



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

This is the 12th annual report of Civil Liberties Australia Inc, registered association no. A04043, trading as and known as Civil Liberties Australia, or CLA. This annual report covers the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2015.

Registered office and register of members: The registered office of CLA is 51 Ardlethan Street Fisher ACT 2611, where the register of members is kept. The public officer is Bill Rowlings, of that address. Further information about CLA and its activities, including its Constitution, is available at www.cla.asn.au (see *About CLA*)

CLA Civil Liberties Australia Inc A04043

Box 7438 FISHER ACT 2611

E: [secretary\[at\]cla.asn.au](mailto:secretary[at]cla.asn.au)

Web: www.cla.asn.au

Office-bearers:

Dr Kristine Klugman	President
Noor Blumer (part)	Vice-President
Timothy Vines	Vice-President
Bill Rowlings	CEO/Secretary
Phil Schubert	Treasurer
Lance Williamson (part)	Director
Frank Cassidy	Director
Saskia Vervoorn	Director
Richard Griggs	Director
Rajan Venkataraman (part)	Director

Highlights

Last year, in the annual report, we said these issues would be likely to take a lot of energy in 2015:

Major issues for 2015:

- Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement (TPP)
- Gene Patents, and Patents generally
- Right To Appeal law, all states & territories
- Voluntary-assisted dying
- Mandatory imprisonment
- Rule of Law/reversal of onus of proof
- Better Justice campaign

How did we do? The TPP fight continues: the battle goes on with the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties in Australia, and whether the US and Canadian governments decide ultimately to ratify the deal this year. We hope not.

On gene patents, we had a win when the High Court ruled in favour of common sense and to allow women in particular to access cheaper gene tests for breast cancer. In reserve, then and now, we have a Bill ready to go to parliament.

Options for people to access voluntary-assisted dying continues as a battle, but progress was made in 2015. Many more articles appeared on the topic, and several high-profile cases appeared to move Australia closer to a sensible vote for people to have the right to make decisions about their life.

Mandatory imprisonment and the rule of law/reversal of onus of proof were incorporated into our Better Justice campaign. That major new initiative was launched with the New Year 2016 release of the Better Justice one-page summary sheet, accompanied by a slide presentation readied for presenting through 2016.

After a conference on wrongful imprisonment in Adelaide in November 2014, we spent a year preparing the Better Justice program. It is without doubt the best campaign Civil Liberties Australia has produced: it provides leadership in terms of improving the justice system in Australia across the board, from judges to law students, from defendants who can't pay to people languishing in prisons. The planned outcomes have a 10-year viewpoint, with a clear aim of achieving one initiative a year.

For 2016, there will be one major task on which to report:

Major issue for 2016:

- Implement Better Justice campaign

Major activities of 2015:

Civil Liberties Australia proposed, then joined with the local law and bar groups and the ANU Law School to promote and stage, an important address by Bernard Collaery on national security, legal professional privilege and Timor Leste.

This was the first chance for him to present his story in public where mainstream media, including Parliament House reporters and TV crews, could attend. Collaery is the lawyer whose office in Canberra was raided by ASIO and AFP in relation to two of his clients, Timor Leste and Agent X, a former Australian security officer. Collaery represents TL in relation to the maritime boundary between TL and Australia, including over allegations of spying/surveillance by Australia during earlier negotiations, and also represents the ex-agent who has made the allegations.

The entire raid fiasco, and the bans on speaking and cancellation of the agent's passport which followed, had to be formally approved by the Attorney-General Senator George Brandis. The AG has engineered a new low in free speech, civil liberties, human rights and democracy in Australia.

CLA's initiative to try to bring the issue more out into the open was welcomed by Collaery and the media.

