

# Community Legal Centres Association (Western Australia) Incorporated

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Residential Tenancy Databases Inquiry  
Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs  
Standing Committee of Attorneys-General  
Via email: [rtd@treasury.gov.au](mailto:rtd@treasury.gov.au)

To Whom It May Concern

## **Re: Residential Tenancy Databases Inquiry**

Please accept this letter as part of the Inquiry into Residential Tenancy Databases. **The Community Legal Centres Association (WA) endorses the submission made by Tenants Advice Service (WA).**

The Community Legal Centres Association WA (the Association) is the peak organisation representing the 31 Community Legal Centres (CLCs) operating in Western Australia. It is committed to the principles of human rights, social justice and equity, including the rights of West Australians to equity in access to legal services. The Association is part of the national network of community legal centres.

Please find attached further information about the Association and community legal centres, for your information. Should you require any additional information, please contact me via the details above.

Yours faithfully

Holly Hammond  
Resource and Policy Officer

# Community Legal Centres Association of WA

## Membership

Albany Community Legal Centre  
Armadale Information & Referral Service  
Bunbury Community Legal Service  
CASE for Refugees  
Citizen's Advice Bureau Legal Service  
Community Legal & Advocacy Centre  
Consumer Credit Legal Service (WA) Inc  
Deaths in Custody Watch Committee (WA) Inc  
Employment Law Centre of WA (Inc)  
Environmental Defender's Office (WA) Inc  
Geraldton Family Advocacy Service - Yamatji Family Violence Protection Unit  
Geraldton Resource Centre  
Goldfields Community Legal Centre  
Gosnells Community Legal Centre (Inc)  
Human Rights WA  
Kimberley Community Legal Services  
Mental Health Law Centre WA Inc  
Midland Information, Debt & Legal Advice Service (MIDLAS)  
Multicultural Services Centre of WA (Inc)  
Northern Suburbs Community Legal Centre  
Parkway Legal Advice Centre  
Peel Community Legal Services Inc  
People With Disabilities  
Pilbara Community Legal Service  
Rural Community Legal Service  
Southern Communities Advocacy Legal & Education Services Inc  
Sussex Street Community Law Service Inc  
Tenants Advice Service Inc  
Welfare Rights & Advocacy Service (WA)  
Women's Law Centre of WA  
Youth Legal Service

## Executive Committee

### *Chair*

**Gai Walker, Southern Communities Advocacy Legal & Education Services**

### *Deputy Chair*

**Sandra Brown, Citizens Advice Bureau**

### *Treasurer*

**Ramdas Sankaran, Multicultural Services Centre of WA**

### *Secretary*

**Marilyn Ashton, Environmental Defenders Office**

### *Committee Members*

**Lea Anderson, Women's Law Centre**

**Jo Buontempo, Sussex Street Community Law Service**

**Trish Blake, Gosnells Community Legal Centre**

**Zane D'Mello, Geraldton Resource Centre**

**Paula Parentich, Mental Health Law Centre**

## Association Secretariat Staff

### *Administration Officer*

**Nicky Chaytor**

### *Resource and Policy Officer*

**Holly Hammond**

# Community Legal Centres Association of WA

## What are Community Legal Centres?

Community Legal Centres (CLCs) are community based and controlled organisations providing free, accessible and easy to understand legal services to their communities. The communities of some centres are defined by reference to geographic boundaries whilst other centres define their community by reference to common interest (eg mental health, tenancy, women, young people, refugee status, and consumer issues). CLC services include information and advice; casework and minor assistance; representation and advocacy; community legal education; policy and law reform.

CLCs primarily target their services for people who are ineligible for legal aid and who are unable to afford the services of a private lawyer. Centres aim to provide services to people who are social security recipients, those on low incomes, or those who have difficulty in accessing legal services, including people with disabilities, women, young people, indigenous people and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. CLCs are positioned at the prevention and early intervention end of the legal system, working to reduce the likelihood of litigation and the negative social consequences related to lack of access to justice.

The first Community Legal Centre in Western Australia was established in the 1970s in response to a growing community awareness and concern about the large proportion of the community for whom the law, the justice system and legal rights and redress were becoming increasingly inaccessible.

There are currently 31 community based, community managed legal centres throughout metropolitan, regional and remote WA, delivering a diverse range of legal and other services through a wide range of delivery modes reflecting the particular requirements of the communities that these centres serve.

The recently completed Joint Review of CLCs found that:

- Community legal centres (CLCs) enhance citizenship, make a positive contribution to the community and should be actively supported by all levels of government.
- The diverse nature of CLCs, the specialist and generalist services they provide and their community involvement ensures relevant and appropriate services that are responsive to client needs.
- Existing CLCs are appropriately located and the services they are able to provide with existing resources are aligned with need.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Joint Review of Community Legal Centres*, Community Legal Centres Review Steering Committee, September 2003, page 1.