

# ANNUAL REPORT



We extend our sincere gratitude to all the First Nations peoples, clients, and communities we have had the privilege of working alongside over the past year.

Your knowledge, guidance, and generosity continue to enrich and strengthen our shared journey.

We remain dedicated to ensuring cultural safety in all aspects of our work and to approaching this with respect, care, and cultural responsibility.

Readers are advised that this annual report contains photos and de-identified stories of First Nations peoples and communities, some of whom may have since passed.

This report comes to you from Gimuy-Walubara Yidinji and Yirrganydji country.

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we live, work and travel.

We pay deep respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

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# About Us

## BACKGROUND OF THE CENTRE

The Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc (the Centre) was established in 1991 and incorporated in January 1993. The Centre is a not-for-profit community organisation that provides legal and support services for the benefit of people in the community experiencing disadvantage.

The Centre is one of more than 200 community legal centres nationwide and is accessible to the community from 9:00am to 4:00pm Monday to Friday.



## PURPOSE

People in the community experiencing disadvantage are provided accessible legal and social justice services.

## VALUES



Integrity



Commitment



Fairness



Compassion



Adaptability



Diversity



Working Together



Respect



# President's Report

Amanda Lee-Ross

On behalf of the board, I am proud to present the Annual Report for 2024-2025, highlighting the achievements and dedication of our team in providing essential legal services to the communities of Cairns, Cape and Torres Strait. Our community is empowered when navigating the legal system when clients achieve better legal outcomes. We promote positive interactions with the law, and we look forward to building on the success of 2024-2025 as we move forward to deliver on our strategy and write the next chapter of the Centre.

Interestingly, many of the things that were important to us in the last strategic planning cycle, remain so now. This year continued to see economic volatility, rising inflation and high costs of living impact on our vulnerable clients. We have had to continue to innovate and test new ideas of service provision as we seek to offer assistance to the community. The Centre has faced the difficulties associated with recruitment to specialist positions within a regional area, further exacerbated by the seemingly national workforce shortages.

This year also saw us renegotiate our Enterprise Agreement (EA) with staff. Although it was at times a long and arduous process, we believe that we have been able to deliver an EA that provides a range of employment related 'rewards' to our staff while maintaining the Centre's ability to continue to provide services in a financially sustainable way.

On behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our CEO Liz Behrend for the excellent job she has done this year in managing and developing the Centre. Furthermore, I would like to thank our Finance and Administration Manager, Pauline Vella and our Principal Solicitor Melanie Wilson and Supervising Solicitor Kelsey Leahy. I would also like to thank all the staff for their hard work and dedication to the provision of quality services to our clients during this challenging time.

After many years of service to the Centre as a Board Member, we finally said goodbye to Belinda Down. It was a pleasure to work with her and I thank her for her valuable contribution over the years. Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues on the Board, Julie, Arabella and Aidan. All of the Board members have worked hard and made valuable contributions to our strategic plan. Their commitment to the Centre has made my role as President easy.

There will be plenty to do over the next year and I look forward to doing so with you all.



## CEO's Report

Elizabeth Behrend

It is my pleasure to write the CEO Report for the 2024-2025 year. It has been business as usual at the Centre, delivering legal and social support to our communities.

Our purpose and values have continued to guide us. This together with our 2021-2025 Strategic Plan, we have continued to provide outstanding work on a day-to-day basis for clients, maintain focus on our longer-term strategies; and retain a good sense of well-being within the team.

A strong spirit of service has been identified as a key cornerstone of our success. Maintaining a healthy organisational culture and strong relationships, are important aspects of this, with a review of our values and behaviours to be undertaken to ensure that these continue to be relevant and drive the business of the organisation forward in the current environment.

This year has not been without its challenges. Recruitment in the CLC sector remains difficult. This has been a trend that we have not shared alone. It is a statewide challenge for a lot of services. The rising costs of living has seen our client numbers increase. We have continually sought to maximise client and community impact. We have continued to provide outreach to Mareeba, Atherton and Innisfail. Negotiations for an new Enterprise Agreement was also undertaken this year. While it did take some time to complete, the employee benefits have certainly enhanced our Centre to be an employer of choice.

And while I may have been CEO during this time, it does not mean that these achievements are necessarily mine. They are ours – mine and our team of Senior Management and staff. Our team are the key to success. So, to that end, I would like to thank our staff – this amazing group of individuals who come together every day to enrich, improve and expand the wellbeing of our clients and communities. I would like to acknowledge the Centre's Finance & Administration Manager Pauline Vella, Principal Solicitor Melanie Wilson and Supervising Solicitor Kelsey Leahy who form the Senior Management Team. They have helped steer Cairns Community Legal Centre towards the successes of the past year and will continue to push on for the betterment of the Centre. This has provided the Centre with a leadership that has been invaluable. I also extend my gratitude to the Centre's pro bono partners, who were able to assist with client appointments.

Our achievements throughout this year would not have been possible without the leadership of our Board. I want to acknowledge all Board members for the significant contribution they continue to make and especially our President, Amanda Lee-Ross for her wisdom and insight for guiding the Centre through another year which brought its own unique challenges.

Once again, I look forward to working with everyone into the future to providing services to our local community.



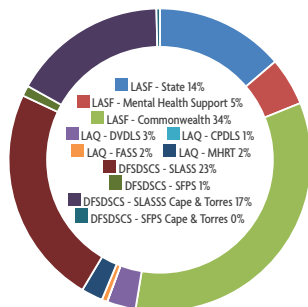
# Treasurer's Report

Aidan Lang

## INCOME

For the 2024-2025 financial year, the Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc (the Centre)'s grant income was \$3,123,963.

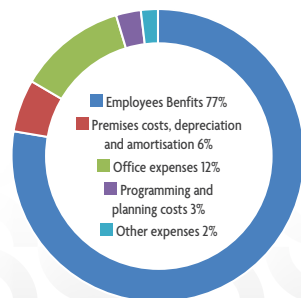
The Centre's main source of income was from the following Government funded programs:



## EXPENSES

For the 2024-2025 financial year, the total expenses for the Centre was

**\$3,279,387**



## Legal Assistance Strategy and Funding (LASF)

**\$1,642,842**

Of the LASF funding received for the year, the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department contributed \$589,897 (including \$160,000 for LASF Mental Health Support Services and \$48,799 for reduction of pay disparity) and the State Attorney-General's Department contributed \$1,052,945. (including digital capacity, client management system transition and workforce uplift grants).

## Legal Aid Queensland funding:

**\$96,333**

Domestic and Family Violence Duty Lawyer Service

**\$187**

Child Protection Duty Lawyer Service

**\$18,500**

Family Advocacy Support Service

**\$71,773**

Mental Health Review Tribunal

## Queensland Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety:

**\$731,420**

Seniors Legal and Support Service

**\$35,158**

Seniors Financial Protection Service

**\$516,024**

Seniors Legal and Social Support Service in the Cape & Torres regions

**\$11,726**

Seniors Financial Protection Service in the Cape & Torres regions

## AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORTS

The Annual Financial Statements and Reports were audited by Jessups Accountants & Business Advisors and are included in the Annual Report.

My thanks to all staff, volunteers and Board members for their assistance during this financial year.



# Principal Solicitor's Report

Melanie Wilson

The 2024-2025 financial year focused on implementing the ambitious projects commenced in the previous financial year and the transitioning to new ways of operation.

August 2024 saw the Centre's migration to a new cloud-based Client Management System which impacted the way in which client services were provided by all staff. This was the culmination of a substantial planning and development process, and as with all significant structural changes, was not without its teething issues and steep learning curves. However, it is safe to say that through it all, the Centre's staff adapted to the changes with patience and an admirable focus on delivering quality client services.

The Centre's generalist practice experienced another busy year, with many clients benefiting from successful outcomes in a range of forums, including the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (consumer-trader and debt disputes), Australian Financial Complaints Authority (complaints against financial services providers) and Magistrates Court. The diversity of complaints and issues experienced by the Centre's clients is a testament to the breadth of knowledge and experience held collectively by the Centre's professional staff.

The Centre's duty lawyer and legal representation services have continued to experience a very busy period with demand only appearing to increase for the Cairns Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court, and the Centre once again offering the Child Protection Duty Lawyer Service on a back-up / conflict basis for Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ). Referrals from LAQ for specialist legal representation in the Mental Health Review Tribunal only continue to increase, adding to the areas of specialisation covered by our professional staff.

