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No. 7**Violence, Disputes
and their Resolution**

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Unfortunately, a minor dispute can rapidly escalate into a violent altercation, resulting in irreparable harm to the victim and great cost to the community. As noted in this paper, disputants are often not satisfied with the process or the outcome when matters go to court, and tensions between disputants may even increase. In addition, the costs incurred in settling disputes in the courts can be enormous. Further, domestic and neighbourhood disputes take up a significant proportion of the working time of a number of public agencies, whose limited resources may be better utilised elsewhere. Intervention in a dispute at an early stage can help reduce these harmful effects.

This issue of Violence Today describes an alternative to litigation. The settlement of disputes through the services of a mediator has much to offer, both to the disputants and to the community at large. *Violence, Disputes and their Resolution* contributes to the prevention of violence in Australian society.

Duncan Chappell
Chair National Committee on Violence

**PERSONAL CONFLICT:
THE ORIGIN OF MOST
VIOLENCE**

A central task of the National Committee on Violence has been to examine strategies for the prevention of violence in our society.

The largest proportion of violent behaviour in contemporary society results from personal disputes between family members, neighbours and workmates. Underlying causes include unemployment or other economic hardships, environmental and noise pollution, infringements of privacy and close urban living, retirement, and rapid social change in neighbourhoods.

The National Committee on Violence found that homicide is overwhelmingly committed by, and against, people previously known to each other (Chappell 1989).

Wendy Faulkes, director of the NSW Community Justice Centres, pointed out that more than 70 per cent of the cases dealt with by the Centres were between feuding neighbours; another 20 per cent involved disputes between family members (*Sydney Morning Herald* 28 May 1987).

'What starts as a storm in a teacup can lead to tragedy. Death threats, often made in front of police, are quite common and every year there are a couple of shootings', reported Faulkes, and this did not happen just in the depressed areas of the town. 'Neighbourhood disputes break out all over, in the

on-the-surface tranquil, leafy suburbs like St Ives right through to the wealth belt of the Eastern Suburbs and the industrial areas' (*Daily Mirror* 5 June 1987).

Domestic arrangements between couples, children and parents, other relatives, or flat-mates can produce serious tension. Disturbances between neighbours can result from a number of issues such as barking dogs or noisy parties.

Disagreements between customers and storekeepers over debts or delivery of goods; or between staff and their colleagues or bosses can cause anxiety and distress.

Different social customs, cultural values and perceptions between ethnic groups, or between generations within ethnic communities, frequently lead to tension. Experiences of discrimination, and racial strife between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is an area of wide public and political concern.

Over time irritations may evolve into severe hostilities and expensive litigation.

EARLY INTERVENTION

Police are frequently called upon to intervene in street or household altercations and the public expect them to stop people from fighting.

In the United States, crisis intervention and conflict resolution techniques are increasingly employed by police. Some training programs for police stress the role of the officer in street and domestic disputes. On a regular basis they

are called upon to intervene in a range of offences from 'nuisance crimes' to near fatal assaults. Less often they negotiate in kidnappings, and hostage or suicide threats.

In describing this new trend in American policing, Folberg and Taylor explain that the role of the officer, acting as a mediator, is to help people 'find a safe and workable way out of the conflict, a way that saves face and meets their needs better than any illegal action such as violence' (1984, pp. 203-8).

Intervention in the early stages of a family or neighbourhood dispute can defuse a situation where persons overwhelmed by anxiety or hostility might explode into violence (Folberg & Taylor 1984; Chappell 1989; Mugford 1989; Bryson 1987).

LITIGATION VERSUS MEDIATION

The legal system is adversarial. It divides parties into 'winners' and 'losers' and encourages them to maximise their position vis-a-vis their opponent. Win/lose, attack/counter attack litigation which typifies the legal system, can permanently damage relationships and severely reduce the health, financial resources and quality of life of litigants.

Judicial and legal traditions depersonalise the dispute and place it beyond the control of disputants. The adversary process involves the participants in cross-examination and in the provision of evidence, but effectively excludes them from final decision-making.

