



**Connecting people with  
information and services**

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**SUMMER Newsletter 2024**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT...

I am honoured to have recently been elected the President of the Citizens Advice Bureau. Along with newly elected Vice President Kate Wellington, the CAB Board and I are delighted to announce the appointment of Dion Dosualdo as the new CEO. Dion comes to us from the not-for-profit sector, bringing with him considerable experience in adapting to ever-changing needs faced by a modern association.

I would like to take the opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation and thanks to immediate past-president Sandra Brown who has served as CAB president since November 2021. Sandra's dedication, vision and tireless commitment have been a driving force at CAB and includes having been the Chief Executive Officer from 1994 until Sandra's retirement in 2011. I am delighted that Sandra will continue serve on the CAB Board and look forward to working alongside Sandra and the other Board members.

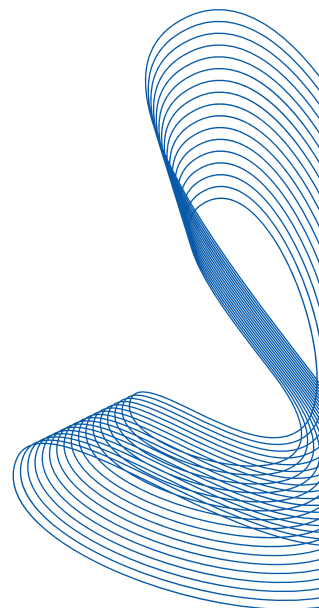
In January, we farewelled Maree Arnason who initially joined us for a two-month consultation role that later expanded well into 2 years as the interim CEO of CAB. Maree assisted with guiding CAB through the implementation of many initiatives in particular at our Perth branch office. Maree's contribution has been greatly admired, and we appreciate all her hard work over the past 2 years.

On the back of celebrating and recognising our 60th anniversary last year, focus now shifts to the future strategic direction of CAB. Needless to say, the achievements of the past 60 years are testament to the incredible work of our volunteers, our staff and the partnerships we have developed.

As we look to the future, CAB's core services will need to adapt and evolve to meet the needs of our community. The stresses in the rising cost of living coupled with the demand for services is being witnessed across all our units as we see increases in requests for assistance and advice. Now, more so than ever, there is a growing need for the services and the referrals CAB provides. We're up for the challenge and will work with all our branches to connect people with information and services so they can make independent and informed decisions.



Citizens Advice Bureau President Rob Lilley.





# WELCOMING NEW CAB CEO, DION DOSUALDO

Hello, this is my very first update as the new CEO of the Citizens Advice Bureau WA. I have quickly settled into my new role, due in no small part to the incredible welcome I have received from so many warm and wonderful people here at CAB.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge the incredible work that has been done by Maree and the team at the Perth branch. It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that I take on this role, and I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the CAB board for entrusting me with this responsibility. No pressure...!

I recently farewelled my team and the many members I represented for over 9 years as the CEO at the Australian Institute of Conveyancers WA Division. Before that I spent 9 years at Landgate, which for those with long memories would remember as DOLA and then DLI. So many wonderful friendships have been forged and as I close a chapter in my life I open a new one here at CAB.

Along with the incredible 60+ year history I can see the need for CAB growing, especially when I think about how we can expand on the good work we do. In the UK the Citizens Advice Bureau, which in many respects is similar to that of CABWA, is testament to the public's need for advice and referral services. Here in WA our complimentary services such as the visiting JP's and Lawyers plus the Legal Aid virtual appointments and the No Interest Loans (NILS) have all come to be part of the fabric of CAB. What will CAB be offering in 2024 and beyond?



Front left to right: Armadale branch volunteers with new CAB CEO, Dion Dosualdo.



Front left to right: Joondalup branch volunteers with new CAB CEO, Dion Dosualdo.

# WELCOMING NEW CAB CEO, DION DOSUALDO

I've started to make my way around to each of the Branches as I hear more about the good work they do. Collectively our many volunteers through their hard work, dedication and commitment contribute in such a positive way to our community.

Recently I was at the Mandurah Branch which is located at the end of the Smart St mall. The well establish team is testament to a cohesive volunteer run Branch and is well known in the local community. Even a recent fire in the adjacent toilets has not deterred their dedication to ensuring services are back up and running.

