

## **NLAF Working Group on Collaborative Service Planning**

### **Discussion Paper on Proposed Catchments for Service Planning – February 2019**

#### **1. Introduction**

Legal assistance service providers are involved in many effective collaborative service planning programs and projects across NSW, including the Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (**CLSD**) Program.

In addition, the National Partnership Agreement on Legal Assistance Services 2015-2020 (**NPA**) and the Indigenous Legal Assistance Program (**ILAP**) require legal assistance service providers to undertake collaborative service planning to coordinate and maximise service delivery.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek the views of legal assistance service providers on proposed catchments for collaborative service planning across all areas of NSW. The objective is to develop an agreed set of catchments to be used for analysing legal needs and unmet demand, and for organisations to work together in service planning, across the state. While this consultation is targeted at legal assistance sector providers, other organisations and individuals are welcome to provide comments.

In particular, feedback is sought on whether the proposed catchments make sense from a local perspective.

Please provide comments to the NLAF Working Group via the Planning and Review Unit at Legal Aid NSW (c/-o [naomi.cheetham@legalaid.nsw.gov.au](mailto:naomi.cheetham@legalaid.nsw.gov.au) Tel: 02 9134 9326) by **Friday, 22 March 2019**.

#### **2. NSW Legal Assistance Forum Working Group**

Currently, NSW holds peak jurisdictional planning meetings twice yearly with Legal Aid NSW, the Aboriginal Legal Service NSW/ACT (**ALS**), Community Legal Centres NSW (**CLCNSW**), the NSW Department of Justice and the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.

In August 2018, a NSW Legal Assistance Forum (**NLAF**) Working Group was established to develop a more comprehensive approach to collaborative service planning in NSW that will:

- align with the NPA and ILAP requirements
- focus on the delivery of legal assistance services to priority clients
- be evidenced based, using a legal needs analysis and legal assistance service data to identify legal need and the range of existing services, and
- focus on coordinating and maximising the reach of services and ensure that services are directed where they are most needed.

NLAF is an interagency forum that brings together key legal service providers across government, non-government and private sectors. Its members include the ALS, CLCNSW, the NSW Department of Justice, Justice Connect, LawAccess NSW, the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW (**LJF**), Law Society of NSW, Legal Aid NSW, Legal Information Access Centre, NSW Bar Association, and the Public Interest Advocacy Centre. NLAF meets

quarterly, and aims to facilitate access to justice for socially and economically disadvantaged people. It convenes working groups to examine key or emerging issues in detail.

The NLAF Working Group meets on a monthly basis and comprises representatives from Legal Aid NSW, CLCNSW, the ALS, LawAccess NSW, the LJF, and the Department of Justice.

The NLAF Working Group has developed an initial work plan which would include:

- agreeing geographic catchments for NSW
- undertaking a legal needs analysis by catchment
- mapping existing legal assistance services within catchments
- establishing regional working groups for each catchment
- identifying the initial service planning priorities for regional working groups
- organising quarterly meetings for the working groups.

### **3. NPA requirements**

The NPA provides Commonwealth funding to states and territories to distribute to legal aid commissions and community legal centres. The objective of the NPA is a national legal assistance sector that is integrated, efficient and effective, focused on improving access to justice for disadvantaged people and maximising service delivery within available resources.

The NPA requires states to undertake collaborative service planning to improve coordination between service providers in the planning and delivery of services. There are two key elements of collaborative service planning:

- the states use an evidence base to identify priority clients and the geographic locations in which people have the highest levels of legal need, and
- the states will conduct collaborative service planning meetings to promote discussion of strategies for the delivery of services within their jurisdiction.

Using evidence and analysis of legal need, collaborative service planning meetings should consider, at a minimum:

- the different locations of services delivered by legal aid commissions, community legal centres and Indigenous legal assistance providers within the jurisdiction
- the mix of legal assistance services available
- strategies to achieve proportionate services response – for example that, where practicable, services are appropriate to clients' legal needs and levels of capability
- the coordination of community legal education at a State level, and
- the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery models.

### **4. ILAP requirements**

The ILAP funds organisations to deliver culturally appropriate legal assistance services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The objective of the ILAP is to ensure Indigenous people are able to access justice and exercise their rights in the same way as other Australians.

The ILAP requires Indigenous legal assistance providers to work collaboratively with state and territory agencies and other legal assistance providers including legal aid commissions and community legal centres to enhance coordinated service delivery across the sector.

## **5. Existing catchments**

There are no standardised geographical boundaries used for service planning across the legal assistance sector, by the broader Justice sector or by other NSW Government agencies.

### Legal Aid NSW catchments

The CLSD Program, administered by Legal Aid NSW, comprises twelve justice partnerships in regional and remote NSW. Further information about the CLSD Program regions is attached at **Tab A**.

Legal Aid NSW also uses Law Society of NSW regions for the allocation of work to private panel practitioners.

### CLC catchments

In October 2017, the LJF was asked by CLCNSW to map the catchment regions of generalist CLCs in NSW based on directory data, to form part of a submission to the Cameron Review of CLC funding.

These catchments were included in the Evidence of Legal Need in NSW, to support the Cameron Review Implementation, published by the LJF in September 2018. Further detail about the CLC catchments is attached at **Tab B**.

### ALS catchments

In 2018, the ALS approached the LJF to explore options for:

- studying and mapping the geographic distribution of matters coming before the different types of courts across NSW
- analysing and reporting on how data might be used to assess demand for services and assist with service planning.

The LJF developed a tool to help the ALS plan to meet demand for their criminal law services. Further detail about the ALS catchments is attached at **Tab C**.

