



**Suite 4 / 8-12 Stafford Street, MIDLAND**

**Ph: (08) 9250 2123**

**Fax: (08) 9250 4115**

**Email: [admin@midlas.org.au](mailto:admin@midlas.org.au)**

Visit our website: [www.midlas.org.au](http://www.midlas.org.au)

Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/MIDLASinc](http://www.facebook.com/MIDLASinc)

Follow us on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/@MIDLAS1](http://www.twitter.com/@MIDLAS1)

Join us on Tumblr: [www.midlas.tumblr.com](http://www.midlas.tumblr.com)

Look at our photos: <http://midlas.posterous.com/>

View our videos: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MIDLASmedia>

*MIDLAS empowers disadvantaged and vulnerable people within our community who are experiencing distress by providing them with free services of confidential: information, advocacy, options, referral and support so they can achieve a better way of life.*



## ANNUAL REPORT

### Contents

Minutes of MIDLAS Annual General Meeting held 19 October 2011	3
Minutes of MIDLAS Special General Meeting held 2 May 2012	4
Chairperson's Report	5
Treasurer's Report	6
Financial Report	7
Chief Executive Officer's Report	16
Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Service (Inc)	17
MIDLAS Service Areas	18
MIDLAS Services	19
Information Service	19
Financial Service	19
Emergency Relief	19
Legal Service	20
Tenancy Service	20
Disability Advocacy Service	20
MIDLAS Clients	21
MIDLAS Board of Management	25
Strategic Planning	27
MIDLAS Strategic Plan 2010 - 2013	27
The MIDLAS Team and Organisational Structure	28
Education, Professional Development and Training	29
Team Building	30
Social Media	30
MIDLAS Social Media Platforms	31
Website	31
Facebook	31
Twitter	32
YouTube	32
Tumblr	33
Posterous	33
MIDLAS Media	34
Networking Events & Forums	36
Competitions and Awards	37
MIDLAS Funding	38



**MIDLAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2012**  
**2.30 PM Wednesday 24 OCTOBER 2012**  
**The Old Court House, Helena Street MIDLAND**

1. Attendance and apologies
2. Confirmation of previous minutes of AGM held on 20 October 2010
3. Business arising
4. Reports
  - 4.1 Chairperson's report
  - 4.2 Treasurer's report
  - 4.3 Chief Executive Officer's report
5. General Business
  - 5.1 Election of management committee
  - 5.2 Appointment of auditor for 2012-2013
6. Close

**MINUTES OF THE MIDLAS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) HELD 19 OCTOBER 2011**

Meeting opened at 2.15PM

**1. Attendance, apologies, introductions**

The following people were noted for attending the meeting:

Christine Wadley, Tricia Mitchell, Julia Burch, Darlene Rogalski, Craig McAllister, Ben Bullock, Astrid Ferrari, Kalem Tymus, Maxinne Sclanders, Justine Clarke, Sally McVicar, Fiona Callan, Tiernan Chisholm, James Wilson, Freda Bender, Rod Wahl, Alan Alford, Charlene Green, Danielle Martin, Harry Guo, and Jarrod Lomas.

Apologies were received from:

Kerryne Batten, Carol Mirco, Theresa Graham, Jennifer Catalano, Prue Matautia, Heidi Guldbaek, Lynn-Joy Scrutton, Taryn Benn, and Janet Buckeridge.

**2. Confirmation of previous minutes**

The minutes of the AGM held 20.10.2010 were accepted as a true and correct record of the proceedings of the meeting.

Moved: Freda Bender      Seconded: James Wilson

**3. Business arising from previous minutes**

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

**4. Reports**

The Chairperson's Report, Treasurer's and Auditor's Report, Chief Executive Officer's Report and the 2010/2011 Annual Report were presented and accepted.

## 5. Election of Board members

The following people were elected to the Board of MIDLAS:

James Wilson  
Freda Bender  
Rod Wahl (nominated as Chairperson)  
Alan Alford (nominated as Secretary)  
Lynn-Joy Scrutton  
Maxinne Sclanders  
Kerrynne Batten (Nominated as Treasurer)  
Charlene Green

---

## MINUTES OF SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING Held 2 MAY 2012

Due to the resignation of the Chairperson, Carol Mirco, Vice Chairperson, opened the Special General meeting at 4.15pm and welcomed those in attendance.

### Attendance and apologies

Attendance Carol Mirco (Vice-Chairperson)  
Maxinne Sclanders  
Freda Bender  
Charlene Green  
Sue Codd  
Danielle Bejr  
Chrissy Wadley  
Darlene Rogalski  
Kalem Tymus  
Jessica Cotterill-Abbett  
Tracey Jones  
Julia Burch

### Declaration of conflicts of interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

### Appointment of Auditor 2011/2012

It was noted that responses were received to the call for Expressions of Interest from local Auditors. After exploring options Ms Burch put forward David Truslove to be appointed as the MIDLAS auditor for 2011/2012.

Voted on and carried unanimously.

Meeting closed at 4.20pm



Pamela Bond (left) Jessica Cotterill-Abbett (centre) Darlene Rogalski (right)  
Social Media training day

## Chairperson's Report

On behalf of the MIDLAS Board of Directors, this report is submitted to summarize an eventful and successful year at MIDLAS for the year ended 30 June 2012, our 23rd year of serving the community since being incorporated on the 5th October 1989.

The MIDLAS Board continues to function in accordance with our charter and the basic principles on which it was founded.

The board shaped the 2011-2012 governance agenda to include Strategic Planning as one of its priorities. Two committees have been established which ably assist with the functions of the Board. The Policy Committee, chaired by Charlene Green until May 2012, is now chaired by Maxinne Sclanders. The Audit, Risk and Remuneration Committee has been chaired by Bettina Gibney since its establishment. Charlene, Maxinne and Bettina have all taken on their chairing responsibilities with a great deal of enthusiasm, as have all other committee members.

The board and committees have invested considerable time and energy in reviewing the activities of MIDLAS and planning for the future.

We can attribute our continued success over the last year, in large part, to the commitment of the MIDLAS staff and our volunteer board and committee members.

On behalf of the MIDLAS Board, I take this opportunity to formally acknowledge Julia Burch, Chief Executive Officer and the entire MIDLAS staff whose hard work, incredible levels of service, dedication and attention to detail in supporting the needs of our community and the daily operations of MIDLAS greatly simplify our jobs. Nothing achieved this year would have happened except for their tenacity and sense of purpose. My sincere thanks and appreciation to each and every one of the staff.

I likewise thank the members of the board and our committees for their commitment to the ongoing success of MIDLAS. It has been a pleasure to chair such a pro-active and responsible board during the year. Danielle Bejr, Freda Bender, Sue Codd, Lynn-Joy Scrutton, Bettina Gibney, Katie McIntyre, Maxinne Sclanders and James Wilson have brought to the table significant experience and expertise in a wide variety of fields. I would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Rod Wahl, Kerryne Batten, Marie-Eve McNicoll and Charlene Green who were Board members in the earlier part of the year.



Carol Mirco  
Chairperson

## Treasurer's Report

I have great pleasure in presenting the Treasurer's report for the financial year ending 30 June 2012. The report includes this written report which has been distributed at this annual general meeting and as part of the Annual Report published on the web site. This report includes the attached consolidated profit and loss statement, statement of cash flows and detailed balance sheet for the year ending 30 June 2012.

The financial accounts, as presented, have been audited by David Truslove who was the engaged auditor for this financial year. MIDLAS is in a good financial position and is being managed very well with highly limited resources. It should be noted that the association has made some great advances with the executive working very hard on ensuring the successful future of MIDLAS. I would like to congratulate every person that has contributed to this achievement.

My thanks also go out to those who have donated to our cause and supported us in many different ways to achieve the level of service we are now able to offer the community.

I would also like to thank the Board of Management members and the Audit, Risk & Remuneration committee members for their ongoing support in fulfilling my role as Treasurer.

