

Directors' Report

and Financial Summary

Directors' Report

30 June 2021

The Directors present their report on Women's Legal Service Victoria Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2021.

Information on Directors

The Directors of the organisation during the current FY to the date of this report are:

Tina Lavranos	Chair (<i>Member since 2015</i>)
Trish Low	Deputy Chair & Secretary (<i>Member since April 2019</i>)
Kathryn Brown	Treasurer (<i>Member since September 2020</i>)
Monique Adofaci	Member (<i>since October 2018</i>)
Jane Welsh	Member (<i>since April 2019</i>)
Leonie Mayson	Member (<i>since April 2019</i>)
Mia Lloyd	Member (<i>since July 2020</i>)
Adrienne Walters	Member (<i>since October 2020</i>)
Kim Mays	Member until October 2020 (<i>since November 2017</i>)

Directors have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

Why we exist

We exist to help build a gender equitable society.

Our unique contribution to this vision, as lawyers, advocates and educators, is to work alongside women experiencing disadvantage to promote their rights to live free from violence and make informed choices about their relationships.

How principal activities assisted in achieving the objectives

1: We provide legal advice and representation to women experiencing disadvantage.

Our unique cross-jurisdictional approach – where women are helped across three intersecting legal jurisdictions (Family Law, Family Violence & Child Protection) – has been crucial in giving clients the chance to create a better future this year. In addition, our integrated financial counsellors and social workers help women address other issues that arise due to violence, such as debt, homelessness and poor mental health.

As in previous years, the demand for our services has grown beyond our current capacity to meet this need. Our service data this year (20/21 FY) demonstrates that:

- › Virtual outreach services across the State **increased by 67%**
- › Ongoing complex family law and child protection casework services **increased by 24%**
- › Turn-aways in our family law and family violence casework services **increased by 80%**

We service 16 regional areas across the state and assisted over 700 women in regional Victoria.

Women accessing our services are experiencing disadvantage at a greater rate than the Victorian population, as demonstrated by this service data snapshot:

- › 36% of Family Law and Family Violence law casework clients are culturally and linguistically diverse
- › 50% of Health Justice Partnership clients identified as having a disability

- › 25% of Health Justice Partnership clients identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
- › 34% of Child Protection casework clients were experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness

Recent surveys of our clients revealed that more than 85% answered 'very much' or 'mostly' when asked if they felt listened to and understood when accessing our service and if we helped them make informed decisions.

2: We advocate for laws and policies that respect and promote the rights of women.

Our advocacy efforts this year to contribute to positive systemic change included:

- › Advocating for legislative changes that will enable victims of economic abuse to pursue a fair superannuation split after relationship breakdown;
- › Supporting the development of a comprehensive Family Violence Rolling Action Plan in Victoria that includes the integration of legal assistance; and
- › Encouraging the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor to focus on the misidentification of the primary aggressor in violent relationships, due to the ongoing issue of women being misidentified.

We have also driven change through our innovative prevention project, Starts With Us, which aims to support Victorian legal and justice organisations to take action to prevent violence against women. This ambitious project has secured widespread support from Victoria's legal institutions, who are committed to tackling the outdated, sexist and harmful structures and behaviours that allow the perpetuation of gender inequality and, therefore, violence against women.

3: We build the capacity of other professionals and the community to identify and respond appropriately to legal need.

Our Education and Engagement team has trained 1048 professionals this year – from youth workers to financial counsellors – to identify when a woman experiencing violence has legal issues and refer them for help.

Surveys from our Safer Families training revealed that over 80% of participants felt the training helped them identify and define the nature and dynamics of family violence; and assisted them to apply the knowledge to their area of legal expertise.

Surveys from our Safer Families Masterclass training revealed that 100% of participants felt the training helped them identify the intersection between family violence and other areas of law, including migration, child protection and family law; and assisted them to identify the impact of trauma on their clients.

General information

Members' guarantee

Women's Legal Service Victoria Inc. is a company limited by guarantee. In the event of, and for the purpose of, winding up of the company, the amount capable of being called up from each member and any person or association who ceased to be a member in the year prior to the winding up, is limited to \$ NIL for members that are corporations and \$ NIL for all other members, subject to the provisions of the company's constitution.

At 30 June 2021 the collective liability of members was \$ NIL (2020: \$ NIL).

Operating results

During the current year Women's Legal Service Victoria reported a surplus of \$459,316 (2020: \$187,520).

The organisation has received funding in previous years for annual wage increases mandated by Fair Work Australia based on the Equal Remuneration Order 2012. These funds were not fully expended and have now been drawn down during the current year.

Other items

Meetings of Directors

The number of meetings of the company's Board of Directors and each board committee held during the year ended 30th June 2021, and the number of meetings attended by each Director were:

Women's Legal Service Victoria - Director	Board Meetings		Audit and Risk Sub-committee		Human Resources Committee		Financial Sustainability Committee	
	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend	Attended	Eligible to Attend
Tina Lavranos	6	6	-	-	2	2	-	-
Trish Low	6	6	-	-	2	2	-	-
Kathryn Brown	6	6	3	3	-	-	-	-
Monique Adofaci	6	6	3	3	-	-	-	-
Jane Welsh	5	6	3	3	-	-	3	3
Leonie Mayson	5	6	-	-	1	2	3	3
Mia Lloyd	4	6	-	-	-	-	3	3
Adrienne Walters	4	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kim Mays	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-

Financial Summary

Our full financial statement can be found on our website at www.womenslegal.org.au

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
Income		
Grant Income - Operating Funding Commonwealth	1,745,997	1,531,035
Grant Income - Operating Funding State	490,249	483,060
Grant Income - Community Legal Services Program funding	455,624	371,936
Grant Income - Project Funding Other	2,054,851	1,281,085
Legal education	23,915	68,067
Legal services	15,780	6,936
Philanthropic donations	35,330	48,923
Other income	108,342	111,716
Recoupment from Family Law Legal Service (FLLS)	418,199	332,808
Finance income	30,615	57,223
	5,378,902	4,292,789
Expenses		
Employee benefits expense	(3,910,411)	(3,150,321)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		
PPE - Depreciation	(46,990)	(47,979)
Occupancy expenses	(198,745)	(176,736)
FLLS costs	(280,488)	(270,492)
Other expenses	(482,952)	(459,741)
	(4,919,586)	(4,105,269)
	459,316	187,520
Other comprehensive income, net of income tax		-
Total comprehensive surplus for the year	459,316	187,520

Statement of Financial Position

As at 30 June 2021

	2021	2020
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and cash equivalents	4,743,209	3,426,184
Trade and other receivables	251,672	400,532
Other assets	6,698	12,545
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	5,001,579	3,839,261
NON-CURRENT ASSETS		
Property, plant and equipment	121,850	123,302
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	121,850	123,302
TOTAL ASSETS	5,123,429	3,962,563
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Trade and other payables	498,500	327,798
Employee benefits	472,950	386,141
Deferred income	1,827,456	1,371,548
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,798,906	2,085,487
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Employee benefits	88,061	84,330
Long-term provisions	128,083	143,683
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	216,144	228,013
TOTAL LIABILITIES	3,015,050	2,313,500
NET ASSETS	2,108,379	1,649,063
EQUITY		
Capital Replacement Reserve	90,000	90,000
Retained Surplus	2,018,379	1,559,063
TOTAL EQUITY	2,108,379	1,649,063

women's legal
service victoria

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