Other significant things CLA was involved in included:

- passage through the Tasmanian parliament of the "right to appeal" legislation. This new law – first proposed to the Tasmanian Attorney-General, Dr Vanessa Goodwin by CLA – provides Sue Neill-Fraser, whom CLA believes was wrongfully convicted, with the right to request her case be re-heard. At end-2015, the appeal papers were being finalised for lodging early in 2016 (under the supervision of CLA member and Neill-Fraser's pro bono lawyer for four years, Barbara Etter).
- CLA WA member Brian Tennant was invested with an AM award on 27 March, a well-deserved honour in which CLA and CLA members had a role. Brian has been a tireless worker for social justice and civil liberties in Perth and WA for half a century. *He is shown receiving his honour from WA Governor, Kerry Sanderson.*
- NSW CLA member Ann Symonds also received an AM for a lifetime of work for the community, from Waverley Council to the NSW Legislative Council and as founder of the Australian Parliamentary Group on Drug Law Reform.
- CLA proposed the concept of a *Blue Paper* before new or revised terror and security laws could pass the Australian



Parliament. New Senator Nick McKim (Greens, Tasmania), the party's federal justice spokesperson, adopted the idea and will promote it during 2016. Parliament is used to white and green papers being drawn up, and considered for many months, before major policy change occurs. CLA proposes a similar process takes place with a new series, blue papers, whenever any major new law or change in process, such as forming a new agency or new arrangements, is considered for police and security matters.

- CEO Bill Rowlings address to police/academic/civil society workshop at University of Queensland on protests and infrastructure. This 'Chatham House rules' gathering was an acknowledgement that civil liberties organisations can play a productive role in pre-planning for how major protests should be handled.
- in April, CLA appeared before the acting Independent National Security Legislation Monitor, where we advocated for wholesale revision of the terror laws brought in since 2011. The extent to which the government pays lip service to the role of INSM was evident by lack of any response from Attorney-General Senator George Brandis by 31 Dec 2015.
- in May, the President represented CLA at the DFAT-AGD NGO roundtable on Australia's reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):
- also in May, CLA was present at the launch of the Cross-Party Working Group on the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement at Parliament House: hosted by CLA member Melissa Parke MP (Labor, Fremantle), Senator Peter Whish-Wilson (Greens, Tas), and Senator Nick Xenophon (Independent, SA).
- We took part in two key meetings about Australia citizenship, one before the topic became one of contention in relation to Australians in the Middle East, and one after that occurred. The first was a roundtable on citizenship and the Australian constitution, at Parliament House, Canberra, early in the year where we proposed a federal seat-by-seat campaign to promote the value of citizenship. Later, when Australians who fought in the Middle East and wanted to return to their home country became a major talking point, we took part in a seminar at the Attorney-General's Department, led by CLA member Prof Kim Rubinstein. CLA believes there is still much muddled thinking on citizenship, and the first step is for the nation's leaders to define precisely what it is, and what rights and responsibilities it bestows on Australian citizens.
- CLA teamed with Amnesty International and others in a joint approach to government on the death penalty, and Australia's role in advocating for its abolition in our neck

of the woods and worldwide. The committee had not reported at year-end.

- One of the joys of the year was to help support the protest by Parliament House cleaners, organised by United Voice and supported by the Vintage Reds retired ACT unionists group, outside parliament. The delight on the faces of usually repressed migrant workers when they realised a big crowd was there to support them was worth the early morning attendance in the middle of a Canberra winter.
- An 'off-Broadway' event which was significant was attending the address by Elizabeth Reid, former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam's Women's Issue appointment, on *'Maintaining the Rage'* after gains made during the Whitlam era. It is frequently useful to go back 1-5 Prime Ministers and evaluate where achievements of the day, and promises made, have ended up...so as to follow up.
- CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman organised a widespread campaign for nominating Prof Gillian Triggs, the Human Rights Commissioner, as Australian of the Year. It was unsuccessful. The National Australia Day Council appears to be so betoken to the government that it refused to even put her name forward, even though she was probably nominated by more people than anyone else, certainly more than the person eventually chosen.
- CLA Vice-President and National Media Spokesperson Tim Vines (*photo*) visited Brussels in late June and early July as a guest of the EU Visitor Program. He was able to study the way the systems, agencies, bureaucracy and the Parliament of the EU operate.
- Project begun: CLA began to research and gather support for a survey and analysis of the processes for appointing and overseeing Directors of Public Prosecution throughout Australia. These absolutely key positions, who make fundamentally important judge-like decisions day by day, largely operate without public monitoring. CLA believes that should change. We have held meetings with barrister and solicitor CLA members to scope the project, as well as meetings with political and senior DPP/magistrate figures. We are also sounding out potential partners who are in the business of measuring and evaluating legal and like processes.



