



NATIONAL PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTRE

Annual Report 2004

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'...my experience is that lawyers are more reflective about their social role than most professionals, more thoughtful about ethics and much more dedicated to providing pro bono services to the disadvantaged.'

*Professor Dave Weisbrot,
President, Australian Law Reform Commission;
Chair NPBRC Advisory Committee*

Chair's message



Andrea Durbach (Chair 2002-June 2004)

The 2nd National Pro Bono Conference: *Transforming Access to Justice*, organised by the National Pro Bono Resource Centre in collaboration with the Public Interest Law Clearing Houses in NSW, Queensland and Victoria, highlighted the key reasons for the establishment of the NPBRC. At the Conference in Sydney in October 2003, NPBRC successfully

- brought together key stakeholders and players committed to developing and enhancing pro bono legal services across Australia and internationally and facilitated a rich and valuable exchange of ideas, practices and innovations;
- offered an important forum for frank discussion about community needs and opportunities for improving the delivery of critical legal services by the private legal profession and by government. In many cases, this led to the development of new partnerships between communities and community organisations and law firms and the development of effective strategies for utilising resources to ensure appropriate benefit;
- showcased some significant and timely research undertaken by the Centre as part of its 'Mapping Pro Bono' Project and the comprehensive publication, *The Australian Pro Bono Manual: A practice guide and resource kit for law firms*. The first of its kind in

Australia, the manual provides practical information on establishing, managing and enhancing law firm pro bono programs.

The demonstrated capacity by the NPBRC to broker partnerships, to undertake important research and engage in and drive policy initiatives, to publish practical information and to give visibility to the pro bono efforts of community organisations, governments, university law schools and the legal profession, also highlights the reasons to ensure the Centre's ongoing viability and existence.

Added to these attributes, is the considerable expertise and commitment of the Centre staff, the Board of Directors and Advisory Council, who have combined over the first two years of the Centre's life to make significant progress in executing the Centre's key objectives.

My appreciation to my colleagues and fellow directors and Advisory Council members for your vital contributions and enduring support and my thanks also to the private legal profession and the Federal Government for their support of the Centre and its work. My association with the NPBRC has been enormously rewarding, stimulating and challenging and I wish you all, and the Centre's new Chairperson, Tony Fitzgerald, great success in your endeavours.



Tony Fitzgerald AC QC (Chair June 2004)

There is a real challenge involved in taking on the role of Chair of the Centre at a time when there is much to be done but uncertainty about future funding. But this is also a challenge for the Board and Advisory Council, for the Centre itself and more broadly, for the legal profession whose support over the year is gratefully acknowledged.

The Centre provides an invaluable service in carrying out its independent and national role as advocate, broker, coordinator, researcher and resource provider. No other organisation has the ability to promote and support pro bono services in this way – nor to manage the sorts of partnering and relationships that the Centre has facilitated over the past 12 months between law firms and communities in need. There is an undoubted multiplier effect for the dollars invested in the Centre and there is evidence that its efforts have increased the capacity of the profession to better meet the needs of those in the community with no other access to legal help.

We will work throughout the coming months on the assumption that government, as well as the profession and those whose legal needs are met through bono resources, will continue to support the Centre and its work.

Director's report



John Corker with former Commonwealth Attorney-General Daryl Williams

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John Corker

I took up the position of Director of the Centre in January 2004. The Centre had recently co-hosted the Second National Pro Bono Conference with the Public Interest Law Clearing Houses of Victoria, NSW and Queensland. It had also, with the Victoria Law Foundation, published the *Australian Pro Bono Manual*, a practice guide and resource kit for law firms. I thank the previous Director, Gordon Renouf for his work.

Both these events have left a substantial legacy. The papers presented at the conference have been published on the Centre's website and will soon be available in hard copy. The *Australian Pro Bono Manual* is available on the Centre's website and a new edition is about to be published. Focus group sessions conducted in September 2004 indicated that the Manual is highly useful to a number of practitioners and our challenge is to promote it more widely and have it become a 'standard text'. To this end, the Centre has reached agreement with LexisNexis to have a summary of the Manual and some precedents included in their loose-leaf service, *Management of the Australian Law Practice*.

Relationships

The Centre has received support from many quarters over the year, not only from the staff, Board and Advisory Council but also from law firms, particularly those with designated pro bono coordinators or partners. We have worked with the National Association of Community Legal Centres, National Legal Aid, the Public Interest Law Clearing Houses in Victoria, NSW and Queensland, community legal centres everywhere, the University of NSW and the other social justice centres associated with UNSW, the courts, the Victoria Law and the NSW Law and Justice Foundations, professional associations particularly the Law Council of Australia, Law Institute of Victoria and the Law Society of NSW, Indigenous legal organisations and many people in State and Federal governments and statutory agencies. We value these collaborative relationships and will continue to consult and work with these and other agencies as we grow.