Including certain facts as evidence and excluding others is a pervading principle of our justice system. Litigants leaving the court, particularly those who lose, often have an overwhelming sense of injustice and frustration. They feel that their side of the dispute was circumscribed by the court and they did not 'have their say'.

Embittered court battles following family breakdown over custody of children, maintenance arrangements, and the distribution of property, make amiable settlement extremely difficult. Long ranging feuds between extended families have occurred after separation and divorce.

The costs of going to court, not only in legal fees, but in loss of time, employment, and peace of mind can be catastrophic. Tensions

seldom subside through court action, and they are often increased.

Domestic and neighbourhood disputes take up a significant proportion of the working time of police, legal aid services, municipal councils, migrant services, welfare agencies, and criminal, family and civil courts—sometimes to the detriment of these services in other areas (David 1985).

In an 'Australian Household Dispute Study', conducted in Victoria during 1981-82, it was found that 35 per cent of households had experienced neighbourhood disputes which had resulted in damaged or destroyed relationships. Lower income groups were more likely to have unresolved grievances. Ethnic groups, particularly, tended not to seek help from a third party in the settlement of their disputes. In those cases where approaches were made to local government (39 per cent), police (29 per cent), or lawyers (10 per cent), satisfaction with the role of these third parties had been low (Bryson 1987, pp.109-10).

Alternative dispute resolution services, now set up in NSW, Vic., SA, Qld, WA, Tas., and the ACT, provide an option to expensive and often divisive litigation, and to the legally binding win/lose situation of adjudication.

WHAT IS ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION?

Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) programs assist people to reach mutually acceptable resolution to conflict. They enable disputants, particularly those in an ongoing relationship, to settle their disputes voluntarily, in a private and informal setting. Mediation services are usually free, or may involve a small charge to disputants.

Alternative dispute resolution centres appoint mediators to help disputants resolve their own disputes. Unlike a judge, mediators have no authority to make any binding decision on the parties. Neither are they advisers or counsellors. It is their job to create the environment in which the disputant parties can explore all aspects of their problem, and come to an understanding of both sides of the argument.

Disputants are encouraged to put aside their emotions and to approach the practical issues of their

conflict in a businesslike manner. The mediation process has been described by Faulkes as 'structured negotiating' which 'brings out the co-operative side of human nature' (*Sydney Morning Herald* 28 May 1987).

In reaching a settlement a mediator will arrange meetings between disputants, allowing each side to present their side of the dispute without interruption. Rules of evidence, as in a court room situation, do not apply in a mediation session. A mediator is free to meet separately with both parties in order to bring about a more complete understanding of the options.

Mediators help to bring disputants together by listening, guiding, and persuading them to come to terms. As a neutral, third party, the mediator does not take sides. The mediator's role is to facilitate the negotiation process until an agreement, acceptable to both parties, is reached.

Ideally, disputing parties control the content and outcome of the negotiations, the mediator controls the process—thus avoiding a breakdown of communication between the parties.

The steps to alternative dispute resolution are as follows:

- 1 voluntary attendance at mediation sessions;
- 2 appointment of an appropriate mediator (or mediators);
- 3 presentation of each side of the dispute;
- 4 listing of grievances and issues;
- 5 private conferences with the mediator(s) to ascertain disputants' objectives for settlement;
- 6 disputants propose solutions;
- 7 points of agreement are written down;
- 8 rules for future behaviour between disputant parties are detailed;
- 9 a final agreement is signed by both parties.

There has been a remarkable consistency in professional evaluations of alternative dispute resolution services in Australia and overseas. Mediated settlements hold up well over time and relationships between the disputants have often improved. Many clients said they would recommend the services to a friend.

Since Community Justice Centres (CJC) were set up in Surry Hills,

Bankstown and Wollongong as a free service by the NSW Attorney General's Department, they have received between 2500 and 3000 referrals a year. Mediation sessions are arranged for approximately 1000 of these. In mediated disputes CJC claims that between 80-85 per cent are successfully settled with a significant number settled by phone. About 20 per cent of all referrals are settled by conciliation.

REFERRAL

Violent or potentially violent disputes are frequently referred to a mediation centre by police, initially called in to break up an altercation. They may also be referred by the courts.