During 2015 we lost the services of long-serving Board Member and web inspiration, Lance Williamson. For eight years he conceived, implemented and ran the CLA website and membership system, which was an enormous contribu-

tion to the organisation...on top of his incisive comments and practical senior public service experience that he contributed as a Director. To help fill the huge gap left by Webmaster/Director Lance, Hayat Khan volunteered to look after web day-to-day management.

Vice-President Noor Blumer also decided to step down during 2015. Her input was enormously valued by CLA, adding the expertise and experience of a senior lawyer, partner in her own law firm (Blumers Lawyers, with husband, Mark) and law society and national law council positions on which to draw. She and Blumers Lawyers have been great contributors to CLA achievements over many years.

On 17 May, we welcomed Rajan Venkataraman as a new Board Member. He brings extensive Foreign Affairs and Trade experience, as well as operating at the very highest levels of national government in a Cabinet support role. With a new venture just started (a waterfront cafe in Hobart), he brings the added benefit of small business experience. He is actively running the Tasmanian CLA group while fellow Tasmanian Director, Richard Griggs, takes a year's sabbatical from his full-time corporate lawyer post at the University of Tasmania to run the Greens state political office.

CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman and CEO Bill Rowlings visited Tasmania in February, to further progress on the Right To Appeal law (which was passed, and became operative in November) and in October to receive an award.



In October, they were honoured with the 2015 National Award for Civil Justice (photo) from the Australian Lawyers Alliance. It was presented at the ALA annual national conference in Hobart. The award reads *"In recognition of an outstanding achievement in promoting justice, freedom and the rights of the individual."* We feel that accolade should apply to all members of CLA who support the

organisation with their actions and/or subscriptions. It is the members who make it possible.

During the October visit to Tasmania, the opportunity was taken to launch the History of Civil Liberties in Australia's Tasmanian chapter. This was done at a meeting of CLA Tasmanian members, and by lodging an official copy with the State Library of Tasmania. The history will be progressively published on the CLA website over 2016.

Continuing issues

Apart from the expected new appeal for Sue Neill-Fraser in Tasmania, the need to be every-watchful for new terror laws, and inhumanities in the offshore processing of asylum seekers, we will be closely watching the trial of noted criminologist Paul Wilson in Queensland on remembered, relatively

minor child sex abuse allegations from about 40 years ago; the continued imprisonment of Francis Lockhart's son Chiseko, in South Australia's prison system ; and the refusal of the WA AG Michael Mischin to release a specially-commissioner forensic expert report into DNA involved in the conviction of Robin David Macartney, who is likely to die in jail in WA before he can access the secret document, paid for by the taxpayer and which should be available to Macartney's legal representatives.

We will observe how the merger of Australian Institute of Criminology with the Australian Crime Commission in 2015 becomes a disaster for valid criminology research.

We will continue generally, and under the Better Justice campaign to push for state and full federal ratification of OPCAT, the Optional Protocol to the Convention On Torture. We undertake that task as part of a wider push to improve education and rehabilitation in Australian jails, so that people return to jail after release less frequently and with greater time gaps between offending.

Submissions in 2015

Several members authored submissions in 2015: CLA is particularly grateful for the work of Pauline Westwood on the TPP and Kenneth Davidson on free trade treaties in general. Umberto Torresi brought a lawyers's eye to his legislation contributions, and to the articles he contributed. As manager of CLA's submission business, Director Rajan Venkataraman was responsible for a number of submissions. Where no author is given, those below were jointly prepared by Dr Kristine Klugman and Bill Rowlings or co-authored with other organisations.