Consultation and networking within the legal profession, the community and government sectors continues to be a major activity. Developing a 'network of goodwill' with the stakeholders and those who are seeking pro bono legal assistance has made it easier for the Centre to coordinate activities, to identify opportunities

"The Australian Pro Bono Manual is an invaluable reference for lawyers, particularly those in small and medium sized firms that do not usually have a full time pro bono coordinator... I recently found the secondment agreement in the Manual most helpful as it concisely covered all the issues that need to be addressed.

Kalinda Cobby, Pro Bono Partner, Lane and Lane, Sydney.

for information sharing and partnerships and to bring together people and resources to facilitate the better delivery of pro bono legal services.

As Director I have greatly valued the input from Board and Advisory Council members. They have provided clear direction for the Centre and I especially thank Andrea Durbach for her role as Chair of the Board to June 2004, Tony Fitzgerald for his role as Chair since that time and Professor David Weisbrot for his counsel as Chair of the Advisory Council.

Measures were taken in 2004 to better integrate the operation of the Advisory Council and the Board and to increase representation from the legal profession, particularly those with expertise in delivery of pro bono legal services and programs.

Professor David Weisbrot was made an ex officio member of the Board providing a formal link between the two bodies and three new directors from the legal profession were appointed. Also the first joint Board/Advisory Council meeting was held in June 2004 allowing the joint views of the Board and Advisory Council to inform decisions about the strategic policy direction for the Centre.

National issues

The Centre has focused on a number of national issues consistent with its unique role as a national centre. These include advocating adoption by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Attorneys General of a protocol developed by the Centre to ensure that firms that act pro bono against Government will not be prejudiced when Government purchases legal services. Initial responses to this initiative have been positive with firm support for the principle from some Attorneys (see Pro bono, conflicts and government p.5). The matter is being raised in the current review of the Federal Government's Legal Service Directions.

Another national issue has centred on the introduction of aspirational pro bono targets into, or as a schedule to, professional practice rules in the various Australian jurisdictions. The issue has initiated discussion about the role of pro bono in the legal profession and was the subject of an editorial by Chris Dale, President of the Law Institute of Victoria, in the *Law Institute Journal* (April 2004). The editorial supported consideration of inclusion of aspirational targets within professional conduct rules.

During the year, the Centre provided a detailed response to the Federal Government's Civil Justice Strategy paper addressing profession-wide and systemic issues

that affect delivery of pro bono legal services. It also undertook work on the national mapping project and planning for a national survey of the profession's pro bono activities. Results from these important projects will be forthcoming in the 2004/2005 year

An emphasis on developing and using IT and web-based resources to better communicate with stakeholders has been a focus during 2004. This has resulted in the establishment of the Pro Bono Network (see p.7), an enhanced operation for the Centre's website and the continuing popularity of the Centre's bi-monthly *Pro Bono News* e-newsletter which is now sent to nearly 600 subscribers.

Partnerships

One idea that has resonated throughout the year is that of partnerships between community legal centres and the large and medium-sized firms with structured pro bono practices. The Centre's Remote Rural and Regional project, funded by the NSW Law and Justice Foundation, addressed this and brokered a number of pilot partnerships between regional community legal centres and city based law firms. Two successful relationship-building events between RRR community legal centres and law firms were held and a new relationship was fostered in Western Australia between a city law firm and a regional centre. Feedback has been extremely positive and the Centre plans to conduct more partnership events in the coming year.

The future

Finding funding for the Centre beyond June 2005 remains a central task. The Centre has developed a broad 'network of goodwill' and produced a range of significant and useful resources. Its independent role enhancing and supporting pro bono activities undoubtedly adds value to government and the entire legal profession and we trust that government and the profession will continue to appropriately fund and support the Centre and its work.

The Action Plan for National Coordination and Development of Pro Bono Legal Services from the Report of the National Pro Bono Task Force Report (June 2001) remains the blueprint for the work of the Centre and there is still much to do. If funded at its existing level the Centre aims to continue to:

- build interest and capacity amongst all sectors of the profession including corporate lawyers, government lawyers, students and academics as well as law firms and barristers;
- support referral schemes and development of new schemes;
- provide leadership and advocacy on key national issues affecting the delivery of pro bono services;
- identify potential partnerships and projects and broker relationships;
- provide input to federal, state and territory government policy on matters affecting the delivery of pro bono legal services;
- work on a national level with other agencies concerned with the provision of services to disadvantaged people to coordinate approaches to meeting needs;
- coordinate, initiate and advocate for new and innovative ways of trying to meet the key areas of unmet legal need, e.g. family law, pro bono for Indigenous people, RRR communities, self-represented litigants;
- develop and document standards of best practice for the delivery of pro bono services;
- conduct client-focused research including measuring and mapping pro bono in Australia; and
- sponsor and conduct events that will continue to grow, build and strengthen the culture of pro bono in Australia.

