

# Tenants' Union of Tasmania



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## Annual Report

### 2014/15



# Convenor's Report

This has been a year of considerable uncertainty and change for the Tenants' Union of Tasmania.

As foreshadowed in last year's report, moves at the national level to reduce funding to community legal centers (CLCs) as well as to reduce the scope of the work they carry out, continued. After lengthy discussions and negotiations, funding to CLCs by the Commonwealth Government was maintained for the 2015-6 financial year, but with no commitment to funding in future years. Funding at the State Government level was also obtained, including additional one-off funding from the Solicitors Guarantee Fund. These latter funds while very welcome, are only for one year, making future planning and staff retention difficult.

The Committee will continue to monitor developments in funding and the TUTAS will work with other CLCs in the coming year to secure adequate and on-going funding to enable it to carry out its responsibilities to tenants in Tasmania.

The Management Committee had a stable year in terms of membership. Michael Kennett continued as Treasurer and Emily Conway took on the role of Secretary. Many thanks to both for their efforts. Michelle Parker, Pia Struwe and Jody Johnson continued as members, joined in late 2014 by Andrew Muthy and in 2015 by Jon Sumby. Again thanks to all for volunteering their time.

2014-5 saw some major staffing changes, with the departure of long term staff Phil Hoffen (Communications Officer) and Michael Lynch (Finance Officer). In addition, Peter Foster (Solicitor), Rebecca Taylor (Training Officer) and Julia Ely (Communications Officer) finished their terms with us. Stability and experience was provided by the continuing work of Meredith Barton (Principal Solicitor) and Ben Bartl (Solicitor).

While the TUT ends the year in a sound financial position, as noted above, the Committee is concerned with the uncertain funding position going forward and will continue to carefully monitor the organisation's financial position and forward commitments.

Finally I would like to thank the staff, the very important volunteers and the Committee members for their contribution and input into the successful functioning of the TUT.

Our current Committee members are:

- Michael Kennett
- Pia Struwe
- Michelle Parker
- Jody Johnson
- Andrew Muthy
- Emily Conway
- Jon Sumby

**Sue Chapple**  
**Convenor**  
**October 2015.**

# Principal Solicitor's Report

This last year has been another successful and productive year for the Tenants' Union of Tasmania (TUT). With the ongoing support of the North West Community Legal Centre and the Launceston Community Legal, our advice, advocacy and education service has reached across the state. Our telephone advice service continues to be a popular service for tenants, while our drop in and face-to-face service continues to be incredibly useful for both clients and staff. We have faced some challenges along the way, including the introduction of changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* in two stages. These changes have seen staff and volunteers come together to discuss how they affect our advice delivery and getting used to dealing with two versions of the Act at one time. Whilst it has been challenging we clearly see the benefits of our hard work in getting these changes through. The continuing challenge is our funding concerns at both State and Federal Level.

## Southern Office

This past financial year has seen dramatic changes in the staffing of our Southern Office. I returned in September 2014 after having nearly a year off on Maternity leave. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Tim Walter for stepping into the role whilst I was away and allowing for a smooth transition for everyone during that period.

In April 2015 we said goodbye to two incredibly valued staff members.

Phil Hoffen had been with us since June 2007, in the often, crazy role of Communications and Administration Officer. He evolved the position description of the role, expanding his work and often starting new projects. He was such an asset to the team; our go to guy for computer issues, website maintenance and for political and football discussions. He was a huge support during both my Maternity Leave terms and he was instrumental in the development and implementation of changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*, especially Minimum Standards which he was very passionate about. Phil decided it was time to move on and has now begun a new adventure in Germany. We will miss the friendly, heated discussions between him and Ben, as well as his very generous and friendly nature.

Thankfully, Julia Ely very successfully stepped into this open role for a short period. The transition was smooth and easy with everything being maintained exceptionally well. Julia finished in July and welcomed the arrival of her and Ben's baby girls soon after. We wish her all the best in this new and exciting role of 'mum'. Lynn Parlett has now moved into this role and is getting to know the ropes as we speak.

We also said goodbye to our Finance Officer Mick Lynch who started at the same time as Phil in June 2007. Mick first spent time as a volunteer on the advice line and was a huge support to us over the years, always having current information to hand and ensuring that in difficult times we managed to maintain our resources, helping with applications for financial support from the Tasmanian Community Fund and the Solicitors Guarantee Fund. Mick was a valued member of Staff even adding to the team when his old puppy Jack would pop in for a visit.

Anita Menhofer took over the role of bookkeeper from Mick in April 2015. However she gained further hours in her other employment and was unable to do both. Louise Foster has since joined us and after the usual bumps along the way (thanks to the bank) everything is falling into place and we are very pleased to have Louise on our team.

On a personal note, both Phil and Mick were not only great colleagues but also great friends. They made it easy to come to work each day knowing I had their support and friendship. I believe we were very blessed to have such a work environment.

Due to changes in our funding circumstances, we had other changes in staffing. Peter Foster decreased his Solicitor role to 2 days per week and at the end of the financial year ceased employment with the TUT. He had been with us since 2011 as a Solicitor and contributed to casework, advice, volunteer training and supervision and Community Legal Education. He has moved on to experience other areas of law and we wish him all the best.

As our Solicitor Guarantee Fund money came to an end we have had to put the position of Training and Development Officer on hold, saying goodbye to Rebecca Taylor from this position whilst we sought further funding. Bec started whilst I was on leave and even during that time, kept me up to date with what she was doing and how the position was moving forward. I think it is clear from the statistics how successful this position was and how well Bec managed it as we have become well recognised in the community for our training and education program.

Ben Bartl has taken over the role of Solicitor in a 4 day a week position working Tuesday through to Friday. He continues to undertake the drop in advice service with support from some graduate volunteers along with casework, media liaison as required and he is often working on a policy project. He has begun providing an advocacy service at the Magistrates Court in Hobart each Wednesday morning. This allows the TUT to have a presence at the court and to provide advice and support for tenants during the process.

I currently work a 3.5 day week, Monday through to Thursday. Whilst having a smaller staff is difficult, our team continues to work well together and we are lucky to have great volunteers on the telephone advice line and working with us on our caseload.

### **Northern and North West Services**

Our overall service continues to be boosted by our North and North West outreach support. The North West Community Legal Centre and the Launceston Community Legal Centre, who each provide solicitors for 7.5 hours each week, support this program. This has enabled us to provide tenants in these areas with more face-to-face advocacy services and assistance. We thank both these services for their support and professionalism and especially thank Chris Young, Jennifer Dunn and Matthew Rose from the North West and Nicky Snare, Sarah House and Ryan West from Launceston.

### ***Residential Tenancy Act Review***

This last financial year finally saw the implementation of some changes to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*. Whilst minimum standards were put on hold for further review, many of the other changes were enacted from the 1 October 2014 with up to 12 months for overall implementation. Staff and volunteers at the TUT are often working with two pieces of legislation to determine which would apply to the issue at hand, a steep learning curve. However, it is vital for such reviews to happen to ensure that tenants rights are protected as much as possible and to ensure that as a sector in our community, they are heard. Tenants now have the right to 12 months of the same rental, longer notice periods for vacation of premises and have recourse to the Residential Tenancy Commissioner for repairs and maintenance issues. In August 2015 the new Minimum Standards will begin. It is an exciting feeling for the TUT to see many years of hard work finally come to fruition and whilst in these debates and processes, we do not get everything we desire, we believe that these changes will benefit Tasmanian tenants and will allow them to enjoy a better rental experience.

## **Funding**

The TUT has faced and continues to face funding uncertainty. Indeed in May 2015 the Commonwealth Government announced there would be funding cuts to the community sector that would affect Tasmanian services. Whilst for the next financial year, the State Government has agreed to maintain our funding as it is, we will see a considerable loss in the near future to the area and indeed to our own funding. We thank both the Commonwealth and the State Governments for their continued financial support.

Solicitors' Guarantee Fund (SGF): As previously mentioned our current SGF funding came to an end this financial year. In March 2015, we made an application for further funds from the SGF. This is a continuous application process for the service to allow us to increase our ability to provide support and education to the community. Whilst it is unfortunate that our core funding cannot cover everything, it is key to organisations such as the TUT to be able to apply for additional funding of this nature.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Tenants' Union enjoys support from so many people who enable us to deliver our services to clients on a small budget. I would like to thank all our wonderful volunteers who work tirelessly on our telephone advice line. In particular I would like to thank Alex Fry for his long standing service and the extra shifts he puts in. Alex has been with us for over 9 years. I would also like to thank Alex Tate who undertook casework and client representation with us after completion of the Graduate Legal Practice course. Alex has secured employment with a Law firm in Ulverstone and we wish him all the best.

We would like to thank our other volunteers, Violet, Nicolle, Alex B, Greta, Daniel, Katryna, Lokesh, Cheryl, Elena, Anelda, Jay, Simon, Georgia, Karpu, Aarthi, Gilda, Emmeli, Jon, Jeff and Narelle who have contributed many hours to keep our telephone advice line going.

I would like to thank the Management Committee, who volunteer their time for this important role. It has been a busy year with the changes in the Act, budget concerns and staffing movements. In particular I would like to thank Sue Chapple in her role as Convenor. Sue has been a great source of support and information to myself and other members of staff. Thank you also to Michael Kennett who continues to do a great job as our Treasurer and has supported us with the transition of the bookkeeper position. Thank you also to Michelle Parker for her efforts on the Staffing Sub-Committee, and Emily Conway for stepping in as Secretary. Thanks also go to our Public Officer, Jody Johnson, and Committee Members, Pia Struwe and Andrew Muthy. Also to Michelle Legg who resigned after volunteering her time for several years

I would also like to thank the Hobart Community Legal Service staff, in particular Bernie and Pam for their provision of front office reception to our tenants throughout the year.

