

**Community Justice Centres
Year in Review Report
2011/2012**



Table of contents

Director's foreword	3
What we do	4
Our people	5
Caseload.....	7
Dispute types	11
Referral source.....	14
Outcomes.....	16
Service delivery	17
Service promotion	20
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program	23
Appendix A – List of CJC mediators	26

Director's foreword

I have great pleasure in presenting Community Justice Centre's "Year in Review" report for the 2011/12 financial year.

The NSW Government has a strong commitment to Alternative Dispute Resolution. The Government's ten-year plan *NSW 2021: A Plan to Make NSW Number One* lists increasing awareness and use of Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Community Justice Centres to resolve disputes, as a priority action.

Community Justice Centres has strived to achieve this goal, and the past year has been marked by significant achievements.

We have seen a continuation of the strong growth in the number of disputes that we help people resolve, and have continued to provide our mediation services across NSW free of charge to the public.

Providing a high quality of client service has always been a key priority of Community Justice Centres. The new feedback system that we implemented earlier in the year has been vital in monitoring our service. The overwhelming feedback is that people are highly satisfied with the overall Community Justice Centres' process, and that mediation has given people a chance to have their say.

The primary aim of mediation is to allow the parties a chance to reach an agreement on the issues that are in dispute. We have met this aim, with a very high agreement rate of 80 percent.

I am particularly proud of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program. It is encouraging to see an increase in the number of mediations we conducted involving an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander party, and I look forward to training and recruiting more Aboriginal mediators in the new year.

These achievements are the result of the dedication and commitment of the Community Justice Centres' staff and mediators.

I look forward to working with you in the new year to continue to grow and improve our services to the people of NSW.



Natasha Mann

Director, Alternative Dispute Resolution Directorate and Community Justice Centres

What we do

Community Justice Centres (CJC) helps people resolve their disputes by providing free mediation and conflict management services throughout NSW.

CJC is part of the NSW Department of Attorney General and Justice (DAGJ), and is fully funded by the NSW State Government.

CJC was first established in 1980 as part of a pilot program. It was made permanent in 1983 with the commencement of the *Community Justice Centres Act 1983* (NSW).

Mediation is the most common Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) service that we offer, in which the disputants, with the assistance of mediators, identify the issues in dispute, develop options, consider alternatives, and endeavour to reach their own agreement.

Mediators have no advisory or determinative role in regard to the content of the dispute, or the outcome of the mediation. CJC uses both a solo and a co-mediation model (in which two trained, professional mediators are allocated to each case).

Resolving disputes through CJC is proven to be effective for many dispute types. We have achieved a high settlement rate of 80 percent. The agreements that the parties reach often involve a broader range of solutions than a court is able to provide.

Importantly, CJC services continue to be provided to the community free of charge, and mediation sessions can be organised in a short timeframe across NSW, at a location close to the parties.

CJC also has an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program that aims to increase the awareness of mediation with CJC to Aboriginal communities, and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediators within CJC.

Our people

In 2011/12, CJC used a panel of 168 highly skilled and trained sessional mediators of various backgrounds.

CJC is a Recognised Mediator Accreditation Body (RMAB), and all of our mediators are Nationally Accredited under the National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS).

Mediators are located throughout NSW, to ensure service accessibility and economy.

Our mediators come from a variety of backgrounds, and are selected for their mediation skills. They do not give advice or make recommendations to the parties, regardless of their qualifications, knowledge, or particular field of expertise.

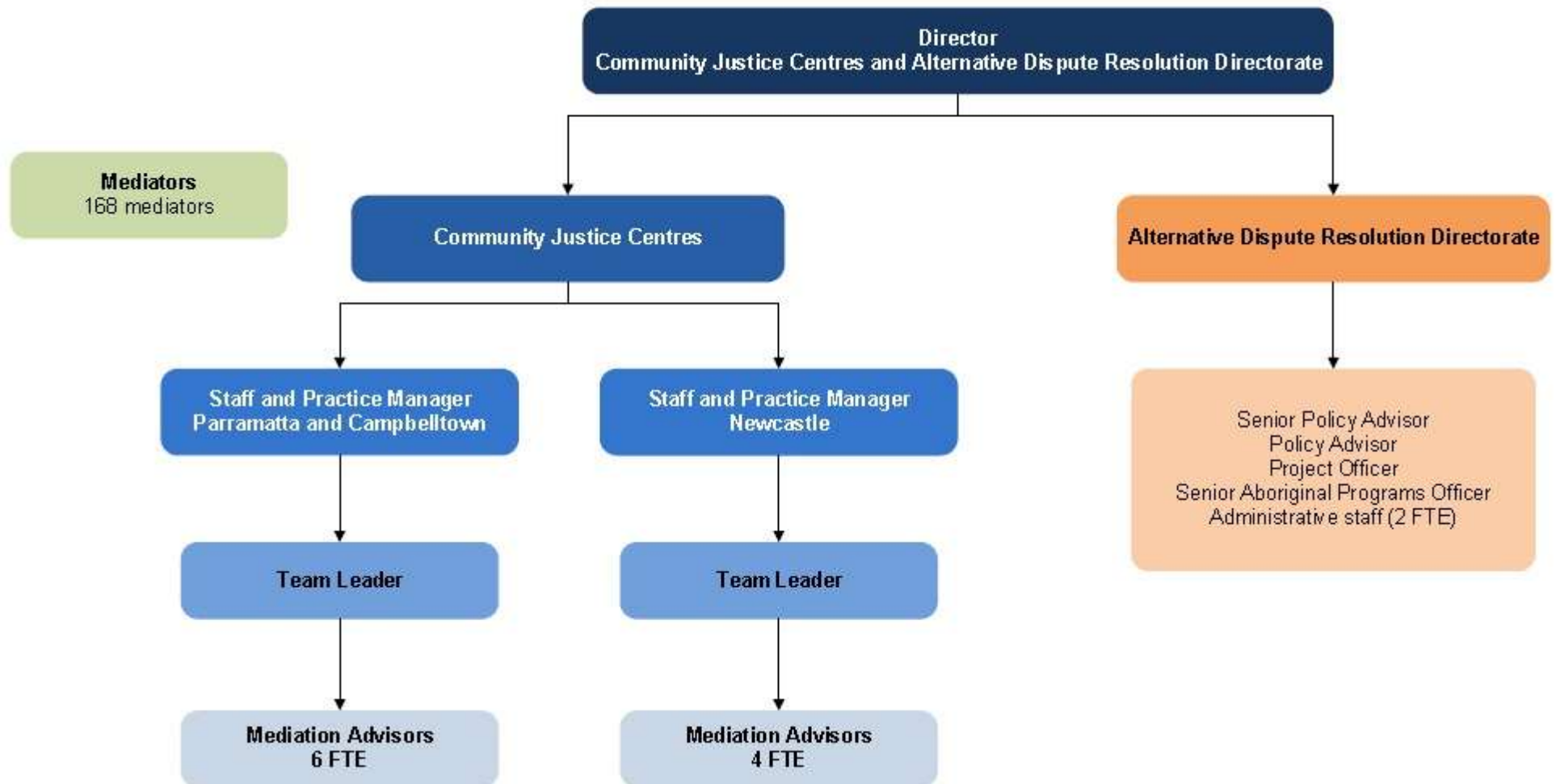
A list of all our mediators on our panel in 2011/12 can be found at Appendix A.

