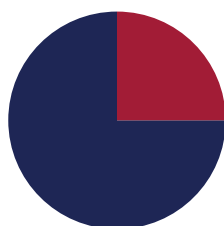
**57%**  
Female clients  
**43%**  
Male clients



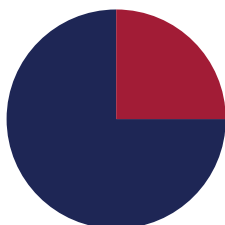
**98%**  
reported to be  
experiencing  
financial  
disadvantage



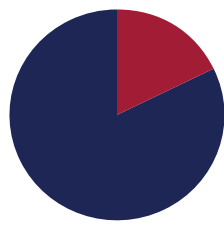
**20%**  
Identified as  
Aboriginal or Torres  
Strait Islander



**31%**  
reported to have  
a disability

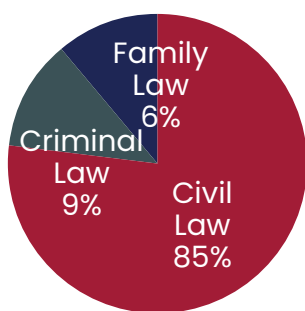


**29%**  
reported to be  
experiencing  
Domestic/Family  
Violence



**8%**  
were at risk of  
homelessness

## Representation Services given by Law Type..



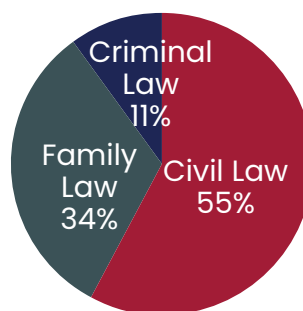
### Top problem within Law type:-

**Family Law** – Parenting arrangements

**Civil Law** – Wills and Estates

**Criminal Law** – Traffic and  
vehicle Regulatory offences

## Advices by Law Type..



### Top problem within Law type:-

**Family Law** – Parenting arrangements

**Civil Law** – Domestic Violence  
Protection Orders


**Criminal Law** – Traffic and  
vehicle Regulatory offences



# Our Statistic Profile – Moree


assistance to   
**174** clients

 Provided referrals  
and information to  
**237** clients

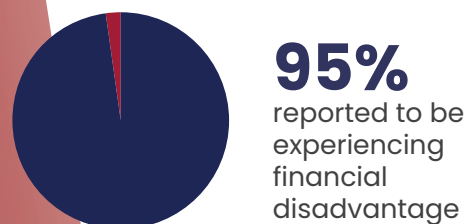
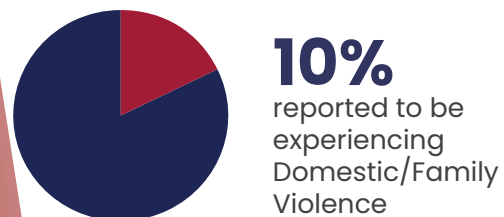
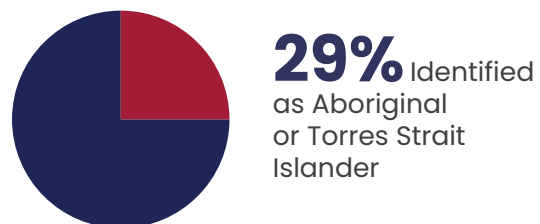
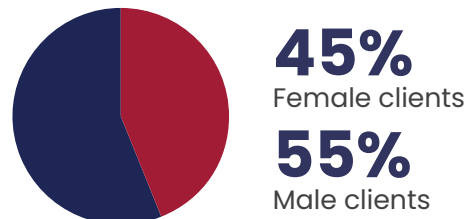
**166**   
legal advices

Provided court  
representation to  
**5** clients 

Opened  
**101**   
New representation services

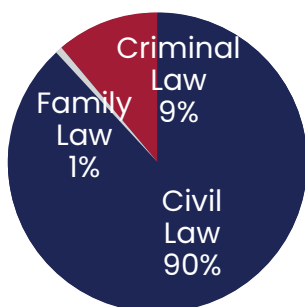
Closed  
**74**   
Representation services

## Of these clients assisted..

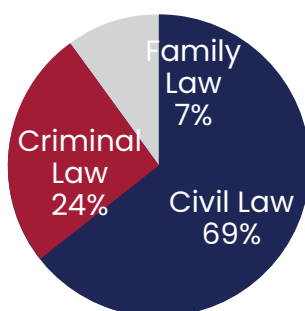




## Representation Services given by Law Type..



## Advices by Law Type..



# Additional services through Commonwealth COVID-19 Funding

Our Service was successful in securing additional funding from the Commonwealth Government in the Government's response to assist legal service providers when responding to increased demands due to COVID-19. Our funding application, for 2 projects, was approved by the NSW Attorney General, The Hon. Mr Mark Speakman, and was administered through Legal Aid NSW's Community Legal Centres Program.

## Project 1: Social Worker

This new position in our Service is a perfect extension to the work of our legal team. Our Social Worker works closely with the Solicitors, supporting clients' wellbeing with crisis intervention and counselling, right through to resolution of clients' legal problems. Offering guidance with housing, financial management, parenting and mental health support has been beneficial meeting increased demand, in these areas, since COVID-19.

Of our clients seeking social work assistance 73% had indicated that they were living with a mental illness. We provided those clients with between 20 and 50 hours each of mental health support and counselling, including trauma counselling. While 100% of clients assisted reported to be experiencing financial disadvantage, demonstrates a significant need in our community for this valuable free service.

This Project is due to expire in March 2022. We are grateful to the Hon. Mr Mark Speakman for his recognition of this much-needed service in our community, and his approval of our grant in the Frontline Services category. We look forward to connecting and assisting more of our community through to the completion of the Project.

## Project 2: Information & Communications Technology (ICT)

We were successful in receiving funding from the ICT Project and Enhancements category. This funding assisted in expanding our website to include a "Request a Free Appointment" page, where clients may commence the process of securing their appointment with our Service. Many clients take advantage of this efficient means in contacting us, which becomes particularly useful during times of high demand on our telephone system.

