

# ANNUAL REPORT 2015~2016



## STAFF

Coordinator / Principal Solicitor ~ Melissa Ballantyne  
Administrators ~ Gabrielle Bond and Ruth Woolley

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair ~ Iris Iwanicki | Treasurer ~ Patricia von Baumgarten  
Karen Bubna-Litic, Richard Cook,  
Tom Matthews, Cristelle Maurin, Felicity Niemann

**EDO** ENVIRONMENTAL  
DEFENDERS OFFICE  
(SA) INC



# CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT 2015~2016

When I reluctantly agreed to be temporary chair of the EDO Management Committee, I rather hoped that a more experienced lawyer could be recruited, given the challenging circumstances that currently threaten the survival of the EDO in South Australia.

That lawyer has not appeared, but I have found supporting and fundraising for the EDO a positive experience because I believe that the past effectiveness of the EDO and its current efforts deserve support. The past 12 months have shown the ongoing need for an independent organisation such as this to comment and assist in responsible governance of the environment - whether it be urban, marine or rural.

I thank Melissa and Gabrielle, who have managed to keep the EDO functional, on a much reduced basis, and all those who have supported us through the last 12 months, specifically the State Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, the Law Foundation of SA, Flinders University, and our 11 rostered lawyers who volunteer their expertise and time to advise members of the public. This volunteer service is a core service of the EDO and the legal support is much appreciated. The Ninth Annual Performance Report on the National Pro Bono Aspirational Target 1 shows that 11,185 Australian lawyers provided 402,216 hours of pro bono legal services in the last financial year. That is the equivalent of 223 lawyers working pro bono full-time for one year. While the dollar value of this is very high, the social value to the community is inestimable.

Thanks also to our small but very capable Management Committee and for their involvement and support in both fundraising and advocacy. Fundraising efforts have included the Quiz Night at Willunga and an informative Environmental Law Forum. With regard to the Quiz – it was wonderful to have the 4 piece band Open House call up, turn up to buy tickets, entertain during quiz breaks and then donate all proceeds of their CD sales to the Quiz night funds! Our fundraising program is by calendar year so the recent Hypothetical debate on Heritage was also an entertaining and successful event.

Surely there is much public support for efforts which seek to protect such iconic areas as the Flinders Ranges and the Great Australian Bight from potentially damaging developments and activities. The EDO has no furry cute creature to tug at the heartstrings and gain support, so fundraising, while it is fun and wonderful to feel the support of so many who come to the events, is not enough. We value your support and hope you will continue to help us survive and possibly recruit friends and family to consider doing so as well. Melissa's report demonstrates the extent of submissions and assistance provided to a range of environmental issues and with your support and ongoing donations we will function as long as possible.

We are looking to run further events in the next year including another environmental law update, film night as well as a seminar on public participation rights in environmental law, delayed from June this year due to resourcing constraints. Recent building developments in the Adelaide Park Lands are particularly germane in this respect. Current legislation by the planning Minister renders all major developments in the Park Lands as category 1 – which means the public is no longer notified or given the opportunity to challenge development proposals for more building development within the Park Lands belt of the city.

As public land, the clear and historic intention has been to bequeath the Park Lands to the public. The protection of this green space during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is even more important now. One wonders why, in the absence of any mandate, and particularly when planning policies specifically state that there should be no increase in building area within the Park Lands, this lack of inclusiveness was allowed by our Parliament. Relevantly, South Australia's Strategic Plan has a community objective which states: *Social participation-increase the proportion of South Australians participating in social community and economic activities by 2020 (Target 23-Baseline 2011).*

I look forward to the Public Participation presentation and anticipate that communication and participation improves as a result of continued advocacy.

More than ever today, any environmental defense by a person does take courage. People who take a stand against unsustainable practices need to research and understand as much as possible, for often the issue is not simple and they will be marginalised by other proponents as 'greenies' or 'crackpots'. Some people quite rightly fear for their job, if they raise a dissenting voice.

So we need to keep up the work of the EDO, even if only to continue to provide the public with advice that is factual and unbiased. In a world where information is often a slogan, rather than a reasoned and intelligent discussion, it is all the more reason by the EDO should continue to provide the analysis, advocacy and advice that looks at the law and the impacts of legislation on the environment and a sustainable society.