It was another very busy year for the Centre's Seniors Legal and Support (SLASS) Programs (Cairns), and Cape and Torres Strait Seniors Legal and Social Support (SLASSS) Programs. Client demand for both programs continues to demonstrate the Centre's entrenched position and expertise in the area of elder abuse prevention and support. The SLASSS Cape and Torres program continues to grow with new outreach destinations such as Mapoon, Bamaga and the Northern Peninsula Area added to our regular outreach locations of Cooktown, Wujal Wujal, Hope Vale, Weipa/Napranum, Normanton and Thursday Island.

The Centre was also fortunate to grow its full-time professional staff and welcome two lawyers and two social workers, whose collective experience and skills are providing immeasurable value to our clients.

As 30 June 2025 saw the conclusion of the States and Commonwealth funded NLAP Agreement, the Centre is now looking forward to meeting the new requirements of the National Access to Justice Partnership (NAJP) and the increased opportunities (and funding) it offers in the way of client services and support.

Finally, a huge thank you should be offered to the professional staff (both existing and new) who have continued to keep our Centre operational. Our Centre's ability to meet its service targets, grow its profile in the community and continue to achieve such outstanding client outcomes is only possible with their consistent commitment, patience and dedication.



# Our people

## BOARD

### President

Amanda Lee-Ross  
Business and Finance Manager,  
Cairns Regional Domestic Violence Service

### Vice President

Julie Theakston  
Manager, Mareeba Community Centre Inc

### Treasurer

Aidan Lang  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Access Community Housing

### Secretary

Belinda Down  
Senior Region Adviser – Northern Region,  
Local Government Division, Department of Housing,  
Local Government, Planning and Public Works  
(until January 2025)

Arabella Kullack  
Special Counsel, The Will & All (from February 2025)

### Ordinary Members

Arabella Kullack  
Special Counsel, The Will & All (until February 2025)

## STAFF

### Chief Executive Officer

Elizabeth Behrend

### Finance & Administration Manager

Pauline Vella

### Principal Solicitor

Melanie Wilson

### Supervising Solicitor

Kelsey Leahy

### Solicitors

Denise Hilder, Renee Lees (until August 2024),  
Andrew McDonnell, Zyanna Davidson (until March 2025),  
Munashe Masimirembwa, Michelle Whitfield  
(from November 2024)

### Social Workers

Tracey Ashton, Lauren Esposito (from November 2024),  
Tullita Miller (from November 2024)

### Paralegal

Stephanie Carroll

### Client Information & Administration Support

Linda Cheng, Jennifer Christensen, Alena Pannell, Ana Tereni  
(from September 2024)

### Client Support Officer

Baitha Warusam-Tabuai

### Executive Assistant

Lucy Raymer

### Administration Assistant

Rhesa Joshua (Maternity Leave Temporary Role)

Top: Michelle, Stephanie, Kelsey, Andrew, Zyanna, Rhesa. Bottom: Tracey, Lauren, Baitha

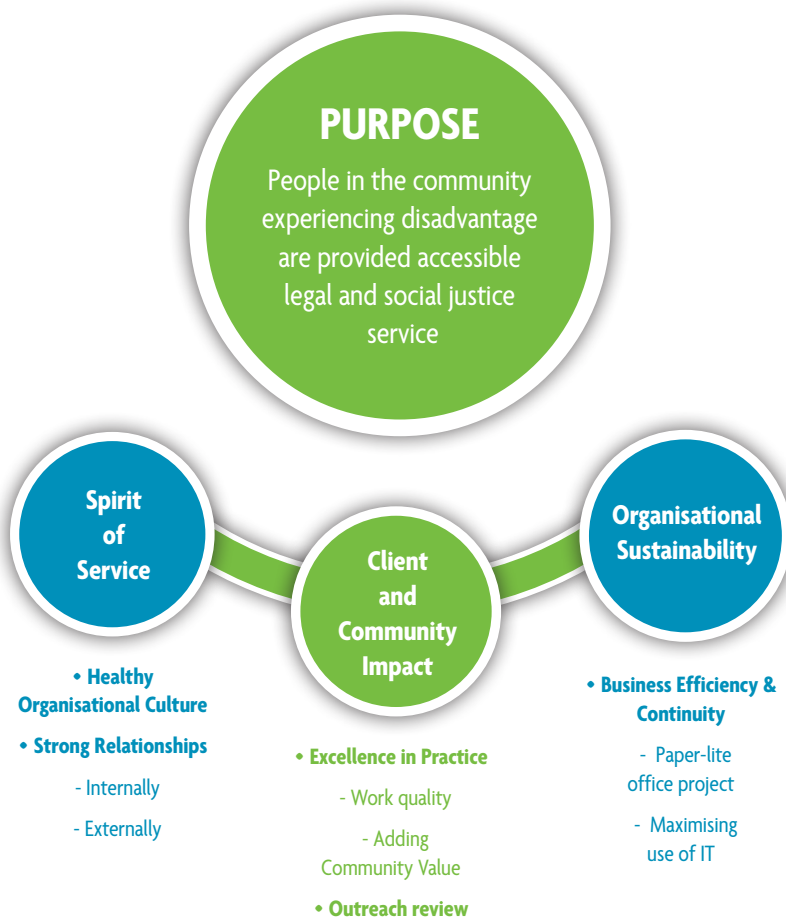


## RECOGNITION OF SERVICE – BELINDA DOWN

Board Member/Secretary  
August 2012 - January 2025.

# Strategic Priorities

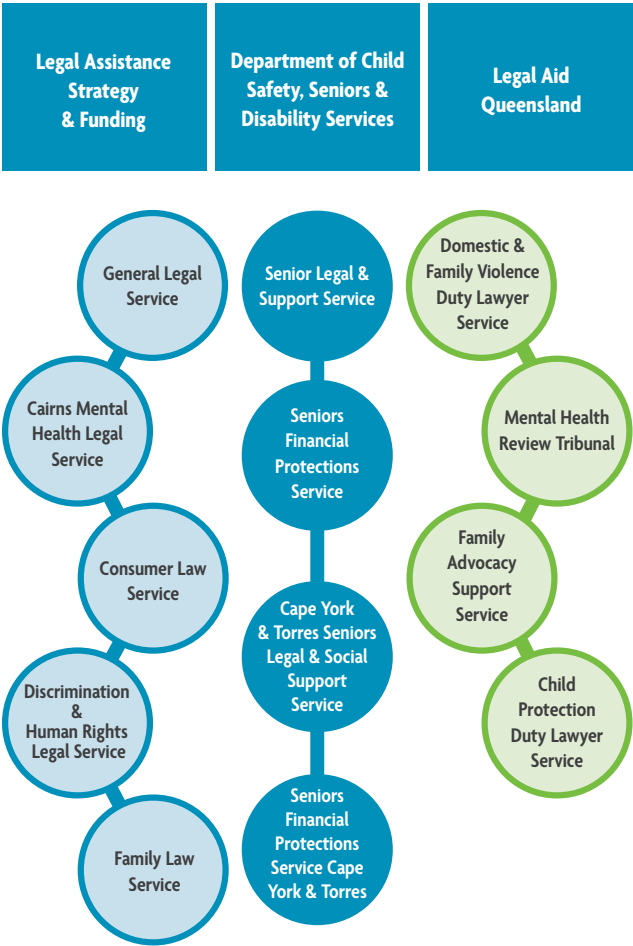
The Centre's Strategic Plan can be simply and effectively stated as follows:



This has guided us throughout the year, with achievements across these areas outlined in this report.

# Our Services to the Community

In 2024-2025 the Centre provided information, referrals, discrete service assistance and ongoing casework services across its various programs and funding streams:



The Centre offered these services over a geographical area stretching across Far North Queensland with services delivered face-to-face, as well as via telephone and video teleconferencing and through regular outreach locations at Innisfail, Atherton, Mareeba and the Cairns Hospital.

## TELEPHONE ADVICE AND WALK-IN SERVICE

Established in response to client demand, this Service enables clients to access urgent face to face or telephone advice across all of the Centre's practice areas.

The necessity of this service is demonstrated by the 115 emergency appointments provided to clients during the 2024-2025 financial year, and as such, is now embedded as a critical part of the Centre's services.



