



ANNUAL REPORT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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

TABLE OF CONTENTS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

O2
TABLE
OF CONTENTS

ABOUT PILBARA
COMMUNITY LEGAL
SERVICES

08

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT 12

CHAIRPERSON REPORT 14

PRINCIPAL SOLICITORS REPORT

18

TENANT ADVICE & EDUCATION REPORT 22

SETTLEMENT ENGAGEMENT & TRANSITION REPORT 26

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT REPORT

30

REDRESS

34

PILBARA HOUSING SUPPORT REPORT 40

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING REPORT

42
FINANCIAL

STATEMENTS

ABOUT PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES INC.

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (PCLS) is a not-for-profit, government-funded community organisation that provides a range of free services which include; legal, disability advocacy, financial counselling, tenancy advocacy and support, housing support, Redress, domestic violence advocacy and victim support and community migrant services. PCLS aims to reduce legal disadvantage, increase the capacity of individuals to manage their lives effectively and ensure people understand their rights and obligations. PCLS is part of a large national network of community legal service providers who occupy a unique position in law reform in Australia, pursuing a range of reform and public interest issues on behalf of disadvantaged people and the community at large.

Over the last 27 years, PCLS has become a highly valued part of the Pilbara's social infrastructure. PCLS is a well- established service operating in four locations; Karratha, South Hedland, Roebourne and Newman. PCLS provides outreach services across the Pilbara region to isolated communities such as Marble Bar, Nullagine, Onslow, Jigalong, Tom Price and Paraburdoo.

The organisation's current strategic service delivery model is the outcome of an evidenced- based, pro-active, community involved process. As PCLS provides many services the team is able to work together and deal with multiple client issues

simultaneously resulting in improved client outcomes. At the root of our service is the concepts of justice, human rights and community. PCLS adopts a rights-based, holistic, community development approach to the delivery of the service, dealing not just with the 'immediate presenting problems' of clients, but also with other broader social community issues.

The demands for the services are expected to continue to increase significantly as the population of the Pilbara increases. All PCLS services are flexible and responsive, making PCLS a vital community organisation that contributes to the Pilbara region. PCLS Staff and Board of Management are confident that despite issues associated with the Pilbara region, they can demonstrate excellence in terms of governance, program and service delivery, to empower the people of the Pilbara.

PCLS is unique in providing a holistic approach and not a 'referral roundabout'. It is extremely difficult to plan for when legal issues may arise, individuals do not budget for legal fees for issues like marriage breakdown, eviction or debt problems, however; PCLS ensures that every community member can access the services in the Pilbara regardless of their financial situation or social circumstances. PCLS actively continues to improve their current services and expand where the need.

PURPOSE: PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE,

EQUITABLE, RESPONSIBLE & CULTURALLY

APPROPRIATE ADVICE, SUPPORT & ADVOCACY

TO THE PEOPLE OF THE PILBARA.

VISION: EMPOWERING THE PEOPLE
OF THE PILBARA TO MANAGE THEIR LIVES
EFFECTIVELY.

ABOUT PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL INC.

ABOUT PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL INC.

OUR STRUCTURE

LEGAL

FAMILY LAW
CIVIL LAW
WILLS &DECEASED ESTATES
DISABILITY ADVOCACY

SETTLEMENT & ENGAGEMENT & TRANSITION

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

REDRESS

TENANT ADVICE & EDUCATION

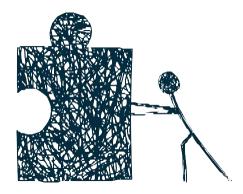
HOUSING

FINANCIAL

ADMINISTRATION

GOVERNING BOARD CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHAIR



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

CHIEF

MIRANDA CECICH

Pilbara Community Legal Servie Inc.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

FROM THE

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc (PCLS) is part of a large national network of community legal service providers (National Association of Community Legal Centres- NACLC) who occupy a unique position in Western Australia, actively seeking and assisting in the pursuit of a range of reform and public interest issues on behalf of disadvantaged people and the community

Over the last 25 years, PCLS has developed to be a highly valued part of the Pilbara's social infrastructure. The service began in a small single office in Newman in 1993. A regional office was established in Hedland, under the auspices of the Pilbara Social Justice Council to address a number of needs identified by a working party who lobbied hard for funding.

Now, PCLS plays a vital role in assisting disadvantaged people to not only access and engage with the legal system, it advocates for multifaceted support in areas of domestic violence, homelessness, tenancy, migrant services, financial counselling and survivors of institutionalised abuse.

PCLS provide accessible, equitable, responsible, and culturally appropriate advice, support, and advocacy to the people of the Pilbara completely free of charge, for

Since COVID-19 and the fall out of lock down's, limited resources and an increase in costs of service, PCLS have remained agile, connected and responsive, ensuring our service is available to the entire Pilbara community. PCLS has felt the impact, thus we have worked diligently to achieve optimum support for the most vulnerable, requiring a shift and pivoting of our provisions, how we reach our audience and how this work and our service is provided.

Despite the protection and border closures Western Australia was afforded from COVID-19, the organisation still felt the impact and consequent challenges of these unprecedented years of 'pandemic'. Whilst WA was largely protected, this did not mitigate or protect the community sector. Demand has certainly been at its highest, as seen in the exponential increase in client numbers across multiple services, as well as complexity in case loads. Clients often require multiple services by necessity.

The border closures also made for challenging recruitment and selection in the 'not for profit sector'. The Pilbara experienced another supply and demand challenge in housing as well as a 'mini boom' in 'industry', therefore a competing demand in resources. Finding secure and safe accommodation in the Pilbara continues to remain a challenge with the limited public housing stock, inflated private rental prices as well as cost of living within the region.

Regardless of these challenges, PCLS has achieved more than it ever has before and under demanding and ever-changing circumstance.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

PCLS have provided assistance to over 1200 clients, across all service streams over the past year. PCLS has increased client intake in ALL services

We continue to raise awareness in critical and demanding service areas. PCLS have taken specific active advocacy on ministerial level in the domestic violence and housing space as we near 'crisis' point, being actively involved in the state domestic violence advocacy groups and being an active contributor amongst a co-hort of vested organisations in the housing space.

PCLS IS AN ACTIVE CONTRIBUTOR IN COMMUNITY EVENT:

- NAIDOC week
- Port Hedland Careers Expo
- 16 Day in WA
- Ochre Ribbon Day
- White Ribbon Day

We have increased the technology platforms and hardware at PCLS, providing technology to our clients. Under ordinary circumstances, our clients would not be able to access this technology. We have also provided more 'brokerage' to our clients than ever before; providing supplies and/or compensation for essential and emergency items and services to those who need them most.

