



eastern **community legal** centre

---

**A**  
**COMMUNITY LEGAL CENTRE**  
**FOR THE**  
**YARRA RANGES**

**Legal Needs Study and Proposal**

---

Thanks to:

Yarra Ranges CLC Reference Group (see 1.7)

Agencies assisting the research

Amy Johnstone

ECLC staff, volunteers and board

Legal needs research undertaken by S. Wilson (RMIT student placement) 2009

Report: M. Smith, S. Wilson, D. Budge, 2010

Eastern Community Legal Centre Inc.

Suite 3, Town Hall Hub

27 Bank Street Box Hill 3128

Ph: 9285 4822

Fx: 9285 4833

Suite B, 6 Floriston Rd (PO Box 747) Boronia 3155

Ph: 9762 6235

Tf: 1300 797 08

Fx: 9762 9751

[www.eclc.org.au](http://www.eclc.org.au)

## **Table of contents**

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF PROJECT</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1. Introduction	9
1.2. Background	9
1.3. Need for community legal services	9
1.4. Outer East Centre	10
1.5. 2009 Bushfire Response	10
1.6. Yarra Ranges Project	11
1.7. A partnership approach	12
1.8. Legal Needs study	12
<b>2. YARRA RANGES PROFILE</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>3. FINDINGS</b>	<b>16</b>
3.1. Legal Issues	16
3.2. Barriers	17
<b>4. GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF INTEREST</b>	<b>18</b>
4.1. Yarra Junction/Warburton	18
4.2. Healesville	19
4.3. Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth, Chirnside Park	19
<b>5. KEY THEMES</b>	<b>21</b>
5.1. Family Violence	21
Integrated Family Response	22
5.2. Tenancy and Housing	22
5.3. Transport	23
5.4. Disability	23
5.5. Indigenous Population	23

<b>6.</b>	<b>SERVICES PROVIDED BY ECLC TO THE YARRA RANGES</b>	<b>25</b>
6.1.	Clients attending ECLC from the Yarra Ranges 2008/09	25
6.2.	Matters seen by ECLC from the Yarra Ranges 2008/09	26
6.3.	Bushfire Response – long term issues	26
<b>7.</b>	<b>SERVICES PROVIDING LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN THE YARRA RANGES</b>	<b>29</b>
7.1.	Respondents acknowledging legal assistance available in Yarra Ranges	29
7.2.	Other services that provide legal assistance in the Yarra Ranges	29
7.3.	Financial Counselling	29
<b>8.</b>	<b>KEY STAKEHOLDERS SERVICE STRATEGIES</b>	<b>30</b>
8.1.	Shire of Yarra Ranges	30
8.2.	Community Legal Centres (CLCs)	30
8.3.	Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)	30
<b>9.</b>	<b>SERVICE PROPOSAL</b>	<b>31</b>
9.1.	Service Model	31
9.2.	Service Location	31
	<b>APPENDIX 1 - LEGAL NEEDS STUDY APPROACH</b>	<b>32</b>
1.	Community Development	32
2.	Methodology	33
	<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>34</b>

## **Executive Summary**

In 2005 Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) opened its outer east office in Boronia to expand services to a larger geographical area. Although this office provides direct services and a platform for outreach services, given the Shire of Yarra Ranges' size, geography and diversity it struggles to make an effective impact for these residents and communities. This is of concern given the greater level of disadvantage experienced by a number of communities and residents in this area.

Following the devastating bushfires of Black Saturday, ECLC demonstrated its commitment to the impacted communities in the Yarra Ranges through offering an immediate and ongoing response to people's legal and related needs, harnessing volunteer and other support and working closely with Council, government, agencies and local residents. This crisis response confirmed the need for an ongoing response to local needs through a local community legal centre presence in partnership with the community.

ECLC initiated the Yarra Ranges project after identifying emerging issues around legal service provision in the Shire. It developed a research and partnership development project to detail the legal issues that exist and consider appropriate responses.

The purpose of the research project was to:

- Identify the types of legal issues that residents face
- Identify the types of barriers residents face accessing legal services
- Build relationships with existing community welfare service providers in the Shire

The research was undertaken by Stuart Wilson, a final year social work student at RMIT University completing a field education placement with ECLC.

Alongside the research, ECLC established a Yarra Ranges CLC Reference Group to guide the research, analyse the issues and inform the development of service models to respond to the legal needs. The Reference Group was well supported by the Shire of Yarra Ranges, community agencies, Victoria Police and the local Member for Seymour, Ben Hardman.

The research project used both qualitative and quantitative methods and involved both local residents and service providers to elicit information about the common legal issues, gaps in legal service delivery and barriers to access residents face.

The Yarra Ranges comprises a population of over 140,000 spread across a vast area of 2467 km<sup>2</sup> on Melbourne's urban fringe. While most of the residents reside in the urban west, there are significant communities experiencing disadvantage, particularly in the geographically and socially isolated areas. Residents in the Shire generally have lower levels of formal education and community wellbeing indicators highlight up to 15% of young people are disengaged from employment or study (compared to 9% in the region). These are of significant concern when these residents require legal assistance.

The research highlighted that both agencies and residents had major concerns regarding the legal needs and lack of relevant services in the Shire.

The findings of the research identified:

- According to service providers in the region, 86% identified that their clients face tenancy/housing related legal issues, 77% family law problems and 77% intervention order issues.
- A lack of awareness of legal services (81%) is the biggest barrier for people accessing a legal service in the Yarra Ranges and beyond. This is closely followed by transport/distance to travel at 77%.
- There are distinct levels of disadvantage that exist in parts of the Shire, which include Yarra Junction and Healesville/Badger Creek.

- A complete lack of awareness is common for many residents when questioned on legal services and assistance in their area
- Family violence and family law are dominant themes that emerge from consultation with service providers and local residents.
- An overwhelming majority of people consulted during the research process are in favour of a new community legal centre being established immediately.

The number of Intervention Orders (IVO) sought by Victoria Police in response to family incidents was higher than any other municipality in the Eastern region. Police, the Court and agencies identified that the lack of both legal and support services, as well as difficulty in accessing these services due to transport issues creates difficulties for women and children needing assistance. Further, the reforms seeking a more integrated family violence service system are undermined by the lack of legal services being available to affected family members, especially those who should seek advice before any Court proceeding.

Tenancy and housing stress were emphasised by the research. It is almost impossible to access any real tenancy support in the Shire of Yarra Ranges due to the sheer distance from these services. The need to address these legal issues has resulted in some local service providers having to take on the role of a tenant support worker and attend VCAT with their clients to attempt to stabilise their tenancy. With proper access to tenancy advice and support, residents of the Shire would be informed of their rights and processes and as a result reduce the number of illegal evictions and be provided with achievable options that may ultimately reduce avoidable homelessness.

There is a large concentration of indigenous residents in the Healesville/Badgers Creek area, over four times higher than the Victorian average. Responses from service providers in the Healesville region suggested that a legal service in the area would complement the state-wide indigenous legal services as well as local services for the indigenous community.

The lack of public transport in the outer areas of the Shire of Yarra Ranges has a huge impact on the communities of Yarra Junction, Healesville, Yarra Glen and beyond. These communities have identified that the infrequency of services, the distance between bus stops and the time it takes to travel to Lilydale all make it difficult to access services such as the community legal centre or legal aid.

The report recommends the establishment of a Yarra Ranges CLC to service this municipality, based in Healesville with additional outreach services, particularly at Yarra Junction. The Healesville was selected as:

- the Healesville police station received approximately 1600 calls per annum compared to the 400 or so at the Yarra Junction and Warburton stations;
- the higher indigenous population based close to Healesville and accessing local services;
- the Murrindindi population including Marysville and other townships are likely to access a Healesville service and must be considered as a 'community of interest' and a probable secondary catchment.

## **Recommendations**

1. That the State and Commonwealth Governments fund the establishment of a full community legal centre for the Yarra Ranges shire, as a matter of urgency.
2. That the Yarra Ranges service be operated by Eastern CLC.
3. That the Yarra Ranges CLC be based in Healesville, in suitable premises.
4. That the Yarra Ranges CLC undertake regular outreach to Yarra Junction, Yarra Glen and Lilydale.
5. That Eastern Community Legal Centre continue to work closely with Council and partner agencies in the establishment of such a service.
6. That family violence be prioritised in the establishment of the Yarra Ranges CLC and this work be integrated with the existing Intervention Order Support Service at Ringwood Magistrates' Court and family violence support services.
7. That ECLC develop responses – in the short and long-term - to tenancy issues in the Yarra Ranges following these issues highlighted in this report.
8. Following funding being received, ECLC establish further links with the communities in the secondary catchment of the Murrindindi shire.



Shire of Yarra Ranges 2010

## 1. Purpose and Scope of Project

### 1.1. Introduction

For over 35 years, Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) has assisted residents of Melbourne's east as they encounter the justice and legal systems. Initially based just in Blackburn, in 2005 ECLC established an Outer East service based in Boronia with the support of the Victorian government.

Despite excellent work by the outer east service, the needs of the Yarra Ranges, initially identified in 2004, have remained a key focus for the Centre. It has a large population (almost 145,000) and a number of communities experiencing particular socioeconomic disadvantage. ECLC has provided some limited outreach services but believed these were insufficient.

