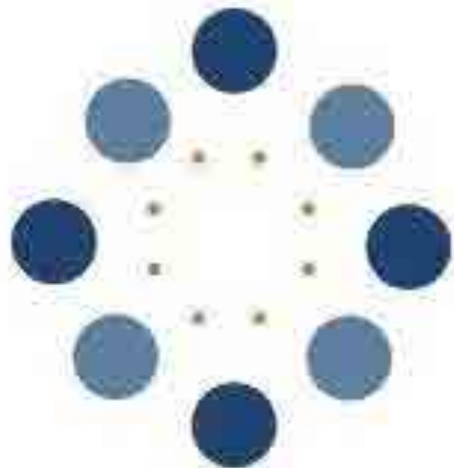


Welfare Rights Centre



ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

Contents

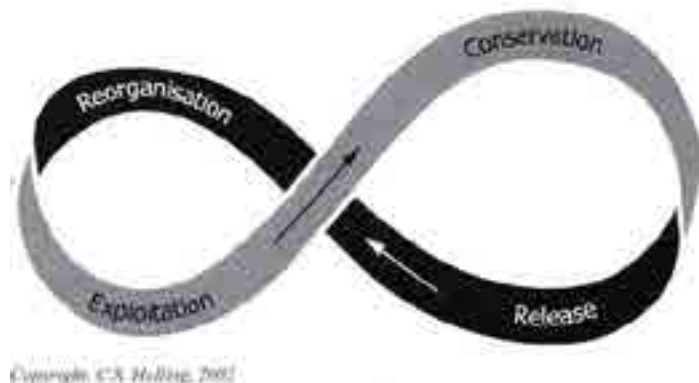
Report from the Chair	1
Report from the Coordinator/Principal Solicitor	3
What Our Centre Does	4
Casework Practice	5
Policy Work	15
Community Legal Education and Resources	17
Media	19
Funding	20
Administration	21
Our Volunteers	22
OUR STAFF	27
OUR BOARD	31
THANK YOU	32
Get Involved	33

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

Report from the Chair



Every organisation goes through cycles. The Welfare Rights Centre, one of the first Community Legal Centres in Australia, has been operating since 1983. Over 35 years both the internal and external environments fluctuate and combine to require different approaches to suit the circumstances. The role of the board also fluctuates according to the point in cycle – in times of renewal it must be stronger; in times of stable high performance it should be less.



The Centre is currently in a vibrant reorganisation and renewal phase.

We have a **new constitution** (December 2016) which reasserts the strength of purpose captured in the original but updates the governance structure and arrangements to meet contemporary requirements.

We have a new **strategic direction** and strategic **plan** which, while retaining the core vision, values and purpose of the Centre reinterprets these, and the program we need to achieve them, to suit the current constrained circumstances.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR

We have **renewed leadership** through both new, committed Board members and a reinvigorated, if lean, staff team under the guidance of a new Coordinator/ Principal Solicitor.

We have two **new Board committees** - the Finance and Staffing Issues Committee and the Governance, Risk and Compliance Committee, both of which are policy engine rooms and supplement the Board's performance monitoring role.

We have a battery of **new policies** reflecting the strategic directions and values of the Centre but which provide clarity and guidance distilled from the experience of our current leaders.

We have **new Board members** who bring new experience and greater diversity to our governance processes.

And, we are close to **finalising a new Enterprise Agreement**, a critical document that hopefully provides the best that we can offer our staff. Each and every member of our dedicated staff team, some of whom have been with us for many years, deserves the best care, attention and conditions we can manage with the inadequate resources we have.

We are **readying ourselves to exploit the next phase** in the cycle - to exploit the efforts we have made throughout this reorganisation and renewal phase. With a stable financial future, sound governance, an excellent staff team, an ambitious strategy and plan and an unmatched dedication and enthusiasm for the cause of welfare/social security rights in an increasingly challenging policy environment, I am confident that we will not be found short.

I thank all the Board and staff for their great commitment and monumental efforts and I look forward to the next exciting year of challenges and achievements.

REPORT FROM THE COORDINATOR/PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR

Report from the Coordinator/Principal Solicitor

This is my first Annual Report since I started at the Welfare Rights Centre in July 2016. To those of you who are familiar with our previous Annual Reports, you will notice a massive change to its format and content, which is in keeping with the massive changes I have managed or introduced at the Welfare Rights Centre over the past 12 months.

Yet we are seeing increasing pressure on people receiving a social security and family payments, and on Centrelink staff who deliver services to these clients. The robodebts scandal is clear evidence of this. This system for recovery of alleged debts, usually from former recipients of a social security payment, is a blatant example of cost shifting from Centrelink onto individuals.

The robodebts scandal and other measures implemented or proposed have the potential to do great harm to vulnerable and disadvantaged people, something we see every day in our advice and casework practice.

Responding to these threats to our social security system has been a challenge given that amount of internal change at the Centre, mostly directed at making savings in the face of the impending cuts to CLC funding, reversed at the last minute.



It's been a big year, and there still much more to do. I would like to thank all staff at the Centre for persevering through the changes – and for providing such a great service to our many clients. I would also like to thank our Board, whose assistance and support during this transition has been essential.

WHAT OUR CENTRE DOES

What Our Centre Does

The Welfare Rights Centre is a not-for-profit organisation and Community Legal Centre (CLC). We provide free legal advice and representation to thousands of NSW residents every year who are adversely affected by Centrelink decisions. The Centre also provides education to improve knowledge and understanding about social security law in the community. The Centre uses the knowledge and experience it gains through casework and work with its peak organisation, the National Social Security Rights Network, to advocate for reforms to the law and policy that would make the system fairer for everyone.

The Welfare Rights Centre opened its doors in 1983 as part of the CLC movement in Australia. This was a response to the scarcity of affordable legal assistance available to marginalised members of society. Originally co-located with Redfern Legal Centre, the Centre opened its own premises in 1985. Since then it has experienced changes in location, staff, funding sources, law and policy. Throughout these changes, the Welfare Rights Centre has remained the lead service agency in NSW for social security law and policy.



Staff at the Annual Planning Day, which was held at Gilbert + Tobin in Barangaroo, Sydney

Missing: Gerard and Julia

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Casework Practice

INFORMATION, ADVICE AND CASEWORK SERVICE

We provide legal information, advice and casework services to people with income support problems related to social security and family assistance law, and to agencies assisting people with such problems. The aim of the Centre's casework service is to achieve beneficial outcomes for both individual clients and for classes of clients.

The casework practice comprises a telephone advice service, research, assistance with self-advocacy, interventions directly with Centrelink, written advocacy on behalf of clients and written or personal representation before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT), or in some cases the Federal Court. Advice is given on almost all aspects of social security and family assistance. Further representation may be provided in complex cases, particularly where children are at risk, in matters of wide application, in matters where the client has no money or where they may not adequately represent their own interests.

We hold two advice shifts per week, on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm. During the advice shift people can call our freecall number 1800 226 028. One of our trained volunteers will provide information or basic advice, or will assign callers to a caseworker who will provide more complex advice. Solicitors and caseworkers bring to our weekly casework meeting clients with Centrelink issues which require ongoing assistance. At the casework meeting a decision is made as to whether the client's problem meets our Advice & Casework policy and whether we have the capacity to take on the client's matter.

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Disability Support Pension (DSP) Clinic

On Wednesday morning two trained volunteers provide both telephone and written advice to those seeking assistance in appealing Centrelink's rejection of their DSP claim. The volunteers provide advice in preparing and appealing their claim to the first tier of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. Volunteers also provide advice to clients who are appealing their DSP claim to the Authorised Review Officer (ARO).



These clients contact the Centre during the advice shift. The advice shift volunteer provides basic advice and asks the person to send in their ARO decision. The client is told they will be contacted during the DSP Clinic. Additionally, when clients call and are in the process of appealing their matter to the ARO, the DSP Clinic can provide template treating doctors' reports and Impairment Tables to help them gather the right medical evidence.