RAMPED UP OUTREACH SERVICES

this year despite the ever present potential of 'lock down' our PCLS staff increased home visits and outreach services across the Pilbara region to isolated communities such as:

- Marble Bar
- Nullagine
- Tom Price
- Onslow and
- Jigalong

One of last years internal objectives and focus was on governance, compliance and quality. PCLS geared for our pending Accreditation process as Legal Aid funding shifted to Department of Justice. PCLS have successfully undertaken and achieved accreditation via the rigorous audit process.

Given the shift and change PCLS has also undertaken a transformation in both review of location and imagereinventing our PCLS branding. The new PCLS brand involved the input of whole of team and Board to reflect the new and reinvigorated position the organisation seeks to be.

As the socio-economic demands and the indirect and direct impact of COVID-19, shortage of housing and cost of living in the Pilbara, community demand brought the need for an expansion of services in Financial Counselling, Domestic Violence and Housing. To accommodate and as funding acquired, PCLS made a bold and brave move to acquire and relocate their premises in Karratha. A significant and symbolic move from the existing premises of over 20 years.

PCLS now a well-established service and has a team of staff operating in all four centres (Karratha, Port Hedland, Newman & Roebourne), operating at full

PCLS celebrated and humbled by the distinguished and winner of the Western Australia Attorney General's Community Legal Service Award selected directly by the Western Australian Attorney General, Hon. John Quigley.

MOVING FORWARD

The next twelve months will continue to be a challenge - the economic uncertainty post COVID-19 funding a concern for the future continuity and sustainability of our critical services. PCLS acknowledges that to stay competitive and relevant, there is an expectation from funders for increased transparency. This, in turn, increases pressure on PCLS to demonstrate the impact of their programmes. PCLS views this as an opportunity to participate in greater collaboration with funders, networking of critical advocacy and political engagement work. PCLS look to facilitate a sustainable future for all vested parties.

To continue to achieve effective and efficient delivery of service, it is critical that the funding approach be collaborative, with a transparent and consistent funding model. PCLS looks forward to working closely with local organisations and funding bodies, at State and Federal levels, to achieve the best outcomes for all stakeholders.



PCLS were also listed as finalists and runner up in the Karratha District Chamber and Commerce Community Service Award. Finally, PCLS were also finalists amongst the reputable, enviable and prestigious state 'WA Community Awards.' Three incredible accolades and recognition; a reflection of the hard work that has been undertaken this year.

PCLS continue to be supported by our funding providers, as indicated in the continuity of our funding. PCLS thanks all our valued and various funding partners, for their continued support and encouragement. They are vital to the continued success of the PCLS across the Pilbara.

The PCLS team has demonstrated a capacity to show leadership and conviction in facilitating the groundwork for a shift in doing 'work' in the old way. A change in 'work culture', together with approach and behaviours continue to push change across the organisation. PCLS have responded to the changing environment. We spent time planning with the service teams and continue to incorporate our values and guiding behaviours into our operational planning. In addition, the internal redesign, has created administrative service support, with a clear focus on quality, compliance and risk management. Whilst we are limited in funding and compete with local industry in human capital and salaries, we seek to be an employer of choice; a reputable community organisation that people enjoy working for. We continue to look at innovative ways to attract, entice and retain our people.

At the root of all PCLS current services are the concepts of justice, human rights, and community. These beliefs affect not just the outcomes of the work but also the processes used. PCLS will continue to promote a rights-based, holistic, community development approach to the delivery of our services. This means dealing not just with the 'immediate presenting problems' of clients, but also with other broader social community issues. PCLS will continue the pursuit of a range of reform and public interest issues on behalf of disadvantaged people and the community at large. .

MIRANDA CECICH **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER** Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

ADMIN TEAM



TRINA WILLIAMSON **ADMINISTRATION MANAGER**



EMELI NESTOROSKA ADMINISTRATION TRAINEE



RACHEL REED **ADMINISTRATOR**



GASPER ADMINISTRATION TRAINEE

BIANCE MAYNE ACCOUNTS ADMINISTRATOR



FIELDING **ACCOUNTS ADMINISTRATOR**

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

CHAIRPERSON REPORT



DAMIEN MILES

This past year, PCLS has been able to establish new partnerships with fellow NGO's to increase capacity in wrap around support for our clients and communities.

FROM THE **CHAIR**

TThe 2020-21 financial year has been filled with many highlights for Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS), which are outlined in this year's report. One particular area of pride is the way our people continue to focus on clients and the community, successfully working with other NGO's in the region. This ensures we provide high quality service to our clients, many of whom are disadvantaged members of our community.

The excellent work undertaken by the PCLS team was recognised this year by a number of awards, including the 2021 Attorney General's Community Service Law Award (Not-for-Profit). It is pleasing to see the team gain this recognition, given their focus on ensuring quality services for clients.

Of course, new partnerships cannot be successful without the continuation of existing support. PCLS has been fortunate to have this support from multiple stakeholders, including our funders and governing bodies. They include:

- Community Legal Centres Australia (NACLC)
- Department of Justice
- Department of Attorney General

THE LIST IS LONG, & INCLUDES:

- Department of Communities
- Department of Home Affairs
- Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and
- Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Department of Social Services
- Financial Counsellors Association of Western Australia
- WA Law Society

2021 has seen PCLS undertake a significant accreditation process conducted by NACLC where they confirmed our accreditation as a community legal centre under the NACLC standards. As the 2020-21 financial year came to an end, we also moved our Karratha office, and temporarily farewelled our CEO Miranda Cecich as she went on maternity leave. PCLS secured Karen Grove, from Kimberly Community Legal Service to cover the initial absence, with long time employee, Trina Williamson stepping into the role until Miranda's return in 2022.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the organisations who work with PCLS, as well as our own dedicated and professional team for the wonderful contribution you make to the Pilbara community.

DAMIEN MILES

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR'S REPORT



JULIE **MASON** PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR Funded under the Rural Women's Outreach Program, through the



RYAN **SAME**

SENIOR SOLICITOR Funded under the Family & Domestic Violence Lawyer Program through the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

WAYDE **NEWTON**

General.

JUNIOR SOLICITOR Funded by WA Law Society Public Purpose Trust

AJAY **SAHOTA**

JUNIOR SOLICITOR Funded by the Department of Communities as Disability Advocate



HERBERT JUNIOR SOLICITOR Funded under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy Program through the Department of Prime

Minister and Cabinet.

KAYLA



AREAS OF LAW PCLS SOLICITOR'S OFFER ADVICE & REPRESENTATION

Even through multiple staff changes in the legal service over the past financial year, PCLS solicitors were able to continue providing unimpeded services to 950 clients. This consisted of 638 clients for civil law advice and 312 clients for family law advice and information. There was a marked increase in clients being advised on, and having documents prepared for, Wills and Estates, as the senior solicitor is the only solicitor in the Hedland region that offers these services.