In 2009 ECLC initiated a legal needs study of the Yarra Ranges with the support of local and active Reference Group. This study has been completed and confirms both a high level of legal need and major access barriers to services for these communities.

In partnership with community agencies, local government, legal professionals and the community, the time has come for the Yarra Ranges to receive better access to justice.

### 1.2. Background

Eastern Community Legal Centre (ECLC) provides free legal advice and assistance for residents in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) of Melbourne. The centre operates during the day, at night and through various outreach locations. While open to all residents, priority is given to those who are disadvantaged or are on low incomes. ECLC lawyers provide assistance with a range of matters, with a family law and family violence being a major focus.

In addition to direct legal services, ECLC undertakes community development activities that empower clients, workers and the general community, raise awareness and provide education through projects and partnerships, workshops, media, events and publications.

ECLC has a small staff team and over 100 volunteers. ECLC has two main offices:

- Inner East in Box Hill which serves the municipalities of Whitehorse, Boroondara and Manningham; and
- Outer East in Boronia which serves the municipalities of Knox Maroondah, and Yarra Ranges.

ECLC operates outreach services in nine locations across the region including at the Ringwood Magistrates' Court. In 2008/09, ECLC assisted 2,416 clients through legal advice and casework by staff and volunteers, as well as community legal education sessions to over 1,200 residents and published legal information for many more.

### 1.3. Need for community legal services

Eastern Community Legal Centre services a vast area incorporating six municipalities:

<b>Outer East</b>		<b>Inner East</b>	
City of Knox	152,388	City of Boroondara	162,285
City of Maroondah	102,478	City of Manningham	115,702
Shire of Yarra Ranges	144,993	City of Whitehorse	151,233
<b>Sub-totals</b>	<b>399,859</b>		<b>429,220</b>
	<b>Total</b>		<b>829,079</b>

ABS Census, 2006



Within a week of the bushfires ECLC offered free legal advice to people affected by the fires in their region, initially on a daily basis in two relief centres. Considering the destruction of the fires and the loss people endured, residents had concerns about a range of issues with a legal dimension - insurance, property matters, tenancy issues, replacing legal documents, estate and family law issues. Eastern CLC, along with Victoria Legal Aid, volunteers and the private profession through the LIV and PILCH, along with the Victoria Law Foundation worked together to assist people affected by the bushfires.

In March 2009 ECLC received some Commonwealth funding to support the bushfire response in the Yarra Ranges. This supported some additional staffing until February 2010 to support this work.

Since February 2009 ECLC has maintained a presence in Yarra Glen through a weekly outreach service and extensive community development and partnership work.

The bushfire response has highlighted the unmet legal need in the region and raised concerns about the adequacy of ongoing legal service provision to the Yarra Ranges community. While ECLC had good relationships with the (relatively few) community agencies operating within the community, it was not initially seen as an automatic partner following the tragic events. This reflects the challenge of maintaining extensive partnerships at local, municipal and regional levels across a vast catchment.

## **1.6. Yarra Ranges Project**

In mid-2009, ECLC initiated a project to focus on the legal needs of the Yarra Ranges. The project is the outcome of the need identified through both ECLC's ongoing outreach work in the Yarra Ranges and the bushfire response. While the need for action has been known by the management of ECLC for some time, the recent dramatic events have highlighted its urgency.

Eastern Community Legal Centre expected that the need for a community legal service in the Yarra Ranges would be readily apparent and indeed, overdue. While willing to provide leadership on this issue, the Centre recognises that true community legal services need to be based within their communities to be viable and effective.

Eastern Community Legal Centre is prepared to auspice an Outer East Community Legal Service. However, rather than the auspice, the most crucial issue is to have such a service established. To do so will require a major increase in resources and significant preparatory work to occur within the area. To this end, ECLC has embarked on a collaborative strategy to both prepare and advocate for the establishment of such a service.

The project aims to address these issues through a targeted and evidence-based campaign with the following components:

### **1. Establish a Yarra Ranges Reference Group.**

The reference group (based on the successful Outer East CLC Reference Group of 2004/05) was initiated to guide the project, provide strategic advice and assist in advocacy for the proposed development in the Yarra Ranges.

### **2. Undertake a Legal Needs Study**

Social work student, Stuart Wilson has led this component of the project. The study will establish whether there is a need for further services and identify the key legal issues in the region as well as barriers people face accessing legal services.

The research component will be guided by participatory action principles which aim to draw in local knowledge that provides a platform for positive action. The study will also inform consideration of the most effective service model for this diverse region.

### **3. Build upon established links and form new relationships.**

ECLC has a history of building positive relationships and partnerships with local agencies in various settings. Some existing partnerships with Council, community health services, family violence services and local law firms provide a strong foundation. For this project to be

successful it is vital to spend time with agencies in the Yarra Ranges, building upon current links, seeking their input and knowledge and establishing new relationships with agencies that exist in the region.

#### **4. Formal Report / Submission**

Incorporating the information gathered through the research and advice from the reference group, a formal report will be completed for submission to the federal and state governments and other relevant agencies.

#### **5. Advocacy**

As the project develops, and once the legal needs are clearer, the project will advocate at a range of levels to highlight the need for an expanded service response for the Yarra Ranges communities.

### **1.7. A partnership approach**

A Yarra Ranges Community Legal Centre Reference Group has been established to advance this proposal. The group has now met on four occasions and is committed to improving access to justice for residents of the Yarra Ranges.

Membership of this group includes representation from:

- Ben Hardman MP – Member for Seymour
- Anchor - John Devine
- Anglicare Lilydale - Marg Kearsley, Gaby Thomson
- EACH Financial Counselling - Bernadette Douglas
- Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) - Teresita Padilla
- Shire of Yarra Ranges - Nick White
- Victoria Police Yarra Ranges Area - Inspector Andrew Humberstone
- Victoria Police Family Violence Advisor - Sgt. Lisa Keyte
- Yarra Junction & District Community Bank Branch (Bendigo) - Adam Whitworth
- Yarra Valley Community Health Service - Jane Judd
- Eastern CLC Board members - Kate Hamond, Lance Wilson, Rhonda Goodall
- Eastern CLC staff - Michael Smith, Denise Budge

### **1.8. Legal Needs study**

The legal needs study analysed local data and undertook consultations and surveys with agency staff and local residents. Details of the methodology and approach are in the appendix to this report.

## 2. Yarra Ranges Profile

The Shire of Yarra Ranges covers a range of 2467 km<sup>2</sup> making it one of the largest municipalities in Melbourne’s metropolitan fringe. The Shire is large, diverse and complex, and contains different areas of rural and urban land. Most of the 140,000 residents live in the western part of the Shire which constitutes two major hubs; Lilydale and Belgrave. These two regional towns are major connection points between rural Yarra Valley and metropolitan Melbourne. The two centres are separated by the Dandenong Ranges making the links between them difficult due to the terrain. Most of the urbanized and populated area in the west was mainly developed in the 1970s and 1980s with the emphasis on detached housing for family-type households (McNelis et al 2005).

The eastern part of the Shire makes up over half of the geographic area of the Yarra Ranges but has a relatively small population of close to sixteen thousand. There are around 40 townships and villages both in the hills and valley - most of these had their roots in small settlements in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. They have developed a strong community spirit and involvement over this time, in particular valuing the local environment. Although these areas contain only a small portion of the Shire’s population they present many challenges. They are home to the most geographically and socially isolated members of the Shire, partly due to the size of the area and the rural nature of the environment and social context. These factors result in a lack of services, ranging from transport services to health services which only further isolate and disadvantage people living in this vast area (McNelis et al 2005).

When compared to the bordering municipalities, Yarra Ranges clearly has elements of disadvantage. Considering the diverse and complex nature of the Shire, there are areas which have been highlighted as more disadvantaged than others, especially in the western half. Previous research projects have indicated that towns which run along the Warburton Highway which include Wandin, Woori Yallock, Launching Place, Yarra Junction, Wesburn, Millgrove, Warburton and McMahons Creek all rate as areas of high disadvantage on the relative socio-economic disadvantage index (SEIFA). The index is derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, unemployment levels, unskilled occupations and other variables that reflect disadvantage.