The total income for the financial year was \$ 1,053,308 which was an increase of \$160,401. The Consolidated Balance sheet for 2011-2012 is \$225,057, with a net operating profit (after tax) of \$20,013.

I recommend the accounts as presented be adopted by the membership.



Katie McIntyre  
Acting Treasurer

# Financial Report

## Independent Auditor's Report

### To the Members of Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Services (Inc)

I have audited the accompanying financial report being a special purpose financial report of Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Services (Inc) which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2012, the statement of comprehensive income for the year then ended, statement of changes in equity for the year then ended, notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information and the Committee's declaration.

### Committee's responsibility for the financial Report

The Management Committee is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the financial reporting requirements of the Constitution and is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines 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

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with Australian auditing standards. Those standards require that I 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 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 give a fair presentation, in order to design 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 as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

### Independence

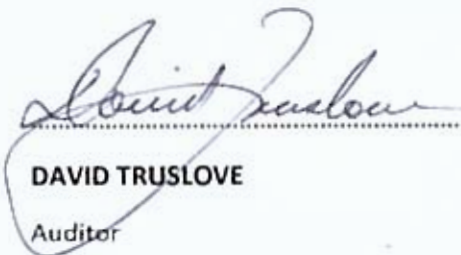
In conducting my audit I have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional accounting bodies.

## **Opinion**

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly in all material respects, and gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Services (Inc) as at 30 June 2012 and of its financial performance for the year then ended and complies with Australian accounting standards to the extent described in Note 1 to those reports

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

Without modifying my opinion, I 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's responsibility under the Constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.



.....

**DAVID TRUSLOVE**

Auditor

22<sup>nd</sup> September 2012.

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**  
**Detailed Profit and Loss Statement**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2012**

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<b>Income</b>		
Commissions received	-	38,458
Interest received	13,663	10,927
Grants received	1,009,958	837,173
Special Equipment Grants	1,277	4,031
Other Income	28,410	2,318
<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>1,053,308</u></b>	<b><u>892,907</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Accountancy	25,200	17,218
Advertising	5,688	3,892
Amortisation Expense	-	1,574
Audit fees	13,597	10,000
Bank Fees	344	322
Board Expenses	2,842	937
Cleaning	5	3
Community Education	23	5,546
Consultants Fees	5,564	4,009
Depreciation expenses	20,026	18,940
Expense for Commissions	30,021	35,295
Insurance	7,395	3,422
Interest	49	73
Interpreting Services	23	-
Legal Fees	-	1,584
Library Resources	200	339
Memberships	11,107	4,418
Postage	1,845	1,083
Photocopying/Printing	1,538	8,803
Professional Development	9,793	9,559
Provision for Office Reallocation	-	- 42,790
Provision for new P&E	-	- 44,745
Provision for Repairs/Awards/Training	6,034	-
Provision for Consulting	45,000	-
Provision for Redundancy	51,300	-
	<b><u>237,593</u></b>	

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

**Detailed Profit and Loss Statement**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2012**

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
	237,593	
Provision for LSL	5,772	8,769
Provision for AL	9,419	11,468
Provision for Social Media	-	22,547
Rent	43,748	37,616
Repairs & Maintenance	358	500
Security	1,059	76
Special Equipment Grants	3,945	1,364
Staff Amenities	1,310	844
Staff Training	-	66
Stationery	6,149	4,318
Sundry Expenses	667	1,367
Superannuation	60,030	47,873
IT Support & Maintenance	2,073	5,917
Telephone	10,764	13,247
Travel	4,658	4,561
Utilities	5,845	5,851
Wages	662,452	532,193
Worker's Compensation	-	1,993
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,033,295</b>	<b>781,978</b>
<b>Profit from ordinary activities before income tax</b>	<b>20,013</b>	<b>110,929</b>
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities	-	-
<b>Net profit attributable to the association</b>	<b>20,013</b>	<b>110,929</b>
<b>Items recognised directly in equity:</b>		
Net increase in Asset Revaluation Reserve	-	-
Increase (decrease) in retained profits due to:	-	-
<b>Total revenues, expenses and valuation adjustments attributable to the association and recognised directly in equity</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total changes in equity of the association</b>	<b>20,013</b>	<b>110,929</b>

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**

**CONSOLIDATED**

**Detailed Profit and Loss Statement**

**For the year ended 30 June 2012**

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Opening retained profits	199,285	88,356
Net profit attributable to the association	20,013	110,929
Adjustments	5,759	-
Rounding	-	-
<b>Closing retained profits</b>	<b><u>225,057</u></b>	<b><u>199,285</u></b>

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**  
**Statement of Cash Flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2012**

	2012	2011
	\$	\$

---

**Note 1. Reconciliation Of Cash**

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments, net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

Cash at end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:

Bendigo Bank	284,910	171,791
Bendigo Emergency Relief #2	615	1,166
Petty Cash	100	100
Bendigo Term Deposit	70,794	66,829
	<u>356,419</u>	<u>239,887</u>

**Note 2. Reconciliation Of Net Cash Provided By/Used In Operating Activities To Net Profit**

Operating profit (loss) after tax	20,013	110,929
Depreciation	20,026	18,940
Amortisation	-	1,574

Changes in assets and liabilities net of effects of purchases and disposals of controlled entities:

(Increase) decrease in prepayments	- 1,349	- 1,092
Increase in Assets	- 1,203	-
Increase (decrease) in other creditors	- 98	7,974
Increase in Retained Earnings	5,759	-
Increase (decrease) in employment entitlements	60,731	20,237
Increase (decrease) in sundry provisions	12,653	- 92,676
	<u>116,532</u>	<u>65,886</u>

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

Detailed Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<b>Current Assets</b>		
<b>Cash Assets</b>		
Bendigo Bank	284,910	171,791
Bendigo Emergency Relief #2	615	1,166
Bendigo Term Deposit	70,794	66,829
Petty Cash	100	100
	<u>356,419</u>	<u>239,886</u>
<b>Other</b>		
Prepaid Insurance	9,121	4,703
	<u>9,121</u>	<u>4,703</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<u><b>365,540</b></u>	<u><b>244,588</b></u>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>		
<b>Property, Plant and Equipment</b>		
Furniture & Fixtures at Cost	46,932	46,932
Less: Accumulated depreciation	- 18,904	- 12,948
Equipment at Cost	73,246	56,208
Less: Accumulated depreciation	- 59,027	- 29,123
	<u>42,248</u>	<u>61,069</u>
<b>Intangible Assets</b>		
Software and Applications	1,948	1,948
Less: Accumulated amortisation	- 1,948	- 1,948
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>	<u><b>42,248</b></u>	<u><b>61,069</b></u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<u><b>407,787</b></u>	<u><b>305,657</b></u>

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**  
Detailed Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2012

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
<b>Financial Liabilities</b>		
<b>Unsecured:</b>		
Credit Cards	- 678	443
	<u>- 678</u>	<u>443</u>
<b>Current Tax Liabilities</b>		
GST Payable control account	21,921	6,349
Input tax credit control account	- 5,690	- 5,925
PAYG Withholding Payable	5,937	5,489
	<u>22,168</u>	<u>5,913</u>
<b>Provisions</b>		
Provisions for Annual Leave	25,360	19,453
Provisions for Long Service Leave	15,354	11,829
Provisions for Redundancy	51,300	-
Provisions for Training	8,182	-
Provisions for Audit DS	15,000	-
Provisions for Admin expenses	32,851	-
Provisions for Social Media	-	43,380
	<u>148,047</u>	<u>74,662</u>
<b>Other</b>		
Grants in Advance	13,193	10,125
Superannuation Payable	-	15,231
	<u>13,193</u>	<u>25,356</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u><b>161,240</b></u>	<u><b>106,374</b></u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<u><b>182,731</b></u>	<u><b>106,374</b></u>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<u><b>225,057</b></u>	<u><b>199,285</b></u>

**MIDLAND INFORMATION DEBT AND LEGAL ADVOCACY SERVICE (Inc)**  
**CONSOLIDATED**

Detailed Balance Sheet As At 30 June 2012

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
<hr/>		
<b>Members' Funds</b>		
Accumulated surplus (deficit)	<u>225,057</u>	<u>199,285</u>
<b>Total Members' Funds</b>	<u><u>225,057</u></u>	<u><u>199,285</u></u>

## Chief Executive Officer's Report

2011-2012 has been a dynamic, innovative and exciting year for MIDLAS. As a consequence of sheer determination MIDLAS has achieved unprecedented growth and development.