FAMILY LAW

DIVORCE

Legal advice about divorces; assist clients with the drafting of divorce applications and information about the process of obtaining a divorce.

PARENTING MATTERS

Legal advice about parenting / child matters; clients withthe drafting of parenting agreements and court documents.

CARE & PROTECTION

Advice and court representation for care and Protection matters.

PROPERTY MATTERS

Information in relation to the process of finalising de facto and marital property settlements.

CIVIL LAW

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

Representation for Criminal Injuries Compensation matters.

VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDERS

Advice and court representation for family violence (FVRO) and violence restraining (VRO) orders.

WILLS & DECEASED ESTATES

Advice in relation to wills and estates. Assist clients with drafting of simple wills; probate applications; letters of administration; powers of attorney, and guardianship applications.

DISABILITY ADVOVACY

The Disability Advocacy service is committed to improving the lives and opportunities for people with disability. The service recognises that there is a gap between people living with disability in the Pilbara, and the services available to them for advocacy, advice and support.

The service has a solicitor dedicated to Disability Advocacy. The advocate can assist with any legal issues you, or your carer might be facing, no matter how big or small, such as:

- Discrimination claims
- Preparing or appealing a Disability Support
- Preparing or appealing a Carer Allowance Claim
- Appointing a Power of Attorney, Guardian to make decisions for you
- Making an advanced health directive
- Eligibility for government benefits
- Eligibility for NDIS
- Elder abuse

PCLS SOLICITORS PROVIDED **UNIMPEDED SERVICES TO** 950 CLIENTS

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR'





OUTREACH LEGAL SERVICES

PCLS understands the difficulty for clients that live in the Pilbara to travel to the Karratha, Roebourne and Hedland offices. Our outreach service covers a vast area from Onslow to Newman.

Karratha based solicitors' conducted weekly outreach visits to our Roebourne office and bi-monthly visits to Onslow (Bindi-Bindi community and the township).

Hedland based solicitors' conducted monthly outreach visits to Karratha and Roebourne and quarterly outreach visits to Tom Price and Newman.

The outreach trips ensure clients who live in these remote communities are offered the opportunity to receive the same services as those clients that live in Karratha, Roebourne and Hedland areas.

COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES

Community Legal Education is an effective way to disseminate information and start conversations about different areas of law. By offering this education, the community can continue to be empowered through knowledge and understanding.

All PCLS solicitors contribute to community legal education. This may take the form of stakeholder meetings, educating front line staff at relevant organisations, informing all stakeholders as to updates in legislation, and promoting PCLS legal services.

The monthly PCLS newsletter, PCLS website, brochures and fact sheets contain information on specific areas of law that we practice in as well as promoting our legal service. Legal brochures detailing all the legal services available at PCLS are distributed at all community events PCLS participates in and displayed on community noticeboards

KEY **ACHIEVEMENTS**

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PCLS has continued to partner with Curtin University to provide valuable internship placements to Curtin Law School final year law students. The students gained invaluable experience and knowledge in relation to the services that PCLS provides in the Pilbara region by observing client interviews and assisting PCLS solicitors with paralegal support. We also formally supervise a local law graduate undertaking the practical component of his Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice.

We thank the legal team of Ryan Same, Kayla Herbert, Wayde Newton and Ajay Sahota for their commitment to our clients, their continual support, and their great work which all enhances and maintains the professional reputation of the legal service. We also thank our administrative staff in Karratha and South Hedland for their crucial roles in the running of

The legal team look forward to assisting community members in the year ahead.

the legal service.

ATTORNEY GENERAL COMMUNITY **SERVICE LAW AWARDS**

PCLS was the winner of the 2021 Attorney General's Community Service Law Award. PCLS was amongst many larger and well-resourced nominees. In addition, we stood out with only two other winners of separate awards. Minter Ellison (a massive, established law firm) and Mr Redman (30+ years in delivering individual pro-bono legal work). This award shows recognition of the hard work that all of our lawyers devote to the clients.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Principal Solicitor continues to provide formal supervision of all of the junior lawyers, with the senior solicitor providing guidance where appropriate. This ensures a continual professional growth of the junior lawyers, in order for them to effectively assist the

Tenancy Agreement Tenancy Agreement is for letting furnished shorthold tenuncy and assured shorthold tenuncy dron assured an assured shorthold tenancy idential accommo dron le station. As such, this knowle document and short land within the provision of the law of Landid Vano Ten and South and I and of the law of Landin Warren the date specifies it. It is intender This Tenancy Ag and shall be either Party does he legislati strongly advised t This Agreement is ment the Landlord and created by this AE tenancy within the

TENANT ADVICE & EDUCATION REPORT



COOK Funded by the Department of Mines, **Industry Regulation and** Safety under the Tenant Advice and Education Service



AMY LIEBERT

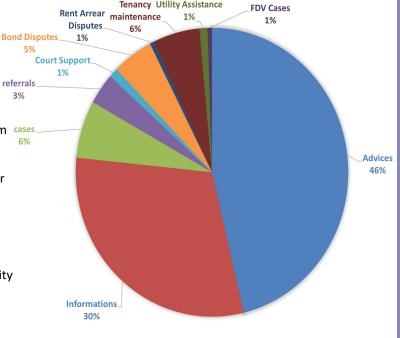
Funded by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety under the Tenant Advice and Education

AREAS OF ASSISTANCE

The past 12 months for the Tenant Advice and Education Service program have presented the team cases with an extremely busy case load.

The Karratha tenancy advocate left PCLS for greener pastures and another found their way to PCLS and has proven to be a great asset to the team.

The tenancy team have assisted a vast majority of clients with a range of different tenancy related issues. The team are pleased to report that a majority of client issues and concerns have had a positive outcome.



Tenancy Advice and Education Service have an unwavering commitment to social justice.

TENANT ADVICE & EDUCATION REPOR

KEY ACHEIVEMENTS

PROMOTING TAES

[one] A stall was held at the latest Career Expo 2021 for students at South Hedland Senior High School.

[Two] Outreach was conducted to Tom Price from the 6th to the 20th of September for community engagement with Gumala, Tom Price Youth Centre (YACWA), Wakathuni community members and Nintirri

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

[one] TAES attended sector Briefing - Referral pathways and tenancy moratorium training. this involved discussions about current referral pathways, resources and tools available to the community service sector when supporting individuals at risk of losing their tenancies.

[two] Buried in Treasure and re-frame training provided the team with tips on being able to look at the big picture and think of the problem from multiple perspectives.

