



Annual Report 2005/2006



**Disability
Advocacy &
Complaints
Service of
South
Australia**



**DISABILITY ADVOCACY & COMPLAINTS SERVICE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.
ANNUAL REPORT 2005-06**

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Vision

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. wants to be recognised by people with disabilities and the wider community for excellence in advocacy service provision and as a provider of opportunities for people with disabilities.

Mission

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. is a community service, which is driven and informed by people with disabilities, their families and friends. It is our mission to enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities, to advocate for the removal of barriers to full participation and to pro-actively eradicate the social exclusion many still face.

How to contact the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.

Adelaide Office
Unit 3, 178 Henley Beach Rd
Torrensville SA 5031

Telephone: 8234 5699
TTY: 8234 2229
Fax: 8234 6044
Email: drigney@dacssa.org.au

Whyalla Office
28 Head St
Whyalla Stuart SA 5600

Telephone: 8649 3666
Fax: 8649 3233
Email: mschusterwcs@telsta.com

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.

Management Committee (2005-06)

Chairperson	Hon. Robert Gregory
Deputy Chairperson	Mr. Peter Arborn
Secretary	Ms. Heather Southcott
Treasurer	Mr. Robert Tinker,
Committee Members	Ms. Ali Cupper (resigned in November 2005)
	Mr. Ian Cummins
	Mr. Aaron Inglis
	Ms. Lorna Roberts
	Mr. David Rankin (Staff Representative)
	Mr. David Rigney (Chief Executive Officer)

Public Officer

Mr. Robert Gregory

Staff (2005-06)

Chief Executive Officer:	Mr. David Rigney
Administration & Information Officer:	Ms. Leonie Crase
Senior Advocates:	Mr. Mark Schuster (Manager Whyalla Office) Ms. Monika Baker Ms. Helen Finch Ms. Thea Jewels
Advocates:	Ms. Leatha Henry Mr. David Rankin Ms. Eloise Taylor
Maintenance:	Mr. John Bradley

Management Report

The Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. continues to provide an individual disability advocacy service which is based on enabling people with disabilities to access their human, civil and legal rights and to address grievances and complaints about access to services and service delivery.

During the 2005-06 financial year our advocates worked on 478 issues. The main issues addressed included legal issues such as discrimination in employment and education, detention and community treatment orders, administration and guardianship orders; access to services and personal care, and access to the built environment, transport and accommodation.

Our clients have indicated a high level of satisfaction with our services in our feedback sheets. We have received no serious complaints about our performance, which is an excellent outcome in a very busy year.

This year Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. continued to attend the Disability Advocacy Network, which is an alliance of disability advocacy services in South Australia. The network meets bi-monthly and shares information as well as trends emerging in individual advocacy programs.

Throughout this year the network has faced serious challenges. Disability Action Inc. was de-funded. In December a National Disability Advocacy Program review was announced by our funding body, the Department for Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

As from June 2006 all National Disability Advocacy agencies were notified that they will have funding until 31 December 2006. Ongoing funding will be subject to the Minister adopting set recommendations from the review consultants.

The network has worked together on finding some solutions to respond to a possible tendering process and changes in the guidelines of the funding agreement.

The Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. has taken several steps in the past year to review and improve our performance in relation to the National Disability Services Standards. We have adapted these standards and developed Key Performance Outcomes to the delivery of advocacy services.

Organisational Changes

This year has seen some significant changes, increased staffing levels, a new interior, a new database and client management system, and the presence of two groups, which our organisation is sponsoring and supporting.

We reviewed all our policies and created three manuals, one for employees, one for volunteers, and one for the Management Committee. These manuals contain all procedures, policies and documents, which should be available to all staff members, volunteers and the members of the Management Committee.

The South Australian Council on Intellectual Disability (SACID) re-started its activities in our offices after several years of being hosted by the Intellectual Disability Services Council. We have supported SACID throughout the year.

In June 2005 and December 2005 we applied for six grants from the Community Benefit Scheme SA. Lady Luck struck in form of the Minister for Disability Services, the Honourable Jay Weatherill. The Minister asked for all applications from the Community Benefit Grant SA, which came from disability organisations, and he funded them all. Thank you, Minister!

The grants were dedicated to the

- development of our library and the purchase of new literature;
- development and purchase of a database and client management system;
- development of an accessible website;
- purchase of outdoor equipment and promotional equipment to promote the agency and assist fundraising efforts of volunteers;
- purchase of a laptop and projector for training and community education;
- purchase of software to enable people with intellectual and learning disabilities to communicate electronically.

In August 2005 we started hosting the **OUR VOICE SA** Committee, a self advocacy group for people with intellectual and learning disabilities. We received funding to employ Monika Baker as the OUR VOICE SA Project Coordinator for one day per week and extra funding to cover the expenses of meetings.

The OUR VOICE SA Committee received a grant from the Department of Premier and Cabinet in January 2006 to design and deliver a training program for consumer reps and for peer mentors with intellectual and learning disabilities. Both training courses will be available as downloads on the OUR VOICE SA website, which is hosted by the Enable Net of the Disability Information and Resource Centre.

In October 2005 the OUR VOICE SA Committee travelled to New Zealand with seven members. For many members it was their first overseas trip and flight. Raising the money and developing and filming a second video were huge achievements for the group. In New Zealand at the Annual Conference of the Australasian Society for the Study of Intellectual Disability, OUR VOICE SA delivered a workshop and showed their video.

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The new database was installed at the beginning of July 2005, just in time to be able to report within the time frame set by FACSIA. The database had a few glitches which were resolved by March 2006. The glitches did not prevent us from collecting reliable data about our activities.

Our new website was up and running in October 2005 and **our library** will be launched in November 2006.

The OUR VOICE SA Committee has been out sausage sizzling with our **new marquee and trailer**, and we attended several expos with our **new expo wall and banner**.

In March 2006 we received **one off funding** to address the needs of people with disabilities who were left stranded as a result of the closure of Disability Action Inc.

This led to full time employment of Monika and part time employment of existing volunteers, Leatha, and Eloise.

We were well prepared to house our new advocates, before Christmas we divided our board room and created another office. Over Christmas we painted our office and welcomed the New Year with a fresh face.

The **new signage** in the front and back window completed the renewal of our office.

Future Development at Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. is currently developing and negotiating Memoranda of Understanding with the Office of the Public Advocate, Disability Services SA, Mental Health Services, Indigenous Disability Services Network, and the Guardianship Board. We want to ensure good cooperation between our agencies and the above mentioned organisations for the benefit of our clients.

We are planning to extend our outreach services, and are planning to develop partnerships in Mount Barker, Murray Bridge and Mount Gambier. An extension of Whyalla's services to the Eyre Peninsula and Aboriginal communities in Ceduna is being developed by the Whyalla Office.

The closure of Disability Action Inc. has meant that South Australia does no longer have a systemic advocacy program. We are prepared and willing to deliver a systemic advocacy program. We are actively campaigning for the return of a systemic advocacy program. We hope that as a result of the current review the systemic advocacy program will return to South Australia.

We are also campaigning for an additional 0.8 FTE mental health advocate. The need for mental health advocacy is great. Whenever patients of the psychiatric wards can get hold of us while we are visiting our clients they ask for our assistance. A mental health advocate

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could move around to the mental health facilities on a regular basis and assist patients to access their rights.

Finally, our biggest fight will be to keep our doors open. Our service agreement only runs to the 31st of December 2006. If we are not informed by the 1st of October 2006 whether we are continue to receive funding beyond the 31st of December, we will begin the process of closing down. We certainly hope that this will not be the case.

Advocacy Services

Mental Health Advocacy

This financial year has seen an increase in mental health advocacy. Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. advocates have represented clients predominately in the Guardianship Board but have also liaised and advocated on behalf of mental health clients in areas of accommodation, hospitals, lawyers and employment.

Lack of resources is a major issue, hopefully the Federal and State Governments place the promised millions of dollars for mental health services into the correct areas of service delivery.

Attitudinal problems are also apparent in some areas of service delivery, unless this is addressed it is unlikely that significant improvement in the system will occur.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. is also concerned at the increasing role the South Australian Police and South Australian Ambulance Service are being required to play within the mental health system. SAPOL officers are not adequately trained to deal with many of the issues they are currently being required to handle. Conversations between senior SAPOL officers and Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. staff indicate a growing disenchantment with the way the Government is handling the State's mental health crisis.

Similarly, the South Australian judicial system is also at breaking point as a result of the crisis in Mental Health Services in this State, as can be seen from the overload at James Nash House, and the comments coming from Correctional Services about the high incidence of mental health problems in prisons.

The appointment of the new Minister for Mental Health, Ms Gail Gago, who is assisting the Minister for Health, is welcome, as is the extra funding of 2.5 Million for community based support services for people with psychiatric disabilities.

We need to see more action on the front lines, though. A few trials will not address the immense needs, and the growing discomfort in the community about the treatment of people with psychiatric disabilities.

South Australia's record on mental health is particularly poor. There is no time for complacency, **the reform of the mental health system in South Australia is long overdue.**

Unmet Need

In some form or other Unmet Need affects most people with disabilities. Over the last ten years there has been a change in Government policy here in South Australia. Governments in this State decided to close institutions and encourage people with disabilities to be more active in the community.

The disparity between the funding levels for Options Co-ordination and the cost of providing services to the growing number of people seeking help and support is getting wider. As a consequence, Unmet Need is growing.

The exact extent of Unmet Need relating to Options Co-ordination and the State's equipment program is a sensitive issue for the State Government. The State Government through the Minister for Disability, Jay Weatherill, has injected extra funding into the disability sector during this financial year. But there still remains considerable unmet need in the community as a whole. This funding gap equates to severe short falls and protracted waiting periods for people with disabilities to access services.

Fixing unmet need is all about priorities, but is it important enough?

It obviously is if you can't go to the toilet, can't eat or have a shower.

It's important enough if your wheelchair keeps breaking down and you can't get another one for eighteen months or your bum is always sore because you can't get a new cushion.

It's important if you are a parent and you are faced with the prospect of seeing your child institutionalised. Or if your child's future means living in a metal cage because that is the only way you can keep her safe from herself.

It's certainly important enough if you have to rely on your young child to provide your personal care! Although the exact number is not known, there are a significant number of children between the ages of six and fifteen who are the principal carers for their parents. Surely it doesn't take too much imagination to think through the implications for both parent and child when a young boy is providing personal care for his mother!

Unmet Need is a major problem and it is only going to get worse unless something is done about it. The current Government did not create the problem they have inherited it from previous Liberal and Labor Governments. The Government does, however, deserve to be judged on its performance. And to date, despite some increases and some re-announced funding, the unmet need in the day care sector for school leavers may have been addressed, but people with disabilities still only get a shower once a week.

