

27 October 2023

BY EMAIL: submissions@nlapreview.com.au

Dear Dr Mundy,

Re: Submission to National Legal Assistance Partnership Review

Hume Riverina Community Legal Service (HRCLS) is pleased to provide a submission to the National Legal Assistance Partnership Review (the Review).

HRCLS receives Commonwealth funding under the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP), through the Victorian and New South Wales State Governments.

HRCLS consents to this submission being published on the Review website, being identified in the report of the Review as having made a submission. HRCLS consents to being quoted with attribution in the report of the Review and being quoted anonymously.

HRCLS endorse submissions from four of the organisations to which we belong:

1. Federation of Community Legal Centres,
2. Community Legal Centres Australia,
3. Community Legal Centres New South Wales, and
4. National Regional, Rural, Remote and Very Remote Community Legal Network (4Rs Network).

Introduction

HRCLS is a service of Upper Murray Family Care (UMFC). UMFC is a community service organisation supporting children and families in their time of need throughout North East Victoria and Southern NSW.

HRCLS is a community legal centre that provides free legal services to people experiencing barriers to justice across North East Victoria and the Southern Riverina of NSW. HRCLS undertakes community development and legal education, and advocates for law reform to improve access to justice for all people to achieve fair and just legal outcomes.


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Upper Murray Family Care

Our vision is a society where all people enjoy equality of opportunity and have equal access to the law.

HRCLS provides legal services across a geographic area spanning 8.2 million hectares and a population of over 322,000 people. This area spans 17 local government areas, seven in Victoria; Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Mansfield, Towong, Wangaratta, and Wodonga. And, ten in NSW; Albury, Berrigan, Edward River, Federation, Greater Hume, Lockhart, Murray River, Murrumbidgee, Snowy Valleys, and Wagga Wagga. These areas are classified, in the vast majority, to be Outer Regional, with Wodonga classified as Inner Regional and Murrumbidgee classified as Remote.

HRCLS is a unique community legal centre in that we provide cross-border, cross-jurisdictional legal services. Although our region is divided by the Murray River as a state boundary, our communities are interconnected and daily life including work, study, recreation and accessing services occurs without border. It is often not until people experience a legal matter that they realise the complexity the border adds. We believe people should not be disadvantaged by inconsistencies in legislation or the provision of support programs, and we continue to advocate for change where this arises.

In addition to cross-border complexity, statistical data highlights the disadvantages being experienced in our region.

The communities of our region have a higher than state average population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians; 2.42% compared to the Victorian average of 1%, and 4.9% compared to the NSW average of 3.4%.

The communities of our region also experience a higher incidence of mental illness than the state averages; 10.17% compared to the Victorian average of 8.8%, and 9.49% compared to the NSW average of 8%.

The rates of family violence in HRCLS local government areas also exceeds state averages.

The latest Victorian Crime Statistic Agency data in the year ending June 2023 showed the Victorian average was 946.3 family violence incidents per 100,000 people. In Wodonga that rate was 1,259.2, in Wangaratta incidents exceeded the state average by double, 2,054, and Benalla was even higher, 2891.3.¹

Statistics from the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research for the 2022-23 year shows the NSW average rate of domestic violence related assault by 100,000 of population to be 428.7. Six local government areas in HRCLS region exceed this average: Snowy Valleys 496.6, Murrumbidgee 589.2, Berrigan 627, Albury 708.5, Wagga Wagga 782.5, and Edward River almost double the state average at 841.5.² Of note is the different measurements used in the two states, an example of cross-border administrative complexities.

¹ Crime Statistics Agency, [Latest crime data by area | Crime Statistics Agency Victoria](#)

² NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, [LGA excel tables \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Against this geographic and statistical background, HRCLS strives to provide and improve access to justice for our communities.