Although we consistently try to wind back on the submission making – because it is not terribly productive when most MPs completely ignore civil society opinions – we still managed to make more than 30 in 2015. Among those lodged during the year were:

Article, as submission: Why are we militarising **Customs?** ASIO Act section 35 P (**restrictions on journalists** and reporting), plus supplementary submission to Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (INSLM), plus appearance at hearing.

Australian Law Reform Commission (ALRC) inquiry into rights and freedoms in Commonwealth laws (**Freedoms Inquiry**): lead - Rajan Venkataraman.

Australian National Audit Office: sub re audit of **Australian Government Security Vetting Agency**.

Australia's reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and International Convention on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR): author Rajan Venkataraman.

ChAFTA (Chinese-Australia free trade agreement) inquiry into trade agreement: lead author Pauline Westwood.

Citizenship: Attendance at the Roundtable on Constitutional Law and Australian citizenship (note: no report by parliament). Media release by CLA demands government defines rights and responsibilities.

Right: Prof Kim Rubinstein (seated), Prof George Williams (left) and Labor Shadow Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus at the Citizenship roundtable. The two professors are CLA members.



Collective Complaint to International Criminal Court Critique of Australia's 5th report (2010-14) under the ICESCR to the UN: CLA endorsed Refugee Action's submission, plus CLA submission to above: lead author Rajan Venkataraman.

Death Penalty: Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade's Human Rights Sub-Committee in relation to the inquiry on Australia's Advocacy for Abolition of the Death Penalty. CLA also appeared in person before the committee, and lodged a supplementary supplement on how Australians feel about the death penalty. The original submission was made jointly with an Amnesty-led coalition.

Deductible Gift Recipient inquiry submission.

Defence Trade Controls Act: extra points submission in conjunction with one by Brendan Jones.

Electoral Education at Parliament House: CLA re-submitted our sub of 2006 on same subject.

Environmental organisations: inquiry into their registration

Firearms trafficking offences (Criminal Code Amendment (Firearms Trafficking) Bill 2015

Migration Amendment (Maintaining the Good Order of Immigration Detention Facilities) Bill 2015, aka **Refugee Riot Act.**

Paying People Smugglers: submission lead-authored by member Umberto Torresi.

Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Ctee (SLAC Legn): on reasons for NOT **merging the Australian Institute of Criminology** with the Australian Crime Commission, under the ACC Amendment (Criminology Research) Bill 2015.

Trade and Investment Growth Committee Inquiry – Benefiting from **Australia's Free Trade Agreements:** lead author Kenneth Davidson.

Treaty-making processes: submission lead-authored by Pauline Westwood.

UN Universal Periodic Review (done in cooperation with Human Rights Law Centre).

States:

NSW:

- Ombudsman inquiry into **Firearm Prohibition Orders** search powers
- **Economic Development in Aboriginal Communities**

Victorian Parliament's Legal and Social Issues Committee inquiry into **end of life choices**

ACT:

- **Human Rights Commission restructure**
- Abortion clinic: **offset free of protest**

SA:

Children and Forced/Trafficked Marriage: lead author Felicity Gerry QC.

Tasmania:

- **Right To Appeal** draft legislation: Criminal Code Amendment (Second or Subsequent Appeal for Fresh and Compelling Evidence) Bill 201
- **Phasing Out Suspended Sentences**

And, on the important matter of **Selfies:** we arranged for the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters to formally tell us that taking 'selfies' in polling places – perhaps of how you filled in your ballot paper – was OK. Look for lots of ballot selfies come September 2016, or whenever the federal election is held.

As well as these submissions, we worked on a submission to AG Brandis and international bodies that he, as first law officer, could not meet international obligations as to the state of justice in Australia because of the failure of the justice system in at least one state. That submission is on hold.

As is usual, we held numerous meetings with individuals and partner bodies during the year to advance CLA's viewpoints and to partner on campaigns.



Above: CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman (right), then CLA Vice-President Noor Blumer (centre) and ACT Chief Justice Helen Murrell (left) at one of the information exchange meetings during 2015.



Left: Meeting between CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman and Australian Privacy Foundation former Chair, Prof Roger Clarke.