A caseworker supervises the two DSP Clinic volunteers. The volunteers initially discuss with the DSP Clinic supervisor what they understand the issues to be and the advice they intend to provide. The supervisor confirms the advice before the volunteers contact the client and provide advice over the phone. Following this, the volunteers prepare written advice, checked and signed by the supervisor, along with supporting documents such as impairment tables and template treating doctor's reports. On occasion the volunteers may also speak to the client's doctor or other health care professionals to assist in the preparation of gathering evidence.

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Debt Clinic

In early 2017, the Centre decided to establish a Debt Clinic, which provides specialised advice on Centrelink debts, including “Robodebts”. The Debt Clinic runs every Thursday morning. The Debt Clinic volunteers are specially trained to provide advice to social security debts of \$10,000 or under. Initially, clients will be referred to the clinic through the advice shift.

Once the referral has been made, the volunteers will interview the clients to determine what level of assistance the Centre is able to offer them. All clients will be provided with a debt factsheet. The volunteers will draft a letter of advice based on circumstances of the client’s debt. The clients will remain in the Debt Clinic for ongoing assistance or the matter will be allocated to another caseworker.

The Debt Clinic assists clients with in-depth advice about their Social Security debt and enables the Centre to run more smoothly. As these matters generally do not have time limits, volunteers are able to assist clients by getting instructions to thoroughly understand their circumstances. Following this, the caseworker will discuss the issues and confirm the advice required for the client.

These clinics are extremely valuable to volunteers as they are able to gain further legal experience by interviewing clients, deciding what the issues are and how the matter should be progressed.

Outreach to Western Sydney

The Centre established a monthly outreach at Anglicare’s One Stop Shop held in Mt Druitt in June 2017.

CASEWORK PRACTICE

SRSS Debt Pro bono project

The Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS) Debt Pro Bono Project was established who have debts to the Commonwealth as result of receipt of Status Resolution Support Service Payments. Many of these clients have debts to the Commonwealth due to unfavourable Refugee Review Tribunal decisions regarding their refugee status or other changes to their circumstances like income earned after gaining work rights. They remain an extremely vulnerable client group. The Centre works with its pro bono partners to assist these clients get these debts waived.

CASEWORK STATISTICS

Service type	
Total number of clients	1980
Referrals	3004
Information	268
Discrete Non-Legal Support services	44
Legal Advices	3147
Legal Tasks	56

Service type	Open as at 1/7/2016	Opened during 2016/17	Closed during 2016/17
Other Representation cases	75	232	247
Court/Tribunal cases	34	35	48

CASEWORK PRACTICE

CASEWORK ISSUES DURING 2016/17

Robodebts

The robodebt scandal broke over the Christmas/New Year period. Within weeks the Centre's advice shift resulted a significant increase in the number of people seeking advice about debts, but often it was difficult to diagnose whether their debt was a robodebt or an "ordinary" debt.

The only way to be sure is receipt of the letter which kicks off the whole robodebt process, titled "Important Information about Your Employment Income". If the person never received this letter or did not respond to it because they did not understand what was being asked of them, a computer program automatically calculated the debt was (thus "robodebt") and an "Account Payable" letter. Too often this letter was also not received, and the first many people knew they had a debt was a phone call from the debt collectors.

This is often when people would contact the Centre.



CASEWORK PRACTICE

Debt Hotline

To ensure that as many people as possible received advice about their Centrelink debts, the Centre collaborated with Legal Aid NSW, Illawarra Legal Centre and LawAccess NSW to establish and promote the LawAccess 1800 number as a “hotline” number to get advice and assistance about Centrelink debts.

This line operates through eReferrals, whereby LawAccess NSW staff will email a referral to Legal Aid, which will then distribute the referrals between itself, the Centre and Illawarra Legal Centre. Each organisation has undertaken to call the person within 48 hours of receiving the e-Referral. As a result, clients only need to ring one number to receive information and advice regarding their Centrelink debts.

Case study

Samantha contacted the Centre about a Youth Allowance robodebt of \$7,452.76 that she had appealed to the Social Services & Child Support Division of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. In its decision the AAT stated that:

1. “No debt or debt component is able to be founded on the extrapolations from Australian Tax Office records;
2. The earnings components of any recalculated debts as may be raised must be based on and confined to any fortnightly salary records obtainable in the exercise of statutory power to do so (if set in train).”

However, subsequent to the AAT decision Centrelink recalculated the debt and advised the new debt amount was \$6,000. It was not clear whether Centrelink had adhered to the AAT decision in calculating the new debt amount.

We appealed the new decision to an Authorised Review Officer. The ARO reduced the debt to \$5332. The ARO confirmed that Centrelink had contacted three of Samantha’s employers and obtained pay records as required by the AAT decision. In relation to

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Samantha's fourth employer, who was no longer in business, Centrelink accepted her bank statements in order to calculate the debt.

The AAT decision was very favourable to our client and hopefully it sets a benchmark for how Centrelink should calculate debts.

Member of Couple (MOC) Debts

The Centre continues to assist clients with very large debts resulting from Centrelink's assessment that they are a member of a couple and thus were not entitled to the higher single rate of payment, or were not entitled to any payment, due to their "partner's" income.

Case study

Sarah was receiving Youth Allowance while she was studying at university. Sarah contacted the Centre after Centrelink decided that she was a member of a couple and she had failed to declare her partner's income.

Sarah was aged 20 at the time of the debt and was a university student. She was living in a share house with her boyfriend and another person. The Centre was successful in appealing Sarah's debt to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal. The Centre explained the nature of their relationship arguing that it was a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship and not a de-facto relationship within the meaning of the Social Security Act.

The client resided in regional NSW which enables us to provide our high level casework to our regional client.

Family Tax Benefit and Social Security Debts

During the previous year, the Centre has seen an increase in the number of people seeking assistance with debts that have arisen due to confusion about how they should report their income for Family Tax Benefit (FTB) purposes and for social security purposes.

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Our clients had quite reasonably thought that by reporting their income for FTB, they had also reported their income for their Centrelink payment, such as Parenting Payment. In fact, they need to report their income separately, something which Centrelink has not been made sufficiently clear to many people, nor is it easy to navigate the website to report the income. The Centre has been representing these clients at the AAT and has been working with the National Social Security Rights Network on this issue.

Case study

Susan was overpaid \$37,000 over a four year period and Centrelink subsequently raised a Parenting Payment debt. Centrelink decided the debt arose because Susan failed to report her husband's employment income, which would have affected her rate of Parenting Payment throughout the period.

When Susan applied for Parenting Payment she declared her husband's income and Centrelink failed to place her on fortnightly reporting. Susan reported her husband's annual income estimate every year during the debt period as a required by Family Tax Benefit.

Susan believed Centrelink knew about her husband's income because she had declared his income initially and updated the family income every year. On this basis she appealed the decision to raise the debt.

Susan was successful in having the decision varied at the Social Services and Child Support Division of AAT however Centrelink appealed this matter. The Centre represented Susan at the General Division of the AAT and the appeal was successful, with approximately 90% of the debt waived.

Special Benefit

Special Benefit is a Centrelink payment which is only available where a person cannot receive any other income support payment, due to the operation of the Social Security

CASEWORK PRACTICE

Act. The person must be in financial hardship and be unable to work and be an Australian resident or the holder of a specified subclass of visa.

Case study

Imran's Special Benefit was cancelled in June 2016, with date of effect January 2016. This meant that in addition to having no income Imran also had a debt of just over \$5000.

Centrelink cancelled the payment on the basis that Imran's wife had gifted the property in which she lived to their daughter. The property was a modest unit, which was originally purchased in the name of Imran's wife and their son. Imran's children had put up the money for the deposit. The intention was for Imran and his wife to take over the mortgage repayments after they established themselves in Australia. However, neither Imran nor his wife got a job in Australia. Therefore, they would not contribute to the mortgage. The mortgage was paid for primarily by their son, who also lived in the unit with them.

As their son was paying the mortgage Imran and his wife thought it was only fair that the unit be transferred into his name. However, Centrelink considered this to be a gift and cancelled Imran's Special Benefit. Imran's wife does not receive social security as she is subject to a 10 year Assurance of Support.

We represented Imran at the AAT. The AAT accepted our submission that the unit was effectively always owned by Imran's son, meaning no gift took place. Centrelink did not appeal. Imran's Special Benefit payment was restored and he was paid arrears of just over \$16,000.