### Other government agency catchments

Boundaries used by the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Family and Community Services, Health NSW and NSW Education closely align. There are further similarities in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) that form the metropolitan and regional boundaries for each of those agencies.

The NSW Police Force, Courts and Tribunals NSW and Corrective Services NSW have not aligned their boundaries with the Department of Premier and Cabinet's boundaries, and have not aligned themselves to each other's boundaries.

## 6. Proposed new catchments

The NLA Working Group is exploring the development of new catchments that cover the entire state of NSW (the CLSD Program regions and CLC catchments do not apply state wide). This would allow for a consistent approach to be adopted by legal assistance service providers, and for any gaps and/or duplication in service delivery to be identified and addressed through the collaborative service planning process.

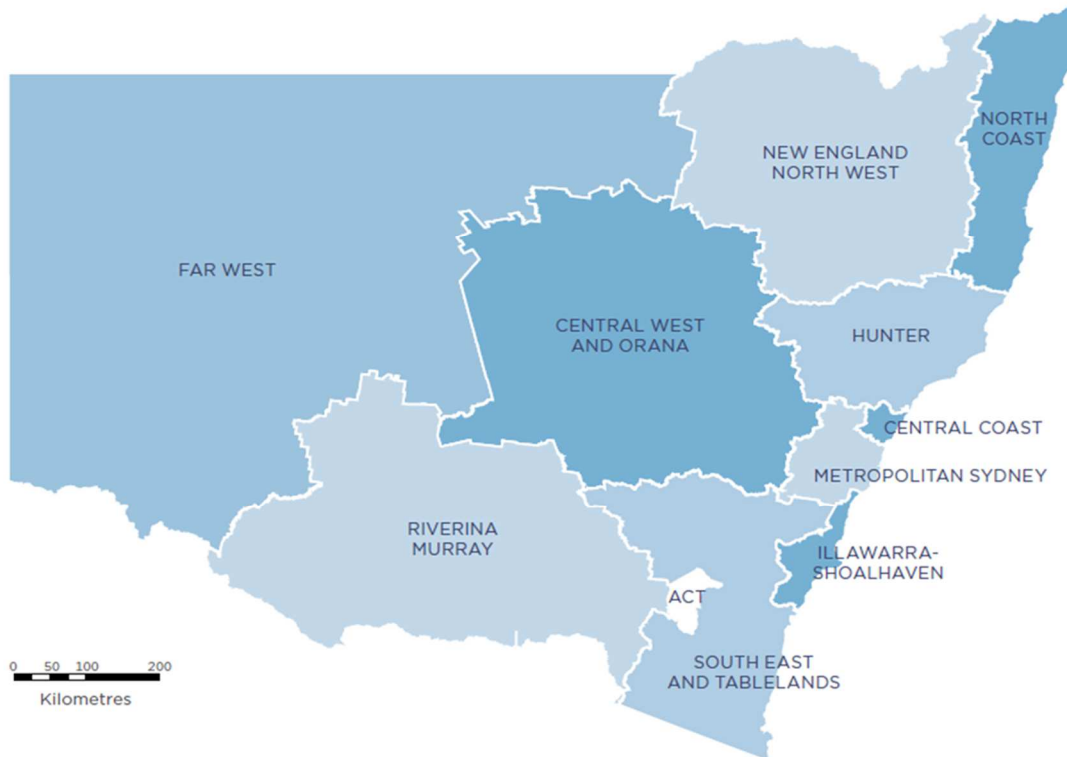
Ideally, the new catchment areas for collaborative service planning in NSW should:

- be based on logical communities
- align with existing government boundaries and ABS statistical areas
- include at least two service providers in each catchment area to allow for collaboration (this could include services provided via outreach services)
- incorporate existing CLSD partnerships within the catchment area boundaries
- include court circuits / courts serviced by the relevant offices in the catchment area, and
- recognise existing collaborations and outreach arrangements where possible

The collaborative service planning process will focus on better service planning and use data to inform appropriate allocation of resources. It is not intended to be directly linked with the allocation of financial resources within the legal assistance sector.

The NLA Working Group considered adopting the boundaries set by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) and more customised boundaries for metropolitan areas shown in the table and map below. However, we need to ensure that the catchments reflect the practical realities of regional service delivery, e.g. where a region is serviced by a large town that lies outside the catchment, should we adjust the boundary to include that town?

REGIONAL CATCHMENTS	METROPOLITAN CATCHMENTS
Central Coast	Sydney West
Central West & Orana	Sydney South West
Far West	Sydney Central
Hunter	
Illawarra & Shoalhaven	
New England & North West	
North Coast	
Riverina Murray	
South West & Tablelands	



We recognise that DPC regional catchments above represent very large regional areas. To address this issue, the following sub-catchments are proposed. These sub-catchments mean that the DPC regional catchments of Central West & Orana, Far West, North Coast and Hunter have altered to better align with functioning CLSD boundaries and court circuits.