In addition, CJC employs up to 25 staff that manage, administer, and support the service through our three offices – Parramatta, Campbelltown and Newcastle.

Most of these staff are mediation advisors who provide advice and assistance to members of the public on resolving disputes; assess whether cases are suitable for mediation at intake; and then make arrangements for mediation.

CJC's organisational structure can be found in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1CJC and ADR Directorate organisation chart.



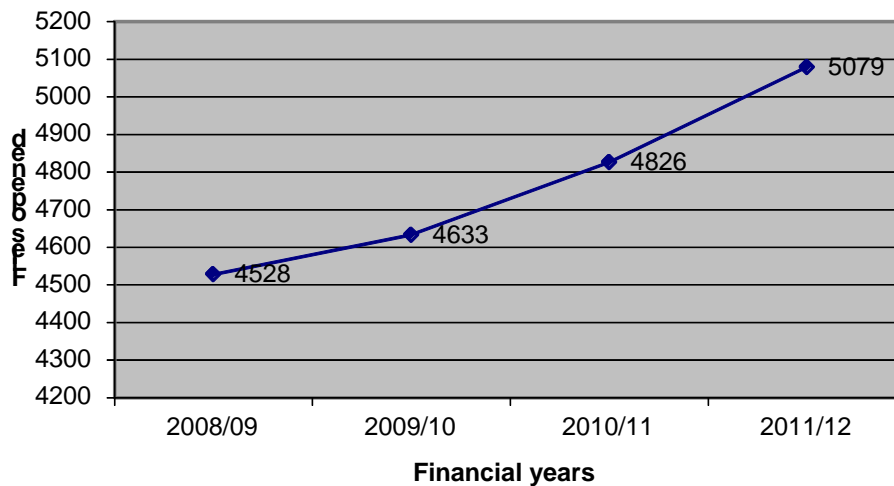
Caseload

Assisting the public

CJC has continued its steady growth over recent years in relation to the number of disputes that we assist people to resolve.

This growth is demonstrated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2 files opened by CJC



CJC will open a file for a party where they specifically request to start the mediation process. In 2011/12, CJC opened files in relation to 5079 disputes. This represents an increase of 253 files from the previous year.

CJC also receives tens of thousands of calls each year from members of the public with queries about their particular dispute, and mediation in general. In 2011/12, CJC received 30,484 such phone calls.

Many people would like to find out more about the mediation process, and will not immediately request to set up a mediation session. In these instances, a file will not be opened for the client. They may call back at a later stage to do so.

In some instances, mediation is not appropriate and CJC will refer the person to other suitable services such as those providing legal information or counselling.

In all of these instances, CJC is assisting people to resolve their disputes without necessarily resorting to formal judicial processes.

Pre-mediation

The mediation process is initiated where a person requests mediation with a particular person, organisation, or group.

CJC will then contact the other person/s to invite them to participate in a mediation session, usually through a letter. If contact cannot be made on the first attempt, CJC will attempt to contact the other person on two additional occasions.