Under the *Justices (Community Justice Centres) Amendment Act 1983* (NSW) magistrates have the power to refer appropriate disputes to mediation. Referral may occur prior to a hearing, after a hearing, in lieu of punishment, or in addition to a sentence. Overseas experience suggests that mediation services can work well as part of programs in pre-trial diversion for adult offenders.

Although mediation practices are rare in Australian prisons, in the USA they have been used with some success in the settlement of disputes between prison inmates, and between inmates and custodial staff.

Referral by the police or courts 'introduces a possible element of coercion into what is essentially a voluntary process'. However, David suggests, this may be a safeguard from mediation being regarded as a 'soft option' by offenders. Courts could keep the case open for three to six months after referral until they are satisfied that a mediated agreement has been upheld. If not, the offender and the dispute could be returned to the adjudication system (David 1985, pp.91-2).

Disputants frequently refer their own problems for mediation without intervention from authorities. Other agencies, such as lawyers, legal aid offices, welfare workers, church representatives, or friends, may also suggest mediation.

CRIME AND DISPUTE SETTLEMENT

Alternative dispute resolution offers an alternative forum for the handling of a significant range of minor criminal offences, including neighbourhood disputes. Here is a simple example:

One morning, when trying to get to work, Mr A found that his driveway had been blocked by his neighbour's car on their joint driveway. Angry at the delay he hammered on Mr B's door to demand that he remove the car. As Mr B worked a night shift he was not pleased with being woken up and gave Mr A a cold reception.

The next weekend Mr A caught Mr B's child stepping into his flower garden to retrieve a ball. The abusive language he used to the child upset Mrs B. The next morning Mrs B scolded Mrs A over their back fence over loud music she was playing while doing her gardening, which resulted in Mrs A turning her hose on her neighbour.

Seeing his mother upset the child took matters in his own hands and rode his bicycle over Mr A's front yard, spoiling the new grass he was growing.

Mr A confronted Mr B about the damage and a heated argument followed. When Mr A began verbally abusing Mr B's wife and child, he was assaulted by Mr B. The police were called in and charges of assault were laid. The case was referred by the police to a neighbourhood mediation centre.

In the final settlement it was agreed that both parties would leave the driveway free for entrance and exit. Children were to retrieve balls taking care not to damage property. Any future grievances about the behaviour of the children would be discussed and settled by the adults. Mr A's family agreed to take care not to wake up Mr B until late afternoon after he had his sleep. Mr B agreed to pay for the cost of new grass seed and top soil, and the charge of assault was subsequently dropped.

Of the 2891 disputes referred to the NSW Community Justice Centres for the year 1987-88, complaints of violence or threats of violence were mentioned in 708

cases, harassment in 752 cases, abuse in 955 cases and property damage or theft in 419 cases. Referrals to the Centres came from police in almost 8 per cent, from bench magistrates just over 8 per cent, and from chamber magistrates in 25 per cent of the cases (NSW Community Justice Centres 1988).

A criminal act, involving parties previously known to each other, is often only one step in a series of reciprocal events and offences committed by disputing parties against each other. Subjecting the isolated criminal act, such as a common assault, to criminal law effectively separates the act from the underlying environment in which the conflict grew, and this may embitter and escalate the dispute, possibly leading to more serious retaliatory action.

In some cases victims may well carry some blame in provoking an assault upon their persons or property. An important aspect of the ADR agreement, in the process of settling the root causes of the dispute, is to lay foundations for more peaceable conduct between the disputants. In the context of the present relationship, rules for future behaviour will be designed to avoid later grievances or hostile acts.

In some overseas programs mediation has been increasingly employed in crimes involving strangers. The Brooklyn Dispute Resolution Centre, established in 1977, mediates in felony arrest disputes for crimes which carry a maximum penalty of up to one year's imprisonment (David 1985; Marshall 1985).

Under Australian programs mediation in minor criminal offences has been primarily limited to persons with a prior or ongoing social relationship. At present, the expansion of ADR services to include disputes between strangers, or to include crimes of a more serious nature, is only under consideration.