REGIONAL CATCHMENTS	SUB-CATCHMENTS
<b>Central Coast</b>	None
<b>Central West &amp; Orana (Tablelands)</b>	<b>Central West</b> – Bourke, Cobar, Dubbo, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wellington
	<b>Central Tablelands</b> – Bathurst, Condobolin, Cowra, Forbes, Lake Cargelligo, Lithgow, Mudgee, Oberon, Orange, Parkes
<b>Far West</b>	<b>Broken Hill</b> – Ivanhoe, Menindee, Wilcannia
	<b>Wentworth</b> – Balranald, Euston, Hatfield
<b>Hunter</b>	<b>Upper Hunter</b> – Muswellbrook, Singleton, Upper Hunter
	<b>Lower Hunter</b> – Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Newcastle, Port Stephens
<b>Illawarra &amp; Shoalhaven</b>	<b>Illawarra</b> – Albion Park, Kiama, Port Kembla, Wollongong
	<b>Shoalhaven</b> – Milton, Nowra, Ulladulla

REGIONAL CATCHMENTS	SUB-CATCHMENTS
<b>New England &amp; North West</b>	<b>New England</b> – Armidale, Glen Innes, Gunnedah, Inverell, Murrumbidgee, Tamworth, Walcha
	<b>North West</b> – Boggabilla, Moree, Mungindi, Narrabri, Wyallda, Wee Waa
<b>North Coast</b>	<b>Northern Rivers</b> – Ballina, Byron Bay, Casino, Lismore, Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads
	<b>Mid North Coast</b> – Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Kempsey, MacLean
	<b>Lower North Coast</b> – Forster, Gloucester, Port Macquarie, Taree
<b>Riverina Murray</b>	<b>Wagga Wagga</b> – Griffith, Hay, Temora, Tumut, Young
	<b>Albury</b> – Deniliquin, Finley, Holbrook
<b>South West &amp; Tablelands</b>	<b>South Coast</b> – Batemans Bay, Bega, Bombala, Eden, Merimbula, Narooma
	<b>Southern Tablelands</b> – Braidwood, Cooma, Goulburn, Gundagai, Queanbeyan, Yass
METROPOLITAN CATCHMENTS	
<b>Sydney West</b>	
<b>Sydney South West</b>	
<b>Sydney Central</b>	

## 7. Map of proposed new catchments

The LJF has prepared maps of the DPC catchments which includes existing office locations and courts and the proposed sub-catchments within the larger regions. The maps are attached at **Tab D** (metropolitan) and **Tab E** (regional).

## 8. Interaction with all court circuits, legal service providers, CLSD program regions,

**Tab F** sets out which court circuit, CLSD program region and ALS, CLC, Legal Aid NSW and FVPLS offices are located within the proposed catchments and sub-catchments.

## 9. Further information

For further information please contact the Planning and Review Unit, Legal Aid NSW on 02 9134 9326 or [naomi.cheetham@legalaid.nsw.gov.au](mailto:naomi.cheetham@legalaid.nsw.gov.au).

### Questions for responses

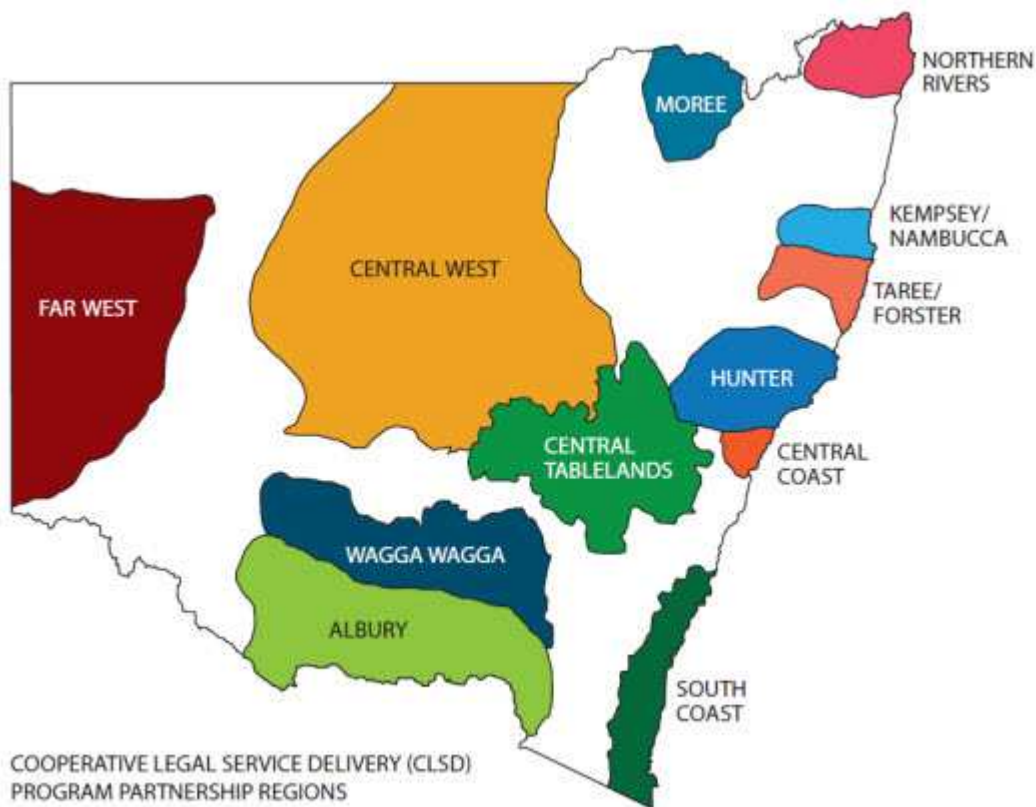
- Are these the right catchments and sub-catchments?
- Do they need to be adjusted for any reason?
- Are there any other issues we need to be aware of?