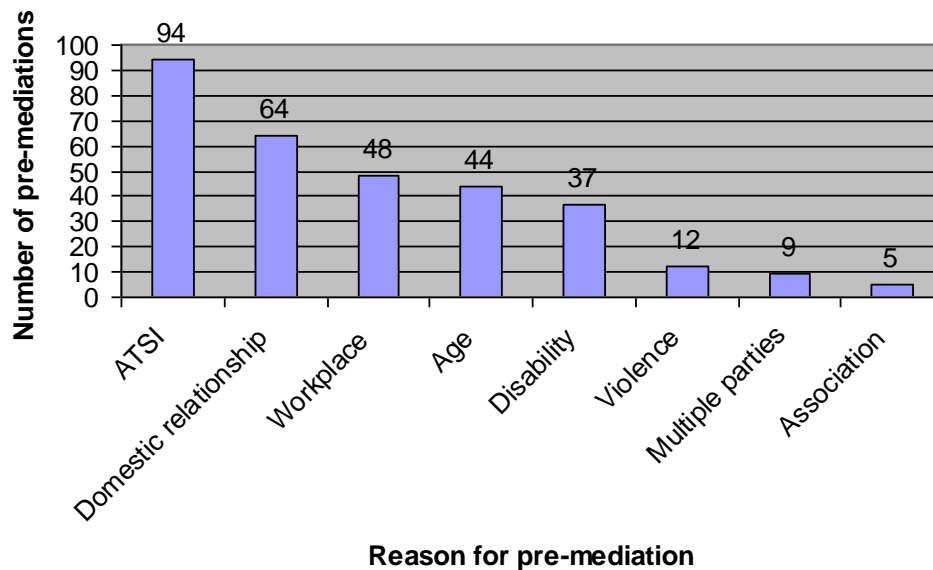
In some instances, CJC may conduct pre-mediation with the parties. This is usually done because of the characteristics of one of more of the parties (for example, where one of the parties is a child or young person) or the type of dispute.

The purpose of pre-mediation is to assess the suitability of the dispute for mediation and to prepare the parties for any subsequent mediation.

In 2011/12, CJC conducted 323 pre-mediations.

The primary reasons for these pre-mediations are shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 reasons for pre-mediation.



The primary reason for pre-mediation was because the dispute involved an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander party. In 2011/12, CJC trialled a new process of conducting pre-mediation in all disputes involving an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander party. The reason for this was to provide the parties with more information about the mediation process, and to determine whether there were any ways in which CJC could tailor the process to the parties.

CJC no longer routinely conducts pre-mediation in disputes involving an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander party, and will instead decide whether pre-mediation is appropriate on a case-by-case basis. This was done following a review of the trial by CJC.

Of the 323 pre-mediations held in 2011/12, 201 actually proceeded to mediation (65 percent). A further 30 were deemed to be unsuitable for mediation (10 percent).

Of those that proceeded to mediation, 84 percent of matters ended with an agreement between the parties. Overall, 80 percent of mediations conducted by CJC ended with an agreement, demonstrating that pre-mediation does increase the parties' chance of reaching an agreement on the day.

Mediation sessions arranged

Of the 5079 files opened in 2011/12, mediation sessions were arranged in 1972 files.

This represents an increase of 83 mediations from the previous year.

The primary reasons why mediation could not be arranged in the remaining 3107 files is because CJC was unable to contact, or had no response from the other party (1158 files), or because the other party declined to attend mediation (1069 files).

These figures are consistent with the previous year.

A breakdown of the outcomes of these 5079 files opened is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1 outcomes of all files opened in 2011/12.

Outcome	Number of files	Percentage of total files opened
Mediation arranged	1972	38.8%
No contact from responding party	1158	22.8%
Responding party declines	1069	21.1%
Initiating party withdraws	358	7.1%
CJC-assisted settlement	268	5.3%
CJC withdraws	168	3.3%
Refer to other CJC file <i>(both parties have agreed to mediation but the mediation must be delayed for some months due to both parties' availability)</i>	80	1.6%
Family Dispute Resolution certificate issued	6	0.1%

Of the 1972 mediations arranged, 1803 mediations actually took place. This means that 36 percent of files opened by CJC resulted in a mediation actually taking place.

The primary reason for the remaining 169 mediations not taking place is one of the parties withdrawing prior to the mediation or one of the parties not showing up to the mediation on the day.

CJC continues to work to reduce the number of files that do not progress to mediation because the responding party could not be contacted, or because the responding party declined to attend.

CJC is exploring alternate ways of contacting responding parties to invite them to mediation. Parties will still be initially contacted via letter to attend mediation, however will be followed up with a phone call (where the phone number is available) where there is no response.

CJC is also working to reduce the number of responding parties declining to attend mediation. CJC has recently developed a workbook to assist parties with preparing appropriately for mediation. The workbook also contains information on the mediation process.

This workbook is sent out to all responding parties who are considering attending mediation. It is anticipated that providing responding parties with this additional information about the process may eventuate in fewer parties declining to attend mediation.

Civil claims

CJC provides on-the-spot mediation services to a number of Local Courts throughout NSW in civil claims matters. Mediators are rostered on a weekly basis to provide mediation in the following courts:

- Bankstown
- Burwood
- Downing Centre
- Hornsby
- Kogarah
- Manly
- North Sydney
- Parramatta
- Ryde
- Sutherland
- Waverley

Feedback indicates that Local Courts highly value this service as it encourages the parties to reach an agreement between themselves, and reduces the number of cases unnecessarily progressing through the Local Court.

Case study

Thuy and Sarah attend the same school and have a poor relationship. Both girls had accused the other of bullying, and a recent fight had ended with Thuy throwing a drink over Sarah. The school suggested they try mediation at Community Justice Centres.

At mediation, Thuy and Sarah each had a parent there to support them, but Thuy and Sarah did all the talking with the help of the mediators. They were encouraged to talk about how they felt. Thuy revealed that she felt that Sarah made snide comments in the classroom about her, and Sarah said that she felt that Thuy spoke about her behind her back. The girls discussed how things had got to that point, including their misunderstandings, a lack of communication and other people adding opinions that did not help the situation.