The existence of pockets of disadvantage is supported by a study undertaken by The Ignatius Centre (Jesuit Social Services), titled “Unequal in Life”. The study uses a range of data including unemployment figures, income levels, child abuse rates, number of unskilled workers and number of court convictions to determine a “Risk Score” for localities across Victoria. Localities ranged from the most at risk, Braybrook, with a score of -2.3347 (ranked no. 1 in the State) to Bandiana which was the least at risk with a score of 2.65075 (ranked no. 621 in the State). Some 6 localities in the Yarra Ranges area were given negative risk scores in the report. Three of the most disadvantaged (in the lowest quarter of scores) were in the rural areas of the Shire of Yarra Ranges:

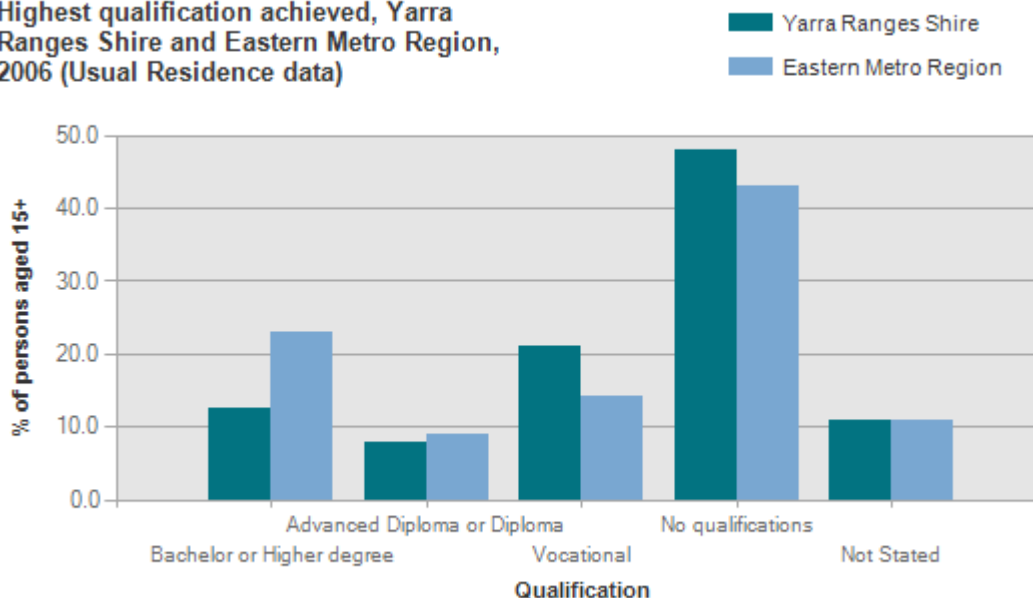
Locality	LGA	Risk Score	Rank
<b>Healesville</b>	<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	<b>-1.03819</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>Gilderoy/Three Bridges</b>	<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	<b>-0.89863</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>Warburton</b>	<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	<b>-0.85401</b>	<b>143</b>
Silvan	Yarra Ranges	-0.25719	250
Lilydale	Yarra Ranges	-0.24689	254
Selby	Yarra Ranges	-0.05197	294

Source - St Ignatius Centre: *Unequal in Life*.

A broader examination of the Shire indicates that people living in the Yarra Ranges earned similar incomes when compared to Victoria, however there was a higher level of low income earners, with 15% of people earning less than \$600 per week compared to 13.6% in Victoria.

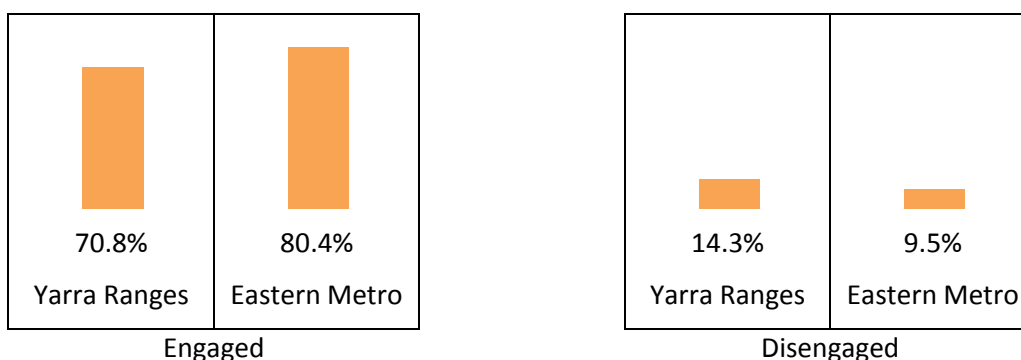
The level of secondary schooling completed also shows a large comparable gap between the Yarra Ranges and Victoria. 53% of students completed their last year of schooling in year 11 compared to 44% in Victoria. These figures also reflect the highest qualification obtained by individuals with only 12% of people in the Yarra Ranges earning a Bachelor degree or higher compared to 22% in the Eastern metropolitan region ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)).

**Highest qualification achieved, Yarra Ranges Shire and Eastern Metro Region, 2006 (Usual Residence data)**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006 Census of Population and Housing (Usual Residence)

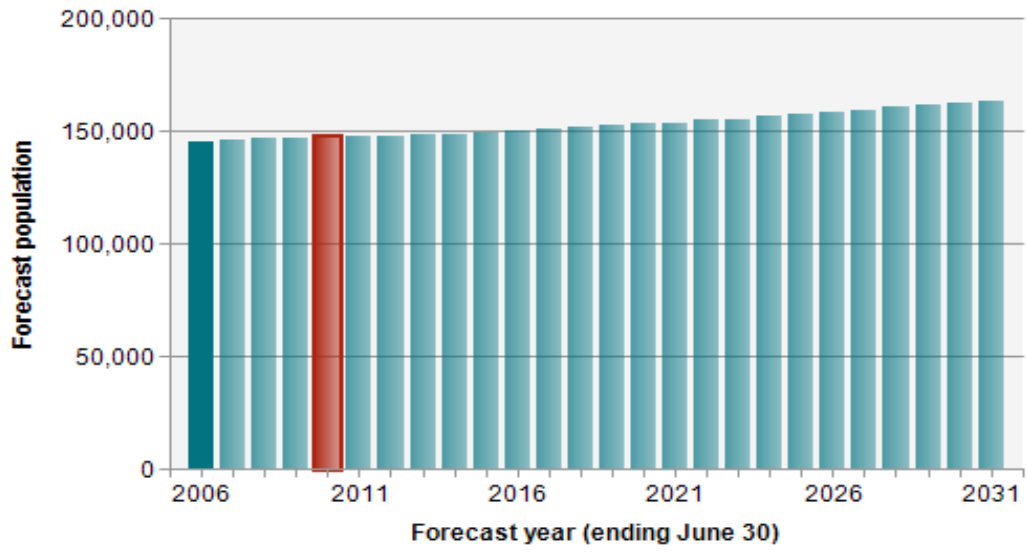
Further, community wellbeing indicators highlight that up to 15% of young people are disengaged in the Yarra Ranges, meaning that they are neither employed nor are active in study compared to 9% in the Eastern Metropolitan Region ([www.communityindicators.net.au](http://www.communityindicators.net.au)).



Source: Community Indicators 2006

Considering future population growth, the Yarra Ranges population is expected to continue to increase over the coming years. While the rate of growth is not particularly high, experience indicates that much of this growth is from residents who can no longer afford to live in the metropolitan area, so has a disproportionate number of residents with income-related difficulties.

**Forecast population, Yarra Ranges Shire**



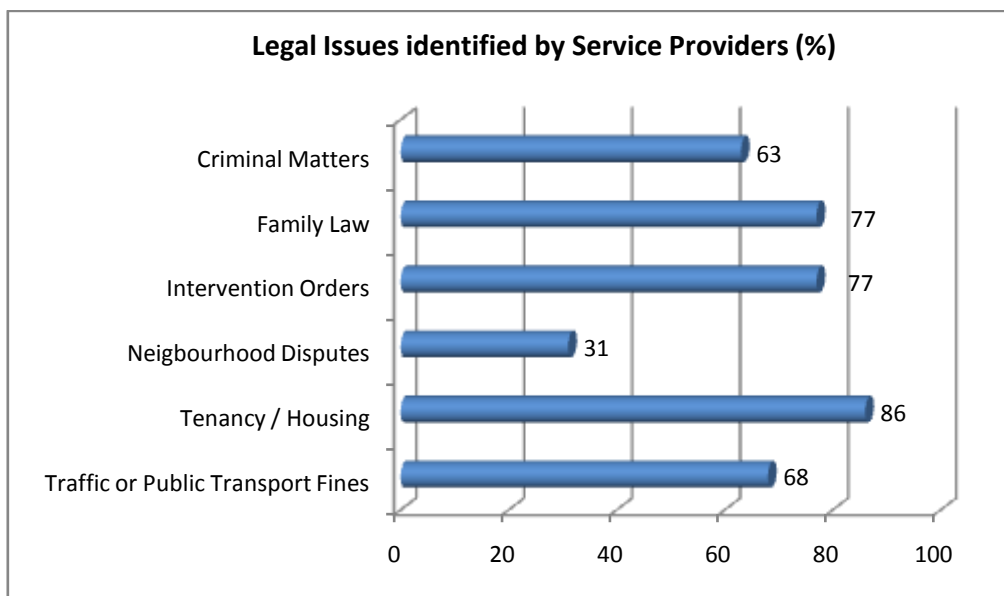
Source: .id consulting pty ltd, 2010

### 3. Findings

Both service providers and agencies were approached to identify the key legal issues faced in the community.

