

JUSTICE POLICY STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2010 FEDERATION of COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRES (VIC) INC

Overview

This plan outlines the key objectives and activities of the Federation Secretariat in Justice Policy for the 2009 and 2010 calendar years.

The plan covers all of the Federation's justice policy activities including activities funded by:

- Victoria Legal Aid's ongoing funding to the Federation; and
- Legal Services Board funded "Grounded Justice" major project.

The document focuses on 2009 activities and outcomes. The activities and outcomes for 2010 will be reviewed and documented in an updated plan at the end of 2009, following a process of consultation with Federation working groups and the Justice Initiatives Standing Group.

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1: A FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE CIVIL LAW SYSTEM IN VICTORIA

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
<p>Civil law system fairer and more accessible to CLC clients</p>	<p>Research and consult with CLCs on civil law issues affecting CLC clients to identify issues for reform in areas such as debt recovery, fencing, alternative dispute resolution, victims of crime, mental health and access to immigration advice.</p> <p>Identify potential partners for research and consultation.</p> <p>Document findings of research and consultation and disseminate findings.</p> <p>Advocate for resources to implement recommendations arising from civil law research.</p> <p>Prepare briefing paper/factsheet on civil law unmet need.</p> <p>Advocate for implementation of VLRC and AG Justice Statement 2 proposals around self-represented litigants and support CLCs to obtain funding to implement these proposals</p> <p>Advocate for VLRC Stage 2 Civil Justice Review focused on reforming lower court civil litigation</p> <p>Review need to conduct specific project in collaboration with immigration CLCs on access to justice in immigration issues.</p>	<p>Civil law issues affecting CLC clients identified</p> <p>Research capacity on civil law enhanced through collaboration</p> <p>Issues documented and publicised</p> <p>Public spending informed by, and targeted towards, needs identified by research.</p> <p>As above</p> <p>None in 2009</p> <p>None in 2009</p> <p>Need examined.</p>	<p><i>Review in 2009</i></p> <p>Self-represented litigant proposals implemented</p> <p>VLRC researching means to improve access to justice in lower level civil law matters</p>

CLC client issues and case studies informing Victorian civil law reform	<p>Participate in relevant civil law advisory groups (directly or through external representative).</p> <p>Promote CLC involvement in Civil Law Working Group and civil law reform & policy initiatives</p> <p>Develop a mechanism for CLCs to document and collect civil law case studies which can be accessed for policy and law reform initiatives.</p> <p>Evaluate potential for better data recording of civil law issues through CLSIS or alternative mechanism.</p>	<p>CLC client experiences informing reform.</p> <p>Effective Civil Law Working Group & greater CLC engagement in civil policy work</p> <p>CLC case studies informing reform</p> <p>Improved data recording examined.</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>
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2. HUMAN RIGHTS OF DISADVANTAGED AUSTRALIANS REALISED

FCLC Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
A national legislative human rights charter	<p>Federation submission to national consultation</p> <p>Advocacy to support submission and respond to negative human rights coverage</p>	<p>CLC perspective informing consultation</p> <p>Balanced debate around human rights, with interests of CLC client groups represented</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>
CLC client issues and case studies informing national human rights debate	<p>Facilitate mechanisms for CLCs to document and provide cases studies on human rights</p> <p>Use case studies in human rights advocacy</p>	<p>CLC case studies informing debate</p> <p>As above</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>
Victorian Charter strengthened through 2011 review to include economic, social & cultural rights, and expanded remedies	<p>Federation submission to Victorian review</p> <p>Advocacy to support submission and respond to negative human rights coverage</p>	None in 2009	<p>CLC perspective informs review of Victorian Charter</p> <p>CLC perspective informs debate about Charter review</p>
Gardner EO Act Review implemented	Advocacy to support implementation of review	Review implemented	<i>Review in 2009</i>