[Request a Free Appointment](#)

[BOOK NOW!](#)





# NNWCLS at a glance

As a Generalist Service we ensure our advice and casework guidelines reflect the needs of our catchment. Our Stakeholder and community feedback assists with current recognition of the areas of practice required, and we shape NNWCLS to meet the needs of our clients.

## Our work in the area of:

### • Domestic and Family Violence

Clients who indicated that they were experiencing D/FV presented with the following top problem types:

- » Apprehended Violence Orders
- » Child contacts
- » Family or Domestic Violence Orders
- » Divorce/separation
- » Parenting Plan/Parenting Mediation

24% of our overall work this year was to clients experiencing D/FV

### • Family Law issues

We predominately assist clients in the Family Law space with:

- » Parenting arrangements
- » Divorce/Separation
- » Domestic/Family Violence

59% of Family Law issues are for advice and representation in Parenting arrangements

### • Wills, POA & Enduring Guardianship

These documents can be drafted for anyone living in our catchment, with restrictions in place for Wills involving real property. However, we continue to assist clients on Centrelink benefits who own their own homes and find it difficult to afford to have these documents drafted. This is assessed on a case-by-case basis.

414 Wills, POA and Enduring Guardianship documents were drafted

### • Consumer complaints

Just one example of a positive outcome in our consumer complaints work this year, came when a car dealer was ordered by NCAT to repair a newly arrived migrant's second-hand car in a proper and workman like manner

7% of our overall Civil Law work is directed to Consumer Complaints

- **Employment and workplace issues**

We assisted clients with workplace bullying, unfair dismissal, general protection claims and underpayments.

**10% of our Civil Law legal advice assists clients with Employment issues**

- **Credit and debt issues**

We are able to assist clients with varied credit and debt issues, including money being owed to them, money being owed by them, and bankruptcy. In response to COVID, we expanded our guidelines to allow our Service to assist sole traders with debt recovery matters. And we provided advice to clients who breached the Public Health Orders during COVID lockdown.

**We have assisted 86 clients with bankruptcy, debt recovery and money owed to/by our clients**

- **Discrimination**

Several clients with disability experienced discrimination. We assisted them with formal applications to the Anti-Discrimination Board of NSW.

**We assisted 8 clients with Discrimination matters this year**

- **Neighbourhood disputes**

Our work with clients in this area is largely for disputes about fencing. However, generalised neighbour complaints regarding noise and overhanging trees continue to be a constant every year.

**4% of Civil Law advice assists clients with neighbourhood disputes**

- **Traffic Offences**

We represented many clients for licence appeals this year including many young drivers having lost their licence due to speeding offences. Representations from our Service led to reduced penalties for our clients and a more positive Court experience.

**40% of our Court work was assisting clients with traffic and vehicle regulatory offenses**

- **Criminal Law**

We saw an increase in drug related criminal offences this year.

**9.6% of our overall assistance is for Criminal Law**



- **Apprehended Violence Orders**

We helped clients vary their AVO conditions due to the change of their personal circumstances. In addition, we also represented clients for their non-contestable AVO matters.

**14% of AVO work was assistance in Court**

- **Victims Support**

We assist clients who have experienced an act of violence, including domestic and family violence, sexual and physical assaults, to make an Application for Support with Victims Services.

**Victims Support can assist with counselling and financial assistance**

- **Youth issues**

Work with youth this year was:

- » 44% Criminal Law
- » 44% Civil Law
- » 12% Family Law

## Top 10 Problem types for total client numbers this year..

1. Wills, Power of Attorney, Enduring Guardianship
2. Family or Domestic Violence Orders
3. Child contacts and contact orders
4. Road, traffic and motor vehicle regulatory offences
5. Certifying/witnessing documents – JP services
6. Divorce/Separation
7. Immigration Other Visa
8. Parenting Plan
9. Credit and Debt issues
10. Employment Law issues





# Court Liaison Program

This Program sees Stanley Tao attending the Armidale Local Court each Monday on criminal list day. While Niel van der Linde attends the Tenterfield Local Court on criminal list day each month. Our overarching objective of our Court Liaison Program is to promote access to justice in our catchment.

From a practical perspective, our Solicitors direct court users to the Duty Solicitor and assists them in their court experience on the day, e.g. welcome them to court; make sure they know where to go; ask if they have a solicitor etc. Our Solicitors may advise/represent clients in matters that fall outside of the duty solicitor guidelines or for those who cannot afford a private practitioner.

Consultation with our Stakeholders during our Strategic Planning process indicated that defendants of ADVO's would benefit from education about their Orders to prevent any risk of breach. This education has become an important part of this Program as an increase in breaches is reported through the NSW Recorded Crime Statistics in our region.

## **Of the matters that we assist through**



## **these Courts:**

- Domestic Violence Protection Orders = 43%
- Traffic and vehicle regulatory offences = 41%
- Illicit drug offences = 10%
- Other Civil = 6%

Increasing people's understanding of the law and their legal rights



# Duty Lawyer Service

Our Solicitors do represent clients in court on certain matters, but the Service is not currently part of the duty lawyer service.

## Community Legal Education

Community Legal Education (CLE) is an important part of our yearly Strategic Planning. The purpose of CLE is to increase our community's knowledge of particular areas of law that would be specific to their personal needs, or to their organisation's upskilling.

Our Solicitors are passionate about educating our community, but not only does each CLE session educate its groups, it also becomes a great introduction of them individually as Practitioners. Participants become comfortable through an interactive method of education and feel confident to make contact with our Service, having already met their Solicitor.