MIDLAS enjoyed exceeding \$1,000,000 total income for the year 2011/2012 and looks forward to continuing this success in future years. This achievement would not have been possible without the dedication and resilience of the MIDLAS team. I would like to thank each 'mighty' member of the MIDLAS team for their commitment to service delivery and enthusiasm they invest in MIDLAS. The team of MIDLAS needs to be congratulated for their individual and collective work as they pushed boundaries and limits to seek positive outcomes for clients. Working together, the team has implemented new ways to empower people through ground-breaking methods of service provision.

With guidance from our dynamic and multi-talented Board, governance of MIDLAS has been revolutionised. After some initial turn over, the newly established Board revisited our strategic plan, created sub committees and actively assisted with preparation for the upcoming National Community Legal Centres Association accreditation audit and National Disability Advocacy Standards 2012 audit. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated on the Management Systems Online system. My heartfelt thanks go to this wonderful Board for their encouragement and support over the past year.

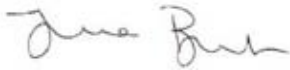
Clients have learned to rely on MIDLAS for our expertise and professionalism as a well established and integrally connected organisation within our community. Clients presenting at MIDLAS with an array of complex issues benefited from the implementation of a new case model approach this year. By operating from the one physical location, MIDLAS has been able to respond to the community's holistic needs in a coordinated manner. In addition to regular newspaper articles, depicting recent events and achievements at MIDLAS, Parliamentary members have given mention to MIDLAS in a number of Parliamentary speeches. Prestigious awards and nominations have also ensured widespread exposure of all MIDLAS services.

The use of new technology has been carefully woven into the daily work of advocacy. The introduction of iPads at MIDLAS has ensured a successful migration of all services from paper to electronic file management. Easy English and alternative formats has been provided for all services to ensure access to our services is widespread. The use of 'Skype' made it possible for MIDLAS to conduct a client interview directly with a bed ridden hospital patient recovering from surgery. The possibilities are seemingly boundless. All team members are encouraged to try out new techniques to engage with clients by providing information in a variety of ways and have actively researched trends and issues, collected client case studies and participated in events to gather information to share in the form of videos, blogs, and tweets.

Having undertaken preliminary investigations into the world of Social Media, the key outlook on the MIDLAS agenda for the 2011/2012 financial year was about establishing the organisation as a leader in this revolutionary new area of human service provision.

Funding turbulence and anxiety this year has now calmed. MIDLAS has been faced the daunting task of surviving the end of non-recurrent funding from the Department of Child Protection and the ceased Global Financial Crisis funding from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Service and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) resulting in the loss of a financial counselling position. MIDLAS is awaiting response from the Public Purposes Trust in relation to funding for the MIDLAS Legal Service. Since May 2012, MIDLAS has operated a new service area called MIDLAS Media, which is a 'for cost' service to like-minded organisations. MIDLAS is eagerly anticipating funding from The Department of Communities to ensure the continuance of this social enterprise.

MIDLAS successfully entered contracts with the new State Government Procurement 'Delivering Community Services in Partnership' policy with the Department of Commerce, and the Department for Child Protection. One year Commonwealth FaHCSIA funding for Disability was extended to three years, and FaHCSIA Income Management funding was extended for a year. LotteryWest has continued to support MIDLAS emergency relief for another year.



Julia Burch

Chief Executive Officer

## Midland Information Debt and Legal Advocacy Service (Inc)

MIDLAS is a not-for-profit Community Legal Centre (CLC) that provides vital services to eligible residents in the North East of Perth. MIDLAS offers six free services: Information Service, Financial Service, Emergency Relief Service, Legal Service, Tenancy Service and Disability Service. Without MIDLAS our clients would be unable to afford the relevant and appropriate professional assistance and would risk facing further disadvantage and social exclusion. MIDLAS adopts, applies and promotes non-discriminatory entry rules in respect of age, gender, race, culture, religion or disability, consistent with the contractual obligations and purpose of our agency. It is the intention of MIDLAS that all people in the organisation's target group have equal access to our services.

MIDLAS services intend to provide a long-term, sustainable improvement in the quality of life of the individual and the community at large. We provide real services, to real people in real need.

MIDLAS supports those who are at risk of social exclusion. MIDLAS provides a central location to disseminate and coordinate information and referrals to other professional services in the area. The work undertaken by MIDLAS is fundamental in reducing the levels of poverty and crime in the north eastern metropolitan and 'hills' region of Perth. Moreover, MIDLAS brings the community together, building social capital and strengthening the social fabric of the region. MIDLAS fosters a positive environment of hope for those in need, seeking to sustainably improve the quality of life for all individuals within the community.

***"We provide real services, to real people in real need."***



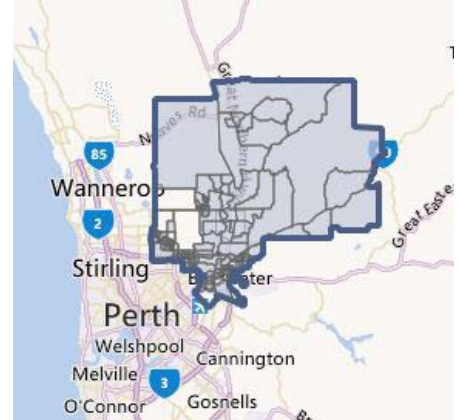
Justine Clarke: MIDLAS reception

## MIDLAS Service Areas

***MIDLAS assists people in the north east metropolitan region of Perth who are experiencing hardship, financial stress and other disadvantage.***

The MIDLAS Service Area encompasses the City of Swan, Shire of Mundaring, Shire of Kalamunda and the City of Bassendean. The areas covered within our geographic catchment area contain some of the most financially and socially disadvantaged households in Perth. The most recent Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA) regarded the City of Swan and the City of Bassendean to be of 'high disadvantage', with the Shires of Kalamunda and Mundaring being considered 'moderately disadvantaged' MIDLAS is devoted to correcting these injustices and empowering the disadvantaged people of our Service Area.

The graphs below and adjacent provides a visual representation of the MIDLAS service area.



City of Swan



112,960 Residents  
1,044.0 km<sup>2</sup>

Town of Bassendean



14,790 Residents  
10.4 km<sup>2</sup>

Shire of Mundaring



38,910 Residents  
643.7 km<sup>2</sup>

Shire of Kalamunda



55,814 Residents  
342.4 km<sup>2</sup>

## MIDLAS Services

***MIDLAS is the only not-for-profit organisation in the north east metropolitan and hills area of Perth that offers a wide range of services, in one place, free of charge to the client.***

Below is a brief overview of the six free services that MIDLAS offers.

### Information Service



MIDLAS provides clients with the knowledge and tools necessary to stabilise their lives and work towards a brighter, self-sufficient and sustainable future. Many clients who attend MIDLAS are burdened by multiple issues often requiring immediate intervention. Some issues may be issue specific, for example an inability to pay utility bills, threat of eviction or problems stemming from domestic and family violence. Other client concerns may present as a matrix of complex, interrelated dependencies.

Many MIDLAS clients live with disabilities which adds to the complexities of their concerns. MIDLAS provides an Information Service that collaborates accurate and relevant information for all disadvantaged and vulnerable people, empowering them with the knowledge required to prevent the crisis from recurring. MIDLAS provides all clients with free telephone, online, social media, face to face and written information about our services and our networks.