## Tab A – Cooperative Legal Service Delivery (CLSD) Program

The CLSD Program supports 12 regional justice partnerships in regional and remote NSW that address unmet legal need and work collaboratively to plan services and achieve better outcomes for vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

CLSD Program partnerships are located in the following regions:

- Moree
- Northern Rivers
- Kempsey/Nambucca
- Taree/Forster
- Hunter
- Central Coast
- South Coast
- Wagga Wagga
- Albury
- Central Tablelands
- Central West
- Far West



## Tab B – CLC catchments

In October 2017, the LJF was asked by CLCNSW to map the catchment regions of generalist CLCs in NSW based on directory data to form part of a submission to the NSW Department of Justice Cameron Review of CLCs.

Between October and December 2017, the LJF undertook a process of feeding the directory data into geographic information software to map the catchments. Feedback was provided to the LJF from CLCNSW as centres were consulted. The finalised maps were provided to CLCNSW and the NSW Department of Justice in December 2017.

In early August 2018, these catchment regions were once again circulated to CLCs by CLCNSW and feedback was provided to the LJF. No further changes were made to catchment regions after 10 August 2018. The catchments include:

- Central Coast
- Elizabeth Evatt
- Far West
- Hume Riverina
- Hunter
- Illawarra
- Inner City
- Kingsford
- Macarthur
- Marrickville
- Mid North Coast
- North and North West
- Northern Rivers
- Redfern
- Shoalcoast
- South West Sydney
- Western NSW

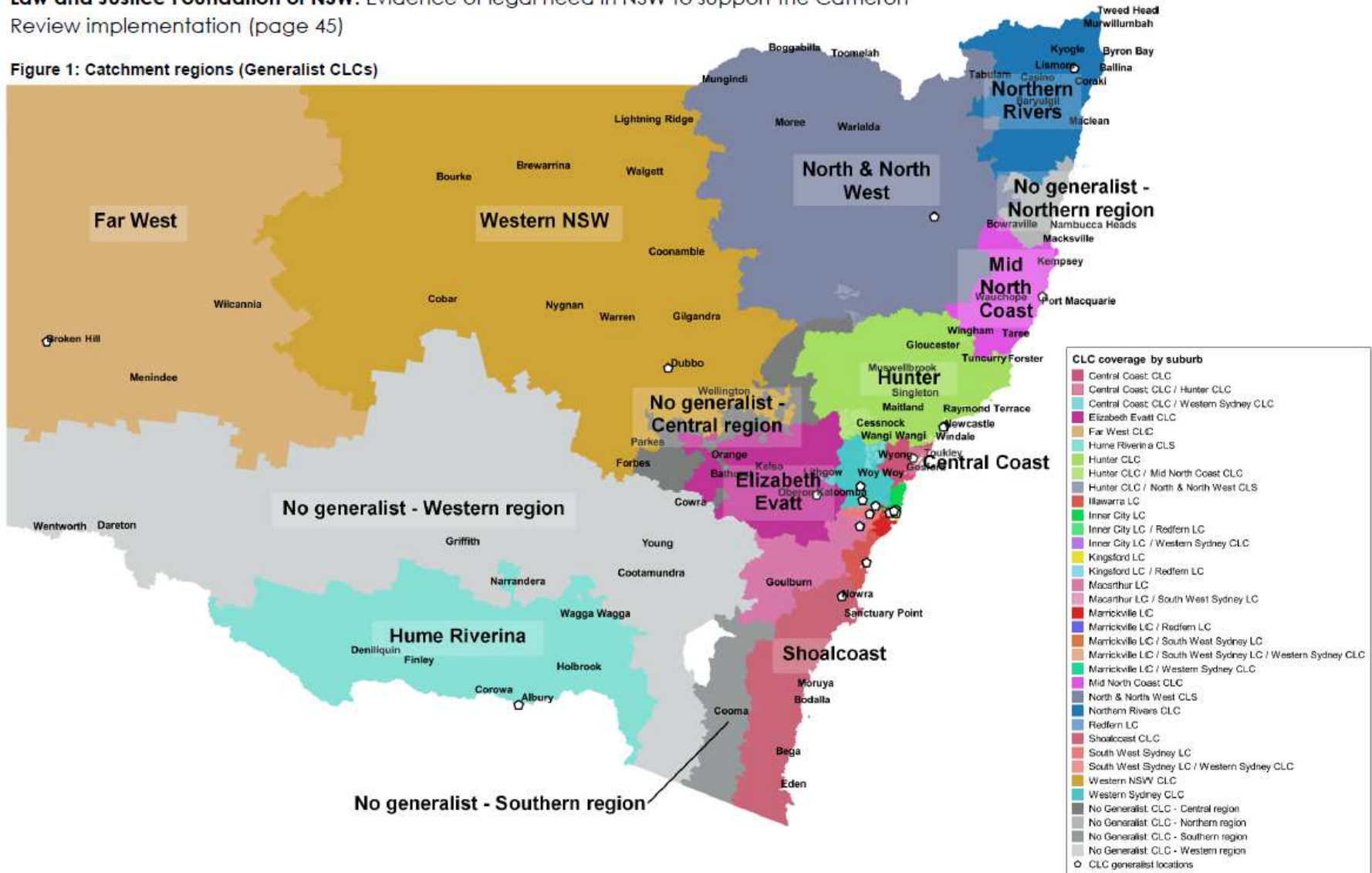
While the catchment regions are relevant for generalist CLCs providing ‘generalist’ legal assistance services within these catchments, specialist services are provided state wide in specific areas of law, or targeting specific priority groups, by specialist CLCs and a number of generalist CLCs.

The catchment regions are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics State Suburbs. Where suburbs were covered by more than one CLC, the data was split evenly to avoid double counting. These regions may not necessarily align precisely with the communication of individual CLC ‘catchments’ for local audiences but represent agreed catchment areas for the funding process. It is possible that future iterations of the funding process may use alternative geographic ‘catchments’, to better align with collaborative planning purposes. Thus, it is anticipated that future work will be required to refine regions and to continue to develop the evidence base.