CASEWORK PRACTICE

CASEWORK PRACTICE AND PROCEDURES

Advice & Casework policy and procedures

From February 2017 the Centre commenced trailing its new Advice & Casework Policy. The Policy seeks to focus the Centre's limited resources on people who are most in need of advice and casework assistance. As a general rule, advice will only be provided where the person has already received an Authorised Review Officer's (ARO) decision and have sent it in to the Centre.

Exceptions are made for priority clients, and for all clients who have a debt. ARO decisions are very useful as they clearly set out Centrelink's decision and Centrelink's reasons for not changing the decision. Where the person contacting the Centre does not receive advice, the volunteers have been trained to provide them with relevant information, including the right to apply for review, and send factsheets to the person.

Cross Check

Cross check took place on 5 December 2016. No major risk issues were identified.

POLICY WORK

Policy Work

ROBODEBTS

In addition to providing advice and casework to people with a robodebt, the Centre participated in the campaign against robodebts. It collated data for and sent case studies to the National Social Security Rights Network. The Centre also appeared at the Sydney hearing of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee and gave evidence.

CAMPAIGN TO RETAIN THE ENERGY SUPPLEMENT

The Centre participated in the Community Sector Campaign to retain the Energy Supplement. The Centre was a signatory to a letter urging the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition to keep the Energy Supplement and increase Newstart Allowance.

ALRC ELDER ABUSE INQUIRY

The Centre made submissions to the Australian Law Reform Commission's *Discussion Paper on Elder Abuse*. With over three quarters of the elderly receiving some form of social security, the report identified key areas where there is a risk of elder financial abuse in relation to social security arrangements. The ALRC's agreed with the Centre's recommendation that Centrelink develop a separate elder abuse strategy dedicated to prevent, identify and respond to the abuse of older Australians.

BIANNUAL MEETING WITH DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES AND DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SECURITY

The Centre accompanied the National Social Security Rights Network in its biannual meeting with the Department of Human Services and Department of Social Security in Canberra. The agenda was very tightly controlled, with the focus on Cashless Debit Card, Child Support, Carer Assessment Project and Departure Prohibition Orders. The NSSRN raised issues relating to the activity testing of people in civil confinement (i.e.

POLICY WORK

admitted into a psychiatric ward), communications strategy in regards to the introduction of new aged care means testing, and the need to improve aspects of the DSP impairment tables.

COMMONWEALTH OMBUDSMAN'S SOCIAL SERVICES AND INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLE

The Centre participated in the Commonwealth Ombudsman Social Services and Indigenous Community Roundtable. The meeting was attended by a range of community organisations and key stakeholders, including Carers NSW and Legal Aid NSW.

A number of themes emerged from the discussions:

- More comprehensive and accessible information about program of support requirements for disability support pension claims;
- Concerns about penalties applied under the Community Development Program;
- Centrelink's communication with Indigenous customers in remote communities;
- Better direct access for advocates and caseworkers to government agencies e.g. Centrelink's Indigenous Service Officers and the Participations Solutions Team;
- Centrelink's focus on driving access via online services resulting in reduced accessibility for some groups;
- Access to services, simple translated information, and interpreters for CALD communities; and
- Assistance for asylum seekers trying to claim the SRSS payment.

COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

Community Legal Education and Resources

FCAN CONFERENCE

The Centre presented a CLE to the Financial Counsellors Association of NSW (FCAN), which included an overview of Centrelink matters with particular detail on beneficial changes to the assessment of income maintenance periods and an update on changes to legislation.

ROBODEBT CLE

The Centre presented a CLE on robodebts to the Quarterlies, which is hosted by Community Legal Centre's NSW. The focus of the CLE was on how other CLCs could in a practical way assist clients get online and confirm/correct their employment income information, as well as find and contact former employers to obtain details about their employment.

CLCs were encouraged to assist their clients in complaining to Centrelink and if not satisfied with the response to then complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman. If the client still has a debt after attempting the online process, CLCs were asked to refer the client to the Centre. During the session, the Centre also discussed the Senate inquiry into the robodebt issue and encouraged Centres to put in a submission outlining their experience assisting clients to access the online system.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETY CLE

The Centre attended a caseworker meeting at the Benevolent Society, and during an informal sessions provided information on Centrelink decisions, particularly regarding Disability Support Pension, Special Benefit and debts. The Benevolent Society's clients are mostly unemployed people and people with disabilities and newly arrived residents.

COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

HOMELESS CONNECT

The Centre attended the yearly event, Homeless Connect, where we assisted many people with their Centrelink matters. Some clients had had their payments reduced as

they were repaying debts and did not know they could appeal against the raising of the debt or the amount recovered each fortnight. Some were not in receipt of payment due to the imposition of a compensation preclusion period or alleged failure of the activity test. We also advised a number of New Zealand citizens who were homeless that they could receive a social security payment for six months if they had been residing in Australia for 10 years.

Often a homeless client will have problems with producing the identification required for a Centrelink payment. At Homeless Connect we were able to refer people to a representative from the Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages and also advise that Centrelink has an alternative proof of identity form that can be completed.

DSP LAW PROMPT TOPIC

The Centre was successful in its application to the Legal Aid NSW Administrative Efficiencies Grants Program for funding to produce a new social security law LawPrompt topic for LawAccess NSW on DSP eligibility and appeals. The Centre has prepared the first draft and will be working with LawAccess NSW on the second draft of the topic.

MEDIA

Media

MEDIA MENTIONS

During the year, the Centre was mentioned or quoted in the following media:

- Crackdown throws thousands off the Disability Support Pension, Rick Morton, The Australian, 13 July 2016.
- Tougher eligibility rules force thousands off the disability pension and into financial hardship, RN Breakfast, Patricia Karvelas, 14 July 2016.
- Editorial, Work to be done, The Saturday Paper, 29 September 2016.
- Morton, R. 'Nation must face moral obligation' to break carer welfare cycle, 5 September 2016, p 1 & 4.
- Legal aid services join up to deal with the high volume of Centrelink debt cases, The Guardian Australia, 1 April 2017. Katherine Boyle was interviewed for this article.
- How Centrelink's Robodebt debt ran off the rails, Background Briefing, 5 March 2017. The Centre's Solicitor, Carolyn Odgers, featured in this program.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Welfare Rights Centre has been working on increasing its social media presence. The Centre has increased its presence on Facebook and Twitter by interacting and connecting with its followers to let the public know of the casework undertaken but also of our staff and volunteers.

Following from the #FundEqualJustice campaign the presence of the Centre has increased exponentially. A focus on lobbying against cuts, unfair and unjust Social Security proposals by Government and also showcasing the faces of the Welfare Rights Centre NSW.

FUNDING

Funding

The Centre received funding under the Community Legal Services Program (CLSP) and from members of its Trade Union Program and HESTA. In addition the Centre was successful in obtaining additional small one-off grants to implement its new Information and Communication Technology system and to draft a topic on DSP for LawAccess NSW.

FUND EQUAL JUSTICE CAMPAIGN

Just before Christmas 2016, the Centre sent emails to every politician in NSW regarding the cuts to the Community Legal Sector. The letter outlined the important work of the Centre, and the CLC sector generally offered to meet with the MP to discuss how s/he could show support for the work the Centre does. Between ten and fifteen MPs replied to the email – mostly to decline a meeting, unfortunately. However, the Centre met with a number of MPs or their staff.

WELFARE RIGHTS TRADE UNION AND HESTA PROGRAMS

The Centre continues to provide advice and caseworker to members of trade unions who have signed up to our Trade Union Program and to members of HESTA. A number of these members had robodebts and Family Tax Benefit/Social Security debts.

The Centre presented an information session to call centre staff at United Voice NSW on 29 September 2016. The purpose of the session was to assist staff to identify when members may have a social security issue and to facilitate referrals to the Centre. Further CLEs will be organised for the Centre's trade union funders later in the year.

The Centre provided training resources to HESTA for use in training its front line staff in awareness of social security law and policy issues.

ADMINISTRATION

Administration

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SCHEME

The Centre was granted Accreditation and certified under the under the National Accreditation Scheme (NAS).