Social Worker Tracey - Hambledon House CF.

# Legal Assistance Strategy & Funding (LASF) Program

## GENERAL LEGAL SERVICE

The General Legal Service (GLS) is the Centre's core service, providing legal assistance across a broad range of areas including family law, domestic violence, peace and good behaviour matters, discrimination, guardianship administration and other mental health legal work, debt, motor vehicle, criminal law, traffic and other miscellaneous matters.

Work undertaken by the GLS includes:

- Information and referrals; and
- Legal advice and legal task services; and
- Casework services.

The GLS also provides community education talks on a broad range of legal matters to community groups, organisations and others.

The GLS is funded by the Commonwealth and State Governments through the Queensland Department of Justice and Attorney General, Legal Assistance Strategy & Funding (LASF).



## STORY OF IMPACT

Navigating the Family Law system unrepresented can be an incredibly stressful, overwhelming and intimidating experience. Many people struggle to understand the complex legal procedures and language, which can lead to unnecessary delays in their matter.

Bruce is a 27-year-old father of 4 children who lives in a small rural town and has experienced past trauma resulting in mental health issues at times.

Bruce had commenced Family Law children proceedings in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia ("FCFCOA"). Bruce sought urgent advice from our Centre, as he had been receiving emails from the FCFCOA Registry requesting he provide an outline form by 4:00pm that afternoon in preparation for a Mediation the next day. Bruce was anxious and stressed not knowing how to comply with this request by the Registry.

A Solicitor from our Centre advised Bruce that the appropriate form was a Confidential Case Outline Document (Dispute Resolution) which informed the Registrar and other parties of his current position and what has been occurring in preparation for the Court Ordered Mediation. Our Solicitor then took Bruce's instructions and drafted the Confidential Case Outline Document (Dispute Resolution) for Bruce to file with the FCFCOA Registry prior to the 4pm deadline.

As a result of our Centre's urgent advice and assistance, Bruce was able to comply with the FCFCOA Registry request and therefore be in a better position to attend the Court Ordered Mediation the following day, alleviating Bruce's anxiety regarding the matter.

# STORY OF IMPACT



## CONSUMER LAW SERVICE

The Consumer Law Service (CLS) provides services across a range of consumer law matters including consumer credit, debt, bankruptcy, telecommunications and financial services complaints, consumer product and services complaints and other consumer related enquiries.

The CLS assists the consumers by providing:

- Information and referrals; and
- Legal advice and legal task services; and
- Casework services.

The CLS also provides community education talks addressing consumer rights and common consumer issues.

The CLS is part of those services funded through the LASF.

Under Australian Consumer Law, goods sold by businesses must be of acceptable quality, free from defects, safe and durable. When a business provides goods that are not of an acceptable quality, there can be a significant impact on the consumer. It is for this reason that the consumer is entitled to take action against the business when the product purchased does not comply with these standards.

Being a single mother who was due to relocate for greater employment opportunities, Cindy required a reliable vehicle to transport herself and her daughter. Cindy purchased a second-hand vehicle from a local dealership. A few weeks after purchase, Cindy noticed that the vehicle began to encounter a range of mechanical issues. These issues quickly lead to the vehicle being inoperable and it was towed to a local mechanic for repairs. The mechanic inspected the vehicle and advised that the issues were so significant it would not be financially viable for Cindy to repair the vehicle.

On this opinion, Cindy contacted the dealership and sought a refund. The dealership was not willing to offer any resolution, so Cindy contacted our Centre for legal advice. Our Centre advised Cindy of her options and wrote to the dealership outlining the alleged breaches under the Australian Consumer Law. This correspondence led to the dealership towing the vehicle to them for an inspection, free of charge. Unfortunately, when the vehicle arrived at the dealership, they made unauthorised repairs to the vehicle, which meant any trust Cindy had in the dealership was now gone.

Our Centre again wrote to the dealership, seeking a refund in full and final satisfaction of the matter. While the dealership was initially insistent on refusing a refund, when Cindy advised she was considering proceeding with this matter through the relevant Tribunal, the dealership agreed to offer Cindy a full refund of the purchase price. As a result of the refund, Cindy is now able to purchase a safe and durable vehicle from a different dealership.



# STORY OF IMPACT

## DISCRIMINATION & HUMAN RIGHTS LEGAL SERVICE

The Centre's Discrimination & Human Rights Legal Service (D&HRLS), continues to specialise in providing services to people experiencing discrimination; as well as providing services to those whose matters fall within the ambit of the Human Rights Act (Qld).

The D&HRLS work is also provided through:

- Information and referrals; and
- Legal advice and legal task services; and
- Casework services, including representation of clients before the Queensland Human Rights Commission, Australian Human Rights Commission and Fair Work Commission.

The D&HRLS is also available to provide community education through the local community.

The D&HRLS is also funded through the LASF.

## FAMILY LAW SERVICE

The Family Law Service (FLS) focusses on family law matters involving children.

The FLS has a primary focus on facilitating client's ability to participate effectively in family law mediations and to advance the prospect of successful mediation without the need to resort to litigious processes.

The FLS assists clients through:

- Information and referrals; and
- Legal advice and legal task services; and
- Casework services.

The FLS is also available to provide community education and is funded through the LASF.

The Family Law Act acknowledges that children have a right to maintain connections with significant people in their lives, including grandparents. The law requires the Family Court to consider a child's relationship with important people like their grandparents, when deciding what is in the child's best interests. This means that grandparents can apply for parenting orders for their grandchild.

Amanda is a grandparent wanting to assist with the care of her grandchild whilst the child's parents are unable to due to health concerns and domestic violence. Amanda did not know if she was able to do anything legally, given she is not the parent.

A Centre solicitor advised Amanda about the Family Law Act and how Amanda can make an application to the Family Court for parental responsibility. Our solicitor discussed other avenues that people in Amanda's position sometimes consider, such as Child Safety and Children's Court, as well as the use of domestic violence orders, and why the Family Court would be the best option for Amanda to have the legal responsibility for the care of her grandchild.

Our solicitor explained how to get the court process started and referred Amanda to another government funded agency who can provide representation services in the Family Court. Amanda was relieved that she was able to do something legally to help her grandchild.



Social Worker Lauren & Social Worker Tullita - Hope Vale Aged Care

# STORY OF IMPACT

## CAIRNS MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL SERVICE

The CMHLS provides legal services to clients needing help with Treatment Authorities, Electroconvulsive Therapy Applications and other mental health legal work. This includes representation at hearings before the Mental Health Review Tribunal; with advice and assistance also provided across the Centre's other usual areas of practice where that's needed.

The CMHLS provides tailored community education talks to members of the community who may be suffering from a mental illness and to service providers working in mental health.

The Centre is working with the Cairns Hospital to attend regular face-to-face legal advice appointments for patients of the Mental Health Unit once per week.

Owen is a disability support pensioner who lives with physical and mental health concerns, including anxiety and agoraphobia. Owen lives in a block of units and considers his home his sanctuary in which he can heal. When Owen was in better health, he would actively take part in body corporate matters, such as committee meetings and facilitating work that had to be done to the complex.

When tradespeople were engaged by the body corporate committee to urgently repair damage to common property, they accessed Owen's unit to facilitate the repairs. While facilitating those repairs, they damaged Owen's unit, leading to a dispute between Owen and the body corporate committee in relation to the damage and the costs of repair.

In bodies corporate it is inevitable that, from time to time, disputes will occur. Although there are practical and cost-effective avenues available to assist in resolving them, resolution is not always forthcoming if members of the body corporate committee are unwilling to compromise. The lack of resolution was particularly distressing for someone with Owen's vulnerabilities as it concerned his home, and place of security, and involved people that he associated with on an ongoing basis.

In addressing Owen's dispute, and particular vulnerabilities, our Centre's solicitor employed a trauma-informed legal assistance strategy when providing advice, empowering Owen with informed choice in relation to his rights and the process. This included ongoing and detailed telephone and email advice, as well as an element of emotional support and encouragement to Owen, who has understandably found this experience more difficult as a result of his physical and mental health concerns. Our solicitor also engaged in negotiations with the body corporate manager and committee secretary on Owen's behalf with a view to obtaining a negotiated outcome. As the matter is not yet resolved, our Centre is supporting Owen with an application for resolution by the relevant decision-making body.

