



Darwin Community
LEGAL SERVICE

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

2021-22

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Darwin Community Legal Services is located on Larrakia country.

We acknowledge the Larrakia people as the Traditional Owners of the Darwin region and we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of lands and waters throughout the Northern Territory and Australia. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture.

DCLS supports Voice – Treaty – Truth.



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CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

DCLS celebrated 30 years of achievement in 2021. This marks the myriad of positive outcomes achieved for thousands of people, who otherwise would have no means of support in times of personal difficulty.

I also take this opportunity to reflect on the amazing achievements of the dedicated staff, volunteers and board members who have been involved in the success of this organisation for 30 years. DCLS has evolved from a 2 day per week legal advice service in 1991 into what is today; a vital, respected, multi-disciplined service which employs 30 staff and co-ordinates 60 plus volunteers providing services for tenancy, general legal, senior and disability advocacy, veterans legal, after hours legal sessions and community education programs.

It is fitting to acknowledge the initial group of 22 interested members of the community for their foresight and selfless call to action that started with a meeting in 1989. It would take months of dedication from this group of people to have DCLS incorporated in January 1990 and a further 8 months to establish the first management committee. The members of the Management Committee from 1990 through to 1992 included:

Jenny Hardy
Trish Burrows
Geoff Airo-Farulla
Richard Bruxner
Corrie MacDonald
Tricia McEniery
Margaret Orwin
Camilla Hughes
Kate Gillman
Warick Ryan
Glen Dooley
David Wray
Graham Jefferson

Since 2007, the Administrator of the Northern Territory, then The Honourable Tom Pauling QC became the patron of DCLS starting a tradition that continues to this day. DCLS gratefully acknowledges the support and enthusiasm of our current Administrator, the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO and Mr Craig O'Halloran.

My thanks are extended to the dedicated staff and volunteers lead by CEO Rachael Bowker and our Board members for their work over the past year.

It has been a pleasure working with you all.

*Yours faithfully,
Julie Davis
Chairperson*




L - R: THEN ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NT, AUSTIN ASCHE AND DCLS COORDINATOR, ANNE O'BRIEN C. 1995

EXCERPT FROM LAW SOCIETY NT PUBLICATION
"BALANCE", APRIL 1992

DCLS officially opened

FREE COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVICE



The Darwin Community Legal Service was officially opened by Senator Bob Collins last month. It was the culmination of an enormous effort by a group of Darwin solicitors and that work was acknowledged by the Attorney-General, Daryl Manzie, Senator Collins and Jenny Hardy, the convenor of the DCLS Management Committee. Senator Collins said the fact that 55 Darwin solicitors had volunteered to work with the DCLS was recognition of how desperately needed the service was and of the profession's commitment to access to justice for middle Australia. He pledged to continue to seek federal government assistance so the DCLS could expand its operations. The Attorney-General, Daryl Manzie, also pledged his support and said he looked forward to the day when a similar service would be available to the residents of Alice Springs. The Co-ordinator of the Service, Gordon Renouf, said that several projects, including an NT law handbook, were already underway, and that the Service hoped to be able to provide a 008 number for people outside the Darwin area as soon as it was possible to do so. Mr Renouf also said the Service would produce a variety of information packages to assist with public education on legal issues. He said the Service has expanded from one free legal advice session per week to three since September last year.

Darwin Community Legal Service Inc, PO Box 4305 Darwin NT 0801

CEO'S REPORT

DCLS celebrated its 30 years of operation this past financial year, which is an amazing achievement for all the staff, board members and volunteers who have been involved over the last 30 years!

As I reflect on DCLS' first annual report in 1993, I am in awe of the idea that community members saw an unmet legal need in the community and from that initial meeting in 1991, a community legal centre was created that has survived and flourished for 30 years! I wonder if those community members who meet for the first time 30 years ago ever thought that the seed they were planting, to create a community legal service would grow into a successful organisation that assists so many people in the NT?

To celebrate our 30 years service, DCLS launch its new logo. The logo is derived from the tropical flow Birds of Paradise and represents the 3 arms of the organisation.

There is much to be proud of as I look back over the past year of DCLS providing help and support to the communities across the NT and in particular focusing on helping most vulnerable and disadvantaged community members.

The passion, resilience and dedication of the staff and volunteers this year and the commitment to continue to provide high level, responsive services needs to be acknowledged. Without our amazing staff and volunteers, DCLS would not be able to achieve all it has over the last 12 months.

Some of the year's highlights were:

- 30th birthday celebration hosted by Minister Selena Uibo at Parliament house with current and former staff and volunteers and a breakfast celebration with Her Honour Vicky O'Halloran as our Patron, our community

stakeholders, staff and volunteers. It was lovely to hear people speak with such passion and fond memories of their experience at DCLS over the last 30 years!

- Our programs recommenced and expanded their outreach services to include Yissa short term accommodation service in partnership with Mission Australia, Vinnies Ozanam house and the SDRS team commenced providing NDIS information sessions in Palmerston monthly.
- The 'Veterans' Legal Service based at Mates4mate continues to assist veterans and their families and gain more support from other defence services.
- The DCLS team made 23 trips to visit remote communities including East Arnhem, Tiwi Islands, Daly region, Nhulunbuy and of course visits to Katherine, Alice Springs and Tennant Creek
- SDRS launched the Safety Toolkit: Responding to Older Persons' Abuse at World Elder Abuse Awareness day. Minister Lauren Moss and OPAN CEO Craig Gear spoke at the event commending the team who put the toolkit together. The TV advertisement highlighting the signs of Older Persons' Abuse was also launched at the event.
- Rights on Show was another successful event at Supreme Court with many people attending the opening night.
- Volunteer appreciation event at Government house hosted by Her Honour Vicki O'Halloran
- The commencement of the build for the new database for SDRS
- The team attended many expos to promote DCLS such as the All ability expo, Seniors Expo to name a few

During the year we farewelled Caroline Deane from her role as the TAS team leader. I would like to thank Caroline for all her hard work leading the Tenancy Advice Team, playing a vital role in the review of the residential tenancy act and for her contributions to the leadership team and myself. We wish her well in her new role with the NT Government.

Thank you to our funders, community partners, board members, students and volunteers. Your contribution is vital to us fulfilling our purpose, in particular I would like to extend my thanks to Julie Davis as the Chair of DCLS for always supporting me in my role as the CEO and the organisation.

Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our staff. We recognise and appreciate your persistence and effort in achieving fairer legal and advocacy outcomes for our community members experiencing disadvantage; and working towards a society in which all people have equal access to the legal and advocacy services they need. In particular I would like to thank Judy Harrison as Principal Solicitor for her steadfast advice and support to myself and her tireless hours she contributes to DCLS and the Leadership team Caroline Deane, Kellie Streeter and Alana Coulson for providing leadership and guidance to their teams.

DCLS will continue to be fearless advocates for the most disadvantaged and vulnerable members of our community and we look forward to another 30 years of service to the NT!

Thank you, Rachael

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR'S REPORT

This year DCLS's 30th year milestone in 2021 continued to inspire and connected with verve and focus to collaboratively build forward.

The three teams, being the General Legal Service (GLS), Tenants' Advice Service (TAS), and the Seniors and Disability Rights Service (SDRS), work from client and community wellbeing and empowerment approaches to benefit individuals and increase fairness and justice in the NT.

The DCLS legal and advocacy models reflect a commitment to client and community service, which connects every case with systemic deliberations and analysis. The lived experiences of our clients, their insights and critiques are central to how we aim to respond and assist. The three teams draw on each other in client work, community legal education and reform, which is often multi-disciplinary and collaborative.

How the teams relate also flavoured many internal discussion groups, planning activities and student/staff presentations during the year. Thriving and effective communities of practice engaged with community, reform, and service issues and achieved multiple, positive impacts.

There were 4,962 client legal services in 2021/22 through the combined efforts of staff, volunteers, and students. This was about a 40% increase on 2018/19, being the last full financial year before the onset of COVID. The increase was roughly even for the GLS and the TAS.

Legal representation services substantially increased, especially in support of basic rights including tenancy and housing,

social security, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), consumer issues, credit and debt, adult guardianship, and discrimination. This was even more notable, as operations were still COVID impacted during the year and at times all staff worked remotely, and in-person appointments ceased.

This was paralleled in the law reform effort during the year with a substantial increase in submissions to external inquiries and processes and research and efforts in support of community legal education.

During the year, we also focused research on conceptual barriers to access by people living in remote and very remote communities in the NT to civil law legal help. This was reflected in a series of research papers completed with DCLS staff supervisors by law student interns. This work explored how lack of access is purportedly justified and proposed several inversions, including accountability to communities reflected in service models being designed by, with and for communities rather than externally by funders or service providers.

DCLS contributed to the formation of the new National Regional, Rural, Remote and Very Remote Community Legal Network and participated in many NT and national networks.

The legal practice:

- Undertook weekly outreach to residents at YiSSA short term accommodation at Mararra.