HRCLS presents the following submission to the Review in developing an outcomes-based framework for legal assistance services from 2025:

- 1. Legal assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians,**
- 2. NLAP objectives and intended outcomes,**
- 3. Legal need,**
- 4. The role of the Commonwealth and States in determining and administering funding with particular attention to cross-border circumstances,**
- 5. How challenges of service delivery in regional, rural and remote locations may be addressed in future agreements,**
- 6. Funding models required to meet current and future needs,**
- 7. The need for funding to support activities to prevent legal need,**
- 8. Regulatory burdens of funding processes,**
- 9. Workforce impacts on service delivery, and**
- 10. Opportunities to improve service delivery outcomes.**

1. Legal assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, in response to section 3 of the Review Issues Paper:

It is the experience of HRCLS that self-determinisation and cultural appropriateness can be best supported through legal assistance arrangements that involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in developing, designing and implementing programs for their communities.

HRCLS has been working in partnership with Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS) for over 8 years in Invisible Hurdles Health Justice Partnership (HJP) focused on young people experiencing or at risk of family violence. This program saw service demand and unmet legal need in the wider Aboriginal community and led to AWAHS and HRCLS designing a whole-of-community HJP, 'Bagaraybang bagaraybang mayinygalang' which in Wiradjuri is 'empowering and alleviating'. This program embeds a HRCLS lawyer and community engagement worker within the Aboriginal community led organisation. This program practically and effectively contributes to National Agreement on Closing the Gap Priority Reform 2 and 3.

NLAP mental health funding enables delivery of this program. Dedicated funding for Community Legal Centres (CLCs) to work in partnership with Aboriginal organisations would be preferred. In our region there is no Aboriginal Legal Service, the closest is based in Wagga Wagga NSW, 135kms away and Shepparton VIC, 170kms away. Their capacity to service our region is limited.

Certainty of funding supports intersectional and holistic approaches to the provision of legal services.

Example:

One of the recommendations in the First Research and Impact Evaluation Report – Addressing the Torment of Powerlessness, BBM, specified the need for long-term funding:

“The funding bodies and the policy makers need to recognise that collaborations and partnership need to be adequately supported and funded on an ongoing basis rather than a short-term basis or fragmented funding models.

This is in recognition of the fundings of this study that building trust needs to be sustained and genuine. One trust is tested and has been built up overtime, it enables the relationships to traverse and overcome difficulties together...³

³ Curren L and Alici N, First Research and Impact Evaluation Report – Addressing the Torment of Powerlessness: Bagaraybang bagaraybang mayinygalang (BBM): Empowering & Alleviating: A HJP of the HRCLS and AWAHS offering legal support for social and emotional well-being with Aboriginal Peoples in North East Victoria and Southern NSW, p9, <https://bit.ly/3Fyiulk>

Recommendations:

- Specific program funding for regional CLCs to partner with their local Aboriginal organisations to provide holistic – health, legal and social services, and support Aboriginal self-determination.
- Longer term funding for program certainty and continuity to enable trust building where pilot programs are successful.

2. NLAP objectives and intended outcomes, in response to section 4.1 of the Review Issues Paper:

NLAP objectives are outcome focused on improving access to justice in our community. The tyranny of distance affecting much of Australia is a barrier to justice and one that regional Community Legal Services (CLCs) work hard to assist people overcome. It is also an area for further attention in the NLAP.

HRCLS sees the growth of integrated legal assistance as an effective way to meet NLAP objectives.

Example:

HRCLS has worked to build several Health Justice Partnerships (HJP) in our region to reach people most in need and provide them with client-centred holistic support:

1. Family violence partnership with Centre Against Violence (CAV) (VIC),
2. Mental health partnership with Gateway Health - Holistic Assistance and Legal Outreach (HALO) (VIC),
3. Family and domestic violence partnership with Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) - Outreach, Networking and Empowering (ONE) (NSW),
4. Youth partnership with Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS), NESAY, Wodonga Flexible Learning Centre - Invisible Hurdles (VIC), and
5. Mental health partnership with AWAHS - Bagaraybang Bagaraybang Mayinyalang (BBM) (NSW).

Delivering client-centred legal services to people experiencing multiple disadvantages before the law requires additional skills to be trauma informed, and more time is spent with each client. This sees an increase in operational costs alongside lower client numbers.