As a result of specialist mental health funding, our solicitor was equipped with the requisite skills and training in providing trauma-informed legal assistance which meant that Owen was supported in a way that was sensitive to his particular vulnerabilities.



Paralegal Stephanie & Social Worker Lauren.

# Legal Aid Queensland Funded Services

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DUTY LAWYER SERVICE

The Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc (CCLC) is providing the Domestic & Family Violence Duty Lawyer Service in partnership with Legal Aid Queensland (LAQ) and North Queensland Women's Legal Service Inc (NQWLS).

CCLC, LAQ and NQWLS are available at the Magistrates Court in Cairns each Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday, to provide legal advice and representation on the day to parties in DV matters. NQWLS is available to women, with LAQ and CCLC available to all men, both aggrieved and respondents. CCLC is also in some cases available to women, for example where both parties to a DV matter are women.

The Centre's GLS also compliments the DVDLS by enabling follow up work to be provided in relation to domestic violence and other work that is required beyond the duty lawyer service provided, including in relation to family law matters.

**We provided services to 374 clients**

## MENTAL HEALTH REVIEW TRIBUNAL SERVICE

The Centre's Mental Health Review Tribunal Service is also funded by Legal Aid Queensland.

This service is delivered by a hybrid model of in person and online representation.

**We provided services to 46 clients**

## FAMILY ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT SERVICE

Funded by Legal Aid Queensland, the Family Advocacy and Support Services referrals ("FASS") is a face to face or a remote service delivery to clients serviced by the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia registry with urgent family law matters involving family violence.

In 2024-2025 the Centre continued to make itself available for urgent referrals and provided FASS legal services to clients with urgent family law matters involving family violence, in the Cairns region.

**We provided services to 2 clients**

## CHILD PROTECTION DUTY LAWYER SERVICE

In 2024-2025 the Centre also made itself available to assist with the Child Protection Duty Lawyer Service, when required.

This service is also funded by Legal Aid Queensland.

**We provided services to 1 client**

## CAIRNS MENTAL HEALTH LEGAL SERVICE

The Centre is working with the Cairns Hospital to provide regular face-to-face legal advice appointments for patients of the Mental Health Unit, with a regular weekly Outreach day.

The CMHLS provides legal services to clients needing help with Treatment Authorities, Electroconvulsive Therapy Applications and other mental health legal work.

**We provided services to 19 clients**

66 *The service is wonderful. Solicitor has been great. They talked me through everything step by step and made everything easy to understand.* 99



# Department Of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services

## STORY OF IMPACT

### SENIORS LEGAL & SUPPORT SERVICE

The Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) undertakes legal and support services for the benefit of seniors affected by elder abuse or financial exploitation.

The SLASS provides a multi-disciplinary practice, consisting of a solicitor and social worker who provide a range of assistance to clients including via home visits and other safe locations.

The SLASS assists clients through:

- Legal advice, legal task assistance;
- Information and referrals;
- Counselling and support; and
- Casework services

The SLASS also provides community education talks to client groups and other service providers including residents in nursing homes, neighbourhood centres and other community organisations, retirement groups, aged care service providers and others.

The SLASS is funded by the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

There are unfortunately a number of people who are suffering abuse and mistreatment from their neighbours, and these people are often pushed to the point of relocation. With the current housing crisis, however, relocation is no longer an option. With the threatening behaviour of the neighbours continuing, the homeowner's options include seeking protection by applying for a Peace and Good Behaviour Order through the courts.

Peter is a 72-year-old man who has lived in his home for many years without any issues with his neighbours. Peter recently started having problems with one particular neighbour over a nature strip. Peter had been given permission by the local council to mow the piece of grass as it was becoming unsightly and a nuisance. Peter's neighbour objected to his actions and thus started a campaign of fear and harassment by the neighbour and her boyfriend, causing emotional stress and fear of assault to Peter.

Peter was subject to numerous threats of violence and harm against him and also threats of property damage to his home and his motor vehicle. Peter had to go to the expense of installing surveillance equipment to protect himself and his property from the actions of the neighbour and her partner. Peter was living in constant fear.

Peter reported the matter to police on numerous occasions, but they could not help him in a meaningful way. Peter sought advice from our service as to what legal options were available to him and was given advice on applying for a Peace and Good Behaviour Order against the neighbour.

The solicitor assisted Peter in drafting his application and guided Peter as to the process on having the application signed by a justice of the peace and filing the application in court, as well as serving the application on the neighbour. Advice was also provided about the possible outcomes at the court hearing.

Ultimately, Peter's application was successful, and a Peace and Good Behaviour Order was made. Peter is now protected by an order of the court against further bad behaviour of the neighbour.



Social Worker Tracey - FNQLA Estate Planning and Elder Abuse Session 2

# Jugarrbaajing

(Unsettled Mind)

Bajar jama nyuni garba

(Leave bad thoughts behind)

Wurnyan ngajin gulaayi mundu

(Healing my body with Spirit)

Wabar yaluuga gurriny ngaju

(Walk closer to a better tomorrow)

Giyl biiban

(Share happiness)

These words were gifted to the Cairns Hospital Mental Health Unit Open Day.

Solicitor Zyanna & Principal Solicitor Melanie

## SENIORS FINANCIAL PROTECTION SERVICE

The Seniors Financial Protection Service (SFPS) aims to enable seniors experiencing or at risk of experiencing financial abuse to make informed decisions, look after their personal finances, protect their financial futures and reduce the risk of being financially abused.

The SFPS is also funded by the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

*“I am from another culture and English is my second language. Solicitor was incredibly patient and really took their time and explained things in different ways to make sure that I understood. Thank you so much for your help.”*

## STORY OF IMPACT

Home care packages (HCP) are funded by the Australian Government to allow older Australians to access services to get some help at home. Services provided under a home care package are designed to meet the persons care needs and goals. The HCP Manual is reviewed regularly and details to providers what can, and cannot, be funded with HCP funds. Sometimes a person will request a product or service to be paid from a HCP that needs to be assessed by the provider, as it is not a typical purchase and requires approval before the item is purchased or service arranged.

Linda is an 80-year-old carer for her husband Robert who lives with a diagnosis of dementia. Robert has a HCP and utilises funds for regular services including respite, transport and domestic assistance. One day Linda was using the oven which tripped the power to the entire house. Linda promptly contacted Robert's HCP case manager who said that the repairs could be covered by the package and for Linda to forward a quote for approval. Linda promptly provided the quote.

The electrician billed the HCP provider direct, and Linda thought no more of it. A year later the electrician contacted Linda stating that he had not been paid and started forwarding the outstanding invoice to Linda. Fortunately, Linda had kept the email correspondence between herself and the HCP provider. During that time Robert had switched HCP providers and Linda made an appointment with the Seniors Legal and Support Service (SLASS) for advice.

The SLASS social worker assisted Linda to structure a complaint to the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner as the previous HCP provider stated that they could no longer pay the invoice as they did not have access to the package funds, even though the invoice was clearly approved at the time. The complaint process was lengthy, but eventually, due to our assistance, the previous provider did agree to pay the invoice that they had previously approved the quote for.

# STORY OF IMPACT

## SENIORS LEGAL & SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICE CAPE YORK AND TORRES

The Seniors Legal and Social Support Service (SLASSS) provides accessible legal and social support services for the benefit of seniors affected by, or at risk of elder abuse or financial exploitation in the Cape York and Torres Strait regions.

The SLASSS provides a multi-disciplinary practice. A client support officer and/or social worker provides the first point of contact with the older person, and maintains contact until the conclusion of the service. If legal issues are identified, and if the client wishes to obtain legal advice, the social worker will introduce them to a lawyer.

Clients can be provided a range of assistance, including via home visits and other safe locations.

The SLASSS assists clients through:

- Legal advice, legal task assistance;
- Information and referrals;
- Counselling and support; and
- Casework services

The SLASSS also provides community education talks to client groups and other service providers including residents in nursing homes, neighbourhood centres and other community organisations, retirement groups, aged care service providers and others.

The SLASSS is funded by the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

“*The service is wonderful. Solicitor has been great. They talked me through everything step by step and made everything easy to understand.*”

The Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) is often appointment by medical professionals to make healthcare, lifestyle and medical decisions for a person who lacks decision-making ability.