- Promoted NT wide access to legal advice sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays after hours.
- Provided free legal help to veterans via a collaboration with Mates4Mates.
- Undertook weekly outreach to morning program participants at Ozanam House in Stuart Park.
- Undertook a consultation and advice visit to the Cox Peninsular.
- Updated GLS Fact Sheets, collaborated to provide community legal education sessions and developed new public legal education sessions online.
- Helped develop projects and new funding submissions.
- Worked with numerous collaborators and networks locally, regionally, NT wide and nationally promoting solutions and reform.

Operations

During the year there was a major focus on workflows for DCLS legal assistance and we reached the tail end of a two-year effort for DCLS to become paper lite. All roles relating to the legal practice needed to adjust. Sarah Moses undertook the new role of Legal Practice Coordinator, and there was substantial focus on intake functions.

It was wonderful to start the year with the legal practice fully staffed a full complement of volunteer lawyers and law students for the afterhours Volunteer Advice Sessions and a very active law student placement and intern program.

Finally, a big thankyou to CEO Rachael Bowker, Team Leaders Alana Coulson, Caroline Deane and Kellie Streeter for their tremendous work during the year.

Areas of advocacy

During the year, DCLS staff worked collaboratively with other groups in to promote community wellbeing, press for reform and increase access to legal help, advocacy and services. For example, DCLS was actively involved in research and advocacy regarding:

- systemic racism and systemic bias as highlighted by the NT Aboriginal Justice Agreement. For example, we raised these issues in input to the Australian Law Reform Commission's Review of Judicial Impartiality, the NT Law Society consultation on Mandatory Continuing Professional Development, and with researchers on a number of NT wide and national research projects.
- Federal funding to address lack of access to social security legal help nationally but particularly in the NT.
- Ending the Cashless Debit Card and Income Management in the NT which also reflected the positions of the Aboriginal Peak Organisation NT, the NT Council of Social Services, the Australian Council of Social Services, Economic Justice Australia, the Accountable Income Management Network, and many others.
- Overhauling the Disability Support Pension in the NT and nationally, with many others we submitted that the rules are unfair, impractical in the NT and are causing enormous hardship and related problems.
- Expanding the coverage of the proposed NT monitoring arrangements for implementation of the Optional Protocol Against Torture.
- Overhauling the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) appeals processes. This relates to when a decision is made refusing a person access to the NDIS or declining requested supports. Our work aligned with many NT disability organisations and national peaks. DCLS called for access to culturally safe and accessible appeals assistance, especially highlighting funding needs for specialist non-legal advocacy and legal representation, including co-advocacy (these working together).
- Urging the Productivity Commission to make recommendations in support of improved federal regulation of aged care quality and availability in the NT, including conditions for aged care workers.
- Reform of the NT Residential Tenancies Act to increase protections, noting that the NT does not have the standards reflected in other jurisdictions and still does not have a bond holding authority (Rental Bond Board).
- Addressing shortcomings with the proposed new NT Remote Rent Framework, which would see increased rents for over 65% of tenants living in remote communities.
- Federal funding for access to tenancy and homelessness legal help, especially for tenants in remote and very remote communities.
- Reform of the NT Adult Guardianship Act to promote human rights, minimum interventions and supported decision making plus access to legal help in relation to guardianship applications.

L - R: LUKE GOSLING OAM, MP FOR SOLOMON
MARK DREYFUS ATTORNEY-GENERAL OF AUSTRALIA
RACHAEL BOWKER, CEO DCLS
JUDY HARRISON, PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR DCLS



OUR NEW LOGO



Our icon inspiration is derived from the tropical flower, Bird of Paradise.

Each different colour petal represents 'arms' - the 3 main services provided by DCLS and a small dot has been added to indicate a person and the community we support.

Seniors & Disability Rights Service
The People - Our Community
Tenants' Advice Service
General Legal Service

VISION

Just and fair outcomes for a stronger community.

MISSION

Strengthen access to justice and empower the community through advocacy, education, legal advice and holistic service delivery.

ABOUT DCLS

Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS) is a non profit community-based effort committed to legal and social justice and the protection and expansion of rights, fairness and wellbeing in the NT.

We especially work with people who are vulnerable or marginalised. DCLS works to provide legal help, advocacy and support services, collaborates to understand obstacles to justice and tries to achieve reform, and promotes understanding and acceptance of rights, justice and inclusion.

DCLS provides a multi-disciplinary service consisting of:



A General Legal Service that provides free civil legal advice and representation to vulnerable members of the community, as well as delivering legal education and promoting law reform.



A Tenant's Advice Service that provide specialist legal advice, assistance, representation and information to tenants in the Northern Territory. TAS also delivers legal education and promotes law reform to make renting fair and safe for all Territorians.



A Seniors and Disability Rights Service that supports the rights of people with disability and promotes the rights of older persons in the Northern Territory.



A Free Legal Advice Service staffed by NT Lawyers who volunteer their time to provide high quality legal advice after hours and on weekends.



Specialist projects including Older Persons Abuse, NDIS appeals and working with the Disability Royal Commission.

30 YEARS OF SERVICE

Darwin Community Legal Service (DCLS) was established in 1991 by volunteer lawyers who were passionate about providing free legal advice to financially disadvantaged people in Darwin.

Over time, the service expanded its geographical coverage and the range of matters for which it provides assistance.

Our aim 30 years ago was to be fearless, independent advocates that were visible and vocal on issues of injustice and disadvantage – this is still our aim today!



L - R: TOM KORECKI,
DCLS BOARD MEMBER
SELENA UIBO, ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR NT
ALASTAIR SHIELDS, DCLS BOARD MEMBER

In September 2021 we celebrated 30 years of service of our organisation to the community with a reception at Parliament House, hosted by then-Attorney General, The Hon Selena Uiobo. Ms Uiobo delivered such an informed and knowledgeable speech to our stakeholders; summarising the history of DCLS nicely, touching on all of our key milestones. DCLS very much appreciates Ms Uiobo's continuing support of our organisation.

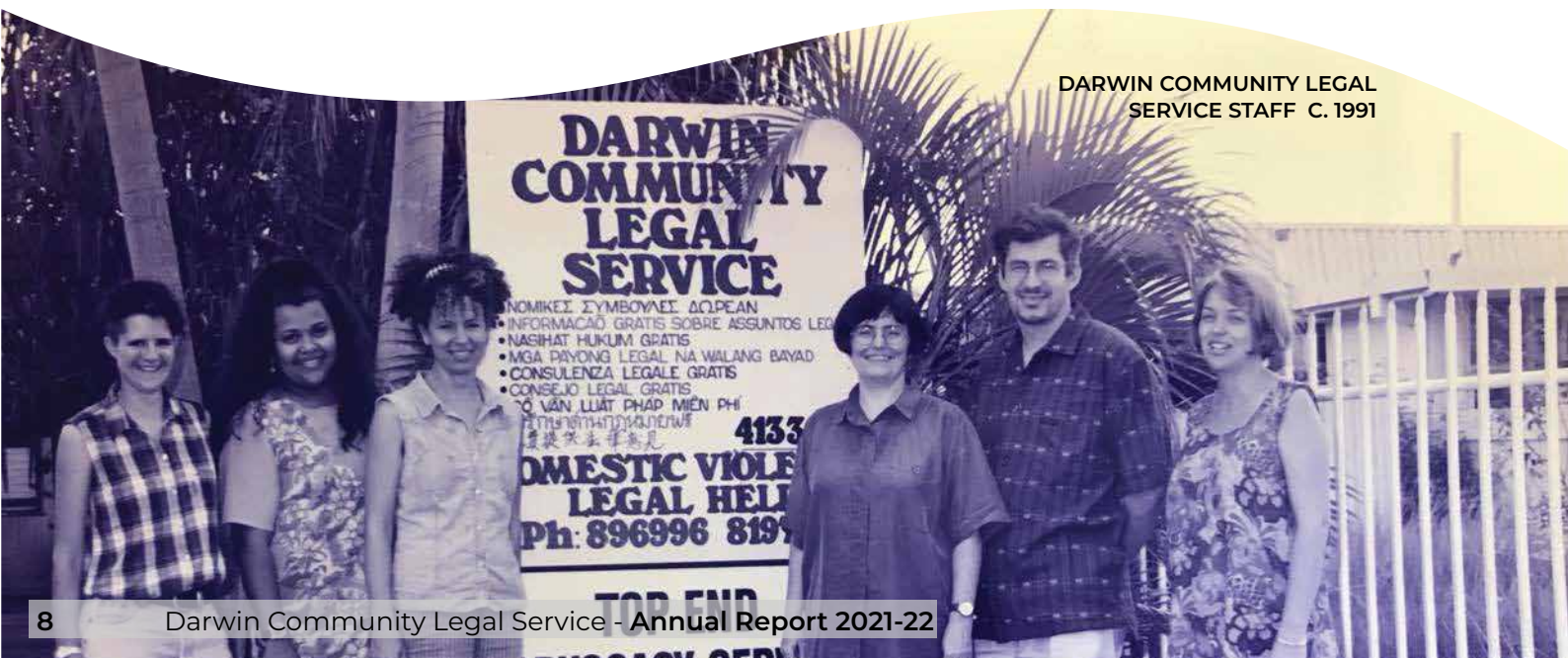
The reception was followed by a breakfast at DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade where our Patron, The Hon Administrator of the NT, Vicky O'Halloran gave a heartfelt speech to our stakeholders; including her own thirtieth birthday anecdote that was enjoyed by many!