Media and major campaigns in 2015

In terms of media, CLA made organisational gains in personnel over the year, but fought a losing battle in media releases, TV and radio commentary and articles against an active government hell-bent on dumbing down the the nation while raising fear levels in the community.

If 2014 had been a year of gathering clouds for civil rights – with never ending tranches of anti-terror ‘hyperlegislation’ being rushed into and through Parliament – then it really started to pour in 2015.

Despite one of the most concerted civil society campaigns in recent time, mandatory data retention (aka Australia-wide Mass Surveillance) passed into law along with new anti-terrorism laws permitting Australian citizens to be stripped of their citizenship without trial. The negotiated-in-secret Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement, which piles on barriers to creative works and education (not to mention life-saving medicines) while ripping back Australia’s sovereignty via an Investor State Dispute Settlement clause, was signed by the Minister for Trade. And a hundred other cuts were made to the freedoms and rights of Australians, in the form of still greater powers for our police, security agents and politicians to act without judicial oversight or accountability.

Perhaps most egregious was a law that passed parliament that would, in effect, allow detention centre guards beat to death asylum seekers with near impunity – all in the name of ‘maintaining order’.

What is a small organisation to do? Well, we mobilised through the media and through our active members. Richard Griggs and Rajan Venkataraman in Tasmania have done fantastic work to try to curtail some of the worst anti-protesting laws Australia has seen since the dark days of Joh Bjelke-Petersen. Through the *Guardian*, we raised serious issues with the Orwellian-named citizenship-stripping “Allegiance to Australia” Bill – which was subsequently amended in light to widespread criticism. (It’s still a bad law though).

In a concerted effort with the media, we made it more difficult for Attorneys-General to thrust ‘anti-bikie’ laws on the public. These laws, which never use the word ‘bikie’, would undermine the independence of the courts and negate the right to silence.

There was some sunshine in amongst the rain: working with friends, members and allies in the Victorian and ACT Parliaments we influenced the passage of laws that balance the right to protest with the right of women to access lawful abortion and health services.

On a personal note, I was fortunate enough to travel as a guest of the European Union to Brussels as part of the EU Visitors Program in late June. The real commitment to democracy and diversity I saw now appears to be under

Contact author

@timvines1975

Wednesday 24 June 2015 08:23 BST



< Shares

Comments

2



There is a real risk the new law amounts to Parliament imposing a sentence and punishment on an individual. Peter Dunton, Tony Abbott and George Brandis. Photograph: Mike Gowers for the Guardian

The lead up to the introduction of the patriotically-named “allegiance to Australia” bill has been marked by debate around whether any such law would be constitutional, or would breach the separation of powers by giving the ministers judge-like powers.

Above: Article by CLA V-P Tim Vines in the *Guardian* on the citizenship changes proposed by the government in 2015.

heavy strain from the threat of terrorism and rising nationalism as a response to the Syrian crisis.

By far the most glorious moment of 2015 came as a surprise. In a stunning turn of events, the High Court ruled 7-0 that patents over DNA and genes were – and had always been – *invalid*, opening the path to a future where the whims of a monopoly holder cannot dictate whether you can find out if you are at high risk of cancer. Our long-running ‘Don’t Patent Me’ campaign can come to an end – for now.

Ultimately, this endeavour was won through the Courts, and we congratulate the team at Maurice Blackburn for taking the case all the way to the High Court *pro bono* and, most especially, brave Yvonne D’arcy who brought the case and challenged a US-based multinational. This has been a campaign over many years, with many partners, and CLA acknowledges the tireless advocacy of some academics and Parliamentarians, including long-time CLA member Melissa Parke who sadly announced her retirement from politics at the end of 2015, effective at the 2016 election.

2015 was a year when CLA really consolidated its national media reach. Having more people able to respond to media requests means we can reach more groups and build stronger relationships with more media outlets. While media work alone will not stop the next series of rights-diminishing laws it helps to shine a light on these frequently poorly written and confusing laws.