### Some of the CLE's for this year included:

- Wills, Power of Attorney, Enduring Guardianship to
  - » Health Wise Armidale – Dementia Carers Group
  - » Aquatic Centre Narrabri – Parkinsons' Support Group
  - » Estate Planning Day at Ashford
  - » Wee Waa Hospital – Nursing staff
- Drivers Licences and Young People – Narrabri Library

A mode of CLE that is unique to our Community Legal Centre is our radio program "Law Matters". Our Solicitors, Niel van der Linde and Prue Bolton host this program on 2ARM 92.1FM three times each month. The Solicitors talk on many





and varied topics which include Family Law matters, Consumer Law Matters, traffic and driving offences, ADVO's, domestic and family violence issues, neighbourhood disputes, bankruptcy, debts, refugees, social media and human rights interest.

The radio station broadcasts to a potential audience of 30,000 people. The topics not only inform people of their rights and responsibilities but encourage listeners to consider perceptions of legal issues.

Now that 2ARM FM streams all their programs online, no matter where you are, you can tune in to Niel and Prue and "Law Matters".

We can also broadcast our Program from remote broadcasting equipment from our office so that, during COVID-19 lockdown orders, we may still provide this program to our community. Some of our clients say they listen out for every broadcast to learn something new about their legal rights.



Our Facebook activity increased this year, which saw an increase in reach and engagement from Facebook users.

While we promoted our Service work throughout our catchment, our local community events, state and nation-wide commemorations, it was the client appointments that eventuated from these community-interest stories that aligned with our outset goals of posting.

This increased Facebook activity had a flow-on effect to increased traffic to our website by up to 54%. With Family Law, Estate Planning and AVO's being our top problem types for appointments made from clients visiting our website. Our new website feature – "Request a free appointment", has proven to be most efficient, particularly during times of increased demand. From this point clients can provide a significant amount of information allowing for a swift process when our administration staff call to confirm the appointment.



Reaching our community in every way possible to educate







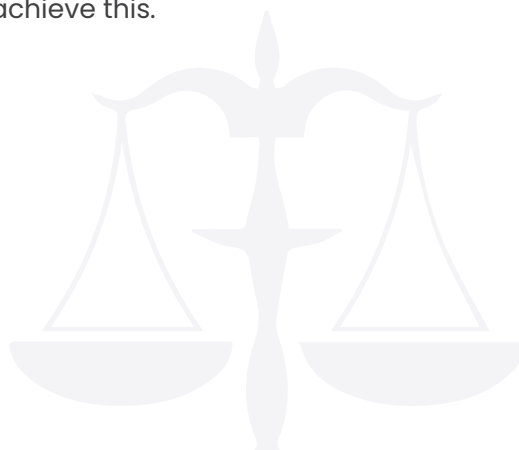
# Community Groups & EXPO involvement

**Our staff attended and spoke to Interagency meetings throughout our catchment to initiate discussions on how best our Service can meet the needs of each organisation's clients.**

Our Solicitors participate in many Interagency meetings throughout the year, either face to face or via zoom. These meetings are such an important part of our Service's framework, as referral pathways from other organisations strengthens our communities access to free legal services. This collaborative practice also enriches the work with our clients when referrals from our Service to others may result in swift resolutions to our clients' issues.

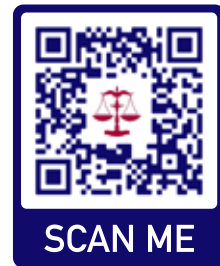
This year we have been involved with Armidale Interagencies including Armidale Domestic/Family Violence Steering Committee, Armidale Interagency, Family Law Pathways Network, Community Drug Action Team, Multicultural Interagency and the COVID Snapshot Wellbeing Committee. In Moree we were involved with the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery and in Tamworth the Community Directory Meeting.

Participation in Community Expo's is a great, cost-effective means to promote the work that our Service does, and it's an excellent opportunity for us to meet with the community in a relaxed atmosphere. It is a wonderful introduction of our Service, and feedback from clients has indicated that putting a face to a name made walking through our doors, with sometimes overwhelming legal problems, an easier experience. Our Service is passionate about making this process easier for clients, and community engagement is the greatest way to achieve this.



## This year we have participated in the following Community Expo's:

- Gunnedah Youth Expo
- Moree Youth Homelessness Matters Expo
- Neighbourhood Centre Week Expo in Tamworth Coledale Centre
- Disruption Family Violence Program – Centacare
- Onsite NAIDOC celebrations (due to COVID restrictions)



Building strong  
community connections  
while strengthening  
referral pathways







# Law Reform

This year we engaged in 4 Law Reform Activities:

- Release Inquest Police Response to Domestic Violence
- Endorsed open letter – calling for independent review to Victims Services changes
- Completed open letter to Federal Government – Stop cuts to homelessness services
- Drug Reform letters sent to local Parliamentary Members

# Access and Equity

Our Service has policies and practices in place to promote our work and to ensure access, equity and non-discrimination is achieved for our clients, and potential clients. Recognition of potential barriers for our demographic, and providing a solution, forms a large part of our assessment of our access and equity to our community.

## Our work removing barriers:

- Our Home Visit Policy: Elderly, disabled or very unwell clients require our legal team to visit them in hospital, at their nursing home or in their homes, to give advice or to sign or witness documents.
- We provided the Automated Telephone Interpreting Service (ATIS), as funded by Legal Aid NSW, to our clients who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse. This year 41% of our CALD clients received an interpreter to assist with their appointment.



- We made available the newly regulated video conferencing service for clients when witnessing documents was required during COVID-19 lockdown

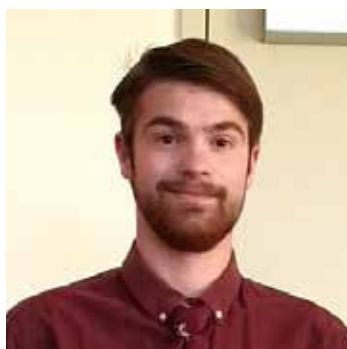


Removing  
barriers for all...



# Volunteers

Terri and Stanley worked together this year coordinating and securing the assistance of enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers from the Law School at the University of New England. Iain Sutherland and Kaitlyn Scott have been a valuable part of our team this year, assisting the Solicitors with research and administrative tasks. We are grateful for their contribution and look forward to their continued assistance next year.