Walk a Mile in My Shoes Campaign – Compass SA Incorporated and Dignity for Disabled

A major political campaign was conducted by Compass SA Inc and Dignity for Disabled which ran throughout this financial year. This campaign focused on unmet need in the disability community.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. and Parent Advocacy Incorporated fully supported this campaign and participated in the organisation of events and forums. Attendance at all events was high, which demonstrated and highlighted the extent of concern for unmet need in the community.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. believes that this campaign forced all political parties to review and add to their policies on disability. Extra funding will flow directly into the disability sector because of the successful campaign of Compass SA Inc. Dignity for the Disabled and supporting groups.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. wishes Compass SA Inc. all the best for their ongoing activities in the future.

Representing People with Disabilities

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.'s staff members and volunteers have represented people with disabilities on peak bodies and Government Committees, such as:

- Premier and Cabinet Social Inclusion Initiative - Consumers and Advocates Panel Mental Health
- Ministerial Disability Advisory Council of South Australia
- Health Consumer Alliance, Board of Management
- South Australian Council of Intellectual Disabilities
- Disability Advocacy Network of South Australia

While these are usually activities associated with systemic advocacy and we do not use staff time to attend these meetings, we are using every opportunity which presents itself to ensure that the voices of people with disabilities are heard.

The demand for our presence on several other committees and requests to submit submissions to Government led inquiries has markedly increased since Disability Action closed its doors. This increased demand will not subside, yet we will not be able to respond to all requests unless we can provide a systemic advocacy program.

Requests for Information and Training

As requests for our contributions to ongoing working committees and representation on peak bodies grows, so have requests for training and community education sessions.

This financial year we have delivered information sessions and training to MINDA employees involved in a Certificate course, and the Uniting Care Wesley Mental Health Team in Salisbury.

The OUR VOICE SA Committee delivered four information sessions with our support. They met with the managers of Options Coordination, the CARA Consumer Rep Committee, the Lyons Club and delivered a workshop at the Australasian Society of the Study of Intellectual Disability in Auckland New Zealand.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. participated in three Disability Services Expos, one in October at Port Adelaide, one in April in Murray Bridge and the third one in May at the Julia Farr Centre.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.'s Rural Outreach Whyalla Office **Report from Mark Schuster, Manager**

This reporting period has without a doubt been the busiest on record for the Whyalla individual advocacy program. As our statistics show we have had a sharp increase in both inquiries and intakes in this period.

Of worth noting is that we have had a remarkably high number of enquiries being converted into cases during this period.

The nature of complaints has remained relatively constant with most complaints directed towards service providers regarding unmet need and lack of resources. Following this are complaints of discrimination against services and businesses.

The most significant activity (besides casework) to have occurred during this reporting period is the involvement of three social work students from the University of South Australia in the disability advocacy program.

The students have each completed their third year Bachelor of Social Work requirements of a 500 hour supervised placement at Whyalla's Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. office, during which time they have taken on some casework responsibilities for some of the less complex issues of the individual advocacy program.

The involvement of local students in the program not only provides those students with a valuable insight into the process of advocacy, but also improves networking within the professional community at a local and regional level.

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Furthermore the involvement of students has allowed the individual advocacy program to carry a slightly higher caseload during this period.

With the end of this financial year it is with enthusiasm that I am able to reflect upon the past 12 months and report on what has been an outstanding year.

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.'s program has become a valuable resource for the communities of Whyalla and the Eyre Peninsula. The partnership between Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. and the Whyalla Counselling Service continues to shine as an example of innovative thinking in high quality service delivery and best practise outreach in rural and remote locations.

With this in mind I would like to extend my congratulations to the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. staff, particularly David Rigney, and the Board of Management for their success over the past 12 months.

Overview of Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. Individual Advocacy Services

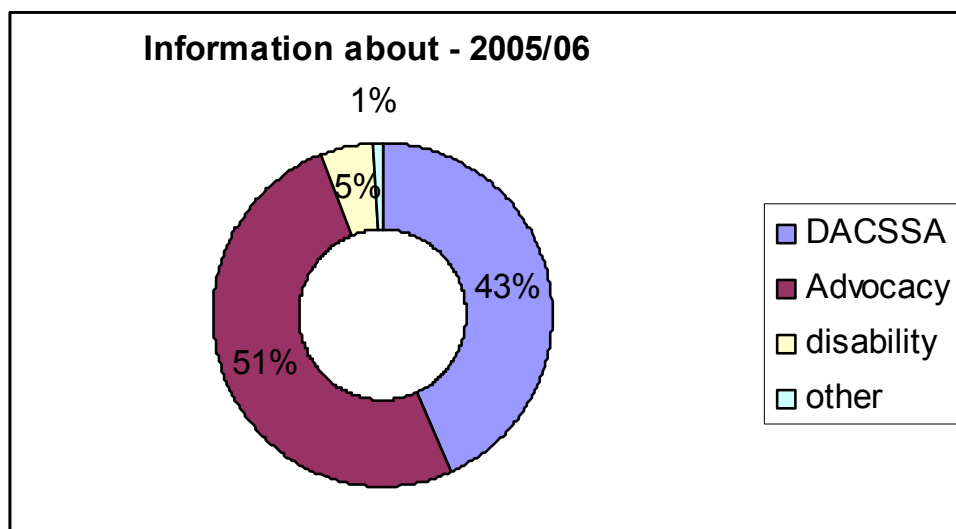
Facts and Figures 2005/2006

Inquiries

In the year 2005/05 our staff members in Adelaide and Whyalla handled 701 inquiries for assistance of which 478 required advocacy services.

- Inquiries fall principally into four categories, these are inquiries about:
- Our agency and services;
- Advocacy issues, including those inquiries, which become intakes;
- Issues arising from living with a disability, which often lead to a referral to another service, and
- Other issues.

Figure 1 gives the number of inquiries that fall into the four categories for the Adelaide and Whyalla Office in 2005/06.



Previously Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. collected this information in a different format. There were also four categories, these were

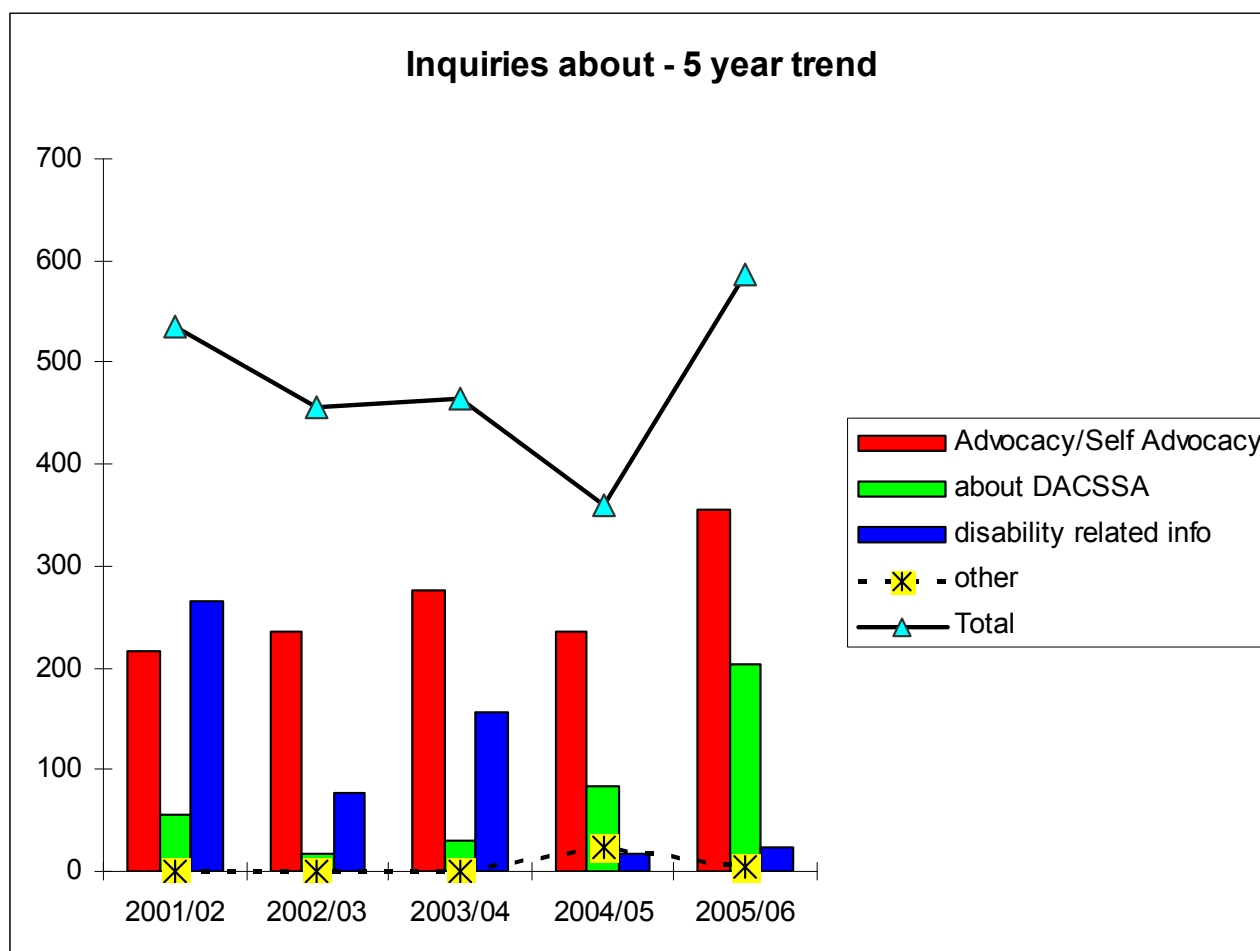
- inquiries about problems, which are more appropriately or efficiently handled by another agency – for example legal issues or matters relating to consumer affairs, (we counted these under **Disability related** inquiries in our 5 year trend overview)
- issues, clients wish to handle themselves but are seeking advice on the best way to move forward, (these were counted under **advocacy** in the 5 year trend table)
- issues, which after discussion with a staff member do not amount to an actionable complaint, (we converted these under the category of **DACSSA**)

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- issues, which require advocacy intervention (these were counted under **advocacy**).

While this transfer of data may not accurately reflect the spirit of the previous categories, the reader can read the previous category above instead of the new ones for the first three years reflected in the five year trend overview.