Pablo is a 71-year-old Aboriginal man who resides in a remote community. During this time, Pablo was being taken out by family and humbugged particularly on pension days. He lived by himself, was dependent of alcohol and wasn't being supported by family or friends.

In 2022, Pablo went to hospital and at the time, the hospital social worker felt that Pablo could not make simple or complex decisions around his personal/health care, lifestyle/accommodation choices or financial affairs. Scans also showed that Pablo had a brain injury and vascular dementia diagnoses which reduced his decision-making capacity.

Pablo was also unable to participate in a discussion about his decision-making and whether another person should be appointed to make decisions for him, therefore an application to QCAT was done, appointing the OPG to support Pablo with his personal/health care and lifestyle/accommodation choices.

Pablo was referred to the Seniors Legal and Social Support Services (SLASSS) at our Centre, as he felt he had no control over the situation that the hospital made, and didn't support the idea of the OPG being appointed to make all his health decisions.

As a result of the Centre's interventions, an application was submitted to seek leave to withdraw the OPG on the grounds that added security and support was being provided by an aged care facility (where he now resided) and that his impaired capacity was his medical condition (alcohol dependency, which caused him to have possible alcohol induced dementia). Since going into the Aged Care facility these risk factors were no longer a contributing to his medical condition and impaired decision making.

QCAT has since approved the application to withdraw as guardian for Pablo, has indicated he has felt supported through the process and no longer stresses about his health decisions being made by the OPG.

# STORY OF IMPACT

## SENIORS FINANCIAL PROTECTION SERVICE CAPE YORK AND TORRES

The Seniors Financial Protection Service - Cape and Torres Strait (SFPS C&T) aims to enable seniors experiencing or at risk of experiencing financial abuse to make informed decisions, look after their personal finances, protect their financial futures and reduce the risk of being financially abused.

The SFPS C&T is also funded by the Queensland Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services.

*“Solicitor has been extremely valuable to me, providing me with relevant and accurate information. It has been very easy to obtain the meetings, as required, and all staff engaged with me professionally and with empathy.”*

Social Worker Tullita - Normanton.



Scammers exploit vulnerable individuals by targeting those who may be more isolated or unaware on how to verify the legitimacy of the contact or requests they receive.

Clint is a 57-year-old Aboriginal man who resides in a remote community. In 2022, Clint was a target of a serious scam, which resulted in him being contacted by what he thought was the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

During the call, Clint gave his myGov ID and password to what he thought was the ATO, and with this information the scammers were able to reverse several years of tax refunds dating back to 2016. This resulted in the scammers receiving EFT refunds of over \$100,000. Clint was unaware of this situation until he received a notice in the mail stating his owed over \$100,000 to the taxation office. This left Clint extremely stressed as he already been a victim to many other scams in the past.

Clint was referred to the Centre by his local NDIS provider. His initial concerns were the numerous bills and letters he was receiving from the ATO, which was impacting his mental and physical health. Using the multi-disciplinary framework within our centre, the solicitors and social workers worked together to advocate on Clint's behalf with the taxation office explaining the significant scam he had been involved in, and how this was affecting his mental health. Clint was also on an aged pension, which meant after assessing his income and assets, there was no money left over to pay this debt.

As a result of our Centre's intervention, the ATO confirmed that they would cease all action to gain recovery of these funds. However, if his circumstances changed in the future, they would reassess his financial situation.

Clint has since informed the Centre that due to the is outcome that his physical health has improved, and he no longer visits the hospital daily with ongoing panic attacks.

# The statistics

## OUR CLIENTS

Records show that in 2024-2025 the Centre provided 1835 clients; with legal advice, legal task assistance, duty lawyer, court/tribunal and other representation, as well as social work support services.

*“The legal service was recommended to me by a friend, and I have already recommended it to someone else. I believe this service fills a significant gap in the legal sector, making support accessible to those who might not otherwise afford it.”*



**93%** of our clients reside in outer regional and remote areas - with approximately 38% of our clients residing outside of the immediate Cairns City area



**30%** of our clients identified as having a disability



**87%** of our clients are financially disadvantaged



**19%** of our clients identified as First Australians



**20%** four clients identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness



**12%** of our clients identified as experiencing or at risk of experiencing Domestic & Family Violence



**24%** of our clients were born overseas



SLASS Cape & Torres Team - Social Worker Tullita, Client Support Officer Baiha & Social Worker Lauren - Hope Vale.

## OUR WORK ACTIVITIES

**Records show that in 2024-2025** the Centre's work encompassed approximately: **56% civil law work; 22% family law; and 22% criminal law** - across a range of problem types.

**Discrete legal and social work support services totalled 4321** for all funding categories, including 1703 legal advices and 81 legal task assistance services provided through the LASF.

A total of **101 new court/tribunal and other legal representation matters** were also opened; with **96 such matters closed** during the year, including 26 through the LASF.

In addition, the Centre provided **513 duty lawyer services through the Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Service;** and **66 client services through the Mental Health Review Tribunal Service.**

Further work complimenting the Centre's information, referral, advice and casework services included the provision of **67 community education and CLE activities**, including 18 community legal education (CLE) activities through the LASF.

Over **5378 information and referral activities** were also provided, including 3516 referrals through the LASF. This included referrals to other organisations in instances where the Centre was unable to assist (for example due to resourcing constraints) as well as referrals provided to other organisations in order to provide clients with a holistic approach to their situation or avoid duplication of services.

Maintaining strong stakeholder engagement in 2024-2025 (**216 activities**).

“*Solicitor helped me with my case, they are an excellent solicitor. Solicitor was so helpful and explained everything to me along the way and really made sure that I understood it all. Solicitor gave me regular updates. Solicitor is a top person and I had a really great rapport with them and would recommend them to anyone needing help. I can not thank Solicitor enough for the help they have given me.*”



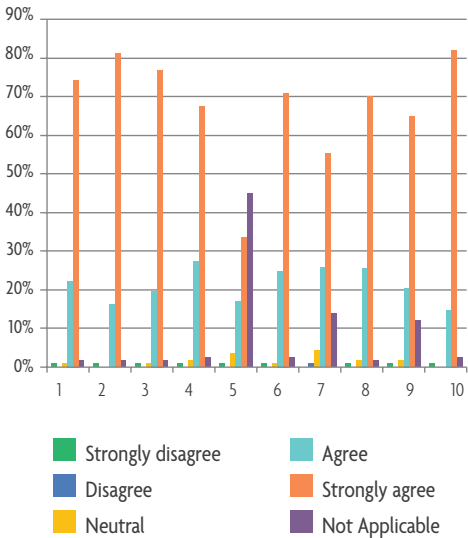
## WHAT OUR CLIENTS TOLD US

In May 2025, the Centre undertook a client survey pursuant to the requirements of the National Legal Assistance Partnership Agreement 2020-2025 (NLAP), and the Queensland Department of Justice and the Attorney-General.

The Centre sought to survey all clients who received a legal advice, legal task, court/tribunal or other representation service in May 2025, with some of these services including the provision of information and/or referral services.

Client satisfaction results are summarised as follows:

1. It was easy to access the legal centre when I first needed help
2. The legal centre staff listened to my legal problems in a friendly and respectful manner
3. The legal centre staff helped me understand how to deal with my legal problem and provided me with options
4. The information and resources I received from the legal centre staff were very useful
5. I am very likely to access the other service(s) that I was referred to by the legal centre
6. I feel confident in the ability of the legal centre to assist me
7. I am satisfied with the resolution of the matter I received assistance for
8. I know where to get help if I have another legal problem in the future
9. The legal centre was able to meet me specific cultural or personal needs
10. I would recommend this legal centre to other people



“You provide a really great service and everyone that I’ve spoken to at the centre is really nice and seem to genuinely care.”

# Community Engagement, Profile and Influence

The Centre participated in a range of community engagement activities throughout 2024-2025.