Pro bono centre gets a Corker

John Corker appointed Director, January 2004

National Student Pro Bono Plan on Track

Lawyers Weekly, June 2004

NPBRC comments on Federal Civil Justice System Strategy Paper

April 2004

Centre gives oral evidence before Senate Committee into Legal Aid and Access to Justice

November 2003

Hosting of Second National Pro Bono Conference: Transforming access to justice

Sydney, October 2003

NPBRC makes submission to Review of the Legal Services Directions Issues Paper

April 2004

Launched! The Australian Pro Bono Manual: a practice guide and resource kit for law firms

Published October 2003

Legal Services Guide Published

Published September 2003

Lawyers need to set pro bono goal

Lawyers Weekly, February 2004

NPBRC develops Protocol on pro bono, conflicts and government for Commonwealth Agencies

April 2004

Award offered by NPBRC to first law society to adopt aspirational target rule

January 2004

Record number of hits to NPBRC website

www.nationalprobono.org.au

NPBRC e-Newsletter published

every 2 months

Pro Bono Network – beta version launched

March 2004

NPBRC undertakes RRR project with funding from NSW Law and Justice Foundation

January 2004

Projects, Activities & Publications 2003-2004

The Centre's activities have been grouped under the six objectives as outlined in its Strategic Plan:

1. Promoting pro bono work throughout the legal profession, enhancing and consolidating the delivery of services.....

2nd National Pro Bono Conference (October 2003)

The conference – *Transforming access to justice* – organised by the Centre and co-hosted by the Centre and the Public Interest Law Clearing Houses, attracted 180 people over 2 days and featured overseas and local speakers. It provided an opportunity to evaluate traditional models of pro bono service delivery in addressing social justice objectives and offered guidance on developing pro bono schemes and practices. Participants were stimulated by the exchange of ideas and benefited from the networking opportunities. Sponsorship of \$100,000 was raised.

Advocacy of formal pro bono targets

An opinion piece by John Corker was published in *Lawyers Weekly* in February 2004. There was support from the President of the Law Institute of Victoria, and the matter is being further discussed with the law societies and the Law Council of Australia.

Pro bono, conflicts and government

The Centre developed a protocol addressing the perceived conflict that arises when pro bono legal assistance is provided in matters against Government. Letters were received from State and Territory Attorneys-General indicating action to investigate

adoption of the protocol is proposed in at least four State and Territory jurisdictions. Victoria has recently proposed incorporating the protocol into its Government Legal Services Panel Contract. The Federal Attorney-General's Department is likely to include a form of the protocol in its review of the Legal Service Directions applying to all government departments and agencies. The Centre made a submission to this review in May 2004. A number of A-Gs have publicly stated that firms will not be prejudiced in vying for Government work by reason of doing pro bono work against Government.

Australian Pro Bono Manual: A practical guide and resource kit for law firms (October 2003)

After the launch, the Manual was promoted to the profession during the year through fliers, articles and reviews. For more details, see separate report, p.7.

Legal Services Guide (September 2003)

This state by state guide to internet legal resources is intended to assist pro bono lawyers, and lawyers and other caseworkers in publicly funded legal services. The guide, available on the Centre's website, is topic based and includes links to sites that offer a brief description of available resources where caseworkers may find useful materials for their clients.

Other promotional activities

National Pro Bono News continues to be distributed every two months to a list of nearly 600 people, providing links back to the Centre's website which is regularly updated. The Centre has featured in stories in legal, community sector and mainstream journals and newspapers including *Lawyers Weekly*, the *Australian Financial Review* and the *Alternative Law Journal*. A flier and fact sheet about the Centre was also prepared and distributed at the Conference and elsewhere. Centre staff conducted meetings and workshops with pro bono coordinators, and the Director spoke at conferences in 4 jurisdictions throughout the year. The Centre attended the National CLC Conference in September 2003. Media releases and background information for pro bono stories were disseminated by the Centre. In October 2004, a 'pro bono partnership award' sponsored by the Centre. was awarded by the NSW Law

and Justice Foundation to the partnership between Mission Australia, the Salvation Army and Freehills.

2. Promoting, informing and enhancing the delivery of pro bono legal services through undertaking research and projects...

Pro Bono Institute Annual Seminar

In February 2004 the newly appointed Director John Corker attended the US Pro Bono Institute Annual Seminar in Washington DC and visited the DC Bar pro bono program and some of its clinics. He said: 'This provided a great introduction to the many issues ideas and challenges that the pro bono world presents'.



Australian contingent at US Pro Bono Institute Seminar

L to R (back) is Michelle Hannon, (Gilbert & Tobin), John Corker (NPBRC), Anne Cregan (Blake Dawson Waldron), Tammy Taylor (Pro Bono Institute)
L to R (front) David Hillard and Fiona McCleay (Clayton Utz). Present but not in the photo was Jennifer McVicar (Baker & McKenzie).