I also had the pleasure of visiting the Armadale Branch which is conveniently located in the Armadale Shopping Centre. Such a modern bright and well-appointed office the team are so proud of the work they do and the same can be said for the Joondalup Branch. Despite a much more compact office the team at Joondalup were full of such fun and to such joy in each other's company. I might tower over the team at Joondalup but they were head and shoulders over me when it came to their spirit for servicing the local community. I'm immensely proud to be part of an association that has not only existed for over 60 years but has done so thanks to the generosity of spirit from the many volunteers and the hard work of the staff and board. There's a lot of heart at CAB and its shared with all the people we help.

I believe that our greatest asset is our talented and diverse team. Each of them brings unique perspectives, skills, and experiences. It is through our collective talents that we will ensure we continue to make a difference in helping people.

I am committed to leading with integrity, transparency, and a clear vision which is why I know we will adapt, evolve, embrace new challenges as well as seek out opportunities. Despite where CAB goes we will remain steadfast in our commitment to delivering value to the communities and the people we service. I am incredibly excited about the journey I am taking and hope I can contribute to CAB's success but most importantly find my place amongst the incredible group of volunteers and staff who I have such admiration for.

Sincerely,  
Dion Dosualdo



Front left to right: Board Member Barbara Kwiecien with Interim CEO Maree Arnason.

From an original 8-week tenure as a consultant to an eventual two years of service to CAB, interim CEO Maree Arnason has made an indelible contribution to CAB. Maree's leadership, guidance, vision, strategic acumen and unwavering commitment has benefited CAB immensely.

Maree's approachability, humility, and genuine concern for the well-being of the volunteers and staff has fostered a positive and inclusive workplace culture. Maree's team

approach instilled a belief that every member of the CAB family plays a crucial role in the services we provide to the community.

We sincerely wish Maree all the best and hope the future is as rewarding and fulfilling as her time with us has been. Thank you, Maree for being a visionary leader, a mentor and above all, a source of professionalism.



# JOONDALUP BRANCH: VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS

Diane has been with the Joondalup branch for 10 years this year and has enjoyed every minute of it thus far. She stated that the variety of calls and people one meets is very interesting and always educational, there are no two days alike!

Diane and a fellow colleague, Bea Leembruggen work together to assist individuals with WA No Interest Loan applications, which Diane feels is extremely satisfying and rewarding as it directly impacts the community and helps to bridge the gap for people in need.

Knitting is one of Diane's passions as she makes children's garments and donates them to a local women's refuge. In her free time, Diane enjoys caravanning, and spending time with her family.

We hope to have Diane on our team for years to come, thank you for your service to CAB and to the community at large!



Diane Senior of CAB Joondalup Branch.



Bea Leembruggen of CAB Joondalup Branch.

Bea Leembruggen has been volunteering at CAB Joondalup for 23 years, an amazing achievement and benefit to our community.

Bea works on a Wednesday, and helps clients whom are applying for WA No Interest Loans. Working closely with Anglicare and The Good Shepherd, Bea endeavours to aid clients gain access to financial means during periods of hardship.

Bea states life was simpler in the earlier years; since the digital age emerged, times have evolved and at a very fast rate. CAB has embraced those changes, ensuring the volunteers are prepared to manage the needs of the community through frequent training and information.

Bea states that being a volunteer is not about making yourself feel good, but that it is about being an active listener, directing, helping and supporting people most often when they are in a vulnerable place in their own life. In return, one works as a team, makes life long friends and grows as a person. What more could you possibly want?

# 10 YEARS OF SERVICE: FAREWELL TO NERYS LLOYD

After 10 years of providing services to the Joondalup branch, it comes time to bid exceptional CAB visiting lawyer Nerys Lloyd farewell as she commences a new chapter. There is no doubt that Nerys was an absolute asset to the Joondalup team, as she donated her time to the branch once monthly for many many years - we are ever so grateful for your service.

Having provided Family Law appointments for the last ten years, it is evident that the service was highly desirable and very much needed for CAB clients both located in the Northern suburbs but also throughout all of Western Australia.

Always professional, with a kind and understanding demeanour, going above and beyond to ensure clients were assisted as best as possible - we will certainly feel her absence but are excited and comforted knowing that Nerys will aid many people in the community for years to come.

We wish Nerys all the very best in her new appointment, and thank her very much for the countless clients she serviced and the numerous lives she was able to touch.