It is probable that within the next 12 months the EDO will consider whether to radically restructure at a national and state level. To sustain and grow the organization into the future funding levels must improve. A nationally focused report has recently been produced regarding the future of EDOs around the country which makes a number of suggestions, and I anticipate that the incoming Management Committee and our wider membership will consider the possible options over the coming months. We will also be considering ways of increasing our capacity, so if you would like to get involved, please contact me or Melissa.

In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you at our next fundraising event in the new year! More on this in future e-Bulletins! Thank you for your attendance and support.

**Dr Iris Iwanicki, PhD BA GDTP M.Env.Law FPIA**

# TREASURER'S REPORT 2015~2016

## REPORT FOR THE 2015/2016 FINANCIAL YEAR:

The 2015-2016 financial year has seen the EDO improving its net income from -\$22,408 in 2014-2015 to \$-2,249 in 2015-2016: a net improvement of \$20,159. This is due to the continuing support from Flinders University, the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Law Foundation of SA, volunteers, EDO members and community. Great efforts from staff and management committee in keeping expenses the lowest possible and generating revenue from fundraising activities have also contributed to a much better financial situation than 2014-2015, despite the fact that the EDO is still relying on its savings to maintain its operations.

### Revenue

The decline in the EDO's revenue from \$ 191,979 in 2014-2015 to \$85,329 in 2015-2016, a difference equals to \$106,650, is largely due to the difference in grant values that the EDO received from the Law Foundation: from \$90,909 (a one-off emergency grant) in 2014-2015 to \$7,500 (project grant) in 2015-2016 (difference equals to \$83,409). Other revenue sources that have also declined in 2015-2016 are:

- ♦ Donations – from \$55,314 to \$34,484 (\$20,830);
- ♦ Fundraising – from \$8,752 to \$3,856 (\$4,896);
- ♦ Interest – from \$4,202 to \$1,893 (\$2,309); and
- ♦ Membership – from \$5,157 to \$3,324 (\$1,833).

The \$15,000 grant from the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources continued to be a great contribution to the revenue in 2015-2016.

Other income sources (GST inclusive) as it relates to the income statement are:

- ♦ DTPI project funding – \$13,200 (part of the project was cancelled so a reimbursement of \$9,750 was made during the same financial year – so actual income was \$3,450 – refer to expenses in the income statement);
- ♦ Advisory Service fees – \$1,375 (25 x \$55)
- ♦ Reimbursement of software paid for but never received – \$4,567; and
- ♦ Seminar fees – \$2,108.

### Expenses

The decline in the EDO's expenses from \$ 214,387 in 2014-2015 to \$87,578 in 2015-2016, a difference of \$126,809, is largely due to reduced wages and superannuation: wages reduced by \$91,916 and

superannuation reduced by \$9,680, comprising a total of \$101,596. Other key contributors for the reduction in expenses are:

- ♦ Computing expenses – from \$5055 to \$0 (\$5,055)
- ♦ Fundraising expenses – from \$4,672 to \$0 (\$4,672)
- ♦ Phone, fax and internet – from \$5,153 to \$2,268 (\$2,885)
- ♦ Subscriptions and membership fees – from \$3,623 to \$1,326 (\$2,297)
- ♦ Accounting and audit – from \$2,852 to \$1,204 (\$1,648)
- ♦ Staff amenities – from \$1,183 to \$68 (\$1,115)
- ♦ Printing and stationery – from \$1,169 to \$92 (\$1,077)

During 2015-2016, the only expense that increased was consulting fees, from \$885 to \$3827 (\$2,942), which was due to:

- ♦ DTPI project work;
- ♦ Admin support for last year's audit and AGM; and
- ♦ IT support to fix computer virus.

The total net asset as at 30 June 2016 was \$86,804. Although the year's budget provides for a negative net income of \$2,249, this has been reduced from \$22,408 in the previous financial year. This is a great result for the EDO as it survives the period of crisis.

Looking into the future, it looks brighter than the previous year as the EDO proves its resilience. The continuing support from its volunteers, Flinders University, the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, Law Foundation, members and community have been paramount in the survival of the organisation. Members of the management committee and staff are very encouraged and thankful for the support and vote of confidence received.

South Australians are fortunate to continue to receive the services of the EDO, despite the limitations. The strength of the staff, volunteers and EDO supporters is testimony of what is possible. Big challenges facing the environment are not likely to go away in the near future, so the environmental legal work that the EDO does is of paramount importance to the wellbeing of the planet and all its beings. I am hopeful that the EDO will continue its crucial work during the next decade as we continue to work on its income sources and other potential options, and consider the EDO's future direction.