Regional, Rural and Remote (RRR) Pro Bono

With funding assistance from the NSW Law and Justice Foundation, this project has assisted CLCs and their clients in RRR areas to gain access to pro bono services. Three pilot partnerships have been established in NSW. A relationship-building event involving 14 firms and 9 CLCs was held by the Centre in Sydney in May 2004 and another took place in Adelaide in August 2004. In a separate initiative the Centre has been involved in brokering a mentoring relationship between Clayton Utz (Perth) and Geraldton CLC.

Australian law students project

Research on pro bono and clinical legal education activity at Australia's 28 law schools was undertaken by the UNSW interns at the Centre and finalised by Centre staff. The outcome, an information paper on issues that face law schools in developing or expanding such programs, was published in August 2004.

Pro Bono Students Australia (PBSA) program

This relatively low cost program, whilst not a substitute for clinical legal education, expands opportunities for law students to do law-related work for public interest and non-profit organisations in their community. A critical element of the PBSA program is the promotion of pro bono law to non-profit community organisations.

Expanding on the knowledge and skills of a Canadian exchange student based at the Centre and the UNSW interns, the Centre researched the successful Pro Bono Students Canada program and similar US and UK programs.

A trial of a similar program is now taking place at the University of Western Sydney law school with the Centre providing ongoing practical support, assisting the faculty supervisor and student coordinator to enlist organisations, and reviewing and revising the precedents as the trial progresses. After the trial has been assessed, the Centre will encourage other law schools to initiate PBSA programs.

Government lawyers in pro bono

The Centre, assisted by summer clerks from Freehills, researched pro bono activities and policies of government lawyers in Canada, the US and the UK and prepared an information paper to facilitate and support Australian government lawyers to do more pro bono work. The Centre has collaborated with the Australian Government Solicitor's (AGS) office and provided comment on a proposed new pro bono policy for AGS lawyers. The Centre's information paper was launched in October 2004.

In May 2004, a submission was made to the Government Lawyers Committee of the Law Institute of Victoria, suggesting that adoption of a policy relating to pro bono work should be part of the role and functions of the Committee. Pro bono issues were also discussed with the Australian Corporate Lawyers Association, where government lawyers make up 35% of national membership.

Mapping project

This substantial paper is intended to make visible current and possible models of pro bono in Australia. Much information has been gathered and completion of this paper and its publication is now the top priority of the Centre. This paper will be a wide-ranging survey of the quantity, types and different models of pro bono in Australia. It will also include a discussion on pro bono delivery and identify some of the barriers to pro bono. It is intended to provide a resource for the many people involved in this field to think about ways to do things differently and more efficiently and to initiate innovative pro bono programs and activities.

National survey

The Centre commenced planning for a national survey of pro bono activity to be undertaken next financial year and obtained in principle support from the Law Council of Australia for such a survey.

3. Developing strategies to evaluate and address legal need...

The Centre has made and supported the call by others for a national study of legal need. In the absence of such a study, the Centre has collected data from a range of sources that evidence the sorts of needs that inform the Centre's activities.

Publishing information about legal need

The Australian Pro Bono Manual includes information on identifying needs and sources of work and refers to recent and forthcoming reports on access to justice and legal needs. The Centre also publicised research by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW in its eNewsletter during 2004.

Strategies for identifying legal need

The Centre undertook research, including a survey, for an Indigenous legal organisations report. The report is due to be published in the latter part of 2004. For more details see p.8.

Legal need was explored and addressed in the Rural, Regional and Remote (RRR) project undertaken by the Centre with support from the NSW Law and Justice Foundation. The project commenced in December 2003 and will conclude by the end of 2004, after which a report will be published.

The Centre has developed close relationships with the three Public Interest Law Clearing Houses (VIC, NSW, QLD) and with CLCs at a local, state and federal level to ensure that initiatives of the Centre are based on evidence of need in the community.

“Implementing a pro bono program in a national law firm is a complicated process. The Australian Pro Bono Manual, with its analysis of the different models of service provision, and its realistic commentary about procedural and management issues, was a very useful resource. I would recommend the Manual to anyone who requires a holistic and practical understanding of this emerging area of activity in the legal profession.”

*Michael Rosenfeld
Director, Community Assistance Scheme
Sparke Helmore Lawyers*

The Centre has liaised with the NSW Legal Aid Commission and provided input to the survey questionnaire being used in their cooperative Service Delivery Model in relation to their legal needs project.

Pro Bono Australia (PBA) has volunteered to provide its online survey tools to conduct a national survey on legal needs of not for profit organisations (NFPs). ‘Needs’ would include an exploration of legal issues for which they most commonly require assistance. Survey design is being developed in conjunction with PILCH (VIC).

Submissions and appearances

Centre staff appeared before the Senate Committee on Access to Justice and Legal Aid, liaised with others and made a formal written submission to the Committee.