Building relationships with community and stakeholders is important and is additional to the provision of legal assistance. Further, the maintenance of these relationships requires an agile and skilled workforce. For HRCLS servicing cross-border communities this work requires cross-jurisdictional knowledge, practice and funding requirements.

Recommendations:

- Funding measures and reporting must account for the intersectionality of clients.
- Funding must recognise costs associated with community engagement, partnership building and stakeholder management in communities of need, a current omission in the NLAP.
- Legal assistance providers must be supported to build the capacity of their organisations to ensure they can effectively respond to evolving service demand including the costs of providing effective supervision for staff, both internally and externally.
- Program funding continuity to support the development and operation of programs.
- That NLAP provisions enable flexibility for cross-border CLCs to provide legal services to clients with legal matters on both sides of the border without requiring duplication of reporting to state funding bodies.

3. Legal need, in response to section 4.2 of the Review Issues Paper:

Community Legal Centres require funding to undertake legal needs analysis in their regions to obtain an accurate assessment of existing legal needs.

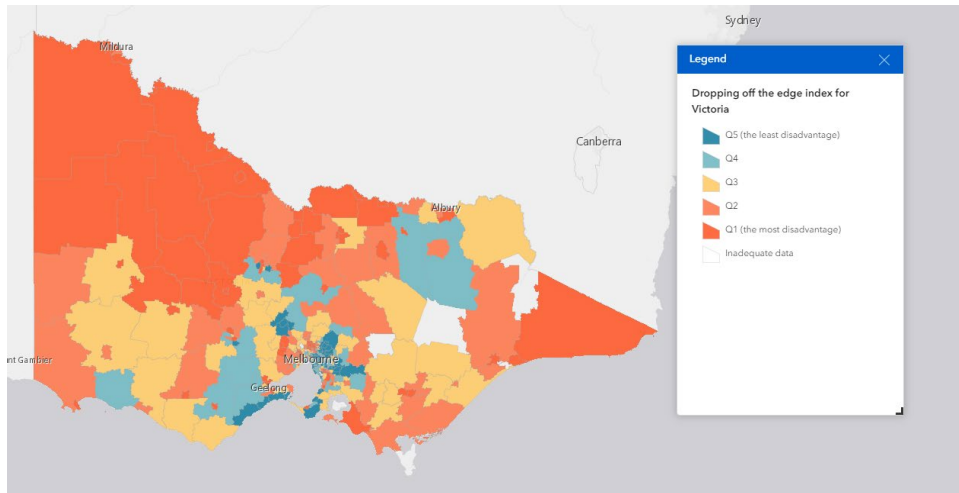
Data collected on family violence rates in local government areas shows high rates across much of HRCLS' service region, as outlined in the introduction of this submission. Further, HRCLS is aware of significant unmet need in family law and family violence across our region, our own service capacity, and the limited alternate provision of legal services for people experiencing vulnerabilities before the law. Legal needs analysis will provide data for which services can be developed, expanded and delivered.

Our region does not have access to specialist resources such as a Specialist Family Violence Court, compounding legal need in our region. Without specialist resources legal services are less efficiently delivered.