Figure 2: 5 Year Trend – What the inquiries were about

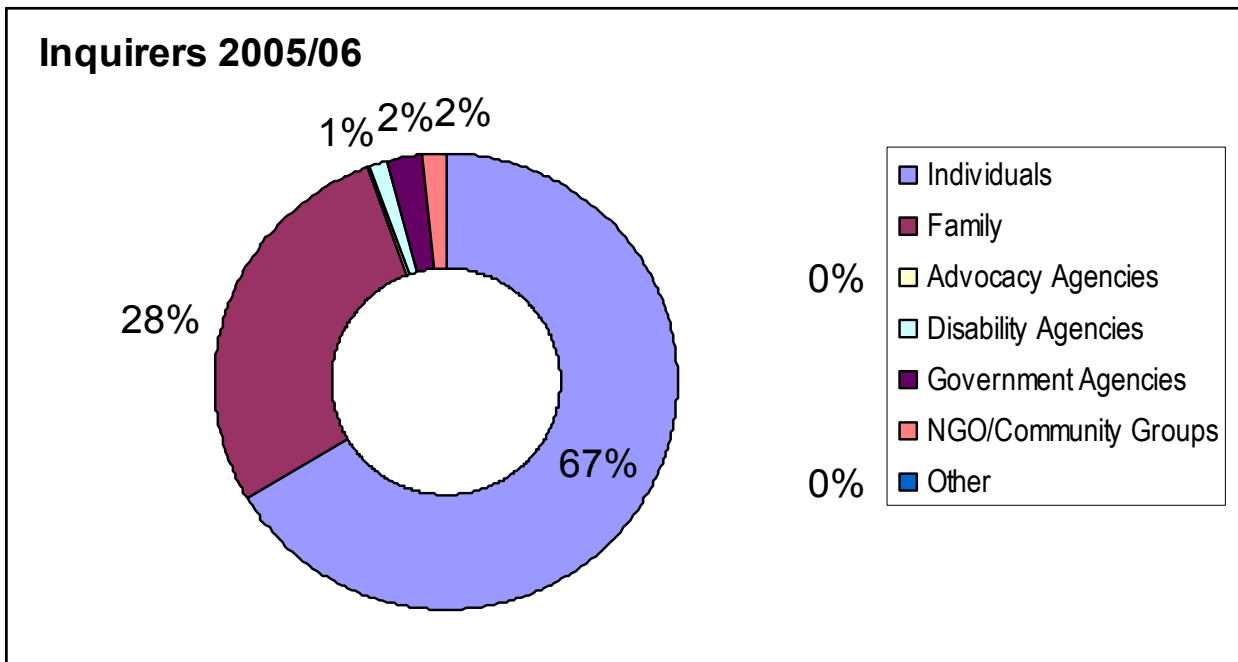


Most of the inquirers were people with disabilities, or their family members or friends. This year we had a marked increase in inquiries from organisations and service providers, as well as from the Guardianship Board, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (the National Abuse Hotline), and from other disability services.

We received several requests to promote our service at disability expos and attended groups and staff development sessions of other organisations. These are categorised as inquiries about our organisation.

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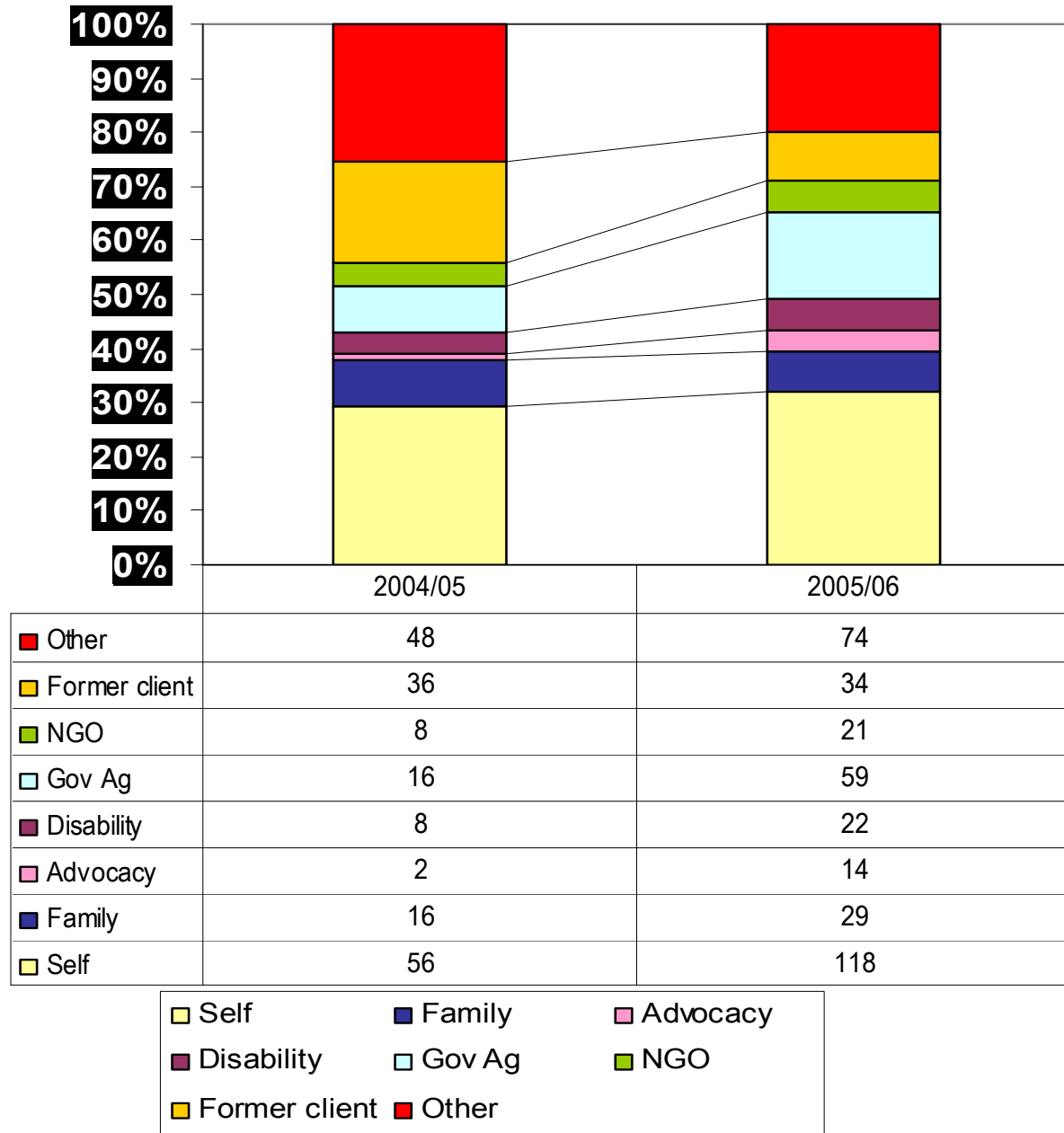
Figure 3 provides an overview over who the inquirers are in 2005/06



The next figure provides an overview over who referred inquirers to us. There is marked increase in referrals from government agencies and a decrease in approaches from former clients. However, this figure does not include our intakes, as the previous figure did. This is one of the fine tuning still to be done to our database. Next year our entries to the intake data base will collect the missing data.

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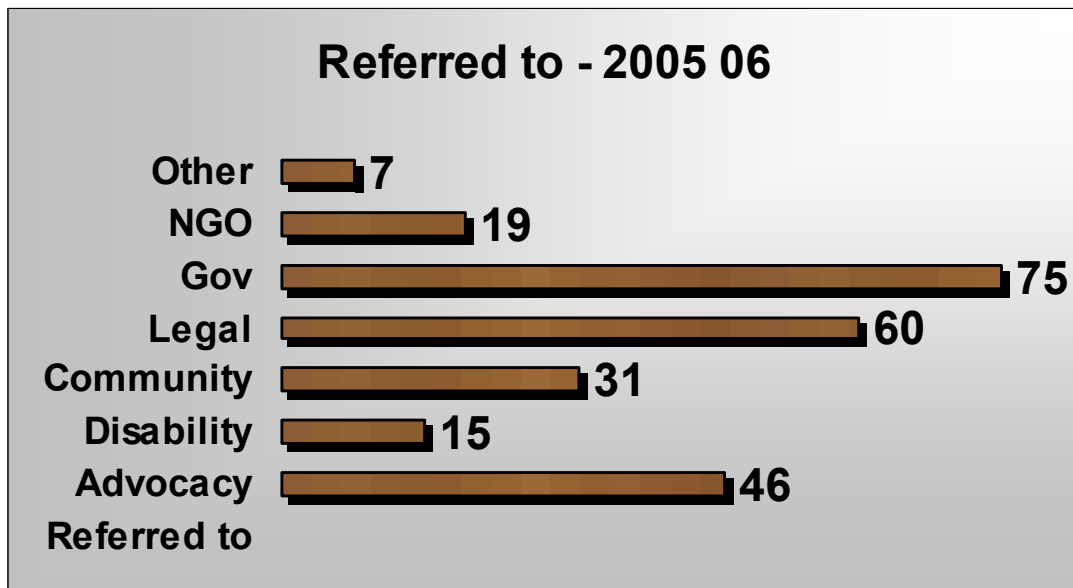
Figure 4: Comparison between 2004/05 and 2005/06 of who referred inquirers to our agency



The category 'Other' included in 2005/06 inquirers who responded to our advertisements throughout April and May (8), inquired as a result of Disability Action's closure (4), were referred to us by their TAFE or university lecturers (8), by lawyers (3), and other responses such as: 'cannot remember where I saw information about you' and 'I met someone at an expo, but cannot remember when and who it was.'

Our staff members referred many of the inquirers to other agencies. The next figure shows where we referred inquirers to.

Figure 6: Referrals to other agencies 2005/06 in numbers



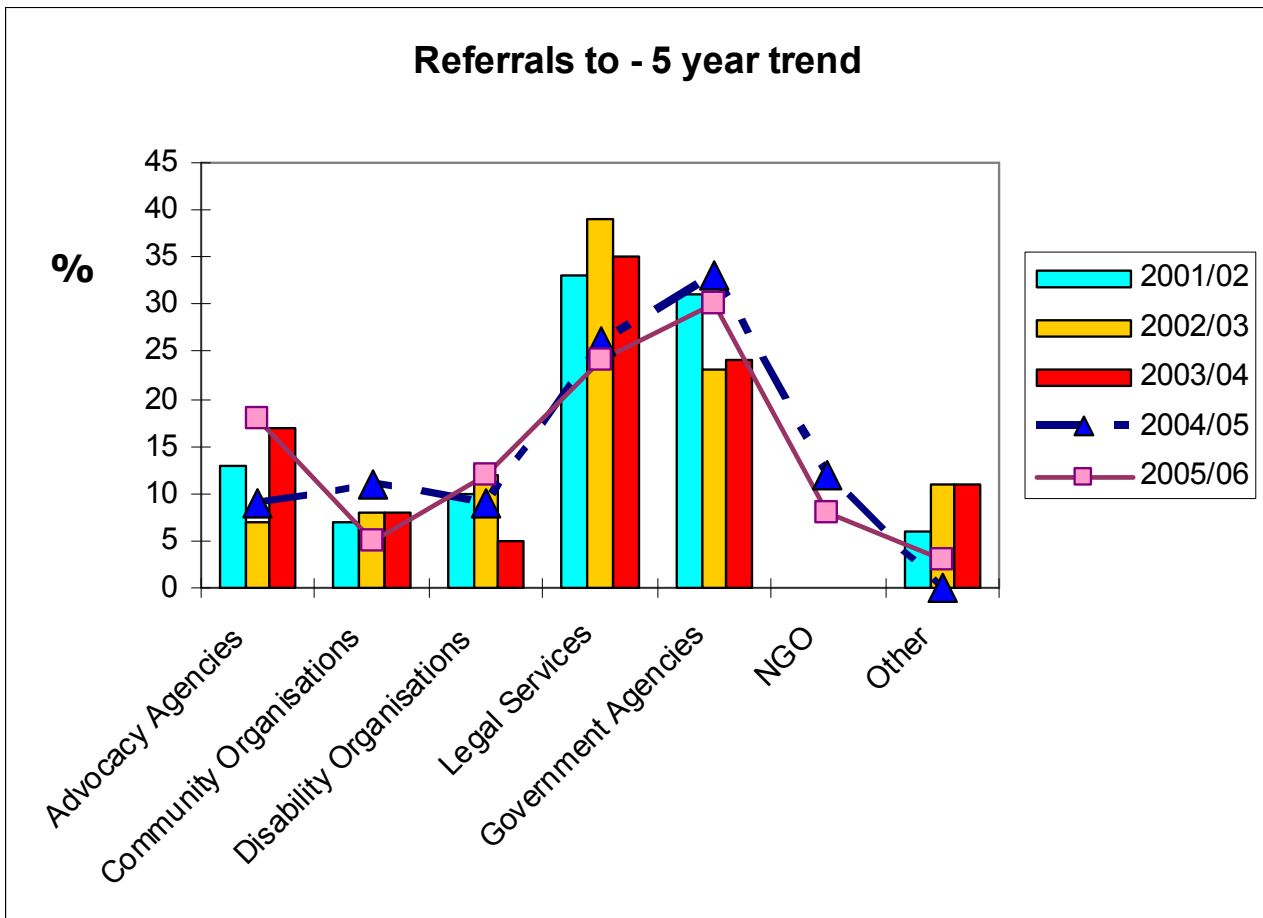
The five year trend of referrals to our agency indicates a lower referral rate to legal services. This can be explained by looking at the increase of legal issues we dealt with in our agency. Our skill level is currently enabling us to advocate on behalf of and with our clients in matters related to the Guardianship Board, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Youth Court, the Independent Gaming Commission, and the Residential Tenancy Tribunal.