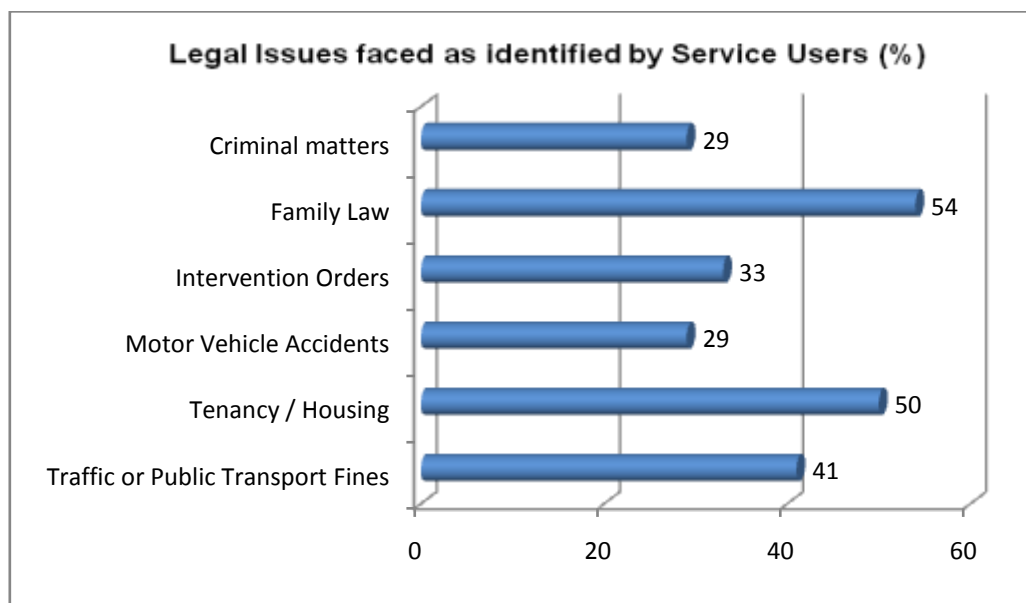
#### 3.1. Legal Issues

Agency staff identified a number of key legal issues experienced by the clients with whom they work. Tenancy and housing related issues were the most highly identified, by 86% of service providers followed by Family Law and Intervention Order issues (both 77%) and traffic and public transport fine issues at 68%.



*\*As respondents were able to identify multiple issues, percentages will consequently not add up to 100%. This pattern is repeated throughout the report's data.*

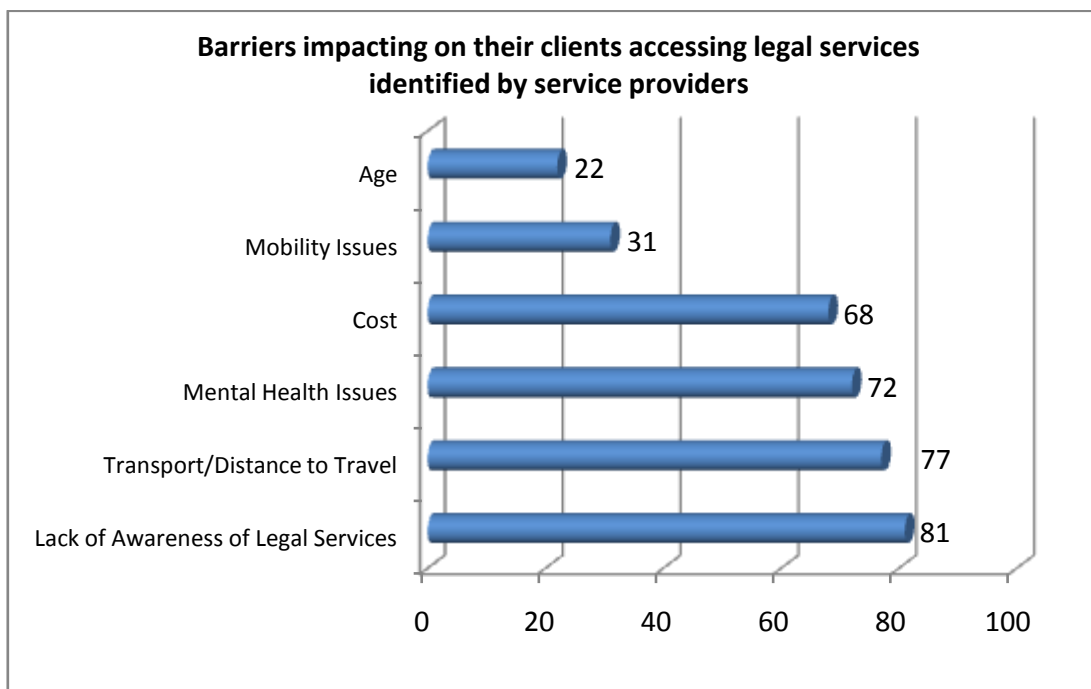
On an individual basis, the response to the question was very high. Residents surveyed and interviewed highlighted that 54% have had family law related issues in the past, 50% tenancy and housing issues and 41% traffic or public transport fine related issues.



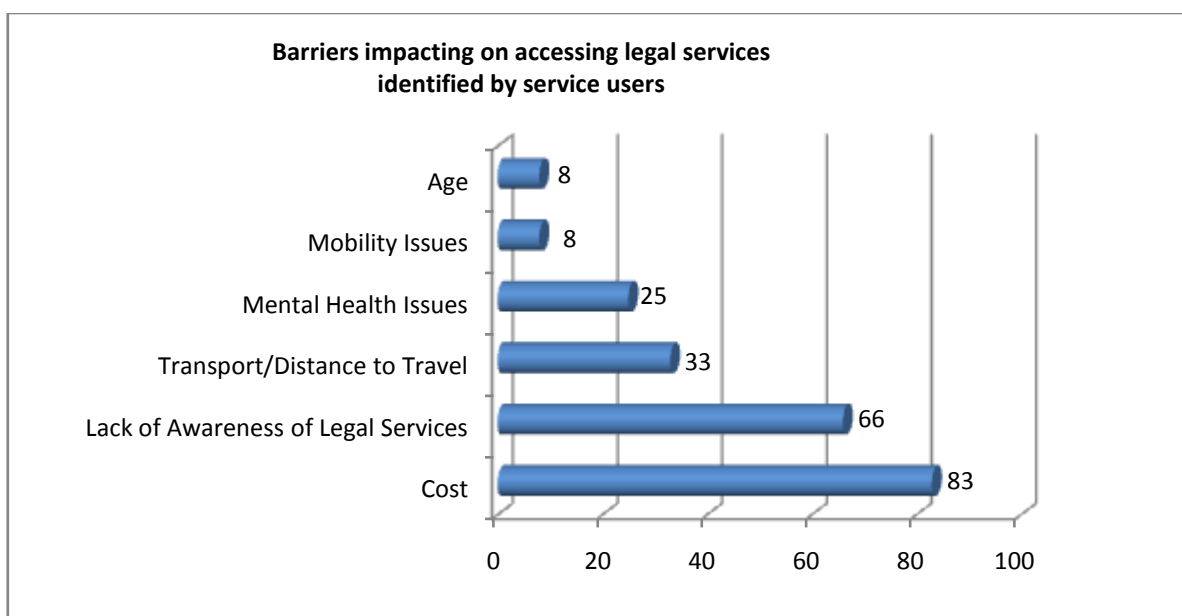
### 3.2. Barriers

In addition to the legal issues confronting local residents, a key factor affecting their access to justice is the barriers, real and perceived, that contribute to their ability to gain the assistance they seek.

A lack of awareness of legal services (81%) was identified by service providers as the biggest barrier for people accessing a legal service in the Yarra Ranges and beyond. This is closely followed by transport/distance to travel at 77%.



Although a lack of awareness of legal services was significant (66%), residents surveyed most commonly identified the cost (83%) of legal assistance as the biggest barrier preventing residents from accessing legal services



## 4. Geographical Areas of Interest

### 4.1. Yarra Junction/Warburton

The area from Yarra Junction to the town of Warburton is generally ranked high on disadvantage indices. ABS statistics highlight that the residents of the suburb of Millgrove have a median weekly individual income of \$353, compared with \$466 in Australia. The median weekly household income was \$686, compared with \$1,027 in Australia and the median weekly family income was \$797, compared with \$1,171 in Australia. The unemployment rate (11.3%) was also double that of the Australian rate (5.2%) ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)[b]).

*"I didn't know what to do or where to go..."  
Joe, Yarra Junction, commenting on the  
lack of legal help in the area.*

Furthermore in the 2006 Census, 32.1% of families in this area were one parent families compared with 15.8% in Australia. The suburb of Yarra Junction highlights similar disadvantage, with the median weekly individual income being \$364, compared with \$466 in Australia and the median weekly household income being \$768, compared with \$1,027 in Australia. When the area from Yarra Junction through to Warburton is placed together it is one of the most disadvantaged areas in the state of Victoria ([www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)[b]).

### Findings

Throughout interviews with service providers and service users in the Yarra Junction-Millgrove area, stories of disempowerment and frustration surfaced, reinforcing what the data indicates. The service providers interviewed in the area described a mindset tendency to internalise many of the elements that disadvantage brings. The lack of community services and accessibility to existing services compounds the disadvantage that some people must live with.

The three predominant legal issues that people face according to the service providers were: family law, intervention orders and tenancy/housing related issues. This is consistent with the major issues identified within the whole shire. It was found that financial counsellors and ECLC were the most well-known agencies that deal with legal assistance within the Yarra Ranges.

The barriers that impact on residents from Yarra Junction/Warburton accessing legal services were not surprising. Transport and distance to travel to and from services rated highly as did the awareness (or lack of) legal services. Service providers stated that residents would only travel "up the line", when they needed to, that is travelling west on the Warburton Highway. However, residents who did not have their own transport would have to rely on the local bus service which ran every thirty minutes at best.