**Iain Sutherland**



**Kaitlyn Scott**

## Staff Training & Development

Our staff participated in training relevant to their type of work, be it administrative or legal.

### **This year's training included:**

- Time Management Training hosted by Training and Coaching Solutions of Woolwich NSW
- Business Continuity Planning (COVID-19)
- Anxiety and Depression Webinar by neuroscience educator Nathan Wallis – through Family Law Pathways Networks Australia
- Grant Writing Workshop – Department of Communities and Justice
- Meaningful conversations at work – Community Legal Centres Queensland
- Centrelink Debt – Legal Aid NSW
- Traffic, parking and COVID-19 fines – Redfern Legal Centre
- Writing Law Reform submissions – Legal Aid NSW
- COVID AGM Regulations – Kaizen Synergy
- Modern slavery and anti-trafficking laws – Women's Legal Services
- Child Inclusive and Developmentally Focused Dispute Resolution – Family Law Pathways
- Yarn up Indigenous training – CLCNSW
- Wills seminar – College of Law
- COVID events and QR Codes – Kaizen Synergy
- First Aid Training including CPR – Armidale & Moree Community College
- Flood Insurance – Financial Rights Legal Centre
- Stolen Generation Statutory Scheme – Legal Aid NSW
- Workplace rights for domestic violence leave – Women's Legal Services



# Case Studies

## Unfair Dismissal

A client was employed on a casual basis with a retail company. This client had suffered back injury whilst at work and was directed to take time from work by her doctor. Upon returning to work, the client did not receive any further shifts. The client made enquires with her employer as to the lack of shifts and employment was then terminated. Our client felt that she was terminated due to her back injury and was not happy with the way in which the employer treated her.

We assisted the client in making an unfair dismissal application to the Fair Work Commission. After the conciliation, the employer agreed to pay the client for the time that they had not offered her further shifts, to provide her with a statement of service, and to pay for her medical expenses.

The client was happy with the outcome as she was able to meet her financial obligations, use the statement of service to apply for further employment opportunities and eventually gain different employment.

## License Suspension Appeal

A client had his licence suspended for a period of 3 months. He was required to drive as part of his employment and his employer had to end his employment if he did not have a licence. This caused the client much concern about his financial situation.

We filed an appeal of the licence suspension on behalf of the client and assisted him with the relevant submissions, courses, and materials for his appeal hearing. We represented the client in the Local Court and his appeal was upheld. The client expressed great relief and gratitude for our assistance.

## Parenting Matter

A client had separated from her husband who had been convicted of child sexual offences some time ago. She had two young children of the relationship. After some time, the father wanted to spend time with the children, but the client was not comfortable with this, given the father's conviction. The father initiated a mediation, with a threat to take the matter to the Family Court. The mediator requested that the client obtain legal advice and assistance at the mediation, but the client could not afford such.

We provided the client with advice and agreed to assist her at the mediation. Although a delicate matter, the matter was resolved to the client's satisfaction and a parenting plan was prepared as a result.

## Youth and family violence

A year 12 student, who was living independently due to family violence issues, had her provisional licence suspended. Because she was living independently, she required her licence to travel to school and to her part time job, on which she relied to support herself.

We assisted the client with a licence suspension appeal. The appeal was successful, but the Court still required her to pay the associated fine. We then assisted the client with a Work Development Order which allowed her to pay off the fine via attending approved counselling sessions.

The client was able to continue living independently and to support herself financially. The approved counselling session not only alleviated the financial burden of the fine but also further assisted her in dealing with her trauma associated with family violence.

### Consumer Matter

A newly arrived migrant client, of limited financial means, attended our Service after she had purchased a faulty second-hand car from a car dealer. The dealer refused to correspond with the client after she asked that they repair the problems with the car.

We assisted the client in lodging a claim with the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal and then also assisted her at the subsequent hearing. After considering our submissions and other materials, the Tribunal ordered the dealer to repair the car.

The client was very happy with the outcome as she was of limited financial means and could not afford to pay for the repairs.

### Drug Offence

A female Indigenous client, who was caring for a child diagnosed with ADHD, attended on our Service after being charged with driving under the influence of drugs. The client relied heavily on her licence for her employment, caring for her child and for general day to day errands.

We assisted the client in the Local Court and, after making submissions on her behalf, the Court allowed her to keep her licence and did not impose a conviction.

The client was delighted that she could keep her driver licence.

### Wills, Power of Attorney & Enduring Guardianship – Hospital visit

A concerned family member contacted our Service on a Friday afternoon, regarding Wills, Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship. She advised that her elderly sister was in Hospital with a heart condition and that she had never had a Will, Power of Attorney or Enduring Guardianship documents drafted.

The family were told by the Doctors that their sister was going to be flown to Sydney at any time for a pacemaker.

Given the urgency of this matter our Service responded immediately.

Our Solicitor and Legal Support Officer were at the Armidale Hospital taking the sister's instructions within half an hour of the phone call. Keeping in mind that this elderly lady could be flown to Sydney at any moment, the documents were drafted that afternoon.

Our Solicitor and Legal Support Officer returned to the Hospital and the elderly lady was able to understand and sign her Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship documents.

However, due to stress and exhaustion that this lady was experiencing, our Solicitor was unable to confirm capacity for the Will to be signed.

Our elderly client was flown to Sydney, and she received her pacemaker the next day. A few days later the family member contacted our Service to let us know of her sister's return to the local Hospital. Our Solicitor and Legal Support Officer attended the Hospital, and our Solicitor was able to confirm capacity and our client was able to understand and sign her Will.

Unfortunately, the elderly lady died 2 days later. Her family were eternally grateful for our quick response.







# Highlights for the Year

This year has certainly been filled with special occasions for our staff. While we celebrate the successes of the Service within our Annual Report, we must also acknowledge the personal highlights of our amazing team.