VICTIMS

Once an offence enters the criminal justice system it becomes a crime against the state. With the exception of their evidence, victims become almost irrelevant to the judicial and sentencing process. In an extensive report, the NSW Task Force on Services for Victims of Crime found that, as the court process was

'predominantly offender-oriented, the needs of victims in their contact with it have been neglected by the judiciary, court personnel and the criminal justice system as a whole' (1987, p.93).

In a Victorian report upon support services for victims of crime, the concept that mediated restitution schemes 'provided both a role for the victim and an alternative in the treatment of offenders' was generally supported (Victoria 1987, p.44).

Of course, in some cases, a victim may be too frightened to meet the offender face to face, fearing hostilities or even attacks. But where the disputants are in a regular relationship, the bringing together of minor offenders and their victims has often had healthy results. Victims are given the opportunity to express feelings of fear, loss of dignity, and injury resulting from the offence. Offenders are obliged to listen, and 'face up' to the injury they have caused.

Offenders are forced to see the effects of their behaviour upon a real person, rather than an abstract 'society'. Together, victims and offenders decide on the appropriate means for compensating the victim. This enables offenders to make amends within a non-punitive and persuasive setting, and allows victims to get on with their lives without the distress of an impending court hearing.

There are also a number of so-called 'victimless crimes' (such as public drunkenness), and minor vandalism or other offences where the victim is an institution (such as a school), in which mediation could offer a viable alternative to incarceration and fines. An aspect of compensation or offender rehabilitation could be built into such settlements.

DOMESTIC INTERVENTION

There are perhaps no disputes more prone to lead to violence than those which threaten the security of family life.

Police are generally reluctant to become involved in domestic disputes unless they involve violent assault or child abuse. There have been eruptions over Family Court decisions; and there has been violence and threats of violence

against Family Court staff, including the 1984 bombing of the home of a Federal Court judge resulting in the death of his wife.

In cases of family breakdown, Kiel and Kingshott point out that the divorce courtroom process polarises and embitters the dispute. The 'no-fault' concept within the adversary system, 'has been equated with no responsibility, not only for the marriage breakdown, but also for the future' (1985, pp.2-3).

Disputes involving marital or de facto partners can reach a stage which Faulkes has described as 'volcanic'. After an initial 'eruption', which could go on for some time, the mediation process tends to settle down to working on each issue. A 'degree of trading often goes on' as mediators help disputants draw together an agreement which they can both live with (1982 pp.38-9).

The most common disputes handled by NSW Community Justice Centres for separated or divorced couples concern the highly explosive issue of access to children (66 per cent of such cases). In access disputes about 55 per cent were resolved by mediation. Although this is a lower success rate than usual for the centres, Faulkes points out that 'it is significant that all but two of these cases were referred by the court'.

Mediation has been successful in aiding ex-partners to agree on details regarding the division of property and financial resources. In addition to helping with child access arrangements, disputants frequently want assurances that the other parent, new spouse, or other relatives, will stop trying to alienate their children from them with harmful stories and strategies.

Domestic disputes can be the source of considerable anxiety and distress, and are well known to police as situations which can trigger violent outrage, assault, and even death. In these circumstances, mediation has a purging effect on the disputing parties, making later settlement easier (Faulkes 1982, pp.41-2). As a cautionary note, NSW Community Justice Centres regard the continuation of violence as non-negotiable, but may mediate on other matters believed by the parties to contribute to a pattern of domestic violence. However, cases which are beyond retrieval through mediation will require police intervention.

FAMILY MEDIATION CENTRES

A government family conciliation program, piloted in Victoria (Noble Park) under the 1984-85 federal budget, incorporated mediation into its services to assist families in disputes. Some other family counselling services have also included mediation. Mediation and conciliation are offered in addition to family counselling, financial counselling, social welfare referral, and legal aid referral.

The Noble Park Family Mediation Centre has an acknowledged 'multi-disciplinary' approach to family dispute resolution. Its objectives are to provide early intervention to reduce the risk of family breakdown; and to obtain a cost-effective alternative to court and legal processes for resolving family disputes (Noble Park Family Mediation Centre 1988a; Noble Park Family Mediation Centre 1988b; Alternative Dispute Resolution Association of Australia 1988).

