



Office of the Attorney-General

21 AUG 2013

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Mr David Crofts
23 Brisbane Street
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Dear Mr Crofts

Thank you for your email of 18 July 2013 to the Attorney-General, the Hon Robert Clark MP, regarding the Mental Health Legal Centre (MHLC). The Attorney-General has asked me to respond on his behalf.

As you may be aware, decisions with regard to funding for community legal centres, such as the MHLC, are made by the board of Victoria Legal Aid (VLA), independently of the Victorian Government. It would, therefore, not be appropriate for the Attorney-General or his office to seek to intervene in that decision-making. However, the Government fully supports the VLA board's work to ensure that legal aid funding is spent wisely and directed to areas of greatest need.

I am informed that the MHLC was under statutory management for some time and experienced significant compliance and administrative problems.

VLA funding that has been provided to the MHLC will be redirected into VLA's Mental Health and Disability Advocacy program. As a consequence, there will be no diminution of those services and legal advice to mental health clients will continue to be provided through VLA's own service provision.

Thank you for writing to the Government with your views.

Yours sincerely

Paul Denham
Acting Chief of Staff