This included:

## ATTENDANCE AT COMMUNITY EVENTS:

The Centre was involved in a number of community events throughout the year including:

- James Cook University Market Day – Stall
- NAIDOC Week - Stall
- Domestic and Family Violence Month – Breakfast & Vigil
- FNQ Family Law Pathways – Breakfast | International Women's Day - Breakfast
- Law Week – Law Walk | Red Rose Rallies
- Mental Health Week – FNQLA Lunch
- Seniors Month – Cairns Regional Council & Tablelands Council's Positive Ageing Fair – Stall
- Mareeba Seniors Expo – Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services

## REGIONAL & REMOTE OUTREACH:

The Centre undertook a number of outreach trips in to regional and remote communities throughout the financial year, including:

- Cape York
- Cooktown
- Hope Vale
- Napranum
- Normanton
- Thursday Island
- Weipa
- Wujal Wujal

## MEDIA:

The Centre also stayed connected with its communities through its web and social media presence.





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STORY OF IMPACT

## COMMUNITY LEGAL & OTHER EDUCATION:

The Centre's Community Education work continued to be delivered, with work in this space being provided to Community Organisations, Groups and Networks including:

Access Community Housing | ACAT Service Providers | ARC Disability Services | Arukun Shire Council | Australian Independent Retirees | Aveo Retirement Living | Better Together | Cairns and Community Dementia Carers Support Group | Cairns Ladies Lions Club | Cairns Regional Council & Cairns Libraries | Cairns RSL | Cape York Family Centre | Cape York Health Outreach Team | CentaCare FNQ | Community Support Centre Innisfail | Cooktown District Community Centre | Cooktown Shire Council | Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services | Djindigal Residential Rehabilitation Service | ECHO | ECS Regional Yarning Circle | Family Responsibilities Commission | Far North Queensland Law Association | Freshwater Church | Gungarde Community Centre Aboriginal Corporation | Hambledon House Community Centre | Heritage Gardens | Hope Vale Aged Care | Indigenous Conferencing Services Integrated Living | Independent Living Support Association | James Cook University | LLA Normanton | LawRight | Marlin Coast Neighbourhood Centre | Mind Australia | Mission Australia | Mossman Support Services | My Pathway Thursday Island | Napranum Shire Council | Normanton Hospital | Normanton Justice Group | North Queensland Women's Legal Service | North West Remote Health | Port Douglas Neighbourhood Centre | Prisoner's Legal Service | QLD Health | Queensland Injectors Health Network | Relationships Australia | Selectability | Tablelands Community Housing | Tablelands Regional Council | TAFE Cairns & Atherton | The Junction Clubhouse | Torres Strait Aged Care Association | UCC Cairns | War Widows Association | Weipa Hospital | Wellways | Wujal Justice Group | Wujal Primary Health Care | Wujal Shire Council | YETI | YIRMBBA First Nations Unit, Queensland Human Rights Commission

Vulnerable people suffering from mental health difficulties experience substantial legal problems – and such legal problems have more severe consequences for them. Vulnerable people suffering from mental health difficulties are less likely to seek the assistance of a Lawyer. One of the major impediments for people suffering from mental health difficulties can be identifying when personal problems converge with legal problems. That is why it is pertinent that stakeholders in the community are conscious of the need to identify legal issues and connect the vulnerable person with the necessary legal assistance that they require.

The Cairns Community Legal Centre delivered an information session to 30 staff of a non-profit organisation that provides support to a diverse cross section of vulnerable people in Far North Queensland on matters ranging from social housing, disability inclusion and homelessness. We examined the legal issues that their clients generally experience such as domestic violence orders, residential tenancy disputes, mental health law and matters in the Mental Health Review Tribunal. The Centre developed and presented fictional client scenarios about young people suffering from mental health issues attending the services of our Centre. As an interactive activity, the audience ascertained the legal issues that the fictional characters were likely to experience and discussed where and how legal services like Cairns Community Legal Centre could assist

The underlying theme of the presentation was to illustrate that community stakeholders do not need to have the expertise of solicitors to play a pivotal role in identifying legal problems. With the skills to now identify legal issues, the organisation is more confident to refer client's to our centre for assistance.

# REGULAR NETWORK MEETING STORY OF IMPACT

## REGULAR NETWORKS:

This work continued remotely, with our ongoing involvement in the:

- CLC Community Services Network
- National Older Persons Legal Service Network
- Queensland SLASS Network
- Cairns Collective Impact on Domestic and Family Violence Network
- Operational Working Group for the Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Court
- Tablelands Domestic Family Violence and Sexual Assault Network
- Regional Legal Assistance Forum
- CLE Legal Assistance Forum
- Cairns Alliance of Social Services
- Tablelands Interagency Network
- Human Rights Advocates Network
- Family Support Network
- Disaster Community of Practice
- FNQ Consumer Task Force
- Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) – Cairns
- National Rural, Regional, Remote and Very Remote Network
- Elder Abuse Regional & Remote Community Engagement Reference Group
- Mental Health and Disability Legal Assistance Forum
- Queensland Alliance for Mental Health
- Queensland Council of Social Services Network
- Mental Health Legal Service Network
- Social Justice Professionals in Legal Settings

With Networks aimed at developing client service delivery and organisational objectives.

In response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, a Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Court was established in Cairns.

In preparation for the specialist Court, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General created an Operational Working Group (OWG). The OWG consists of local stakeholders directly involved with the Specialist Court, the Court staff and the Judiciary. The OWG met regularly, with the initial meetings to assist with developing an understanding of the operations of the Specialist Court Integrated model, and for the Court to keep agencies informed of and updated with the work planned for the Court facilities to support an integrated service model approach.

In July 2023, the Specialist Court became operational, seeing domestic and family violence matters being heard across 3 days a week, rather than 1 day a week. Once the Specialist Court was established, the OWG continued to meet on a monthly basis. The OWG meetings now act as a forum for agencies to come together to share information, discuss operational issues, innovate new ideas and work towards continuous improvement of the services.

As our Centre provides duty lawyer services for domestic and family violence matters, being involved in the OWG allows our Centre to efficiently improve and adapt its service delivery through decisions made at the OWG meetings, resulting in an immediate benefit to the clients we service.

# Partners and Relationships

In order to optimise the services that the Centre can provide to clients, the Centre also works closely with a range of legal and non-legal service providers.

This includes regular participation in the **Regional Legal Assistance Forum (RLAF)** **CLELAF (Community Legal Education Assistance Forum)** and **MHDLAF (Mental Health and Disability Legal Assistance Forum)**. In addition, the Centre also maintains its connections with the **Cairns Alliance of Social Services (CASS)**.

The Centre is a regular and active participant in the RLAF, CLEAF; and also facilitates a conduit between the RLAF and the non-legal service providers who form part of the CASS.

Additionally, the Centre's **pro bono** partners and relationships remain important. In 2024-2025 the Centre continued to maintain its links with its pro bono supporters including **local and national firms**; and **local Counsel**. Through their generosity and goodwill the Centre and its clients have been able to achieve a level of assistance that would have not otherwise been possible.

“*The staff treated me with respect, and the solicitor explained the legal terms in a way that was appropriate and easy for me to understand.*”

## PRO-BONO STORY OF IMPACT

Navigating the legal system can be a complex and overwhelming task for vulnerable people. The resulting frustration can often lead to disengagement from legal processes and a failure to achieve the outcome to which they are entitled.

Sonja is a South Korean woman on a temporary skilled work visa with limited English skills. Sonja attended the Cairns Community Legal Centre after her sponsor attempted to vary her full-time employment contract by reducing her wage, under the threat of withholding her annual leave entitlements, should she not have agreed to the wage reduction. Sonja's temporary residency status excludes her and her family from social security benefits, and her financial circumstances, including her housing and childcare costs, meant that if she did not agree to the wage reduction, she could not support her dependents, whilst she sought employment elsewhere.

Sonja was left in the difficult position of trying to re-negotiate the terms of her employment contract, followed by the payment of her annual leave entitlements. Unsure of her employment rights and entitlements, Sonja consulted our Centre for advice.

A solicitor from our Centre agreed to assist Sonja in her attempt to resolve the dispute by making a general protections claim in the Fair Work Commission alleging that she was forced to resign due to the employer's conduct. Whilst it was expected that the matter would proceed to a Fair Work Commission conference in the usual way, the employer filed an objection to Sonja's application and the parties were directed by the Fair Work Commission to prepare for a jurisdictional hearing on the matter and to attend a case management hearing beforehand.