Almost half of the work of the Family Conciliation Centre relates to divorce or separation. In a 1988 Noble Park user survey, it was found that in 49 per cent of the cases referred to the Family Mediation Centre the couple were separating, 20 per cent of the cases involved an existing couple, and 15 per cent involved parents and adolescents (Donnelly 1988, p.20).

The survey indicated that people sought Family Mediation Centre assistance in arrangements for separation (26 per cent); for the division of property (23 per cent); to avoid the legal system (11 per cent); due to difficulties in communication (9 per cent); in financial difficulties (5 per cent), and in child custody matters (5 per cent) (Noble Park Family Mediation Centre 1988a p.4).

JUVENILES AND FIRST OFFENDERS

Mediation offers juveniles, particularly first offenders, the opportunity to appreciate the effects of anti-social behaviour upon others.

Child/parent mediation programs, and mediation with a commitment

to children's rights and the decriminalisation of minor juvenile offences have, for some time, been a part of the ADR movement in North America (Merry 1987).

Projects established in Port Washington and Rochester (USA) and in Nova Scotia (Canada), report a 90-95 per cent success rate in compliance with mediated agreements in disputes relating to juvenile delinquency and a 76 per cent success rate in truancy cases (David 1985, p.96; Faulkes 1983).

In 1987-88 a pilot Juvenile Mediation Reparation Scheme was set up by the NSW Community Justice Centres to take referrals from police, and the Bidura and Cobham children's courts, concerning minor offenders aged between eight and 17 years. This scheme, which has since been deferred, provided mediation between juvenile offenders and victims with the view to reparation.

In such programs youth and victims work through the issues, discussing ways in which the young people can change antisocial or offensive behaviour, or make amends for the destruction of property. Ideally, being a part of the process in deciding how to 'put things right' with the victim, juveniles are able to restore their own self-worth, and may acquire a sense of community responsibility from this experience (NSW Community Justice Centres 1988 p.17).

It has been found that in certain disputes involving husband-wife, child-parent, or victim-offender meetings an imbalance of power can undermine the free negotiation normally associated with mediation (for a fuller discussion of this see Scutt 1986). There is also concern that victim-offender mediation may widen the net of social control over persons who would normally undergo lesser punishment through the courts (Bryson 1986). What is unknown, however, is the extent of long-term deterrence of these offenders from further crime as a result of a mediation experience. Crime prevention benefits would need to be weighed against the disadvantages of net widening.

STRATEGIES TO REDUCE VIOLENCE

It is essential that simple problems be resolved by citizens without recourse to law, or without taking the law into their own hands.

The Noble Park Family Mediation Centre (1988b) considers that there is a need to change community attitudes towards conflict. People, they argue, do not understand conflict, or how to manage it. Unresolved discord can result in a build up of stress and tension. A violent response frequently occurs when individuals and groups deal with conflict inappropriately.

Parents may not allow children to resolve disputes with siblings and merely forbidding conflict does not resolve it. Step-families, or 'blended families' are particularly vulnerable to family breakdown.

Dispute Resolution Services recognise conflict as normal and place the responsibility for its resolution directly upon those involved. They provide the opportunity for constructive examination of people's problems with each other, and reward co-operative, non-violent methods of settlement.

The Noble Park Centre felt that the government could play an important part in demonstrating its willingness to deal constructively with conflict, and in promoting community education campaigns which overcome community myths about violence and abuse within families and neighbourhoods. It stressed the need for curriculum materials to teach children and young people about these topics. Similar materials were needed to reach parents and other adults.

The Centre was particularly concerned about the depiction of violence on the media, and the continued reinforcement of violence rather than conflict resolution strategies. The media, they said, needed to be exposed 'to discussion about the assumptions it makes about conflict and its resolution' (Noble Park Family Mediation Centre 1988b).