EO Exceptions Review finalised and implemented	Advocacy to support implementation of review	Review finalised and implemented	<i>Review in 2009</i>
Enhanced participatory democracy and free speech	Monitor laws and policies that impact on democracy and free speech	Issues monitored	<i>Review in 2009</i>

3. FAMILY VIOLENCE ELIMINATED IN AUSTRALIA

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
Further implementation of the VLRC Report on Family Violence.	By leading Women's Justice campaign, continue advocacy for implementation of non-legislative reforms.	Government implementation of VLRC non-legislative reforms.	<i>Review in 2009</i>
A sustainable network of CLC Applicant Family Violence Lawyers.	Support CLCs to organise network meetings, develop promotional and resource materials, develop models for peer support/mentoring, seek funding for network.	Network in place and operating effectively.	<i>Review in 2009</i>

4. A FAIR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AND EFFECTIVE POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY IN VICTORIA

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
A strengthened and more independent police accountability system.	<p>In partnership with Fitzroy and Flemington Kensington CLCs, document research on effective police accountability mechanisms.</p> <p>Develop a mechanism for CLCs to document case studies around police accountability processes focusing on rural, indigenous and disadvantaged communities.</p> <p>Advocate for an improved police accountability system in Victoria</p> <p>Support Police Issues Working Group members to conduct advocacy</p>	<p>None in 2009</p> <p>Working Group effective and engaged in advocacy</p>	<p>Research report prepared</p> <p>CLC case studies informing reform</p> <p>CLC client perspectives informing debate</p> <p>Working Group effective and engaged in advocacy</p>

	Identify potential partners for research and advocacy.		Research and advocacy capacity enhanced through partnership with academics /stakeholders
Police not using unnecessary force or weaponry	Respond to advocacy opportunities on police weaponry and use of force issues Freedom of information application to obtain guidelines around Taser use.	Balanced public debate informed by CLC client perspectives Public scrutiny of Taser guidelines	Balanced public debate informed by CLC client perspectives
Appropriate treatment of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system	Participate in relevant advisory groups (directly or through external representative) examining mental illness and the criminal justice system. Work with specialist CLCs to respond to the review of mental illness and the criminal justice system.	CLC client experiences informing reform of how the criminal justice system deals with mental illness As above	<i>Review in 2009</i>
Human rights protected in Victorian criminal law reform	Promote CLC collaboration to monitor and respond to relevant issues to Victorian Government review of criminal law	CLC perspective informing reform of criminal law	<i>Review in 2009</i>

5. A FAIR & HUMANE CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM THAT PROMOTES CRIME PREVENTION, APPROPRIATE ALTERNATIVES TO PRISON & REHABILITATION

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
CLC sector conducting corrections law reform & policy work and contributing informed and balanced public comment on corrections issues	Undertake advocacy around corrections issues focused on presenting an informed and balanced view point Work with CLCs engaged in corrections work to respond to relevant law reform & policy issues.	Public corrections debate informed by research and CLC client viewpoints Collaborative responses to relevant corrections law reform & policy issues undertaken	

	Support Centre for Human Rights of Imprisoned People Project and other CLC corrections networking initiatives	Effective CLC network engaged in corrections law reform & policy issues.	
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6. ANTI-TERRORISM LAWS THAT ARE CONSISTENT WITH HUMAN RIGHTS AND APPLIED IN A NON-DISCRIMINATORY MANNER

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
CLCs have capacity to engage in policy, legal and community development work around anti-terrorism laws.	Intensive support to Working Group.	Effective Anti-Terrorism Working Group Improved CLC capacity to engage in policy, legal and community development work around anti-terrorism laws.	