Towards the end of the mediation, Thuy and Sarah apologised to each other and discussed ways of ensuring things did not get to that point again. They agreed to keep the lines of communication open, talking directly to the people involved and clarifying issues before acting. The mediation helped Thuy and Sarah to work through the issues themselves and come up with their own solutions.

(Names and identifying details have been changed in this case study.)

Dispute types

CJC provides mediation in a wide variety of disputes.

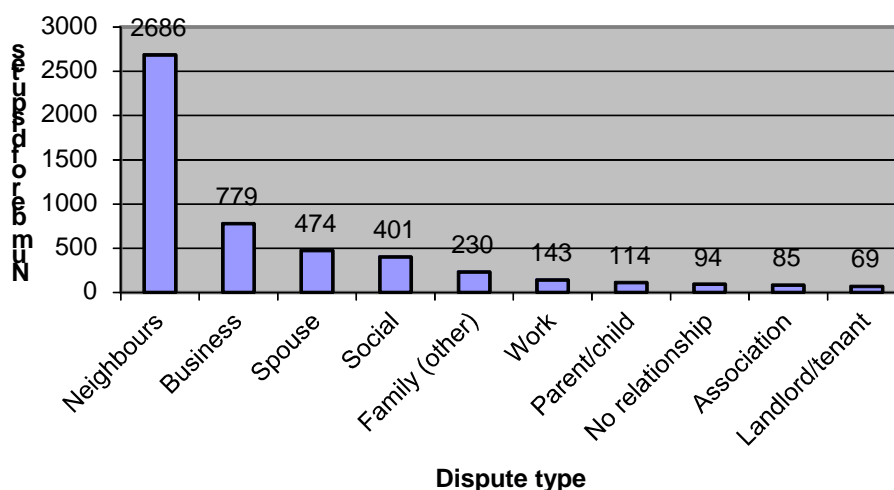
We typically mediate in disputes where there is an ongoing relationship between the parties – for example neighbours, family members, friends, colleagues, and members of community organisations.

There are some restrictions to the types of disputes that we provide mediation in. We do not mediate in criminal law matters or large commercial disputes. If violence is present between the parties, we assess the suitability of the matter on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with our policies.

Neighbourhood disputes continue to account for over half of all disputes in which CJC is involved. Of the 5079 files opened in 2011/12, 2686 (53 percent) related to neighbours. This is appropriate, given that CJC is a community mediation service.

A breakdown of the types of disputes in which CJC assists in is provided in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4 breakdown of types of disputes that CJC assisted in for 2011/12.



The most common issues that arose related to differences in lifestyle, fences, and trees.

A comparison of the types of disputes CJC assisted in during 2011/12 with the previous reporting period is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2 comparison of the types of disputes that CJC assisted with in previous reporting period.

Complaint type	2011/12	2010/11	Difference
Neighbours	2686	2500	+186
Business	779	855	-76
Spouse	474	344	+130
Social	401	490	-89
Family (other)	230	197	+33
Work	143	126	+17
Parent/ child	114	73	+41
No relationship	94	105	-11
Association	85	73	+12
Landlord/ tenant	69	58	+11

There has been a substantial increase in the number of neighbourhood disputes that CJC assisted in. This trend has continued from the last reporting period.

The other substantial change has been an increase in the number of disputes involving spouses that CJC has assisted in. This is important to note, as CJC is currently refining its intake process and developing comprehensive risk screening tools to identify family violence.

Spotlight on CJC training day on family violence

In March 2012, CJC staff and mediators participated in a training day on identifying family violence during intake processes. The training day was important, given that CJC is often the first point of contact for many people dealing with conflict in all areas of life, including family relationship disputes.

The keynote speaker and trainer was Dr Claire Ralfs, the Deputy CEO of Relationships Australia (South Australia). Dr Ralfs has led the development of several national education projects about family violence, and shared her experience of working with clients and using risk assessment frameworks with the staff and mediators.

Participants found the training to be invaluable in making sure that CJC's processes are the best that they possibly can be.



Mediating Apprehended Violence Order matters

In 2011/12, CJC opened files for 952 matters in which an Apprehended Violence Order (AVO) was present. This represents an increase of 40 matters from the previous year.

Of these 952 matters, 816 had an Apprehended Personal Violence Order (APVO) and 136 had an Apprehended Domestic Violence Order (ADVO).

CJC undertakes a screening process for all AVO matters, to ensure that only appropriate matters proceed to mediation. This is done either through phone intake, or through pre-mediation.

Of the 816 matters where an APVO was present, 432 progressed to mediation (53 percent), and of the 136 matters where an ADVO was present, 47 progressed to mediation (35 percent).

Case study

Wally and Shane were neighbours in a block of units. Wally had lived in the block for a long time when Shane moved in. At various times, Shane had asked all the neighbours to turn down their music. Most neighbours complied with the request, however Wally did not like the approach of Shane and things escalated to the point that Shane applied for an APVO seeking that Wally stay away from him and not intimidate him.

During the mediation the mediators encouraged Wally and Shane to discuss how they were feeling and to explain why they reacted the way that they did. Initially, neither party felt that this dispute could be resolved, and thought that one of them would have to move. Neither Wally nor Shane was keen on moving. Wally had lived in the block for a long time, and had good support systems in place. Shane also loved his new home as it was convenient, and the first real home he had had in 20 years.