The lack of transport coupled with the lack of awareness of legal services means many legal issues are likely to remain unresolved. Residents who are connected with a social or welfare worker rely heavily on them for transport to access services. The lack of legal services in this area can result in locals taking action into their own hands, known as "valley justice". This can be as simple as a fencing dispute escalating into a war of words or something more serious. This can occur in neighbourhood disputes and family law issues. A lack of adult literacy was also another issue that was raised by service providers that prevented residents, mostly men, from furthering their issues.

A small number of established community agencies are prominent in the Yarra Junction/Warburton area. The River Valley Church in Millgrove, Upper Yarra Community House (UYCH) in Yarra Junction and Eastern Access Community Health all run locally based programs which provide social support for residents.

The information gathered from local residents within the Millgrove/ Warburton area reinforces what the agencies state. The top two legal issues that were mentioned were tenancy or housing related issues and family law.

The biggest barrier that prevented them from accessing a legal service was the lack of awareness of a legal service. This major problem was a factor for all (100%) survey participants in this region. How to access a legal centre was a common question among the participants. The case for many of the participants interviewed was that their legal issue would simply go unanswered. The distance to a major town, more than likely Lilydale, and for many, mental health issues, all play a part in compounding the barriers that prevent residents from accessing a service.

## **4.2. Healesville**

Healesville, which sits 30km north east of Lilydale and houses over 9,000 residents, has for many years been recognised as a community with significant socioeconomic disadvantage. 45% of the residents survive on a low income below \$500 per week compared with 35% in Victoria (*abs.gov.au[c]*).

### **Findings**

Service providers and residents of Healesville suggest there are major implications from the lack of legal services currently available in the region. The residents that were surveyed reinforce the trend of legal issues that they face. The top three issues were family law, tenancy/housing issues and traffic /public transport fines. Private lawyers proved to be the legal service most often used or known about by residents in the area (90%). This was confirmed by the service providers that were surveyed. ECLC was also well known (70%) and had been used by residents.

Interestingly the two biggest barriers that were identified by residents and service providers were the cost of a legal service and the lack of awareness of legal services. The high number of respondents identifying cost as a barrier suggests that it relates to the high number of people relying on private lawyers to serve the community in Healesville. This point was reinforced by a service provider who suggested that due to the easier access of private lawyers in Healesville they would be used more often than any other legal service. If a service was to be used outside the Healesville region, quite often support workers would drive the client to the service such as ECLC. However, this is avoided because it affects workers time and other commitments. Again, it was noted by residents and service providers that legal issues would go unresolved or compound on top of each other because of the lack of an alternate legal service.

## **4.3. Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth, Chirnside Park**

The most densely populated area of the Shire of Yarra Ranges is situated in the west, made up of Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth and Chirnside Park. The area has over a third of the total population of the entire Shire but only makes up a tenth of the liveable region. Of the 551 matters seen by ECLC in 2008/2009, Lilydale (61) and Mooroolbark (61) both tally equally as the highest suburbs that clients came from with Kilsyth (57) as the third highest. Including Chirnside Park (17), the area makes up 35% of the total number of matters addressed coming from the Yarra Ranges that ECLC had seen in 2008/2009 (ECLC statistics 2008-2009).

Kilsyth, Mooroolbark and Lilydale all rate under the Yarra Ranges average on the socio-economic disadvantage scale offered by SEIFA, but higher than Yarra Junction-Millgrove and Healesville areas (*www.abs.gov.au[d]*).

### **Findings**

The region is better serviced for community and welfare agencies including legal services than most other parts of the Shire. The township of Lilydale provides a hub for community agencies to carry outreach services to the middle and eastern part of the Shire.

Family Law, Intervention Orders and traffic/transport fines rate as the most dominant legal issues that people face according to service providers. A lack of awareness of legal services and mental

health issues are the biggest barriers that people face accessing a legal service according to service providers.

An interview with a financial counsellor in Lilydale highlighted the need for a community based legal service in the Yarra Ranges. It became apparent that the counsellor was taking on cases that normally would require legal representation such as consumer law, tenancy/housing issues and traffic fines. The cases came from clients spread out through the shire including Yarra Glen and Emerald. The counsellor was aware of ECLC's presence in Boronia, however, was hesitant to refer clients due to the distance that clients would have to travel given that the majority relied on public transport.

## 5. Key themes

### 5.1. Family Violence

Violence against women is a very serious issue that has disturbing consequences. Research highlights that violence against women affects one in three women worldwide. Australian statistics show that 33% of women have experienced physical violence, and 19% sexual violence, since the age of 15 (ABS, 2005 in Women's Health East). Despite the high percentage, it is estimated that only 36% of physical assaults against women and 19% of all sexual assaults were reported in 2005. Women's Health East suggest that the increasing "conviction rates for sexual assault is a key issue with evidence indicating over 70 % of sexual incidents are not reported to police."

Family violence centres and associated resources in the Yarra Ranges are limited. Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) provides the main service for women needing support in the Yarra Ranges. The service is complemented by Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (ECASA) based in Ringwood which provides a counselling service one day a fortnight in Healesville. Along with these two services are voluntary men's behaviour programs in Lilydale, Healesville and Yarra Junction.

### Findings

Figures from ECASA show that nearly 900 women attended their service during 2007-8. From that number nearly a quarter (24%) came from the Yarra Ranges which proved to be more than any other municipality in the Eastern Metropolitan region.

Furthermore, family violence issues were the most predominant matter coming from the Yarra Ranges as seen by ECLC (21%). This is higher than other municipalities with family violence comprising 16% of ECLC's legal work across the region.

EDVOS outreach case managers suggest that family law, intervention orders, tenancy/housing issues and criminal law are the predominant legal issues that they deal with regarding their clients. The biggest barriers that prevented their clients from accessing legal services were transport and distance to travel and the lack of awareness of legal services ([www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)).

Considering the prevalence of family violence in the Yarra Ranges and the lack of suitable recourse available to support the women and children, these combine to make a strong argument for more representation and support surrounding the family and the law. What was noted by both EDVOS and Oa family violence worker from Yarra Valley Community Health is the need for a service local to the residents and preferably amongst other agencies. This will help keep the confidentiality of the women seeking support.

### Recorded family Incidents with Victoria Police 2008/2009.

Municipality	Population	Recorded Family Incidents 2008/09 (VICPOL)	Rate of Incidents in LGA per 100,000 population.
Boroondara	162,285	470	289.5
Knox	152,388	890	584.4
Manningham	115,702	464	401.5
Maroondah	102,478	498	485.7
Whitehorse	151,233	559	369.0
Yarra Ranges	144,993	662	456.1

(Victoria Police Corporate Statistics)

## Intervention Orders Applied for by Victoria Police 2008/2009.

Municipality	Population	Where IVO applied for 2008/2009	Rates of Incidents in LGA per 100,000 population.
<b>Boroondara</b>	162,285	28	17.2
<b>Knox</b>	152,388	83	54.4
<b>Manningham</b>	115,702	80	69.3
<b>Maroondah</b>	102,478	54	52.6
<b>Whitehorse</b>	151,233	62	40.9
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	144,993	96	66.2

(Victoria Police Corporate Statistics)

The number of Intervention Orders (IVO) that were applied for through Victoria Police in response to family incidents was higher than any other municipality. The rates of family incidents provided from the Victoria Police highlight that incidents in the Yarra Ranges are predominant and more common than much of the other Eastern Metropolitan Regions (EMR). The majority of aggrieved family members were female and defendants male. The breakdown of aggrieved family members age and defendant's age shows a common picture of older men threatening younger women and children (Walker 2009).

### Integrated Family Response

Over recent years, legislative reform, along with systemic reform of the family violence support sector has focused on integrating responses to family violence, including police, courts, family violence services, community health, men's behaviour change programs, legal services and other relevant agencies. ECLC, along with many other agencies is active in the Eastern Regional Family Violence Partnership. This integration process includes improved referral pathways, education and a range of other initiatives.

In particular, ECLC works in partnership with Victoria Legal Aid, EDVOS, EACH, the Ringwood Magistrates' Court and Victoria Police in operating an Intervention Order Support Service twice a week at Ringwood. Where police, support workers or other agencies work with people affected by family violence, integration can only be effective if the relevant services are available. Hence the options available to police assisting victims, as well as to victims themselves will be considerably less when they cannot easily access a free legal service with expertise in this area. Given the current limited outreach, this poses real difficulties for women and children when they are most vulnerable.

### 5.2. Tenancy and Housing

Of the Shire of Yarra Ranges support agencies that were interviewed, 86% identified that tenancy issues and lack of stable and affordable housing are impacting on their client's ability to address many of their personal and financial problems.

Although there is a tenant advocate program that is funded through Consumer Affairs, workers are located in Frankston and Fitzroy and it is almost impossible to access any real tenancy support in the Shire of Yarra Ranges due to the sheer distance from these services. The need to address these legal issues has resulted in some Shire of Yarra Ranges service providers having to take on the role of a tenant support worker and attend VCAT with their clients so that they have some chance of stabilising their tenancy. This is not only creating a cost shift to other services, but exposing workers to professional indemnity claims due to lack of knowledge.