The Centre participated in the Federal Civil Justice Strategy review process, liaising and consulting with various bodies including the Federal Court of Australia, firm pro bono co-ordinators, National Legal Aid, Law Council of Australia and CLC peak bodies. Issues addressed included developing strategies to deal with unrepresented litigants, duty solicitors, and costs waivers. The Centre made a submission to the Review, commenting on recommendations in the Strategy Paper and making suggestions for additional action by government in a range of pro bono related areas.

The Director presented the work of the Centre to the Family Court self-represented litigants forum. The ‘unbundling’ issue, which involves lawyers undertaking limited or discrete legal tasks in contrast to a general retainer, was discussed with participants.

4. Improving mechanisms for linking pro bono services with clients and communities in need...

Some of this activity has been conducted through radio and newspaper interviews.

Pro Bono Australia

The centre has developed a relationship with Pro Bono Australia, the portal for the not for profit sector with the largest database of NFPs in Australia and whose aim is to give NFPs the resources they need to run effectively. The Centre and PBA discussed ways in which NFPs might have better access to pro bono legal services and have now co-ordinated a relationship between PBA and PILCH (VIC) to help NFPs who were previously unable to access legal assistance. Articles are planned for PBA’s newsletters that reach 20,000 individuals interested in the not-for-profit sector.

CLC volunteers project

This is a joint project with the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC). It is an online database that provides relevant information to lawyers, law students and members of the public about volunteering at CLCs across Australia. The completed database will be accessible through a new site at <www.clcvolunteers.net.au>

Other activities

The Centre has attended the National CLC Conference (Hobart, September 2003), State CLC conferences in Queensland and Victoria this year and presented/chaired conference sessions on pro bono. The Centre has also participated in the NSW Combined CLCs group quarterly meetings.

5. Supporting pro bono service providers by providing practical assistance and distributing resources...

The Australian Pro Bono Manual

This practical guide to operating a structured pro bono practice was launched at the Second National Pro Bono Conference in October 2003. An up to date copy has since been maintained on the Centre’s website, with hard copy editions distributed to stakeholders and contributors. The Victoria Law Foundation distributed the initial print run at \$35 each and is presently working with the Centre to produce a new edition of the Manual and a promotional flier. The Centre was also approached by LexisNexis to prepare and keep current a summary of the Manual as a chapter of their loose leaf service titled ‘Management of the Australian Law Practice’.

Identifying barriers to pro bono

Preliminary consultations were undertaken in relation to a court fees project and information on court fee waivers was included in the Australian Pro Bono Manual. Barriers were identified in the submissions to the Senate Inquiry into Legal Aid and Access to Justice (October 2003), and to the Federal Attorney-General’s review of the Federal Civil Justice Strategy paper (April 2004). The ‘expertise’ barrier was addressed in part by a summer clerk project providing examples of firms acquiring expertise and in the Family Law project (see below).

The Centre website www.nationalprobono.org.au

The site provides a sophisticated research and communications tool for those interested in pro bono. It has grown considerably with the addition on a regular basis of new papers and resources. It includes news of the Centre's ongoing activities, papers presented at the 2003 Conference, the Centre's publications, the Legal Resources Guide (which provides information for pro bono caseworkers and lawyers), as well as links to pro bono resources and organisations.

The Pro Bono Network website www.probono.net/au/pbc

Using ProBono.net tools specifically designed for the pro bono community and widely in use in the US and Canada, the Centre has created the Australian Pro Bono Network website. If adopted by the profession, the site will provide a national intranet for pro bono coordinators and lawyers. Standard features include news, calendar, opportunities to assist and discussion groups. Members can access other member's contact details and post items nationally or by State. The site was launched as a beta project in March 2004 with 6 pro bono coordinators, and then officially launched in September 2004, by which time its membership had grown to 25 coordinators.

Family law pro bono assistance

The Centre has tackled this difficult issue knowing that some firms have indicated that no pro bono assistance will be made available in this area of law. Through a series of meetings co-ordinated by the Centre in Sydney some limited pro bono assistance has emerged as follows:

- two firms have agreed to provide financial assistance analysis in child support departure application and similar matters;
- the Centre organised training for these firms provided by an appropriate CLC; and
- 'Writing of Affidavits in Family Law Matters' training has been organised for firms for September 2004.

Indigenous legal organisations paper

The Centre has prepared a draft paper that identifies the level and nature of use of pro bono services by Indigenous legal organisations and explores ways of increasing assistance to these organisations. This paper is yet to be finalised and published.

Unbundled services issue

The Centre has considered this issue as a potential barrier to the provision of pro bono legal services in Australia and addressed it in its submission to the Federal Civil Justice Strategy Paper review (April 2004). Counsel's advice on the issue has been made available to interested parties.

6. Planning and managing the operations of the Centre Strategic Planning

The Centre's Strategic Plan and Priorities have been adopted, reviewed and published at six monthly intervals, the most recent being July 2004. A 2003/2004 workplan was developed (August 2003). This annual workplan was provided to the Advisory Council in October 2003. A document outlining current projects and projects in development was prepared and distributed to the Board and Advisory Council in October 2003, and to Sydney pro bono coordinators in November 2003.