The NAS is an accreditation and certification process for CLCs across Australia. The aim is to support and give recognition to good practice in the delivery of community legal services, and provide a quality assurance process that gives funding bodies, CLCs and their clients' confidence that CLCs are operating according to a range of organisational and service delivery standards.

CO-LOCATION

The Centre and CLCNSW agreed it would co-locate to the Centre's premises in Surry Hills. After renovations to a portion of the Centre's office space, CLSNSW move in during April 2017.

NEW ITC SYSTEM

The Centre completely overhauled its Information and Technology and Communication (ITC) systems. The Centre now uses cloud computing and Skype, which has resulted in significant costs savings.

MIGRATION TO CLASS

Along with most other CLCs around Australia, the Centre migrated from CLSIS to the new database CLASS.

CLCNSW SHARED FINANCIAL SERVICE

In May 2017, the Centre commenced its subscription with the CLCNSW Financial Service. New streamlined and cloud-based accounts procedures have been put in place and the Centre has transitioned to the Xero accounting program.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our Volunteers

NEW VOLUNTEER PROGRAM ROLLED OUT

In early 2017, the Centre rolled out its new Volunteers Program, which involved the production of a comprehensive and detailed Volunteers' Manual, and structured intake 3-4 times per year.

The initial induction day included information about the Welfare Rights Centre, our systems, the role of volunteers and a session on role playing so volunteers could practice taking enquiries from our clients. The Centre provided the volunteers with lunch and complementary tickets to *I Daniel Blake* screening at the Chauvel Cinema in Paddington which the current and new volunteers attended.

The Volunteer Program covers four areas:

- The advice shift;
- The casework/admin shift;
- the DSP Clinic; and
- the Debt Clinic.

The Center would not be able to function without its volunteers, who do a tremendous amount of work answering phones, talking to clients about their problem and providing information about their social security problem. Our specially trained volunteers also provide basic advice on DSP and debts.

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer profiles



Kelly has been volunteering at the Centre since mid-2017. She is a 3rd year Commerce/Law student at UNSW and has a passion for social justice. She finds working at the Centre has taught her invaluable lessons about the way the law works in practice, and how to communicate clearly, directly, and effectively.

Francesca is a final year Law/Economics student at UNSW. She has been with the Centre since the beginning of 2017 as an Admin volunteer.

Francesca loves working at WRC, she says that it is the chance to help vulnerable people and make an impact in the community.



OUR VOLUNTEERS



Some of our stellar administration/casework and advice shift vollies

Top (left to right): Renata, Rebecca and Lianne

Bottom (left to right): Rebecca, Beycan, Stella and Jerson

OUR VOLUNTEERS

DSP CLINIC VOLUNTEERS



Jazz is a third-year law student at UTS and he started volunteering at the Centre in November 2016.

My primary responsibility as a DSP Clinic volunteer is to assist one of our solicitors to advise clients who have had their claim for DSP rejected. This role helps me communicate with some of our most vulnerable clients, who are often caught up in very upsetting circumstances.

Being a DSP volllie and the interactions that come with it, has significantly improved my communication skills, and has given me a deeper and more practical understanding of our social security system. Working at the Welfare Rights Centre has not only been an absolute pleasure, it has also been a fantastic introduction to the professional world of law practice.”

Dania is a third year law student from UTS.

I joined the Welfare Rights Centre in May 2016. I've had the pleasure of working in the admin, advice and most recently the DSP clinic. I currently provide legal advice under supervision one of the caseworkers for DSP matters and perform ad hoc legal research.

During my time at WRC I have worked alongside some of the most compassionate and determined people. WRC has provided me the opportunity to practically apply my legal skills and also nurture my understanding of administrative law. I have been mentored by some of the most passionate solicitors and caseworkers and for that I am grateful.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

DEBT CLINIC VOLUNTEERS



Amy (top):

I started volunteering at the Welfare Rights Centre in October 2015. I started as an administrative volunteer back when we were still on the paper system using CLSIS and have continued to volunteer until today as a Debt Clinic volunteer. The Centre has gone through significant changes since I first started, but I continue to find volunteering here an absolute pleasure. I enjoy my interactions with everyone on the staff, and I learn new things every time I come in – whether it's new aspects about social security law or new ways to assist clients. Being able to experience how law and government administration interact while still at university has given me a broad view of the law that I believe will be helpful as I graduate and head into the workforce.



Michelle's interpersonal skills and strong work ethic have been a valuable asset to the Debt Clinic.

OUR STAFF

Our Staff

Katherine Boyle Coordinator/Principal Solicitor



I was appointed Coordinator/Principal Solicitor in July 2016. For the past 20 years I have worked in the community legal sector, the union movement, the public sector and in private practice. My favourite thing about working at the Welfare Rights Centre is talking to the clients and helping them make sense of a diabolically complicated system, and then turning this experience into public advocacy for a better and fairer social security system.

Outside of work, my main interests are spending time with my partner and three kids, reading (Franz Kafka is an appropriate favourite), going to the movies and taking my dog for a walk.

Carolyn Odgers Assistant Principal Solicitor

I have worked at Welfare Rights for over 7 years. My previous position was as a tenant advocate for a number of years. I enjoy being able to advocate for and advise our clients on their rights and responsibilities in our complex social security system. The work we do is varied and challenging. It is really satisfying assisting our clients to a good outcome which often has a huge benefit for them impacting really positively in their lives.

My interests outside of work include my lovely family and my ongoing passion for Pilates.



OUR STAFF

Danny Shaw Senior Caseworker

I believe that to successfully advocate for our clients it is necessary to clearly understand the facts of the case – as it is the facts of the case that usually determine the outcome.

I further believe it is necessary to clearly understand the client's story and their circumstances and to gather documentary evidence to support the client's story. Submissions should be straight forward and direct to enable the decision maker to clearly grasp the issues.

Ultimately it is the credibility of the client which is often the key factor in determining the outcome of cases.



Gerard Thomas Caseworker

I am currently a caseworker at the Centre and have worked in the community sector as an advocate for low income Australians for over 25 years. I have been at the Welfare Rights Centre for almost 15 years, and during that time have seen the undermining of our social security safety net, with too many people being left behind. Like many others, I am deeply concerned about accessibility and quality of the important services that are provided by the many dedicated staff at the Department of Human Services.

On a less serious note, I am happily addicted to chilli!



OUR STAFF

Julia Hong Caseworker



I first joined the Centre in 2014 as a volunteer, was appointed Office Administrator in 2015 and then caseworker in April 2017. Clients approach the Centre with all sorts of complex issues – no two clients are the same. While the work is often challenging, there is great satisfaction in being able to make a positive and practical difference in someone’s life.

The Centre’s supportive and flexible working culture enables me to enjoy life beyond work, which includes going on hikes, travelling and keeping my pot plants healthy.

Amrita Saluja Caseworker

I started at the Welfare Rights Centre in March 2017 as a volunteer and commenced my role as a Caseworker in April 2017. I love working in an organisation with incredibly dedicated people who are passionate about helping some of the most vulnerable people in society.

When I’m not at work I love to run, eat and drink loads of coffee.



OUR STAFF



Donna Flood *Office Administrator*

I joined Welfare Rights not long before the end of the financial year. I am the Office Administrator and coordinate the finances, troubleshoot any admin or technical issues that come up and generally help to make life as easy as possible for the staff. I really appreciate working with a group of people that love their work and are incredibly passionate about the clients that they help.