**Law and Justice Foundation of NSW:** Evidence of legal need in NSW to support the Cameron Review implementation (page 45)

**Figure 1: Catchment regions (Generalist CLCs)**



LJF: Evidence of legal need in NSW (October 2018)

The table below sets out the CLCs based on suburb and categories - Specialist (S) and Generalist (G).

<b>Name of CLC</b>	<b>Suburb</b>	<b>S/G</b>
Animal Defenders Office	Civic (ACT)	S
Arts Law Centre of Australia	Woolloomooloo	S
Australian Centre for Disability Law	Advice Line	S
Australian Pro Bono Resource Centre	Kensington	S
Central Coast CLC	Wyong	G
Elizabeth Evatt CLC	Katoomba	G
Environmental Defenders Office NSW	Sydney	S
Far West CLC	Broken Hill	G
Financial Rights Legal Centre	Advice Line	S
HIV/AIDS Legal Centre	Surry Hills	S
Human Rights Law Centre	Sydney	S
Hume Riverina CLC	Wodonga (VIC)	G
Hunter CLC	Newcastle	G
Illawarra Legal Centre	Warrawong	G
Immigration Advice and Rights Centre	Sydney	S
Inner City Legal Centre	Kings Cross	G
Intellectual Disability Rights Service	Redfern	S
Justice Connect	Advice Line	S
Kingsford Legal Centre	Kensington	G
Macarthur Legal Centre	Campbelltown	G
Marrickville Legal Centre	Marrickville	G
Mid North Coast CLC	Port Macquarie	G
National Children's and Youth Law Centre	Kensington	S
North and North West CLC	Armidale	G
Northern Rivers CLC	Lismore	G
Public Interest Advocacy Centre	Sydney	S
Redfern Legal Centre	Redfern	G
Refugee Advice and Casework Service	Randwick	S
Senior Rights Service	Surry Hills	S
Shoalcoast CLC	Nowra	G
South West Sydney Legal Centre	Liverpool	G
Tenant's Union of NSW	Surry Hills	S
University of Newcastle Legal Centre	Newcastle	G
Welfare Rights Centre	Surry Hills	S
Western NSW CLC	Dubbo	G
Western Sydney CLC Parramatta	Parramatta	G
Western Sydney CLC Rooty Hill	Rooty Hill	G
Western Sydney CLC Windsor	Windsor	G
Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women and Children's Legal Centre	Marrickville	S
Women's Legal Service NSW	Advice Line	S

### Tab C – ALS catchments

The LJF has developed a new database for the ALS to assist with planning their criminal law practice services.

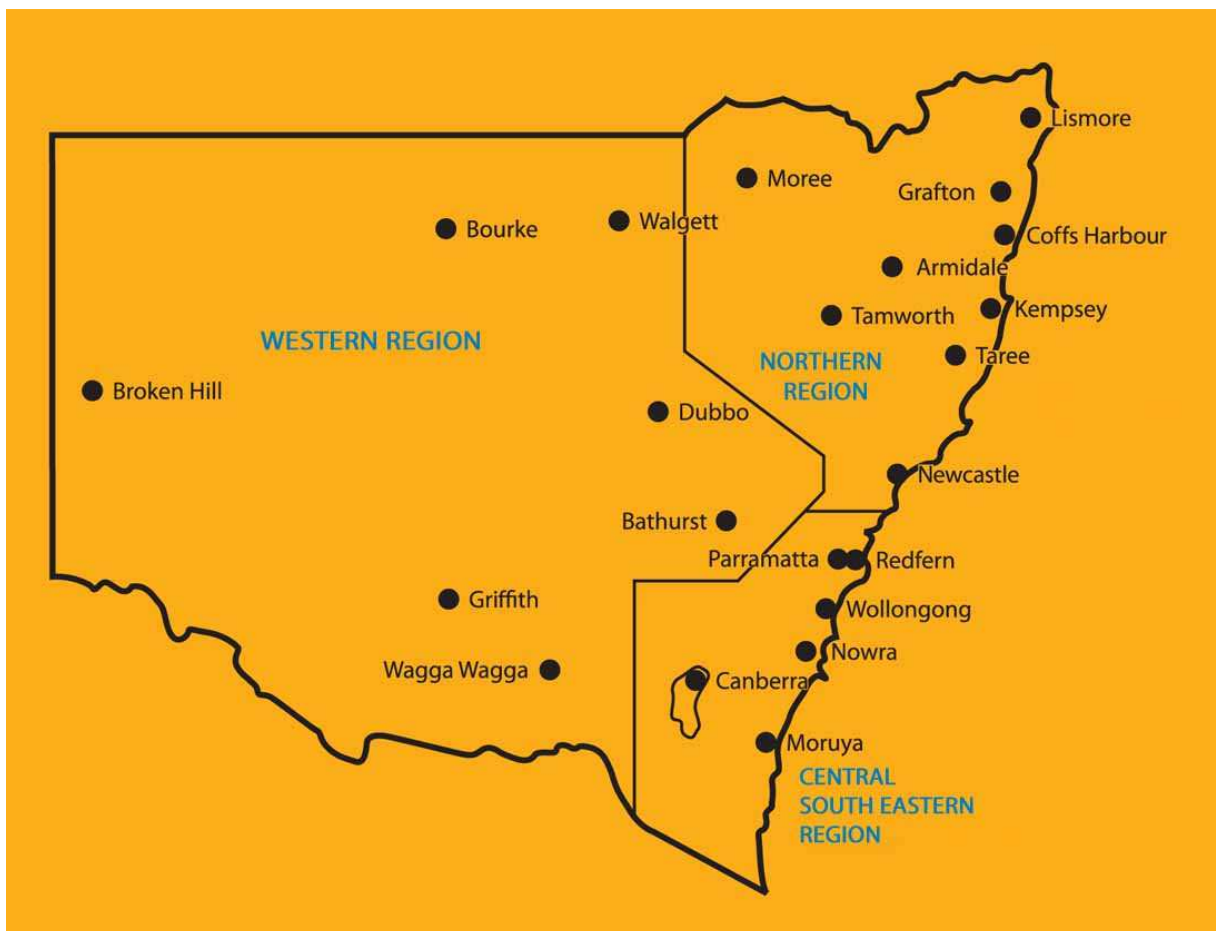
In 2018, the Aboriginal Legal Service (NSW/ACT) Ltd approached the Foundation to explore options for:

- studying and mapping the geographic distribution of matters coming before the different types of courts across NSW
- analysing and reporting on how data might be used to assess demand for services and assist with service planning.

The Foundation sourced Criminal Court statistics on finalised matters with Aboriginal defendants from BOCSAR to develop a proxy to indicate potential demand for ALS Criminal Law Practice services in NSW. The data was processed to create a database and generate maps.

The tool can be used to display the number of finalised matters (and changes across the five years) by court type (Local, District, Children's) and court location in NSW. You can also search by ALS Office, or by ALS Region or ALS cluster. The purpose of the tool is to help the ALS plan to meet demand for their Criminal Law Practice services.

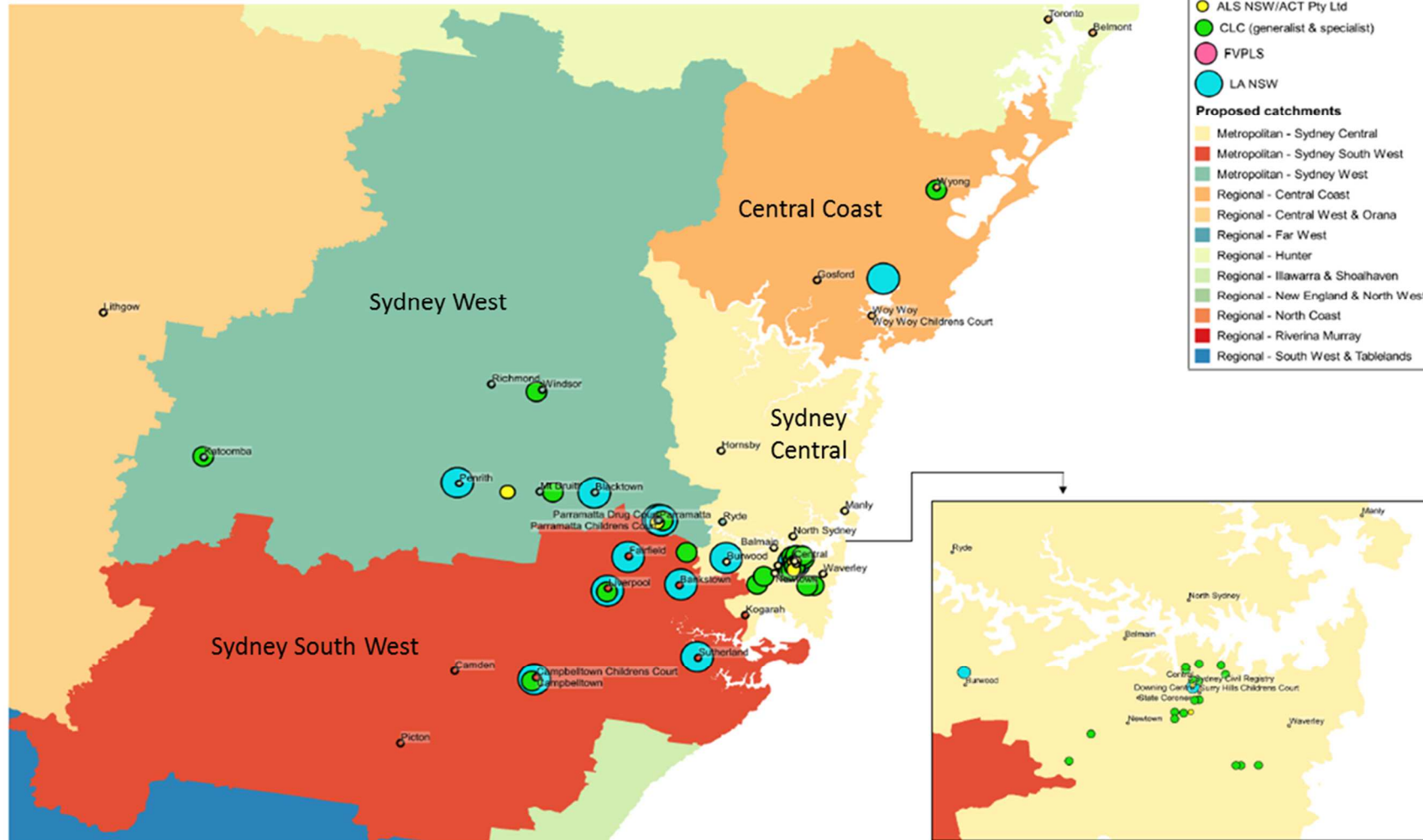
Data is available from Tableau Public. No software is required to access the Tableau dashboards.