Management

John Corker started in the position of Director in January 2004, following the departure of Gordon Renouf in October 2003. Regular staff meetings are held to manage work and review priorities and progress. The Centre's Work Plan is updated on a monthly basis.

Ongoing viability of the Centre

The Board has considered this issue at each Board meeting and the Director has prepared reports on the matter. The case for the ongoing role of the Centre was made as part of

the Centre's response to the Federal Civil Justice Strategy Review paper in April 2004. The difficulty of obtaining core funding from the legal profession, at least in the short term, was highlighted.

Limited project funding has been secured for the Centre, namely support from NSW Law and Justice Foundation (\$25,000) for the Regional, Rural and Remote project, which commenced in December 2003. Approaches were made to law firms, corporations and government to support the second National Pro Bono Conference and funding in excess of \$100 000 was secured from 17 firms and others (including the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department).

Board and Advisory Council meetings

Board meetings in 2003 took place in: March, June, September, October, and December. Board meetings held in 2004 took place in: February, April, and June. The Finance and Administration sub-committee meets prior to each Board meeting.

An Advisory Council (AC) teleconference was held on 21 August 2003, with two face-to-face meetings taking place on 21 October 2003 and 16 June 2004 in Sydney. Board and Advisory Council meetings are minuted and filed.

Systems and reporting

Internal policies are adequate and properly maintained. Relevant filing, work review, work-flow and other systems are established and in place. The Centre carries out timely reporting to the Board and other bodies.

Staff



John Corker

Director since January 2004. John started his career as a judge's associate and a barrister in Victoria. He spent 7 years in Central Australia as a lawyer for Aboriginal Legal Aid and then as the sole lawyer involved in the establishment of Australia's first Aboriginal-owned commercial television service (Imparja). He moved to Sydney where he was employed by the Australian Broadcasting Authority, finally as its General Counsel. He was most recently a senior associate for 3 years in the Sydney office of Clayton Utz.

Gordon Renouf – Director from inception until October 2003, Gordon worked for community legal centres in NSW and the Northern Territory, as Director of the North Australian Aboriginal Legal Aid Service and as a consultant to the NT Legal Aid Commission and the Australian Investments and Securities Commission on access to services and Indigenous consumer policy issues respectively.

Jill Anderson – was the Centre's Senior Policy and Research Officer until June 2004. She was previously a lecturer in Law at UNSW, and a solicitor in community legal centres and private practice. She has been a volunteer policy resource coordinator with ACOSS since 1994 and was a member of the Commonwealth Administrative Review Council from 1995 to 1998.



Jenny Lovric

During her employment at the Centre, Jenny has worked primarily on the Australian Pro Bono Manual and the 'Mapping pro bono' project. Jenny became the Centre's Senior Policy and Research Officer in June 2004. She has previously worked at the NSW Law Reform Commission, the Federal Court and in the community legal sector.



Laura Soley

Laura has been a policy officer since August 2004. A UK solicitor with 7 years experience, Laura has done a considerable amount of work with charities in the UK where she was a trustee of the UK Solicitors Pro Bono Group.

Ann Johnson – worked at the Centre from April 2003 until August 2004 as a part time project officer. Her major projects have been the organisation of the 2nd National Pro Bono Conference and researching and writing the Pro Bono Student project and Information Paper. Ann previously worked in private and corporate practice in Australia and Japan.



Kate House

Kate became the Centre's administrator in March after moving from Perth. She has a degree in Politics and International Relations and has worked for the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure (WA) and the Family Court of Western Australia. She is currently studying Graduate Law at UNSW.

Jacqui Houston – previously employed at the Children's Youth and Law Centre, Jacqui was the Centre's Administrator until April 2004.



Lynne Spender

Lynne is an editor and writer who has been involved with legal centres for over 20 years. She is the Centre's Publications Coordinator. Her book *Between the Lines: a legal guide for writers and illustrators* was published in 2004.

Kirsty Gowans – worked temporarily as a project officer with the Centre, conducting a survey of the pro bono needs of Indigenous Legal Organisations.

NPBRC Board

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Board members

Chair: Tony Fitzgerald AC QC

Tony's name is synonymous with the 1987 inquiry into official misconduct in Queensland, He has had a distinguished career as an advocate and judge at State and Federal level. He held the position of President of the Queensland Court of Appeal (1991-1998) and was a member of the NSW Court of Appeal (1998-2001). He currently holds many positions, including Chairperson of the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW and Honorary Professor at the Key Centre for Law, Justice, Ethics and Governance at Griffith University. He works as a commercial mediator and arbitrator from Wentworth Chambers in Sydney.

Andrea Durbach

Associate Professor and Director of the Australian Human Rights Centre in the University of New South Wales Faculty of Law, Andrea was previously the Director of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) for 7 years. Andrea was a member of the Federal Attorney-General's National Pro Bono Taskforce and oversaw a successful tender by PIAC to establish the National Pro Bono Resource Centre (NPBRC). She is a former Chairperson of the Board of NPBRC, a part-time commissioner of the NSW Law Reform Commission and a part-time judicial member of the Administrative Decisions Tribunal (Legal Services Division).