As always, our small team has again performed outstandingly.

Meredith Barton  
Principal Solicitor  
September 2015

# About Us

## AIMS

The Tenants' Union works for the interests and rights of residential tenants in Tasmania and seeks to:

- Improve conditions in rental housing in Tasmania so that they meet accepted minimum standards
- Raise awareness within the community about tenancy issues
- Promote legislative change where this is necessary to improve outcomes for tenants

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The Tenants' Union is an organisation that is:

- Active in response to changing tenancy issues
- Offering quality advice, advocacy, information and referral services
- Empowering people to take action on their own behalf
- Abreast of current housing issues
- Keeping decision makers in the community aware of the key issues that are impacting on residential tenants in Tasmania

## ROLES

The Tenants' Union has several roles that provide:

- Advice, information and assistance with tenancy issues
- Advocacy for individual tenants on residential tenancy issues
- Systemic advocacy, including political representation
- Education and training for professionals, community organisations, students and community members about tenancy issues

## OPERATION

The Tenants' Union provides:

- A free service
- Access to specialist knowledge on tenancy issues
- A service to all residential tenants (eg. public, community, private and boarding).

The Telephone Advice service operates during the hours of 9:30am and 4:00pm weekdays and the Face-to-Face Advice Sessions are available between 9:30am and 12:30pm Tuesday to Thursday inclusive. We also have services through Launceston CLC and North West CLC.

## FUNDING

Commonwealth Grants from the Attorney General's Department for the financial year totaled \$69,064. This money was used for the provision of Community Legal Education, training, coordination, compliance and administration of the service as a whole.

State Grants from the Department of Health and Human Services, Housing Tasmania equaled \$183,565 for the financial year. These funds were expended by supervising the telephone advice service and providing advocacy services and legal representation.

2014/15 Solicitor's Guarantee Fund grants, used primarily for training & development and statewide law services, and a Tasmanian Community Fund grant for online training and membership totaled \$114,579 during the past financial year.

## **ACCESS AND EQUITY POLICY**

The Tenants' Union continues to ensure that all tenants have equitable access to adequate tenancy advice, advocacy and community legal education services. Similarly the Tenants' Union works to provide equitable access for all tenants to justice through tenancy laws and legal processes and practices.

## **CLIENTS**

The clients of the Tenants' Union are:

- Private housing tenants
- Public housing tenants
- Community Housing tenants

Bodies we liaise with are:

- Non-government agencies (eg. community workers and other parties interested in tenants rights and responsibilities)
- State Government agencies (eg. Housing Tasmania and Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading)

Of the clients who informed us of their status, 65% self-identified as low income, 5% of clients identified as Indigenous, 51% were under 30 years of age and 6% were born overseas. 71% of our clients were women.



# People

**We thank all the people who have been part of the Tenants' Union in the last financial year:**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Violet Aldridge-Hurst</b> | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Nicolle Ang</b>           | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Alex Bamford</b>          | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Benedict Bartl</b>        | Solicitor (Policy and Research)        |
| <b>Meredith Barton</b>       | Principal Solicitor                    |
| <b>Greta Boot</b>            | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Michael Bowman</b>        | Acting Co-ordinator                    |
| <b>Daniel Chan</b>           | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Sue Chapple</b>           | Convenor                               |
| <b>Emily Conway</b>          | Committee Member                       |
| <b>Julia Ely</b>             | Communications Officer                 |
| <b>Peter Foster</b>          | Solicitor                              |
| <b>Alex Fry</b>              | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Phil Hoffen</b>           | Administrator & Communications Officer |
| <b>Katryna Induni</b>        | Advocate                               |
| <b>Jody Johnson</b>          | Public Officer                         |
| <b>Lokesh Kashyap</b>        | Telephone Advisor & Legal Graduate     |
| <b>Michael Kennett</b>       | Treasurer                              |
| <b>Cheryl Liew</b>           | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Elena Lim</b>             | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Anelda Lötter</b>         | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Mick Lynch</b>            | Finance Officer                        |
| <b>Anita Menhofer</b>        | Finance Officer                        |
| <b>Andrew Muthy</b>          | Committee Member                       |
| <b>Jay Pang</b>              | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Michelle Parker</b>       | Committee Member                       |
| <b>Simon Rimmelzwann</b>     | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Georgia Robinson</b>      | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Karpu Shanmugan</b>       | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Aarthi Singaravelu</b>    | Telephone Advisor                      |
| <b>Gilda Sorella</b>         | Telephone Advisor                      |

|                        |                                     |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Emmeli Stenlund</b> | Telephone Advisor                   |
| <b>Amanda Street</b>   | Committee Member                    |
| <b>Pia Struwe</b>      | Committee Member                    |
| <b>Jon Sumbly</b>      | Telephone Advisor                   |
| <b>Alex Tate</b>       | Solicitor                           |
| <b>Rebecca Taylor</b>  | Training & Development Officer      |
| <b>Jeff Thompson</b>   | Telephone Advisor & Tenant Advocate |
| <b>Narelle Traill</b>  | Telephone Advisor                   |
| <b>Tim Walter</b>      | Principal Solicitor                 |

Also thanks to Bernie, Pam Barratt, Harvey Yarnall, Staff at Hobart CLS, Launceston CLC, North West CLC and CHATS, and the tenants who have contacted us in the last year.

## **TRAINING**

### **1. Training of volunteers during 2014/15 financial year:**

- Peter Foster conducted 5 blocks of volunteer training and Rebecca Taylor conducted 7, each block consisting of six hours of preliminary training.
- All regular volunteers have received training and advice during the year from solicitors Meredith Barton, Tim Walter, Peter Foster, Alexander Tate and Ben Bartl.
- Katryna Induni (Law Student) and Jeff Thompson (Legal Graduate) were supervised by Meredith Barton as part of their studies.

### **2. Training of TUT staff during 2014/15 financial year:**

- Meredith Barton, Tim Walter and Jess Feehely conducted ongoing supervision and training with Peter Foster, Alexander Tate and Ben Bartl.
- Phil Hoffen conducted ongoing supervision and training with Julia Ely.
- Rebecca Taylor and Ben Bartl attended the NACLC National Conference in August 2014.
- Ben Bartl attended the National Pro Bono and Access to Justice Conference in June 2015.
- Meredith Barton, Peter Foster, Alexander Tate and Ben Bartl have completed several legal workshops that have contributed to their Continuing Professional Development for the Law Society of Tasmania.

# Service Activity

## OVERVIEW:

The Tenants' Union continued to experience high demand for its services. 2936 people contacted TUT services requesting support, advocacy and/or information from volunteers and staff. The Community Legal Education and Training reached out to wide variety of people in the community through 42 CLE projects and presentations, and there were continued law reform action relating to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997*. The Tenants' Union achieved this with the equivalent of 2.6 full time paid positions plus 0.2 staff at both the Launceston Community Legal Centre (LCLC) and the North West Community Legal Centre (NWCLC).

|                         |                  | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 14/15       | Long Term Ave |
|-------------------------|------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|---------------|
| Advice:                 |                  | 2759  | 2877  | 2607  | 2936  | <b>2787</b> | 2804          |
| Made Up Of:             | Face-to-Face     | 358   | 397   | 518   | 586   | <b>418</b>  | 390           |
|                         | Cases Opened     | 87    | 85    | 117   | 138   | <b>115</b>  | 94            |
|                         | Telephone Advice | 2314  | 2395  | 1972  | 2212  | <b>2254</b> | 2320          |
| Callers:                | Region:          |       |       |       |       |             |               |
|                         | South            | 66%   | 67%   | 62%   | 58%   | <b>57%</b>  | 63%           |
|                         | North            | 21%   | 22%   | 23%   | 28%   | <b>26%</b>  | 24%           |
|                         | North West       | 13%   | 11%   | 15%   | 14%   | <b>16%</b>  | 13%           |
| Callers Identifying As: |                  |       |       |       |       |             |               |
|                         | Low Income       | 77%   | 76%   | 68%   | 68%   | <b>65%</b>  | 70%           |
|                         | ATSI             | 4%    | 3%    | 6%    | 5%    | <b>5%</b>   | 4%            |
|                         | Under 30         | 38%   | 41%   | 41%   | 38%   | <b>51%</b>  | 40%           |
|                         | Women            | 70%   | 70%   | 73%   | 71%   | <b>71%</b>  | 71%           |

## TELEPHONE ADVICE LINE:

The data provided below is collected from clients using the Telephone Advice Line. This data is extremely valuable to the Tenants' Union as it informs law and policy reform activities, assists in targeting community legal education programs and generally allows the organisation to develop a better understanding of current trends in the rental market. We ask all our clients to provide information to us that will be used in statistical reports. It is important to note that a number of clients choose not to divulge some or any information, however we still provide them with advice and information.

Volunteers play an important role in providing assistance to tenants, taking 87% of all calls. On average, volunteers provide 6.2 three hours shifts of telephone advice per week. Volunteers also conduct supervised face-to-face advice and law graduates seeking further qualifications may provide advice of a more complex nature.

The number of telephone advice line calls rose by around 2% on the previous financial year. This is still slightly down on the long-term average increase. The fall in calls may be explained by the marked increase in usage of our website, including from phones and tablets which now makes up 38% of all website visits, up from 21% last year. In the 2013/14 there was an average of 1986 unique website visits and this financial year the average has increased to an average of 2659 unique website visits.

More statistics based on the data collected by the telephone advisors are presented later in this report.

### **FACE-TO-FACE ASSISTANCE:**

Our face-to-face sessions at the Hobart office continue to be popular amongst tenants. In the last financial year 418 tenants were assisted in this manner, an increase of 3.5% on the previous financial year. This is a significant number given that this service operates for only nine hours per week. In addition, our North West service, delivered by the North West CLC, saw 79 tenants\* with 50% of these requiring some level of ongoing advice, and our Northern service, delivered by Launceston CLC assisted 65 tenants with face-to-face advice. The issues discussed face-to-face are usually more complex than those discussed on our telephone advice service. In many cases they escalate into legal casework and representation.