CHALLENGES

COVID-19 appears to have disproportionately impacted people on the lowest incomes, in turn this has exacerbated hardship, loneliness and mental health.

Rents increased dramatically in the Pilbara once the State Emergency Period (Rental Evictions Moratorium) ended on 28th March 2021. Regional growth is being driven by the high performance in mining and the strongest price increases are showing in mining towns where the strongest rental increases are as well.

Domain states the rental prices in Hedland have returned to boom times like those of 2012, Karratha's weekly rent rose by 16.7% and at present the private

rental vacancy rate in WA is at its lowest since 2012.

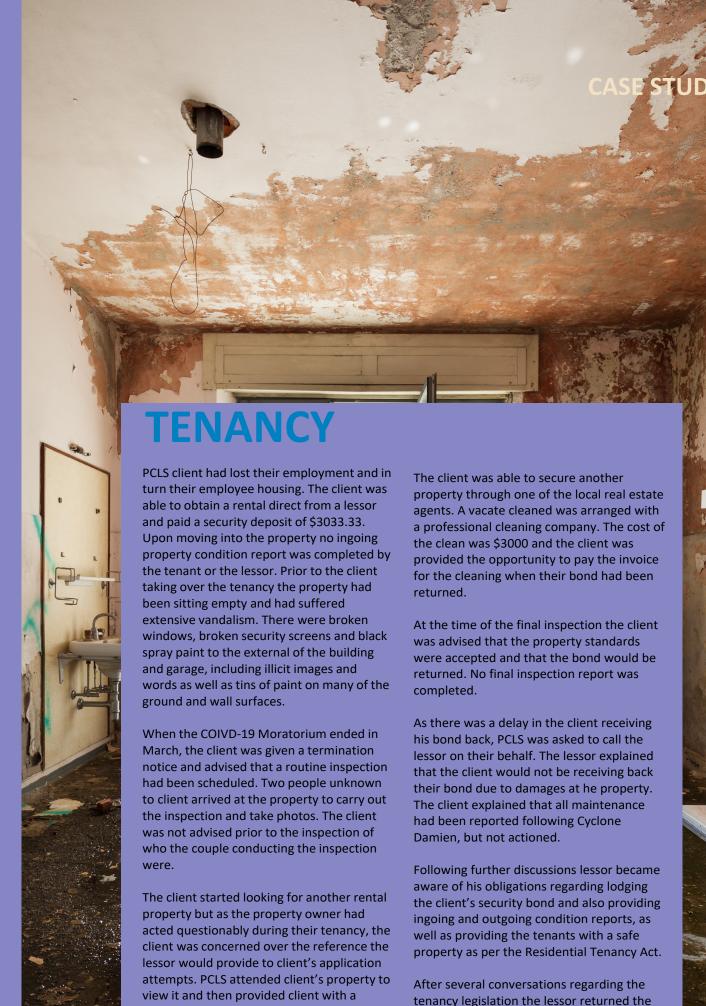
Department of Communities (Housing Authority) wait turn list is backed up for years to come, so much so they have changed the process for applications just in the past week.

Recovery from this crisis is slow and it has never been more important at PCLS to know the different types of emergency support that services can provide to people doing it tough.

PCLS is working hard with other peak stake holders across community services to ensure all service directories map to one another.

SINCE THE END OF (REM) TENANCY **ADVOCATES HAVE BEEN BUSY WITH:**

- Tenancy rent (28 clients assisted)
- Threat of evictions (6 clients assisted)
- Tenancy Termination by Lessor (23 clients assisted)
- Abandoned premises (3 clients assisted); just to name a few.



support letter to go alongside their rental

applications. PCLS also contacted the Bond

Administration and was informed that the

clients Security Bond was never lodged.

clients security bond and it was available in

the client's bank account the following day.

The client was happy with the outcome and

provided positive feedback to the service.

ENANT ADVICE & EDUCATION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES The focus of the program is on social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal wellbeing and community connectedness of newly arrived migrants and refugees. It provides eligible newly arrived clients with settlement-related information, advice, advocacy, and assistance to access mainstream and other relevant services. A key role of this program is to help people learn English, access education and training, and help them get work. It is intended to provide holistic, flexible services designed to meet the individual needs of the clients, and to deliver sustainable settlement outcomes.

ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER **AGENCIES**

Establishment of strong relationships with a variety of service providers, has been a major focus of the caseworkers.

FOLLOWS:

- Hedland's Thai and Filipino communities
- Karratha's Indian Community
- Pilbara University Centre
- Hedland Well Women's Centre
- Karratha Family Centre
- Circle Green Community Legal Centre
- Karratha Women's Place
- Pilbara Multicultural Association
- The City of Karratha
- Town of Port Hedland



Program

77

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The past twelve months have been a very busy and extremely productive time for the SETS caseworkers.

Since October 2020, the SETS team have provided referrals, information and advices and referrals to 140 clients and arranged various activities, such as:

- Christmas multicultural lunches
- Men Only and Women Only swimming lessons in partnership with the Royal Life Savings Society WA
- cooking classes featuring healthy Australian foods, Indian, Thai, Dutch, Italian and Vietnamese cuisines

Ngala, the Cancer Council WA, Pilbara Population Health Unit, the Jobs & Skills Centre and Relationships Australia delivered workshops on parenting, healthy eating, employment readiness and mental health to migrant clients.





The Junction Co and BLB Creative teamed up withh PCLS to organise a series of successful events during Harmony Week 2021, such arts and crafts workshops, movie screening, community celebration with dances, fashion shows and handicraft demonstrations.

This allowed the whole community an opportunity to view, learn and reflect on the different life experiences of migrants as well as raise awareness regarding the various cultures of residents living in the Pilbara.

