



Quarterly Report

SECOND QUARTER: October – December 2019


Service Delivery at a Glance

(Statistics for second quarter only)

- **1,244** new grants of aid
- **1,511** duty lawyer services
- **88** Family Dispute Resolution mediation conferences
- Safe at Home services **108** new files
- **65** new Mental Health Tribunal files
- **1,159** face-to-face advice services
- **12** reviews of grants officer's decisions
- **50%** of reviews varied or set aside the grants officer's decision
- **54%** of new grants assigned to the private profession
- **98%** of law firm bills paid within one working day



12,892
telephone
advice services



158,897
website
page views



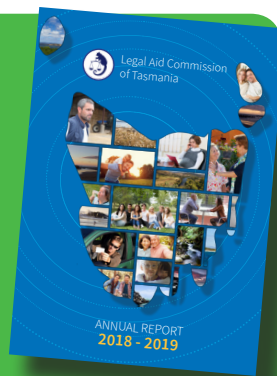
100% of
applications for
legal aid considered
within one day

Annual Report

The Annual Report was released on 27 November 2019. The Report highlights the increase in services provided across the wide range of areas we cover, including.

- Child Safety Grants – 15% increase
- Mental Health & Disability Legal Services – 38% increase
- Telephone Advice & Referrals – 54,488
- Family Dispute Resolution – 91% settled (395 conferences)
- Grants of Legal Assistance to Private Lawyers – up from 3034 to 3127, valued \$5.19 million
- Website Visits – 585,841 (8% increase)
- Community Legal Education – 5067 participants in 75 sessions Statewide
- Legal Talk Webchats – 3465 (average 14 per day)
- Family Advocacy & Support Services (FASS) – 70% increase (1134 to 1936)

The Report is available on our website.



Mental Health Act Review

The 2013 Mental Health Act was a welcome reform, introducing a capacity based approach to mental health treatment.

The Chief Psychiatrist conducted a Review of the Act to examine how it is operating in practice. We participated in a committee chaired by the Chief Psychiatrist and also provided a written submission to the Review.

Our submission recognises the positive aspects of the new Mental Health Act and makes suggestions about how it can be improved.

We look forward to the final outcome of the Review.

16 Days of Action

During December we participated in the 16 Days of Action to End Gender Based Violence. There were a series of presentations in the North West, including a talk by Jess Hill, author of 'See what you made me do'.

These well attended presentations provided an opportunity to build connections between service providers and raise awareness of the issues that are present in much of our work.

Congratulations to Margaret Chandler, Manager Safe at Home and Sarah Holloway, Lawyer Safe at Home, for helping to put on this series of events.

Juries and social media

Did you know that Tasmania has the highest rate of social media use in Australia? It is unsurprising then to learn that Tasmanian juries are not immune from the effects of social media.



We made a submission responding to the Tasmanian Law Reform Institute paper looking at this issue.

Our submission acknowledges that traditional ways of dealing with jurors who make their own enquiries are no longer effective.

We welcome the Final Report's recommendations, which agree with our suggested combination of measures - improved education for jurors and changes to the information provided by trial judges. The introduction of model directions will provide a consistent and clear message to jurors about why they should not engage in this behaviour. We also suggested consideration of 'question trails' - a series of factual questions that the jury decides as the means to reaching their verdict. We look forward to working with others to improve the operation of jury trials.

STAFF PROFILE

We welcome Andrea Ramondino who commenced as Business Services Manager.

Andrea is an accountant with 20 years experience, including over 14 years at Department of Premier and Cabinet where he held various roles such as Assistant Finance Manager and Acting Chief Financial Officer. He has also been on the Board with several community groups, including being a past President of Holyoake Tasmania.

The Business Services Manager, (formerly the Operations Manager) role, is responsible for developing and monitoring the budget, overseeing IT systems and manage facilities.

Andrea says 'I am very excited by the role which combines my corporate knowledge and community service focus. Everyone I have met is so friendly, welcoming and committed to supporting disadvantaged Tasmanians. I look forward to working with the staff, the Commission and all other stakeholders to achieve LACT's goals.'

Disability Royal Commission Legal Service

Tasmania Legal Aid has received funding to help people who want to tell their story to the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

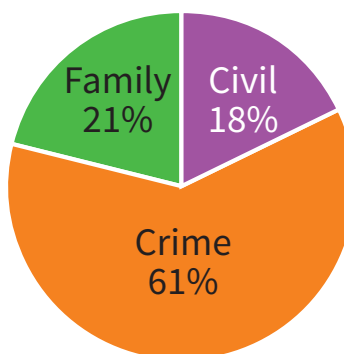
The free national service, gives information and advice to people with disability, and their families, carers, supporters and advocates.

It can explain legal rights and the options available, including by making a submission, participating in a community forum, providing evidence at a hearing and sharing information about experiences. It can also make referrals to counselling and other support services.

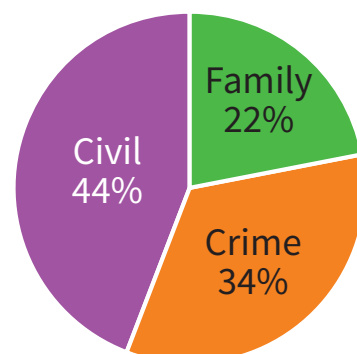
The service, provided jointly with National Legal Aid and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services, can be contacted on 1800 771 800 or drclawservice.org.au/Contact-us

Client Services

Grants



Advice



Summary of Financial Performance

At the end of December 2019, Legal Aid Tasmania is tracking within the budget set by the Board in May 2019.

Financial Summary*	
Commonwealth Funding	\$3,800,724
State Funding	\$3,881,143
Other Income	\$555,139
TOTAL FUNDS	\$8,237,005
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$8,250,402
Capital Management Plan to contend with systemic risk in the Legal Aid Sector: (\$13,397)	

* Note these are management figures and have not been audited.