## Terri is a new Mum...

Our Principal Solicitor, Terri King, has had an exceptionally big year. She and her partner, Joey, were married and then on 22nd July 2021, their gorgeous little girl, Everleigh Grace Coleman, was born. Terri and Joey are successfully settling into life without sleep, and baby Everleigh is thriving!



## Niel is a Dad, again...

Our Solicitor, Niel van der Linde, has become a Dad, again. On 27th July 2021, Niel's wife Flick gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Jack Gerrard van der Linde. Jack is a little brother for Leon. Look out Flick, in years to come, if both boys take after their Dad!



## Natasha is a new Mum ...

Our Administrative Assistant, Natasha Carey and her partner Andrew welcomed their little baby girl, Alissa Macgregor into the world on 24th September 2021. Alissa didn't give Natasha any time to rest, arriving the day after she finished up with us for her parenting leave. Both Tash and Alissa are doing great!



# Support

**Our Service chooses to bank with Regional Australia Bank, Armidale. We have been a member of this financial institution for many years.**

In 2015 we became a member of their Community Partnership Program. The 13 year Program, now supporting almost 1,600 registered groups and causes, allows Regional Australia Bank members to select a local community group, such as ourselves, that they wish to support and in doing so Regional Australia Bank will donate 0.75% of the members' average annual balance to that community group on behalf of the member.

At the end of this financial year we were presented with a Certificate from the Regional Australia Bank and a credit bonus deposited into our account to the value of \$5,038.45. This Program certainly is proof of the Regional Australia Bank's commitment to its members and its community. We appreciated being involved and receiving this support through this Program, that in total has now allocated to the community more than \$2 million in donations.



**NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**  
**ABN 35 931 742 739**

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**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**



**NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**  
**ABN 35 931 742 739**

**STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue	2	1,018,175	829,676
Other income	3	41,141	68,864
Interest revenue calculated using the effective interest method		1,600	6,615
Administration costs		(85,336)	(102,517)
Depreciation expense	4	(64,896)	(60,506)
Employee benefits expenses		(913,955)	(744,081)
Occupancy expenses		(21,628)	(26,908)
Other expenses		(14,963)	(27,279)
<b>Deficit before income tax expense</b>		<b>(39,862)</b>	<b>(56,136)</b>
Income tax expense	1(a)	-	-
<b>Deficit after income tax expense</b>		<b>(39,862)</b>	<b>(56,136)</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive deficit for the year</b>		<b>(39,862)</b>	<b>(56,136)</b>

**NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**  
**ABN 35 931 742 739**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	505,216	653,991
Trade and other receivables	6	12,500	62,500
Financial assets	7	249,828	-
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>767,544</b>	<b>716,491</b>
<b>NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	17,980	34,380
Right-of-use assets	9	215,197	262,118
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<b>233,177</b>	<b>296,498</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>1,000,721</b>	<b>1,012,989</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Trade and other payables	10	11,551	18,410
Provisions	11	317,706	250,441
Lease liabilities	12	35,185	44,311
Other liabilities	13	350	350
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>364,792</b>	<b>313,512</b>
<b>NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Lease liabilities	12	188,867	222,642
Provisions	11	20,694	10,605
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<b>209,561</b>	<b>233,247</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>574,353</b>	<b>546,759</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>426,368</b>	<b>466,230</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Accumulated funds		426,368	466,230
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>		<b>426,368</b>	<b>466,230</b>

NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Accumulated Funds \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2019	522,366	522,366
Total comprehensive deficit	<u>(56,136)</u>	<u>(56,136)</u>
Balance at 30 June 2020	<u>466,230</u>	<u>466,230</u>
Total comprehensive deficit	<u>(39,862)</u>	<u>(39,862)</u>
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u>426,368</u>	<u>426,368</u>



NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Receipts from customers		1,211,006	919,066
Interest received		1,600	6,615
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,055,245)	(938,715)
Interest paid		(11,832)	(13,787)
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	14 (b)	<u>145,529</u>	<u>(26,821)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Payment for investments		<u>(249,828)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(249,828)</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Repayments of lease liabilities		<u>(44,476)</u>	<u>(38,384)</u>
Net cash used in financing activities		<u>(44,476)</u>	<u>(38,384)</u>
Net decrease in cash held		<u>(148,775)</u>	<u>(65,205)</u>
Cash at the beginning of the financial year		<u>653,991</u>	<u>719,196</u>
Cash at the end of the financial year	14 (a)	<u>505,216</u>	<u>653,991</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

**Note 1: Statement of Significant Accounting Policies**

The principal accounting policies adopted in the preparation of the financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

**Basis of Preparation**

In the committee's opinion, the incorporated association is not a reporting entity because there are no users dependent on general purpose financial statements.

These are special purpose financial statements that have been prepared for the purposes of complying with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 and New South Wales legislation the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 and associated regulations. The committee have determined that the accounting policies adopted are appropriate to meet the needs of the members of North & North West Community Legal Service Inc.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the recognition and measurement requirements specified by the Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') and the disclosure requirements of AASB 101 'Presentation of Financial Statements', AASB 107 'Statement of Cash Flows', AASB 108 'Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors', AASB 1048 'Interpretation of Standards' and AASB 1054 'Australian Additional Disclosures', as appropriate for not-for-profit oriented entities.

Historical cost convention

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Critical accounting estimates

The preparation of the financial statements requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the incorporated association's accounting policies. The areas involving a higher degree of judgement or complexity, or areas where assumptions and estimates are significant to the financial statements, are disclosed in note 1.

**(a) Income Tax**

The committee consider that the association is exempt from income tax under Division 50-5 of the Income Tax Assessment Act of 1997.

**(b) Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with financial institutions, other short-term, highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value. For the statement of cash flows presentation purposes, cash and cash equivalents also includes bank overdrafts, which are shown within borrowings in current liabilities on the statement of financial position.

**(c) Plant and Equipment**

Plant and equipment is stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and impairment. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to the acquisition of the items.

