

An aerial photograph of agricultural fields, showing a mix of green and brown crops. A large, white, stylized arrow points from the left side of the image towards the right, partially overlapping the text.

# United Nations Global Compact

Communication on Progress

April 2014



## ➤ Statement of continued support from Chief Executive Partner Michael Rose

Over the past year, Allens has continued to implement and support the 10 principles of the United Nations Global Compact, which seeks to promote responsible corporate citizenship, encouraging business to be part of the solution to the challenges of globalisation.

As a firm, we recognise that we have broad responsibilities to our people, their families and the communities in which we live. In addition to maintaining the highest ethical standards, we engage with the wider community through our pro bono, reconciliation, charity and environment programs, and nurture close relationships with a wide range of community groups in each of those areas.

Examples of Allens' commitment to corporate social responsibility include:

- **Our Reconciliation Action Plan:** We continue to work with Indigenous people and their communities; to inspire like-minded businesses to engage; and to raise cultural awareness.
- **Our Affirmative Action Program:** Allens received the 2013 Employer of Choice for Women citation from the Federal Government's Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency. This is the eighth consecutive time that the firm has received this citation.
- **The activities of our Footprint Committees:** The Allens Footprint Committees are a driving force behind the firm's environment-related activities, policies and initiatives, and they are leading our major initiative for this year: becoming carbon neutral.
- **Our pro bono contribution:** Allens lawyers completed more than 40,000 hours of pro bono work during the past year, assisting more than 240 organisations and a further 350 individuals.
- **Our community contribution:** Through our National Indigenous Program and our Annual Funding Program, the firm actively invests in meaningful community projects that support the rights of marginalised groups in society.

I am pleased to present this *Communication on Progress*, which outlines not only our commitment to the United Nations Global Compact, but also the efforts of our people in honouring that commitment.



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several vertical strokes followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

**Michael Rose**  
Chief Executive Partner





# ➤ INTRODUCTION

Allens is a leading international law firm with partners, lawyers and corporate services staff across Asia and Australia.

We offer our clients access to leading lawyers and resources in Australia, Asia and around the world. Our clients recognise us for our commerciality, professionalism, integrity and technical expertise.

Allens, which was the first organisation in Australia to become a signatory to the United Nations Global Compact, demands the highest of ethical standards from its employees and partners. These ethical standards support the 10 principles of the Global Compact while also supporting our client relationships and the reputation of our business and the legal profession generally.

Working to fulfil the Global Compact means businesses like ours can help ensure that markets, commerce, technology and finance advance in ways that benefit economies and societies everywhere. That's why Allens is committed to internal and external practices – including our workplace and environment policies and community activities – that meet the criteria set by the Global Compact.





# HUMAN RIGHTS

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## PRINCIPLE 1

Business should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

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## PRINCIPLE 2

Businesses should ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuse.

## Commitment

Every human being is entitled to basic human rights – that is, freedom, equality, justice and the right to life. However, not everyone has access to the help or finances required to uphold these rights.

Allens has developed lasting relationships with non-government organisations and others within the community who are working to advance human rights. We recognise that these groups are often in the best position to identify the issues, while we have the resources and expertise to assist.

Allens works hard to achieve its human rights-related goals, as set out by the firm's various community committees. Our goals have been exceeded during the past year and revised targets for the coming year have been set. Our commitment to improving and protecting human rights, and our continual desire to push our human rights agenda, has been widely recognised within the broader community. In FY2013-14, Allens pushed the envelope in a range of different ways, some of which are outlined below.

## Systems

Allens has a number of systems in place that support human rights, in particular through our commitment to Pro Bono and Reconciliation. The firm's Pro Bono and Reconciliation systems are outlined below

### Pro Bono

Allens is committed to pro bono work and to having a coordinated, focused, well-balanced and meaningful pro bono practice. Our pro bono practice provides free legal assistance to a range of not-for-profit and charitable clients, as well as to individuals in need. Our particular priorities include human rights work, the advancement of Indigenous causes, and environmental protection. The pro bono practice runs across all of our legal departments and we aim to give all staff an opportunity to become involved in pro bono work. We see the enthusiastic engagement of our people as the key to the success of our pro bono program. We were a Foundation Signatory to the National Pro Bono Aspirational Target, which means we have committed to use our best efforts to ensure that the firm will undertake, on average, at least 35 hours of pro bono legal work per lawyer each year. In fact, our internal target is 50 hours per lawyer per year, so, in the four years that compliance has been measured, we have far exceeded the target.

The number of pro bono clients Allens has at any time is between 300 and 400, and they include organisations dedicated to the promotion of human rights, the environment and mental health. Our clients include: the Human Rights Law Centre, the International Service for Human Rights, the Great Barrier Reef Foundation, the Children's Protection Society and SANE Australia.

The firm also undertakes ground-breaking legal work for refugees.

In the 2012-13 financial year, Allens:

- completed more than 40,000 hours of pro bono work;
- assisted more than 240 organisations; and
- helped around 350 individuals.