However, wherever a client needs legal advice we refer them to a Community Legal Service, the Disability Discrimination Legal Centre, or individual lawyers.

Figure 7 provides an overview over the five year trend of referrals at the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia.

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Figure 7: 5 Year Trend – Advocates referred inquirers to (in percentages):



Advocacy Services - Intakes

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of SA advocates have worked on 478 issues over the past twelve months. There were 214 continuing issues open at the beginning of the business year.

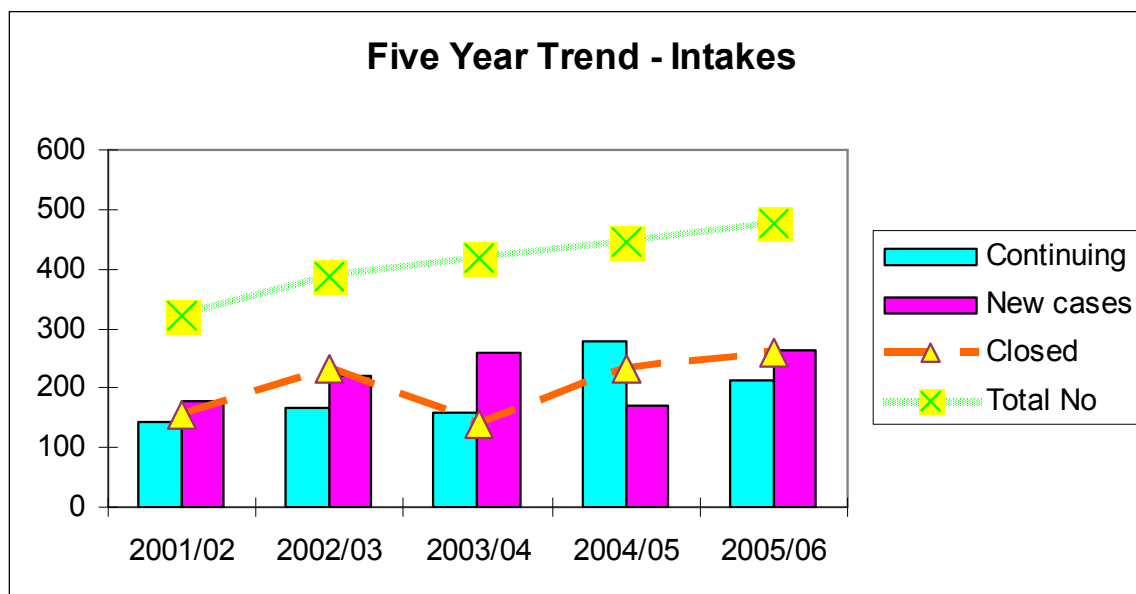
In 2005/06 Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. received 264 inquiries which were taken on as advocacy issues. This is 94 more than last year, an increase of 55%. The number of issues closed has risen from 233 last year to 258 this year, an increase of 11%.

The increases in new issues and closed issues is evidence of our increased productivity, especially in the last quarter, when we received extra funding and were able to employ extra staff members.

The increase in total number of issues dealt with is 16%, from 416 issues in 2004/05 to 478 in 2005/06. Our funding increased by 17%, but the increase came only during the last four months.

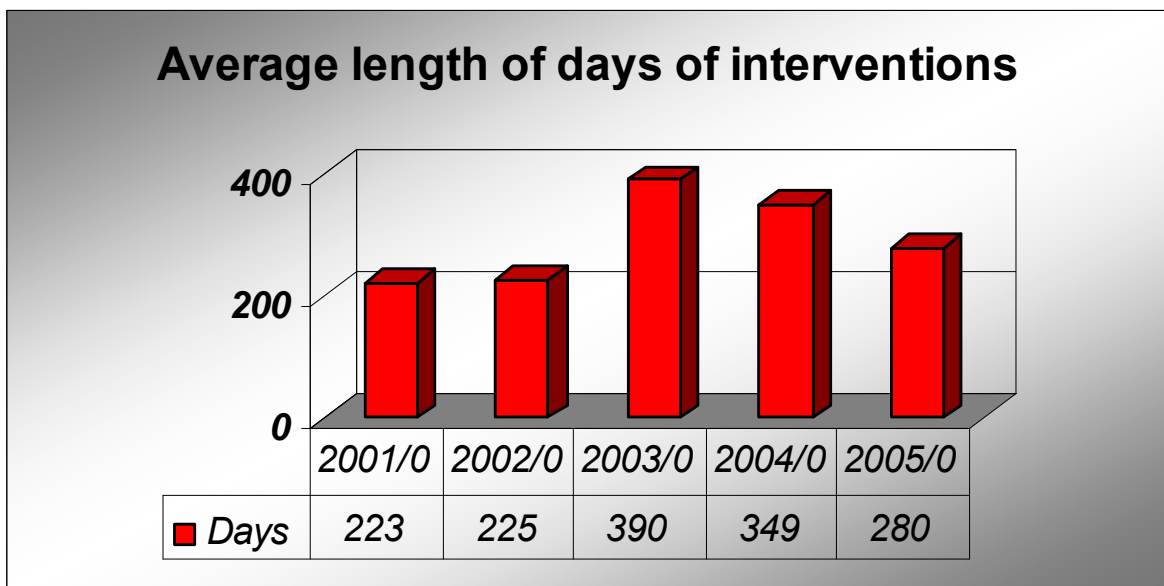
The following figure shows the trend of continuing, new and closed issues over the last five years.

Figure 8: Five Year Trend of Case Load



As can be seen in Figure 9, the average length of time it took to resolve issues has decreased over the last twelve months. In line with a trend which started in 2004. However, this reduction in average length of time was only achievable with the extra input of staff members employed through the one off grant at the end of the year.

Figure 9: Average length of days of interventions

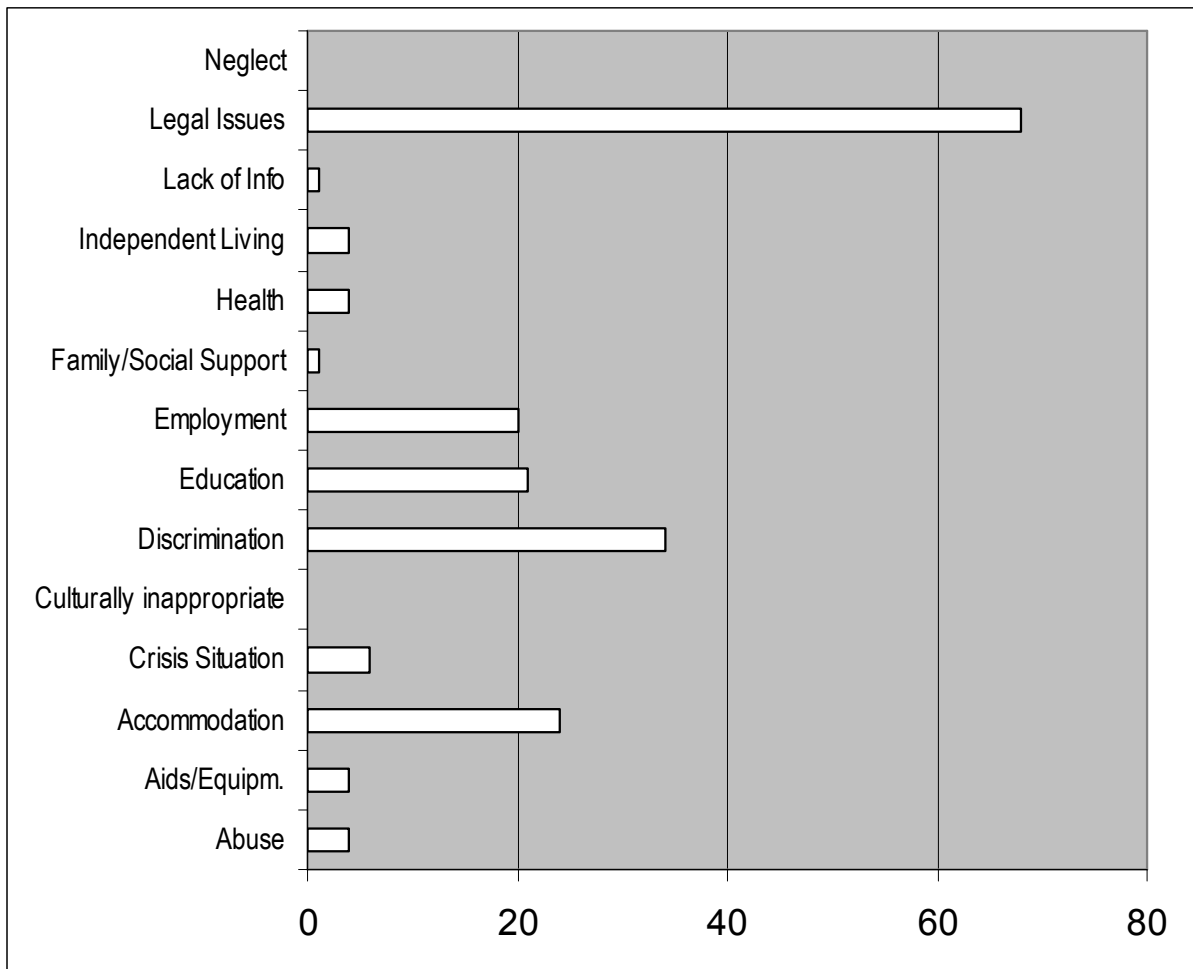


Major Issues

This year we categorised issues in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. We were able to only keep this data for the Adelaide office. Whyalla's database was not functional for most of the year.