It has been a great pleasure for me to continue to work with the EDO. I thank all the staff who has assisted me with the role of Treasurer for their dedication and support: Melissa Ballantyne, Ruth Woolley, and Gabrielle Bond; and fellow members of the Management Committee, in particular the Chairperson Iris Iwanicki. You are all great South Australians.

**Patricia von Baumgarten**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (SA) INC.**

**YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

**Income Statement**

**Statement of Financial Position**

**Notes to the Accounts**

**Statement by Committee of Management**

**Auditor's Report**

**ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (SA) INC.**

**INCOME STATEMENT**

**YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>REVENUE FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>		
Law Foundation of S.A. Grant	7500	90909
Donations	34484	55314
Fundraising	3856	8752
Interest	1893	4202
Membership	3324	5157
Other Grants	0	9091
Other Income	19272	3554
State Government Grant	<u>15000</u>	<u>15000</u>
	<b><u>85329</u></b>	<b><u>191979</u></b>
<b>EXPENSES FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>		
Accounting and Audit	1204	2852
Advertising and Promotion	51	490
Archives	514	899
Bank Service Charges	650	977
Computing Expenses	0	5055
Consulting Fees	3827	885
Depreciation	1078	2002
Electricity	0	506
Equipment Repairs and Maintenance	0	360
Fundraising Expenses	0	4672
Insurance	2066	2115
Legal Fees	0	0
Legal Library	22	197
NACLCs & Law Society	0	0
Network Meeting	0	0
Outreach	448	1130
Phone, Fax and Internet	2268	5153
Postage and Delivery	425	928
Practicing Certificates	541	531
Printing and Stationery	92	1169
Reimburse SACS Funding	0	13312
Repayment for Cancelled Project- Dept of Planning	9750	0
Seminars & Staff Development	570	1477
Staff Amenities	68	1183
Subscriptions and Membership Fees	1326	3623
Sundries	951	1324
Superannuation	4543	14223
Wages	56484	148400
Workcover	<u>700</u>	<u>924</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b><u>87578</u></b>	<b><u>214387</u></b>
<b>NET INCOME FROM ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>	<b><u>-2249</u></b>	<b><u>-22408</u></b>

**ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (SA) INC.**

**BALANCE SHEET AT 30 JUNE 2016**

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2015</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<b>Cash at Bank and on Hand</b>		
Bendigo Bank Cash Management Account	9541	35303
Bendigo Bank Cash Management Trading Account	7290	6565
Bendigo Bank Term Deposits	74326	60367
Petty Cash	0	28
	<u>91157</u>	<u>102263</u>
Accounts Receivable	0	0
Prepayments	568	1205
	<u>91725</u>	<u>103468</u>
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
	<u>91725</u>	<u>103468</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Furniture, Fixtures & Fittings	1079	2157
	<u>1079</u>	<u>2157</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>92804</u>	<u>105625</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Accrued Expenses	1838	16572
Provision for Annual Leave	3383	0
Provision for Long Service Leave	779	0
Grant In Advance	0	0
	<u>6000</u>	<u>16572</u>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<u>86804</u>	<u>89053</u>
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>		
Net Profit/Loss	-2249	-22408
Retained Profits	89053	111461
	<u>86804</u>	<u>89053</u>

**ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (SA) INC.**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016**

This special purpose financial report has been prepared for distribution to the members to fulfil the committee's financial report requirements under the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc.'s constitution. The accounting policies used in the preparation of this report, as described below, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc.'s constitution and with previous years and are, in the opinion of the committee, appropriate to meet the needs of members.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. The accounting policies that have been adopted in the preparation of these statements are as follows:-

**Goods and Services Tax**

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office.

**Non-Current Assets**

Office equipment, furniture and fittings are shown at cost less accumulated depreciation.



## ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENDERS OFFICE (SA) INC.

### STATEMENT BY COMMITTEE

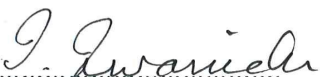
The attached financial statements of the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc. for the year ended 30 June 2016 are, in our opinion, properly drawn up:


- (i) so as to present fairly the financial position and the state of affairs of the organization at 30th June 2016 and the results of its operations for the period then ended;
- (ii) in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution; and
- (iii) in accordance with applicable accounting standards, as disclosed.

As at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

Dated at Adelaide this day <sup>27</sup> September 2016

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Committee.