In 2013, we have been able to provide pro bono assistance to:

250+ Homeless clinic clients

The number of human rights matters for which we have provided pro bono advocacy, including representation in 25 Asylum Seeker claims.

61



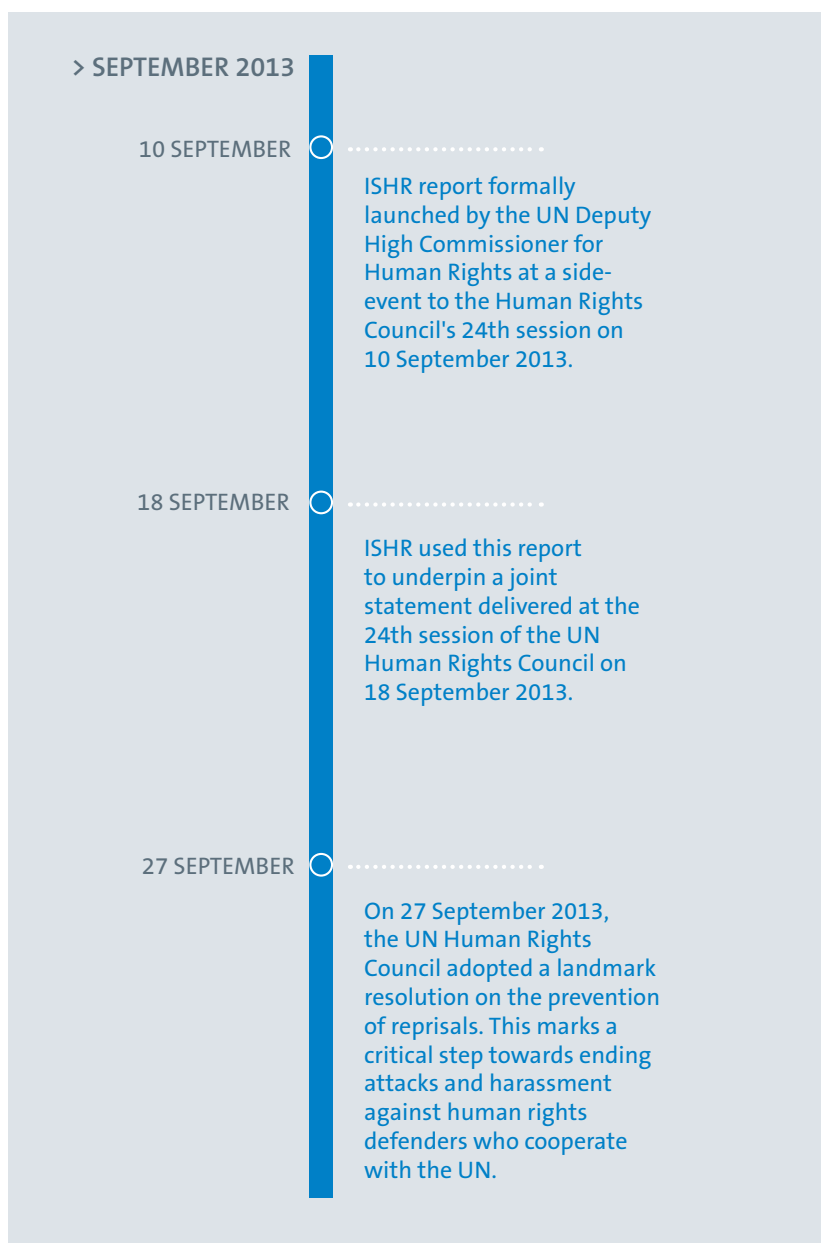
## Allens assists ISHR to shape landmark UN Resolution

The International Service for Human Rights (*ISHR*) is an independent, nongovernmental organisation dedicated to promoting and protecting human rights.

It achieves this by supporting human rights defenders, strengthening human rights systems, and leading and participating in coalitions for human rights change.

More than 50 lawyers and graduates across Allens' Perth, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney offices provided pro bono assistance to help ISHR compile a report on legislative protection from reprisals against individuals who cooperate with UN human rights bodies and European Union human rights mechanisms.

[www.ishr.ch](http://www.ishr.ch)



## Australian Marriage Equality

Allens, with the Human Rights Law Centre, recently acted on a pro bono basis for Australian Marriage Equality (**AME**) on its application to seek leave to intervene as a friend of the court in the High Court of Australia. AME sought to intervene in support of the Australian Capital Territory in proceedings where the Commonwealth of Australia had applied to overturn legislation passed by the ACT recognising same-sex marriage (the *Marriage Equality (Same-Sex) Act 2013* (ACT)). The Commonwealth argued this legislation was inconsistent with Commonwealth legislation on the subject of marriage (the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth)) and, therefore, the ACT's legislation was invalid.