It felt serendipitous that in its' early days, DCLS was once accommodated at Sommerville Community Services and Her Honour's connection to both organisations.

Like Ms Uiobo, Her Honour continues to be a great supporter and champion of DCLS.

Both events were attended and enjoyed by other industry organisations, supporters, volunteers, clients, past staff members, including some of our founding members.

Everyone especially enjoyed the collection of memorabilia that was displayed at the reception which included, among other things, photos and past annual reports.



DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL
SERVICE STAFF C. 1991

L - R: ALASTAIR SHIELDS, DCLS BOARD MEMBER
JULIE DAVIS, DCLS CHAIRPERSON
HER HON THE HONOURABLE VICKI O'HALLORAN AO, ADMINISTRATOR OF THE NT
RACHAEL BOWKER, CEO DCLS
TOM KORECKI, DCLS BOARD MEMBER



Celebrating
30 YEARS

STATISTICS

GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE



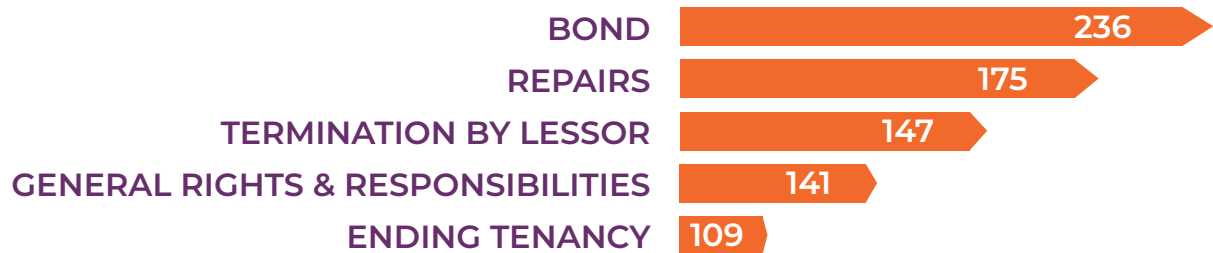
TOP 5 MOST COMMON PROBLEM TYPE



TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICE



TOP 5 MOST COMMON PROBLEM TYPE



SENIORS AND DISABILITY RIGHTS SERVICE



1107

TOTAL NUMBER OF CLIENTS

SENIORS RIGHTS SERVICE



320
CASES



42
EDUCATION
SESSIONS

DISABILITY RIGHTS SERVICE



757
CASES



51
EDUCATION
SESSIONS



23

REMOTE COMMUNITY
VISITS

CLIENT BREAKDOWN BY DEMOGRAPHIC

GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE



5.06% experienced homelessness

9% spoke a language other than English at home

17.88% identified as Indigenous Australian

23.55% had a disability and/or mental illness

92.48% lived in outer regional or remote areas of the NT

TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICE

experienced homelessness 5.45%

spoke a language other than English at home 8.32%

had a disability and/or mental illness 14.37%

identified as Indigenous Australian 16.64%

lived in outer regional or remote areas of the NT 93.49%



GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE

The General Legal Service (GLS) is the name of the DCLS legal team which provides civil law legal help, community legal education and undertakes law reform in areas of law reflecting basic rights.

This includes social security, credit and debt, consumer, employment law, National Disability Insurance Scheme appeals, discrimination, and adult guardianship.

The GLS includes the afterhours Volunteer Advice Sessions which has operated since DCLS began and the new NT Veterans' Legal Service initiative which began with Mates4Mates in July 2021. GLS legal assistance and law reform efforts exceeded activities in recent years, which were impacted by COVID-19 and other factors. GLS completed the updating of community legal education resources, and most staff were involved in GLS and DCLS community legal education.

A very big thankyou to all who contributed, particularly GLS Community Solicitors Bridget McDermott, Leah Radatti, Solomon Berhane plus Legal Practice Coordinator and Volunteer Advice Sessions Coordinator, Sarah Moses, paralegals Lucy Quinlan and Al Cabry, Intake staff including Lauren Parker, Michelle Burchill, Teale Meredith and Jessie-Lee Taylor and students who worked with us. Thankyou also to the Reception and Corporate Services staff in making things run as smoothly as possible.

GLS compared to the NT

The GLS appears to be in a unique position in Australia – in that it is the only generalist community legal service for a whole jurisdiction, it is receiving the smallest pool of resources, with one of the largest geographic areas with high levels of disadvantage and highly prevalent legal needs.

As outlined in the Principal Solicitor's report, the NT lacks standalone specialist community legal services for areas such as

social security, employment law, credit and debt etc. which have been funded in many other jurisdictions. Additionally, the NT lacks funding models to determine and allocate funding to address these legal needs.

As the only generalist community legal service in the NT, and as the legal service which tries to provide legal help in these areas – these lacks impact directly on what DCLS and GLS can provide; it has dramatically limited access by people across the NT to general legal service assistance over the years.

While the resources for the DCLS GLS reflects a Commonwealth contribution which enables DCLS to determine priorities, there is also a major disadvantage which relates to federal accountability for access to justice in federal areas of law in the NT. This is best highlighted through an example. The example relates to social security legal needs, but it is equally applicable to the other areas of federal law indicated above.





GLS successes during the year

Despite resource limitations and other challenges GLS staff have achieved so many positive outcomes by, with and for clients during the year. There are many examples of clients expressing their sincere appreciation for staff going above and beyond what they hoped, or for outcomes which made such a difference. The following are some generalised examples for privacy and anonymity:

- Adult guardianship – through a two-year effort, cultural safety finally prevailed allowing a family to assume full responsibility for personal and financial decisions for a family member.
- Credit and debt – although the client was overwhelmed and had lost most of the relevant records the lawyer was able to assist in collecting the necessary information to achieve a waiver of the debt.
- Employment law – the client was unwell and battling on many fronts, the matter was successfully resolved in the client's favour in the Fair Work Commission.
- Discrimination - the client filed the complaint after receiving assistance and the lawyer worked with the client as the client determined along the way. The complaint was ultimately successful with the client receiving a substantial settlement.
- Social security – the client was ultimately successful, the matter involved research assistance by interns, logistical assistance and a collective effort led by the GLS lawyer.
- Consumer – funeral insurance, second hand cars, consumer credit issues, breach of contract all featured, often with good progress for the client.

VETERANS' LEGAL SERVICE

DCLS provides one of two known community-based Veterans' Legal Services in Australia. Applying a network and a wellbeing model, the DCLS Veterans' Legal Service is a collaboration with Mates4Mates and other Ex-Service Organisations (ESO's) to support over 10,000 veterans and families in the NT.

The DCLS Veterans' Legal Service (DCLS VLS) is one of two known community-based Veterans' Legal Services in Australia. The other is provided by Townsville Community Law which is another community based legal service with a very similar service profile to DCLS.

Townsville and Darwin are garrison cities with Navy, Army and Airforce, present, strong participation in the Defence Reserves Service and large ex-service cohorts.

Recent Census figures (please include ABS stats graph) indicate a high proportion of veterans in the NT compared to the overall population. Considering veterans families, this represents a very significant group.

The DCLS VLS began in July 2021 and is a collaboration with Mates4Mates and corresponding ESOs, provided by our Community Lawyer, Matthew Gardiner, a veteran providing legal service for veterans by veterans.

DCLS' Veterans' Legal Service has established ongoing relationships with local ESO's, service organisations and continues to develop relationships throughout the Defence Community.

Currently the service receives referrals from service organisations such as unit padres and other family support groups.

The service has established itself as an independent legal advocacy service that can provide accurate and timely advice or representation in conjunction with other organisations while supporting other ESO's.

DCLS VLS recognises, complements and honours the work and efforts of veterans, ESOs and other agencies, services and initiatives.

The DCLS VLS approach aims to expand and improve veterans' access to legal assistance services, especially by:

- Destigmatising access to legal help for working on every-day and larger problems
- Enculturating how legal help can be used by veterans and family members, who aim to help others, and
- Enabling veterans and family members to further their own wellbeing through activities that contribute to positive change, including having their voice, improving responses and contributing to reform.



MATTHEW GARDINER
TAS & VETERANS' LEGAL SERVICE SOLICITOR

For the first time, the 2021 Census asked a question about military service, some interesting details and data has emerged.



2.8%

There were 581,100 people who had ever served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF), 2.8% of the Australian population aged 15 years and over.



5.3%

One in twenty (5.3%) Australian households (dwellings) had at least one person who had served in the ADF (that is, at least one person who was either currently serving or had previously served in the ADF).



13%

13% of previous service members needed assistance with the core activities of self-care, mobility or communication.



60%

Three in five (60%) previous service members had a long-term health condition.

SUPPLIED: M.GARDINER
AUSTRALIAN TROOPS IN BIADOA, SOMALIA



TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICE

The Tenants' Advice Service (TAS) provides free legal advice, assistance, representation, information, community education and resources for renters across the Northern Territory.

As the only service of its kind in a jurisdiction where more than 50% of the population rent, TAS plays a valuable role in tackling the power imbalance between landlords and tenants.