Figure 10 provides an overview over the issues dealt with in the Adelaide office. The figure comes in two parts.

Figure 10 a: Issues addressed beginning with 'a' to 'n'

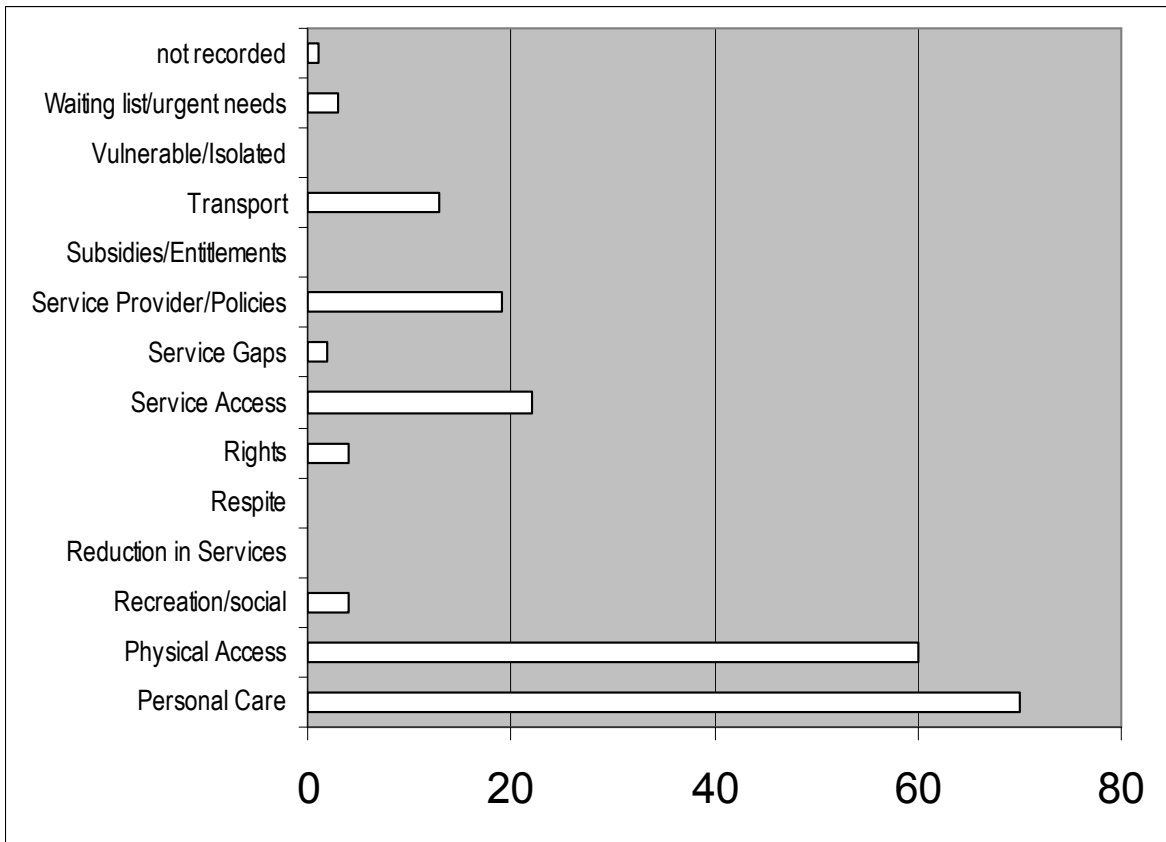


This year our advocates increased their work in the paralegal environments of the Youth Court, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, the Guardianship Board, the Independent Gaming Authority and the Residential Tenancy Tribunal.

We represented 67 clients in relation to paralegal issues, and 34 clients on discrimination issues. Added together (101) this number of clients is a bit higher than that of the number of our clients requesting assistance with their unmet needs (70) under the personal care category and under service access (23) and access to aids and equipment (5), which amounts to 98 clients.

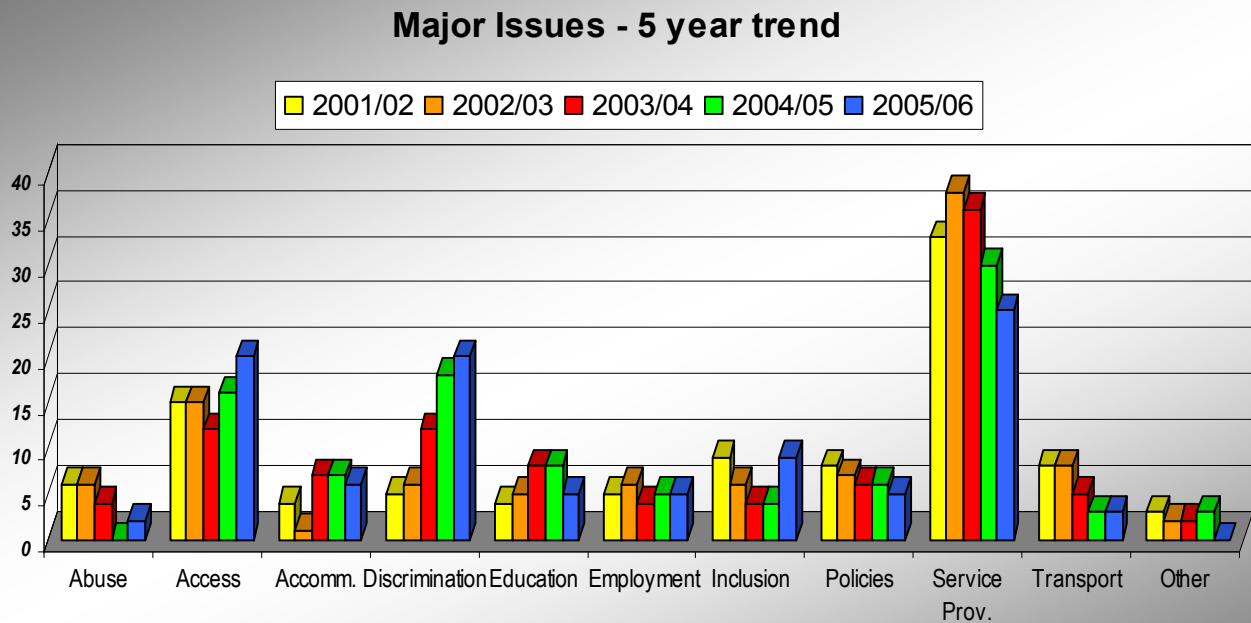
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Figure 10 b: Issues addressed beginning with 'n' to 'z'



Trends over the past five years in the next figure have been adjusted to the way issues were recorded in previous years. And they show the percentage of all issues falling under the relevant category.

Figure 11: 5 year trend – Issues addressed in %



The 5 year trend reveals a strong increase in the request for assistance with complaints about discrimination and access to the built environment. This increase can be explained by an increase in productivity in our agency, as we have been able to reduce our waiting list from around 23 on average in the previous year and the first six months to zero at the end of this business year. This has meant that a lot of the less urgent issues, which sat on the waiting list sometimes for months, were addressed and resolved. These were usually issues about physical access to the built environment.

The high number of unmet needs issues recorded under 'Service Provision' remains a serious problem that needs to be urgently addressed by both the State and Commonwealth Governments.

The rise of the category 'Inclusion' reflects some of the increase in requests from clients with psychiatric disabilities.

Figure 12: Overview of lengths of time closed issues in 2005/06 remained open

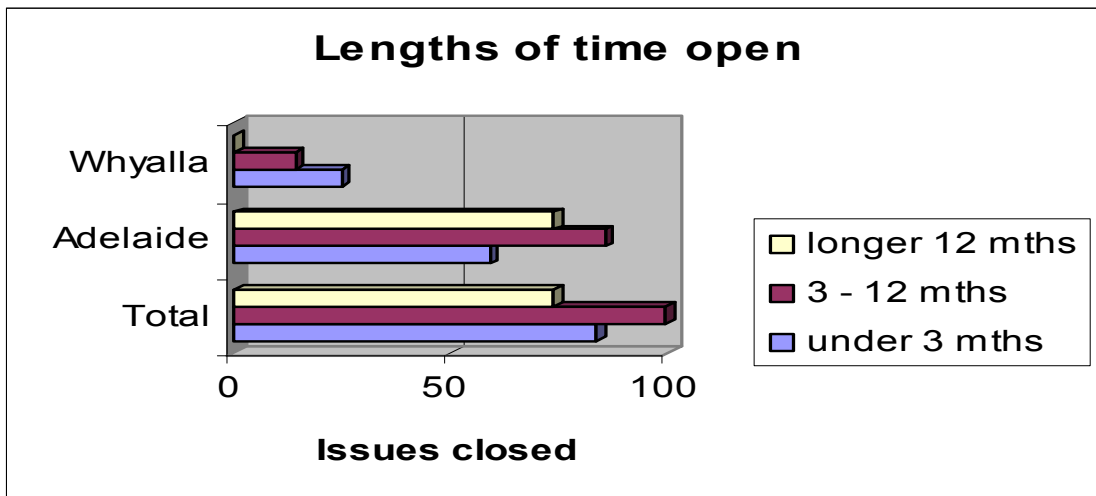
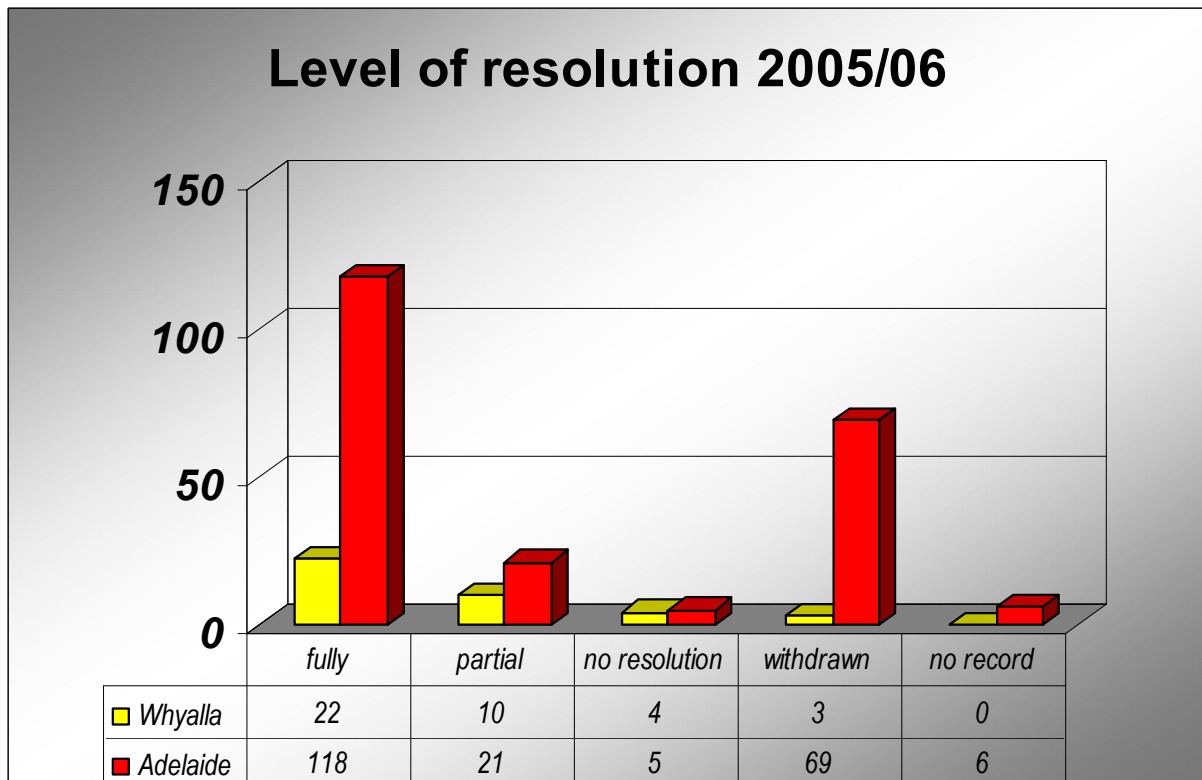