Crisis and emergency accommodation services are unable to meet the increasing demands of homelessness. There are many private landlords that do not understand their obligations in relation to the Residential Tenancies Act and evict tenants illegally, adding a further burden to the emergency accommodation services that may have been preventable. With proper access to tenancy advice and support, residents of the Shire would be informed of their rights and processes and as a result reduce the number of illegal evictions and be provided with achievable options that would stabilise their tenancy.

According to the Bureau of Statistics report of 2006, 18% of households in the Shire of Yarra Ranges were experiencing rent-related poverty (that is, paying more than 30% of their income on rent) which was the highest in the eastern region. With the recent global financial crisis and the bushfires' impact on accommodation options in the region, it is not surprising that tenancy and affordable housing is one of the key issues for the Shire of Yarra Ranges that needs to be addressed.

### **5.3. Transport**

The lack of public transport in the outer areas of the Shire of Yarra Ranges has a huge impact on the communities of Yarra Junction, Healesville, Yarra Glen and beyond. These communities have identified that the infrequency of services, the distance between bus stops and the time it takes to travel to Lilydale all make it difficult to access services such as the legal centre in Boronia. For a resident living in Warburton, an hourly bus service that takes 45 minutes to get to Lilydale and then having to travel from Lilydale to Boronia either by 2 trains or a bus means that the capacity to access a Boronia service is severely impeded. Although there are bus services that travel down the Maroondah Highway, Warburton Highway and Melba Highway there are very few services that travel across the region between Yarra Junction, Healesville and Yarra Glen. Add to this, the cost of a country fare for those living beyond Woori Yallock and time to travel to Boronia it is just not an option for many to travel to Boronia.

### **5.4. Disability**

The Yarra Ranges has a below average proportion of people requiring assistance with core tasks. In saying that, there are pockets in the Ranges that have a high level of residents that require assistance. Areas such as Millgrove-Warburton has rate of 26.2 per 1,000 residents that receive the disability support pension; Yarra Junction and surrounds, 15.5 per 1000 residents and Healesville/Badger Creek at 14.5 per 1000 residents. These areas are also the most socio-economically disadvantaged in the Yarra Ranges (Walker 2009).

### **5.5. Indigenous Population**

The Shire of Yarra Ranges' Indigenous population is estimated to be similar to the percentage of Victoria's 0.6 percent. There is however a large concentration of indigenous residents in the Healesville/Badgers Creek area, with 3.6% of the region's population.

Victoria's Indigenous population suffers from high levels of disadvantage; the population residing in the Yarra Ranges is no different. High levels of unemployment, poverty, educational levels and long term health problems are a number of issues that hinder the wellbeing of indigenous people. Indigenous children are ten times more likely to be involved in child protection and also involved in the Youth Justice system (Walker 2009). Further, Australian Indigenous women are 40 times more likely to be victims of violence (*Mouzos, J 2004 in whe.org.au*).

There is no permanent specific legal service for Indigenous people in the Yarra Ranges. There are two Aboriginal legal services providing the majority of service for indigenous people; the Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) in Fitzroy and the Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention and Legal Service Victoria (FVPLS Victoria) in Collingwood. Service providers involved with indigenous matters reluctantly referred clients to these services given their locality in the inner city and the distance that

would need to be covered from the Yarra Ranges. Some indigenous clients also specifically prefer to use generalist services.

The response from service providers in the Healesville region suggested that a legal service in the area would complement the existing services aimed for the indigenous community. A common theme that was raised was the need for a legal education program that is able to generate a general awareness of legal issues and the law.

## 6. Services provided by ECLC to the Yarra Ranges

ECLC has been providing services to residents for many years and through specific limited outreach programs since 2005. Despite the limited nature of the outreach services, 15% of ECLC clients are drawn from the Yarra Ranges, meaning that the majority of these are already travelling outside of their municipality to receive legal assistance. In some areas of Melbourne, this would not be remarkable but for much of the Yarra Ranges, clients are travelling significant distances to gain access to justice.

Municipality	Population	Clients assisted by ECLC 1/11/08-1/11/09	Percentage of clients assisted by municipality.
<b>Boroondara</b>	162,000	202	9%
<b>Knox</b>	152,000	484	24%
<b>Manningham</b>	115,000	157	8%
<b>Maroondah</b>	102,000	226	12%
<b>Whitehorse</b>	151,000	451	22%
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	144,000	337	16%
<b>Other</b>		182	9%
<b>Total</b>		2039	100%

*ECLC statistics 2008-2009*

Although the numbers for Yarra Ranges are quite high, the evidence earlier suggests that there are people missing out on the service. In addition, the fact that Yarra Ranges is the most disadvantaged region compared to the other six municipalities is clearly impacting these figures..

### 6.1. Clients attending ECLC from the Yarra Ranges 2008/09

Town/Area	Population 2008	Matters seen by ECLC 2008/2009	Matters seen by per 1,000 people
<b>Mooroolbark</b>	18,880	68	3.6
<b>Lilydale</b>	14,457	68	4.7
<b>Kilsyth</b>	8,526 in YR (13,188 inc. M'dah)	57	4.3
<b>Healesville, Badger Creek</b>	9,201	47	5.1
<b>Seville-Wandin, Woori Yallock</b>	12,945	40	3.0
<b>Yarra Glenn, Steels Creek, Dixon's Creek</b>	3,193	38	11.9
<b>Mount Evelyn</b>	9,098	29	3.1
<b>Millgrove, Warburton, Wesburn, Reefton</b>	5,492	24	4.3
<b>Yarra Junction, Powelltown, Gladysdale</b>	2,832	18	6.3

*ECLC statistics 2008-2009*

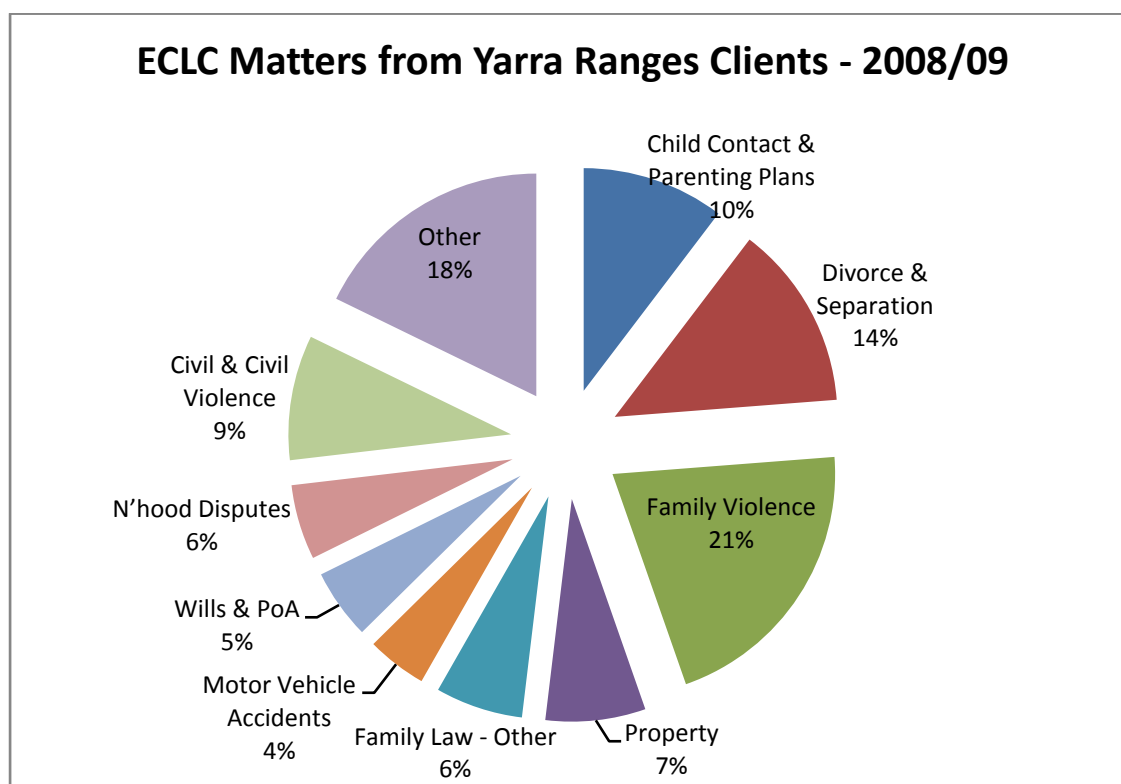
It must be made clear that of the 38 matters seen in Yarra Glen, Steels Creek and Dixon's Creek, there were no family law related issues and only two (2) were family violence related. 17 of the matters were classed as 'other' which includes bushfire related matters. Furthermore, 9 of the 38 matters were for neighbourhood disputes which were also a common theme with bushfire related cases. This breakdown is not to undermine the importance of the Bushfire related work, however it must be understood that ECLC has been conducting weekly outreach to the Yarra Glen district since a week after the devastating February fires. The response has been encouraging, building strong relationships with other service providers in the area.

*It is no coincidence that the areas of Yarra Junction and Healesville are the most highly represented of matters seen by ECLC during 2008-2009.*

If the Yarra Glen district excluded for reasons mentioned above, it is no coincidence that the areas of Yarra Junction and Healesville are the most represented of matters per person seen by ECLC during 2008-2009.