Michael Cole

Manager, Community Services, Law Society of Western Australia, managing Law Access Public Interest Law Clearing House, the Litigation Assistance Fund (WA), the Francis Burt Law Education Centre and Law Week in WA. Admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor in Western Australia in 1980. Former Regional Director of the Australian Government Solicitor's Western Australian Office.

John North

John North is a Partner at North&Badgery Solicitors in Dubbo and Sydney. He is a past member of the Legal Aid Commission of NSW, former President of the Law Society of NSW and is currently President-Elect of the Law Council of Australia. He has a continuing interest in pro bono, legal aid, Indigenous, prison and childcare issues and in streamlining court procedures.

Emma Hunt

Co-Executive Director of the Public Interest Law Clearing House (Vic) Inc for four years. PILCH Vic coordinates pro bono legal assistance in Victoria and administers the Law Institute of Victoria Legal Assistance Scheme, the Victorian Bar Legal Assistance Scheme and the Homeless Persons' Legal Clinic. Emma represents PILCH Vic, PILCH NSW and QPILCH on the Board of the National Pro Bono Resource Centre. She has previously worked as a Judge's Associate, as solicitor at two community legal centres, at the Legal Aid Society of New York and with Victoria Legal Aid.

Aleecia Murray

Aleecia is a solicitor at Minter Ellison Lawyers specialising in industrial and employment law, and teaches corporate law at the University of Adelaide. She has worked previously as the Associate to the Honourable Justice Perry, Supreme Court of South Australia. Aleecia has a strong history in the community legal sector, including being the founding coordinator of the Refugee Advocacy Service of South Australia (RASSA) and coordinator of the Youth Crime Prevention Program delivered to high school students.

Michelle Hannon

Michelle has been the Pro Bono Co-ordinator for Gilbert + Tobin since joining them in 1997. She has conducted a number of human rights and discrimination cases and

has been an executive member of Australian Lawyers for Human Rights for a number of years. Previously, Michelle worked in industrial and employment law and litigation at Freehills. She then went on to be the founding principal solicitor at the NSW Disability Discrimination Legal Centre, undertaking test case and public interest litigation, as well as policy work and community legal education in the area of disability discrimination. Michelle has been nominated by the Sydney based pro bono co-ordinators to be appointed to the NPBRC Board, in consultation with the Melbourne co-ordinators. Her alternate director is Lucy McKernan of Allens Arthur Robinson in Melbourne.

Jane Hutchison

Currently Manager of the Hobart Community Legal Service Inc, Jane has been involved with community legal centres for over 15 years. She was a Board member of the Financial Services Consumer Policy Centre from the mid 90s (helping to establish the Centre) until 2003 and previous Chair of the Australian Financial Counsellors and Credit Reform Association. (OK)

Paul Redmond

Paul Redmond is a Professor of Law at the University of New South Wales, a former Dean of the Faculty and Chair of the Council of Australian Law Deans. He is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Diplomacy Training Program, a regional human rights education provider for NGOs. He has a particular interest in how law schools nurture their students' justice consciousness and orientation towards public service in professional work.

Carolyn Sappideen

Carolyn is a Professor of Law and Head of the Law School at the University of Western Sydney. She is the Director of the Centre for Elder Law specialising in research into legal issues affecting older Australians. Her teaching interests include Medical Malpractice Law, Property Law and Law of Torts. Carolyn is a recipient of a number of research grants including a joint grant from the Commonwealth government on Transactional Learning in the Law of Contracts. She is also the new author for Fleming, The Law of Torts (10th ed) and has published numerous articles and co-authored several books.

Shirley Southgate

Shirley is the immediate past Convenor of the Board of Management of Human Rights, WA Community Legal Centre and the Manager of Client Services at Legal Aid WA. She is a member of the Board of Management of WRANA (Women's Rights Action Network Australia). Previously, Shirley has worked at the Tenants Advice Service, WA and in private practice.

Peter Stapleton

Peter was appointed to the NPBRC Board during 2004. He was instrumental in establishing Blake Dawson Waldron's national pro bono practice and was for many years Chair of Redfern Legal Centre. He has worked with Aboriginal organisations since the early 1970's. Peter has practised in the area of commercial and corporate law, specialising in asset and share acquisitions, joint ventures and foreign investment laws and regulations. Apart from acting for Australian corporations, Peter has acted for many overseas corporations in connection with their business operations in Australia, particularly Chinese, Japanese and European corporations.