Figure 13 shows the level of resolution of our closed cases. The categories are:

Issues were

- Fully resolved
- Complaint withdrawn
- Partially resolved
- Not recorded
- Not resolved

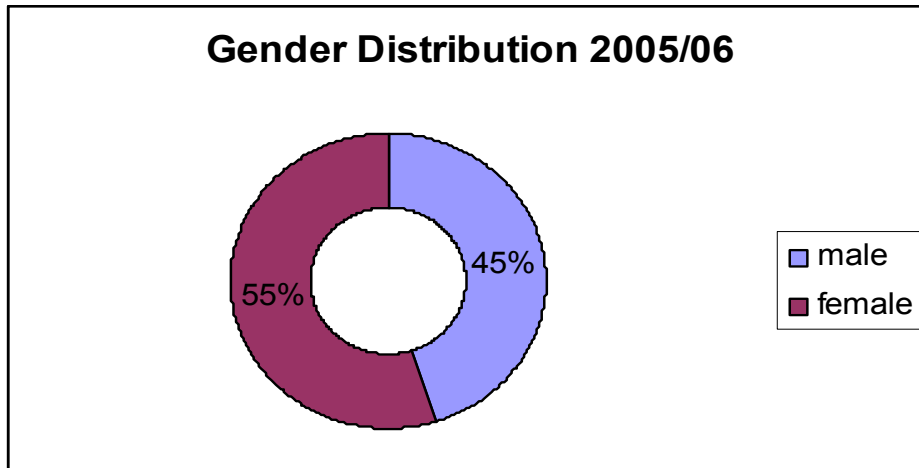
Figure 13: Level of Resolution 2005/06



Information about our Clients

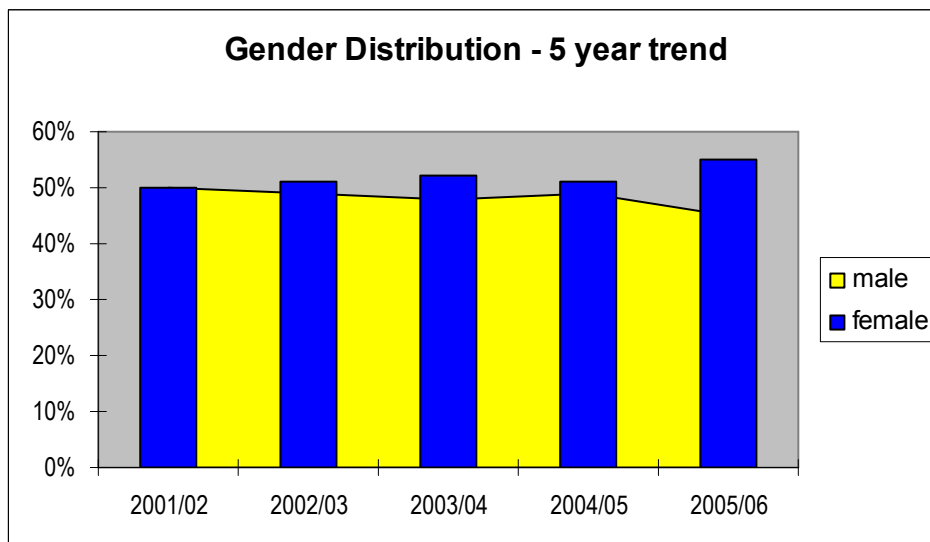
This year the proportion of women to men using the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. reflected exactly the profile of people with a disability in South Australia – 55% female to 45% male.

Figure 14: Gender Distribution 2005/06



In the past five years there were slightly more males accessing our services than the State profile would suggest. The following figure shows the five year trend.

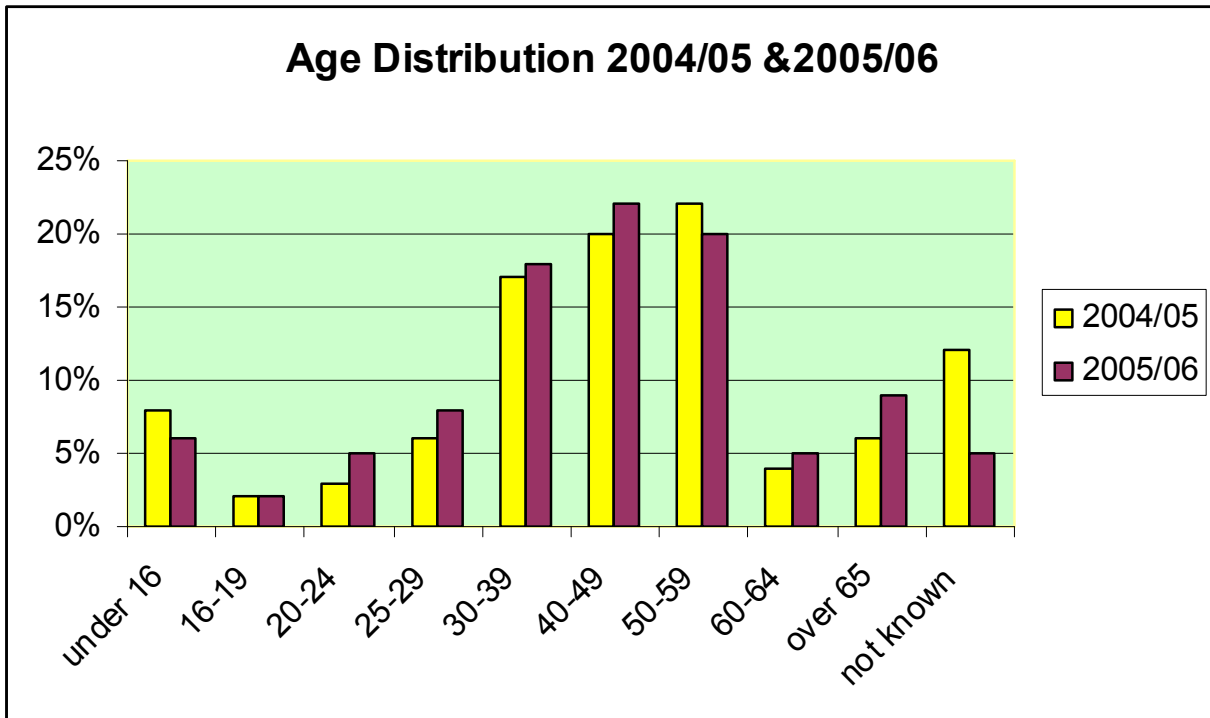
Figure 15: 5 year trend – Gender distribution



Age

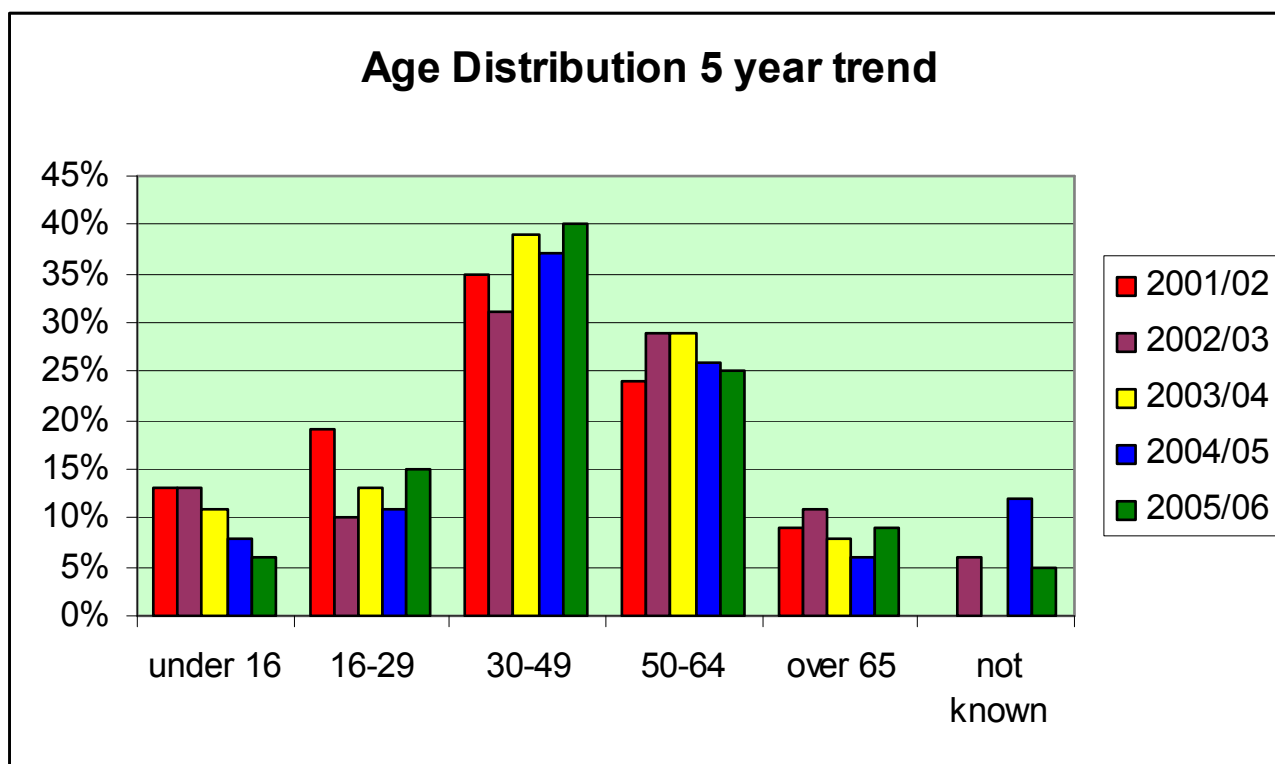
Figure 16 gives the percentage of total consumers from each age group in comparison to last year, when we started keeping statistics with different age categories as in previous years.