## 6.2. Matters seen by ECLC from the Yarra Ranges 2008/09

ECLC provide an outreach to Healesville, Yarra Junction and Lilydale one half day every month. The outreach service has been operating since the outer east office in Boronia was established. Additional outreach services were provided for the year following the February 2009 bushfires.



## 6.3. Bushfire Response – long term issues

While the tragic bushfires will hopefully never be repeated, it is of concern that the additional services provided by ECLC in response to these events and supported by some additional Commonwealth and other funding, will not be able to be continued.

While the initial crisis phase was clearly the most critical, experience of similar events in 1983 and interstate indicates that many families and individuals are likely to be dealing with the emotional, relational and legal implications of these events for many years. Having established client relationships with local residents along with enhanced partnerships with community agencies and

networks, it would be far preferable for this work to be continued, particularly given the clear legal need in the region.

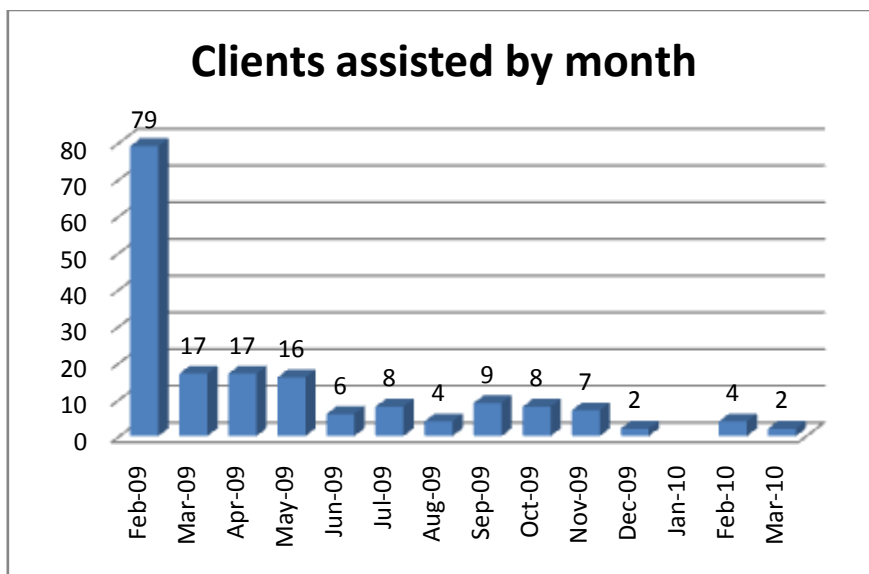
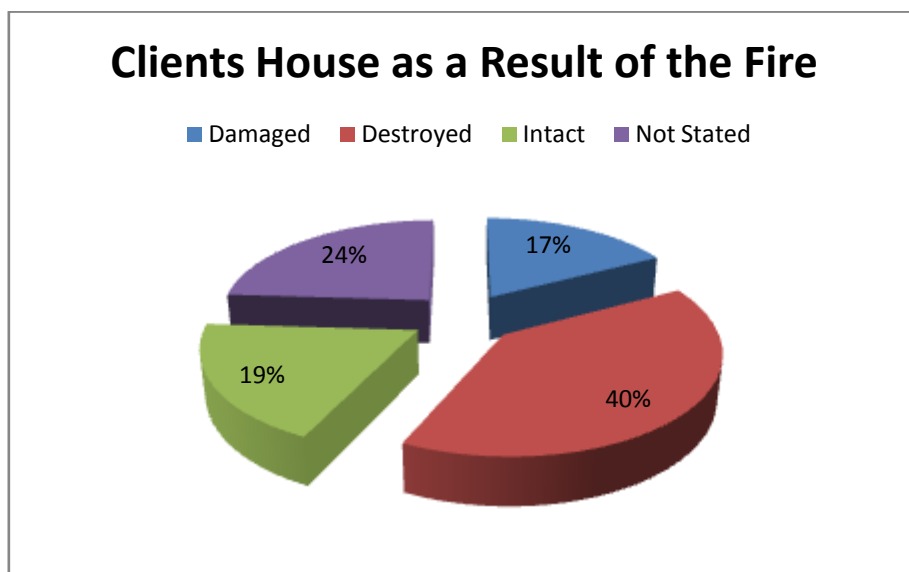
ECLC has played an important role in community development, education and capacity building over this time. This is a role that the Centre would be willing and able to continue and develop, given sufficient capacity.

A summary of ECLC's bushfire legal work follows:

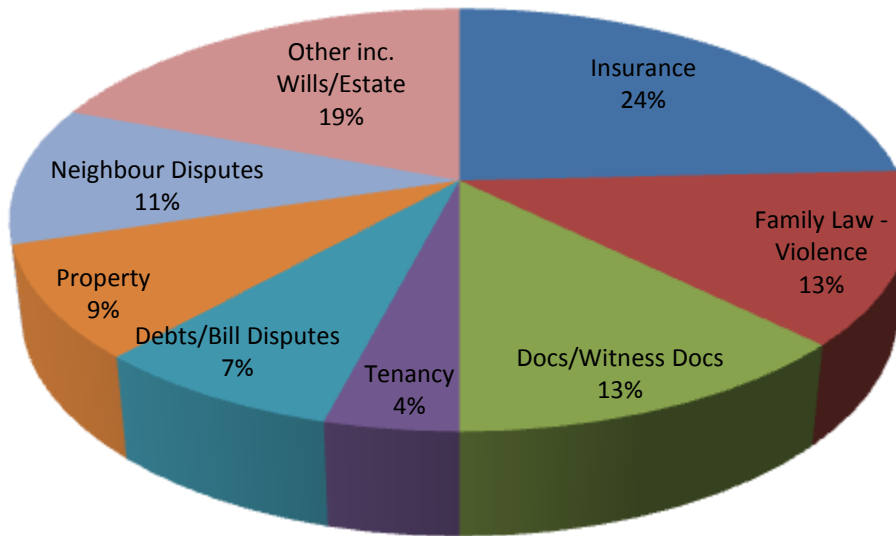
### Bushfire Legal Advice Service: February 2009 - March 2010

Total Number of Clients: 179

Total Number of Matters: 198



## Bushfire Response - Legal Matter Types



## 7. Services providing legal assistance in the Yarra Ranges

### 7.1. Respondents acknowledging legal assistance available in Yarra Ranges

The responses from both the service providers and the service users paints a concerning picture that shows that ECLC is the most used legal assistance provider in the Yarra Ranges according to service providers and second to private lawyers according to service users.

Legal Service	Service Provider	Service User
<b>Eastern Community Legal Centre</b>	75%	61%
<b>Legal Aid</b>	67%	50%
<b>YouthLaw</b>	7%	5%
<b>Tenants Advice Phone Line</b>	39%	33%
<b>Private Lawyers</b>	53%	72%
<b>Financial Counselling</b>	64%	38%
<b>Other</b>	3%	0%

Considering that ECLC only provides an outreach service three half days each month to the Shire of Yarra Ranges, this suggests that residents are either using the outreach service or they are forced to travel to Boronia or Box Hill. This reinforces the claim that due to the barriers that residents face in obtaining free legal advice many people will simply give up their pursuit or are having to pay for private lawyers in cases where there is no alternative/

### 7.2. Other services that provide legal assistance in the Yarra Ranges

#### Victoria Legal Aid

Victorian Legal Aid (VLA) provides legal assistance for people who are unable to afford the cost of the assistance they need to resolve a legal problem. VLA can provide lawyers to act on behalf of people or fund private law firms to act on behalf of people. Residents of the Shire are required to travel into Ringwood to access the Eastern Regional office of Victoria Legal Aid.

#### Private Lawyers

There are approximately 14 law firms in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. Nine of these are in the densely populated areas such Lilydale and Mooroolbark and the remaining are scattered throughout the Shire. Only three firms provide legal aid assistance; Healesville, Mt Evelyn and Belgrave.

#### Youth Law

Youth Law provides an outreach service to Upper Yarra Community House in Yarra Junction through an online forum. The service runs every Wednesday for three hours in the afternoon.

### 7.3. Financial Counselling

Financial counsellors assess people's financial position; they assist in negotiations with creditors and give information about bankruptcy, budgeting, fines, and government payments. There are financial counsellors based in Yarra Junction, Healesville and Lilydale.

## 8. Key Stakeholders Service Strategies

### 8.1. Shire of Yarra Ranges

The Shire of Yarra Ranges has expressed their vision for the next decade and onward in Vision 2020-Community Plan. In doing so they envisage a Shire that is “strong, healthy and connected” in which “services are accessible to those who need them”. The community plan also states that the council “is oriented to facilitating the needs of communities rather than delivering specific services”. Given the need for a community legal centre in the municipality, a new centre would complement the Shires vision for 2020.

### 8.2. Community Legal Centres (CLCs)

The National Association of Community Legal Centres published a document in 2009 named *Community Legal Centres: Putting social inclusion into practice*. The document outlines the strategic service delivery model and ten principles that underpin a social inclusion framework. Reducing disadvantage, early intervention and prevention and increasing social, civil and economic participation are principles that a community legal centre will address if located in the Yarra Ranges.