The Centre also farewelled some valued members of the welfare rights team:

- Sharissa Thirukumar
- Sam Trinity
- Oscar Vicencio
- Sean Bowes

OUR BOARD

Our Board

Michael Raper, Chair

Clancy King, Deputy Chair

James Jankulovski, Secretary

Lua De Burgh, Director

Sam Clay, Director

Diana Covell, Director

Marc Hopkins, Director

Carol Howard, Director

Laura Lombardo, Director

Jacqueline Phillips, Director

Scarlet Wilcox, Director

THANK YOU

THANK YOU

To our volunteers, our Centre could not run without your hard work, enthusiasm and humour:

Stella Antoniou, Doha Abdulkhalek, Mona Abu Zalaf, Anthony Anisseh, Erin Bailey, Jerson Balaton, Sean Bowes, Suami Campos, Shancy Chen, Christopher Chiam, Emily Chow, Renata Cvetkovska, Rebecca Gad, Amy Giang, Kelly Gu, Aishya Farrar, Ben Fawcett, Xavier Fenera, Camille Gray, Sharlene Hau, Mark Haydon, Jonathan Hetherington, Dania Ibrahim, Beycan Irmako, Mariam Jaber, Heather Johnson, Amanda Kandilis, Grace Kessling, Safraz Khan, Sumaiya Khan, Joanne Knight, Vivien Lee, Samanta Lestavel, Molica Ly, Francesca Mendoza, Sarah McIntyre, Marcus Morgan, Anna Nelson, Jazz Osvald, Isabel Owen, Emily Paterson, Gabi Possati, Jonathan Ren, Natalie Ross, Amrita Saluja, Zoe Saunders, Yenee Saw, Veronica Sebesfi, Petrina Slaytor, Zoe Saunders, Patil Sevagian, Jonathan Thompson, Lianne Wong, Tracey Xue and Natalie Zhen.

To our Board, for your enthusiasm, commitment and belief in the great work of the Centre, and for more than stepping up when the call goes out.

To the NTEU, our landlords, who have so generously supported us through tough times.

To CLCNSW, for moving in with us and pulling it off so smoothly.

To HESTA, for your ongoing support and for being a progressive leader in superannuation.

To our trade union supporters, for looking after your members and us: Independent Education Union, NSW Nurses & Midwives Association of NSW, Police Association of NSW, Public Service Association of NSW, NSW Teachers Federation, United Voice NSW.

To PLC Croydon and the NSW Teachers Federation for donating so many computer monitors.

To all the people who contact our Centre for help, for your courage in standing up to Centrelink, and for being patient with us while we get to you call!

GET INVOLVED

Get Involved

Social media links

We are located on Twitter and Facebook.



www.facebook.com/welfarightscentre



www.twitter.com/welfare_rights

Volunteer

The Centre recruits new admin and advice shift volunteers in October, November and February. Please visit www.welfarights.org.au to find out how to join the team.



Welfare Rights Centre Limited

(a company limited by guarantee)

ABN 76 002 708 714

Annual Financial Report
30 June 2017

Contents

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Table of Contents

Corporate Information	2
Directors' Report	3
Auditor's Independence Declaration	8
Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income	9
Statement of Financial Position	10
Statement of Changes in Equity	11
Statement of Cash Flows	12
Notes to the Financial Statements	13
1 General information and statement of compliance	13
2 Changes in accounting policies	13
3 Summary of accounting policies	13
4 Revenue	18
5 Cash and cash equivalents	19
6 Trade and other receivables	20
7 Other assets	20
8 Plant and equipment	20
9 Trade and other payables	21
10 Provisions	21
11 Other liabilities	21
12 Commitments for expenditure	21
13 Related party transactions	22
14 Contingent liabilities	22
Directors' Declaration	23
Independent Auditor's Report	24
Additional Financial Information Disclaimer	27
Detailed Statement of Surplus or Deficit	28

Corporate Information

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

	Name	Special Responsibilities
Directors	S Clay L De Burgh C Howard M Hopkins J Jankulovski C King L Lombardo J Phillips M Raper S Wilcock	Deputy Chair Chair
Company Secretary	J Jankulovski	
Registered Office and Principal Place of Business	Suite 2, Level 1 55 Holt Street Surry Hills NSW 210	
Auditor	Steven J Miller & Co Chartered Accountants	

Directors' Report

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

The Directors of Welfare Rights Limited present their Report together with the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 and the Independent Audit Report, covering those financial statements.

Directors' details and meetings

The following persons were directors of Welfare Rights Centre during or since the end of the financial year.

The number of meetings of directors held during the year and the number of meetings attended by each director is as follows:

Name	Date of Appointment	Date of cessation	Board meetings	
			A	B
D Covell	23 August 1998	15 December 2016	2	1
S Clay	20 April 2017		2	2
L De Burgh	15 February 2017		3	1
C Howard	21 October 1992		5	3
M Hopkins	22 October 2015		6	5
J Jankulovski	15 April 2015		6	6
C King	17 December 2015		6	6
L Lombardo	20 October 2016		4	4
J Phillips	20 October 2016		4	3
M Raper	28 April 2016		6	6
S Wilcock	17 December 2015		6	5

A Number of meetings the Director was entitled to attend

B Number of meetings the Director attended

Details of Directors' qualifications, experience and special responsibilities can be found on pages 5 to 6 of this report.

Company secretary

Mr James Jankulovski has been the Company Secretary since October 2015.

Principal activities

The company's principal activities during the year were the provision of free information, legal advice and representation to resolve problems pertaining to access of people in New South Wales to their social security entitlements.

There were no significant changes in the nature of the activities of the company during the year.

Short and long term objectives

The entity's short-term objectives are:

- to provide free legal assistance to clients regarding social security and family assistance (given that demand for the Centre's services always exceeds supply, priority for casework assistance is generally provided to those most in need, particularly those who currently have no income support or who have a reduced Centrelink payment);
- to protect families and children by preventing debt and assisting with income support and family assistance.

Directors' Report

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Short and long term objectives continued

- to inform the community generally, and in particular beneficiaries and administrators of the system, of the fundamental rights, entitlements and obligations of social security recipients and the broad benefits of the social security system in Australia,
- to publicise the service offered by the entity broadly through NSW in particular to the most vulnerable individuals and groups in society,
- to achieve beneficial law reform and policy reforms on behalf of our client base, and
- to inform readers of the company's publications about development in social security law and to advocate for improvement in the structure and administration of the social security system.

The entity's long-term objectives are:

- to ensure that people generally receive the rights and entitlements under social security and family assistance law;
- to alleviate poverty; and
- to offer the best possible outcomes for our clients.

Strategies to achieve objectives

To achieve these objectives, the entity has adopted the following strategies:

- staff members and volunteers work in partnership with a range of community and government agencies to maintain support for the entity's values and objectives and to achieve a range of beneficial outcomes of individual clients;
- conducting community education and legal advice outreach in a range of settings across NSW
- producing publications and social media content about social security and family assistance law of the highest standard to disseminate information and ideas about public policy development.
- the entity strives to attract and retain staff who are committed to the values of the organisation, and
- staff and volunteers are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for clients both individually and collectively.

Directors' Report

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Directors' qualifications and experience

Name and qualifications	Experience and special responsibilities
D Covell	Diana is a Community Worker and has a career in the Illawarra region. She has been a social security caseworker and policy officer and has worked in a range of advocacy, policy, research and training positions in the non-government sector. She has served on the Welfare Rights Centre Board since 1998 and was the elected Chair from 2010 to 2013 and again in 2015 until April 2016. She ceased being a Board member in October 2016.
S Clay Bachelor of Science, Hons Bachelor of Laws & Grad Diploma of Education	Sam is a Professional Support Officer with the NSW Teachers Federation. He has been the Federation's nominee on the Board since April 2017. Sam holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours, Bachelor of Laws and Graduate Diploma of Education from the University of New England. He completed his practical placement for his Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice with the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT in Wagga Wagga.
L De Burgh	Lua is a former administrative secretary of the Welfare Rights Centre. She has experience dealing with social security law and Centrelink from a personal perspective. She currently works at George Community Housing, Hurstville as a customer service officer and is an Aboriginal Yuin Nation woman with family ties to the south coast of NSW. She joined the board in December of 2016.
M Hopkins	Marc has worked in his current position as Professional Officer (Mental Health) at the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association for the past six years and has worked as a registered nurse in the mental health sector for over 30 years. His current role involves representing and promoting the professional interests of nurses and midwives. He joined the Board in November 2015.
C Howard Diploma of Education	Carol has represented the NSW Teachers Federation on the Board since 1992. She has recently retired from her position as a Welfare Officer with the Federation where she gave advice to public school teachers regarding their rights and responsibilities, referring members to the Welfare Rights Centre for advice on many occasions. For many years Carol was the Company Secretary/Public Officer ceasing this role in 2015.