CONCLUSION

Mediation services have been able to specialise in the provision of family, neighbourhood and ethnically relevant mediation. NSW Community Justice Centres' staff are selected from all age groups, and approximately half of the mediators have non-English speaking credentials. (NSW Community Justice Centres 1988 p.23; Noble Park Family Mediation Centre 1988a p.4). Wherever possible the Centres try to 'match' the mediators to the disputants on the basis of gender, age, and ethnicity (NSW Community Justice Centres 1988, p.6; Faulkes 1985b, p.207).

To date there has been no special provision of ADR services for Aboriginal people, despite an obvious and urgent need. A broad range of social problems and minor offences could be more effectively handled by mediation within Aboriginal communities, particularly in cases of juvenile offending, public and domestic disturbances, discrimination, racial tension, conflicts with police, landlords and local government authorities, or in negotiations with state and federal government agencies or mining and pastoral interests. For some time elder tribunals have been successfully mediating disputes in more traditional Aboriginal communities (Hazlehurst 1988; Williams 1987).

In exercising the option of ADR, many parties have the knowledge that if negotiations fail they can take their case to the courts. In almost 50 per cent of cases managed by the NSW Community Justice Centres legal action was pending and 61 per cent of these indicated that they would take legal action if mediation did not succeed (Faulkes 1985a, p.460). More often than not, however, cases which have been referred by lawyers or the courts to ADR for settlement do not return to the formal justice system and legal action is withdrawn.

In recent years a number of court annexed mediation and conciliation services have been introduced, as a cost-effective means of speeding up the judicial process. Because of sheer backlogs of cases, courts urge the settlement of minor domestic, civil, commercial disputes and even minor criminal cases, through pre-trial conferences and preliminary hearings. Some small

claims courts may require parties to enter into a compulsory phase of conciliation.

Mediation aims to:

- 1 provide immediate, inexpensive and accessible justice to all persons;
- 2 reduce unnecessary hostility and alienation;
- 3 manage conflicts without resorting to litigation;
- 4 prevent the escalation of quarrels into acts of violence;
- 5 reduce arrests and court appearances;
- 6 reduce incarceration;
- 7 intervene in areas not covered by criminal law;
- 8 establish and improve communications between disputing parties;
- 9 teach co-operation and constructive management of disputes;
- 10 provide lasting resolutions, and rules for future behaviour between people;
- 11 foster peace in families, neighbourhoods and multi-cultural communities;
- 12 deal with increasingly complicated situations arising from the contemporary social, economic, and residential realities of modern living (Institute of Criminology 1982; Marshall 1985; Banks 1987; Faulkes 1985a; Mugford 1986).

It is clear that for grave offenders, prison may offer the only shield which society can forge in its own protection. But the increasing use of community-based corrective mechanisms has shown that, in a large proportion of minor crime and civil disputes, other mechanisms of intervention and resolution offer greater educative and reformatory potential.

Few criminal justice professionals today believe that incarceration has any significant deterrent or rehabilitative effect. It is merely the solution of the last resort. Any approach that avoids the doubtful value and certain cost of imprisonment deserves careful implementation and monitoring.

Mediation can resolve quite bitter and potentially explosive disputes. At its best it facilitates enduring settlement, and thus restores pride and dignity to those in conflict.

A system which reduces social and family tension, and which encourages understanding and commitment to resolution of conflict, holds immeasurably greater promise of diminishing violence

than a justice machinery that is activated only after a criminal transgression has occurred.

MEDIATION SERVICES

The following agencies offer mediation services.

Any inquiries are welcome:

New South Wales

Community Justice Centres:

Central Office, 2nd floor, 17 Randle St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010. (02) 211 1600

Bankstown, 335B Chapel Road South, NSW 2200. (02) 790 0656

Wollongong, 2nd Floor, Transport House, 1 Rawson St, NSW 2500. (042) 280 433

Penrith, 80 Henry St, NSW 2750. (047) 321 933; 322 637

Campbelltown, (008) 044 992

The Family Mediation Centre, UNIFAM (family mediations) 6th Floor, 262 Pitt St, Sydney NSW 2000. (02) 261 4077

Fairfield Community Mediation Service, Fairfield Neighbourhood Centre, 25 Barbara St, Fairfield NSW 2165. (02) 727 4333