***The Information Service has provided information to countless numbers of clients, empowering distressed and vulnerable members of the community. Consequently, issues are resolved without the need to open a case file.***

### Financial Service

MIDLAS employs Financial Counsellors to offer assistance to people experiencing financial hardship. The Financial Counsellors aid with issues ranging from personal budgeting skills through to debt management, negotiation with creditors and bankruptcy assistance and information. Financial Counsellors seek to provide options to better regulate the financial situation of individuals and families experiencing financial hardship.



In the past MIDLAS has largely provided information, advocacy, options, referral and support to people on low and fixed incomes however, with the continued increase in rents, mortgage and interest rates, food and utility prices, MIDLAS is identifying more middle income earners seeking assistance from the Financial Service. This however does not deter from the fact that all clients seen at MIDLAS are experiencing some form of hardship.

MIDLAS Financial Counsellors are members of the Financial Counselling Association of Western Australia. The Financial Service is funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (Cth) and by the Department for Child Protection (WA).

***MIDLAS had a Financial Counselling Service caseload of 1195 compared to a caseload of 906 for the 2010/2011 financial year.***

### Emergency Relief

MIDLAS offers limited assistance for people in immediate crisis. As part of the wider services offered by MIDLAS, the organisation also provides some Emergency Relief to people in immediate need. MIDLAS will provide a limited number of blankets, food vouchers, pharmacy vouchers, smart-riders and other assistance as deemed appropriate to people in need. Effective Emergency relief depends upon strong and connected networks throughout Western Australia. MIDLAS Emergency relief assistance is available by appointment only.

MIDLAS has provided more emergency relief to less people this year as part of an engagement and empowerment strategy which has resulted in positive outcomes for people in crisis. The Emergency Relief Service is made possible by a grant from Lottery West WA.

***MIDLAS has provided Emergency Relief services on 341 counts for the 2011/2012 financial year, compared to 531 counts for the 2010/2011 financial year.***

## Legal Service

MIDLAS provides a Legal Service focused on assisting victims of family and domestic violence. The service also includes initial assistance and advice in family law (not property law), criminal injuries compensation and other relevant matters. For anything that exceeds the scope of the MIDLAS Domestic Violence Legal Service, our solicitor facilitates a referral and transfer to a suitable, alternate legal practitioner. General assistance is provided by the paralegal and assists the lawyer to ensure compliance of the organisation.



MIDLAS is a member of the Community Legal Centres Association. The Domestic Violence Legal Service is funded by the Public Purposes Trust.

***MIDLAS had a caseload of 76 legal cases for the 2011/2012 financial year, compared to 50 legal cases for the 2010/2011 financial year.***

## Tenancy Service



The MIDLAS Tenancy Service is available for all tenants, including the private rental market as well as those living in public and social housing or without a permanent place of residence. MIDLAS Tenancy Advocates provide information to tenants on their rights and responsibilities under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1987 (WA)* and negotiate with property agents and owners to secure an improved outcome for the tenant. Where appropriate, MIDLAS provides court representation. The primary aim of the MIDLAS Tenancy Service is the prevention of evictions leading to homelessness.

MIDLAS is a member of the Tenancy Network. The Tenancy Service is funded by the Department of Commerce.

***MIDLAS had a Tenancy Advocacy Service caseload of 369 for the 2011/2012 financial year, compared to 220 for the 2010/2011 financial year.***

## Disability Advocacy Service

The MIDLAS Disability Advocacy Service ensures all people with disability have access to effective disability advocacy that promotes, protects and ensures their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights enabling community participation. The Disability Advocate provides guidance and support to individuals, having regard to their rights, including access to services, discrimination, alleged abuse and neglect. The term persons with disabilities is used to apply to all persons with disabilities including those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org))



This Disability Service is funded by Department of Families, Housing, Community Service and Indigenous Affairs National Disability Advocacy Program.

***MIDLAS had a Disability Advocacy Service caseload of 96, compared to 82 for the 2010/2011 financial year.***

## MIDLAS Clients

The breadth of the MIDLAS service does not discriminate race, gender, creed or religion. Our largest cohort of clients are single parents living in public housing and receiving government income support. The issues presented at MIDLAS are often varied and complex in nature.

### Mental Health

MIDLAS continues to see a range of clients with varying mental health illnesses including anxiety, depression, bipolar and schizophrenia. We have been able to utilise our disability advocacy service to assist individuals that require support. MIDLAS has also developed strong referral pathways in this area, ensuring that client's have access to appropriate medical assistance and other support services in the community. MIDLAS has recently experienced an increase in males and youth presenting with mental health illnesses and an increase in clients struggling to afford counselling sessions and prescription medications. A client's work capabilities are reduced which affects their income earning capacity and access to income benefits. Staff are aware that they need to keep clients focused on their presenting issues, but also be empathetic to their situation/mental illness.

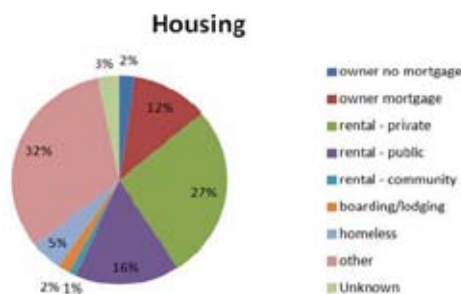
### Gambling

Clients are often reluctant to disclose that they are spending money on gambling. However, financial counsellors may notice that ATM withdrawals and expenses are incurred at a TAB, online gambling or the casino. MIDLAS financial counsellors often refer clients with gambling issues to specialist gambling counsellors.

### Homelessness

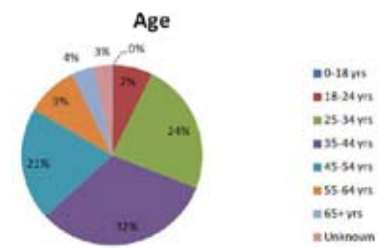
The MIDLAS Tenancy Service continues to assist individuals who are 'couch surfing' or homeless. Advocates assist in finding emergency accommodation for those in dire need and provide a limited number of blankets to those that are unable to find crisis accommodation. Where appropriate, MIDLAS advocates refer clients who are experiencing primary and secondary homelessness to other agencies that specialise in accommodating the homeless.

MIDLAS has found that long-term homelessness rarely demands the need for financial counselling as debts incurred by these individuals are not usually pursued by creditors. MIDLAS is able to offer emergency relief to clients experiencing homelessness to assist with purchasing food, prescription medications and transportation which is often out of reach. Below is a chart illustrating the housing arrangements of MIDLAS clients:



## Seniors

A small reduction in senior clients has been noted this year. MIDLAS has noticed a decrease in clients over the age of 75, and it is assumed that these individuals would prefer to sacrifice other items in an attempt to pay their utilities. Senior clients often experience difficulty in maintaining their utility and telephone accounts. Seniors often support adult family members or dependents that are experiencing marriage break downs and/or drug and alcohol addictions, which places additional strain on their limited income stream. The adjacent chart shows the breakdown in age of MIDLAS clients:



## People with Disability

Many clients who disclose they are living with a disability are accessing the service for assistance with utility bills. Sometimes the clients disability may require more electricity consumption in order to maintain support equipment. Applications can be made to stop the risk of disconnection to Synergy in life support matters. Advocates often book joint financial counselling appointments with the MIDLAS disability advocate in an attempt to assist clients through a shared action plan. Joint bookings foster positive relationships between the client and advocates, and can alleviate the stress that would have been caused by multiple visits to our office. MIDLAS is able to offer client's alternative formats for all our documents and assist those that require unique methods of accessing our services. Training is provided to all MIDLAS staff to ensure compliance with National Disability Advocacy Program standards. A strong referral pathway with Centrelink also exists for those clients that believe they should be receiving a disability pension.