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis to write off the net cost of each item of property, plant and equipment (excluding land) over their expected useful lives as follows:

Plant and Equipment	15% - 25%
Motor Vehicles	25%
Office Furniture and Equipment	7.5% - 30%

The residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when there is no future economic benefit to the company. Gains and losses between the carrying amount and the disposal proceeds are taken to profit or loss.

**(d) Right-of-use assets**

A right-of-use asset is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The right-of-use asset is measured at cost, which comprises the initial amount of the lease liability, adjusted for, as applicable, any lease payments made at or before the commencement date net of any lease incentives received, any initial direct costs incurred, and, except where included in the cost of inventories, an estimate of costs expected to be incurred for dismantling and removing the underlying asset, and restoring the site or asset.

Right-of-use assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the asset, whichever is the shorter. Where the company expects to obtain ownership of the leased asset at the end of the lease term, the depreciation is over its estimated useful life. Right-of use assets are subject to impairment or adjusted for any remeasurement of lease liabilities.

The company has elected not to recognise a right-of-use asset and corresponding lease liability for short-term leases with terms of 12 months or less and leases of low-value assets. Lease payments on these assets are expensed to profit or loss as incurred.

**(e) Economic Dependence**

North & North West Community Legal Service Inc. is dependent on government funding, for the majority of its revenue used to operate the business. At the date of this report the Committee has no reason to believe the government will not continue to support North & North West Community Legal Service Inc.

**(f) Impairment of Assets**

At the end of each reporting period, the company assesses whether there is any indication that an asset may be impaired. The assessment will include considering external sources of information and internal sources of information. If such an indication exists, an impairment test is carried out on the asset by comparing the recoverable amount of the asset, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs to sell and value in use to the asset's carrying value. Any excess of the asset's carrying value of its recoverable amount is expensed to the statement of comprehensive income.

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

**(g) Employee Benefits**

*Short-term employee benefits*

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and long service leave expected to be settled wholly within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

*Other long-term employee benefits*

The liability for annual leave and long service leave not expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are measured at the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date using the projected unit credit method. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using market yields at the reporting date on corporate bonds with terms to maturity and currency that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows.

*Defined contribution superannuation expense*

Contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

**(h) Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the company has a present (legal or constructive) obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable the company will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the consideration required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date, taking into account the risks and uncertainties surrounding the obligation. If the time value of money is material, provisions are discounted using a current pre-tax rate specific to the liability. The increase in the provision resulting from the passage of time is recognised as a finance cost.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

**(i) Lease liabilities**

A lease liability is recognised at the commencement date of a lease. The lease liability is initially recognised at the present value of the lease payments to be made over the term of the lease, discounted using the interest rate implicit in the lease or, if that rate cannot be readily determined, the company's incremental borrowing rate. Lease payments comprise of fixed payments less any lease incentives receivable, variable lease payments that depend on an index or a rate, amounts expected to be paid under residual value guarantees, exercise price of a purchase option or extension option when the exercise of the option is reasonably certain to occur, and any anticipated termination penalties. The variable lease payments that do not depend on an index or a rate are expensed in the period in which they are incurred.

Lease liabilities are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method. The carrying amounts are remeasured if there is a change in the following: future lease payments arising from a change in an index or a rate used; residual guarantee; lease term; certainty of an extension or purchase option and termination penalties. When a lease liability is remeasured, an adjustment is made to the corresponding right-of-use asset, or to profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset is fully written down.

**(j) Revenue**

The association recognises revenue as follows:

*Grants - AASB 1058: Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*

The company receives a number of funding streams that do not contain sufficiently specific performance obligations. Where there are no sufficiently specific performance obligations present, the company recognises revenue on receipt of funds in accordance with AASB 1058: *Income of Not-for-Profit Entities*.

*Other Revenue*

Other revenue is recognised when it is received or when the right to receive payment is established.

*Volunteer services*

The company has elected not to recognise volunteer services as either revenue or other form of contribution received. As such, any related consumption or capitalisation of such resources received is also not recognised.

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

**(k) Goods and Services Tax**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense. Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO are presented as operating cash flows included in receipts from customers or payments to suppliers.

Commitments and contingencies are disclosed on a gross basis.

**(l) Trade and Other Payables**

These amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the company prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. Due to their short-term nature they are measured at amortised cost and are not discounted. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

**(m) Provision for Redundancies**

Provisions have been raised for future redundancies, despite no legal or constructive obligation existing for these expenses at balance date. This does not meet the measurement and recognition criteria of AASB 137 "Provisions, Contingent Assets and Contingent Liabilities". These provisions are charged to the statement of comprehensive income.

**(n) Critical Accounting Judgements, Estimates and Assumptions**

The preparation of the financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts in the financial statements. Management continually evaluates its judgements and estimates in relation to assets, liabilities, contingent liabilities, revenue and expenses. Management bases its judgements, estimates and assumptions on historical experience and on other various factors, including expectations of future events, management believes to be reasonable under the circumstances. The resulting accounting judgements and estimates will seldom equal the related actual results. The judgements, estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities (refer to the respective notes) within the next financial year are discussed below.

*Estimation of useful lives of assets*

The company determines the estimated useful lives and related depreciation and amortisation charges for its property, plant and equipment and finite life intangible assets. The useful lives could change significantly as a result of technical innovations or some other event. The depreciation and amortisation charge will increase where the useful lives are less than previously estimated lives, or technically obsolete or non-strategic assets that have been abandoned or sold will be written off or written down.

*Lease Term*

The lease term is a significant component in the measurement of both the right-of-use asset and lease liability. Judgement is exercised in determining whether there is reasonable certainty that an option to extend the lease or purchase the underlying asset will be exercised, or an option to terminate the lease will not be exercised, when ascertaining the periods to be included in the lease term. In determining the lease term, all facts and circumstances that create an economical incentive to exercise an extension option, or not to exercise a termination option, are considered at the lease commencement date. Factors considered may include the importance of the asset to the company's operations; comparison of terms and conditions to prevailing market rates; incurrence of significant penalties; existence of significant leasehold improvements; and the costs and disruption to replace the asset. The company reassesses whether it is reasonably certain to exercise an extension option, or not exercise a termination option, if there is a significant event or significant change in circumstances.