Directors' Report

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Directors' qualifications and experience

Name and qualifications	Experience and special responsibilities
<p>J Jankulovski</p> <p>Bachelor of laws, Bachelor of Science (Biotechnology) Graduate Diploma of Legal Practice</p>	<p>James is an Associate at Squire Patton Boggs where he works in the areas of corporate and commercial litigation and securities class actions. He holds a Bachelor of Laws/Bachelor of Science from the University of New South Wales and is a former volunteer of the Welfare Rights Centre. James joined the Board in April 2015 and was appointed Company Secretary in October 2015.</p> <p>Company secretary</p>
<p>C King</p> <p>Juris Doctor (Hons class 1)</p> <p>Bachelor of Arts- Communication</p>	<p>Clancy is a former volunteer of the Welfare Rights Centre and has lived experience of dealing with social security law. She holds a Juris Doctor and a Bachelor of Arts in Communications, and is a senior associate in the employment team at DLA Piper. Clancy joined the Board in December 2015 and became Deputy Chair in 2016.</p> <p>Deputy Chair</p>
<p>L Lombardo</p> <p>Bachelor of Laws / Bachelor of Media</p>	<p>Laura is a senior solicitor in the strategic litigation team at the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. She holds a Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Media. She is a former pro bono manager at Ashurst where she regularly assisted community legal centres and other not-for-profit organisations and their clients. Laura joined the Board in October 2016.</p>
<p>J Phillips</p> <p>Combined Arts/Law (BA/LLB)</p> <p>Master of Law (CLM)</p>	<p>Jacqueline is the Director of Policy and Advocacy at the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). She holds a Bachelor of Arts/Law and Masters of Law. She has worked in the non-for-profit sector for more than a decade in senior policy and management roles, with a major focus on social security policy and reform. Jacqueline joined the Board in December 2016.</p>
<p>M Rapot</p> <p>B.A., Dip Ed., E. Dip L. Law</p>	<p>Michael is currently employed as a Director at the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS). Until Feb 2016 he was Director of Services and International Operations at Australian Red Cross for eight years. He is a former Director of the Welfare Rights Centre and former President (and non-executive director) of ACOSS, the National Welfare Rights Network, the Mandela Foundation and the International Council on Social Welfare. He is Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.</p>
<p>S Wirock</p>	<p>Scarlet is a Lecturer at the University of Wollongong School of Law. Scarlet is admitted as a solicitor in NSW and is former volunteer of both the Welfare Rights Centre and Social Security Victoria. She joined the Board in December 2015.</p>

Directors' Report

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

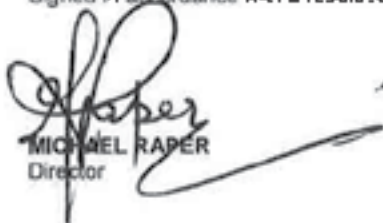
Contribution in winding up

The company is incorporated under the Corporations Act 2001 and is a company limited by guarantee. If the company is wound up, the constitution states that each member is required to contribute a maximum of \$20 each towards meeting any outstanding obligations of the company. At 30 June 2017, the total amount that members of the company are liable to contribute if the company wound up was \$180 (2016: \$150).

Auditor's Independence declaration

A copy of the Auditor's Independence Declaration as required under s 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 is included in page 8 of this financial report and forms part of the Directors' Report.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.



MICHAEL RAPER
Director

Sydney
Dated 26/10/17



Auditor's Independence Declaration

To the Directors of Welfare Rights Centre Limited Company:

In accordance with the requirements of section 60-40 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, as lead auditor for the audit of Welfare Rights Centre Limited for the year ended 30 June 2017, I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, there have been

- (a) No contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012 in relation to the audit; and
- (b) No contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Steven J Miller & Co'.

STEVEN J MILLER & CO
Chartered Accountants

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'S J Miller'.

S J MILLER
Registered Company
Auditor No 1288

Sydney
Dated 30 / 10 /17



Statement of Surplus or Deficit and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenue	4	687,354	734,942
Other income	4	2,083	4,268
Administration expenses		(69,424)	(125,823)
Amortisation expense	8	(224)	(230)
Communication expenses		(22,272)	(18,285)
Depreciation expense	8	(2,891)	(4,443)
Employee benefits expense		(486,282)	(563,636)
Event expenditure		(13,395)	(9,876)
Office costs and premises expenses		(93,526)	(54,810)
Surplus/(deficit) before income tax		1,422	(38,893)
Income tax expense	3.8	-	-
Surplus (deficit) for the year		1,422	(38,893)
Other comprehensive loss for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income/ (loss) for the year		1,422	(38,893)

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Assets			
Current			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	383,690	380,041
Trade and other receivables	6	62,317	32,377
Other assets	7	9,293	10,960
Current assets		475,300	423,378
Non-current			
Property, plant and equipment	8	16,194	19,309
Total non-current assets		16,194	19,309
Total assets		491,494	442,687
Liabilities			
Current			
Trade and other payables	9	42,214	55,389
Provisions	10	37,934	36,644
Other liabilities	11	170,036	117,551
Total current liabilities		250,184	209,594
Non-current			
Provisions	10	57,043	50,248
Total non-current liabilities		57,043	50,248
Total liabilities		307,227	259,842
Net assets		184,267	182,845
Equity			
General funds - unrestricted		184,267	182,845
Total equity		184,267	182,845

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements

Statement of Changes in Equity

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

	Unrestricted funds \$	Total equity \$
Balance at 1 July 2015	221,736	221,738
Deficit for the year	(38,893)	(38,893)
Other comprehensive income	-	-
Total deficit for the year	(38,893)	(38,893)
Balance at 30 June 2016	182,845	182,845
Balance at 1 July 2016	182,845	182,845
Surplus for the year	1,422	1,422
Total surplus for the year	1,422	1,422
Balance at 30 June 2017	184,267	184,267

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Operating activities			
Receipts from:			
• Interest income		6,030	9,257
• Government grants		680,575	737,639
• Events		73,971	188,630
Payments to:			
• Suppliers		(289,158)	(319,476)
• Wages & Salaries		(467,769)	(614,514)
Net cash provided by operating activities		3,649	1,536
Investing activities			
Purchases of plant and equipment	8	-	-
Net cash used in investing activities		-	-
Net change in cash and cash equivalents		3,649	1,536
Cash and cash equivalents, beginning of year		380,041	378,505
Cash and cash equivalents, end of year	5	383,690	380,041

This statement should be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

1 General information and statement of compliance

The financial report includes the financial statements and notes of Welfare Rights Centre Limited

These financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards - Reduced Disclosure Requirements and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012. Welfare Rights Centre Limited is a not-for-profit entity for the purpose of preparing the financial statements.

The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2017 were approved and authorised for issuance by the Board of Directors.

2 Changes in accounting policies

2.1 New and revised standards that are effective for these financial statements

A number of new and revised standards became effective for the first time for annual periods beginning on or after 1 July 2016. Information on the more significant standard(s) is presented below.

AASB 2015-4 Amendments to Australian Accounting Standards – Financial Reporting Requirements for Australian Groups with a Foreign Parent

AASB 2015-4 amends AASB 128 Investments in Associates and Joint Ventures to ensure that its reporting requirements on Australian groups with a foreign parent align with those currently available in AASB 10 Consolidated Financial Statements for such groups. AASB 128 will now only require the Ultimate Australian entity to apply the equity method in accounting for interests in associates and joint ventures, if either the entity or the group is a reporting entity, or both the entity and group are reporting entities.

AASB 2015-4 is applicable to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 July 2015.

The adoption of this amendment has not had a material impact on the company.

3 Summary of accounting policies

3.1 Overall considerations

The significant accounting policies that have been used in the preparation of these financial statements are summarised below.

The financial statements have been prepared using the measurement bases specified by Australian Accounting Standards for each type of asset, liability, income and expense. The measurement bases are more fully described in the accounting policies below.

3.2 Revenue

Revenue comprises revenue from the delivery of services, government grants, fundraising activities and client contributions. Revenue from services and donations is shown in Note 4.

Revenue is measured by reference to the fair value of consideration received or receivable by the company for goods supplied and services provided, excluding sales taxes, rebates, and trade discounts.