### 8.3. Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD)

The DPCD was established in 2007 to lead and support the development of liveable communities. The Victorian Government states that it “is committed to delivering improvements in urban planning and development, particularly in the outer suburbs...” They have committed to “building strong communities that are well planned, well designed and help Victoria continue to be one of the most liveable States in the world.”

A research document that DPCD compiled named Indicators of Community Strength at the Local Government Area Level in Victoria 2006 highlights a number of themes that demonstrate the participation of residents in their respective area. Below are some of the more interesting results that DPCD found:

Local Government Area	“The Area has good facilities and services like shops, childcare, schools and libraries”	“The area has a wide range of community and support groups”
<b>Boroondara</b>	90.3	81.2
<b>Knox</b>	91.7	75.4
<b>Manningham</b>	85.8	75.1
<b>Maroondah</b>	83.7	71.5
<b>Whitehorse</b>	91.0	83.3
<b>Yarra Ranges</b>	73.8	66.7

Source: Department of Victorian Communities (2007) *Indicators of Community Strength at the Local Government Area Level in Victoria 2006*.

Unfortunately it is not surprising that the Shire of Yarra Ranges lacks well behind the other Eastern Metropolitan Regions in the two areas that indicate service and support delivery. What is encouraging though is the better than average numbers for “member of group that has taken local action” (Yarra Ranges 43.5%, EMR 40.3%) and “Attendance at community events” (Yarra Ranges 50.7%, EMR 38.2%). This suggests that the community is willing to support and become involved local services or programs if the opportunity arises.

## 9. Service Proposal

### 9.1. Service Model

ECLC supports the Strategic Service Delivery Model adopted by NACLC and the Federation of Community Legal Centres for baseline funding for CLCs. This is the funding required to operate a CLC to effectively service a catchment of the size of Yarra Ranges. The cost for such a Centre is \$516,536 per annum:

Position	Salary	On costs	Total Salary Costs	Operating Expenses	Interpreter	Total Position Cost
Co-ordinator	69,673	9,615	79,287	31,715		111,002
Principal solicitor	66,680	9,202	75,882	30,353	8,000	114,235
Admin worker	53,460	7,377	60,838	24,335		85,173
Solicitor	62,179	8,581	70,760	28,304	8,000	107,063
Community worker	62,179	8,581	70,760	28,304		99,063
<b>Total</b>						<b>516,536</b>

Regrettably most CLCs are not yet funded to this level. ECLC believes the minimum funding required to provide a worthwhile service to the Yarra Ranges community would be \$300,000 pa.

### 9.2. Service Location

Following the completion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> draft of the legal needs study, the Yarra Ranges CLC Reference Group considered the most suitable location for the proposed service.

Given the geography of the area, the urban southern part of the Shire is still likely to be serviced by the Boronia office.

With the major transport access issues discussed, Healesville and Yarra Junction were identified as the two possible sites for a new CLC service. Following discussion, the Healesville site was preferred as:

- the Healesville police station received approximately 1600 calls per annum compared to the 400 or so at the Yarra Junction and Warburton stations;
- the higher indigenous population based close to Healesville and accessing local services;
- the Murrindindi population including Marysville and other townships are likely to access a Healesville service and must be considered as a 'community of interest' and a probable secondary catchment
- there are good locations in Yarra Junction to host regular (weekly) outreach services on a partnership basis.

## Appendix 1 - Legal Needs Study Approach

### 1. Community Development

This project is guided by the principles of critical community practice which incorporates many of the ideas that rest in a critical theoretical approach.

It can be easily identified that Community Legal Centres (such as ECLC) have been developed within a community development context and continue to engage in community development. They provide legal information to residents in their region for the purpose of understanding the law and legal processes. Community Legal Centres (CLCs) predominantly work with clients who face economic, social or cultural disadvantage and whose life circumstances are affected by their legal problem.

It is important to understand that these social inequalities can be broken into three dimensions informed as follows:

- certain categories of people suffer from some form of discrimination disadvantage and exclusion because of what they are;
- others suffer because of where they live and
- yet others suffer because of certain circumstances in their life, either associated with the demographic they belong to, the ways they have been raised and the lack of access to certain taken for granted resources (Ife & Tesoriero 2006).

It is imperative that a legal centre such as ECLC helps respond to the varying and distinct forms of disadvantage in the Yarra Ranges, not only attending to the needs of people but also to capitalise on the strengths that people possess in meeting their legal and other needs.

The rationale for conducting a needs analysis is to identify and better understand the unmet legal and associated needs within the Shire of Yarra Ranges community. Ife & Tesoriero (2006) inform that the notion of need is fundamental in social policy, planning and community development. Ife & Tesoriero (2006) suggest that there are two ways in which need is seen as basic to social justice and community development; first, a belief that people or communities should have their needs met, and secondly, that people or communities should be able to define their own needs rather than have them defined by others.

Today, almost every aspect of our life is regulated by law (Harper 2006:2)

## **2. Methodology**

An action participatory research method underpinned this project with the emphasis on a qualitative approach. ECLC has visited community agencies that provide assistance to disadvantaged members of the community. Discussions with the local agencies have surrounded the topics of:

- Legal issues that their clients face;
- Services that are used to provide legal assistance in the Yarra Ranges; and
- Barriers that impact on residents accessing legal services.

In total 22 agency staff were surveyed and/or interviewed from the following community service agencies. Given the nature of the services some agencies had multiple programs that assisted the research:

- Anchor, Homelessness Outreach, Lilydale
- Anglicare, Financial Counsellor, Lilydale
- Anglicare, Information Referral, Yarra Junction
- Careworks, Lilydale
- Centrelink Senior Social Worker, Yarra Ranges
- Eastern Domestic Violence Outreach Service (EDVOS), Ringwood
- Eastern Drug and Alcohol Service (EDAS), Ringwood
- Emergency Recovery Officer, (DHS), Yarra Glen
- Family Violence Coordinator, Yarra Valley Community Health, Healesville.
- Gambling Counsellor, (EACH), Lilydale
- Healesville Interchurch Community Care Inc. (HICCI), Healesville
- Personal Helpers & Mentors Program (EACH), Lilydale
- Reachout Program (EACH), Lilydale
- Rivendell (EACH), Healesville
- River Valley Careworks, Millgrove
- River Valley Church, Millgrove
- Salvation Army Eastcare, Community Connections Outreach, Lilydale
- Upper Yarra Community House, Yarra Junction
- Worawa Aboriginal College, Healesville

ECLC also conducted non-probability convenience sampling with local residents surrounding legal issues that surface and barriers that prevent them from accessing appropriate services. Informal discussions and interviews were held at various locations in the Shire. Local agencies were also asked to hand out surveys to their respective client base. A total of 25 survey responses were collected.

The figures are based on the total number of service providers and service users that were surveyed and interviewed in the Shire of Yarra Ranges. (The research is based in the centre west to the northern and Eastern part of the Shire. There was a deliberate approach to not focus on the south west part of the shire which includes the towns of Belgrave and Narre Warren East. The basis was that the residents are more likely to access the Boronia office given its locality.

## References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006(a), Community Profile, “*What are our qualifications*”, [www.profile.id.com.au](http://www.profile.id.com.au), [Accessed 25 June 2009]
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006(b), Community Profile, “*Yarra Junction-Millgrove-Wesburn*”, [www.profile.id.com.au](http://www.profile.id.com.au), [Accessed 03 July 2009]
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006(c), Community Profile, “*Healesville*”, [www.profile.id.com.au](http://www.profile.id.com.au), Accessed 06 July 2009]
- Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006(d), Community Profile, “*SEIFA index of disadvantage*”, [www.profile.id.com.au](http://www.profile.id.com.au), [Accessed 06 July 2009]
- Butcher, H et al. 2007 *Critical Community Practice*, Policy Press, Bristol, UK
- Community Indicators Victoria 2006, McCaughey Centre, School of Population Health, University of Melbourne. [[www.communityindicators.net.au](http://www.communityindicators.net.au)] Accessed 23 August 2009.
- Department of Planning and Community Development 2009, *Victoria in Future 2008*, Victorian Government, Melbourne
- Eastern Community Legal Centre, 2009, *Statistics 2008-2009*. Box Hill, Victoria
- Harper, K. 2006, *The Law Handbook*, Fitzroy Legal Service, Fitzroy.
- McNelis, S. et al. 2005 *Shire of Yarra Ranges: Housing Strategy Issues Paper*, Swinburne University of Technology Institute for Social Research.
- National Association of Community Legal Centres 2009, *Community Legal Centres: Putting social inclusion into practice*, Sydney South, NSW
- Ife, J. & Tesoriero, and F. 2006 *Community Development: community-based alternatives in an age of globalisation*, Pearson Education, Frenchs Forest, NSW
- Shire of Yarra Ranges 2009, *Vision 2020-Community Plan*, Lilydale
- Walker, C. 2009 *Community Health and Wellbeing Profile for the Shire of Yarra Ranges-DRAFT*, Shire of Yarra Ranges, Lilydale
- Women’s Health East 2009, *Fact Sheet No.1*, [[www.whe.org.au](http://www.whe.org.au)] Accessed 18 July 2009.
- Victoria Police, Corporate Statistics 2008/2009 [[www.police.vic.gov.au](http://www.police.vic.gov.au)] Accessed 12 September 2009