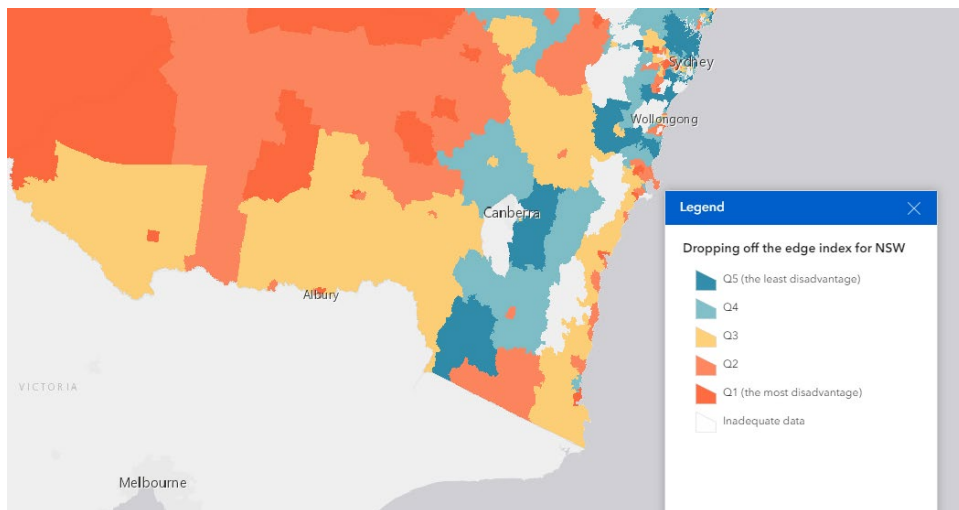
The recent Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) conducted in Victoria illustrates the unmet legal need uncovered in bushfire recovery services such as those provided by HRCLS, the clustering of issues and need in these in communities, and the number of disadvantages clients are experiencing to accessing justice. These findings are reflected in our own experiences and data.

The local disaster history and regional classification, statistical economic and social disadvantage in our region compounds access to justice. The Dropping Off the Edge report conducted by Jesuit Social Services illustrates the disadvantage being experienced in the HRCLS region.

[Victoria — Dropping off the Edge \(dote.org.au\)](#)



[New South Wales — Dropping off the Edge \(dote.org.au\)](#)



This report illustrates economic and social disadvantage, what is not specified is the additional barriers to justice people living in cross-border communities experience. People are subject to two legal systems. This increases the likelihood of legal problems arising and the resolution of these more difficult.⁴

Data on existing economic and social disadvantage in our region is available but it does not take into account the impact of cross-border issues where people live, study and work without border.

⁴ Legal Aid NSW and Victoria Legal Aid, Cross-border justice: Exploring ways to improve access to legal assistance along the NSW/Victorian border, [Working together to improve access to justice for cross-border communities | Victoria Legal Aid](#), October 2018, p1.

Recommendations:

- Funding to support legal needs analysis for each regional Community Legal Centre, for cross-border services this must cover the entire region of the service.
- Funding to undertake a report on all cross-border legal issues and conflicts.
- Resources to address the outcomes of the two reports.

4. The role of the Commonwealth and States in determining and administering funding with particular attention to cross-border circumstances, in response to section 4.3 of the Review Issues Paper:

Regional Community Legal Centres (CLCs) incur additional costs in providing legal services. The geographic region serviced by HRCLS is 8.2 million hectares, similar to the size of Scotland, with a population of 322,000 people is dispersed across this area. HRCLS attends numerous towns across the area providing legal services, HRCLS duty lawyers attend court in Wodonga, Myrtleford and Wangaratta, and under HJP ONE, a program to address domestic violence in NSW, a HRCLS lawyer attends court in Deniliquin, Finley and Corowa.

Population, distance and legal need are part of the service equation, and consideration must be made for the additional cost pressures these have on service delivery. In addition, there are greater costs in providing legal services where client matters cross jurisdictions.

As noted earlier the family violence data for the region serviced by HRCLS is higher than the state average, in some local governments, over double the state average. While this is considered in program funding, HRCLS' position as the only provider of free legal services in this area is not.

Recommendations:

- Resourcing for policy decisions that impact upon legal need and demand for legal services (e.g. where courts require people to appear in person)
- Resourcing when government policy alters border laws, such as COVID-19 restrictions.
- Capacity for cross-border services to provide services within programs to clients with matters on both sides of the border (e.g. without the administrative burden and service fracture to clients of changing lawyers and programs.)
- Performance indicators tied to client numbers are not effective at measuring outcomes where clients experience multiple disadvantages or have multiple, connected, legal matters.

5. How challenges of service delivery in regional, rural and remote locations may be addressed in future agreements, in response to section 4.5 of the Review Issues Paper:

As the Review paper outlines there are specific challenges faced by regional community legal centres to successfully deliver legal services. These result in additional costs to our organisations which must be considered in planning and budgeting processes.