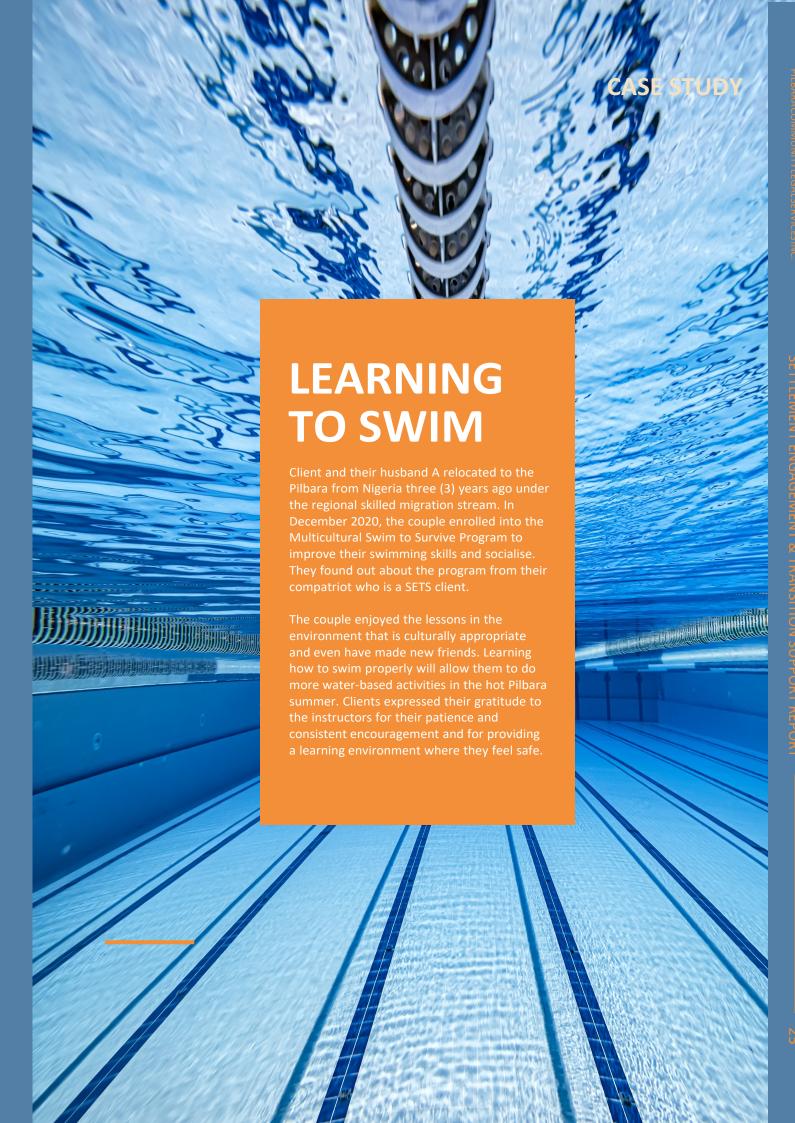
In Karratha, the Harmony Week program was sponsored by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. Town of Port Hedland supported the activities for the Hedland migrant community.

Providing free workshops and family friendly events removes barriers that some community members may have.

CHALLENGESTO DELIVERY OF SETS PROGRAM

The main reason for seeking assistance were community participation and networking, mental health and wellbeing, family functioning, education, skills training and employment. Due to COVID-19 and border restrictions, there are limitations regarding newly arrived migrants. Despite the fact that migration to Australia has significantly fallen, the complexity of the cases remains high. Still a large proportion of SETS clients experience domestic and family violence, with those on temporary visas reporting much higher levels of abuse related to their migration status.

Housing and childcare are other challenges for our clients. Although the nation is experiencing housing and childcare educator shortage, the effects in the Pilbara are acute. Unfortunately, without childcare and affordable housing, migrant families cannot be actively engaged in the workplace. Mining industry is picking up which means more children needing childcare. Parents who are looking to re-enter the workforce or take on new career opportunities, found it challenging. They are not able to bring family members to assist in the caring role from overseas due to the international travel restrictions.



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUPPORT REPORT



SARA
MAKEHAM
Funded by Department of
Communities , Domestic
Violence Advocacy and
Victim Support Program.



DOROTHY
COLFER
Funded by Department of
Communities, Domestic
Violence Outreach
Program.



RODELYN 'RAJ' VIDAD

Funded by Department of Communities, Keeping Women Safe Program.



Dolly and Raj are both located in the South Hedland office servicing the East Pilbara district. This encompasses towns and communities such as Port and South Hedland, Mable Bar, Newman and Jigalong to name only a few. Sara is based in Karratha supporting victims in the West Pilbara including the city of Karratha, towns such as Paraburdoo, Tom Price, Onslow, Roebourne and Wickham.

AREAS OF ASSISTANCE

RISK ASSESSING

This is the process of walking a client through a series of questions and using professional judgement to determine the risk of re-offence (severity and frequency of further abuse). This is the first step in the process.

SAFETY PLANNING

The caseworker assists the client to develop a course of action should further abuse occur. This includes assisting clients to remain in a relationship but do so safely through to exit planning on how to safely leave an abusive relationship. A safety plan is developed on the capacity of the victim. This can range from encouraging clients to call police to detailing steps on staying in a relationship, exiting during emergencies and safety planning at custody hand overs.

FAMILY VIOLENCE RESTRAINING ORDER APPLICATIONS

This includes completing the application form with the client as well as assisting to complete affidavits, guiding the client to chronologically organize incidents, understand the peripheral abuse and correctly word and elaborate on each issue.

COURT SUPPORT

As advocates, the domestic violence team supports clients gaining Family Violence Restraining Orders. After completing and filing the application, the domestic violence worker will support the client at court through explaining and answering questions about the hearing process and organising legal representation, if and when this is necessary. Most of all, it is a safe face during the court hearing.

REFERRALS

These are completed internally and externally is key practice in the domestic violence case management. Referring clients to other service providers allows for case-management and a comprehensive and high-quality provision of service in wrap-around service style.

OUTREACH LEGAL SERVICES

The DVAVSS worker attends Roebourne on a weekly basis to comprehensively service Roebourne, Wickham and Point Samson clients. By having a consistent service in the Roebourne office this provides clients with the opportunity to attend the service when they are ready and feel safe to do so.

This financial year, over 15% of clients were from Roebourne, Wickham or Point Samson (clients from Cheeditha or Mingallatharndo are counted a Roebourne clients).

Newman was visited on two occasions by the DV team as there is no domestic violence services there aside from the 'at-capacity' women's shelter. The South Hedland team take on the Newman cases.

A goal for the DV team for 2021/2022 will be to increase the amount of outreach to in-need communities, including but not limited to Newman, Tom Price, Paraburdoo and Onslow. During outreach the DV team will conduct client work, community capacity building and stakeholder engagement. Moving into the outreach area is an exciting and rewarding space for the DV team.

COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING

The domestic violence team is funded to work within the community to educate and upskill our communities on domestic and family abuse, relationships and how to be a support person. Over the last year, the DV team has been active in community capacity building in various ways.

- The Karratha team is a regular invitee to the Karratha Emergency Services Day. In September 2020, the DV team attended this day in conjunction with other relevant DV and family and child services to engage in positive community conversation about DFV.
- The DVAVSS and a member of the legal team conducted education with the females in the Roebourne Regional Prison. The women met the workshop with positive engagement, learning their rights and how to access them.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

NEW TEAM

Raj is the newest DV team member in the Keeping Women Safe position and works in the South Hedland office. Raj has a Juris Doctor degree and has earned units in Masters of Community Development. She has an extensive background working with marginalised sectors and has passionately advocated for policy reforms to improve their lives. Raj brings passion, diversity of experience and knowledge, and a refreshing perspective to the DV team.