The mediation helped Wally and Shane to see each other's point of view and to understand how important it was for each of them to stay in their unit and live in peace. They could see that their relationship as neighbours had got off to a bad start and they were able to commit to a new beginning. Shane and Wally were able to agree on reasonable times for Wally to play his music, and on how Shane would ask Wally to turn down his music, if necessary. Shane withdrew his application for an APVO.

(Names and identifying details have been changed in this case study.)

Referral source

CJC accepts referrals from multiple sources.

As a community mediation service, CJC encourages members of the public to self-refer for mediation. CJC also encourages referrals from service providers, and maintains close working relationships with key stakeholders.

In 2011/12, the largest source of referrals for CJC was from Courts, with other key sources being self-referral and Local Government. This is consistent with previous years.

A breakdown of referral sources is included in Table 3 below.

Table 3 source of referrals to CJC during 2011/12.

Referral source	Number of referrals	Percentage of total referrals received
Courts	1882	37.0%
Self	1023	20.2%
Local government	705	13.9%
Previous clients	440	8.7%
State government	204	4.0%
Law Access	185	3.6%
Private solicitor	153	3.0%
Police	139	2.7%
Non-government	111	2.2%
Legal Aid	78	1.5%
Family Relationship Centres	78	1.5%
Legal centre	68	1.3%

Figure 8 below shows a comparison of referral sources between this reporting period and the previous.

Table 4 comparison of the source of referrals to CJC with previous reporting period.

Referral source	No of referrals in 2011/12	No of referrals in 2010/11	Difference
Courts	1882	2009	-127
Self	1023	779	+244
Local government	705	672	+33
Previous clients	440	430	+10
State government	204	164	+40
Law Access	185	207	-22
Private solicitor	153	143	+10
Police	139	166	-27
Non-government	111	127	-16
Legal Aid / legal centres	146	105	+41
Family Relationship Centres	78	Data not available	N/A

The biggest change in referral source over the past year has been the substantial increase in the amount of self-referrals. This is expected, as CJC has focused on increasing the number of self-referrals through the launch of a new website and promotional material.

CJC will focus on continuing to increase community awareness of our services in the new reporting period. This is an appropriate focus for CJC, given that it is a community mediation service.

CJC has also seen a decrease in the number of referrals from courts, although courts continue to be CJC's highest referrer. This is not necessarily a negative result, as CJC has seen such a substantial increase in self-referrals, meaning that CJC may be conducting earlier intervention in disputes.

CJC will however focus on building its relationships with local courts in 2012/13. CJC will also be sending out promotional material to all local courts in NSW advertising our services, which we anticipate will lead to an increase in referrals.

Case study

Bob purchased a federation home in need of extensive renovation. Alan, a tradesman, completed floor sanding and polishing services in Bob's home. Bob failed to pay Alan the contracted amount upon receipt of Alan's invoice, so Alan started legal action to recover the unpaid amount. The dispute was referred to Community Justice Centres by the Registrar of the Local Court.

It came to light in mediation that Bob believed that Alan had given an undertaking that the level of the floor near the bathroom would be even with the bathroom floor. Alan explained to Bob that an undertaking to level floors could not be given without the flooring and joists below being removed and re-installed at considerable cost. Alan said that he would never have given such an undertaking.

After lengthy discussion, Bob acknowledged that he would be unable to prove in court that Alan agreed to make the floor level with the bathroom floor. Alan decided to discount his invoice in light of the misunderstanding, and the two parties settled on a price, which Bob agreed to pay within a fortnight.

(Names and identifying details have been changed in this case study.)

Outcomes

The primary purpose of mediation is to enable the parties to reach an agreement between themselves on the issues in dispute.

If the parties are unable to reach an agreement on all the issues, they may be able to narrow the issues in dispute, and discuss ways of resolving the outstanding areas of disagreement between them.

If the parties are unable to reach an agreement on any of the issues in dispute, they have at least had the chance to talk in a safe and supportive environment, and hopefully gain a better understanding of the other party's interests.

Of the 1803 mediations that took place in 2011/12, the parties reached an agreement in 1437 matters. This represents a very high agreement rate of 80 percent.

This is consistent with the previous reporting period.

This agreement rate is also consistent across the different types of disputes that we mediate. Eighty percent of mediations that involved an APVO resulted in an agreement, and 77 percent of mediations that involved an ADVO resulted in an agreement.

Case study

Cassie and Peter were primary school teachers. Although they were both at the same level of seniority, Cassie had worked at the school much longer than Peter and felt she was Peter's superior. Cassie constantly gave Peter directions on how he should run his classes and would not listen to his ideas on how to make the syllabus more interesting. If Peter challenged Cassie's directions or made any suggestions of his own, Cassie would refuse to discuss the issue. Peter discussed this situation with a friend who recommended he try mediation at Community Justice Centres.

Using the mediation model, the two mediators assisted Cassie and Peter to listen to each other and understand the other's perspective. Cassie explained that she felt that Peter didn't appreciate the many years of teaching experience that she had, and felt threatened by him, and Peter explained that he felt unwelcome at the school and felt that that Cassie was not willing to work with him.

Once this happened, Cassie and Peter realised that most of their differences at work had arisen from misunderstandings and a lack of communication. With the help of the mediators, both Cassie and Peter were able to develop some strategies that would enable them to work together to maximise their respective teaching skills for the benefit of the children and the school.

(Names and identifying details have been changed in this case study.)

Service delivery

Time standards

CJC aims to deliver prompt and efficient services to the community.