2016 will likely be more of the same: cloudy, with the chance of a storm or two. But I expect we will see a few sunny days and maybe even some dry spells, where politicians realise that sometimes the best response to a crisis is not to pass a bad law: it’s to do nothing and trust in the Rule of Law.

– Tim Vines, Vice-President & National Media Spokesperson

Tasmanian report



Above: Terry Polglase, Deirdre and Ella Murray and CLA's Richard Griggs pictured for a Mercury article about the issue of schools discrimination.

2015 in Tasmania was bookended by free speech debates. The year commenced with months of sustained public debate and criticism of the state government intention to re-write laws to allow corporations to sue individual for defamations. Eventually the decision was taken not to pursue the changes. This news was welcomed by Civil Liberties Australia, artists, business people, journalists, lawyers, environmentalists and unionists (see: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-05/why-tasmania-backed-down-on-defamation-law-changes/6072170>).

By the end of the 2015, the government had used its new anti-protest laws, the Tasmanian Parliament Workplaces (Protection from Protesters) Act passed in late-2014, for the first time. The laws, which CLA fought to ameliorate, appear to have been the forerunner of attempts throughout Australia to toughen the approach to protest.

Despite a government pledge that the new Tasmanian laws would not be used against 'mum and dad protestors' the first people charged under them were in fact not only parents, but grandparents. They face the potential for \$10,000 fines or four-year jail terms for peacefully protesting on public land.

In 2015, CLA played a major role in some important wins in Tasmania.

We were the first to propose, back in 2013, a 'Right To Appeal' (R2A) process for Tasmania, and our advocacy was instrumental in it being adopted as bipartisan policy in the state and its passage into law in late-2015. The R2A process allows convicted persons to launch appeals where fresh evidence comes to light that points to a miscarriage of justice. Tasmania became the second state (after South Australia) to

adopt such legislation; CLA is urging other states to follow suit.

We expect the first case to be heard under the R2A law in Tasmania will be that of Sue Neill-Fraser, convicted for murdering her husband in a case where there is no body, no weapon, no witness and no believable motive. She has served six and half years of a 23-year sentence: we hope she can attend CLA gatherings as a free woman during 2016.

In another significant achievement, following urgings from CLA the Tasmanian Government announced in December 2015 that it would introduce legislation so people who received convictions under former laws that criminalised consensual homosexual activity could apply to have their criminal records expunged. This process will have a material impact on people's ability to work and to travel and follows similar action by the Victorian Government. Other states are also considering such legislation.

In October 2015, the President of CLA, Dr Kristine Klugman and CEO/Secretary Bill Rowlings were visiting the state at the same time to receive the ALA's National Civil Justice Award ceremony (see earlier). Also present for that event was CLA Treasurer Phil Schubert. The three visiting office-bearers were able to attend a morning tea with Tasmanian CLA members in October, which was also the perfect opportunity to welcome Tasmanian resident Rajan Venkataraman on to the Board of Civil Liberties Australia where he has become the Tasmanian spokesperson for CLA, and national controller of the CLA submission process. Richard Griggs remains a Director on the Board, while on his 'sabbatical' employment. Also while here, Dr Klugman launched the Tasmanian chapter of the CLA publication on the history of civil liberties in Australia at the State Library of Tasmania.

– Richard Griggs and Rajan Venkataraman



Rajan Venkataraman, Kristine Klugman and the Tasmanian Attorney-General's then senior legal adviser, Andrew Mitchell, during a meeting in the AG's offices in early 2015 to progress the 'Right To Appeal' law.

Webmaster's report

After eight years, Director and founding Webmaster Lance Williamson stepped down from both roles. Replacing someone who gave so much effort and time to developing the look and feel of the CLA website, then running it single-handedly, is not easy. In one sense it is almost impossible, because the shape and tone of CLA's web presence was very much a reflection of Lance.

We advertised among ANU computer students/graduates, and from two applicants chose Hayat Khan, who has a Masters in Computing. It will take time for him to develop the ancillary awareness of the Australian NGO operating environment and our corporate reporting and meeting requirements. With a website that is approaching 10, though refreshed significantly two years ago, it would be wise for the Board to start planning a full refresh. That process will start in 2016.