## Tab D – Map of proposed metropolitan catchments

NLAF Collaborative Service Planning Working Group: Proposed catchments with agency and court locations

Map prepared for Legal Aid NSW by the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, December 2018

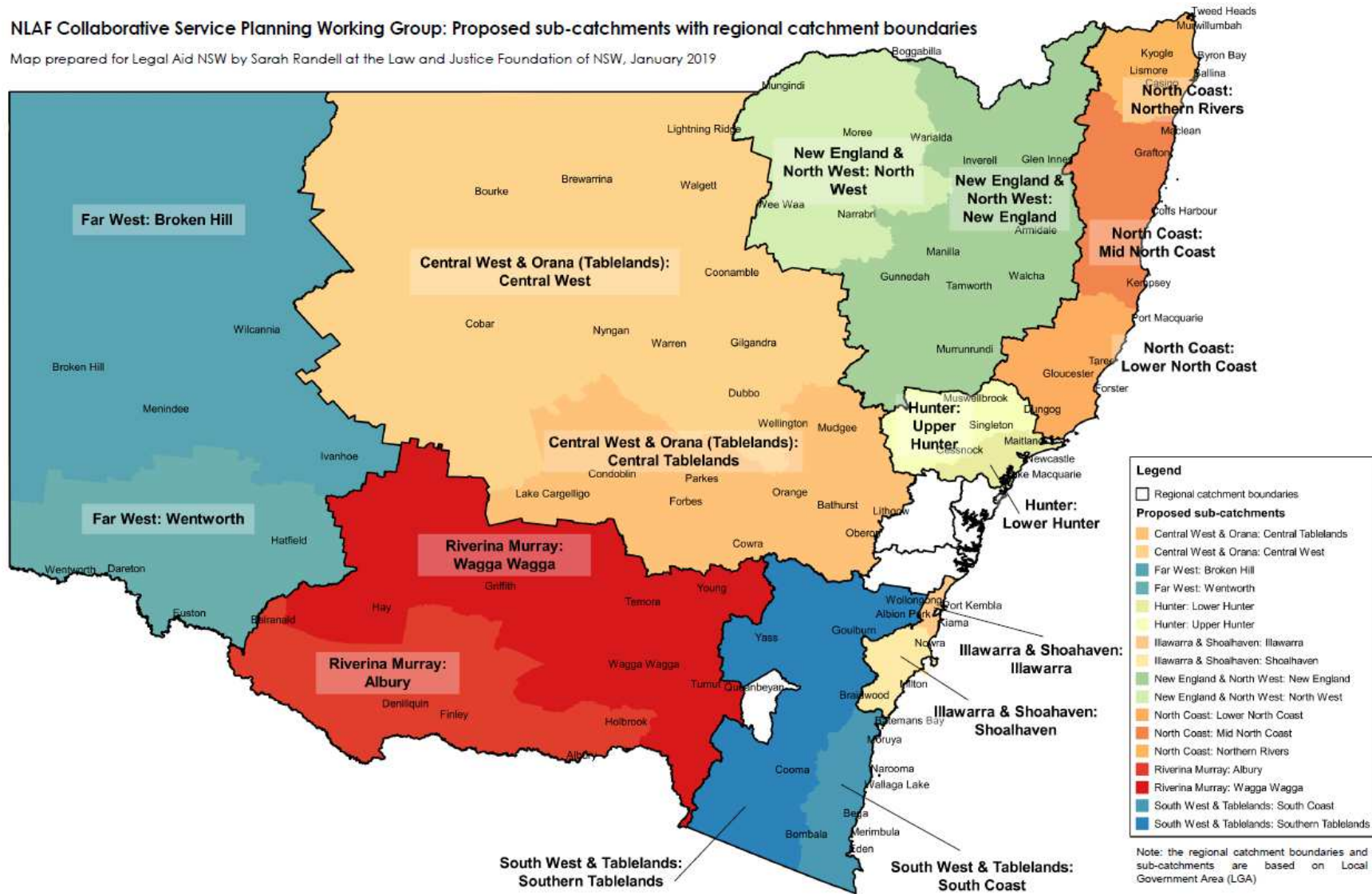




**Tab E – Map of proposed regional catchments and sub-catchments**

NLAF Collaborative Service Planning Working Group: Proposed sub-catchments with regional catchment boundaries

Map prepared for Legal Aid NSW by Sarah Randell at the Law and Justice Foundation of NSW, January 2019



**Tab F – Regional and metropolitan catchments, sub-catchments, court circuit, CLSD region, ALS, CLC, Legal Aid, FVPLS office locations**

**Pink** = belonging to another larger regional catchment area. **Yellow** = belonging to another sub-catchment within the same larger regional catchment