There are no waiting lists, and mediation can be organised at a time convenient to the parties.

In 2011/12, 74 percent of our files were finalised within 30 days and 96 percent were finalised within 60 days.

These timelines are consistent with the previous reporting period.

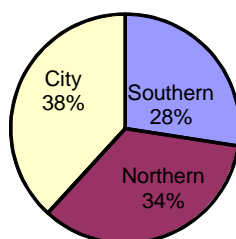
Geographical spread of mediations

CJC provides mediation services across NSW, and conducts mediation at a location convenient to the parties.

The location of these mediations are broken down into one of three geographical categories – city, northern, or southern.

In 2011/12, there was an even spread of mediations conducted in these three regions, as demonstrated in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 breakdown of location of mediation by geographical region.



This breakdown demonstrates that CJC's services are being distributed equally across the State.

Client feedback

We continually monitor client feedback to ensure that our services are relevant to the community.

In May 2011, CJC introduced a new client feedback system for people who attended a mediation session. A comprehensive and user-friendly form is now routinely handed out to all participants at the end of the mediation.

The system has proved extremely successful, with 1040 forms returned in 2011/12.

The feedback that has been provided has been overwhelmingly positive about CJC's services.

Ninety-seven percent of clients reported that they found the staff that they dealt with before the mediation session either "very helpful" or "helpful". A further eighty percent reported that they had enough information about mediation before they attended the session.

Ninety-seven percent of clients felt that at the mediation, the mediators were either "very helpful" or "helpful" during the mediation session, and 95 percent felt that they had the opportunity to have their say during the mediation.

Eighty-one percent of clients felt that mediation with CJC had helped them, primarily because it helped them to communicate with the other person, increased their knowledge of ways to deal with conflicts and disputes, and helped to resolve their dispute.

Overall, clients appear to be highly satisfied with the services that CJC provides. Ninety-three percent ranked themselves as satisfied with the overall process, and 87 percent reported that they would recommend CJC to other people.

These findings demonstrate that clients find the entire CJC process, from the point of initial intake to after the mediation has taken place, to be beneficial.

Services to people with a disability

CJC aims to ensure that our services are accessible to all members of the public.

Mediation advisors routinely ask all clients whether there are any measures that can be put in place to better support them during the mediation process, such as the presence of a support person or having additional breaks during the session.

CJC is also selective in its choice of venues to hold mediations in, aiming to always choose venues that are wheelchair accessible.

We also publicise information about alternative ways of contacting us (such as through the National Relay Service) on our website and in our promotional material.

A tab on our new website is specifically devoted to providing information to people who may require assistance to access our services.

Services to people from a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background

CJC has fact sheets about our services available in 20 different languages. This promotional material is available on our new website, and is regularly mailed out to clients.

We also regularly arrange for interpreters to either speak with clients over the phone during the intake process, or to assist a client during the mediation. This is done at no cost to the client.

Case study

Jim sought mediation with his neighbour Emma, after being disturbed by noise during the night.

When Jim and Emma came to the mediation they both brought support people as there were mental health issues impacting on both parties. Jim spoke about how the noise and disturbance greatly affected him and his quality of life. Emma apologised for the noise and disturbance and with the assistance of her support person (her daughter) spoke about how the death of one of her children in unexpected circumstances had led to her being unable to sleep well at night. She explained that she gets up and does things at night to take her mind off the pain she was feeling.

With the help of the mediators, Jim and Emma talked through the situation and came up with some ideas about how to minimise the noise and disturbance. Both seemed satisfied with the outcome. Jim said that he gained a much greater understanding of why Emma was moving about at night and Emma realised the impact that her actions were having on Jim.

(Names and identifying details have been changed in this case study.)

Service promotion

CJC continues to concentrate on raising its profile within the broader community and increasing the public's knowledge of dispute resolution processes.

This promotion has been extremely effective, with a substantial increase in the number of self-referrals since the last reporting period.

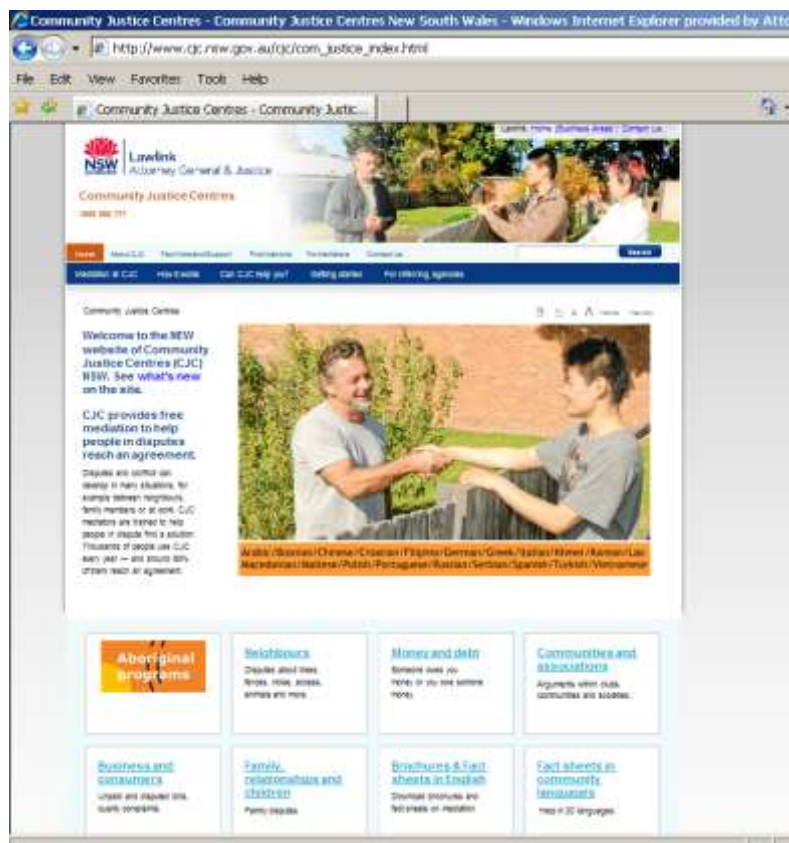
CJC website

CJC launched a new website in December 2011 as part of DAGJ's Courts and Tribunal Services website upgrade.