Demand for legal services in our region outstrips capacity and resources in our region which spans 17 local government areas in North East Victoria and the Southern Riverina of NSW. To attract and retain lawyers HRCLS offers above sector average remuneration packages, including relocation costs. Our operating costs are therefore impacted by the workforce environment. This is in addition to the costs of servicing the vast area of our region, including time, travel and administrative duplication due to the cross-border administrative requirements of our service.

This region is not serviced by another CLC, there is no Legal Aid Victoria office in the area and a small Legal Aid NSW office with limited capacity. Aboriginal legal services provide only limited services within our region, they operate from Shepparton VIC, and Wagga Wagga NSW.

HRCLS builds relationships in communities so that those most in need receive access to justice. This takes time and positions additional to lawyers. Including community engagement workers on staff is a way of building relationships for lawyers to then provide legal services. This has proven to be an efficient use of resources for HRCLS, as evidenced by Dr Curren in her evaluation report of the Invisible Hurdles program.

HRCLS endorses the submissions of the Federation of Community Legal Centres and the 4Rs Network on this section.

Example:

HRCLS lawyers attending towns in our region to provide legal services, and attend court, in 2022-23 travelled an estimated 26,500kms.

This travel took approximately 331 hours of travel time, equivalent to 45 days or 9 weeks of work simply to attend locations at which to provide services, (the time involved in the provision of legal services is not included in this equation.)

Based on the travel time, the cost of a lawyer to undertake this travel is estimated at \$19,273 in salary and oncosts.

The cost of the vehicle running and maintenance costs based on the ATO per km rates of \$0.85 was \$22,525.

The cost to HRCLS in attending locations to provide place-based legal services in 2022-23 was in excess of \$40,000. In addition to this is the time of the lawyer who was effectively unable to provide legal services for 45 days.

Recommendations:

- Funding support for the provision of legal services to overcome geographic barriers to providing client service.
- Funding streams for community engagement workers to build relationships in communities of need.
- Funding to overcome barriers in workforce recruitment, and extra expenses in maintaining staff such as continuing professional development sessions which are often city based.

6. Funding models required to meet current and future needs, in response to section 4.6 of the Review Issues Paper:

HRCLS provides legal services including advice, education and advocacy across two state jurisdictions.

The schematic of the funding allocation model does not take into account cross-border complexities.

Recommendations:

- Cross-border CLCs should be receiving equivalent baseline funding for two centres for effective operation across their region, (e.g. HRCLS are currently funded by each side of the border separately and not equally.)
- The NPA should stipulate a minimum level or percentage of funding for regional CLCs (and in particular, cross border regional CLCs) required to enable them to meet the extra demands on their services.
- Commonwealth oversight of cross-border program funding is needed.

7. The need for funding to support activities to prevent legal need, in response to section 4.9 of the Review Issues Paper:

It is HRCLS experience that Health Justice Partnerships (HJP) provide effective relationships in which to work with communities in need focusing on early intervention.

HRCLS undertakes community legal education and development work to share knowledge of legal processes, rights and responsibilities in all HJPs. Building capacity in support services and partner organisations to identify legal matters for referral and legal assistance is early intervention.

In HJP programs such as Invisible Hurdles, having a presence and building relationships with young people before they require legal services builds trust and capacity in communities. It enables access to justice where structural inequities would otherwise preclude. Connections and relationships built with young people enables information sharing and education. Early intervention avoids costs.

Example:

Invisible Hurdles HJP between HRCLS, Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS), NESAY, Wodonga Flexible Learning Centre has been operating since 2015 and has required 5 funding applications to continue. It is a program for young people and was evaluated in 2022 under 5 proxies, or indicators to measure impact: reach, capacity, engagement, empowerment, reciprocity, and collaboration.⁵ The evaluation found:

“...by involving lawyers in sorting out problems alongside other support people, significant inroads can be made into improving the lives of young people. For example, young people got support with housing, and prevented eviction, got out of irresponsible loans, understood their rights in terms of family violence, and found pathways to employment through understanding their legal position by having the lawyers negotiate in tricky situations.”⁶

Recommendations:

- HJP funding to be extended for certainty for all partners.
- HJP funding to include support for community engagement workers.
- Funding for program evaluations is needed to measure success.