With the end of the COVID Modification Notice period, we have seen changes continue to happen within the rental market. The rental increases in the market are starting to bite with tenants facing not only cost of living increase but rental increases that have not been seen in the Territory market for some time.

We have seen some changes in the Tenancy Team with Team Leader Caroline taking unpaid leave and recruitment commencing for the Team Leader Position. Destiny and Phil also departed with Al joining the team as a TAS advocate.



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE RENTAL MARKET

Fortunately, the financial impact of COVID-19 on Territorian renters to date has been limited, however TAS clients have felt the flow-on effects of the pandemic. The past year saw a flood of Southerners moving to the NT to escape various lockdowns, putting further pressure on the rental market. This has been exacerbated by recent increase rate rises in the housing market. TAS has seen an increase in tenants in rental stress, commonly seeking assistance with rent increases, rent bidding, extending their tenancy or having their tenancy terminated because the landlord wants to advertise at a higher rent, move in themselves or sell the property. Many tenants have been reluctant to report repairs or enforce other rights for fear of having their tenancy terminated and not being able to secure alternative accommodation within their price range.

The NT Government's COVID-19 modifications to the RTA came into force in April 2020 and concluded on 15 June 2022. Some protections remain in place, such as a tenancy that was commenced before or during the COVID Modification Notice period being requiring the landlord to give a minimum of 42 days notice for termination whether in a fixed term or periodic tenancy. Those tenancies signed into after the conclusion of the COVID Modification notice period go back to what is required under the Residential Tenancies Act 1999 which is 14 days' notice before the end of a fixed term tenancy and a minimum of 42 days' notice for a periodic tenancy. While this extra time to find alternative accommodation has been crucial for some TAS clients, and not enough for others with very little alternate suitable accommodation currently available.

LAW REFORM

The long awaited and desperately needed Review of the Residential Tenancies Act commenced in September 2020. Our Act is 20 years out of date and comprehensive reform is needed to bring NT tenancy laws into line with the rest of Australia. The review report has been delivered to Government but there has been little movement. While we recognise there has been a change of ministerial positions, little emphasis has been placed of this much needed reform. Some of TAS' priority areas of reform continue to include:

- The introduction of a centralised bond holding authority;
- Protections for victims of domestic and family violence;
- An end to evictions without good reason;
- Longer time frames for tenants to find alternative accommodation; and
- Regulation to ensure fair rents and rent increases.

Case Study 1:

Protections for victims of DV

Mary's partner had smashed windows and broke doors during an episode of domestic violence at Mary's accommodation. Mary's partner was arrested and remanded in custody. Mary's landlord had made application to NTCAT to have Mary's tenancy terminated with immediate effect. Mary sought assistance from TAS and TAS represented her through her matter and successfully argued that Mary was not to be held responsible for damages that were done to the tenancy as she was the victim of domestic violence and that the Residential Tenancies Act removes vicarious liability for the tenant, when actions that would have been a breach under the Act were done during incidents of domestic violence. The application for termination was dismissed by the Tribunal and Mary's tenancy was allowed to continue.

Case study 2:

Unlawful Rental Increases

Mark was a tenant whose fixed term lease had expired and had become a periodic tenancy. There was no right to increase the rent in the fixed term tenancy and therefore no right to increase rent in the periodic tenancy. Mark was informed by his real estate that the rent would be increased by \$90 per week. Mark started to pay the increased rent, as he did not want his tenancy terminated. After Mark had found alternate accommodation, Mark sought assistance from TAS and the rental increase was successfully challenged at NTCAT as it was not compliant with the Act. The Tribunal ruled that the landlord had to repay the rent increase to Mark.

Case study 3:

Understanding Barriers

John is an elderly gentleman with limited education and literacy skill. John is a tenant in a large apartment complex, John's neighbours had made complaints about John, but none were serious, some were just about John's demeanour, and one was concerned about the way he looked. The landlord made application to have John's tenancy terminated as he was not complying with body corporate rules. TAS represented John at NTCAT and the matter and the application for termination was dismissed when it was found that there was confusion from both the Body corporate and the landlord to what rules were being applied and that due to John's poor literacy, no one had explained the changed rules to him.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

TAS has discussed various tenancy issues in the media throughout the year, including rent increases, COVID-19 related issues, the housing shortage, the rise of tenancy management applications and third-party platforms. Media outlets have included the NT News and ABC News television, print and radio.

This year TAS has delivered community legal education sessions to various community groups including at STEPS Education, Melaleuca Refugee Centre, Mental Illness Fellowship of the NT (MIFANT), Darwin High School and Alana Kaye College. TAS held legal clinics with International Students at Charles Darwin University and the International Student Space, as well as co-presenting sessions on renting rights with NT Legal Aid, both online and in person. TAS has also presented sessions on tenancy law through DCLS education sessions.

TAS attends network meetings with various stakeholder groups including the Community Legal Education Network, Refugee and Migrant Support Network (RMSN), Darwin Region Accommodation Action Group (DRAAG), NT Council of Social Services Domestic Family and Sexual Violence Group, and National Association of Tenants' Organisations (NATO).

TAS has travelled to Alice Springs and Tennant Creek and connected with legal services, housing support services and other community organisations based in those locations. This is important as TAS is a Territory-wide service and often relies on local services for referrals or as a point of client contact in order to service clients outside of Darwin.

TAS also participated in the International Students Reconnect Festival and a Homelessness Week events at Casuarina Library and other venues across Darwin. TAS is also continuing with the Homelessness Outreach at a variety of different locations.



SENIORS' & DISABILITY RIGHTS SERVICE

Seniors and Disability Rights Service (SDRS) provides advocacy support to older people and persons with a disability. SDRS works to promote understanding, create awareness, and empower our community to support access to services and rights, and to advocate for change that promotes fairness and justice.

SDRS provides general services to the Palmerston, Batchelor and Adelaide River, Jabiru, Pine Creek and Katherine regions, and the Tiwi Islands, Coomalie, West and Victoria Daly West and East Arnhem, Groote Eylandt and the Roper Gulf regions. Through our NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Appeals project, we can assist any Territorian anywhere in the NT.

While our service was still impacted by Covid restrictions, SDRS advocates have excelled in reconnecting with clients and other stakeholder's post-lockdowns and restrictions. There has been a strong focus on community engagement, outreach, and education this year, which shows in increased uptake of our services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION SESSIONS

Our Seniors and Disability Rights Advocacy team is a familiar face within community with an increase in workshops to inform Senior Territorians, Support and Care providers about Older Persons' Abuse and Advocacy Support in both urban and remote settings. Some of the organisations that our advocates are regularly engaged with include Territory Faces, Arthritis Association of NT, Parkinson Association of the Northern Territory, both the Seniors' Womens' and Mens' Group at Kate Worden's office, Probus Seniors Club, Nightcliff Seniors Association, Association of Independent Retirees. Our disability advocates have provided education at Headspace, the Greek Association, Wurli-Wurlinjang, NAAJA, Team Health, MIFANT and TEMHCO.

Our Senior and Disability Rights Advocates have also provided drop-in supports at Ozanam house and YiSSA housing,

Our Disability and Seniors Rights advocates surpassed their presence in remote communities over the past 12 months.

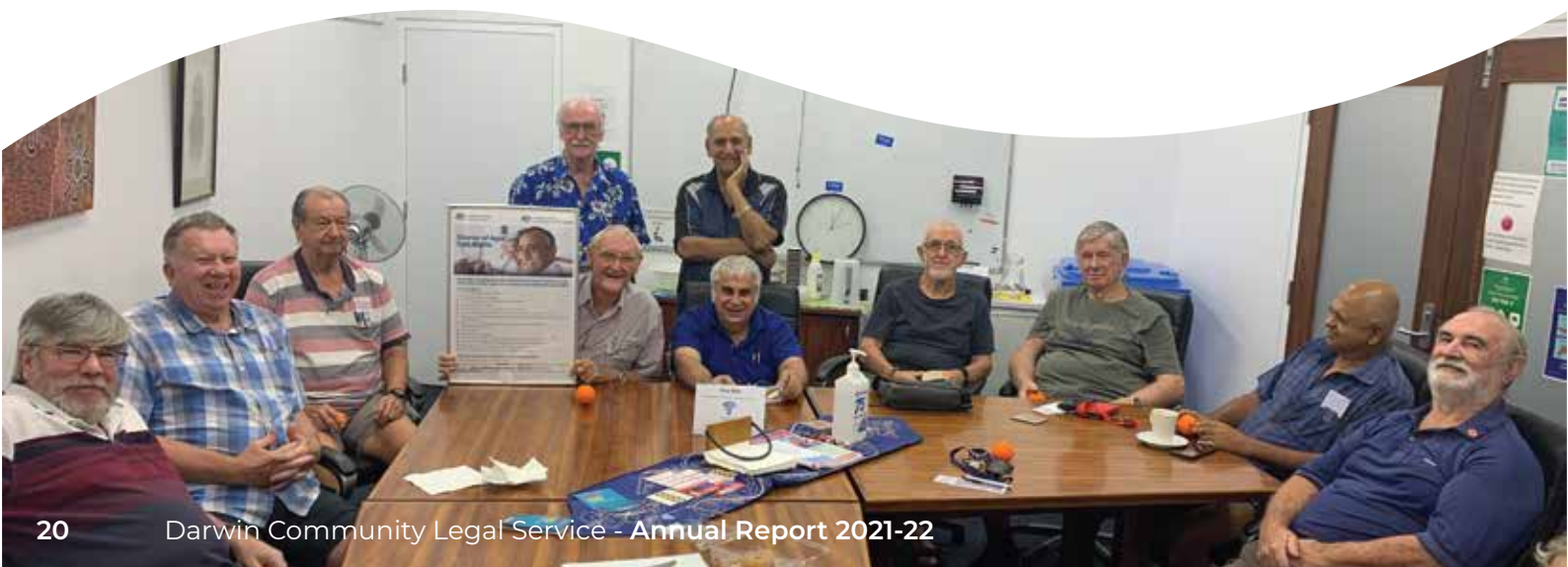
Our advocates have provided Older Person Abuse Workshops and disability workshops and drop-in sessions and client support in East Arnhem Land communities – Yirrkala, Mililingimbi, Ramingining, and Elcho Island.