Figure 16: Age Distribution – two year comparison



There was not much change other than a reduction in clients under the age of 16, and a significant reduction in the 'unknown' category. This reduction is due to more accurate intake interview procedures, however, it is not always possible in an emergency to take a person through the intake procedure.

Figure 17: 5 year trend - age distribution



As in previous years the 65+ age group is under-represented in the figures. This under-representation is a product of how disability and aged care services are structured by both State and Commonwealth Governments. A person with a disability under 65 is "disabled" and is covered by services in the disability sector. People over the age of 65 are supposedly covered by services for the aged and are not considered living with a disability in terms of service provision.

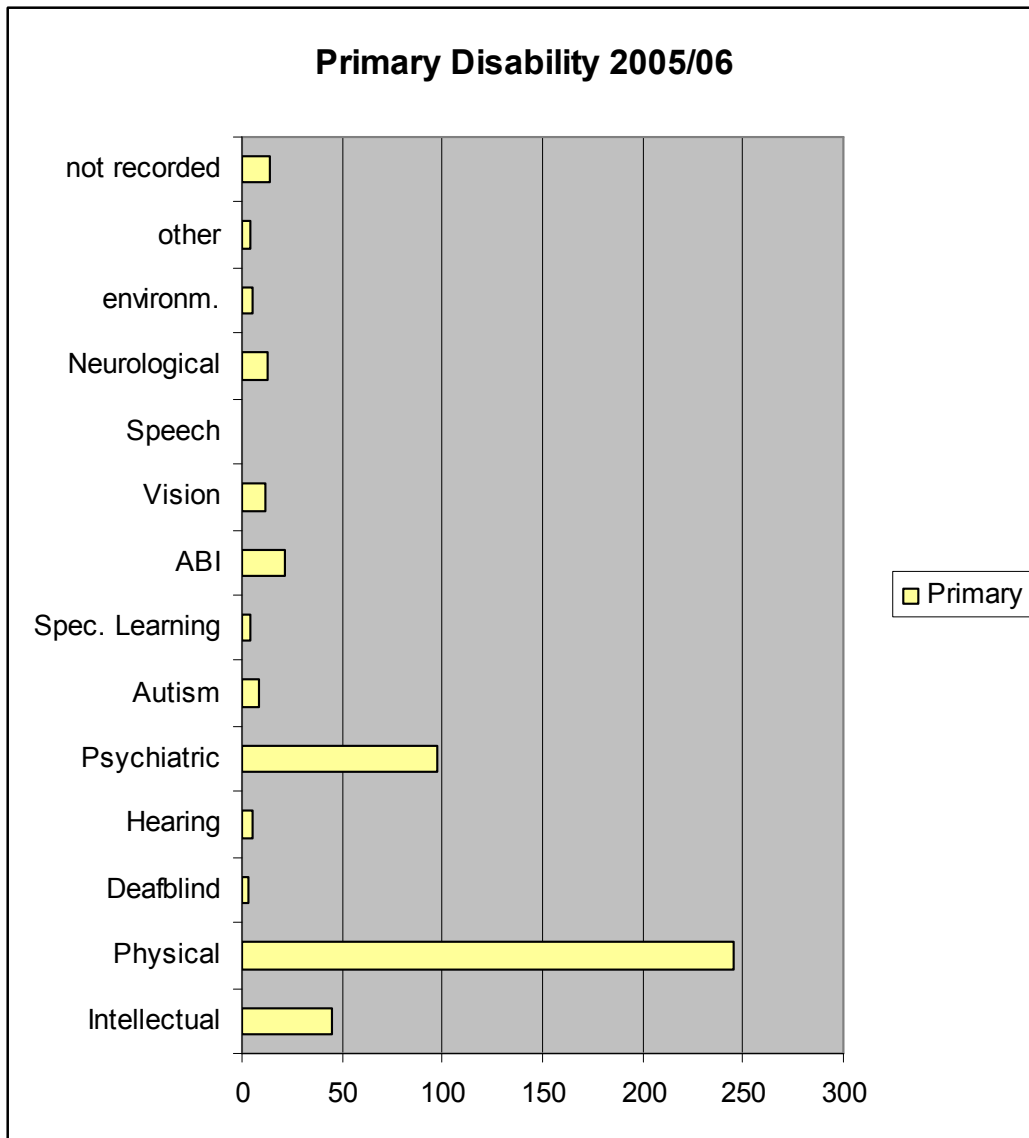
However, this year we have received several complaints from people in this age group and some living in an Aged Care home. Generally we refer clients above 65 with complaints about aged care services to the Aged Rights Advocacy Service. We have assisted several clients with Guardianship Board matters, which is a service not offered by the Aged Rights Service.

The percentage of young people under 16 years of age accessing our services is also diminishing. This is because we are referring inquiries for advocacy of parents on children's behalf to other appropriate advocacy services, such as Parent Advocacy, or the Education Support Program of the Autism SA Association.

Client's Disabilities

Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. is a generic disability advocacy agency. As indicated in Figure 18 our clients live with a range of disabilities.

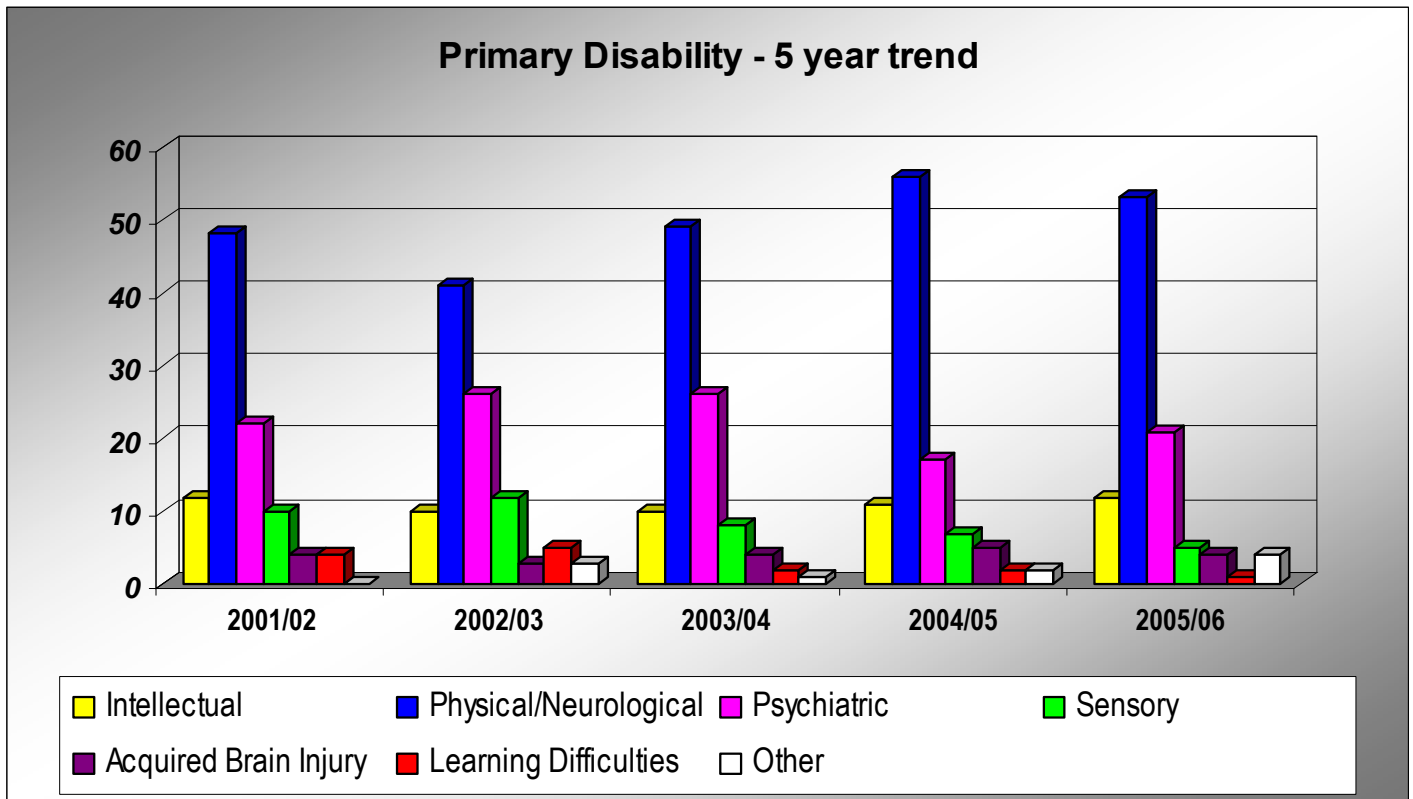
Figure 18: Clients' Primary Disability in 2005/06



When compared to the South Australian population the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. consumer profile in Figure 6 shows an over-representation of consumers with a physical disability and an under-representation of clients with intellectual disabilities and psychiatric disabilities.

The five year trend shows a clearer picture about the clients who approach us.

Figure 19: 5 year trend – Disability distribution in percentages of all clients accessed



There has been a noticeable increase in the number of consumers with a physical disability in 2004/05. This was a time when a high number of clients were referred from one disability services agency which was concerned about the unmet needs for care and equipment. Many of these needs have remained unmet, hence the slight reduction of people with physical disabilities as a percentage of all people with disabilities this year.

Clients with psychiatric disabilities this year have increased their requests for assistance. Five years ago the percentage of clients with a psychiatric disability was similar to this year, however the number of clients with a psychiatric disability has markedly increased from 35 to 98 clients over five years.