\* North West CLC figures combine face-to-face and advocacy/casework into one figure

### **CLIENT ADVICE AND CASEWORK:**

Client advice and casework continued to be a core activity of the Tenants' Union over the last financial year. Of the tenants assisted through the Hobart service, 115 case files were opened and 128 cases were closed. In addition 11 cases were opened by LCLC in our Northern Service. The Casework project is particularly important as it is primarily focused on tenants with complex needs. Issues that may require advocacy and casework assistance include rental arrears, bond return, lease disputes and, most urgently, the threat of eviction. The advocacy work has been strengthened by the Tenants' Union developing good working relationships with landlords, real estate agents, the Office of Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading, and the Real Estate Institute of Tasmania. However, by far our most important relationship in this area is with the Centacare Housing and Tenancy Service (CHATS). For many tenants, our legal expertise combined with the on-the-ground negotiation skills of the CHATS means tenants have a far better chance of gaining success in their disputes.

### **WEBSITE, NEWSLETTERS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND MEMBERSHIP:**

In the financial year 2014/15 our website ([tutas.org.au](http://tutas.org.au)) was visited more often than ever before, with an average click rate of 608 per week and 31,000 visits over the year. That is an increase of almost 30 per cent in page visits compared to the previous financial year! With the first round of amendments to the *Residential Tenancy Act 1997* (TAS) commencing in October 2014, the website proved to be the ideal vehicle for distributing information, links to facilitate new procedures and updates to Tasmanian tenants.

Factsheets were the most popular destination for visitors to our website with a total of ... clicks over the year. Timely updated to the RTA amendments, our factsheets and our *Don't Panic* booklet, which currently is an online resource only, relieve our busy volunteer phone advice line by providing concise and easy to read information. The factsheets with the most views were (in order) Leaving Leases Early, Notice to Vacate, Repairs and Maintenance, Notice to Terminate, and Access and Privacy.

It is interesting that 34% of new users are now accessing our website via mobile, up from 26% in the previous year. We have greatly reduced our rate of 'bounce' (sessions in which the person left our site from the entrance page without interacting with the page); in 2013/14 it was over 33% and in this financial year it is less than 2.5%. New users make up just over 60% of visitors to our site.

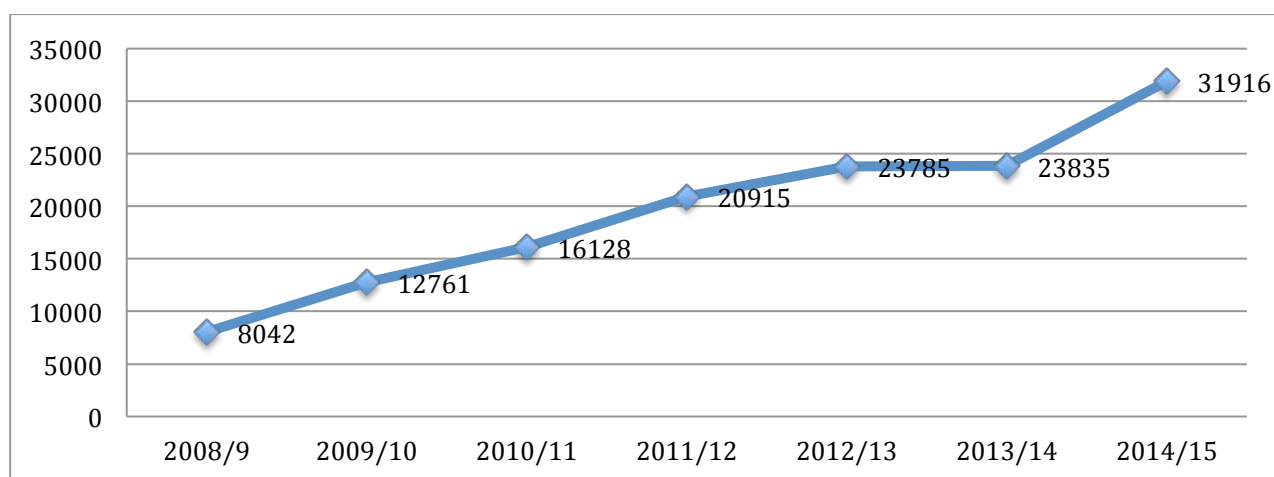
In the past year we revived the habit of sending out our general newsletter *Rent Rant* quarterly, reaching out to community, decision makers and people working in the

residential tenancy sector. With high opening and link click rates, and positive reader feedback we provided insight into our work and more in depth information on developments in tenancy issues in Tasmania and Australia.

The Tenants' Unions' Facebook page was set up in 2011, and received almost 400 page likes by June 2015. With the creation of the page we are providing another avenue of communicating with tenants across Tasmania and sharing news on tenancy.

In July 2014 we introduced the option of becoming an online member of the Tenants' Union. Members have access to our online training modules and a members news section on our website with more in depth insight into the Tenants' Unions work. Furthermore, we invite members to join committees, participate in the formulation of policies, bring forward ideas on lobbying or the option of getting involved in event planning throughout the year. So far, 62 people have signed up for a membership and have been approved by the management committee.

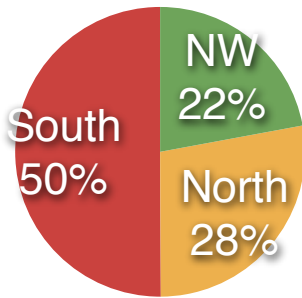
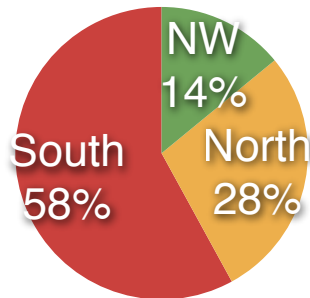
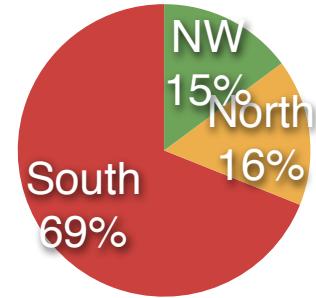
### Website Visits



### **LIMITATIONS TO TELEPHONE ADVICE AND CASEWORK:**

Following the introduction of the Northern Service through our network partners at Launceston CLC in October 2012, our reach to Northern tenants has improved immensely. The ongoing North West service through the NWCLC has improved service access for tenants in the North West. Despite this, Southern Tasmania still makes up a disproportionately high amount of tenants using our services, although an increased profile in Launceston has meant more people from the North are calling our Telephone Advice Service (see pie charts below and service summary on Page 16).

Ongoing service availability in the North and North West should continue to lift the profile of the Tenants' Union, but without ongoing and increased funding for services outside Hobart, access to justice on tenancy matters will continue to be imbalanced in Tasmania.

**Population****Telephone Advice****Face-to-Face & Advocacy****COMMUNITY LEGAL EDUCATION:**

The Tenants' Union is responsible for providing community legal education and training statewide to tenants and the housing sector on tenancy issues, along with an active involvement in tenancy law reform.

The funds for this are provided from the Commonwealth Attorney General's Family and Legal Aid Division and administered through the Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania.

A record number of 42 Community Legal Education sessions (CLE) were conducted by Rebecca Taylor. Peter Foster and Ben Bartl supervised 7 legal session of the Student Legal Service, and 3 CLE events were attended by NWCLC Principal Solicitor, Chris Young.

- CLE for tenants at Huon LINC
- CLE for tenants at Bridgewater LINC
- CLE for migrants at Launceston Multicultural Resource Centre
- CLE for tenants at Richmond Fellowship, Ulverstone
- CLE for tenants at Maranoa Neighbourhood House Kingston
- 23 CLE sessions for newly arrived refugees at Centacare HSS program (twice per month)
- 4 CLE sessions for settled refugees at Centacare SG program
- CLE for women and staff at McCombe House
- CLE for women and staff at Hobart Women's Shelter
- CLE for students at Tabor College
- CLE for housing network members Launceston
- CLE for Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, Putalina
- CLE for staff, Housing Choices Hobart
- CLE for tenancy workers, Social Housing Training, Hobart
- CLE for Tasmanian Aboriginal Community, Launceston
- CLE for tenants at Cygnet LINC
- CLE for community at Maranoa Neighbourhood House, Kingston
- 3 CLE sessions for NWC community
- 7 Supervision Sessions for Law Students at the Student Legal Service at the University of Tasmania, Hobart

Our CLE aims to provide knowledge and skills to support successful tenancies and minimise the need for disputes. In the past financial year the TUT became a regular presence at Centacare's Humanitarian Support Service (HSS) programs tenancy sessions. We have addressed issues specific to the refugee community at a grassroots level, taking a

preventative approach to tenancy issues for this group by educating them from the outset and thus equipping them with the necessary skills to enter into successful tenancies.

Additionally our Online Training platform was launched in June 2014. We have continued to develop the training, reflecting legislative change and incorporate feedback from trainees participating in the program. Forty seven people from a variety of backgrounds including tenants, tenancy workers, volunteers and real estate agents have signed up for the training.

Training and Development Officer Rebecca Taylor has built valuable relationships, e.g. at the 2014 NACLC annual conference, where she a great deal of interest in our online training platform. She was invited to participate in the Victorian CLE and CD network, developing strong support and idea exchange structures and representing Tasmania on the national CLE and CD network, providing Tasmanian input into the national framework. She furthermore has been invited to present her work with indigenous communities and refugees at NACLC's 2015 conference - an exciting project, which at time of writing is on hold due to funding cuts.