Revenue is recognised when the amount of revenue can be measured reliably, collection is probable, the costs incurred or to be incurred can be measured reliably, and when the criteria for each of the company's different activities have been met. Details of the activity-specific recognition criteria are described below.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

3 Summary of accounting policies continued

3.2 Revenue continued

Government grants

A number of the company's programs are supported by grants received from the Federal government. If conditions are attached to a grant which must be satisfied before the company is eligible to receive the contribution, recognition of the grant as revenue is deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

Where a grant is received on the condition that specified services are delivered, to the grantor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction. Revenue is recognised as services are performed and at year-end until the service is delivered.

Revenue from a non-reciprocal grant that is not subject to conditions is recognised when the company obtains control of the funds, economic benefits are probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Where a grant may be required to be repaid if certain conditions are not satisfied, a liability is recognised at year end to the extent that conditions remain unsatisfied.

Where the company receives a non-reciprocal contribution of an asset from a government or other party for no or nominal consideration, the asset is recognised at fair value and a corresponding amount of revenue is recognised.

Donations and bequests

Donations collected, including cash and goods for resale, are recognised as revenue when the company gains control, economic benefits are probable and the amount of the donation can be measured reliably.

Bequests are recognised when the legacy is received. Revenue from legacies comprising bequests of shares or other property are recognised at fair value, being the market value of the shares or property at the date the Company becomes legally entitled to the shares or property.

Interest income

Interest income is recognised on an accrual basis using the effective interest method.

3.3 Operating expenses

Operating expenses are recognised in surplus or deficit upon utilisation of the service or at the date of their origin.

3.4 Intangible assets

Recognition of other intangible assets

Acquired intangible assets

Acquired computer software licences are capitalised on the basis of the costs incurred to acquire and install the specific software.

Subsequent measurement

All intangible assets are accounted for using the cost model whereby capitalised costs are amortised on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful lives, as these assets are considered finite. Residual values and useful lives are reviewed at each reporting date. In addition, they are subject to impairment testing as described in Note 3.15. The following useful lives are applied:

- Website: 3 years

Subsequent expenditures on the maintenance of the computer software & brand names are expensed as incurred.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

3 Summary of accounting policies continued

3.5 Intangible assets continued

When an intangible asset is disposed of the gain or loss on disposal is determined as the difference between the proceeds and the carrying amount of the asset, and is recognised in surplus or deficit within other income or other expenses.

3.5 Property, plant and equipment

Property, plant and other equipment (comprising computer and office equipment) are initially recognised at acquisition cost or manufacturing cost, including any costs directly attributable to bringing the assets to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by the company's management.

Property, plant and other equipment are subsequently measured using the cost model, cost less subsequent depreciation and impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised on a straight-line basis to write down the cost less estimated residual value of property, plant and other equipment. The following useful lives are applied:

- Computer Equipment 3-5 years
- Furniture and fitting: 5-10 years
- Leasehold improvement 40 years

In the case of leasehold property, expected useful lives are determined by reference to comparable owned assets or over the term of the lease, if shorter.

Material residual value estimates and estimates of useful life are updated as required, but at least annually. Gains or losses arising on the disposal of plant and equipment are determined as the difference between the disposal proceeds and the carrying amount of the assets and are recognised in surplus or deficit within other income or other expenses.

3.6 Leases

Operating leases

Where the company is a lessee, payments on operating lease agreements are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Associated costs, such as maintenance and insurance, are expensed as incurred.

3.7 Impairment testing of intangible assets and plant and equipment

An impairment loss is recognised for the amount by which the assets or cash-generating unit's carrying amount exceeds its recoverable amount, which is the higher of fair value less costs to sell and value-in-use. To determine the value-in-use, management estimates expected future cash flows from each cash-generating unit and determines a suitable interest rate in order to calculate the present value of those cash flows. The data used for impairment testing procedures are directly linked to the company's latest approved budget, adjusted as necessary to exclude the effects of future reorganisations and asset enhancements. Discount factors are determined individually for each cash-generating unit and reflect Management's assessment of respective risk profiles, such as market and asset-specific risks factors.

Where the future economic benefits of an asset are not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate net cash inflows and where the entity would, if deprived of the asset, replace its remaining future economic benefits, value in use is determined as the depreciated replacement cost of the asset.

Impairment losses for cash-generating units reduce first the carrying amount of any goodwill allocated to that cash-generating unit. Any remaining impairment loss is charged pro rata to the other assets in the cash-generating unit. With the exception of goodwill, all assets are subsequently reassessed for indications that an impairment loss previously recognised may no longer exist. An impairment charge is reversed if the cash-generating unit's recoverable amount exceeds its carrying amount.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

3 Summary of accounting policies continued

3.8 Income taxes

No provision for income tax has been raised as the company is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

3.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and demand deposits, together with other short-term, highly liquid investments that are readily convertible into known amounts of cash and which are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value.

3.10 Employee benefits

Short-term employee benefits

Short-term employee benefits are benefits, other than termination benefits, that are expected to be settled wholly within twelve (12) months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service. Examples of such benefits include wages and salaries, non-monetary benefits and accumulating sick leave. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the undiscounted amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled.

Other long-term employee benefits

The company's liabilities for long service leave are included in other long-term benefits as they are not expected to be settled wholly within twelve (12) months after the end of the period in which the employees render the related service. They are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. The expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service, and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on high quality corporate bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the timing of the estimated future cash outflows. Any re-measurements arising from experience adjustments and changes in assumptions are recognised in surplus or deficit in the periods in which the changes occur.

The company presents employee benefit obligations as current liabilities in the statement of financial position if the company does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve (12) months after the reporting period, irrespective of when the actual settlement is expected to take place.

Post-employment benefits plans

The company provides post-employment benefits through defined contribution plans.

Defined contribution plans

The company pays fixed contributions into independent entities in relation to several state plans and insurance for individual employees. The company has no legal or constructive obligations to pay contributions in addition to its fixed contributions which are recognised as an expense in the period that relevant employee services are received.

3.11 Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets

Provisions are measured at the estimated expenditure required to settle the present obligation, based on the most reliable evidence available at the reporting date, including the risks and uncertainties associated with the present obligation. Where there are a number of similar obligations, the likelihood that an outflow will be required in settlement is determined by considering the class of obligations as a whole. Provisions are discounted to their present values, where the time value of money is material.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

3 Summary of accounting policies continued

3.11 Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets continued

Any reimbursement that the company can be virtually certain to collect from a third party with respect to the obligation is recognised as a separate asset. However, this asset may not exceed the amount of the related provision.

No liability is recognised if an outflow of economic resources as a result of present obligation is not probable. Such situations are disclosed as contingent liabilities, unless the outflow of resources is remote in which case no liability is recognised.

3.12 Deferred income

The liability for deferred income is the unutilised amounts of grants or sponsorships received on the condition that specified services are delivered or conditions are fulfilled. The services are usually provided or the conditions usually fulfilled within twelve (12) months of receipt of the grant. Where the amount received is in respect of services to be provided over a period that exceeds twelve (12) months after the reporting date or the conditions will only be satisfied more than twelve (12) months after the reporting date, the liability is discounted and presented as non-current.

3.13 Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

Cash flows are presented in the statement of cash flows on a gross basis, except for the GST components of investing and financing activities, which are disclosed as operating cash flows.

3.14 Economic dependence

The company is dependent upon the ongoing receipt of Federal Government grants, service and sponsorship income to ensure the ongoing continuance of its programs. At the date of this report, management has no reason to believe that this financial support will not continue.

When preparing the financial statements, management undertakes a number of judgements, estimates and assumptions about the recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

3.15 Significant management judgement in applying accounting policies

Estimation uncertainty

Information about estimates and assumptions that have the most significant effect on recognition and measurement of assets, liabilities, income and expenses is provided below. Actual results may be substantially different.

Impairment

In assessing impairment, management estimates the recoverable amount of each asset or cash-generating unit based on expected future cash flows and uses an interest rate to discount them. Estimation uncertainty relates to assumptions about future operating results and the determination of a suitable discount rate.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

3 Summary of accounting policies continued

3.15 Provisions, contingent liabilities and contingent assets continued

Useful lives of depreciable assets

Management reviews its estimate of the useful lives of depreciable assets at each reporting date, based on the expected utility of the assets. Uncertainties in these estimates relate to technical obsolescence that may change the utility of certain software and IT equipment.