Marriage Guidance Council of NSW, 149 Hawkesbury Rd, Westmead, NSW 2145. (02) 342 055

Victoria

Neighbourhood Mediation Centres

Outer East, 6 Bedford Rd, Ringwood, Vic. 3134. (03) 879 1744; (03) 879 1144

Geelong, 2nd floor, 75-77 Moorabool St, Vic. 3220. (052) 218 500

North West, Town Hall, Lyttleton Terrace, Bendigo Vic. 3550. (054) 439 099

Heidelberg/Preston, 430 High St, Preston, Vic. 3072. (03) 470 6344

(Three new Neighbourhood Mediation Centres will open in November 1989 in Morwell, St Kilda, and Frankston, Victoria).

Noble Park Family Mediation Centre, 35 Buckley St, Vic. 3174. (03) 547 6466

Marriage Guidance Council of Victoria (family mediations) 46 Princess St, Kew, Vic. 3101. (03) 861 5354

Legal Aid Commission of Victoria (family mediations), 179 Queen Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000. (03) 607 0214.

Western Australia

Family/Neighbourhood Mediation Services, c/- Gosnells District Information Centre, PO Box 226, Gosnells, WA 6110. (09) 3981 455

Marriage Guidance Council of WA (family mediations), 32 Richardson St, West Perth, WA 6005. (09) 322 4755

South Australia

The Community Mediation Service (Norwood), 110 The Parade, SA 5065. (08) 362 1311.

Noarlunga Community Mediation Service, 88 Dyson Rd, Noarlunga Centre SA 5168. (08) 384 9711; 384 9717

Neighbourhood Dispute Service, Bowden-Brompton Legal Service, 20 Third St, Brompton SA 5007. (08) 469 394

SA Marriage Guidance Council (family mediations), 55 Hutt St, Adelaide SA 5000. (08) 223 4566

Willunga District Community Mediation Service, The 'Manning Wing', Southern Districts War Memorial Hospital, Aldersey St, McLaren Vale SA 5171. (08) 323 9261

Queensland

Office of Community Mediation, Justice Department, GPO Box 1601, Brisbane, Qld 4001. (07) 227 4249.

Mediation Matters, 19 Cedar St, Yungaburra, Qld 4872. (070) 953 120.

Qld Marriage Guidance Council (family mediations), 159 St Pauls Tce, Spring Hill, Qld 4000. (07) 839 9144.

Tasmania

Hassels Family Mediation Centre, 244 Charles St, Launceston Tas 7250. (003) 342 055.

Australian Capital Territory

Conflict Resolution Service, Block C, Acton House, access road off Marcus Clarke Street, Canberra ACT 2601. (062) 57 5611; 47 2177; 54 1111

COMMERCIAL DISPUTES

The following organisations can assist in major commercial disputes.

Australian Commercial Disputes Centre, Level 21, 175 Liverpool St, Sydney NSW 2000. (02) 267 1000

Institute of Arbitrators Australia, National Headquarters 6th Floor, Building B, World Trade Centre, Melbourne. (03) 614 1800; 614 3891. (Chapters of this organisation can be found in NSW, Vic., WA, Qld, SA and NT)

MEDIATION NETWORKS AND RESOURCE CENTRES

These organisations provide an important forum for the appraisal and exchange of information on a range of ADR programs now available within Australia. Newsletters may also be acquired from some of these organisations.

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Association of Australia Inc, c/- Community Justice Centre, 17 Randle St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010.

The Conflict Resolution Network Inc., PO Box 1016, Chatswood, NSW 2057. (02) 412 8500.

Conflict Resolution Foundation, Macquarie University, North Ryde NSW 2113.

SA Alternative Dispute Resolution Association, c/- The Community Mediation Service (Norwood), 110 The Parade, Norwood, SA 5065. (08) 362 1311

Mediation Association of Victoria Inc., GPO Box 127A, Melbourne, Vic. 3001.

Dispute Resolution Centre, Bond University, PO Box 10, Gold Coast Mail Centre, Qld 4217.

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