  
.....  
I Iwanicki  
Chairperson

  
.....  
P. von Baumgarten  
Treasurer



## **INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT**

### **To the members of the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc.**

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc., which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2016 the statement of income for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and the Statement by Committee of Management.

#### ***The Committee of Management***

The Committee of Management are responsible for the preparation of the financial report and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the organisation's constitution and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Committee of Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as they determine is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### ***Auditor's responsibility***

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian auditing standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a fair presentation in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Committee of Management as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

#### ***Independence***

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

#### ***Electronic publication of the audited financial report***

It is our understanding that the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc. may electronically present the audited financial report and auditor's report on its internet website. Responsibility for any electronic presentation of the financial report on the organisation's website is that of those charged with governance of the organisation. The security and controls over information

on the website should be addressed by the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc to maintain the integrity of the data presented. The examination of the controls over the electronic presentation of audited financial reports on the organisation's website is beyond the scope of the audit of the financial report.

***Opinion***

In our opinion, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of the Environmental Defenders Office (SA) Inc. as at 30 June 2016 and of its financial performance for the year then ended on that date and complies with Australian accounting standards to the extent described in Note 1.

***Basis of accounting and restriction on distribution***

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the Committee of Management's reporting responsibilities under the constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.



.....  
D. L. Harradine  
Chartered Accountant

Harradine & Norris-Green  
3 King William Road,  
Unley, S.A. 5061

Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of September 2016

# STAFF REPORT 2015~2016

## OVERVIEW

2015-2016 has been another year of great challenge for the EDO as set out in detail in the Chairperson's report. Whilst funding issues occupied some staff time, we continued providing assistance to the South Australian community. Much of our work involved making submissions in relation to law and policy issues including the planning reform process, off shore petroleum regulation and biodiversity conservation. However we also provided legal advices and assistance across a wide range of matters including BP's proposal to explore for oil in the Great Australian Bight and the State Government's consideration of whether SA should have a storage facility for high level nuclear waste.

## OPENING HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9am—5pm

## STAFF

**Administrator:** Ruth Woolley June 2015—August 2015  
Gabrielle Bond (1 day pw) August 2015—June 2016

**Coordinator / Solicitor:** Melissa Ballantyne (2 days pw)

## VOLUNTEERS, STUDENTS AND PRO BONO ASSISTANCE

As in previous years, the EDO is extremely grateful for the assistance provided by many volunteers. As well as the lawyers on our volunteer roster and pro bono lists, the EDO has been helped by many students and law graduates. In round figures, this voluntary contribution is roughly equivalent to about three quarters of the paid time put in by EDO staff.

Special thanks to all those mentioned below:

## ROSTERED LAWYERS

- ♦ Ruth Beach
- ♦ Michael Doherty
- ♦ Stuart Henry
- ♦ John McElhinney
- ♦ James Blindell
- ♦ Paul Leadbeter
- ♦ Tim Mellor
- ♦ Tim Campbell
- ♦ Felicity Niemann
- ♦ Kyra Reznikov
- ♦ Nicholas Swan

## QUALIFIED LEGAL, LAW STUDENT AND RECENT GRADUATE VOLUNTEERS

The EDO continues to attract quality volunteer legal and general researchers. We have had to turn some offers of help away due to lack of a capacity to provide adequate supervision. Special thanks to the following people who have assisted the EDO during the year with legal research and other tasks:

- ♦ Marlon Blencowe
- ♦ Eleanor Parnell
- ♦ Beau Brug
- ♦ Kvitka Becker
- ♦ Laura Bulfon
- ♦ Hugh Scobie
- ♦ Lee Hendrie
- ♦ Lara Douvartzidis

## LEGAL ADVICE AND CASE WORK

During 2015-2016 advice was sought from the EDO by a wide variety of individuals, residents groups, special interest groups and environment groups. EDO clients come from varying socio-economic backgrounds and from all regions of South Australia.

By volume, the largest number of cases involved planning issues under the Development Act (50%) followed by pollution issues under the Environment Protection Act (10%). Some other areas of law with multiple clients included local government, native vegetation and water resources.

Staff and volunteer lawyers provided a total of 50 advices and case work services. Client advice and case work covered a wide range of topics including:

- ♦ Offshore petroleum regulation
- ♦ regulation of the nuclear industry
- ♦ proposed tuna tourist facility for Victor Harbor
- ♦ protest law
- ♦ compliance with development approvals

## LITIGATION AND LITIGATION-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Due to a significant reduction in lawyer hours from the 1 July 2015 our assistance in this area was limited. The EDO's major assistance was to The Wilderness Society SA in relation to seeking information under the Commonwealth Freedom of Information Act in relation to offshore petroleum exploration proposed by BP Aust. A number of other matters were in the category of litigation related activities. We provided advice on a number of occasions on how to conduct third party appeals in the Environment, Resources and Development Court.