DCLS' constant presence in East Arnhem Land has built positive rapport and trust. DCLS is also excelling its presence closer to home, in areas on the outskirts of Darwin. This year we have assisted the community in Wagait Beach, Belyuen, as well as Adelaide River and Daly River.

Our Seniors and Disability Rights team has been actively engaged with many public events; The Seniors Expo, MIFANT Carers Week, the All-Abilities Expo, Palmerston Seniors Day, the International Day of People with a Disability Carnival of Fun, to name a few. As a result of these community events, we have been able to drive awareness of our services. We've also delivered a workshop to the Batchelor Institute Aboriginal Health Practitioners students around advocacy to inspire and inform them of their vital role in health and community service delivery.

SUMMARY

Our advocates have been busy providing rights-based supports to clients, running community education sessions, and providing systemic advocacy. For 2022-2023 we intend to increase our work on issues that affect Territorians at the local level.



SDRS – SENIORS' RIGHTS TEAM

Our Seniors Rights Service provides information, support, and advocacy for older people receiving a pension in aged care facilities and people receiving home care packages. We assist our clients to; access appropriate and high-quality care, provide information and education to the community to recognise and prevent their abuse, neglect, and exploitation and make independent life decisions.

Seniors Rights Service also makes regular contributions to the national discourse through Older Peoples Advocacy Network, advising trends and developing strategies for areas of interest in the Northern Territory.

Covid-19 posed the greatest risk to those most vulnerable, including older Territorians in Residential Aged Care Facilities. Our advocates worked in the local community and coordinated with our national funding body OPAN to ensure that older persons' rights continued to be protected as facilities put measures in place to stop the spread of Covid-19. This included ensuring that people could continue to see their family and independent advocates.



RAMNIK WALIA, SDRS
ADVOCATE WITH AGED
DISCRIMINATION COMMISSIONER,
THE HON. DR KAY PATTERSON AO

Case Study 1:

Family members of consumer (Tom) stated that he does not have cognitive ability to make his own decisions. Application lodged with NTCAT for guardianship orders. Tom contacted DCLS for assistance and an action plan done by both DCLS and SDRS team members to support Tom through the process. Consumer went through memory test at memory clinic and in accordance with the result the consumer was deemed competent (by medical practitioner) to make decisions in relation to all matters. Tom's family members retracted guardianship application and copy of consumer results sent to his family and care provider. This case study is a perfect example which showcases advocacy to protect rights of senior citizens.

Case Study 2:

Client Valma was concerned that they were being over charged for services after transferring from one Home Care Package to another.

Advocate contacted Home Care Package provider to produce documentation pertaining to transfer of providers and monthly statements. Home Care Package provider had been charging the client cancellation fees for services that weren't being provided. Advocate contacted the Home Care Package provider and requested that these funds be refunded as sufficient notice was provided.

Client was happy with the outcome.

“Wow. Just wow.”



This is the first SDRS information session I have attended. I went in not knowing a thing. I came out with a wealth of information; feeling really buoyed and positive with what Nik told us.

What a great feeling to know that there are people we, as seniors, can turn to in times of need.

I am 65 yo and have a supportive family. As I get older I can see the increasing vulnerability of our older citizens. I feel for those who are older and don't have any, or limited, family support. If only they were all aware of what is available to them. I will definitely be doing my bit to get the information about the SDRS and DCLS out into the community.

Nik is a great advocate. He did a great job presenting the info session and discussing it all with us. He gave me the confidence to know that there is someone who I can trust to “go in to bat” for me should I ever have the need.

“12 out of 10 for Nik and DCLS.”

SAFETY TOOLKIT : RESPONDING TO OLDER PERSONS' ABUSE

The Seniors Rights team developed a television commercial for Older Person Abuse. The TV ad was launched on 15 June 2022 and was aired on Channel Nine. Along with the TV Ad, SDRS developed the first Aged Care Older Person Abuse tool kit as a resource for providers and community members in the top end.

DCLS marked the day with a campaign launch of the commercial and invaluable resource.

We were so excited to be joined by Minister for Seniors, the Hon Lauren Moss MLA Lauren Moss : Member for Casuarina, CEO of Older Persons Advocacy Network (OPAN), Craig Gear, Lesley Merrett from Relationships Australia Northern Territory and Janet Brown from COTA NT along with many other service providers and industry supporters.

A special thank you to the Band of the 1st Brigade for their entertainment!

A great morning by all.



LAUREN MOSS, MINISTER FOR SENIORS
& CRAIG GEAR, OPAN CEO WITH
DCLS STAFF



JULIE DAVIS & CRAIG GEAR



SALLY SIEVERS, ANTI-DISCRIMINATION
COMMISSIONER WITH RACHAEL
BOWKER, CEO DCLS



AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND

SDRS – DISABILITY RIGHTS TEAM

DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Our disability advocates have provided supports to people accessing NDIS, Centrelink and Territory Housing. Our rights-based approach focuses on building capacity and helping people achieve good outcomes on the issue that brings them to our service. We had a large number of clients coming through our doors this year, as you can see reflected in the statistics.

We also continue to engage in systemic work. We wrote submissions to senate joint standing committees, both on the disability support pension and the NDIS. Our advocates engage with local and Australian networks including the NT Disability Advocacy Collective and the Disability Advocacy Network Australia to ensure NT people are represented in national conversations.

NDIS APPEALS

SDRS continues to assist people with NDIS appeals, both internal to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the NDIA. This year NDIS appeals advocacy has been in crisis, and for several months there was no specifically funded legal representation available for people appealing NDIS decisions. Our advocates worked hard to offer continuous support to as many people as possible, and we added another NDIS Appeals advocate to our team.

NT DISABILITY STRATEGY

In 2021 SDRS advocates facilitated community consultation for the NT Disability Strategy in Darwin, Katherine, Tiwi Islands and Nhulunbuy. We are pleased that the Strategy has now been finalised including an action plan for the next 3 years.

DISABILITY ROYAL COMMISSION

SDRS has continued to help people connect with the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability (DRC). We supported clients in private sessions with Commissioners. An advocate can help a person structure their story, and collate timelines and evidence to make sure that when a person speaks to the Commissioner, they include everything they want to speak about. SDRS also meets with the DRC Office of Solicitor Assisting to help inform hearings.

SDRS advocates collaborate with the other funded services in the NT; NT Legal Aid, NAAJA, Danila Dilba, Relationships Australia, Disability Advocacy Services and NPY Women's Council. Together we aired a radio ad to raise awareness of the Disability Royal Commission.



Case Study 1:

Paula came to DCLS in a crisis, as she had experienced unexpected significant funding cuts to her son Jonah's* NDIS plan. DCLS assisted by organising an urgent plan review, and emergency funding was accessed. DCLS then further assisted by helping get better long-term NDIS plan in place. This crisis, and the many other crises Paula and her family experienced in trying to access appropriate and sufficient supports for Jonah have left Paula exhausted and frustrated. DCLS helped Paula book in and prepare for a private session with the DRC, and attended this with Paula. DCLS helped prepare a detailed chronology, which was useful in the DRC session, but Paula will also be able to use as she navigates the complaints and ombudsman processes.*

National Disability Advocacy Program – Decision Support Pilot

Case Study 1:

Mark is an Aboriginal man from the remote Top End, under guardianship by the Office of the Public Guardian. He was incarcerated when DCLS started assistance. Mark had an NDIS plan in place, but had not accessed any supports. Mark was looking to make parole and return to his community. SDRS assisted his guardianship case manager with a SIL assessment, and a plan review. Several stakeholder meetings occurred with the guardian, support coordinator and advocate. SIL was approved, and several providers were approached to submit a ROC. Unfortunately, at this point, with Mark's needs, he will have to stay in a city, instead of moving to his home community. DCLS closed the case.*

Case Study 2:

Felipe is a 25 year old man with a CALD background. He is currently incarcerated in Darwin Correctional Center. Felipe first accessed the DSP at DCLS in April 2021. He is isolated, and has significant mental health issues. DCLS assisted Damien to make an access request for NDIS, by collecting existing evidence, and sourcing experts to complete the psychosocial disability form. DCLS' first access request was denied. DCLS attempted a second time with more evidence, and Felipe made access to the NDIS. DCLS is now assisting Felipe with the planning process, which is further complicated as with proper NDIS supports Felipe might be able to be paroled, but as they are not currently in place he cannot. Felipe is also likely to be released into homelessness, DCLS is investigating support through his NDIS plan, as Felipe's disability means his housing options are severely limited.*



VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS ARE INVALUABLE

Darwin Community Legal Service was established in 1991 by volunteers and continues to work with a passionate Legal Volunteer Team to achieve legal and social justice and the protection and expansion of rights, fairness and wellbeing in the NT.