## **LAW REFORM**

The Community Law Reform and Policy work undertaken by the Tenants' Union in the 2014/15 year included the following areas:

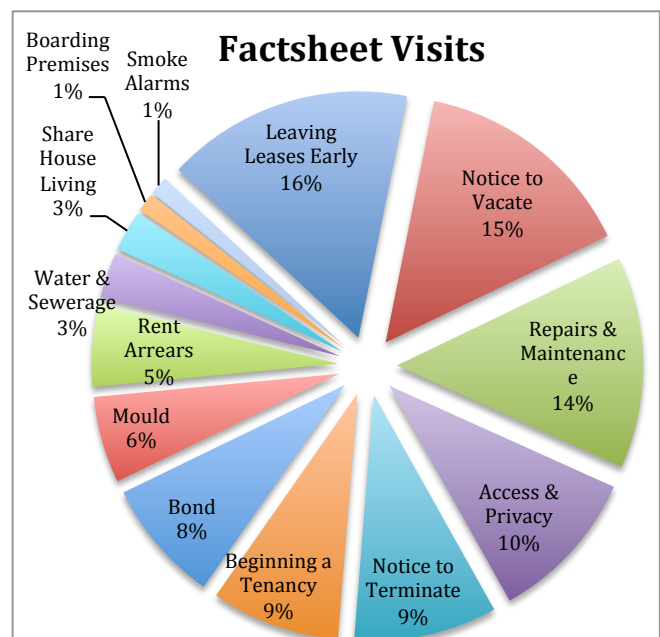
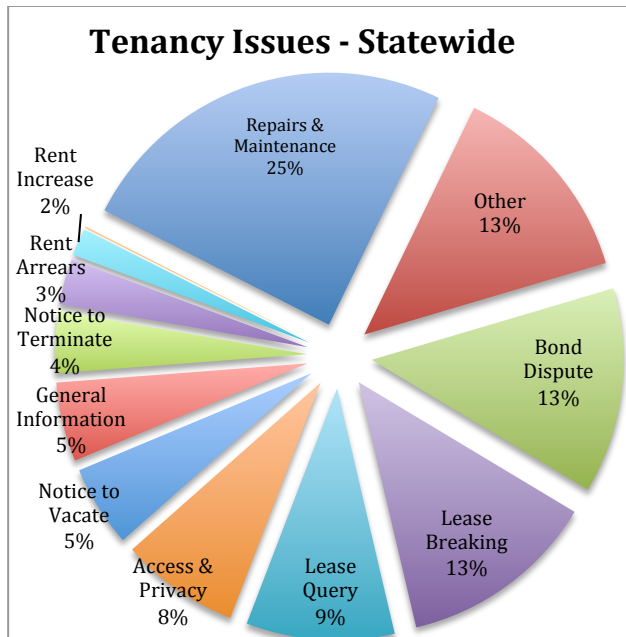
**Amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act** - This included briefings with members of Parliament about proposed changes to the Act including the number of hotplates to be provided as a minimum standard in rental properties and privacy provisions. We also wrote a letter with Shelter Tasmania that was provided to all Legislative Council members.

**RDA Rent Statistics Project** - Each quarter we are able to publish rent statistics compiled from Bond Lodgement Forms collected by the Rental Deposit Authority. Access to this information provides all members of the Tasmanian community but particularly tenants with information about rents in their local community.

**Government Budget and Budget Estimates Submission** - We worked closely with Shelter Tasmania on both their Budget Submission and questions for Budget Estimates.



# Tenancy Statistics

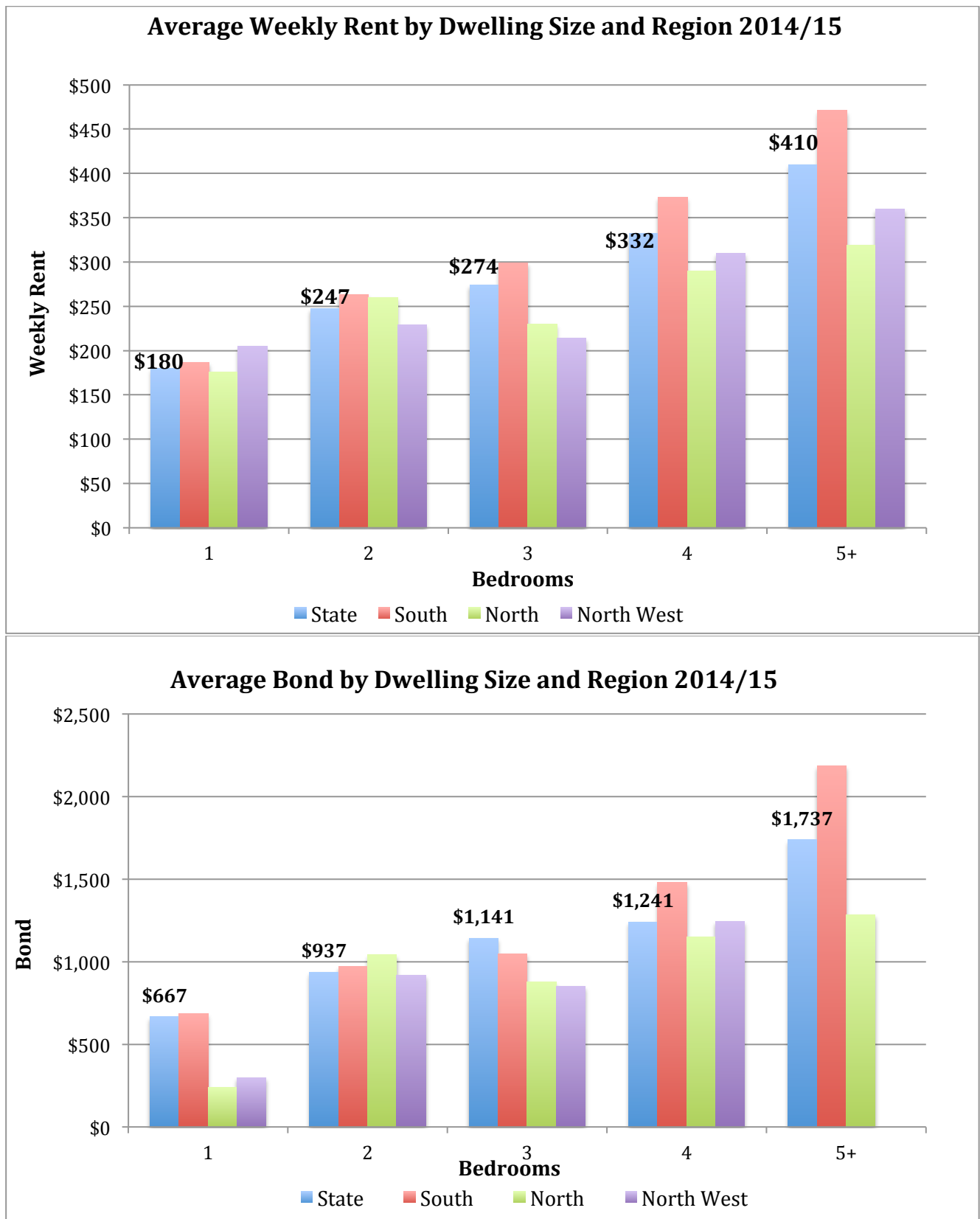


Repairs and Maintenance continues to be the matter that residential tenants seek individual advice for, stressing that professional judgment on types of repairs and entitlement are crucial to ensure tenants access to their rights. The Tenants' Union hope that a major solution to this problem is the introduction of legislated tenancy quality standards for all Tasmanian residential tenancies, which will commence on 1 August 2015 and be fully rolled until 2018.