Long service leave

The liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at the reporting date. In determining the present value of the liability, estimates of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation have been taken into account.

4 Revenue

The company's revenue may be analysed as follows for each major service category:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Revenue			
Grants received	4.1	586,220	502,813
Interest received		6,030	9,257
National Welfare Rights Network - Secretariat		-	107,768
Trade Union Program		115,104	115,104
Total		687,354	734,942

The company's revenue may be analysed as follows for each major product and service category:

Other income			
Administration fees		2,083	4,268
Total revenue		2,083	4,268

4.1 Net grant revenue

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Grants received in advance - 1 July	4.2	60,000	-
Grants received during the year	4.3	606,220	562,813
		666,220	562,813
Less			
Grants received in advance - 30 June	4.4	(100,000)	(60,000)
Net grant income		566,220	502,813

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

4 Revenue continued

4.2 Grants received in advance – 1 July

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Legal Aid NSW		60,000	-
		60,000	-

4.3 Grants received during the year

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Legal Aid NSW State CLC grant		137,831	134,601
Legal Aid Federal CLC grant		258,001	250,487
Legal Aid Commonwealth grant		247,207	180,000
Legal Aid – NSW SACS ERO		6,641	5,055
Legal Aid – Commonwealth – Contract funding		16,540	12,670
Net grant revenue		666,220	582,813

4.4 Grants received in advance – 30 June

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Legal Aid NSW		100,000	60,000
		100,000	60,000

5 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents consist the following:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Cash on hand and at bank		383,690	380,041
		383,690	380,041

5.1 Reconciliation of cash

Cash at the end of the financial year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled in the statement of financial position as follows:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Cash and cash equivalents		383,690	380,041

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

6 Trade and other receivables

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Trade debtors		82,317	31,783
Interest receivable		-	114
Deposits		-	500
		82,317	32,377

7 Other assets

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current:			
Prepayments – real		6,090	6,090
Prepayments – insurance		2,665	3,982
Prepayments – memberships		538	888
		9,293	10,960

8 Property, plant and equipment

Details of the company's plant and equipment and their carrying amount are as follows

	Leasehold Improvements \$	Plant & Equipment \$	Total 2017 \$
Gross carrying amount			
Balance 1 July 2016	10,389	93,218	103,607
Additions	-	-	-
Balance 30 June 2017	10,389	93,218	103,607
Depreciation and impairment			
Balance 1 July 2016	(1,428)	(82,870)	(84,298)
Depreciation	(224)	(2,891)	(3,115)
Balance 30 June 2017	(1,652)	(85,761)	(87,413)
Carrying amount 30 June 2017	8,737	7,457	16,194

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

9 Trade and other payables

Trade and other payables recognised consist of the following:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current:			
PAYG payables		7,062	17,078
Sundry payables and accruals		30,390	30,042
Net GST payable		4,762	8,279
		42,214	55,399

10 Provisions

Provisions for employee entitlements can be summarised as follows:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current:			
Annual leave		37,934	36,644
Non-Current:			
Long service leave		37,043	30,248
Provision for making good		20,000	20,000
		67,043	50,248

11 Other liabilities

Other liabilities consist of income in advance and can be summarised as follows:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Current			
Income in advance		70,036	57,552
Grants in Advance	45	100,000	60,000
		170,036	117,552

12 Commitments for expenditure

Commitments made for expenditure for the coming years can be summarised as follows:

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
Operating leases - Photocopier			
Within 1 year		3,587	3,588
After 1 year but within 5 years		5,081	1,193
		8,668	4,784

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the year ended 30 June 2017

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

13 Related party transactions

The company's related parties include its key management personnel and director related entities as described below

Unless otherwise stated, none of the transactions incorporate special terms and conditions and no guarantees were given or received. Outstanding balances are usually settled in cash.

14.1 Transactions with related entities

The Directors act in an honorary capacity and receive no compensation for their services.

14.2 Transactions with key management personnel

The company's related parties include its key management personnel. Key Management Personnel remuneration includes the following expenses:

	2017 \$	2016 \$
Total key management personnel remuneration	94,519	60,510

14 Contingent liabilities

There are no contingent liabilities that have been incurred by the company in relation to 2017 or 2016.

Directors' Declaration

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

In the opinion of the Directors of Welfare Rights Centre Limited Limited:

- (a) The financial statements and notes of Welfare Rights Centre Limited Limited are in accordance with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012, including:
 - (i) Giving a true and fair view of its financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its performance for the financial year ended on that date, and
 - (ii) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards (including the Australian Accounting Interpretations) and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013, and
- (b) There are reasonable grounds to believe that Welfare Rights Centre Limited Limited will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable (Refer Note 3.14)

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Directors.



MICHAEL RAPER
Director

Sydney
Date 26/6/17



Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

I have audited the financial report of Welfare Rights Centre Limited Limited, which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of surplus or deficit and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the Directors' declaration.

In my opinion, the financial report of Welfare Rights Centre Limited has been prepared in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- (a) Giving a true and fair view of the company's financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year ended; and
- (b) Complying with Australian Accounting Standards and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of my report. I am independent of the company in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act) and the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's *APES 110 Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to my audit of the financial report in Australia. I have also fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Other Information

Those charged with governance are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the company's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2017, but does not include the financial report and my auditor's report.

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

In connection with my audit of the financial report, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact. I have nothing to report in this regard.



Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Directors' Responsibility for the Financial Report

The directors of the company are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the ACNC Act, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

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

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the company's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibility for Audit of the Financial Report

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

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

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the company's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the company's ability to continue as a going concern. If I conclude that a material uncertainty exists, I am required to draw attention in my auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. My conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

Independent Auditor's Report

To the members of
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

Auditor's Responsibility for Audit of the Financial Report continued

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.



STEVEN J MILLER & CO
Chartered Accountants



S J MILLER
Registered Company
Auditor No 4286

Sydney
Dated 8, 11, 17



Additional Financial Information Disclaimer

Welfare Rights Centre Limited

The additional financial data presented on pages 28 and 29 are in accordance with the books and records of the company which have been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in my statutory audit of the company for the year ended 30 June 2017. It will be appreciated that my statutory audit did not cover all details of the additional financial information. Accordingly I do not express an opinion on such financial information and no warranty of accuracy or reliability is given.

In accordance with my firm's policy, I advise that neither the firm nor any member or employee of the firm undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any person (other than the company) in respect of such information, including any errors or omissions therein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.

Steven J Miller & Co
STEVEN J MILLER & CO
Chartered Accountants

S J Miller
S J MILLER
Registered Company
Auditor No 4286

Sydney

Dated 8, 11, 17



Detailed Statement of Surplus or Deficit

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

SCHEDULE 1 – GENERAL OPERATIONS

	Note Sch	2017 \$	2016 \$
INCOME			
Administration fees		2,083	4,268
Grant revenue	4.1	566,220	502,813
National Welfare Rights Network- Secretarial		-	107,768
Interest received		6,030	9,257
Program fees		115,105	115,104
TOTAL INCOME		689,438	739,210
LESS EXPENDITURE	Sch 2	(688,016)	(778,103)
NET SURPLUS/ (DEFICIT)		1,422	(38,893)

The above UNAUDITED detailed statement of surplus or deficit should be read in conjunction with the disclaimer.

Detailed Statement of Surplus or Deficit

For the year ended 30 June 2017
Welfare Rights Centre Limited

SCHEDULE 2 – EXPENDITURE

	Note	2017 \$	2016 \$
EXPENSES			
Annual leave provided		1,290	(2,814)
Auditor's remuneration		6,645	8,753
Bank charges		1,698	2,201
Communications		38,395	22,886
Creative personnel and consultants		51,868	52,781
Depreciation and amortisation	B	3,115	4,673
General expenses		472	1,891
Insurance		4,307	3,831
Office rent		49,220	54,810
Office running costs		35,087	33,113
Production expenses		10,922	16,579
Professional development		4,307	11,035
Salaries and wages		430,395	508,283
Superannuation		44,160	56,374
Travel expenses		2,243	3,607
Workers' compensation insurance		3,883	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		688,016	778,103

The above UNAUDITED detailed statement of surplus or deficit should be read in conjunction with the disclaimer.