With the help of our Volunteer Legal Team, DCLS is able to provide legal help, advocacy and support to the residents of the NT with an after-hours Free Legal Advice Service which is staffed by NT Lawyers and students who volunteer their time to provide high-quality legal advice.

This past year DCLS has had over 60 extraordinary volunteers dedicate their knowledge and time to this service.

This equates to over 320 clients assisted and 1300 hours of valuable time provided by our amazing volunteers and at the afterhours Free Legal Advice Service.

CELEBRATING OUR VOLUNTEERS

This year our amazing Volunteers celebrated National Volunteers week at Government House where we were joined by the Honourable Chief Justice Michael Grant AO.

It was a fantastic night and a pleasure to celebrate our volunteers for their contributions and achievements that they have made this past year. DCLS would like to thank our patron, Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO for hosting us at Government House for the evening and Chief Justice Michael Grant AO for joining us for this special celebration.





NATIONAL 16-22 MAY 2022 VOLUNTEER Better Together WEEK

National Volunteer Week was a chance for all of us to celebrate and recognise the vital work of our volunteers and to say thank you.

Some of our invaluable volunteers pictured here giving a "wave to volunteers" in recognition of the great work of volunteers around the country.

Also during this week, DCLS gets involved with Colour Your Community Red; a chance to thank volunteers and for volunteers to say they are proud volunteers. The campaign highlights all the amazing work of volunteers and this year was a special shout out to all those working in emergency and emergency recovery (bushfires and COVID-19).



CONGRATULATIONS SARAH MOSES VOLUNTEER MANAGER OF THE YEAR NT/SA

Sarah Moses joined Darwin Community Legal Service in October 2020 as the Volunteer Coordinator. Sarah is highly passionate and an advocate for volunteering.

Sarah is active in the legal sector recruiting new volunteers each year and ensuring that DCLS always has a full roster of people for her advice sessions. She ensures that DCLS use best practice in volunteer management and this has made DCLS' volunteer program one of the largest and most sort after volunteering programs for new lawyers.

Thank you Sarah for managing our successful volunteer program!

"I would like to say thank you to all my volunteers that make my day brighter and thank you to Volunteering NT for this acknowledgment. Winning this award has provided me with the encouragement that I needed to continue in my role"

– Sarah Moses



CONGRATULATIONS MICHELLE GANZER VOLUNTEERING NT VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION CERTIFICATE

Michelle volunteers as a supervising solicitor for Darwin Community Legal Service and enjoys helping those in our community to navigate the complex legal systems and frameworks.

Outside of working and volunteering Michelle is a valued member of the Darwin community, she donates blood, enjoys drinking her coffee black and has two rambunctious children, a cute dog and 13 chickens. Michelle Ganzer worked in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions from 2003 as a paralegal while finishing her law degree and continued her legal career upwards from there.

She has worked across a wide range of government legal practice; criminal law, legislative reform, legal policy, Aboriginal land rights and titles, disability, alcohol and other drugs and mental health. She now works for the Department of Health. Michelle has a range of qualifications; Bachelor of Laws, Master of Laws, Master of Public Health and is currently attempting (again) a Doctorate of Philosophy at Law.



ADMITTED TO PRACTICE

Congratulations to three of our volunteers David Ninan, Kailey Coble and Samara Carroll.

After many years of study and practical training they were admitted to practice in May 2022. David, Kailey and Samara are valued volunteers of Darwin Community Legal Service. We wish them all the best in their legal career.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

DCLS would like to recognise all of our 2021-2022 Volunteers. Thank you for volunteering your time and knowledge to help those in our community, your contributions do make a difference to those in need.

Adam Stencel
Adelle Offerman
Aine Buckley
Alistair Wyvill
Al Cabry
Andrew Banks
Annelise Willis
Anne-Maree Chin
Ben Slade
Breathe Hasson
Caroline Deane
Chris Sapinosa
Clarinta Gardiner
Clancy Dane
Daisy Kolt
David Ninan
Eesha Raut
Elisha Harris
Elsa Adshead
Emma Farnell
Errol Chua
Harrold Holingsworth
Ian Grant

Jackie Fryar
James Bowyer
Jeff Thompson
Jessica Cornish
John Garrick
Jorja Costello
Kailey Coble
Kelly Stephenson
Kelvin Sindu
Laura Burfit
Leah Radatti
Leanne Keer
Lucy Quinlan
Mark Hibbins
Matthew Barsden
Matthew Gardiner
Michelle Duggan
Michelle Ganzer
Murry Stubbs
Myles Brown
Nabila Majid
Nathan Supra
Nik Dakis

Ramnik Walia
Rebecca De Zylva
Richie Cardenas
Ron Lawford
Ros Vickers
Ruby Kelly
Samantha Hendry
Samara Carroll
Sarah Cumming
Sarah Strzelecki
Shannon Rice
Simon Pickering
Solomon Berhane
Stella Noor
Tanisha Cubillo- Latzer
Taylah Cramp
Tia Broadhead
Tom Malone
Winnie Chen

INTERNS

OUR 2021/22 INTERNS

The wonderful Charles Darwin University students who were with us during the year as part of their Clinical Law course, coordinated by Ros Vickers, were:

Cody McFarlane	Lew Tuck
Samantha Wilson	Tee Jay Damo
Chris Sapisano	Shannon Rice
Mark Hibbins	Alex Storey
Krista Bruce	Daniel Robins
Deanna Sofia	



Ayssa Cabry did placement for her Monash University Clinical Law course with DCLS and Laura Gallagher undertook her placement for her Macquarie University Global Leadership Program.

We greatly appreciated the collaboration with the Australian National University especially via the Law Internship course. The ANU students who were with us as interns or volunteers, were:

Ivy Loncar	Eugenie Lynch-Grant	Sean Slocombe
Abby Gallagher	Ilsa Hattam	Grace Underhill
Alyssa Ellwood	Matthew Shaw	Laura Lee
Angus Mackie-Williams	Thomas Fitzgerald	Lachlan Pembroke
Annie O'Neill	Emma Rose Walling	Dylan Trainor
Callum Bryan	Baljit Nagra	Alice Tilleard
Scanlon Williams	Min Kyung (Susie) Kim	Joseph Kettle

Eight students undertook legal practice experience, towards their Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice and admission to legal practice:

Bronwyn Flowers (ANU)	Kaitlyn Kerr (College of Law)
Michael Johnson (ANU)	Alyssa Cabry (College of Law)
Jon Gonsalves (ANU)	Hugo Kneebone (Uni Adel/Law Society of SA GDLP)
Shannon Cloy (ANU)	Paul Kiet Ly Phu (UNSW)

Praise for DCLS & Law Internship Program

Matthew is a fifth-year Bachelor of Laws (Honours)/Politics, Philosophy and Economics student. He recently undertook a College-arranged internship at the Darwin Community Legal Service.

What was your favourite part of the program?

"My favourite part was definitely the wide variety of matters which I had the good fortune of assisting with during my internship, from superannuation disputes to adult guardianship appeals and everything in between"



PHOTO CREDIT: MATTHEW SHAW
STORY CREDIT: ANU COLLEGE OF LAW WEBSITE
<https://law.anu.edu.au/study/testimonials/matthew-shaw>

COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS

OVERVIEW

One of the more exciting achievements for the Communications team in the last 12 months is the development and launch of our new brand logo and colours. The Comms team have spent a considerable part of the past year developing and distributing new and refreshed brochures, posters and other collateral with our new branding.

DCLS continued to celebrate the amazing milestone that was 30 years of operation in the Territory. The Comms team developed some letters, posters and call-outs on social media to previous staff, volunteers and board members inviting them to be a part of the celebrations; either for attending the various events or in sharing stories and anecdotes from the early years. We were delighted to get a great response to this and was able to develop a great presentation and take-home event booklet for the occasion.

Event Coordinator, Erin, did a great job in managing the logistics for 2 celebratory events; one being a reception hosted by the then Attorney-General The Hon. Selena Uibo at Parliament House followed by a breakfast for current and previous stakeholders at DoubleTree by

Hilton which was attended by Her Honour the Honourable Vicki O'Halloran AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory.

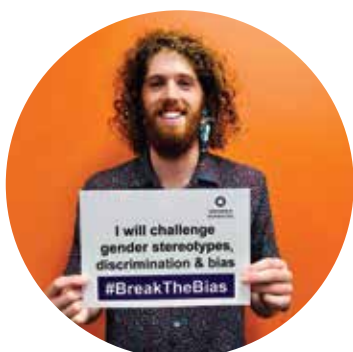
In the last financial year, our team has been involved in developing several resources and campaigns for the purpose of knowledge-sharing and education for our stakeholders.