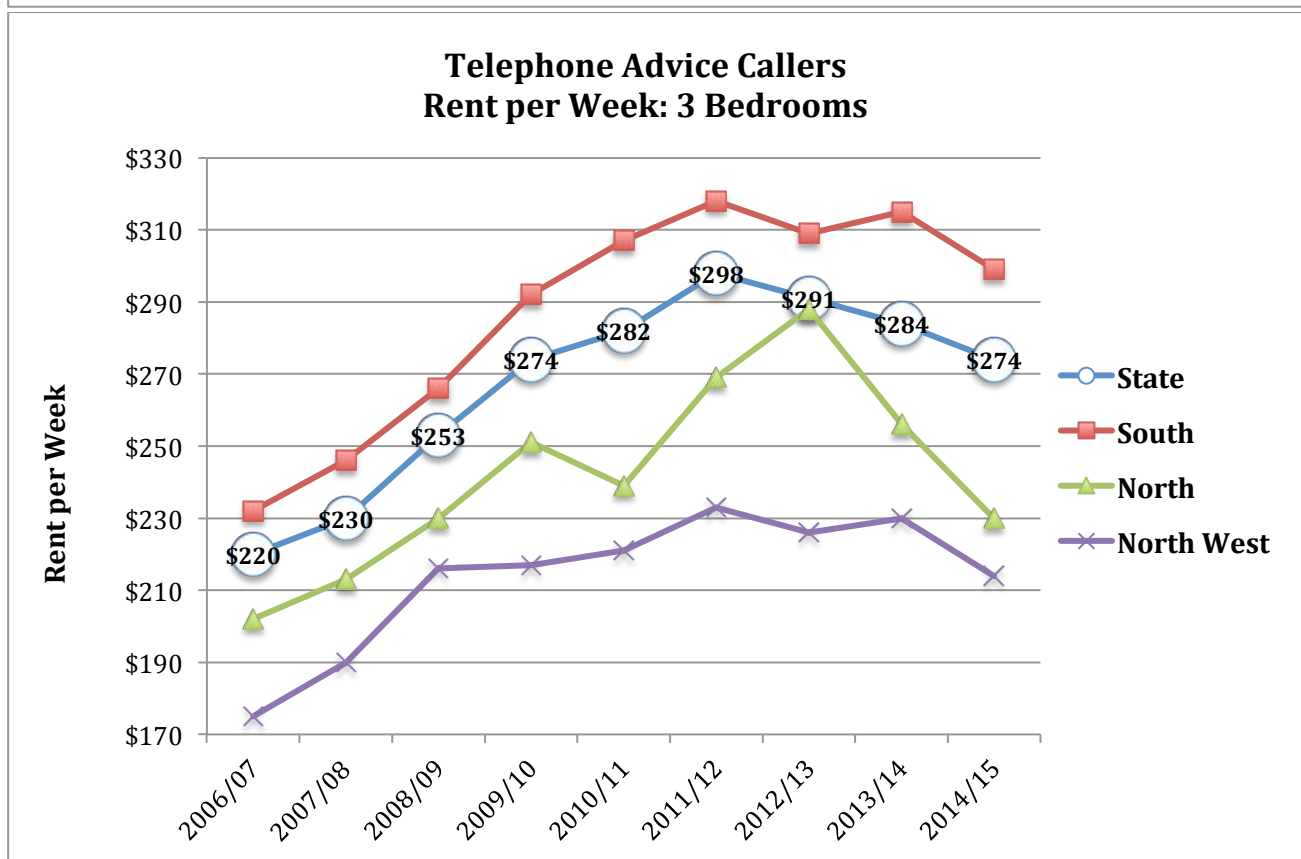
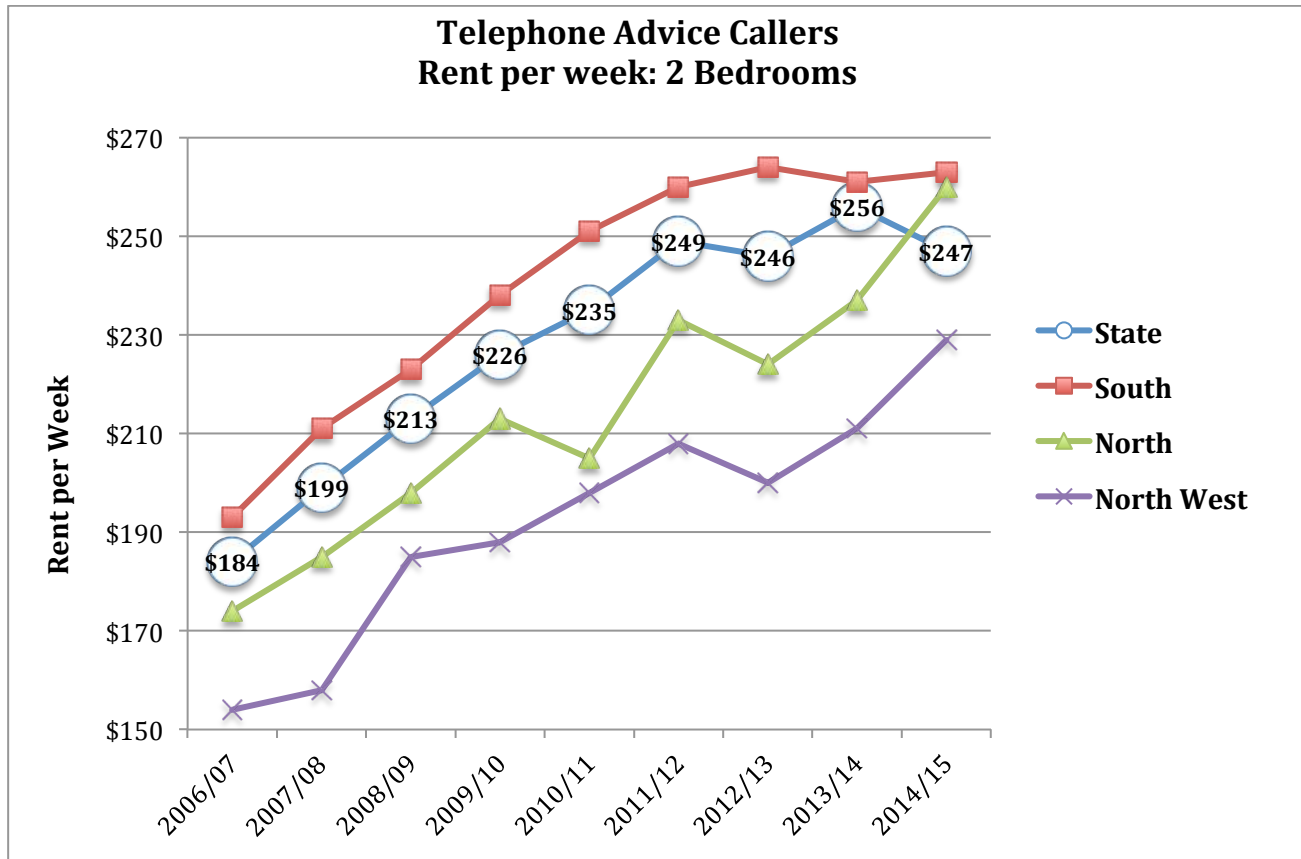
For the past two financial years, vacancy rates increased in most Tasmanian population centres, resulting in the stabilisation of rents in most areas for new leases and hence the low percentage of calls about rent increases. However, tenants seeking to break their lease have found it more difficult to find new tenants at the same rent and as a result lease breaking continues to be a big issue on the telephone advice line. This should continue in the foreseeable future, as vacancy rates continue to be higher than those seen in the first decade of the millennium.



The following graphs provide an overview of weekly rental prices and bond statewide and in the three main geographical regions. There is no surprise to see a correlation between number of bedrooms and the weekly rent and bond, although there are bond anomalies for dwellings with five or more bedrooms due to the small sample size. Dwellings in the South are dearest in the South and cheapest in the North West.



Although housing affordability continues to be major issue, there has been some relief for tenants in the past two financial years with the average rent for telephone advice callers falling for three bedroom properties and rising less than inflation for two bedroom properties.



# North West



% of all Calls:  
**16**  
% of Tasmanian  
Rental Households:  
**22**

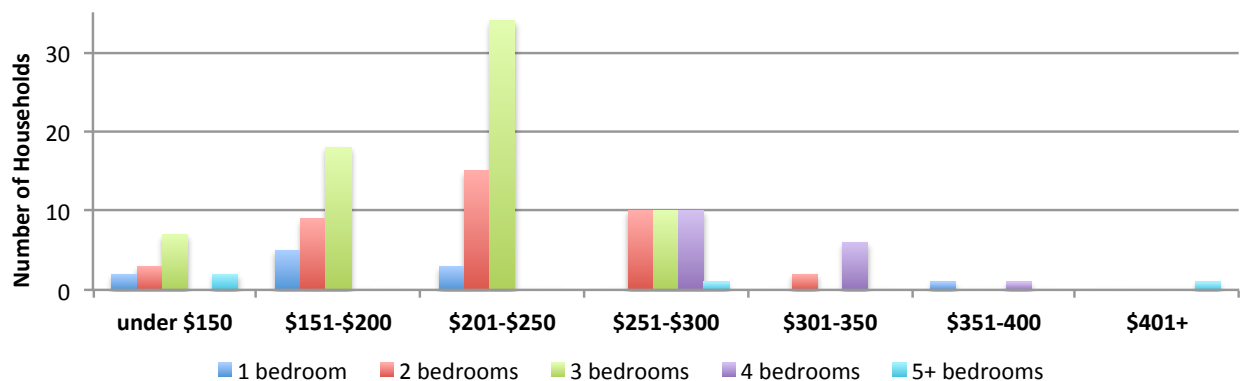
In comparison to other regions historically:

- Lowest rent and bond
- More Repairs & Maintenance issues
- Less Lease Breaking

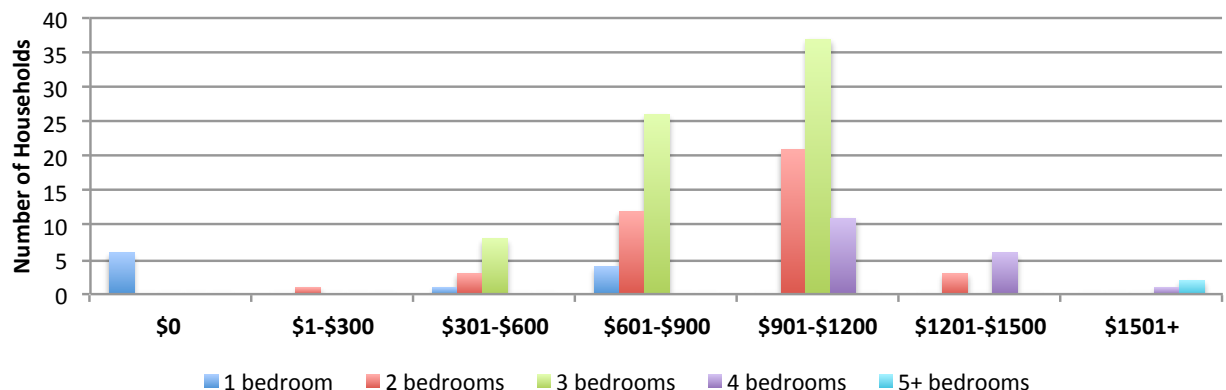
| Tenancy Issue         | 2014/15 | Prev Yr |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Repairs & Maintenance | 28%     | 33%     |
| Lease Breaking        | 14%     | 9%      |
| Other                 | 13%     | 12%     |
| Lease Query           | 12%     | 5%      |
| Access & Privacy      | 9%      | 6%      |
| Bond                  | 7%      | 15%     |
| Notice to Terminate   | 6%      | 8%      |
| Notice to Vacate      | 4%      | 7%      |
| General Information   | 4%      | 3%      |
| Rent Arrears          | 3%      | 3%      |
| Rent Increase         | 2%      | 0%      |

|               | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 2014/15 | Change on<br>Prev Yr | 5 year<br>Change |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------|----------------------|------------------|
| Ave Rent      | 202   | 213   | 222   | 218   | 224   | 230     | 2.7%                 | 13.9%            |
| Ave Bond      | 804   | 824   | 849   | 887   | 894   | 890     | -0.5%                | 10.7%            |
| 2 Br Ave Rent | 188   | 198   | 208   | 200   | 211   | 229     | 8.5%                 | 21.8%            |
| 3 Br Ave Rent | 217   | 221   | 233   | 226   | 230   | 214     | -7.0%                | -1.4%            |
| CPI (Aust)    |       |       |       |       |       |         | %                    | %                |

