**QLD Legal Service Plan – 5/12/13**

Participants:

Anne **-** NQ Women’s Legal Service

Bill – Townsville CLC

Emma – Mackay CLC

Angus and Raquel - RAILS

Apologies: Julian Porter, Suncoast CLC; James Barnes, Cairns CLC and Kara Firth QPICLH

Raquel – Introduction – To discuss collaboration amongst CLC´s that provide Immigration Advice and Assistance as the LPITAF funding application process requires that this occurs.

The other priority is to inform the Qld Legal Services Plan. It was requested that RAILS convenes this meeting to commence the discussion about future collaboration etc.

A good starting point would be to describe the type and volume of work that each of the regional centres do in this area of law.

Anne – Director – NQ WLS´ Principal Solicitor Tanya Anderson is a Registered Migration Agent (RMA) as well– most of work is connected to women and DV work (Family Violence Provisions under the Migration Regulations).

Last financial year they saw around 20 clients (multiple advices) – there were mostly advices and only 5 cases run in last financial year.

Bill –is the Principal Solicitor and also a Registered Migration Agent at the Townsville Community Legal Service. Last year they handled around 90 matters – 75 cases – 12 criminal deportations – 65 onshore refugee + Refugee Family Reunion (RFR) – DV – 12 advices – 85 discreet clients. They do criminal deportations if clients don’t get legal aid. Keep it to no more than half of his job. There has been huge increase in NESB clients – about 30% now. Anne would be same.

Emma – Part time solicitor and registered migration agent at the Mackay Community Legal Service. This is relatively a new service – finding their feet – no casework – advices only – getting 457s enquiries with associated general law queries. Any enquiry comes in and given consideration. Emma is supervised by a volunteer registered migration agent. The Centre also has 2 RMA´s volunteers for night advice.

1. Bill – EAS – done in the past – no commitment from private RMAS, pro-bono CPD –
2. No EAS in NQWCS

RAILS

The type of matters RAILS do are DV, RFR and PV. Also we do JR matters and are assisting Cat C clients (boat arrivals via a sub-contract with RACS in NSW). RAILS volume is high and is casework focussed. RAILS specialised knowledge is of importance to other centres that do not do this work on a day to day basis.

Issues

Bill – He would like to see support to regional centres – they are not funded for this work – no access to Counsel – advisory.

His concerns are as follows:

* Specialist centres – no participation in the CLC network instead the Specialist Centres created their own network
* Acknowledgement of need

Annie – national network – more efforts need to be put into this network

* Specialist centres – with no support this is not sustainable
* Informal network – will allow to share those ideas and issues
* Big need for support from specialist centres
* It is good idea to have a picture of who does what?
* Cancellation criminal – project with prisoners CS.
* Information permissions
* Information re. IE – Counsel’s advice

It was agreed that regular Information would assist all involved.

* RAILS agrees to open its caseworkers meeting once per month so other Centres can participate via telephone
* In the new year we will develop specific referral protocols
* RAILS role – Qld
* RAILS positioning as Statewide service
* RAILS will provide templates when changes to the law occur. Angus is to send template advice to Bill
* Support for RAILS – Report – play a disgusting role in the provision of support and mentor CLCs.
* Centres find that with NESB clients they must be aware of torture and trauma issues which make the work more complex.

Anne also raised:

* CLCs – role in DV
* PII – MOU’s most formalise
* Cooperative legal service delivery model in NSW, should be considered
* Partnerships – Western NSW – trying to address indigenous disadvantage.

Emma was supportive of regular communication and also for RAILS to consider providing direct supervision of the advices. Raquel to negotiate with Jessica, Director of Mackay CLC.

All centres will include some of these ideas in the LPITAF funding application.

 A second meeting will be convened when all return from the Christmas-New year break.

Out of teleconference discussions

RAILS discussed arrangements with James Barnes Principal solicitor at Cairns CLC and Julian Porter from Suncoast CLC.

RAILS agreed to provide support and set up specific cross referral protocols with Suncoast CLC.

RAILS also commenced discussions with James from Cairns CLC to set up a specific referral protocol for regional clients making applications under the domestic violence provisions in 2014 and who are being assisted by RAILS. This arrangement will ease the stresses these clients experience as all of the work is done via phone contact.