CAB volunteers and staff with Joondalup CAB visiting lawyer, Nerys Lloyd (center),



# INFORMATION AND REFERRAL: TRAINING AND EDUCATION

## CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION

In February, two assessors from the Office of Criminal Injuries Compensation came and spoke to volunteers from various CAB branches who gathered together to receive information regarding the processes involved with lodging a Criminal Injuries Compensation application.

CAB strives to continuously provide ongoing training and works diligently to ensure that all CAB volunteers have access to the most relevant and up-to-date information in order to provide our clients with the most accurate community referrals.



CAB volunteers at the Criminal Injuries Compensation training held at the Perth Branch.

## NEW VOLUNTEER TRAINING

New volunteers at the Citizens Advice Bureau undertake a mandatory two-day training course which focuses on the history of CAB, how the organisation provide information and referral to the community, information regarding the community legal centres we work alongside with, and the areas of law and mediation which we are able to service.

This training is beneficial to volunteers and allows them the opportunity to ask questions, get informed, feel more comfortable in their role and gain confidence in helping individuals.



New volunteers from various CAB branches attend the two-day volunteer training which is presented at CAB's Perth Branch by the Volunteer and Client Services Coordinator.

# CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU: END OF YEAR CELEBRATION

In December 2023, the Citizens Advice Bureau held its annual End of Year celebration for volunteers and staff at the Pan Pacific Hotel. The lunch was attended by roughly 100 individuals who all had a fabulous time and thoroughly enjoyed the delicious buffet.

CAB enjoys taking the opportunity to acknowledge and express our endless gratitude and appreciation to all the volunteers whom which the organisation simply could not operate without. The Western Australian community greatly benefits from the time CAB volunteers devote weekly, and getting together and praising this great achievement is indeed a worthy cause.



From left to right: CAB volunteers get together for the End of Year Celebration.



Joondalup volunteers with CAB Patron the Hon. Len Roberts-Smith RFD KC and his wife (centre).

## CLWA Member Engagement Forum

In October 2023, Samantha and Vivian from the Legal Unit attended the CLWA Member Engagement Forum.

Samantha delivered a presentation on Will Drafting Tips that was very well received.

The opening for the presentation was from Hutley's Australian Wills Precedent:

Drafting Wills is a learned, practical skill – but it has to be learned very fast, as there is little scope for error. The underlying difficulty is that once the Will has been prepared, executed and filed in safe custody, there is little likelihood that any errors it might contain will be discovered until after the testator's death, when it is too late to correct them".

This opening gave the attendees an opportunity to reflect and consider whether they should be engaging in Will drafting and impressed upon the attendees, the seriousness of drafting Wills.



CAB PLO presenting during the CLWA Member Engagement Forum.



# MEDIATION UNIT: FAREWELL TO BIRUTE!

Following five years of dedicated volunteering, Birute Greenhalgh has bid farewell to CAB and is embarking on exciting adventures. Birute played a vital role within the Mediation team, contributing significantly to the service of our business and mediation clients. Overcoming the initial learning curve at the commencement of her journey with CAB, Birute evolved into a proficient master of Filepro, the program which we utilise to retain all of our client documents, amongst many other skillsets.

Birute has always gone above and beyond, focusing on streamlining processes to ensure the Mediation unit could function in an efficient manner. She consistently demonstrated her willingness to assist anyone with anything; No task was too big, and if she couldn't find a specific answer, she would diligently locate someone who could. When we spoke with Birute about her time at CAB, she stated that she didn't have just one specific fond memory, but that she has a collection of warm memories from her time with CAB which include...

*Tackling the curly questions that seem to come out of left field from clients, and working out a way to go - teamwork and trust in colleagues for support has been wonderful. I appreciated the support and knowledge sharing from Margaret and Barbara in particular, but also the strong working relationships established with the Mediation team, mostly with Shannon, Gillian, Margaret M, Mark and Barry, and the others whom I met from time to time!*

*Helping the clients to navigate the Mediation service, they are so grateful to have the process explained to them and a path to follow to set up parenting arrangements, property settlement matters and all the implications of avoiding having to go to court if at all possible.*

*And lastly, the ways in which CAB values and demonstrates its support for the many dedicated volunteers who gain so much from a personal and social perspective in being part of an organisation that provides the community with invaluable support and information.*

The Mediation unit's administration owes much to Birute's invaluable assistance and guidance. Thank you, Birute, for your unwavering support. Your cheerful demeanour and wonderful personality will be sincerely missed. We extend our best wishes for your upcoming endeavours in the next chapter of your life.