*Incremental Borrowing Rate*

Where the interest rate implicit in a lease cannot be readily determined, an incremental borrowing rate is estimated to discount future lease payments to measure the present value of the lease liability at the lease commencement date. Such a rate is based on what the company estimates it would have to pay a third party to borrow the funds necessary to obtain an asset of a similar value to the right-of-use asset, with similar terms, security and economic environment.

*Employee Benefits Provision*

As discussed in note 1, the liability for employee benefits expected to be settled more than 12 months from the reporting date are recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, estimates of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

*Coronavirus (COVID-19)*

Judgement has been exercised in considering the impacts that the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had, or may have, on the incorporated association based on known information. This consideration extends to the nature of the products and services offered, customers, supply chain, staffing and geographic regions in which the incorporated association operates. Other than as addressed in specific notes, there does not currently appear to be either any significant impact upon the financial statements or any significant uncertainties with respect to events or conditions which may impact the incorporated association unfavourably as at the reporting date or subsequently as a result of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

**(o) New or Amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations Adopted**

The incorporated association has adopted all of the new or amended Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board ('AASB') that are mandatory for the current reporting period.

Any new or amended Accounting Standards or Interpretations that are not yet mandatory have not been early adopted.

**NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**  
**ABN 35 931 742 739**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Note 2: Revenue</b>			
Other revenue			
Government funding - AASB 1058		1,013,114	816,002
Other revenue - AASB 1058		5,061	13,674
Total revenue		<u>1,018,175</u>	<u>829,676</u>
<b>Note 3: Other income</b>			
Other income			
Government subsidies		41,141	68,864
Total other income		<u>41,141</u>	<u>68,864</u>
<b>Note 4: Expenses</b>			
Surplus before income tax includes the following specific expenses:			
Depreciation expense		64,896	60,506
Remuneration of auditor		7,700	7,350
<b>Note 5: Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>			
Cash at bank		505,206	653,981
Cash - other		10	10
		<u>505,216</u>	<u>653,991</u>
<b>Note 6: Trade and Other Receivables</b>			
CURRENT			
Sundry receivables		12,500	62,500
		<u>12,500</u>	<u>62,500</u>
<b>Note 7: Financial assets</b>			
Term deposits - at amortised cost		249,828	-
		<u>249,828</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Note 8: Property, Plant and Equipment</b>			
Plant and equipment - at cost		64,424	64,424
Less: Accumulated depreciation		(62,239)	(59,075)
		<u>2,185</u>	<u>5,349</u>
Motor vehicles - at cost		52,945	52,945
Less: Accumulated depreciation		(37,150)	(23,914)
		<u>15,795</u>	<u>29,031</u>
Total Plant and Equipment		<u>17,980</u>	<u>34,380</u>
<b>Note 9: Right-of-use Assets</b>			
Right-of-use Land & Buildings		306,838	305,337
Less: Accumulated depreciation		(91,641)	(43,219)
		<u>215,197</u>	<u>262,118</u>



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Note 10: Trade and Other Payables</b>			
CURRENT			
Trade payables		978	1,382
Sundry payables and accrued expenses		10,573	17,028
		<u>11,551</u>	<u>18,410</u>
<b>Note 11: Provisions</b>			
CURRENT			
Provision for employee benefits		189,283	156,554
Provision for locum's and salaries		43,729	27,714
Provision for redundancy		84,694	66,173
		<u>317,706</u>	<u>250,441</u>
NON-CURRENT			
Provision for long service leave		20,694	10,605
		<u>20,694</u>	<u>10,605</u>
<b>Note 12: Lease liabilities</b>			
CURRENT			
Lease liabilities		35,185	44,311
		<u>35,185</u>	<u>44,311</u>
NON-CURRENT			
Lease liabilities		188,867	222,642
		<u>188,867</u>	<u>222,642</u>
<b>Note 13: Other Liabilities</b>			
CURRENT			
Other liabilities		350	350
		<u>350</u>	<u>350</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Note 14: Cash Flow Information</b>			
(a) Reconciliation of cash			
Cash and cash equivalents		<u>505,216</u>	<u>653,991</u>
		<u>505,216</u>	<u>653,991</u>
(b) Reconciliation of cash flow from operations with surplus from activities after income tax expense:			
Surplus from ordinary activities after income tax expense		(39,862)	(56,136)
Non cash flows in surplus from ordinary activities:			
Depreciation		64,896	60,506
Changes in Assets and Liabilities:			
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		50,000	(62,500)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors and accruals		(6,859)	(7,191)
Increase/(decrease) in provisions		<u>77,354</u>	<u>38,500</u>
Cash flows from operations		<u>145,529</u>	<u>(26,821)</u>

**Note 15: Economic Dependence**

The ability of the association to continue as a going concern is dependent upon the continuation of the following:

The association is substantially dependent on the receipt of government funding.

**Note 16: Contingent liabilities**

The association had no contingent liabilities as at 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2020.

**Note 17: Commitments**

The association had no commitments for expenditure as at 30 June 2021 and 30 June 2020.

**Note 18: Events After the End of the Reporting Period**

The impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is ongoing and while it has been financially positive for the association up to 30 June 2021, it is not practicable to estimate the potential impact, positive or negative, after the reporting date. The situation is rapidly developing and is dependent on measures imposed by the Australian Government and other countries, such as maintaining social distancing requirements, quarantine, travel restrictions and any economic stimulus that may be provided.

No other events have arisen since the end of the reporting period which significantly or may significantly affect the operations of the association, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the association in future financial years.

**NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**  
**ABN 35 931 742 739**

**STATEMENT BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021**

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The committee have determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the committee the attached financial report:

1. Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of North & North West Community Legal Service Inc as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date.
2. At the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that North & North West Community Legal Service Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

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



Treasurer



Chairperson

Dated: 13 October 2021



**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
  
ABN 35 931 742 739**

**Report on the Audit of the Financial Report**

**Qualified Opinion**

We have audited the special purpose financial report (the financial report) of North & North West Community Legal Service Inc. (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2021, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statements by members of the committee.