Of notable mention, was the development of the Safety Toolkit: Responding to Older Person Abuse resource and the accompanying television commercial that was launched at an event coordinated by the Comms team.

AWARENESS DAYS

We also take time to come together to recognise national and international awareness days. This has a two-fold effect; it brings us together as a team but also gives us time to reflect on the different issues that may affect our stakeholders and the things we can do both as an organisation and as individuals to be more mindful.

A few of the great events and campaigns we participated in this year were: International Women's Day, PRIDE and Youth Homelessness just to name a few.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is the way of the future which has urged us in the last financial year to focus on increasing our social media footprint to share our communications with our stakeholders; not only about staff movements and community engagement but also for sharing knowledge and policy and law reform updates. This has proven to be a fruitful endeavour with our Facebook and Instagram accounts garnering interest and followers from like-minded interstate organisations. DCLS focuses on sharing relevant, crucial and credible content to ensure we are placing ourselves in the best position to be considered a reliable source of information for our stakeholders.

In the next 12 months, the Comms team will work on establishing DCLS' LinkedIn profile to further broaden our reach.

FACEBOOK

Our Facebook page has grown exponentially with a reach of over 50,000 people in the last financial year.

The most engaging post from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 was the introduction of our Disability Royal Commission Advocate, Krisha, with 176 "likes", 13 comments and 20 shares! Popular lady!

This post was followed closely by the announcement of our veteran-specific free legal service. This post garnered over 100 likes and 30 comments.

Our Facebook page continues to grow in likes and followers, the most notable are follows from other organisations wanting to keep up-to-date with all the happenings at DCLS.



Introducing...

Krisha - Disability Royal Commission Advocate

Krisha has recently joined DCLS as a Disability Royal Commission Advocate assisting people with submissions to the Royal Commission.

We want to help you share your story.

If you are a person with a disability, a family member, support worker or anyone within the broader community, and have a story to tell about the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of people with a disability, you can contact Krisha on 1800 812 953.



INSTAGRAM

In the last financial year, we have steadily gained followers to our Instagram page which can be attributed to our comms team being more active and engaging on the platform.

The post which gained the most traction was the post about "What is Sorry Day?" in relation to National Sorry Day which remembers and acknowledges the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The post was shared & re-posted by other organisations 59 times!

Instagram continues to prove it's relevance to our communications strategy and we will continue to nurture our presence on this platform.



Post Interactions - 70



Impressions - 101



Reach - 90 Accounts



Followers Non-followers

Engagement - 16 Accounts



RIGHTS ON SHOW

DCLS' 25th Human Rights Art Awards and Exhibition - Rights on Show - opened on 2 Dec. 2021 with around 100 people in attendance.

The exhibition is open to all Territorians and people of all ages and skill levels; 'preschool to professional'.

Overall, the event was reported to be a success, and continues to evolve and generate greater exposure. Many attendees were very pleased that the event was up and running again with many unaware that the event returned in 2020 after a 2-year hiatus.

Event Coordinator Erin O'Connell welcomed guests to the event, introducing The Youth Mill to perform their emotive Welcome to Country. Executive Director Rachael Bowker took to the stage to again welcome the guests, thanking the artists for entering such a great calibre of work and introducing former Executive Director Caitlin Perry as guest speaker.

Entries

We were pleased to receive over 100 entries into the exhibition from local artists, these included a number of organisations such as Top End Mental Health Consumers Organisation (TEMHCO), Mental Health Fellowship Association of the NT (MIFANT) and NT Legal Aid Commission who assisted their clients to enter artwork. DCLS is grateful for the support of the NFP sector.

We received a mix of mediums including paintings, photos, pottery and textiles – including skateboards!

Theme

The 2021 Theme was 'Human Rights Can't Wait; moving from words to action'.

In an era where we are being asked to stand up, speak out, see something – say something; let's do better.

The Venue

The venue for this event was the Northern Territory Supreme Court. This offered a prestigious, relevant ('justice/human rights') venue, at no cost. The security extended to the night and were generous in allowing us set up and pack down time after hours. The venue also meant that the exhibition was attended by those attending the court, extending the usual audience reach.

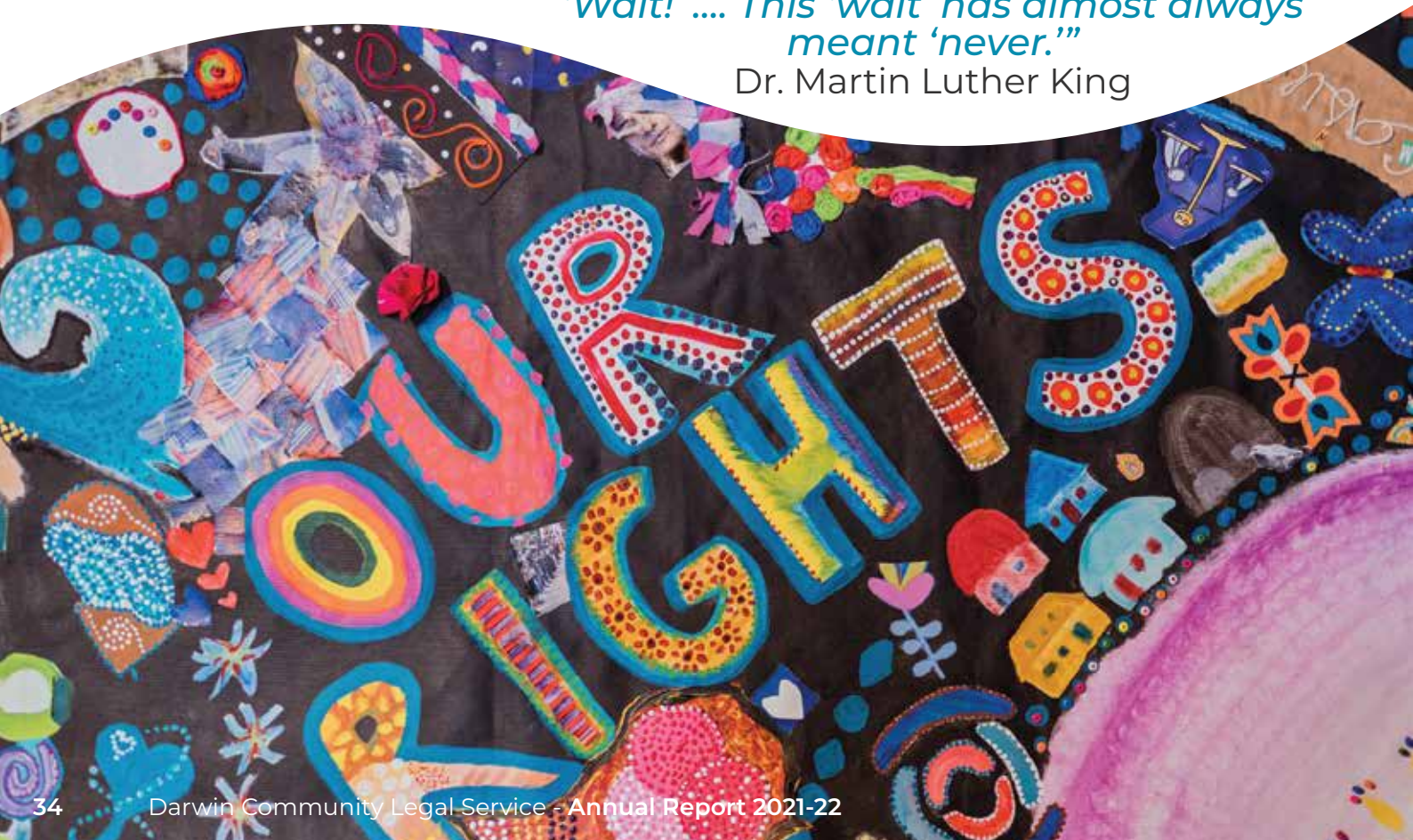
Thank You

Erin O'Connell, Rights on Show Coordinator, would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Kaye Strange for her guidance in curating the artworks and to her small team of volunteers from both Victims of Crime NT and DCLS.

Executive Director, Rachael Bowker, and the DCLS Board would like to thank and congratulate Erin on a fantastic event. Rights on Show saw a resurgence this year which can only be attributed to Erin's efforts which were supported by her small team of volunteers. Well done!

"For years now I have heard the word 'Wait!' This 'wait' has almost always meant 'never.'"