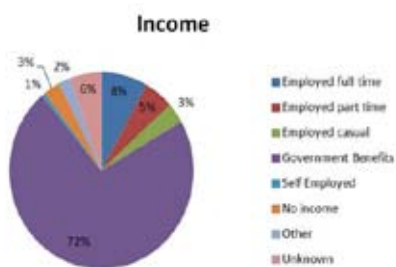
## New and Emerging Communities

MIDLAS has experienced an increase in clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who speak English as their second language. Barriers in communication exist where clients have very limited English speaking skills, often requiring an interpreter to attend with them at their appointment. A Chinese client recently presenting at MIDLAS found it very difficult to understand her financial responsibilities and was provided with an interpreter. Clients in these situations often experience misunderstanding of contracts and payment of utility bills. Financial hardship, separation and domestic violence have been major causes of financial difficulty amongst this group. MIDLAS staff advocate for clients that are unable to communicate sufficiently with service providers to ensure that the clients' best interests are advocated for.

## Prisoners/Former Prisoners (and their families)

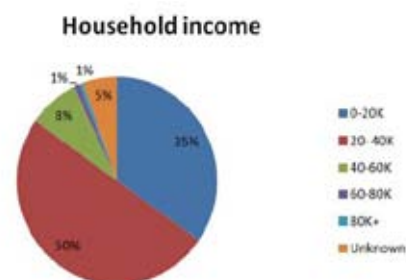
The Transitional Manager at the prisons refer our services to inmates who are coming up for parole. The individual engaging with our financial counsellors dictate and control the service provided based upon the unique set of financial concerns/issues that they have. While it may only be possible to provide information and options over the telephone, inmates have the option of engaging with a financial counsellor at MIDLAS once they have been released from prison. Although the services at MIDLAS are usually restricted to individuals that reside in our area, inmates are exempt from this policy to ensure that engagement is possible. Individuals that are in prison often do not have a permanent residence arranged for when they are released, therefore, relaxing this policy is an attempt to promote inclusiveness and ensure engagement by these individuals.

## People on Income Support



Approximately 85% of the clients seen at MIDLAS receive an income of less than \$40,000 with the majority receiving some form of income support payment. MIDLAS has witnessed these clients receiving parenting payments, disability payments, newstart payments, carers payments and aged pensions. Clients tend to report their incomes as being less than what is showing on their income statements, which may be due to centrepay deductions and lump sum advance payments being deducted from their income before receipt.

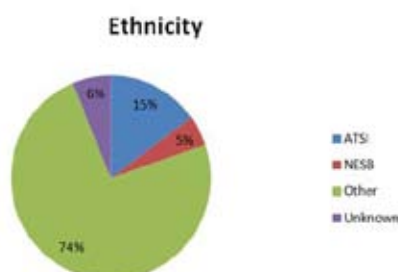
Many clients on income benefits have accessed Centrelink's advance payment system and continue to do so. Payments to: rent for public housing, fines, Centrelink debts and utilities are also regular deductions noted for many clients. Most of these clients find that they need to access the hardship utility grant on an annual basis as their income does not support all of their expenses. Some of these clients also regularly use pay day lenders and have high deductions to these creditors.



## Indigenous Communities

About 15% of MIDLAS clients identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Many Indigenous clients utilise the MIDLAS financial counselling service to seek advocacy and assistance in relation to their utility bills. Over the past 12 months, West Australians have seen a rise in the cost of living (including utility bills), which places extra stress upon families and communities. Many Indigenous clients who seek the support of MIDLAS disclose to staff the stress placed upon their finances are magnified by cultural sensitivities and practices. MIDLAS clients often assist Indigenous clients with Hardship Utility Grant Scheme grants and centrepay deductions.

MIDLAS has seen an increase in Indigenous clients who have retired over the past 12 months. Debts incurred during their working life are unable to be repaid once retired. MIDLAS financial counsellors are able to assist retirees to have their superannuation released early once the client has been receiving income benefits for 6 months.



## Victims of Domestic Violence

The Legal Service employs a principal solicitor and paralegals to focus on assisting victims/survivors of family and domestic violence, and sexual abuse. Since MIDLAS appointed a new principal solicitor in 2012, the Domestic Violence Legal Service has been able to engage with more legal clients and build the capacity of the service as a whole. Over the past six months, the paralegals and projects manager have been able to enhance and enrich the legal educational tools offered by MIDLAS. MIDLAS social media platforms have been used to communicate, raise awareness, inform and empower the community.

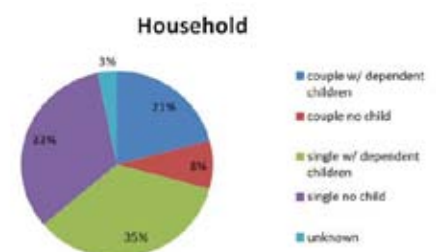
MIDLAS participated in Australia's White Ribbon Day (WRD) campaign to stop violence against women. Collaboration with others in The Domestic Violence Agencies Network allows MIDLAS personnel to broaden their knowledge and skills in relation to domestic violence. Participation in this particular campaign has fostered an innovative learning environment from which the broader community benefits. MIDLAS has nominated to be on the working group for the 2012 WRD and has commenced planning for the event in November. MIDLAS will be developing a video that presents local multicultural leaders making the White Ribbon Day Oath.

## Compulsory and Voluntary Income Management

MIDLAS has been selected to partner with the Department of Human Services (Centrelink) Midland office by having financial counsellors attend sessions at Centrelink every Monday afternoon for income managed clients. We have been able to help 19 income managed clients who were willing to engage during a three month pilot program. Due to this positive response, this program has been extended for the remainder of the year. A strong relationship has been established with the Centrelink income management staff as they refer income managed clients to MIDLAS. Referrals and appointments are made through the Centrelink portal or by the income management staff contacting MIDLAS. MIDLAS staff promote income management benefits to clients who may benefit from the incentives that income management can provide coupled with ongoing support.

## Relationship Stress or Breakdown

Many clients who are experiencing relationship breakdowns do not have the capacity to deal with their financial issues. Issues affecting a client may include custody disputes, domestic violence, financial abuse and child support/custody disputes. It is very common for these clients to consider their financial problems last. Unfortunately, we often see clients once financial issues have accumulated and become more serious. Clients often feel that they cannot cope with negotiating with creditors, financial institutions and utility companies. MIDLAS may only be able to provide information to clients whose debts are in joint names, if the other party is not a MIDLAS client.



## MIDLAS Board of Management

The MIDLAS Board of Management is made up of individuals who have a wide and varied skill set and bring a range of knowledge and experience that are generously volunteered to oversee and drive the direction of MIDLAS.

The MIDLAS Board meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 5:00 PM. The MIDLAS Board currently has two subcommittees being the Policy Subcommittee and the Audit, Risk and Remuneration Subcommittee.

### Chairperson **Carol Mirco**



Carol has extensive experience working within the health care sector. Her leadership skills and achievements were recognised when she was awarded the NT TMP / Hudson Telstra Business Women of Year Award in 2003 for work in the Government Sector. Carol has extensive experience working with boards, both as a member and as a former CEO of the ACT Nursing and Midwifery Board, and the previous Director of Board Services (WA) with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency. Carol's educational achievements include a Bachelor of Health Science (Nsg), a Graduate Diploma in Arts (Aboriginal and Intercultural Studies) and a Master of Applied Anthropology. Carol is currently completing her Master of Business Administration.

### Vice Chairperson **Suzanne Mary Codd**



Sue is a Social Worker with 20 years experience in the human services field. Sue commenced working in Community Legal Centres in the early 1990's as a Welfare Rights advocate at Brewer Street and Sussex Street Community Legal Centre's. Following a brief period working as a lecturer in Human Services at Midland TAFE, Sue returned to work as a hospital based Social worker at Royal Perth Hospital and later, Swan Kalamunda Health Service. Sue is currently employed as Coordinator of the Swan Aged Care Assessment Team. With a strong interest in social justice and equity issues, Sue was pleased to join the MIDLAS Board in 2012.