16 DAYS IN WA

The Hedland team partook in many events for 16 Days in WA 2020, however, the DVO organised and ran a morning tea event. This event was attended by nearly 100 people with special guests including WA Police officers, local Elders and victim/survivors.

EXTRA FUNDING

The DV team were fortunate enough to have been granted a significant amount of extra funding this year making our provision of service much more flexible. The extra funding was used to increase the mobility of the DV team by having mobile phones and laptops purchased. This has allowed the DV team to work remotely such as at court, at other office spaces, or in meetings. There was an increase in ability to provide crisis support such as accommodation, food vouchers and fuel vouchers for clients leaving town. Further, more technology was able to be purchased including a bank of security cameras for high-risk clients and more safety mobiles as imperative parts of actions plans.

INCREASE IN CLIENT WORK

It was a commendable effort of all DV team members having assisted 507 over the last 12 months. This included successfully assisting of new and returning clients through a range of matters from FVRO applications and court support, safety planning and general education. There was a notable increase in CaLD clients accessing the service, a positive reflection on how all PCLS services such as the DV and Migrant service works well to holistically assist the client.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Client (female) is French migrant on a spousal visa. Client married her boyfriend then the relationship turned abusive. Client and abuser were married for two (2) years before she left him. Her first immigration lawyer told her to remain with the abuser as her visa relied on him and if she left him she would not be able to attain her new visa (unattached to a spouse).

The victim and abuser lived together separated for a period of time until the risk increased too much, and she was required to leave the household. Living together separated is not an uncommon practice across the Pilbara. Due to the shortage of housing, the affordability of housing, the access to housing through partners work (to name a few issues), the victim and abuser remain living together in the household but have ended the relationship. This is an extremely dangerous time for clients. Upon leaving she risked her visa and engaged with a new immigration lawyer. Due to the level of continued abuse, she required an FVRO which she previously did not want to attain out of fear for her safety.

This client had accessed the service at the start of 2020 but the matter was closed as she was unable to continue working with the service. She returned to the service, being re-referred by other support services.

Women on temporary visas experience significant levels of psychological abuse due to the abuser using this as a tactic to control the victim. Threats to cancel or deport the victim is the most common tactic used by abusers. As part of the client's immigration case, a final trial/final FVRO will be strong evidence DV occurred in the relationship and that the marriage was not for the visa. This requires another lawyer to run her case. Further, as part of the immigration case psychologist and social worker reports are required. The client was then diagnosed with PTSD/depression/anxiety and is required to be engaged with a psychologist. Each session costs over \$200 and are required fortnightly. Her social worker supported the diagnosis and requires six (6) sessions with the victim.

CASE STUDY

The client is paying an excessive amount of rent for herself due to the rental market in Karratha-she sometimes only eats every couple of days to ensure she has enough money to pay her incoming costs on time. She also is ineligible for many funding bodies. The client works up to 50 hours a week but with the outgoing costs for her legal and health fees, she is struggling to make ends meet.

PCLS was able to assist the victim by paying for her psychologist report for her immigration case and one psychology session. This client requires significant support, being susceptible to breakdowns and panic attacks. The client is removed from her family and friends and struggles to develop a support network because of her depression and anxiety as well as the isolation and degradation she was victim to when with her husband. The client partook in several sessions but due to the expense of these sessions she decided to put her sessions on pause. The caseworker assessed this to be unproductive for the client as she was still highly vulnerable. The caseworker was able to assist the client by referring her to DV Assist, a phone counselling service designed and run by and for regional, rural and remote women. This gives the client the chance to save up money for health and legal fees while still having the support she requires. This tact, of referring out in order to refer back into a service, is something caseworkers negotiate frequently to support the short-term, mediumterm and long-term needs of the client.

RUNNING COST FOR THE VICTIM SO FAR

- Immigration lawyer estimated at about \$10,000
- FVRO (criminal) lawyer- estimated upwards of\$30,000
- Psychologists-\$1,500 (report), \$200 a
- Social worker- \$1,200 for all sessions

Total: \$42,700 (without psychologist sessions.

ASSIST CLIENTS TO COMPLETE **ANAPPLICATION FOR REDRESS** COMPENSATION.

KNOWMORE LEGAL TO **JOINTLY CASE** MANAGE CLIENTS.

PROVIDE WELFARE CLIENTS.

REDRESS REPORT



TRACEY HEIMBERGER COORDINATOR Funded by the Department of Social Security under the National Redress Scheme



KARLA **KELLY** SUPPORT WORKER Funded by Department of Social Security under the the National Redress Scheme.



SUPPORT WORKER

Funded by the **Department of Social** Security under the National Redress Scheme

REDRESS S COPE

PROMOTE REDRESS & OTHER PCLS **SERVICES TO POTENTIAL** CLIENTS.

PROVIDE A CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE CARE/ **ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR**

LIAISE WITH

FOLLOW-UP CHECKS ON

REDRESS TEAM EXPANDS

On commencement of the 2020/2021 financial year, Pilbara Community Legal Services Inc had two support workers in the Redress team - Tracey Heimberger, Redress Coordinator based in the Roebourne office and Karla Kelly, based in the Karratha office. The Redress Coordinator regularly attended South Hedland to service the South Hedland clients. She also conducted outreach to Newman, Onslow, and Tom Price. In March 2021, Trevor Fraser commenced working between the Roebourne and Karratha offices. In June 2021, Tracey resigned and Karla was promoted to the Coordinator role.



COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION

The Redress team and PCLS Solicitor Ryan teamed up to conduct presentations to the Elders group at the South Hedland Yorgum Healing Centre.

Trevor presented redress information and Ryan spoke about Wills, Power of Attorney and other legal services provided by PCLS Legal Team. The outcome from the event resulted in the redress team receiving an influx of client enquiries in the South Hedland office and five (5) new clients. We also received more enquiries about wills.

The Redress team regularly engage with the staff at Yorgum and they continually refer clients to PCLS.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Direct personal response
- Redress support services part A & B
- Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid

The redress team make every attempt to provide a culturally appropriate level of care to survivors. We are looking forward to the future challenges that the redress program and working at PCLS will bring us in the 2021/22 financial year.

CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY OF SERVICE

There have been many challenges with servicing our remote areas with covid restrictions, Lore in culture and sorry time/mourning. Unfortunately, we are sometimes not aware of sorry time and may only become aware that the community is in sorry time during the scheduled outreach.