The Centre consulted its list of pro bono partners and obtained assistance to prepare for the jurisdictional hearing, including invaluable 'phone a friend' assistance ahead of the case management hearing. As a result of our assistance and productive pro bono network, Sonja was able to navigate the Fair Work Commission's legal processes and have legal representation granted, with the matter ultimately settling before the jurisdictional hearing and Sonja being paid her annual leave entitlements.

## OUTREACH SERVICES HAVE REMAINED A PART OF THE CENTRE'S SERVICES AS FOLLOWS:

### **CMHLS**

Provided in conjunction with the Cairns Hospital (face to face)

### **Innisfail**

Provided in conjunction with the Community Support Centre Innisfail Inc (via telephone and face to face)

### **Mareeba**

Provided in conjunction with the Mareeba Community Centre Inc (via telephone and face to face)

### **Atherton**

Provided in conjunction with Better Together (via telephone and face to face)

## NACLC ACCREDITATION

The Centre also retains its certification as part of the NACLC accreditation process.

Through this the Centre seeks to maintain continuous quality improvement and best practice.



We also extend a special thanks to government and funders who continued to demonstrate their support during this highly irregular year:



\* Stories of Impact – All stories have been provided with the consent of the client; with all names changed.

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED  
30 JUNE 2025





JESSUPS

## INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION

TO THE MEMBERS OF CAIRNS COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE INC  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

We declare that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit of Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2025, there have been:

- no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements as set out in section 60-40 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*; and
- no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct.

Yours faithfully  
**Jessups**

**Darren Thamm**  
Partner

Dated this 16th day of October 2025

## Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

### For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue	4	3,538,107	2,246,515
Interest income		8,460	7,761
Other income	4	(778)	183
Employee benefits expense		(2,546,628)	(1,771,104)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(136,810)	(103,645)
Travel and accommodation expenses		(67,998)	(38,603)
Insurances		(18,130)	(17,754)
Minor equipment purchases		(36,174)	(54,869)
Training and development costs		(26,501)	(13,911)
Communication costs		(14,299)	(13,223)
Office expenses		(213,615)	(119,402)
Library, resources and subscriptions		(14,569)	(15,985)
Programming and Planning costs		(89,965)	(96,557)
Premises costs		(53,153)	(65,800)
Recalled funds unspent		-	(76)
Other expenses		(52,448)	(31,333)
Finance expenses		(9,097)	(13,894)
<b>Surplus before income tax</b>		<b>266,402</b>	<b>(101,697)</b>
Income tax expense		-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>266,402</b>	<b>(101,697)</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>266,402</b>	<b>(101,697)</b>

## Statement of Financial Position

30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>ASSETS</b>			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	845,704	876,418
Trade and other receivables	6	21,668	21,668
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		867,372	898,086
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	194,918	332,506
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		194,918	332,506
TOTAL ASSETS		1,062,290	1,230,592
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	9	203,846	552,395
Lease liabilities	8	117,163	113,201
Employee benefits	10	131,154	100,160
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		452,163	765,756
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	8	29,542	146,705
Employee benefits	10	4,025	7,972
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		33,567	154,677
TOTAL LIABILITIES		485,730	920,433
NET ASSETS		576,560	310,159
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Reserves		82,192	67,418
Retained earnings		494,368	242,740
TOTAL EQUITY		576,560	310,158



Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc

ABN: 87 237 848 993

Statement of Changes in Equity  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2025

	Retained Earnings	General Reserve	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2024	242,740	67,418	310,158
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	266,402	-	266,402
Transfers from retained earnings to general reserve	(14,774)	14,774	-
Total other comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2025	494,368	82,192	576,560

2024

	Retained Earnings	General Reserve	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2023	356,555	55,300	411,855
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(101,697)	-	(101,697)
Transfers from retained earnings to general reserve	(12,118)	12,118	-
Total other comprehensive income for the period	-	-	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	242,740	67,418	310,158

## Statement of Cash Flows

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
Note	\$	\$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Receipts from customers	4,180,952	2,464,516
Payments to suppliers and employees	(4,097,827)	(2,376,262)
Interest received	8,460	7,761
Net cash provided by/(used in) operating activities	14 <u>91,585</u>	<u>96,015</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	-	(48,620)
Net cash provided by/(used in) investing activities	-	<u>(48,620)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:</b>		
Payment of finance lease liabilities	(122,299)	(119,012)
Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities	<u>(122,299)</u>	<u>(119,012)</u>
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents held	(30,714)	(71,617)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year	876,418	948,035
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	5 <u><u>845,704</u></u>	<u><u>876,418</u></u>

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2025**

The financial report covers Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc as an individual entity. Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc is a not-for-profit Association, registered and domiciled in Australia. Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc is incorporated in Queensland under the *Association Incorporation Act (QLD) 1981 (as amended by the Associations Incorporation and Other Legislation Amendment Act (QLD) 2007)* ('the Act').

The principal activities of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2025 were to provide people within the community experiencing disadvantage with accessible legal and social justice services.

The functional and presentation currency of Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc is Australian dollars.

Comparatives are consistent with prior years, unless otherwise stated.

#### **1 Basis of Preparation**

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

#### **2 Material Accounting Policy Information**

##### **(a) Revenue and other income**

###### **Revenue from contracts with customers**

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Association expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services.

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Association have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

The revenue recognition policies for the principal revenue streams of the Association are:

###### **Grant Income**

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligation is satisfied.

The performance obligations are varied based on the agreement but many include provision of specific programs with agreed outcomes.

Each performance obligation is considered to ensure that the revenue recognition reflects the transfer of control and within grant agreements there may be some performance obligations where control transfers at a point in time and others which have continuous transfer of control over the life of the contract.

Where control is transferred over time, generally the input methods being either control of time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefit.

Revenue in the scope of AASB 1058 is recognised on receipt unless it relates to a capital grant which satisfies certain criteria, in this case the grant is recognised as the asset is acquired or constructed.

Where the control is transferred over time, generally the input method being either costs or time incurred are deemed to be the most appropriate methods to reflect the transfer of benefits.

Notes to the Financial Statements  
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2 Material Accounting Policy Information

(a) Revenue and other income

Contract assets and liabilities

Where the amounts billed to customers are based on the achievement of various milestones established in the contract, the amounts recognised as revenue in a given period do not necessarily coincide with the amounts billed to or certified by the customer.

When a performance obligation is satisfied by transferring a promised good or service to the customer before the customer pays consideration or the before payment is due, the Association presents the contract as a contract asset, unless the Association's rights to that amount of consideration are unconditional, in which case the Association recognises a receivable.

When an amount of consideration is received from a customer prior to the entity transferring a good or service to the customer, the Association presents the contract as a contract liability.

Other income

Other income is recognised on an accruals basis when the Association is entitled to it.

(b) Income tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

(c) Goods and services tax (GST)

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST), except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payable are stated inclusive of GST.

(d) Volunteer services

No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

(e) Property, plant and equipment

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment.

Depreciation

Property, plant and equipment, excluding freehold land, is depreciated on a straight-line basis over the asset's useful life to the Association, commencing when the asset is ready for use.

The estimated useful lives used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Useful life
Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings	5 - 10 years
Motor Vehicles	8 years
Leasehold improvements	4 years

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

#### 2 Material Accounting Policy Information

##### (f) Financial instruments

###### Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

###### *Classification*

On initial recognition, the Association classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at amortised cost. The Association does not hold any financial assets at fair value.

###### *Amortised cost*

The Association's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

###### *Impairment of trade receivables*

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Association has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

##### (g) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprises cash on hand, demand deposits and short-term investments which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

##### (h) Leases

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Association's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whether there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Association's assessment of lease term.

###### *Exceptions to lease accounting*

The Association has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The Association recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

## **Notes to the Financial Statements**

### **For the Year Ended 30 June 2025**

#### **2 Material Accounting Policy Information**

##### **(i) Employee benefits**

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits, those benefits that are expected to be wholly settled within one year have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than one year after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

##### **Defined contribution schemes**

Obligations for contributions to defined contribution superannuation plans are recognised as an employee benefit expense in profit or loss in the periods in which services are provided by employees.