Regional Catchments	Sub-catchments	Relevant court circuit	CLSD Region	Relevant office			
				ALS	CLC	Legal Aid	FVPLS
<b>Central Coast</b>	None	Gosford Wyong	Central Coast		Wyong	Gosford	
<b>Central West &amp; Orana (Tablelands)</b>	<b>Central West</b> – Bourke, Cobar, Dubbo, Lightning Ridge, Walgett, Wellington	Bourke, Brewarrina Dubbo Bourke, Brewarrina, Cobar, Peak Hill, Gilgandra Dubbo, Walgett	Central West	Bourke, Dubbo, Walgett	Dubbo	Bourke, Dubbo, Walgett	
	<b>Central Tablelands</b> – Bathurst, Condobolin, Cowra, Forbes, Lake Cargelligo, Lithgow, Mudgee, Oberon, Orange, Parkes	Bathurst, Blayney, Lithgow, Oberon Rylstone Orange, Gulgong, <b>Dunedoo</b> , Mudgee Parkes, Forbes, Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo	Central Tablelands	Bathurst		Orange	Forbes
<b>Far West</b>	<b>Broken Hill</b> – Ivanhoe, Menindee, Wilcannia	Broken Hill, <b>Wentworth</b> , Wilcannia	Far West	Broken Hill	Broken Hill	Broken Hill	Broken Hill
	<b>Wentworth</b> – Balranald, Euston, Hatfield		Far West				
<b>Hunter</b>	<b>Upper Hunter</b> – Muswellbrook, Singleton, Upper Hunter	<b>Cessnock</b> , Singleton, Muswellbrook	Hunter				
	<b>Lower Hunter</b> – Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie,	Maitland Newcastle	Hunter	Newcastle	Newcastle (2)	Newcastle	

Regional Catchments	Sub-catchments	Relevant court circuit	CLSD Region	Relevant office			
				ALS	CLC	Legal Aid	FVPLS
	Maitland, Newcastle, Port Stephens	Raymond Terrace, Dungog, Gloucester (Lower North Coast) Toronto, Kurri Kurri					
Illawarra & Shoalhaven	<b>Illawarra</b> – Albion Park, Kiama, Port Kembla, Wollongong	Wollongong, Albion Park, Kiama, Port Kembla		Wollongong	Warrawong	Wollongong	
	<b>Shoalhaven</b> – Milton, Nowra, Ulladulla	Nowra, Milton	South Coast	Nowra	Nowra	Nowra	
New England & North West	<b>New England</b> – Armidale, Glen Innes, Gunnedah, Inverell, Murrurundi, Tamworth, Walcha	Armidale, Glen Innes, Tenterfield, Walcha Gunnedah, Coonabarabran, Coonamble (Central West), Narrabri, Tamworth, Wee Waa Tamworth, Murrurundi, Scone, Quirindi		Armidale Tamworth	Armidale	Tamworth	
	<b>North West</b> – Boggabilla, Moree, Mungindi, Narrabri, Warialda, Wee Waa	Moree, Inverell, Boggabilla, Mungindi, Warialda	Moree	Moree			Moree
North Coast	<b>Northern Rivers</b> – Ballina, Byron Bay, Casino, Lismore, Murwillumbah, Tweed Heads	Ballina, Grafton, Maclean Lismore, Casino, Kyogle Tweed Heads, Byron Bay	Northern Rivers	Lismore	Lismore	Lismore	
	<b>Mid North Coast</b> – Coffs Harbour, Grafton, Kempsey, Maclean	Coffs Harbour, Macksville, Bellingen Kempsey, Bellingen, Macksville	Kempsey / Nambucca	Grafton Kempsey		Coffs Harbour	Kempsey

Regional Catchments	Sub-catchments	Relevant court circuit	CLSD Region	Relevant office			
				ALS	CLC	Legal Aid	FVPLS
	<b>Lower North Coast</b> – Forster, Gloucester, Port Macquarie, Taree	Port Macquarie, <b>Kempsey</b> , Wauchope Taree, Forster	Taree / Forster		Port Macquarie	Port Macquarie	
<b>Riverina Murray</b>	<b>Wagga Wagga</b> – Griffith, Hay, Temora, Tumut, Young	Cootamundra, <b>Cowra (Central Tablelands)</b> , <b>Grenfell (Central Tablelands)</b> , Temora, Tumut, West Wyalong, Young Griffith, <b>Deniliquin</b> , Hay, Hillston, Leeton, <b>Moama</b> Wagga Wagga, Narrandera, Junee	Wagga Wagga	Griffith Wagga Wagga		Riverina Murray (Wagga Wagga)	
	<b>Albury</b> – Deniliquin, Finley, Holbrook	Albury, Corowa, Holbrook, Finley, <b>Tumbarumba</b> (Southern Tablelands)	Albury		Wodonga (Vic)	Riverina Murray (Albury)	
<b>South West &amp; Tablelands</b>	<b>South Coast</b> – Batemans Bay, Bega, Bombala, Eden, Merimbula, Narooma	Batemans Bay, Bega, Bombala, Eden, Moruya, Narooma	South Coast	Moruya			
	<b>Southern Tablelands</b> – Braidwood, Cooma, Goulburn, Gundagai, Queanbeyan, Yass,	Goulburn, Crookwell, Gundagai, Yass Queanbeyan, Cooma	South Coast		Civic (ACT)		



Metropolitan Catchments	Relevant court	CLSD Region	Relevant office			
			ALS	CLC	Legal Aid	FVPLS
<b>Sydney West</b>	Blacktown, Katoomba, Windsor, Mount Druitt, Parramatta, Penrith		Parramatta, St Mary's	Katoomba, Parramatta, Rooty Hill, Windsor	Parramatta, Blacktown, Penrith	N/A
<b>Sydney South West</b>	Bankstown, Campbelltown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Moss Vale, Camden, Picton, Sutherland		N/A	Campbelltown, Liverpool	Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Campbelltown, Sutherland	N/A
<b>Sydney Central</b>	Burwood, Central, Downing Centre, Hornsby, Manly, Newtown, Waverley		Central Sydney, Redfern	Kings Cross, Kensington, Marrickville, Redfern, Woolloomooloo, Kensington (2), Randwick Sydney (4), Surry Hills (4), Redfern, Marrickville, Telephone Advice Line (4)	Central Sydney, Burwood	N/A