7. ELIMINATION OF INDIGENOUS DISADVANTAGE AND REALISATION OF INDIGENOUS SELF-DETERMINATION

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
CLCs have capacity to appropriately address Indigenous issues.	Develop and implement a strategy to achieve appropriate cultural competency levels in CLCs	Strategy developed	CLCs delivering culturally appropriate and accessible services to Indigenous clients
Federation working collaboratively with Indigenous CLCs on policy issues affecting Indigenous Victorians.	Work with AFVPLS and VALS to develop a strategy to work collaboratively on Indigenous policy issues and review 09/10 policy priorities in light of strategy. Work with AFVPLS and VALS to review the Indigenous section of the Federation Policy Positions.	Strategy developed and 2010 policy priorities reviewed in light of strategy. Need for Indigenous justice policy reform highlighted in Policy Positions.	<i>Review in 2009</i>

8. ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION & HARASSMENT AGAINST GAY, LESBIAN, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER & INTERSEX COMMUNITIES

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
FCLC engaged in collaborative law reform & policy work on GLBTI issues	<p>Work with GLBTI agencies to develop a strategy to work collaboratively on GLBTI policy issues and review 09/10 policy priorities in light of strategy.</p> <p>Work with GLBTI agencies to review the GLBTI section of the Federation Policy Positions.</p>	<p>Strategy developed and 09/10 policy priorities reviewed in light of strategy</p> <p>Need for GLBTI justice policy reform highlighted in Policy Positions.</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>

9. A CORONIAL SYSTEM IN VICTORIA THAT IS MORE RESPONSIVE TO FAMILIES AND THAT HAS A STRENGTHENED PREVENTATIVE ROLE

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
Enhanced access to justice for families in inquests	Explore means to develop resources and conduct training to promote increased and more effective representation of families in inquests	Increase in expertise and access to representation in coronial law	<i>Review in 2009</i>

10. CLCs ENGAGED IN, AND COLLABORATING ON, EFFECTIVE LAW REFORM AND POLICY WORK

Federation Goal	Activities	Expected Outcomes 2009	Expected Outcomes 2010
CLCs collaborating on law reform & policy work	<p>Support and, where possible, attend Federation Working Groups and Justice Initiatives Standing Group.</p> <p>Develop Working Group Convenor Position Description</p> <p>Review and distribute information on Federation structures and getting involved</p>	<p>Effective Working Groups and JI Standing Group</p> <p>As above.</p> <p>Greater CLC understanding of, and engagement with, Federation structures.</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>

	<p>Review and develop membership policies and protocols on collaboration between specialist and generalist CLCs, the Federation and Working Groups</p> <p>Monitor relevant law reform & policy issues not being covered by Working Groups and promote CLC collaboration to respond to issues such as family law.</p>	<p>Greater collaboration and better coordinated law reform & policy work by specialist and generalist CLCs and Federation and Working Groups.</p> <p>CLCs collaborating on law reform & policy issues not being addressed by Working Groups.</p>	
CLCs undertaking increased law reform & policy work.	<p>Promote CLCs undertaking law reform & policy work</p> <p>Review and publicise data on CLC engagement in law reform & policy work</p> <p>Actively engage with CLCs on Federation law reform & policy projects</p> <p>Consult with RRR CLCs on how Federation can support RRR CLC law reform & policy work</p>	<p>Increase in CLC involvement in Federation law reform & policy work</p> <p>As above</p> <p>Greater CLC input to Federation law reform & policy initiatives</p> <p>Greater Federation collaboration with RRR CLCs on law reform & policy work</p>	<i>Review in 2009</i>
Improved effectiveness of CLC law reform & policy work	<p>Build links with academics and others to provide research assistance and collaboration around law reform & policy work</p> <p>Identify & disseminate research and statistical analysis to support CLCs to conduct effective law reform & policy work</p> <p>Provide training to CLCs on submission writing and media work</p> <p>Explore means of developing database, accessible to CLCs, of CLC case studies (either through a Federation initiative or CLSP review)</p>	<p>CLC law reform work backed by improved research capacity</p> <p>CLCs have greater access to research and data to support law reform work.</p> <p>More effective CLC law reform & policy work.</p> <p>None in 2009</p>	<p><i>Review in 2009</i></p> <p>CLC case studies accessible and informing law reform and policy initiatives</p>