#### **3 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments**

Those charged with governance make estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

##### **Key estimates - receivables**

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

## Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

### 4 Other Revenue and Income

#### Revenue from continuing operations

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue from contracts with customers (AASB 15)		
- Legal Aid Qld Revenue	186,793	157,031
- Government revenue (including grants)	2,937,170	2,256,739
- Unexpended Grants B/F	425,633	257,774
- Unexpended Grants	(11,695)	(425,633)
	<u>3,537,901</u>	<u>2,245,910</u>
Revenue recognised on receipt (AASB 1058)		
- Donations	165	500
- Membership fees	41	105
	<u>206</u>	<u>605</u>
	<u>3,538,107</u>	<u>2,246,515</u>
Other Income		
- Parental leave subsidies	-	183
- net gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment	(778)	-
	<u>(778)</u>	<u>183</u>

#### Government grants and other assistance

	2025 \$	2024 \$
<b>Commonwealth government</b>		
LASF Commonwealth Grant	381,098	358,170
LASF - Mental Health Support	160,000	160,000
LASF - Pay Disparity Reduction	48,799	-
	<u>589,897</u>	<u>518,170</u>
<b>State government</b>		
LASF State Grant	1,052,945	535,304
DFSDSC - SLASS Grant	731,420	703,696
DFSDSC - Seniors FPS Grant	35,158	34,722
DFSDSC - SFPS Cape & Torres	516,024	455,519
DFSDSC - SFPS Cape & Torres	11,726	9,328
	<u>2,347,273</u>	<u>1,738,569</u>
<b>Total government grants and other assistance</b>	<u>2,937,170</u>	<u>2,256,739</u>

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

#### 5 Cash and Cash Equivalents

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Cash at bank and in hand	845,704	876,418
	<u>845,704</u>	<u>876,418</u>

#### 6 Trade and Other Receivables

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Other receivables	21,668	21,668
<b>Total current trade and other receivables</b>	<u>21,668</u>	<u>21,668</u>

#### 7 Property, Plant and Equipment

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Plant and equipment		
At cost	4,826	4,826
Accumulated depreciation	(4,792)	(4,776)
<b>Total plant and equipment</b>	<u>34</u>	<u>50</u>
Furniture, fixtures and fittings		
At cost	60,393	60,393
Accumulated depreciation	(55,883)	(54,657)
<b>Total furniture, fixtures and fittings</b>	<u>4,510</u>	<u>5,736</u>
Motor vehicles		
At cost	16,487	16,487
Accumulated depreciation	(15,982)	(15,836)
<b>Total motor vehicles</b>	<u>505</u>	<u>651</u>
Office equipment		
At cost	89,875	102,808
Accumulated depreciation	(52,550)	(51,318)
<b>Total office equipment</b>	<u>37,325</u>	<u>51,490</u>
Right-of-Use - Buildings		
At cost	366,105	366,105
Accumulated depreciation	(213,561)	(91,526)
<b>Total Right-of-Use - Buildings</b>	<u>152,544</u>	<u>274,579</u>
<b>Total property, plant and equipment</b>	<u>194,918</u>	<u>332,506</u>



## Notes to the Financial Statements

### For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

#### 7 Property, Plant and Equipment

##### Movements in carrying amounts

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Plant and Equipment \$	Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings \$	Motor Vehicles \$	Office Equipment \$	Right-of-Use - Buildings \$	Total \$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2025</b>						
Balance at the beginning of year	50	5,736	651	51,490	274,579	332,506
Disposals	-	-	-	(778)	-	(778)
Depreciation expense	(16)	(1,226)	(146)	(13,387)	(122,035)	(136,810)
<b>Balance at the end of the year</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4,510</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>37,325</b>	<b>152,544</b>	<b>194,918</b>

#### 8 Leases

The Association leases buildings for their offices, the lease duration is 18 months, which is set to expire 31 March 2025, with the option to extend a further 18 months.

The building lease contains an annual pricing mechanism based on CPI movements at each anniversary of the lease inception.

##### Lease liabilities

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

	< 1 year \$	1 - 5 years \$	> 5 years \$	Total undiscounted lease liabilities \$	Lease liabilities included in this Statement Of Financial Position \$
<b>2025</b>					
Lease liabilities	122,299	30,575	-	152,874	146,705
<b>2024</b>					
Lease liabilities	122,299	152,873	-	275,172	259,906

##### Extension options

The current building lease contains an extension option which allows the Association to extend the lease term by up a further 18 months.

The Association includes options in the leases to provide flexibility and certainty to the Association operations and reduce costs of moving premises and the extension options are at the Association's discretion.

At commencement date and each subsequent reporting date, the Association assesses where it is reasonably certain that the extension options will be exercised.

## Notes to the Financial Statements

### For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

#### 8 Leases

##### Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income relating to interest expense on lease liabilities and short-term leases or leases of low value assets are shown below:

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Interest expense on lease liabilities	9,097	13,894
	<u>9,097</u>	<u>13,894</u>

#### 9 Trade and Other Payables

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Trade payables	5,991	44,095
GST payable	60,952	44,527
Payroll Liabilities	118,699	38,140
Unexpended grants	11,695	425,633
Portable LSL	6,509	-
	<u>203,846</u>	<u>552,395</u>

Trade and other payables are unsecured, non-interest bearing and are normally settled within 30 days. The carrying value of trade and other payables is considered a reasonable approximation of fair value due to the short-term nature of the balances.

#### 10 Employee Benefits

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
CURRENT		
Provision for annual leave - LASF & Ors	85,677	54,728
Provision for annual leave - DFSDSC	14,981	14,984
Provision for long service leave - LASF & Ors	30,496	15,224
Provision for long service leave - DFSDSC	-	15,224
	<u>131,154</u>	<u>100,160</u>
NON-CURRENT		
Provision for long service leave - LASF & Ors	2,489	5,328
Provision for long service leave - DFSDFC	1,536	2,644
	<u>4,025</u>	<u>7,972</u>

#### 11 Key Management Personnel Disclosures

The remuneration paid to key management personnel of the Association is \$ 797,110 (2024: \$ 488,919).

## Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc

ABN: 87 237 848 993

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

#### 12 Auditors' Remuneration

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Remuneration of the auditor Jessups NQ, for:		
- auditing the financial statements	5,700	5,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>5,700</b>

#### 13 Contingencies

In the opinion of those charged with governance, the Association did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2025 (30 June 2024:None).

#### 14 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of net income to net cash provided by operating activities:

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Surplus for the year	266,402	(101,697)
Cash flows excluded from profit attributable to operating activities		
- Finance costs	9,097	13,894
Non-cash flows in profit:		
- amortisation	122,035	91,526
- depreciation	14,775	12,119
- net (gain)/loss on disposal of controlled entity	778	-
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
- (increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	-	2,185
- increase/(decrease) in trade and other payables	(348,549)	57,020
- increase/(decrease) in employee benefits	27,047	20,968
Cashflows from operations	<b>91,585</b>	<b>96,015</b>

#### 15 Events After the End of the Reporting Period

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

#### 16 Statutory Information

The registered office and principal place of business of the company is:

Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc  
2nd Floor, Main Street Arcade  
82 Grafton Street  
Cairns QLD 4870

## Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc

ABN: 87 237 848 993

### Statement by Members of the Board

The responsible persons declare that in the responsible persons' opinion:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the registered entity is able to pay all of its debts, as and when they become due and payable; and
- the financial statements and notes satisfy the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

Signed in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profit Commission Regulation 2013*.

Responsible person                     *John D'S.*                     Responsible person                     *Alm g.*                    

Dated 16/10/2025

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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

### TO THE MEMBERS OF CAIRNS COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE INC FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

#### Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

##### *Opinion*

We have audited the financial report of Cairns Community Legal Centre Inc (the registered entity), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the directors' declaration.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the registered entity is in accordance with Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* (ACNC Act), including:

- giving a true and fair view of the registered entity's financial position as at 30 June 2024 and of its financial performance for the year then ended; and
- complying with Australian Accounting Standards – AASB 1060: *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

##### *Basis for Opinion*

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

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

##### *Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report*

The directors of the registered entity are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards – AASB 1060: *General Purpose Financial Statements – Simplified Disclosures for For-Profit and Not-for-Profit Tier 2 Entities* and the ACNC Act and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.



**JESSUPS**

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

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

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

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards website at: [http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors\\_responsibilities/ar4.pdf](http://www.auasb.gov.au/auditors_responsibilities/ar4.pdf). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

**Jessups**

**Darren Thamm**  
Partner

Dated this 16th day of October 2025





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