The new website is much more user-friendly and comprehensive, with information on our services (including pictorial flowcharts of the entire process), case studies, testimonials and general information on dispute resolution.

Members of the public are able to contact CJC directly through the website.

Anecdotal feedback has been that clients and referrers have found the website to be a very useful source of information.



CJC publications

CJC developed a suite of new promotional material in January 2012, including two new pamphlets and two new posters – “Dealing with a dispute”, aimed at the general public, and “Blewin”, specifically targeted at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

These pamphlets and posters were designed to be comprehensive and user-friendly.



These promotional materials are available on the CJC website, and are regularly mailed out to members of the public and service providers.

Promotional events

CJC staff and mediators regularly attend events in the local community to promote our services. These events are varied, ranging from Government tradeshows to local fetes.

A snapshot of the events that CJC staff and mediators attended in 2011/12 include:

- The Royal Easter Show.
- Law Week (in Sydney, Parramatta, Blacktown and Newcastle).
- City of Sydney “Good Neighbour” barbeques.
- Metropolitan and regional court user meetings.
- Law Access information sessions for call centre staff.

Spotlight on The Royal Easter Show

CJC participated in DAGJ's stall at the Royal Easter Show for the first time in 2012.

The stall was a huge success, providing CJC staff with the opportunity to showcase our services to the more than one million people who passed through the dates over the 14 days.

Many people were interested in CJC's services, and were keen to find out more about mediation.

The stall won the Silver Award in the Home, Garden and Lifestyle pavilion based on its presentation and customer service.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program aims to increase awareness of mediation with CJC to Aboriginal services, communities and people across NSW, and to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediators within CJC.

Caseload

In 2011/12, CJC opened a total of 246 files that involved an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander party. This represents five percent of all the files that CJC opened during the reporting period. This is consistent with last year's reporting period.

Of these 246 files, 88 resulted in mediation. This conversion rate of 36 percent is consistent with overall rate.

CJC achieved a high agreement rate of 88 percent for mediations involving an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander client.

Aboriginal staff and mediators within CJC

There are currently two Aboriginal-identified positions within CJC - the Senior Aboriginal Programs Officer based in the Parramatta office, and an Aboriginal Mediation Advisor, based in the Newcastle office.

CJC aims to provide parties with an Aboriginal mediator where requested. There are currently seven Aboriginal mediators from across NSW on the CJC panel. A key priority in 2012/13 is increasing the number of Aboriginal mediators.

To meet this priority, CJC has entered into a partnership with the Aboriginal Unit and Community Services Unit of Mt Druitt TAFE to deliver Certificate IV in Mediation to Aboriginal people. It is hoped that this course will then be rolled out at multiple TAFEs across NSW.

CJC has also been granted funding to appoint an Aboriginal mediator/ Mediation Advisor to be employed for 12 months, through the Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Program. The successful applicant will be a pre-existing employee of either the NSW Government or Local Government. The position is expected to be filled in the 2012/13 year.

Building community awareness of CJC

CJC has focused on building awareness of our services in Aboriginal communities in 2011/12. This information has focused on the services that CJC offers, and how to access those services.

CJC has developed new promotional material that is targeted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The CJC website also has a separate page that is devoted to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mediation program.

In addition to this material, CJC focuses on meeting face-to-face with stakeholders wherever possible, to promote our services.

A key event that CJC was part of in the 2011/12 financial year was the Annual Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout. The Knockout is the largest gathering of

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in NSW. This year, the Knockout took place in Bathurst over the long weekend in October 2011.

We promoted our services to community members through sponsoring a stall and distributing information. Many community members who visited the stall showed a keen interest in the service.

In addition to the Knockout, CJC Aboriginal staff and mediators carry the message of mediation to all parts of NSW.

A snapshot of events attended in 2011/12 include:

- Aboriginal Community Information and Assistance Days.
- Aboriginal Community Justice Group Members Conference – Dubbo, Rooty Hill and Coffs Harbour.
- Aboriginal Community Justice Group – Armidale, Mount Druitt.
- Bundaleer Community Offender Support Program Information Day.
- Koori Yarn Up.
- Cooperative Legal Service Delivery - Wagga Wagga, Nowra, Albury, Bathurst.
- Closing the Gap – Campbelltown.
- Family Fun Day – Richmond.
- Hawkesbury Local Area Command Aboriginal Advisory Group.
- South West Sydney Koori Interagency.
- Western Sydney Koori Interagency.
- NAIDOC events at Campbelltown, Mount Druitt, Toronto, Gosford, Doonside, Newcastle, Penrith, Parramatta and Richmond.
- Indigenous Jobs Market – Mount Druitt.
- Riverstone Interagency.
- Good Services Forum – Nowra.