We continue to communicate with Aboriginal Corporations, State Government departments, medical centres and other not-for-profit organisations in the Pilbara and regularly stock them with information packages, fact sheets and Redress brochures.

The Redress team have a productive relationship with Knowmore Legal, Perth who provide us with advice and assistance, in addition to joint case management, when needed for our clients with their redress applications. Each survivor has a different level of need. Most agree to have their information shared with Knowmore. Knowmore also offer support to PCLS via up-to-date training and also assist when there are 'client conflicts'.

Knowmore attended Karratha in March 2021 and were treated to a to a four-day tour of the proximity towns that PCLS service - Karratha, Dampier, Roebourne, Wickham and Cossack. The team that travelled to Karratha consisted of Solicitor Ellie Haas and two Aboriginal engagement Officers, Brian Toigo and Margie Coyne. The Redress team and Knowmore also had permission to attend Cheeditha Aboriginal Community where an informal redress information session was provided to the resident artists at the art Centre.







Located across our four offices in the Pilbara to provide HSW assistance and support for families and individuals that are homeless or are at risk of homelessness through our Housing Support service and the NPAH service that is a Commonwealth and State funded initiative that provides specialist holistic support and assistance.

The NPAH service targets single adults, young people, families and women with children who are experiencing domestic violence, and for people that have undertaken treatment for substance abuse issues who have become homeless after exiting a rehabilitation facility. Through referrals and links to mainstream services for drug and alcohol counselling, financial counselling, health and employment (where appropriate), clients are then assessed by Housing Support workers and Department of Communities for allocation of an NPAH property.

Once allocated an NPAH property, they are case managed intensively for 12mths to prevent the risk of homelessness.

SERVICE

We also support people that are already housed in Public Housing properties whose tenancies maybe at risk due to overcrowding, poor property standards, disruptive behavior, and/or tenancy debt. Our HSW's provide assistance with managing budgets and developing client skills to maintain a successful functioning household and make referrals to appropriate support agencies.

Our referrals are from Department of Communities, Housing, Child Protection, Mental Health, Women's Refuges, Corrective services and other non-government agencies.



ANGIE MITCHELL ROEBOURNE Funded by Department of Communities under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness [NPAH]



KARRATHA Funded by Department of Communities under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness [NPAH]

KARLA



LUFF SOUTH HEDLAND Funded by Department of Communities under the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness [NPAH]

ANNE

VICKY AVALOS **NEWMAN**

Funded by Department of Communities under the National Partnership

Agreement on Homelessness [NPAH]

KEY ACHEIVEMENTS

Our areas of assistance over the last financial year increased capacity since the lifting of the COVID Moratorium on public and private rentals in March 2021. We had an increase in families and individuals seeking assistance with Public Housing applications due to the increase of private rental costs and application submissions. We have assisted and submitted over 60 Public Housing applications for normal wait turn and for Priority Housing.

We were able to assist and support 300 individuals and families in the last financial year with housing applications, emergency accommodation and assisting tenants to sustain their tenancy in order to avoid eviction. We are pleased to say that no one was evicted from their Public tenancy property in the last financial year.- clients were supported to sustain their tenancy through referrals to financial counselling, domestic violence services, counselling and Health services and other appropriate services.

Using brokerage and external financial support, we sought emergency accommodation for women and children leaving domestic violence relationships and single men seeking emergency accommodation (which is very limited and costly in the Pilbara).

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

HSW's continue to engage and network regularly with stakeholders and other community service providers to service, refer and collaboratively case manage families and individuals. The HSW team are actively involved in community groups such as the Balagarni Yarndi for change in Roebourne that meets bi monthly, as well as the Aboriginal Interagency meetings.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Housing Support Worker Team continue to engage and update in professional development to improve service delivery and to meet the needs of families and individuals. This can be in the context of online Webinars or local face to face training. Unfortunately, the snap Covid lock down in May prevented our HSW's attending the 4 day Homelessness Forum in Perth.

THE SERVICE FOCUSES ON 3 KEY STRATEGIES:

Breaking the cycle of homelessness to help vulnerable people get 'back on their feet' and find stable accommodation. A better connected service system that will build integrated and responsive services to assist clients such as links to alcohol and other drug treatment programs, mental health, family violence support, financial community and justice support, education and training.

Supporting individuals and families referred from Department of Communities to maintain at vulnerable tenancies to avoid the risk of becoming homeless.

CASE STUDY

We have a client with five (5) children who relocated to the Pilbara. The family were staying in a three bedroom property with relatives - which was overcrowded. The client was assisted with completing a Public Housing application, sourcing identification and addressing her previous vacated tenancy debt. However, her tenancy debt would have to be reduced considerably before she would be considered for a property. The family are now living in a two bedroom property that is now severely overcrowded with up to 12 people. They are closer to being housed but it's still a long wait for a 4 bedroom property.

CHALLENGES IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

Finding secure and safe accommodation in the Pilbara continues to remain a challenge - with the limited Public housing stock and the inflated private rental prices - both of which have led to some families and individuals being perpetually homeless. The limited Public housing stock was further impacted by the Pindan Group (who were the head contractors for Government housing maintenance) going into Administration. The collapse of Pindan ceased work on the SHERP properties (Social Housing Economic Recovery Package), for a considerable time that affected those people on the housing waitlist. Not only does sourcing stable and safe housing impact our clients but it also affects employers being able to attract and retain staff as the weekly rent on private rental can be more than 40 per cent of their weekly income.

Finding emergency short term accommodation for client's during peak holiday seasons is even more of a challenge due to increased visitors to the Pilbara region. This creates full occupancy rates in all accommodations and peak season tariff charges in an already costly region. For example, an accommodation stay in a local Pilbara Caravan Park can cost over \$2,000.00 for up to ten night's stay. The most affordable accommodation for our Port/ South Hedland clients is the South Hedland Aboriginal Hostel. Clients can stay short term subject to availability, yet it does not allow for our other clients in need who are non-aboriginal.





40

FINANCIAL COUNSELLING REPORT



JAYNE JARITO **ACCREDITED FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR** Funded by the Department of Communities under the Financial Counselling



SUSANNE ROONEY ACCREDITED FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR Funded by the Department of Communities under the **Financial Counselling** Program



KAREN GARTLETT **ASSOCIATE FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR** Funded by the Department of Communities under the Financial Counselling Program



MELANNIA MULEYA ASSOCIATE FINANCIAL **COUNSELLOR** Funded by the Department of Communities under the Financial Counselling Program

KATHE LENEHAN **ACCREDITED FINANCIAL** COUNSELLOR Funded by the Department of Communities under the Financial Counselling Program

ACCREDITED FINANCIAL COUNSELLOR Funded by the Department of Communities under the **Financial Counselling** Program

AREAS OF ASSISTANCE

DEBTS - Private debt issues such as credit card, personal loans, contract disputes, payday lender, facing legal actions regarding debts, and bankruptcy.