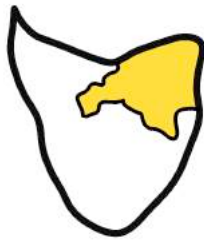
## Weekly Rent by Dwelling Size - North West Tasmania 2014/15



## Bond by Dwelling Size - North West Tasmania 2014/15



# North



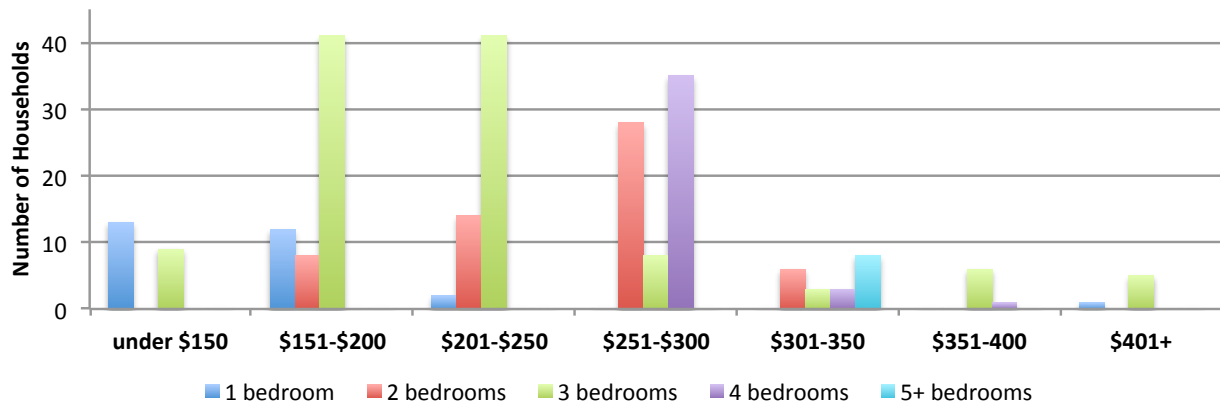
% of all Calls:  
**26**  
% of Tasmanian  
Rental Households:  
**28.5**

In comparison to other regions historically:  
More lease breaking  
More eviction queries

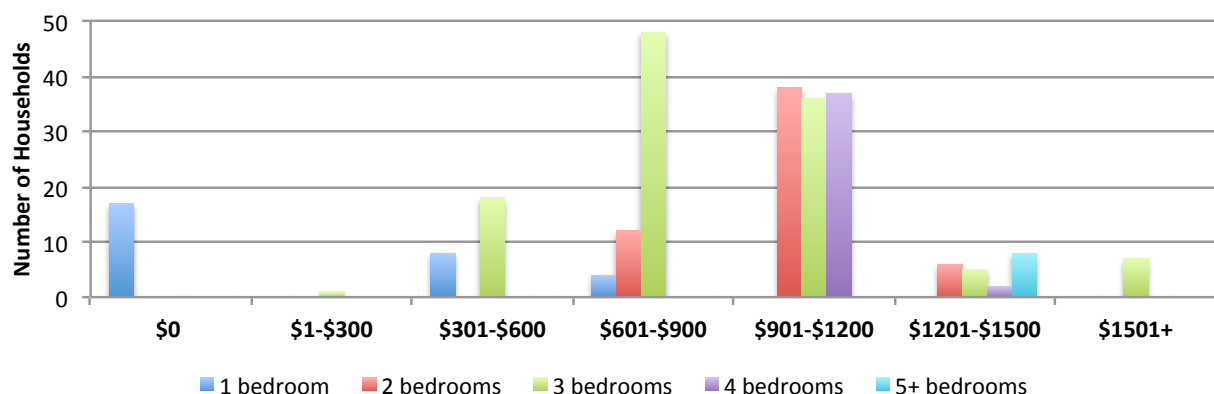
| Tenancy Issue         | 2014/15 | Prev Yr |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Repairs & Maintenance | 26%     | 26%     |
| Bond                  | 17%     | 15%     |
| Lease Breaking        | 13%     | 19%     |
| Other                 | 11%     | 11%     |
| Access & Privacy      | 8%      | 6%      |
| Lease Query           | 8%      | 4%      |
| Notice to Vacate      | 5%      | 6%      |
| Notice to Terminate   | 4%      | 8%      |
| General Information   | 4%      | 4%      |
| Rent Arrears          | 2%      | 2%      |
| Rent Increase         | 1%      | 2%      |

|               | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 2014/15    | Change on<br>Prev Yr | 5 year<br>Change |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Ave Rent      | 229   | 223   | 252   | 253   | 250   | <b>244</b> | -2.4%                | 6.6%             |
| Ave Bond      | 750   | 828   | 980   | 992   | 963   | <b>921</b> | -4.3%                | 22.8%            |
| 2 Br Ave Rent | 213   | 205   | 239   | 224   | 237   | <b>260</b> | 9.7%                 | 22.1%            |
| 3 Br Ave Rent | 251   | 239   | 269   | 283   | 255   | <b>230</b> | -9.8%                | -8.4%            |
| CPI (Aust)    |       |       |       |       |       |            | %                    | %                |

Weekly Rent by Dwelling Size - North Tasmania 2014/15



Bond by Dwelling Size - North Tasmania 2014/15



# South



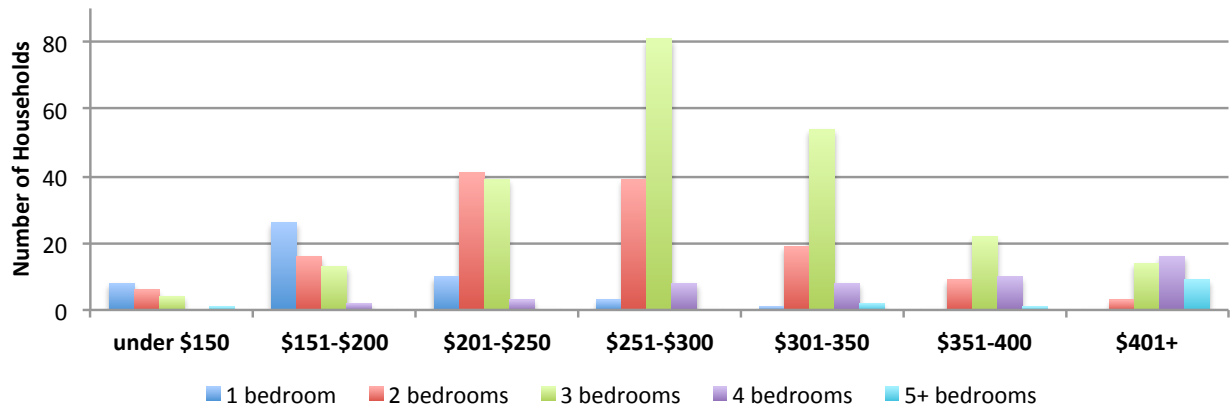
% of all Calls:  
**57**  
% of Tasmanian  
Rental Households:  
**49.5**

In comparison to other regions historically:  
Highest rent and bond

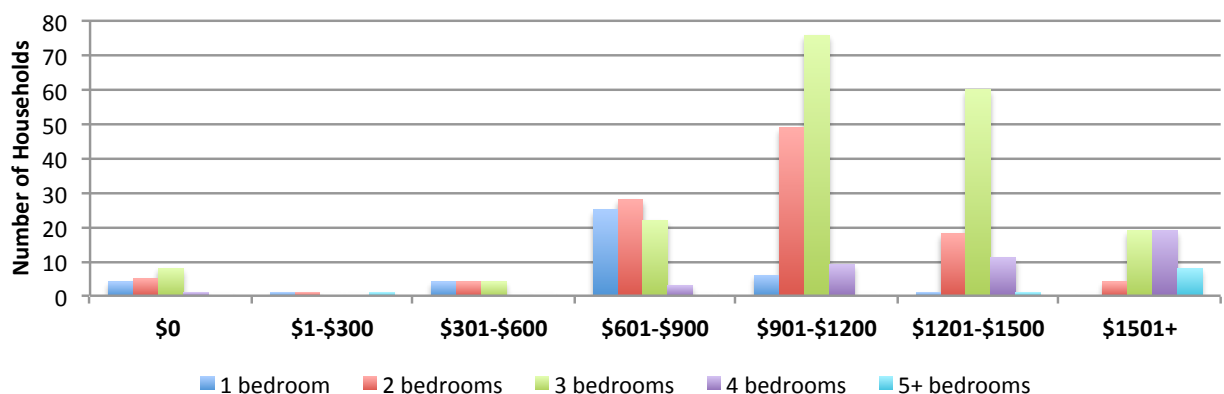
| Tenancy Issue         | 2014/15 | Prev Yr |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Repairs & Maintenance | 26%     | 24%     |
| Bond                  | 13%     | 13%     |
| Lease Breaking        | 13%     | 11%     |
| Lease Query           | 11%     | 7%      |
| Other                 | 10%     | 13%     |
| Access & Privacy      | 8%      | 6%      |
| Notice to Vacate      | 6%      | 7%      |
| General Information   | 4%      | 5%      |
| Rent Arrears          | 4%      | 4%      |
| Notice to Terminate   | 3%      | 9%      |
| Rent Increase         | 2%      | 2%      |

|               | 09/10 | 10/11 | 11/12 | 12/13 | 13/14 | 2014/15     | Change on<br>Prev Yr | 5 year<br>Change |
|---------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Ave Rent      | 267   | 282   | 291   | 288   | 291   | <b>285</b>  | -2.1%                | 6.7%             |
| Ave Bond      | 1003  | 1040  | 1096  | 1092  | 1098  | <b>1047</b> | -4.6%                | 4.4%             |
| 2 Br Ave Rent | 238   | 251   | 260   | 264   | 261   | <b>263</b>  | 0.8%                 | 10.5%            |
| 3 Br Ave Rent | 292   | 307   | 318   | 309   | 315   | <b>299</b>  | -5.0%                | 2.4%             |
| CPI (Aust)    |       |       |       |       |       |             | %                    | %                |