## ACCESS TO INFORMATION, COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION & SEMINARS

Environmental Law seminars form part of the EDO's Rural Outreach Programme (funded by the State Department of the Environment, Water and Natural Resources). As well as providing free legal advice, most regional visits include presentations to school classes and/or a community workshop.

This year we visited the South East and provided sessions on environmental matters to two classes at Mt Gambier High School. We also organised and presented with the Wilderness Society SA a community forum on offshore petroleum regulation.

We also presented an Environmental Law Update co hosted with Flinders University. Presentations included updates on the new planning system and native vegetation regulation reform. We had approximately 60 attendees from the legal profession, academia, community and government. We thank Flinders University for supporting this event and also our speakers Sandy Pitcher, Rob Fowler and James Blindell.

We also undertook the following work;

- ◆ Presented to a Forum on the work of the Nuclear Royal Commission
- ◆ Presented to TAFE students on the work of the EDO

## PUBLICATIONS AND WEBPAGE

We were very pleased this year to finalise work on a guide to mining and petroleum regulation in South Australia. This guide will enable particularly rural members of the community to understand their rights and appropriate responses when mining and petroleum activities are proposed in their local communities. The guide was primarily written by Melissa Ballantyne with contributions from David Cole and Karen Bubna-Litic. We also thank volunteers Marlon Blencowe, Beau Brug, Laura Bulfon, Kvitka Becker and Hugh Scobie for their research and other efforts with this important project. The guide is available on our website. We thank the Law Foundation for funding this project.

Our e-Bulletin continued to be produced. The e-Bulletin is a fortnightly publication, compiled by volunteer Richard Cook. It details the latest relevant South Australian and Commonwealth environmental law notices, events and inquiries. Many thanks to Richard for his continuing work on this important publication which continues to generate great feedback from the public.

As in recent years, we have focused on web-based materials rather than paper resources as electronic technologies are widely used by our client base. However, we continue to print and post materials if requested.

## LAW REFORM AND RESEARCH

The EDO continues to be active in promoting reform of environmental laws. During the year we were involved in 20 activities of this type.

Our law reform work includes submissions to government departments and parliamentary committees on proposed legislation as well as our own law reform agenda. Not all of these resulted in EDO submissions as many involved giving assistance to conservation clients with their submissions. Copies of EDO submissions are available on our web site and promoted through our Facebook page.

An important and ongoing law reform project is the EDO's involvement in the South Australian government's Planning Review – the Planning Improvement Project. We continued to work with conservation and community groups in an effort to influence the Planning Bill as it was debated in the South Australian Parliament. We conferred with the sector to produce letters and media releases, attended two government and one community forum and produced a special e-Bulletin.

We commenced work on a significant funded project on public participation in SA's environment and planning laws. A Charter of Public Participation was completed and research started. The aim is to produce a report in early 2017 outlining proposals for law reform. We thank the Law Foundation of SA for funding this project.

We also undertook work in the following areas:

- ◆ Submission on proposed changes to Native Vegetation laws
- ◆ Meeting with conservation sector in relation to threatened species listing
- ◆ Submission to Royal Commission into the Nuclear Fuel Cycle in response to release of the Tentative Findings document
- ◆ Reviewed the Royal Commission into Nuclear Fuel Cycle Report and preparation of submission to SA Parliamentary Inquiry
- ◆ Submission to a Senate Inquiry into BP's proposed operations in the Great Australian Bight
- ◆ Submission in relation to the work of the National Offshore Petroleum and Safety Authority and community engagement
- ◆ Attendance at 30 year Plan for Greater Adelaide update meeting

- ◆ Two submissions on the proposed Environment Protection Air Quality Policy submissions
- ◆ Submission on DEWNR Offsets Policy
- ◆ Meeting at CCSA in relation to native vegetation offsets
- ◆ Attendance at a consultation on transparency in offshore regulation
- ◆ Attendance at a Mining Law Workshop which included the preparation of a law reform paper

## FUNDING ACTIVITIES

As a consequence of our ongoing funding issues the EDO held an environmental law forum and Quiz Night. Many thanks to all who assisted with these activities. We also applied for grants and were successful in getting a grant from the Law Foundation of SA for the public participation in environmental law project.