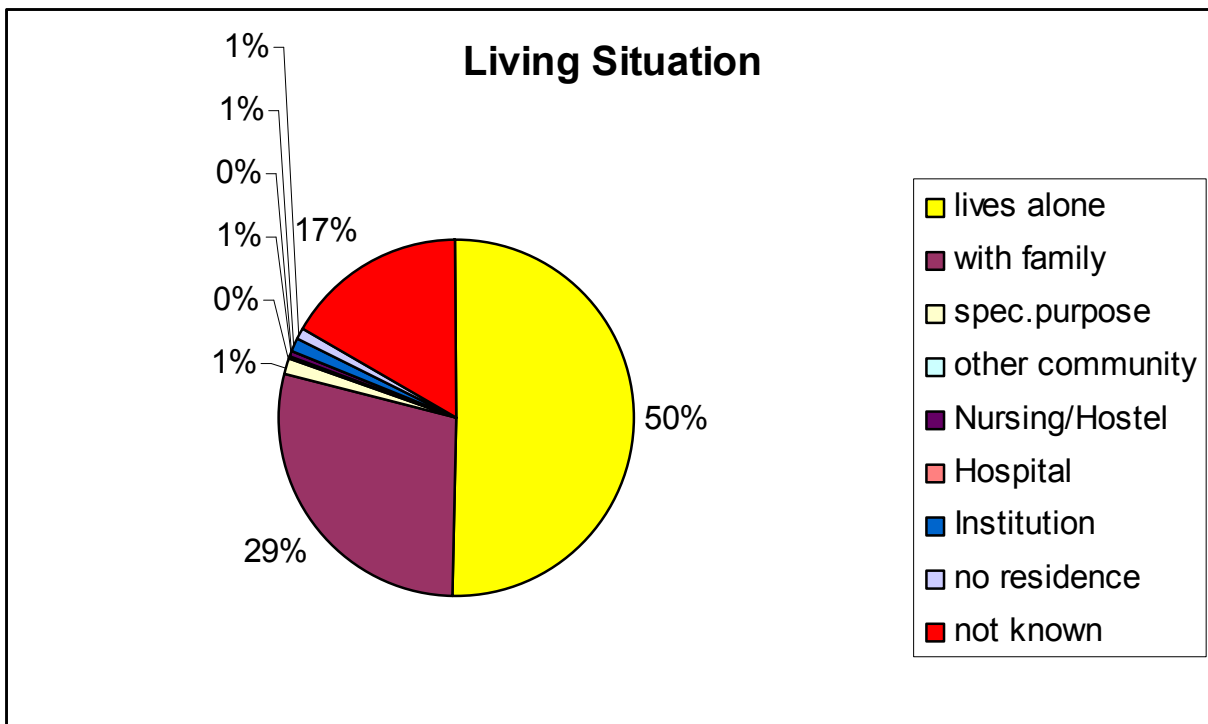
The trend still identifies a significant under-representation of people with intellectual disabilities as well as people with sensory disabilities. Our support for the OUR VOICE SA Committee, a self advocacy group for people with intellectual disabilities, will assist us to inform more people with intellectual disabilities about our services.

If we had a bit more flexibility in our funding we would be able to pro-actively go out to other services or places of employment and advertise our services. Television and radio ads would also increase participation of people who have difficulties accessing print based materials.

Living Situation

This is the first year that we have collected this information as requested by our funding body. The chart provides an overview over where our clients live.

Figure 20: Living Situation of our Clients in 2005/06



Consumer Evaluation

When an issue is closed, our clients receive an evaluation form to fill out and return to Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.. In the past twelve months 51 forms have been returned.

There are several reasons why the response rate is down in comparison with previous years. During the previous business year 2004/05 our database broke down, and with it the automatic send out of evaluation forms. A new Chief Executive Officer took over and apart from the database, the computers started breaking down too.

In July 2005 we installed our new database, had to get used to new procedures and new templates. In order to be able to compare previous year's client evaluations with the evaluations of this period we had to combine some of our current categories.

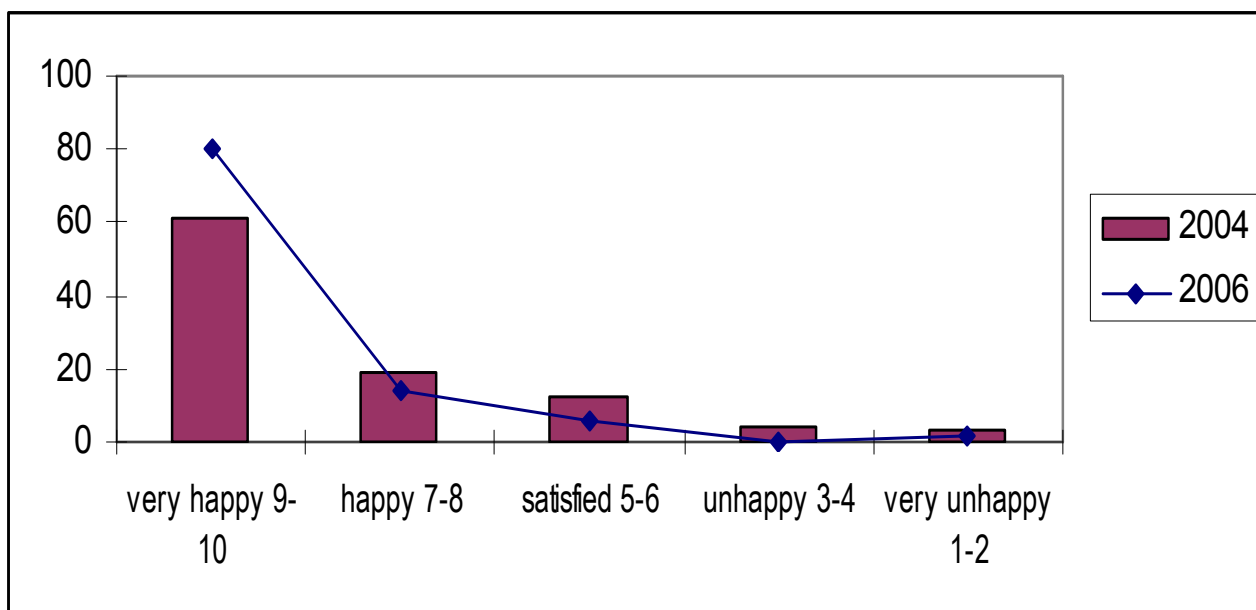
The first set of questions is designed to gauge the level of satisfaction with the work practices of Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc. and the service provided by the staff. In our new forms clients can choose their answer from a scale from 1 to 10. Previously questions with yes and no answers were used, or in one case a scale from 1 – 5.

As can be seen in Chart 1 and Figure 21, 80% of the clients were "very happy", an increase of 31% from the year 2004. Chart 1 provides an opportunity to compare the evaluation sheets from 2003/04 and 2004/05/06.

Chart 1: Level of Satisfaction in %

	2004	2006
Level of Satisfaction	%	%
very happy 9-10	61	80
happy 7-8	19	13
satisfied 5-6	12	5
unhappy 3-4	4	0
very unhappy 1-2	3	2
	100	100

Figure 21: Level of Satisfaction in %



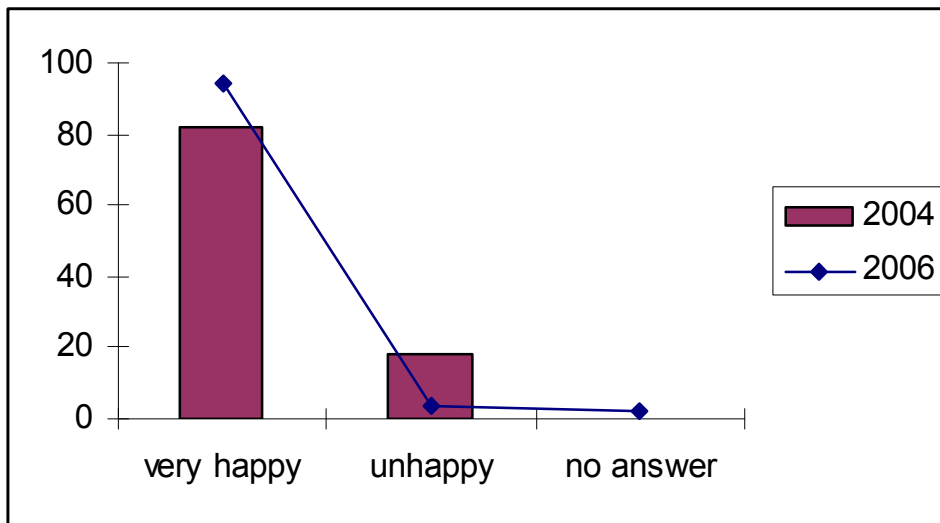
The second question in the evaluation involves appropriate communication skills from our advocates and access to the facilities of the Disability Advocacy and Complaints Service of South Australia Inc.

The level of satisfaction mirrored the responses in Table 1/Figure 21.

Table 2: Level of Satisfaction with Access to DACSSA and advocates

Access to DACSSA	2004	2006
very happy	82	94
unhappy	18	4
no answer	0	2

Figure 22: Level of satisfaction with access to advocates and the agency



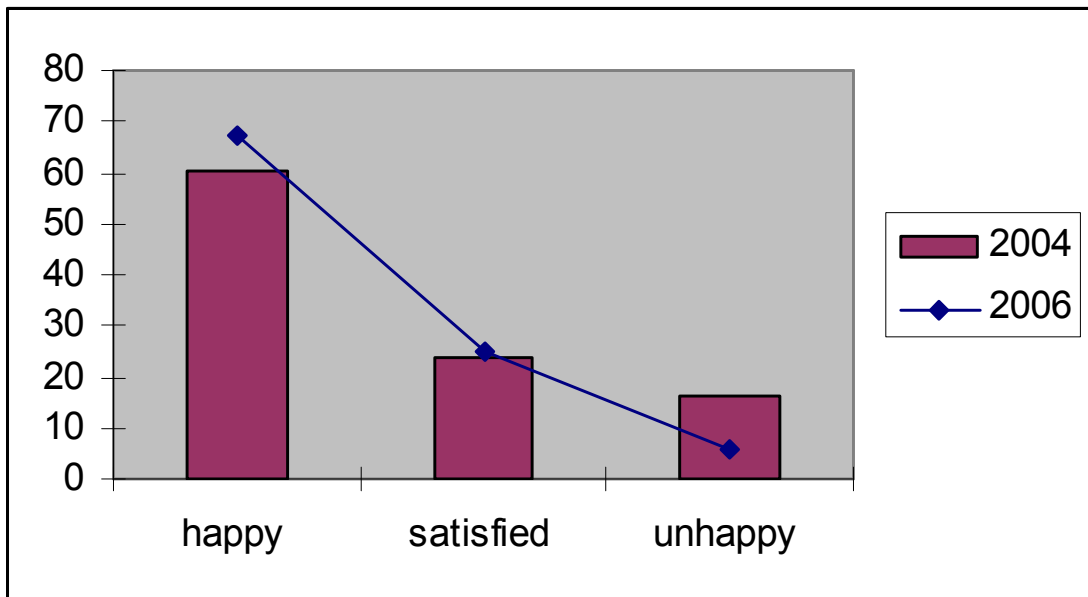
Several clients commented on the waiting time, and sometimes about the response time of advocates. All but one consumer indicated that they felt the quality of service was excellent, but that there were not enough advocates to do the job. Six clients remarked that the agency should receive more funding or employ more staff.

Chart 3 shows the percentage of clients being happy with the outcome of their advocacy processes. Obviously there is a difference between being satisfied with the quality of our services and being satisfied with the response of the respondent of the advocacy process.

Chart 3: How clients felt about the outcome of the advocacy process in percent.

	2004	2006
happy	60	67
satisfied	24	25
unhappy	16	6

Figure 23: How clients felt about the outcome of the advocacy program



Finally we ask our clients if they would use our service again.

Chart 4 compares the responses from 2003/04 with the responses from 2004/05/06 in percentages.

Chart 4: Percentage of clients who would use our services again

	2004	2006
yes	92.8	98
no	4.1	2
don't know	3.1	0

This shows that we have improved the overall satisfaction of our clients with our service provision.