8. Regulatory burdens of funding processes, in response to section 4.11 of the Review Issues Paper:

HRCLS faces unique challenges as a cross-border Community Legal Centre (CLC). These challenges include the administrative burden of funding applications in two jurisdictions where funding streams are rarely duplicated or reflective.

Challenges also include the reporting requirements for Victoria Legal and Legal Aid NSW, again these are not necessarily reflective as the two bodies have differing strategic objectives, goals and methodologies for determining legal need in the allocation of funding.

HRCLS works to design programs to meet the separate strategies and requirements of the two funding bodies and two jurisdictions so that both sides of the border receive access to needed legal services. This requires significant resource in time and workforce commitment.

HRCLS works with two peak bodies, duplicating membership meetings and reporting, and duplicating sector developments and information.

HRCLS baseline funding does not take this duplication of regulation and administration into account.

⁵ Curren L, ‘Going Deeper’: The Invisible Hurdles Stage III Research Evaluation Final Report, Nottingham Trent University, 2022 [APPROVED-Final-Version-Going-Deeper-IH-Stage-III-Research-Evaluation-Report-20220626.pdf](https://hrcls.org.au/APPROVED-Final-Version-Going-Deeper-IH-Stage-III-Research-Evaluation-Report-20220626.pdf) (hrcls.org.au)

⁶ Ibid, p13.

Example:

Following Commonwealth funding to the states for legal programs addressing the priority indicator of mental health, HRCLS applied for NSW funding to commence a HJP with Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service (AWAHS), Bagaraybang Bagaraybang Mayinyalang (BBM). This application was completed before Victoria's applications under the same funding stream opened.

The Victorian application process was not reflective of NSW, nor was the eligibility criteria. The programs offered were essentially the same but the differences in application processes highlighted inefficiency in administrative requirements for funding applications that only cross-border services would experience in the provision of legal service delivery.

HRCLS was successful in receiving funding in both jurisdictions, the Victorian program is a HJP with Gateway Health, Holistic Assistance and Legal Outreach (HALO).

Recommendations:

- The Commonwealth should retain greater oversight of the methodology for distribution of Commonwealth funding, and for determining legal need, to ensure consistent approaches.
- State bodies responsible for administering Commonwealth funding should be required to coordinate with each other (not just the Commonwealth) to ensure consistent outcomes and objectives are achieved between the states in their use of Commonwealth funding.
- Cross-border CLCs should be given one funding agreement for Commonwealth funding, or State bodies should be required to coordinate with each other to reduce the reporting burden on cross border CLCs and avoid duplication.
- Funding should be provided to cross border CLCs to facilitate reporting, coordination and liaison with two state bodies, as well as the Commonwealth.

9. Workforce impacts on service delivery, in response to section 4.13 of the Review Issues Paper:

Workforce supply for regional Community Legal Centres (CLCs) has considerable affect on the provision of legal services.

HRCLS experience is that demand for legal services exceeds service capacity and competitive recruitment is sometimes difficult because of geographic location, remuneration, and career progression possibilities. HRCLS offers above sector remuneration and relocation costs to attract lawyers and ensure the service meets operational capacity.

Coupled with this, CLCs attract a values driven workforce who take pride in providing access to justice to people and communities who experience disadvantages in our legal system and focus their advocacy on client need, not their own. CLCs workplaces are female in the majority

which is interesting and concerning when reflecting on the growing inequality in Australia between gender-based incomes.

Workforce scarcity also sees CLCs in competition with each other when recruiting.

Further, in many regional areas only one service exists, there is a scarcity of legal assistance whether CLC, Legal Aid, Aboriginal legal centre, or private practitioners offering pro bono services.

HRCLS endorses the detailed submission of the Federation of Community Legal Centres on this section.

Example:

HRCLS spent \$45,000 on recruitment for 9 positions in 2022-23. CLCs experienced a competitive workforce market at this time and no applications for some positions resulting in a review of our HRCLS recruitment strategy. We offered above award rates and relocation costs for the positions to attract applicants. On average it took between five and seven months to recruit candidates.