## FLINDERS UNIVERSITY

Flinders University again provided invaluable support to the EDO through sponsored accommodation and meeting spaces. We thank Flinders University and in particular the Dean of the Law School Kim Economides for their ongoing support and look forward to furthering our relationship into the new year. This year we were very pleased to work with Flinders University in the following ways:

1. Law students undertaking research for the Mining Guide and other tasks
2. Joint presentation of a community forum on environmental law and policy issues
3. Guest lectures to law students

## STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Staff attended seminars and information sessions on the following topics:

- ◆ Mining Law Forum
- ◆ Webinars– transformation in small organisations, Perpetual grant applications
- ◆ Attendance Law Society session on Nuclear Fuel Cycle Report

## NETWORKS

The Australian network of EDOs (EDOs of Australia) supports the staff of EDO offices across the country and coordinates national activities such as submissions on changes to Commonwealth environmental laws. Staff

participated in regular phone link ups of the network. The main task of the Network Coordinator was to facilitate a Strategic Analysis of the network. This analysis, which recommended greater integration of the network through the creation of a national body will be the subject of further discussion over the next twelve months. Staff also attended meetings of the South Australian Council of Community Legal Services.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

There are a wide range of other activities were carried out by staff to keep our service functioning and accountable. These include:

- ◆ reporting to funding bodies
- ◆ preparation of financial documents including the annual budget
- ◆ bookkeeping
- ◆ participation in the professional indemnity insurance review scheme
- ◆ preparation for and attendance at various service meetings
- ◆ data entry
- ◆ organising the volunteer advisory service
- ◆ quarterly reviews of all client files
- ◆ updating office equipment and information technology
- ◆ seeking advice on award matters.

Work also continued with accrediting our service in accordance with the national process applying to all community legal centres.

## MEDIA

When approached by media outlets, EDO comment is generally limited to broad legal issues (including law reform) with requests for more specific media comment on particular issues being referred to appropriate clients. This year, we have raised the issue of funding cuts to the EDO through the media. Our Facebook page has also proved significant and has raised the profile of and support for the EDO.

## ACCESS AND EQUITY

Volunteer solicitors provide advice to clients as part of the Thursday evening Advisory Service. Demand for this service has been fairly steady with an average capacity for two appointments each week. The Thursday evening service is the first point of face-to-face contact between the EDO and some of its clients, however urgent issues, public interest matters, issues raised by conservation groups and country clients are usually dealt with by the staff solicitors.

The EDO toll free advice phone number (1800 337 566) continues to be used extensively by rural clients. The toll

free number is listed in all South Australian country telephone directories. The funding for the toll free number is from the South Australian Department of the Environment, Water and Natural Resources as part of their continuing support for legal advice to country clients through outreach visits and country phone inquiries.

The EDO does not impose a means test on clients because our main criterion for providing ongoing assistance is “public interest”. In the past, all clients whose problem falls within the definition of “environmental law” have been accommodated at our Thursday evening advisory service. In any event, ongoing assistance depends on meeting the public interest criterion. All clients are charged an administration fee at the time of receiving legal advice.

## THANK YOU

The EDO staff greatly appreciate the continued support from all members and volunteers who have freely and willingly given their time to the EDO. Without volunteer support, the EDO would not be able to provide services to the people of South Australia and to the environment. Special thanks go to the EDO Committee of Management, particularly our office bearers: Chairperson, Iris Iwanicki and Treasurer Patricia von Baumgarten. Our thanks also go to:

- ◆ Law Foundation of South Australia—grant for public participation project
- ◆ South Australian Department of the Environment, Water and Natural Resources —country outreach, litigation support and other funding
- ◆ Flinders University—accommodation
- ◆ Brian Donaghy—fundraising
- ◆ IT on the road
- ◆ Norman Waterhouse Lawyers—Government Gazette and advice on employment and lease issue
- ◆ Giulio Cirillo—accountant
- ◆ Total Computer Solutions—for National EDO Network web page
- ◆ Sam Taylor and Rupert Hogan-Turner from Glashaus—pro-bono communications consulting
- ◆ Jenny Norris-Green—audit
- ◆ Temple Bruer Wines—in kind sponsorship with great wine!
- ◆ All our wonderful supporters who have given donations or have provided assistance in some way

**Melissa Ballantyne**  
**Coordinator /Solicitor**

**Gabrielle Bond**  
**Administrator**