Dr. Martin Luther King



WINNERS

We were please to see such a variety and great calibre of work this year for Rights on Show; the judges has some difficult decisions to make! Below are the winners for each category:

RIGHTS ON SHOW 1ST PLACE

Catherine Miles
Find a Better Way



SECONDARY SCHOOL AWARD

David Dela Vega-Dela Pena
Right to Wear Pink



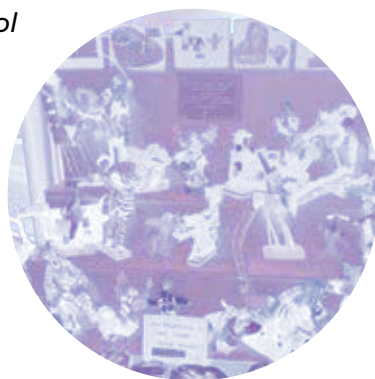
RIGHTS ON SHOW 2ND PLACE

Virginia Close
Emotions



PRIMARY SCHOOL AWARD

Anula Primary School
Creative



RIGHTS ON SHOW 3RD PLACE

Pascale Zufferey
Where are they now?
Asylum Seekers



JUDGES AWARD

Anne-Marie Cullinan
Left Hanging



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AWARD

Nadira Neela
Me and My Right

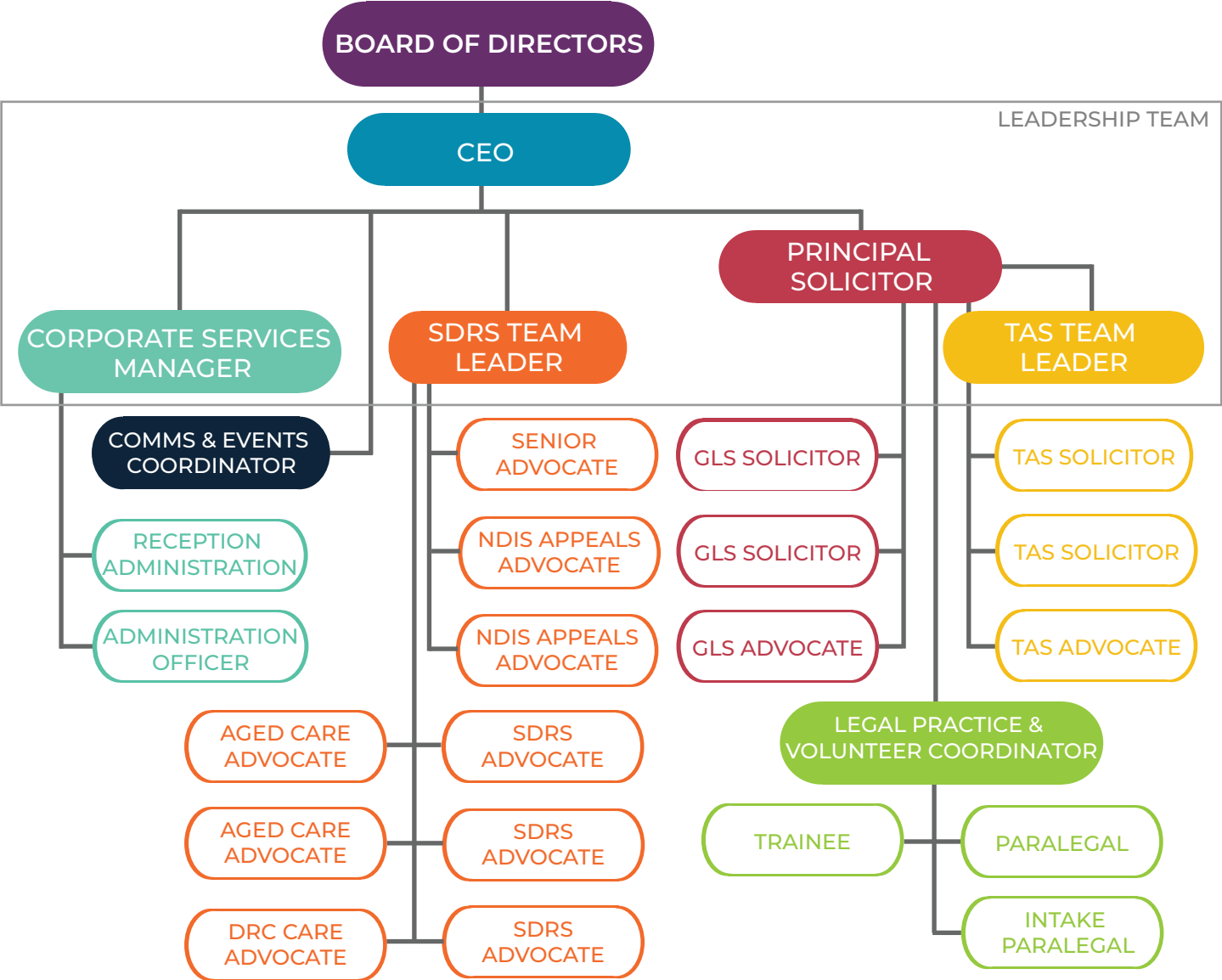


PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

Alana Hartley
Be Croc Wise



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



DCLS STAFF LIST

STAFF LIST FOR THE 2021/22 PERIOD

Executive Team		Seniors and Disability Rights Service	
Chief Executive Officer	Rachael Bowker	Senior SDRS Advocate	Jessica Brugmans
Principal Solicitor	Judy Harrison	NDIS Appeals Advocate	Chrissie Sherley
Leadership Team		NDIS Appeals Advocate	Jessica Cornish
Corporate Services Team Leader	Alana Coulson	Aged Care Advocate	Ramnik Walia
SDRS Team Leader	Kellie Streeter	Aged Care Advocate	Hayley Webb
TAS Team Leader	Caroline Deane	Aged Care Advocate	Sascha Burakowski
HR & Administration Manager	Trudy Allpike	Aged Care Advocate	Odri Aubapty
Corporate Services		DRC Advocate	Krishna Ketchell
Communications and Events Coordinator	Erin O'Connell	SDRS Advocate	Jamie Phelan
Reception Administration	Jesse-Lee Taylor	SDRS Advocate	Lachlan Rowe
Reception Administration	Joanna Czora	SDRS Advocate	Theresa Kagayo
Intake Administration	Lauren Parker	SDRS Advocate	Siobhan Wolsey
Quality and Assurance	Sharon Binns	SDRS Advocate	Will de Bomford
General Legal Service		SDRS Advocate	Elaine Walton
Community Solicitor	Bridget McDermott	Tenants' Advice Service	
Community Solicitor	Solomon Berhane	Community Solicitor	Matthew Gardiner
Community Solicitor	Leah Radatti	Community Solicitor	Phil Andrews
Advocate	Lucy Quinlan	Community Solicitor	Destiny Gultom
Legal Practice		Advocate	Al Cabry
Legal Practice and Volunteer Coordinator	Sarah Moses	Board of Directors	
Intake Paralegal	Michelle Burchill	Chair	Julie Davis
Trainee	Teale Meredith	Secretary	Peggy Cheong
		Treasurer	Kimmy Jongue
		Director	Alastair Shields
		Director	Clarissa Phillips
		Director	Julie Hansen
		Director	Tom Korecki
		Director	Lucy Markoff
		Director	Hugh Bond
		Director	Myles Brown - resigned Nov 2021

BOARD MEMBERS LIST FOR THE 2021/22 PERIOD

Board of Directors		Board of Directors	
Chair	Julie Davis	Director	Julie Hansen
Secretary	Peggy Cheong	Director	Tom Korecki
Treasurer	Kimmy Jongue	Director	Lucy Markoff
Director	Alastair Shields	Director	Hugh Bond
Director	Clarissa Phillips	Director	Myles Brown - resigned Nov 2021

FUNDING SUMMARY

THE GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE IS FUNDED BY:

- Commonwealth Government under the National Partnership Agreement for Legal Assistance Services through the Northern Territory Government's Department of Attorney-General and Justice
- As per Section 388 of the Legal Profession Act 2006, DCLS received an allocation of funds from the Legal Practitioner Fidelity Fund. These funds contribute towards general operational and staffing costs.

THE TENANTS' ADVICE SERVICE IS FUNDED BY:

- The Agent's Licensing Fidelity Guarantee Fund.

THE SENIORS AND DISABILITY RIGHTS SERVICE IS FUNDED BY:

- Commonwealth Department of Social Services
 - 'Disability and Carer Support Program'
 - 'Disability Advocacy Program'
 - 'NDIS Appeals Disability Carer & Support Program'
 - 'NDIS Decision Support Pilot'
 - 'Disability Royal Commission'
- Commonwealth Department of Health 'National Aged Care Advocacy Program' through the Older Persons Advocacy Network'
- NT Government's Territory Families 'Elder Abuse Prevention Project'



Australian Government

Department of Health and Aged Care



Australian Government

Department of Social Services

PRO BONO

A special thank you to the following individuals and organisations for their ongoing support.

Legal

Pat McIntyre - Barrister

Higher Education

Charles Darwin University Clinical Law Program

Australian National University College of Law

University of New South Wales Practical Legal Training Program

Leo Cussen Centre for Law

Community

East Arnhem Regional Council, East Arnhemland

Mala'la Healthcare and Disability Services, Maningrida

Belyuen Community Government Council and Belyuen Aged Care

Wagait Shire Council

SPECIAL MENTION

DCLS would like to acknowledge the following businesses for their in-kind support and sponsorship in 2021/22

Advertising



Rights on Show

- Supreme Court of the Northern Territory
- Northern Territory Government
- Darwin Visual Arts
- Slater & Gordon Lawyers
- Songlines
- Paul Kirby MLA | Member for Port Darwin
- Mark Turner MLA | Member for Blain
- The Exhibitionist
- E3 Productions
- Pony & Sid Catering
- The Youth Mill
- Jenny Shepherd
- Suzan Cox
- Kaye Strange
- Victims of Crime Staff





Darwin Community LEGAL SERVICE

DARWIN COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

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