– Bill Rowlings, CEO

Treasurer's report

We've been able again to husband our resources during 2015, to end the year in a solid financial position. For 2016, we expect funds above normal to be spent on refreshing core publicity, equipment and functional materials, including the website and Facebook page, for the first time in a decade.

We also expect to see an increase in postage costs due to the increased charges – and reduced services – of Australia Post. Many of CLA's members have joined the organisation in response to a letter from the President, following their expressing an opinion or comment supportive of civil liberties and human rights in newspapers or other public forums.

A number of members were very generous with donations during the year, helping to ensure that CLA's reserves remain in a healthy position. We are extremely fortunate to have people who contribute extra funds in support of one of the few non-government organisations which receives absolutely no funding from government in any way. Our ability to critique government depends on members' subs and the generous donations, as well as the donated time of many people who write letters, submissions, comments and articles, and who serve on the Board.

In detail, the 2016 accounts show income slightly up, with expenditure down due to less travel: one trip to Hobart was paid for by the Australian Lawyers Alliance for the President and Secretary to received their award. In 2016, more travel is likely as we spread the CLA Better Justice message throughout Australia.

– Phil Schubert, Treasurer

Membership

Membership since CLA's inception (10 Dec 2003):

Year	Financial Members at 31 December
2004	17
2005	62
2006	121
2007	169
2008	224
2009	244
2010	304
2011	259
2012	267
2013	302
2014	264
2015	297

VALE:

Neal Keith Wilkinson, ACT

<http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/police-release-image-of-wanniassa-murder-victim-neal-keith-wilkinson-20150323-1m5ler.html>

Phyllida Ives, NSW

Selected feedback during 2015

I enjoy the newsletter. Obviously a lot of people do a lot of work.
– Stu, CLA member

Headline in *The Mercury*, Hobart, re the ALA award to Civil Liberties Australia members:

'Award for pair of legal stirrers'

Comment on the headline from a member:

'You are veritable pains in the butt'. (Keep it up !)

Not always successful...

I want to thank you again for your kind support. It's really a wonderful job that you have, even if your hands are sometimes tied to help as much as you would like to, as was the case with me. Still I do realise that you did your utmost to give me the best advice you could.

– non-member who sought help with a 'revenge porn' problem

History:

An organisation concerned with civil liberties (Council for Civil Liberties of the ACT Inc) existed in the ACT in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Mostly, it was organised and managed by Mr Laurie O'Sullivan, a barrister at the Sydney and Canberra bars who also had extensive involvement with the Australian Public Service Board over many years.

In the late 1990s, the organisation's management changed and Mr Jon Stanhope became prominent as president. He went on to a political career, and to be Chief Minister of the ACT for a decade. After Mr Stanhope went into politics, the organisation lapsed, being formally de-registered by the ACT Registrar-General in the early 2000s period.

A new organisation with a different name to distinguish it from the earlier body – Civil Liberties Australia (ACT) Inc. – was created when a properly constituted meeting of the interim board resolved to apply for registration under the Associations Incorporation Act 1991 of the ACT.

The Certificate of Incorporation was stamped by the ACT Registrar-General on 10 December 2003. Dr Kristine Klugman OAM was the inaugural President.

At the 2004 AGM, Mr O'Sullivan was voted the first honorary life member and patron of CLA. He died in October 2004. Mr John Marsden, a former president of the NSW Council for Civil Liberties and of the NSW Law Society, later became patron. He died in May 2006.

In March 2007, the AGM agreed to change the organisation's name to Civil Liberties Australia Inc. (dropping 'ACT' from the name) to reflect the reality that the organisation was having an impact and drawing a response in other States and the Northern Territory of Australia. The AGM also agreed that voting on important issues like board positions and constitutional change could be handled electronically. CLA was therefore one of the first organisations to come to grips with the electronic age for membership/voting.