## Weekly Rent by Dwelling Size - South Tasmania 2014/15

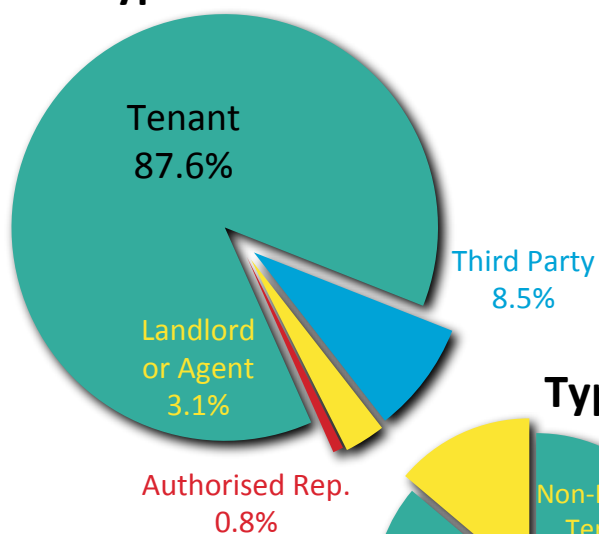


## Bond by Dwelling Size - South Tasmania 2014/15

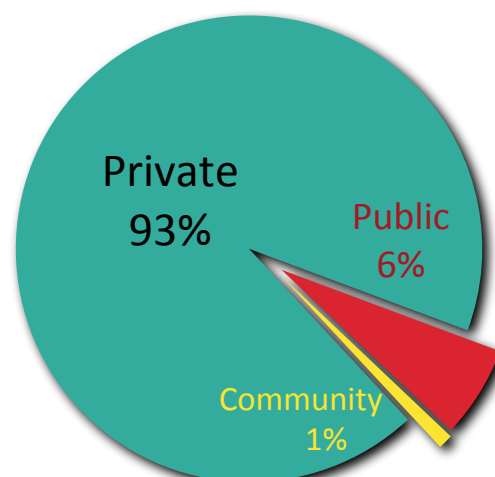


# Statewide 2014/15

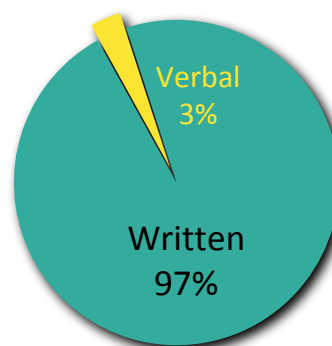
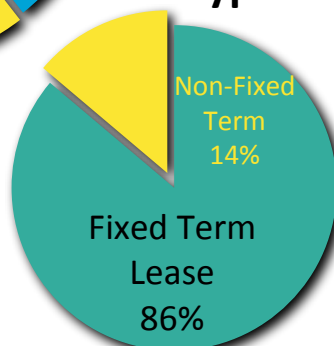
## Type of Caller



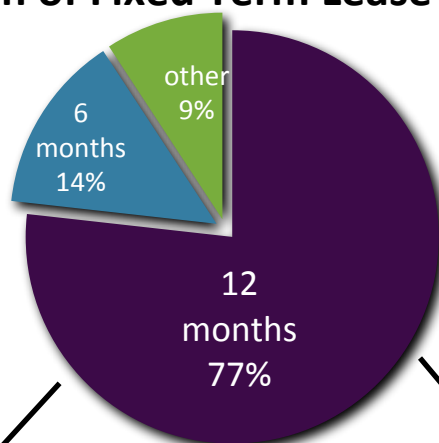
## Landlord



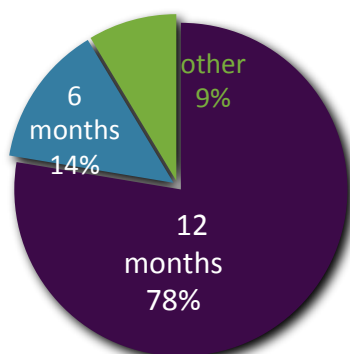
## Type of Agreement



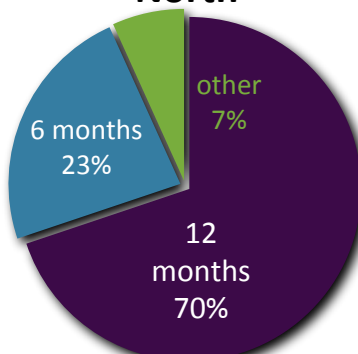
## Length of Fixed Term Lease - State



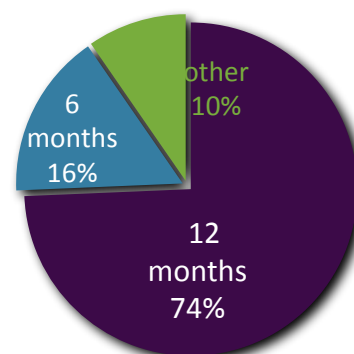
### South



### North



### North West



# Our Links

The Tenants' Union has continued its association with the following organisations:

Member of:

- National Association of Tenants Organisations (NATO)
- Shelter Tasmania
- National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)
- Community Legal Centres Tasmania (CLCTas)
- International Union of Tenants
- Tasmanian Council of Social Services (TasCOSS)

Network Partners

- Centacare Housing and Tenancy Services (CHATS)
- North West Community Legal Centre
- Launceston Community Legal Centre

Working Relationships with

- Colony 47
- Anglicare
- Red Shield Housing
- Office of Consumer Affairs and Fair Trading
- Residential Tenancy Commissioner
- Rental Deposit Authority
- Housing Tasmania, Department of Health and Human Services
- Legal Aid Commission of Tasmania
- Housing and Community Research Unit, University of Tasmania
- Tasmanian Association of Community Houses (TACH)
- Advocacy Tasmania

# Financial Report

For the year ended 30 June 2015

The operating result for the year ended 30 June 2015 is a profit of \$11,123 (FY14: loss of \$10,876) – a pleasing turn-around from the losses incurred over the past couple of years. The financial details underlying this result are discussed below.

The Tenants' Union of Tasmania Inc. remains committed to providing services to tenants throughout Tasmania, and this work would not be possible without the generous support and assistance from our sponsors. We gratefully acknowledge their support. Our core sponsors are the Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments, but we also received funding from the Tasmanian Community Fund, The Solicitors Guarantee Fund, and the Solicitors Trust. We strive to ensure that funds granted to us are used appropriately and solely for the purposes for which they have been entrusted to us.

Just prior to the end of the last financial year the Association received significant funding for its activities. This was recorded in the balance sheet, which showed \$269,362 cash and equivalents as at 30 June 2014. Whilst the total cash and equivalents as at 30 June 2015 is significantly lower at \$144,092, there has been a corresponding change in the liabilities of the association, with grant surpluses reducing from \$128,652 as at 30 June 2014 reducing to just \$9,592 as at 30 June 2015 (refer note 5). In other words, the Association has substantially completed the activities during the year for which we received the grant funding. Whilst there is less cash held by the Association, the fundamental financial strength of the Association remains strong, and we are well positioned to cope with the vagary of our funding.

As noted in the Convener's Report, during the year two long serving employees, Phil Hoffen and Mick Lynch, resigned. I thank Phil and Mick for their service, and wish them all the best in their future activities. However, my concern in this report is the impact on the financial statements, where these events are most clearly reflected in the movement of employee benefits – being annual leave and long service leave. As a result of reassessing the Association liabilities with respect to current employee benefits there has been a write-back of these provisions during the year, resulting in the operating surplus of \$11,123 for the year.

As per prior years, both employee entitlements and carried forward grant surpluses are fully funded. The financial position of the Association remains strong, and we continue to pursue our goal of improving the services to tenants all around Tasmania.

Michael Kennett  
Treasurer  
October 2015



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***Benedict Leung***

Chartered Accountant  
ABN: 87 359 582 128

44 Sandy Bay Road  
Battery Point Tas 7004  
Telephone: 03 62238699  
Facsimile: 03 62236793  
Email: [bkyleung@bigpond.com](mailto:bkyleung@bigpond.com)

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**  
**Financial Statements & Audit Report**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**



Chartered Accountant

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**  
**Committee's Report**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

Your Committee members submit the financial report of the association for the financial year ended 30 June 2015.

**1 General Information**

**Principal Activities**

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were providing services, including advocacy, community education and training for tenants.

**Significant Changes**

No significant change in the nature of the activities occurred during the year.

**2 Operating Results and Review of Operations for the Year**

The surplus/(deficit) of the association for the financial year amounted to \$11,123 (2014: (\$10,876)).

**3 Other Items**

**No Significant Changes in State of Affairs**

No significant changes in the associations state of affairs occurred during the financial year.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Management Committee:

Convenor S. Chapple

Name S. Chapple

Dated this 29 day of October 2015.

Treasurer M. Kennett

Name Michael Kennett

Dated this 29 day of October 2015.