### Secretary **Danielle Bejr**



Danielle is currently a student at Curtin University, studying a double degree in Psychology, Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations. She enjoys volunteering in her community groups, and has experience in the role of Secretary at the Psychology Student Council at Curtin, as well as in the role of HR Director and a Project Manager at Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) Curtin. Through SIFE Curtin, she has helped to create The Halo Yarns, Perth's first Aboriginal youth magazine.

### Treasurer **Katie McIntyre**



Katie is in her final year of a Bachelor of Business (double major in finance and accounting) at Edith Cowan University. At the completion of this she will begin her accounting career in a graduate role with BHP Billiton; and is enrolled to begin working on her Master of Business Administration (MBA). This is her first position on a board, and she hopes to bring some new ideas and initiatives to the organisation as well as contribute to the ongoing success of MIDLAS.

## Member Freda Bender



As a founding member of MIDLAS, Freda has been on the Board of Management since the very beginning. MIDLAS spent some time operating out of Helena Street Lotteries House Building in Midland where Freda fought to secure low cost rental accommodation for community organisations. Freda was also a founding member of Swan Emergency Accommodation and volunteers her time at the Citizen’s Advice Bureau, the Midland Nursing Home and is also on the board of the Red Cross and the Ascension Anglican Church Council.

## Member Bettina Gibney



Bettina has been an executive director in a private company (Hydratrans Pty Ltd) in the transport industry for six years as well as co-founding director of the same company. Bettina’s current role focuses on strategic planning and marketing, financial management, compliance, business development and business process improvement. Bettina spent many years maintaining the corporate regulatory compliance and statutory proceedings register of a large group of subsidiaries of Woodside Energy Ltd and coordinated the Audit & Risk; Human Resource; and Governance and Nominations Committees board paper reporting to the board of Woodside Energy Ltd. Bettina’s educational achievements in addition to her Master of Business Administration include a Graduate Certificate in Business Law, a Diploma from the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is currently completing her Master of Commerce in International Business.

## Member Maxinne Sclanders



During her professional career Maxinne has been a senior manager in the public service for over ten years, an educational administrator and a teacher. She left the public service in 1997 to become an independent consultant and since that time, has been active in providing consultancy services to a range of agencies, specialising in evaluation and review, policy development, human resource management and organisational development. As well as broad experience across the public sector, through the memberships of various boards and committees, she has established extensive networks and working relationships throughout the health industry (government and non-government) and the agricultural sector. She has worked with local community groups on a voluntary basis to initiate and develop tourism and various events to support and promote the area in which she lives.

## Member James Wilson



Previously acting as the Treasurer of the MIDLAS Board, James has been a dedicated board member for over 10 years. James has been actively involved in the local community, serving on an array of Boards in organisations in the Midland area.

## Member Lynn-Joy Scrutton

Lynn-Joy has over 20 years experience in the field of education, training and employment in a variety of strategic and operational roles in both the federal and state government, in order to build capacity and reduce the social and economic gap between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians.

## Strategic Planning

The board participated in a strategic planning day which was facilitated by Christina Kadmos from Kalico Consulting. This strategic planning exercise involved the review of the organisations current strategic direction and planning and development of an enhanced strategic plan of the organisation.

The review provided clarity surrounding the core business and strategic objectives of MIDLAS, ensuring the Board's strategy guided the organisation's goals and vision. Staff members, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer and Board members, contributed to the understanding of the MIDLAS services and the future goals and hopes for the development of those services.



## Strategic Plan 2010-2013

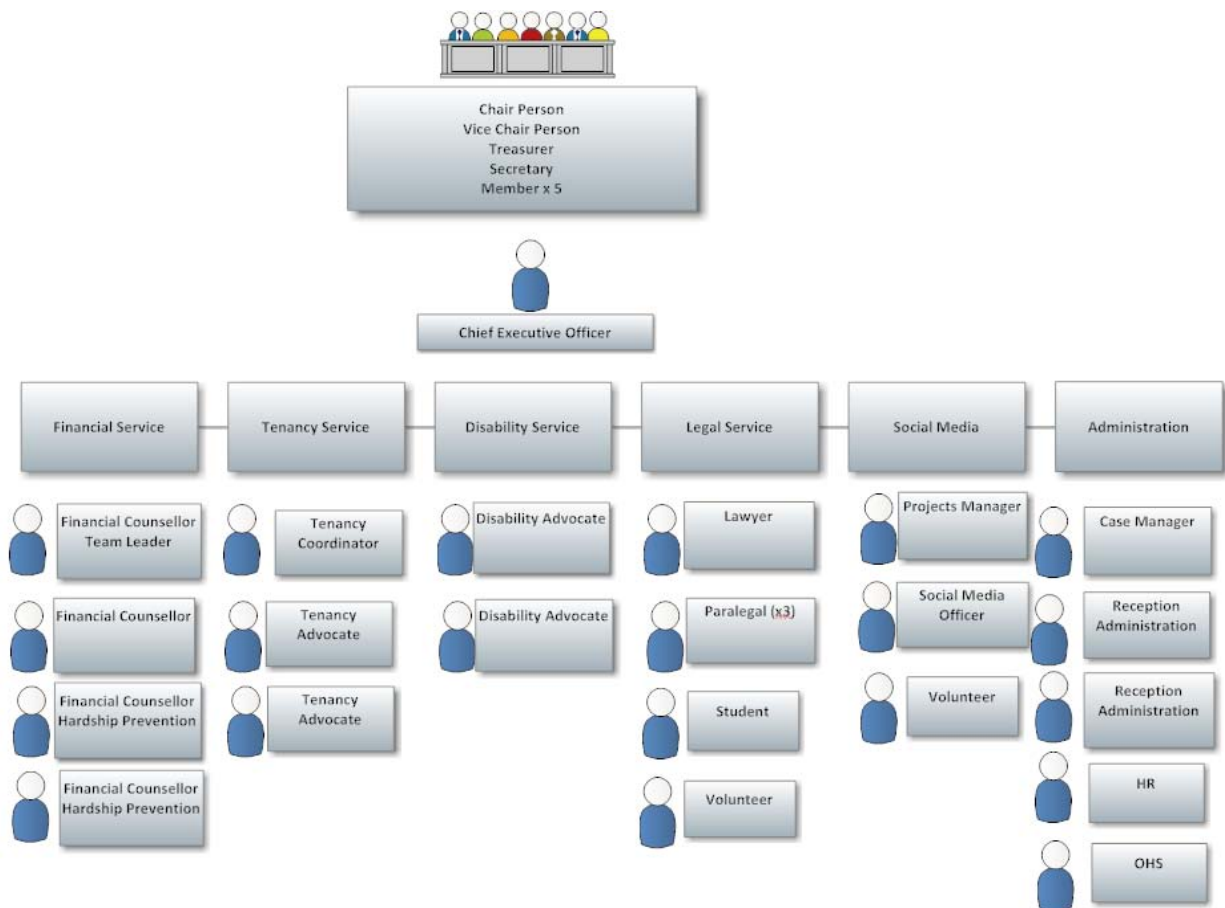
*draft 2*

Empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable people within our community who are experiencing distress by providing them with free services and confidential information, options, referral and support so they achieve a better way of life.



## The MIDLAS Team and Organisational Structure

In 1989, when MIDLAS became a legal identity, the team consisted of one Financial Counsellor and a part-time administrator. MIDLAS now operates under the guidance of a full Board of Management and employs 16 staff (12.4 FTE) and volunteers. MIDLAS services are provided by a team of highly qualified, experienced and dedicated personnel.



MIDLAS Team 2012

# Education, Professional Development and Training

## Professional Development & Training

MIDLAS supports the growth and development of staff, as individuals and as a team, through internal and external training and professional development. In September, all employees were registered for the highly recommended and greatly successful Building Capacity, Building Bridges which was brought to Blue Steel Oval thanks to Midland Communities for Children Plus (C4C+). This was a stimulating and thought provoking session on working with clients in poverty, proving to be a very useful resource in improving the service provided by the organisation. The number of external professional development training sessions attended by MIDLAS team members is too many to list, however, some of the staff development opportunities hosted at MIDLAS over this year include:

- Equal Opportunity Commission facilitated training on the Equal Opportunity Act 1984
- Elizabeth Brennan from Relationships Australia facilitated self esteem training
- Red Cross – Danielle Lobo
- Wes Elliot from Swan Mental Health facilitated a training session on how to manage aggressive clients.