Advisory Council members

Professor David Weisbrot (Chair)

President, Australian Law Reform Commission
Ex-officio member of the NPBRC Board

Professor Don Chalmers

Faculty of Law, University of Tasmania

Mr Simon Cleary

Secretary, QPILCH

Mr Chris Dodds

President, Council of Social Service of NSW

Mr Chris Gabelish

Geraldton Resource Centre

Mr Ian Govey

General Manager, Civil Justice & Legal Services
Commonwealth A-G's Department

Ms Julie Hamblin

Partner, Ebsworth and Ebsworth

Ms Jenny Hardy

NT Legal Aid Commission

Mr John Harley

Public Advocate

Ms Ellen Johnson

Women's Legal Resources Centre

Ms Kathy Laster

Director, Victoria Law Foundation

Ms Fiona MacLeay

Clayton Utz

Mr Denis Nelthorpe

Consumer advocate

Ms Alexandra Richards QC

Barrister, Victoria

Interns

In its second year of operation, the Centre has been fortunate to have had assistance from several interns through its association with the UNSW Law Faculty Social Justice Intern program. The Law Faculty offers an elective subject providing students with the opportunity to spend one day a week at the research centres affiliated with the University. Students make significant contributions toward the work of the centres, and in turn are able to gain practical experience in research, writing and advocacy about issues affecting social justice. Our sincere thanks this year to:

Lisa Eckstein (2003)

Rodney Teoh (2003)

Pilar Lopez (2004)

Michelle Tse (2004)

Courtenay Mitchell

(Canadian exchange student Courtenay assisted with the development of the Pro Bono Students Australia program, based on the Pro Bono Students Canada program).

Key Priorities 2004-2005

While the Centre continues to work with the profession and the community to promote and enhance pro bono services, it will also be undertaking research and policy projects to provide helpful information and new ideas about pro bono. The Centre Director, Board, Advisory Council and staff will be involved in planning and management for the Centre, including consideration of a range of strategies for its future viability.

'The benefit of engaging in pro bono is like the quality of mercy: it blesses those who provide it, and those who receive it.'

**Chris Dale, President,
Law Institute of Victoria**

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In 2004 and 2005, the Centre will particularly focus on:

- **Strategies to obtain funding for the Centre after July 2005**
- **Promotion of *The Australian Pro Bono Manual*; updating and expanding its contents and conducting best practice sessions**
- **Completion of the 'Mapping Pro Bono' project and the conduct of a national survey of pro bono work done by the legal profession**
- **Improving its IT strategy to provide better online tools for the pro bono community**
- **Building pro bono capacity amongst government lawyers and facilitating service delivery**
- **Brokering partnerships between CLCs (particularly from RRR areas) with law firms**
- **Monitoring the trial Pro Bono Students Australia program and promoting its uptake by other law schools**
- **Publication of the findings on pro bono and Indigenous Legal Organisations and development of matchmaking opportunities**
- **Building pro bono capacity amongst in-house corporate lawyers and supporting delivery of effective services**
- **Continuing to promote and lift the profile of pro bono across the profession and in the community.**

Financial report*

Statement of financial position (Audited) Year ending 30 June 2004

	2004 \$	2003 \$
National Pro Bono Resource Centre ABN 131 02 444 557		
Current Assets		
Cash assets	142,368	202,464
Receivables	75,200	5,500
Other	3,566	2,199
Total Current Assets	221,134	210,163
Non-Current Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	15,243	17,482
Total Non-Current Assets	15,243	17,482
Total Assets	236,377	227,645
Current Liabilities		
Payables	30,559	20,844
Provisions	11,469	5,400
Other	80,851	68,000
Total Current Liabilities	122,879	94,244
Net Assets	113,498	133,401
Equity		
Retained Earnings	113,498	133,401
Total Equity	113,498	133,401

*Copies of the full Financial Report for the year ending 30 June, 2003 are available from the Centre.

Statement of financial performance (Audited) Year ending 30 June 2004

	2004 \$	2003 \$
National Pro Bono Resource Centre ABN 131 02 444 557		
Revenue from ordinary activities	427,013	283,128
Expenses from ordinary activities		
Printing	6,244	2,747
Employee benefits expense	238,540	113,401
Depreciation expense	6,239	3,244
Audit fee	2,200	2,000
Insurance	4,273	1,533
Computer and Communications	16,115	12,594
Library	427	874
Travel	14,000	4,032
Conference expense	144,412	-
Other expenses from ordinary activities	14,467	9,302
Surplus/(Deficit) From Ordinary Activities	(19,904)	133,401
Income tax expense relating to ordinary activities	-	-
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	(19,904)	133,401

NATIONAL PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTRE

The National Pro Bono Resource Centre is an independent non-profit organisation that supports and promotes pro bono legal services nationally.

The Centre receives financial assistance from the Federal Attorney-General's Department and accommodation and other support from the Faculty of Law at the University of New South Wales.

Further information about the Centre including details of the Centre's publications, current activities and projects in development is available at:

www.nationalprobono.org.au

You can subscribe to the Centre's eNewsletter at www.nationalprobono.org.au



NATIONAL PRO BONO RESOURCE CENTRE

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