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**  
**Statement by the Management Committee**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

**Statement by the Management Committee**

The Committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In the opinion of the Committee the financial report as set out in the following pages:

Presents a true and fair view of the financial position of the Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc. as at 30 June 2015 and its performance for the year then ended.

At the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:

Convenor S. Chapple

Name S. Chapple

Dated this 29 day of October 2015.

Treasurer M. Kemett

Name Michael Kemett

Dated this 29 day of October 2015.

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**  
**Statement of Comprehensive Income**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

|   | 2015           | 2014            |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Income</b>                             |                |                 |
| State Government grants                   | 183,565        | 204,588         |
| Grants - other                            | 114,579        | 119,264         |
| Commonwealth grants                       | 69,064         | 68,680          |
| TACLC wage recovery                       | 32,157         | -               |
| Interest revenue                          | 5,728          | 8,973           |
| Miscellaneous income                      | -              | 498             |
| <b>Total Income</b>                       | <b>405,092</b> | <b>402,003</b>  |
| <b>Expenses</b>                           |                |                 |
| Wages and salaries                        | 275,030        | 269,302         |
| Superannuation                            | 28,846         | 23,902          |
| Launceston & Northern advocacy            | 24,646         | 21,105          |
| Office rent                               | 17,515         | 18,835          |
| Web site development                      | -              | 14,062          |
| Rates and taxes                           | 5,240          | 5,927           |
| Insurances                                | 4,403          | 6,106           |
| Auditors remuneration                     | 3,330          | 3,230           |
| Depreciation                              | 2,287          | 3,170           |
| Committee expenses                        | 91             | 254             |
| Other expenses                            | 32,580         | 46,986          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                     | <b>393,969</b> | <b>412,879</b>  |
| <b>Net surplus/(deficit) for the year</b> | <b>11,123</b>  | <b>- 10,876</b> |

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

|  | <i>Notes</i> | 2015           | 2014           |
|--|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Assets</b>                          |              |                |                |
| Cash and equivalents                   | 2            | 144,092        | 269,362        |
| Trade and other receivables            |              | -              | 2,232          |
| Property, plant & equipment            | 3            | -              | 2,287          |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                    |              | <b>144,092</b> | <b>273,881</b> |
| <b>Liabilities</b>                     |              |                |                |
| Trade and other payables               | 4            | 31,788         | 25,024         |
| Employee benefits (annual leave)       |              | 21,326         | 43,618         |
| Employee benefits (long service leave) |              | 12,090         | 18,414         |
| Grant surpluses                        | 5            | 9,592          | 128,652        |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>               |              | <b>74,796</b>  | <b>215,708</b> |
| <b>Net Assets</b>                      |              | <b>69,296</b>  | <b>58,173</b>  |
| <b>Equity</b>                          |              |                |                |
| Reserves                               | 6            | 40,000         | 40,000         |
| Accumulated surpluses                  |              | 29,296         | 18,173         |
| <b>Total Equity</b>                    |              | <b>69,296</b>  | <b>58,173</b>  |

## Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc

### Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

#### 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies (ctd)

##### (i) Unexpended Grants

It is the associations policy to treat grant monies as unexpended grant liabilities in the statement of financial position where the association is contractually obliged to provide the services in a subsequent financial period to when the grant is received or in the case of specific project grants where the project has not been completed.

The Solicitors Trust of Tasmania provides funding to the association for the provision of specified legal assistance. Whilst the association has no contractual obligations to return unspent funding the committee has made a determination to defer the recognition of the funding as revenue until the service provision is performed for the purposes of matching income and expenditure.

##### (j) Revenue and Other Income

Interest revenue is recognised over the period for which funds are invested.

Revenue from the provision of services is recognised upon delivery of the service to customers.

Grant income is recognised when expended in accordance with the terms of the funding agreement.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax (GST).

|  |                |                |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| <b>2 Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>       | 2015           | 2014           |
|  | \$             | \$             |
| Petty cash                               | 82             | 250            |
| Cash at bank                             | 144,010        | 269,112        |
|  | <u>144,092</u> | <u>269,362</u> |
| <b>3 Property, Plant and Equipment</b>   | 2015           | 2014           |
|  | \$             | \$             |
| Furniture, fixtures and fittings         |                |                |
| At Cost                                  | 34,525         | 34,525         |
| Accumulated depreciation                 | - 34,525       | - 32,238       |
|  | <u>-</u>       | <u>2,287</u>   |
| <b>4 Trade and Other Payables</b>        | 2015           | 2014           |
|  | \$             | \$             |
| Trade payables                           | 12,462         | 6,946          |
| PAYG withheld                            | 15,724         | 14,108         |
| GST payable/(receivable)                 | 3,601          | 3,970          |
|  | <u>31,788</u>  | <u>25,024</u>  |
| <b>5 Grant Surpluses Carried Forward</b> | 2015           | 2014           |
|  | \$             | \$             |
| Tasmanian Community Fund                 | 6,092          | 8,403          |
| State Government                         | -              | 2,842          |
| Solicitors Trust                         | 3,500          | 117,407        |
|  | <u>9,592</u>   | <u>128,652</u> |

## **Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended 30 June 2015**

#### **1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

##### **(a) Basis of Preparation**

This financial report is a special purpose financial report prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (Tas) and Commonwealth Government Funding Agencies. This association is a not-for-profit association for financial reporting purposes.

##### **(b) Cash and Cash Equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term deposits.

##### **(c) Trade and Other Receivables**

The association considers accounts receivables to be fully collectible, accordingly no allowance for impairment is required.

##### **(d) Property, Plant and Equipment**

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready to use.

The association recognises capital acquisition of individual amounts under \$3,000 as an expense when incurred.

##### **(e) Trade and Other Payables**

Trade and other payables are stated at cost, which approximates fair value due to the short term nature of these liabilities.

##### **(f) Employee Benefits**

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled. The associations' policy is to provide thirteen weeks long service leave after ten years and to pro-rata after seven years.

Superannuation contributions made by the association are charged as expenses when incurred.

##### **(g) Income Tax**

No provision for income tax has been raised as the association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*.

##### **(h) Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Tax Office. In these circumstances the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

## Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc

### Notes to the Financial Statements For the Year Ended 30 June 2015

#### 6 Reserves

It is the association policy to make suitable provision for contingent events that could affect the provision of ongoing services. The moving reserve sets aside funds should there be a requirement to relocate premises. The case reserve sets aside funds to cover costs in the event that the association becomes involved in a Supreme Court case.

|                | 2015          | 2014          |
|----------------|---------------|---------------|
|                | \$            | \$            |
| Moving reserve | 20,000        | 20,000        |
| Case reserve   | 20,000        | 20,000        |
|                | <u>40,000</u> | <u>40,000</u> |

#### 8 Subsequent Events

There are no subsequent events that affect these financial statements that are required to be disclosed.

#### 9 Registered Office

The registered office of the association is:

Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc.  
166 Macquarie Street  
Hobart TAS 7000

#### 10 Management Committee

The members of the management committee for the year ended 30 June 2015 were:

|                   |  |  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Convenor          | Susan Chapple                                | 220 Nelson Road<br>Mount Nelson TAS 7007           |
| Public Officer    | Jody Johnson                                 | 29 Chandos Drive<br>Berridale TAS 7011             |
| Treasurer         | Michael Kennett                              | 439 Allens Rivulet Road<br>Allens Rivulet TAS 7150 |
| Secretary         | Emily Conway                                 | 63 Kingston View Drive<br>Kingston TAS 7050        |
| Committee Members | Pia Strawe                                   | 108 Mount Stuart Road<br>Mount Stuart TAS 7000     |
|                   | Michelle Parker                              | 12 Grevillia Way<br>Kingston TAS 7050              |
|                   | Amanda Street<br><i>Resigned during year</i> | 39 Garnett Street<br>Blackmans Bay TAS 7052        |
|                   | Andrew Muthy                                 | 30 Valley Street<br>West Hobart TAS 7000           |
|                   | John Sumby                                   | 148 Davey Street<br>Hobart TAS 7000                |



***Benedict Leung***

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

Benedict K Y Leung CA

44 Sandy Bay Road, Sandy Bay, TAS 7005  
G.P.O Box 1117, Hobart, TAS 7001

Telephone: 03 62238699 Fax: 03 62236793  
E-mail: bkyleung@bigpond.com

**Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc**

**Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Tenants Union Tasmania Inc**

***Report on the Financial Report***

I have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special report, of Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc (the association), which comprises the statement of financial position at 30 June 2015, statement of comprehensive income for the year ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the Committee.

***Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report***

The Committee of the association is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, are consistent with the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act Tasmania 1964* and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The Committees' responsibility also includes designing, implementing and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the 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. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. I conducted my audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that I comply with the relevant ethical requirements relating to the 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 judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Committees, 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.

***Benedict Leung***

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

Benedict K Y Leung CA

44 Sandy Bay Road, Sandy Bay, TAS 7005  
G.P.O Box 1117, Hobart, TAS 7001

Telephone: 03 62238699 Fax: 03 62236793  
E-mail: bkyleung@bigpond.com

*Independence*

In conducting my audit, I have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional ethical pronouncements. I declare to the best of my knowledge and belief that the auditor's independence declaration to the financial report has not changed as at the date of providing my audit opinion.

*Auditor's Opinion*

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material respects the financial position of Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc, as at 30 June 2015 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

*Auditor*



Benedict Leung  
Address 44 Sandy Bay Road  
Battery Point 7004  
Tasmania

Date

29.10.2015

Tenants Union of Tasmania Inc

Auditor's Independence Declaration

I declare that to the best of my knowledge and believe, during the year ended 30 June 2015 there have been

- (i) no contraventions of the auditor's independence requirements as set out in the Accounting Professional Ethical Standards in relation to the audit, and
- (ii) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

Benedict Leung

Date



29.10.2015

Address: 44 Sandy Bay Road  
Battery Point, 7004  
Tasmania.