In our opinion, except for the possible effect of the matter described in the basis for qualified opinion paragraph, the accompanying financial report of the Association is in accordance with the Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (the ACNC Act), including:

- (a) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and of the Association's performance for the year ended on that date; and
- (b) complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1, the *Associations Incorporation Act NSW 2009* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

**Basis for Qualified Opinion**

Attention is drawn to Note 1(m) in the financial statements 'Provision for Redundancies'. The recognition of this liability does not meet the recognition criteria as prescribed in AASB 137 "Provisions, Contingent Asset and Contingent Liabilities" and as such is a departure from the standard, we are therefore qualifying our opinion in respect of provisions and associated employee benefits expenses.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (including Independence Standards)* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

**Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting**

We 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 the Association's financial reporting responsibilities under the ACNC Act. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

*Liability limited by a scheme approved under Professional Standards Legislation.*

*The title "Partner" conveys that the person is a senior member within their respective division, and is among the group of persons who hold an equity interest (shareholder) in its parent entity, Findex Group Limited. The only professional service offering which is conducted by a partnership is external audit, conducted via the Crowe Australasia external audit division and Unison SMSF Audit. All other professional services offered by Findex Group Limited are conducted by a privately owned organisation and/or its subsidiaries.*

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**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**

**ABN 35 931 742 739**

**Other Information**

The committee is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information contained in the Association's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2021, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

**Responsibilities of Management and the Committee for the Financial Report**

The Committee of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the needs of the members and the *Associations Incorporation Act NSW 2009* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such internal control as the committee determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee are responsible for assessing the ability of the Association to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intend to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

**Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit 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 Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.



**INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**

**ABN 35 931 742 739**

- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during the audit.

**CROWE AUDIT AUSTRALIA**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kylie Ellis".

**Kylie Ellis**  
**Partner**  
Registered Company Auditor (ASIC RAN 483424)  
90 Rusden St  
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Dated: 13 October 2021





**DISCLAIMER  
TO THE MEMBERS OF  
NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC**

**ABN 35 931 742 739**

The additional financial data presented on pages 17 - 20 is in accordance with the books and records of the association which have been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in our statutory audit of the association for the financial year ended 30 June 2021. It will be appreciated that our statutory audit did not cover all details of the additional financial data. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on such financial data and we give no warranty of accuracy or reliability in respect of the data provided. Neither the firm nor any member or employee of the firm undertakes responsibility in any way whatsoever to any person (other than North & North West Community Legal Service) in respect of such data, including any errors of omissions therein however caused.

**CROWE AUDIT AUSTRALIA**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kylie Ellis".

**Kylie Ellis**  
**Partner**  
Registered Company Auditor (ASIC RAN 483424)  
90 Rusden St  
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Dated: 13 October 2021

NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

LEGAL SERVICE	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Income</b>		
Government funding		
Commonwealth funding	557,724	544,288
NSW state funding	271,991	271,714
Service generated income	6,662	20,269
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>836,377</b>	<b>836,291</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<u>Salary &amp; Wages</u>		
Salaries and wages	747,391	629,517
Superannuation contributions	66,468	56,288
	<b>813,859</b>	<b>685,805</b>
<u>Salary Related Expenses</u>		
Provision for annual leave	19,655	14,139
Provision for long service leave	18,955	28,958
Provision for relief wages	7,101	-
Provision for redundancy	18,522	3,578
Staff training	514	3,732
Staff recruitment	-	1,965
Staff labour hire	-	3,524
Workers compensation insurance	2,584	2,380
	<b>67,331</b>	<b>58,276</b>
<u>Other Operating Expenses</u>		
Accounting and finance fees	12,856	11,199
Communications	1,450	7,220
Depreciation expense	61,532	60,506
Insurance	10,363	10,488
Interest - ROU assets	10,649	13,787
Office overheads	22,197	44,299
Library, resources and subscriptions	10,171	11,173
Other premises costs	11,228	11,377
Programming and planning	6,098	14,839
Repairs and maintenance	39	5,043
Minor equipment	1,255	1,228
Travel	13,708	26,051
	<b>161,546</b>	<b>217,210</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,042,736</b>	<b>961,291</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>(206,359)</b>	<b>(125,000)</b>

NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

COVID FRONTLINE & ICT SERVICES	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Income</b>		
COVID - Frontline Services	120,300	-
COVID - ICT	5,100	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>125,400</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<u>Salary &amp; Wages</u>		
Salaries and wages	28,927	-
Superannuation contributions	2,743	-
	<b>31,670</b>	<b>-</b>
<u>Salary Related Expenses</u>		
Staff recruitment	1,095	-
	<b>1,095</b>	<b>-</b>
<u>Other Operating Expenses</u>		
Depreciation expense	3,364	-
Interest - ROU assets	1,183	-
Office overheads	431	-
Library, resources and subscriptions	89	-
Online services	5,100	-
Programming and planning	400	-
	<b>10,567</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>43,332</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>82,068</b>	<b>-</b>



NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

OTHER INCOME	2021 \$	2020 \$
<b>Income</b>		
ICT additional funding	18,000	-
Government subsidies	<u>41,141</u>	<u>68,864</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>59,141</u>	<u>68,864</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<u>Other Operating Expenses</u>		
Communications	6,876	-
Office overheads	6,909	-
Library, resources and subscriptions	<u>927</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<u>14,712</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Surplus/(deficit)</b>	<u>44,429</u>	<u>68,864</u>

NORTH & NORTH WEST COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC  
ABN 35 931 742 739

DETAILED INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

OTHER INCOME	2021 \$	2020 \$
Income		
SSTF funding	40,000	-
Total Income	40,000	-
Expenditure		
Total Expenditure	-	-
Surplus/(deficit)	40,000	-