## Conferences – Attendance and Presentations

MIDLAS Attended numerous conferences, summits and symposiums for promotion, discussion, consideration and action on a variety of issues impacting the organisation and the human services sector at large. Among others, MIDLAS attended the:

- Family and Domestic Violence WA Pathways Network
- Western Australian Council for Social Services (WACOSS) Conference
- Connecting Up Conference
- Homelessness Service Conference
- Closing the Gap 2012: Indigenous Health Seminar
- Occupational Safety and Health Community Organisations
- Legal Aid Summer Series
- Leading the Road Home (Homeless) Conference
- Financial Councillors Association WA (FCAWA) Members Forum
- Social innovation in Western Australia Enterprise Building Workshop
- FCWA annual conference
- Community Legal Centres WA networking days.

MIDLAS furthered its engagement with Community Education, by presenting at a number of local, national and international conferences on contemporary topics that affect the clients, the organisation and the Human Services industry, including:

- 2012 WACOSS Conference by Projects Manager, Craig McAllister
- National Association of Community Legal Centre's Conference in Adelaide
- 2012 Youth Activism and International Social Justice and Youth Activism Conference in Canada - MIDLAS Paralegal, Ben Bullock presented a paper titled "Legal Empowerment of Vulnerable Members of Communities"

## Team Building

MIDLAS creates teambuilding activities to strengthen the relationships and resilience of the staff. The MIDLAS Christmas Party was a lawn bowling competition at the Glen Forrest Sports Club. To celebrate the End of Financial Year, the MIDLAS team participated in painting a special coffee mug at Midland Stirk Ceramics.

The MIDLAS team created, implemented and delivered a re-induction program that shared developments and highlighted changes over the previous calendar year.



## Social Media

MIDLAS has established social media platforms to disseminate up to date free relevant and easily accessible information. MIDLAS social media platforms have been used to communicate, raise awareness, inform and empower the community. MIDLAS has identified the use of social media and online engagement as a significant tool in reaching out and responding to the established and emerging needs of our clients. Additionally, MIDLAS believes that social media will play an increasingly integral role in meeting contractual outcomes for funding bodies, as funding agreements include social media engagement as a key performance outcome.

MIDLAS has conducted extensive research into the use of social media for not-for-profits in relation to meeting the needs of clients within the community. Market research demonstrates an increased take-up and relevance of social media. For example, according to Social Bakers Online, current Facebook usage in Australia is almost 11 million users - 54.89% of population (<http://www.socialbakers.com/facebook-statistics/australia>). Upon relaunching the MIDLAS website (including an effective integrated social media model), MIDLAS has seen a dramatic increase in the number of users contacting us via our website. We receive on a daily basis email enquiries through the website for our services. Many of these enquiries are made outside of conventional business hours. MIDLAS uses the following social media platforms to release regular blogs and media comments:

A social media presence is now considered to be essential for producing, publishing, controlling, critiquing, ranking and interacting with online content.

Giannini, 2010:157

# MIDLAS Social Media Platforms

## Website

The MIDLAS website is a rich repository of information and referral. Easy navigation, friendly personalised images and up to date content makes it simple for users to find and use the tools that are embedded within the website. Over the past twelve months, traffic usage through the MIDLAS has increased. More people have viewed our pages and interacted with the inbuilt features. One of the most effective features was the 'contact us' page. The message box provided a simple way for users to make appointments and contact MIDLAS staff without the need for email. MIDLAS received 10-20 requests for appointments and information per week using this platform.

*The MIDLAS Website has received 1600 unique visits per month*



## Facebook



The MIDLAS Facebook page has been our on-line communication, social media platform and was designed to facilitate interaction with current and potential clients. Users of Facebook shared news stories, photographs, video and other files. MIDLAS staff used Facebook to alert clients of available appointment times by posting them on the MIDLAS Facebook wall. 33% of MIDLAS Facebook users interacted with the page on a regular basis.

*MIDLAS Facebook received 148 'likes' with 653 unique reaches. 33.1% of the 148 who clicked 'like' actively engaged with MIDLAS Facebook content on a weekly basis.*

## Twitter

Twitter was used as the MIDLAS online social networking and micro blogging service. Twitter enabled users to send and read text posts of 140 characters, known as ‘tweets’. MIDLAS tweeted twice weekly and replied to other posts on a regular basis. Hundreds of other not-for profits connected with MIDLAS and shared information about our sector. The MIDLAS twitter feed provided greater connection with local journalists, politicians, for-profit businesses and other not-for-profit organisations. These connections helped increase exposure of MIDLAS and relay the important services offered.

**MIDLAS Twitter had 482 followers and contributed to 690 tweets.**



## YouTube

The MIDLAS unique YouTube channel showcased videos relating to issues concerning MIDLAS clients. Video subject matter has included:

- White Ribbon Day
- Client interviews and feedback
- MIDLAS Safety Planning
- Domestic Violence information
- Tenancy and Disability Information
- Information about improving financial health.

**Videos posted on the MIDLAS YouTube channel were viewed 1,901 times**



## Tumblr



The MIDLAS Tumblr page displayed posts and blogs in relation to current affairs, national participation days, community legal education, law reform and general information. All evidence and research for the content of these articles was conducted by MIDLAS team members. The Tumblr platform was an important tool for MIDLAS in disseminating more than 40 important and relevant posts to clients, other networks, funding bodies and the wider community.

***MIDLAS posted 41 blogs on Tumblr***

## Posterous

The MIDLAS Posterous page provided an opportunity for the community to view images of events and activities that MIDLAS participated in.

***Posterous has received 483 unique views on our 36 post.***



Craig McAllister & Kalem Tymus -Social Media team

## MIDLAS Media

Through our success with social media, MIDLAS has been approached by several other not-for-profits seeking advice on how to utilise these tools. The MIDLAS Media social enterprise works with Western Australian not-for-profit organisations to establish an online social services community that promotes technology based knowledge sharing, communication, conversation and innovation in a cost efficient and effective way. The vision of MIDLAS Media is to empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people within our community through building strongly educated and relevant online networks that can provide information to the community and agency clients. The mission of this new service is to equip and establish working relationships within not-for-profit organisations in Western Australia by providing them with the necessary tools to effectively engage in online education and communication.

MIDLAS has observed that the not-for-profit sector, as a whole, has been slow to adopt online and social media technologies. MIDLAS has identified the opportunity to leverage our technical skills, infrastructure and profile, to provide affordable social media support services to the NFP sector in WA and beyond. The long term aspirations of MIDLAS Media is to generate surplus funding which will be sufficient enough that it can pay for a much needed Family Lawyer and to provide a sustainable funding source for MIDLAS.

The Projects Manager has attended and presented at many conferences throughout the year including:

- WACOSS 2012 Annual Conference
- NACLC National 2012 conference
- 2012 Connecting Up conference
- Sussex Street Disability Forum
- WACOSS Social Media training workshops
- Optus business breakfast
- Microsoft Social Media Presentations (Singapore office)
- WA Family Pathways Network Conference
- WACLC management meetings



The increased interest in MIDLAS approach to social media has had a ripple effect through the not-for-profit sector not only in WA but throughout Australia. The Projects Manager has provided training and consultation to over 50 not-for-profits throughout Australia. MIDLAS has provided resources, including our policy guide and social media handbook, to over 50 organisations throughout the year, including:

- WACOSS
- Identity WA
- Law & Justice Foundation NSW
- Queensland Association of Legal Services
- Centrecare WA
- Kalparrin, and
- Hills Community Support Group

Plus many others throughout WA and across Australia.