CAB volunteer Birute Greenhalgh enjoying dinner aboard the Queen Elizabeth with her husband.

# CAB IN THE COMMUNITY

**40,448**  
**PEOPLE  
HELPED**



## COMMUNITY EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT

- AGED CARE
- LIBRARIES
- SUPPORT GROUPS
- TALKBACK RADIO
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT

## OUR **TOP 3** AREAS OF LAW BY APPOINTMENT

1. WILL/EPA/EPG
2. LETTERS OF ADMINISTRATION
3. PROBATE



**96%**  
CLIENTS FOUND CAB **HELPFUL**



**94%**  
CLIENTS WOULD  
**RECOMMEND** OUR  
SERVICES TO OTHERS

**97%**  
CLIENTS WERE **HAPPY**  
WITH OUR SERVICE

**CUSTOMER  
PERCEPTION  
SURVEY**  
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU  
MAY 2023

**88%**  
CLIENTS RECEIVED  
**USEFUL** INFORMATION

A PANEL OF  
**13**  
ACCREDITED  
MEDIATORS



**9**  
QUALIFIED FAMILY  
DISPUTE RESOLUTION  
PRACTITIONERS



**5**  
LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT  
PARTNERSHIPS  
WITH MEDIATION  
SERVICE





# CAB SNAPSHOT


SERVING & INFORMING WA FOR **60 YEARS**



CAB PERTH

**+9**  
BRANCHES  
METRO & REGIONAL

**OVER 200 VOLUNTEERS**

**INFORMATION AND REFERRAL SERVICE**

- PHONE LINE
- FACE-TO-FACE
- ONLINE



**LEGAL SERVICE**

- WILL/EPA/EPG
- FAMILY LAW
- LOA
- PROBATE



**MEDIATION SERVICE**

- DISPUTE
- FAMILY
- COMMUNITY
- COMMERCIAL
- CONFIDENTIAL PROCESS

## WA FUNDING BODIES




**ADDITIONAL FREE SERVICES**

- WA NILS
- CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION
- TAX HELP
- JUSTICE OF PEACE AND LEGAL AID WA (WITH OUR THANKS)

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION



## GOVERNANCE

COMPLIANT: REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS



## NATIONAL ACCREDITATION SCHEME FOR CLC'S

- ✓ ACCREDITED
- ✓ CERTIFIED





# CAB's 3 Pillars



## INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Our role is to give accurate and current information and referral assistance to help the WA community navigate their challenges.

We answer queries via:



With regular Community Legal Education activities we go out to meet people in the community and represent CAB offsite.

### Additional Services:

- Tax Help
- WA NILS
- Criminal Injuries Compensation
- CAB Virtual Legal Appointments
- Justice of the Peace



## LEGAL

We provide a low-cost legal advice service on a range of issues and prepare various legal documents:

- **Family Law** - divorce, child and property matters
- **Civil Law** - Wills, Enduring Power of Attorney and Enduring Power of Guardianship, Probate applications and Letters of Administration, Estate

### • Criminal Law

Probate kits can be purchased on our online shop and at our Perth office.



## MEDIATION

We offer dispute resolution services for the following matters, including:

- **Family Matters**
  - Parenting
  - Property
  - Grandparenting
- **Community Matters**
  - Dividing fences
  - Overhanging branches
- **Commercial Matters**
  - Workplace disputes
  - Small business and association disputes

### • Facilitation and Education.

Mediations are held in our Perth office or virtually.

## With thanks: Funding Partners and Visiting Lawyers

We wish to express our gratitude and appreciation towards our funding partners and supporters.

Your contributions and unwavering support enable us to continue to provide a quality service in diverse areas.



Our funding partners



Our visiting pro bono lawyers (above) assist our clients in family, estate and criminal law matters



CABWA acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands in which we live and work, the Whadjuk Nyoongar people. We pay our respects to elders, past, present and emerging, acknowledging their special connection to land, waters and community.

CABWA recognises, respects and welcomes diversity in all its forms, in the belief that diversity is a source of strength and opportunity.



## **CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

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Perth WA 6000

Enquiries (08) 9221 5711

Admin (08) 9325 4217

Mediation (08) 9325 4121

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