Recommendations:

- More certainty around program funding to enable certainty of employment.
- A minimum level or percentage of funding for regional CLCs to attract and maintain a workforce to service the legal need of people experiencing disadvantage.
- Correction of wage inequality between CLCs and the public service and legal aid practitioners.

10. Opportunities to improve service delivery outcomes, in response to section 4.15 of the Review Issues Paper:

Non-lawyer staff: Administration staff, community engagement workers and communications staff are critical to the effective and efficient operation of Community Legal Centres (CLCs) in service delivery. This is even more so in regional areas where difficulties recruiting lawyers or law student volunteers mean work must be supplemented by other staffing where possible. It is an inefficient use of resources – time, skills and money, for lawyers to undertake administrative work which also reduces their capacity to provide direct legal services.

Disaster law: Resources must be available for preparedness, response and recovery, particularly for regional Community Legal Centres (CLCs). Legal services must be available in all communities for disaster response to be effective and responsive; it must be client focused, trauma informed and holistic. The recent Public Understanding of Law Survey by Victoria Law Foundation showed people affected by the 2019-2020 Black Summer bushfires were more likely to have justiciable problems, have more problems, longer problems, and

more severe problems and required greater legal and non-legal services.⁷ Baseline funding for disaster law in regional areas with surge provisions is needed.

The importance of local place-based services and the relationships to work collaboratively with local service agencies cannot be understated. Added to this is the need for external support from specialist CLCs and pro bono lawyers. HRCLS experience has seen that the greatest need for specialist assistance is in taking up complex case work.

We endorse the submission of Community Legal Centres Australia relating to disaster law.

Cross-border issues: Challenges facing cross-border CLCs have been highlighted through this submission and warrant a further point here. The nature of work in two jurisdictions increases the administrative burden for funding applications and reporting. It is regulatory requirements which add to the work of cross-border CLCs. Services are required to support people who live, study and work in cross-border regions and communities.

Examples:

HRCLS provides legal services to victim survivors of family violence living in border communities such as Albury/Wodonga, Corowa/Rutherglen, Tocumwal/Berrigan, where applications under both the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal; in Victoria, and the NSW Victims Services are sometimes sought. The two jurisdictions operate differently, they have different thresholds for assistance, and different processes.

Tenancy matters are not uncommon for clients of HRCLS. Where landlords reside on a different side of the border to their investment property, the state-based tribunals are unable to hear matters and tenants are forced to make application to the respective Magistrates' or Local Court. Advocacy support is provided for tenants in the state tribunals but no support is provided for tenancy matters in court. Due to these jurisdictional issues pursuing cross-border landlords is complex and carries greater risk.

HRCLS have assisted a victim survivor of family violence where the police made application for an Intervention Order (IVO) on the other person, however a breach occurred in NSW. The police at the place the incident occurred investigated and charged the other person, but this information did not go to the Victorian police who sought the IVO. When the IVO was to be extended they did not know of the continuing risk and did not extend the IVO.

In HRCLS experience it is not uncommon for situations to require IVO and Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO) following incidents on both side of the border, and then for charges and court proceedings to follow, on both sides of the border. This requires lawyers to have knowledge of two jurisdictions, the additional costs of Continuing Professional Development for our lawyers in two jurisdictions, the matters take more time and work to resolve for the client, and the service provided to the client is more expensive to HRCLS.

⁷Balmer N, Pleasence P, McDonald H and Sandefur R, The Public Understanding of Law Survey (PULS) Volume 1: Everyday Problems and Legal Need, 2023, [Everyday Problems and Legal Need \(victorialawfoundation.org.au\)](https://www.victorialawfoundation.org.au)

We are pleased to make this submission and look forward to working to improve access to justice for people experiencing disadvantage and vulnerabilities. All people in our community should enjoy equality of opportunity and equal access to the law.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodgers". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Sarah Rodgers
Manager and Principal Lawyer
Hume Riverina Community Legal Centre