MIDLAS social media has become the exemplar amongst not-for-profits throughout WA and progressively throughout Australia. The MIDLAS Board and management have seen an opportunity to develop a trading arm of MIDLAS providing social media to other not-for-profits throughout Australia. MIDLAS Media contracted the services of Kalico Marketing, a consultancy company, to assist with the development of a robust and effective business plan.



MIDLAS Media has produced several pilots over the past 6 months and has refined our product so that it is affordable yet competitive. MIDLAS Media pilot programs involved organisation throughout WA including:

- The Salvation Army –Just Salvos
- Midvale Early Childhood & Parenting Centre
- Swan Alliance – Communities for Children Plus



Holly Calder - Presenting for White Ribbon Day

## Networking Events & Forums

### Networking

Having relocated to the Eastern Region Business Enterprise and Arts Centre building, MIDLAS found the capacity to make a stronger presence in the community, having a more effective involvement within new and existing networks. This year MIDLAS has driven a number of challenging projects to complement our mission of empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals to make a positive change in their quality of life.

MIDLAS wishes to acknowledge the relationship and networks shared over the past 12 months: Alinta Gas, Anti poverty week, Australian National University, Centacare Midland, Centrecare, Centrelink Midland, Centrelink Service Review, City of Swan, Communities for Children Plus (C4C+ Midland), Community Legal Centres Association and all Community Legal Centre Association members, Cyril Jackson, Department for Communities, Department of Child Protection Midland, Department of Housing Midland, , Domestic Violence Agencies Network, DonorTech, FaHCSIA, Financial Counselling Association of WA, Foundation Housing, Hills Community Support Group, Holyoake, Ken Wyatt - Federal Member for Hasluck, Karnany, Koolkuna, Midland Court Stakeholders meetings, Midland Family Support Network, Midland Women's Health Care Place, Midvale Early Childhood and Parenting Centre, the Salvation Army, Synergy, Swan Emergency Accommodation, Water Corporation, WACOSS Partnership Forum, Wooroloo Prison Farm and many more.

MIDLAS participated in the following days of action and support: White Ribbon Day, Silent March, National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Day, International Volunteer Day, International Women's Day, International Day for People with Disability, Disability Advocacy Forums and many more.

MIDLAS' extended networks: Centrelink outreach for Income Management clients, WACOSS Partnership Forum, Midland Regional Homelessness Plan Workshop, Midland Court Stakeholders, Midland Community Forum (Department of Human Services), Community Legal Centres – strategic planning, CLCWA/Legal Aid – social inclusion program, Shelter WA, Tenancy Network, Domestic Violence Agencies Network – joint tender submission. Midland and Swan Members of Parliament, Swan Chamber of Commerce amongst many others.

MIDLAS staff have represented and visited various organisations throughout the year: Holyoake, Midland Women's Health Care Place, Corrective Services, Relationships Australia, Koolkuna, Midland Dialysis Centre, Swan Districts Hospital, Swan Mental Health, Wooroloo, Cyril Jackson, Anti Poverty Week, White Ribbon Day, Wooroloo prison farm, MoneySmart Week and many more.



Jessica Cotterill-Abbett at the MIDLAS stall - NAIDOC Day 2012

## Competitions and Awards

This year MIDLAS was the proud recipient of a number of awards and high profile nominations for work within the community. In addition to the awards outlined below, MIDLAS was recently awarded the prize for Best Australian Film in the TechSoup Competition, from which we received international recognition. MIDLAS has also participated in an array of other nominations including the MoneySmart Week awards and the WA Department of Commerce Innovator of the Year.

On an individual level, MIDLAS Committee Member, Freda Bender is a finalist in the WA Seniors Award.

MIDLAS was honoured to receive the WACOSS Department of Communities' Community Services Excellence award for "raising the profile of the community" through our efforts in Social Media. Craig McAllister represented MIDLAS at the WACOSS award winners dinner at Government House which was presided over by His Excellency Governor Malcolm McCusker.



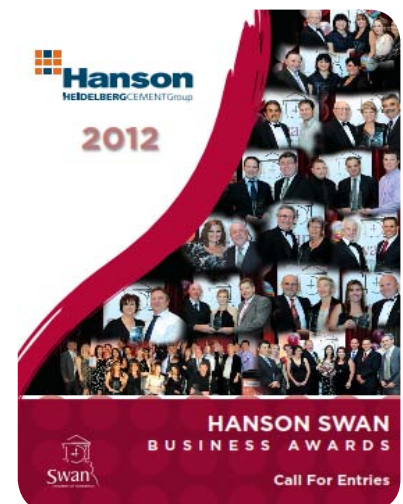
Julia Burch (left), Craig McAllister (centre), Kalem Tymus (right) - WACOSS Awards Night 2012



Ben Bullock (Paralegal)- Finalist of Lawyers Weekly Awards 2011

MIDLAS' Paralegal, Ben Bullock was selected as one of six finalists from across Australia in the Student Lawyer of the Year awards. Ben, Kalem Tymus and Craig McAllister represented MIDLAS at the awards ceremony at the Sydney Opera House. Ben has spent the past year travelling overseas. During this time he has been employed by MIDLAS on a casual basis utilising social media and other Information Communication Technologies to communicate with the Midland office.

MIDLAS was a finalist in the prestigious 2012 Hanson Swan Business Awards for Website & On-line Services. By being a finalist MIDLAS gained widespread recognition within our local business community.



## MIDLAS Funding

MIDLAS works in partnership with government and non-government organisations to deliver a diverse range of professional services designed to support and improve the lives of eligible clients. MIDLAS receives funding through a variety of sources and would like to extend our thanks to our funding bodies as their contributions enable MIDLAS to empower disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our community.

### Commonwealth Funding

#### Financial Service.

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

- Commonwealth Financial Counselling Program (CFC)
- Commonwealth Financial Counselling Program - Supporting Income Management

Working collaboratively to help vulnerable and disadvantaged people build financial resilience, health and wellbeing.

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/communities-and-vulnerable-people/programs-services/commonwealth-financial-counselling-cfc>

#### Disability Service.

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)

The National Disability Advocacy Program (NDAP) funds MIDLAS to provide individual advocacy support to people with disability that promotes, protects and ensures their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights, enabling community participation.

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/publications-articles/national-disability-advocacy-program>

### State Government Funding

#### Tenancy Service.

Department of Commerce: Provision of Tenancy Advice and Education Services in Western Australia.

MIDLAS has given advice to persons on the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act 1987.

From 2012-2017 - Delivering Community Service in Partnership (DCSP) Policy, July 2011

<http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/index.htm>

#### Financial Service.

Department for Child Protection: Financial Counselling Service - Preferred Service Provider status

From 2012-2015 - Delivering Community Service in Partnership (DCSP) Policy, July 2011

MIDLAS financial counsellors work with clients to resolve financial crises such as the risk of legal action, loss of essential services or repossession/eviction. Services offer information, conduct assessments and provide support and options to assist clients address identified problems and manage their financial situation more effectively.

[http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/servicescommunity/Pages/HardshipUtilitiesGrantScheme\(HUGS\).aspx](http://www.dcp.wa.gov.au/servicescommunity/Pages/HardshipUtilitiesGrantScheme(HUGS).aspx)

#### Emergency Relief.

Lotterywest: Emergency Relief Grant

LotteryWest help organisations who help people who are experiencing hardship. MIDLAS Emergency Relief grant is used to cover the cost of food, clothing, shelter; transport and other needs considered critical by the service provider.

<http://www.lotterywest.wa.gov.au/grants/grant-types/emergency-relief>

#### Legal Service

Public Purposes Trust: The Law Society of Western Australia as trustee of the Public Purposes Trust. The Objects of the Trust are to Advance the education of the community and any section of it with respect to the law; 2) Advance the collection, assessment and dissemination to the community and any section of it, of information relating to the law; and 3) Improve the access of the community and any section of it to legal services.

MIDLAS legal service meets all of the Objects of the Trust and offers legal services in relation to victims of domestic violence.

<http://www.lawsocietywa.asn.au/public-purposes-trust.html>