Aboriginal Community Information and Assistance Days (commonly referred to as “roadshows”) involve numerous local Government and non-Government services coming together to promote services and offer practical assistance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members.

CJC has been actively involved in these roadshows throughout NSW, with staff visiting the following communities:

- Penrith
- Ulladulla
- Jerrinja
- Nowra
- Wollongong
- Bowral
- Queanbeyan
- Yass
- Goulburn
- Young

Case study

In addition to attending many events and meetings throughout NSW, the Senior Aboriginal Programs Officer (SAPO) also meets with various local agencies and service providers such as courts, Aboriginal Legal Services, Aboriginal Medical Services and Aboriginal Community Organisations.

Recently, whilst in a community conducting promotional work for CJC, the SAPO became acquainted with staff members within a particular organisation. In due course, the members of that community were in dispute over funeral arrangements.

One of the staff members in the organisation remembered the SAPO visit and her discussion of mediation. The SAPO was called and asked to help the community members resolve the issues. The dispute needed to be resolved urgently, as funeral arrangements had to be made.

There was no time to physically visit the community due to time constraints, so the SAPO conducted an impromptu phone mediation with the parties. The staff from the organisation also participated as support people.

The phone mediation took almost two hours.

At the end of the mediation, the parties had reached a verbal agreement about the funeral arrangements and were very happy to move forward. This was a very encouraging result as the mediation had been particularly sensitive, due to the death of a loved one.

The staff from the organisation later phoned the SAPO to thank her for the quality of the service, and to inform her that all the agreements made on the phone had been adhered to in arranging the funeral.

The workers also passed on the parties' thanks for the assistance they had received.

This was a flexible way of CJC providing mediation services to clients in Aboriginal communities.

Appendix A – List of CJC mediators

Please note that this list includes all mediators who were on the 2011 and/or 2012 CJC panel.

Renica Adam	Renee Estrella
Salahuddin Ahmed	Ron Favelle
Tony Amatto	Helen Ferry
Karen Apps	Vicki Findlay
Anne Ardagh	Leonie Fleming
Barbara Armitage OAM	Mark Fleming
Linda Attard	Keryn Foley
Lise Barry	Jim Foran
Peter Bates	Jeanne Francis
Margaret Beard	Suzanne Freed
Geoffrey Blackert	Dick Frost
Katherine Blewitt	Marilyn Fulford
Pam Bonfield	Gargi Ganguly
Melissa Bordogna	John Gaston
Carmel Boyko	Leone Gotzy
Gwen Bradley	Wendy Gover
Phillip Britten	Peter Gurney
Cherie Buchert	Melinda Halloran
Joseph Bufalo	Dianne Hamer
Yvonne Burgess	Peter Hanson
Donald Dennis Burgin	Richard Harvey
Jan Campbell	Maryann Hausia
Don Campey	Halley Hayes
Denys Cato	Lawry Herron
Maria Cencigh	Carol Ann Hibberson
Danny Chard	Mary Hinchey
Robyn Claremont	Vic Huggins
Alun Clark	Stan Hurley
Jennifer Cook	Felix Jones
Derek Cooke	Judy Jones
John Courcier	Spase Karoski
Christine Courcier-Jones	Edith Amy Kearns
David Colin Coutts	Tony Keenan
Leoni Cowling	Catherine Kelly
Robert Dailey	Dr Lorretta Kelly
Nihal Danis	Jennifer Kendrick
Mary Day	Meera Khan
Peter Day	Veronika Korchma
Micheline Dewdney	Clyde Lee
Stephen John Dick	Man-Chung Lee
Ralph Dixon	Malcolm Lemaire
Alan Doak	Paul Lewis
Anna Durant	Teik Hock Lim
Susan-Ann Edmonds	Rosemary Mackenzie
Frank Edwards	Brenda Mahar
Gwen Edwards	Robyn McClung
Glen Eggleton	Helen McConkey
Alana Maria Eslick	Phillip McConkey
Irene Esteves	Thomas McDermott

Alan McDonald
John McKenzie
Robert Michie
Aishad Mohammed
Yvonne Monaghan
Ray Moore
Connie Morris
Jovanka Naumoska
Peter F Neilson
Linh Nguyen
Peter Nicola
Wayne Nugent
Denis A O'Neill
Anne O'Shannessy
Laurence Pettiford
Janice Pinter
Ted Powell
Patricia Price-Jones
Ashley Prideaux
Jenni Prince
Abraham Quadan
Darryl Quigley
Josie Quigley
Dolores Reseigh
Josephine Reyes
Barbara Richards
Pamela Richards
Caroline Rimmer
Ray Robinson
David Rollinson
Lynette Rolls
Mike Rowntree
Elinor Salter
James Samphier
Doreen Schafferius

Melissa Scott
Russell Sear
Gayle Sheridan
George Simpson
Ronald Simpson
Christine Margaret Smith
Lorraine Smith
Frances Smyth
Katrina Spyrides
Kerrie Stewart
Melissa Stubbings
Helen Margot Sullivan
Max Sulman
Nicholas Summers
Faye Taylor
Judi Teesdale
Verlyn Thompson
Jane Thompson-Powter
Lesley Torpey
John Tunnicliffe
Perri Wain
Barry Walker
Brenden Walters
Sue Waterhouse
Vicki Weller
Rex Wendt
John Westbury
Alexandra Whitney
Peter Wick
Ken Wicklund
Janice Williams
Peter Wolfe
Tosca Woodward
Leanne Wynne
Miriam Ziegler