In 2009, an electronic Annual General Meeting (eAGM) was held for the first time. In 2010, the organisation moved to a fully electronic database for membership and financial management, which was consolidated and became fully operational in 2011. In the same year, CLA held its second (two-yearly) e-ballot for Board positions, and the third eAGM,

making us probably the leading incorporated entity in managing its formal business electronically.

The year 2012 saw appointment of the first non-ACT-based Director, Rex Widerstrom of WA, and consolidation as the enterprise began to enter its first 'matured' phase. Also, the Board planned for an expansion phase through 2013 by way of marketing and promotion.

In 2013, CLA's second director from outside Canberra, Richard Griggs, joined the Board, and the Tasmanian CLA group was refreshed and reinvigorated. On 10 December 2013, CLA celebrated its first decade in existence. That same month, for the second time, the organisation reached more than 300 members throughout Australia (with a few overseas), from 17 members at the same time, only in the ACT, nine years earlier. In June CLA's official Secretary, Public Officer and CEO, Bill Rowlings was awarded an OAM for 'services to civil liberties and human rights'. Mr Rowlings was also honoured as ACT Senior Australian of the Year in 2010, in both cases for his work with Civil Liberties Australia. The webmaster entirely revamped the CLA website, giving it a improved 'look and feel' while converting to a software system easier for non-specialists to work with.

In 2014, fees increased for the first time in 10 years. This move launched CLA on to a firmer financial footing in the next few years. In 2015, a second Director from Tasmania, Rajan Venkataraman, joined the Board, which suffered the loss of eight-year and founding Webmaster/Director Lance Williamson.



Civil Liberties Australia

Box 7438 Fisher ACT 2611 Australia

Email: secretary@cla.asn.au

Web: www.cla.asn.au



CLA Board, end-2015 :

Frank Cassidy, Tim Vines, Saskia Vervoorn, Phil Schubert, Bill Rowlings, Kristine Klugman, Richard Griggs, Rajan Venkataraman.

Note: composite photo.

Summary of CLA Finances (\$)					
			2015 full year	2014 full year	
BALANCE B/F			\$ 23,979.00	\$20,275.00	
INCOME					
Memberships			\$ 10,520.00	\$10,088.00	
Donations	General	\$ 3,273.00	\$ 3,273.00	\$ 2,272.00	\$ 2,272.00
Interest	Working	\$ 8.00		\$ 9.00	
	Cash reserve	\$ 262.81		\$ 83.00	
	Term Deposit	\$ 249.89		\$ 328.00	
	Total		\$ 520.70	\$ 420.00	
TOTAL INCOME			\$ 14,313.70	\$12,780.00	
EXPENDITURE					
Communications	Ink & Stationery	\$ 656.91		\$ 578.00	
(with members & public)	Printing	\$ 125.40		\$ 466.00	
	Website	\$ 724.76		\$ 898.00	
	Postage	\$ 1,125.75		\$ 657.00	
	PO Box	\$ 115.00		\$ 113.00	
	Parking fees	\$ 106.40		\$ 202.00	
	Functions	\$ 37.80		\$ 811.00	
	Travel	\$ 369.81		\$ 4,208.00	
	Publicity/other	\$ 67.41		\$ 480.00	
			\$ 3,329.24	\$ 8,413.00	
Sponsorships		\$ -		\$ 120.00	
General Administration	Bank Charges	\$ 256.19		\$ 543.00	
			\$ 256.19	\$ 543.00	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			\$ 3,585.43	\$ 9,076.00	
Surplus/Deficit			\$ 10,728.27	\$ 3,704.00	
BALANCE C/F			\$ 34,707.27	\$23,979.00	
Comprising Bank Balances					
Working Account			\$ 3,147.38		
Maxi Direct			\$ 23,002.76		
Term Deposit			\$ 11,143.63		
Total Bank Accounts			\$ 37,293.77		
	add Moneys not Credited		\$ 40.00		
	less Moneys not Debited				
Net Financial Position			\$ 37,333.77	\$23,979.00	

Accounts prepared for Auditor. If any changes or notes to be added by Auditor, CLA Members will be advised.