MORTGAGE ISSUE – primary residence and investment property.

SPENDING BEHAVIOUR / MONEY MANAGEMENT – Gambling and addictive spending problems, budget management and preparation, access to micro finance, Facilitate Early Release of Superannuation PERSONAL FINANCIAL CRISIS – Loss of, or under employment, unforeseen changes to personal situations such as relationship breakdowns, health, family death.

UTILITIES / ESSENTIAL SERVICES – Electricity, Water, Gas and Communication Utilities. ACCOMMODATION - Housing Authority and private housing repossession and eviction.

OUTREACH SERVICES

Our financial counselling is now a sponsor to the Work Development Permit Scheme. The Work and Development Permit (WDP) Scheme is a new initiative to help people experiencing difficulty paying court fines due to hardship. Under a WDP, eligible people can apply to complete approved activities under the supervision of a sponsor in place of paying the amount

We actively reach out to the communities through our outreach programs to inform them of our new services, such as the WDP.

Our Newman financial counsellors are now conducting community awareness to the local shops twice a month to improve our visibility in the community.

Our Karratha and Roebourne financial counsellors regularly conduct outreach to remote aboriginal communities to enhance our relationship with the Elders and help their members improve their lives.

Our Hedland financial counsellor has worked collaboratively with another agency to support the Aboriginal Homeownership program.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Financial Counselling in the Pilbara Region has been serving community members to alleviate the financial crisis for over 15 years now. We aim to provide excellent financial counselling across the region. In addition, we aim to improve the financial skills of people in the Pilbara.

Our financial counsellors, both accredited and associates, are committed to our goal and continuously research and update our knowledge and skills. As a result, we can genuinely say that we have expertise in handling unique and complex cases specific to our region.

The year 2020-2021 has been very challenging for our sector as we still feel the after-effects of the COVID-19 on the lives of our clients. However, we can also celebrate our financial counsellors' achievements to reach the best possible outcome for our clients.

We have achieved approximately \$2,500,000 worth of debt waivers for clients with a massive amount of debts and avoiding bankruptcy.

98%

Clients who received financial counselling service have improved their economic circumstances through advocacy and negotiation with third parties.

96%

Clients who received financial counselling services were in control of their finances and managed their money

97%

Clients who received financial counselling services understood their financial situation and entitlements.

95%

Clients who sought assistance on their utilities maintain a connection to essential utilities such as electricity

99%

Clients who sought assistance on their housing authority issues maintain their stable housing arrangements.

FUTURE OF FINANCIAL COUNSELLING

With COVID-19 still lingering around us, our future seems to be challenging. However, our team of financial counsellors, who themselves are resilient and have championed by achieving the best outcomes on most complex cases, we can be confident that we will again thrive and succeed.

We are looking to improve our data system recording to focus more of our time on our clients. In addition, we are thinking of innovative services to reach out to the youth. We are also committed to developing more appropriate programs for our community outreach.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

AUDITOR'S INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2021 there have been no contraventions of:

- (i) the auditor independence requirements as set out in the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 (WA) and Australian Charities and Non-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit, and
- ii) any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Name of Firm: Letizia Palmer Chartered Accountants

Name of Auditor: Leon Stielow

Address: Level 1, 544 Beaufort Street, Mt Lawley WA 6050

n xi

Date this 12 day of October 2021

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		\$	\$
Income			
Operating activities:			
Grants and donations	3(a)	3,672,920	3,613,670
Non-operating activities:			
Interest received		6,394	5,326
Other non-operating government subsidies		50,000	50,000
Other gains/ (losses)	3(b)	(179,387)	(144,404)
Other income	3(c) _	28,536	31,509
	_	3,578,463	3,556,101
Expenses			
Advertising, promotion and event costs	4(c)	(26,292)	(29,524)
Depreciation expenses	4(b)	(133,310)	(103,248)
Employee benefits expense	5(a)	(2,515,339)	(2,156,452)
Interest expense		(9,532)	(1,026)
Office and administration expenses	4(a)	(474,202)	(355,513)
Other program operating expenses		(120,451)	(131,244)
Rent and variable outgoings		(154,981)	(104,545)
Travel and motor vehicle expenses	_	(107,627)	(63,553)
	-	(3,541,734)	(2,945,105)
Current year surplus before income tax	-	36,729	610,996
Income tax expense	1(b)	_	-
Current year surplus after income tax	`	36,729	610,996
	_		
Other comprehensive income			
Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss:			
Gains (losses) on revaluation of non-financial assets at fair value through other			
comprehensive income, net of tax	_	-	(334,496)
Total other comprehensive income for the year	-	-	(334,496)
Total comprehensive income attributable to members of the association	-	36,729	276,500

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	Note	2021	2020
		\$	\$
ASSETS			
Current Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	6	2,387,545	2,875,766
Accounts receivable and other debtors	7	91,023	26,684
Other current assets	8 _	93,439	75,033
Total Current Assets	-	2,572,007	2,977,483
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9 _	2,479,791	1,791,433
Total Non-Current Assets	_	2,479,791	1,791,433
TOTAL ASSETS	-	5,051,798	4,768,916
LIABILITIES			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and other payables	10	164,416	20,122
Contract and other liabilities	11	1,073,045	945,979
Employee provisions	5(a) _	136,231	161,438
Total Current Liabilities	-	1,373,692	1,127,539
Non-Current Liabilities	_		
Total Non-Current Liabilities	_	-	-
TOTAL LIABILITIES	_	1,373,692	1,127,539
NET ASSETS	_	3,678,106	3,641,377
EQUITY	-		
Retained surplus		3,678,106	3,641,377
TOTAL EQUITY	-	3,678,106	3,641,377

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

2020 / 2021

ANNUAL REPORT

PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE INC.

THANK YOU

To the Board of Management, staff, volunteers and partners,, the Pilbara Community Legal Service inc. team thank you for your ongoing support. We are looking forward to the challenges and opportunities ahead and can't wait to share the experience with you all in the year to come.

08 9185 5899 admink@pcls.net.au

Karratha Business Centre 52/15 Sharpe Avenue Karratha WA 6714

PO Box 132 Karratha WA 6714

08 9140 1613 adminsh@pcls.net.au

South Hedland Lotteries Units 7 & 9

PO Box 2506 South Hedland WA 6722

08 9185 5899 admink@pcls.net.au

2 Padbury Street, Roebourne WA 6718

PO Box 132 Karratha WA 6714

08 9140 1613 adminsh@pcls.net.au

PO Box 1