Partner Malcolm Stephens, Lawyer Trieste Corby and Vacation Clerk Andrew Clark assisted AME by preparing an application for it to seek leave to appear as a friend of the court; researching various points of law; and assisting counsel, Jeremy Kirk SC and Perry Herzfeld (an Allens alumnus), to prepare submissions. Jeremy and Perry also appeared pro bono in this matter.

AME was granted leave to appear in these proceedings, and allowed to give written and oral submissions in support of the ACT's case.

The High Court ultimately decided that the ACT's legislation was inconsistent with Commonwealth legislation and therefore invalid. However, AME's intervention assisted the court to clarify the breadth of section 51(xxi), the 'marriage power', of the Constitution. In its reasons, the court made it clear that the marriage power in the Constitution allows the Federal Parliament to legislate in favour of same-sex marriage, if and when the Parliament should choose to do so. This is an important step in recognising marriage equality in Australia.

## Ministerial Intervention on behalf of Asylum Seekers

Since late 2012, Allens has been assisting asylum seekers to prepare Ministerial Intervention Requests, which are the option of last resort for people seeking protection in Australia.

Our clients, who are generally offshore arrivals, have been unsuccessful at earlier stages of the assessment process (which may have included judicial review in the Federal Magistrates Court or merits review in the Refugee Review Tribunal) and their only recourse is to appeal on compassionate grounds to the Minister to exercise his discretion under the *Migration Act 1958* (Cth) to grant a protection visa.

Many are suffering from severe psychological conditions and physical illnesses brought on by the events in their home countries which led them to flee, extended periods in detention and the uncertainty of their position.

The work is challenging, particularly in terms of overcoming communication barriers, attempting to understand the many complexities of the Migration Act, and because the potential outcome is so unpredictable yet has such a direct impact on our clients' future.

Unfortunately there are very few services that assist clients with this work, so we are grateful to have the opportunity to offer our assistance.

To date, a team from Allens has submitted requests to the Minister on behalf of three clients and are waiting with hope to hear the outcome of those requests.



## The Bunuba community establishes a foundation for the future

The Bunuba people are an Indigenous group from the Kimberley town of Fitzroy Crossing and the surrounding Fitzroy Valley. The Bunuba people have instructed the firm on several pro bono matters.

June Oscar AO, a Bunuba woman and chair of Bunuba Cattle Company, was awarded an Order of Australia this year for her work. After the community experienced 13 suicides in 13 months, June, alongside Emily Carter, began lobbying for alcohol restrictions, despite fierce community opposition. Alcohol-related domestic violence is now down by 43 per cent and the number of people seeking emergency health assistance due to alcohol-related injuries has halved.

Our team, which is mainly based in the Melbourne office, has worked with the group to restructure six Bunuba-owned corporate entities to simplify governance and operational matters, and to establish a Bunuba native title body as the central decision-making entity. Partner Jon Webster recently travelled to Fitzroy Crossing to brief the boards of the Bunuba entities.

Allens has also assisted with negotiations with Australian Agricultural Company Limited in relation to a commercial venture on two cattle stations over which Bunuba holds pastoral leases.

Lawyer Angela Gibbs has worked with the Allens team assisting the Bunuba people. 'It has been fantastic to work with the Bunuba people. The new corporate structure will help them carry out many activities for the community's benefit, including charitable activities (such as 'meals on wheels'), cultural and artistic programs, and commercial ventures. It has also been interesting to learn about the corporations regime set up specifically for Indigenous people, governed by the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (Cth) and regulated by the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations.'



June Oscar AO and Jon Webster at a Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation Board meeting.

## Navigating the safe way home

A team from Allens is working with the Prisoners' Legal Service (**PLS**) to help prisoners prepare parole applications through the SafeWay Home (**SWH**) Program. The SWH Program encourages prisoners to develop support networks and actively plan for their release. In this way, clients may overcome potential obstacles on their path to reintegration. The program aims to promote rehabilitation and to combat recidivism.

We received our first referral in March 2013, and have since assisted 18 clients in our Brisbane office. Eight of these clients are women, and 10 are males who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Many suffer from mental illness and/or intellectual impairment. Most clients have low or no literacy, or experience some form of communication barrier.

Our involvement has helped parole applicants begin to overcome their individual issues and to submit the best application possible to the Parole Board. We have invited interest in this project in Perth and should soon have a team there to assist the PLS clients.

In May 2013, volunteers completed their first parole application. One client was a 30-year-old woman convicted of assisting in a violent robbery. She suffered domestic violence from the age of 14 and a brother, whom she idolised, died in 2006. Following her brother's death, she isolated herself from her family and developed a gambling addiction, which led to her offending. She indicated to our volunteer lawyers that she had basically given up on herself and felt worthless.

Initially, she was quite reserved with our volunteers but, over a number of teleconferences, they developed an open relationship of trust and were able to assist her in developing a relapse prevention plan to realistically help her overcome her addiction, through the use of a network of both professional and family support. She has now accepted responsibility for her actions and is looking forward with new hope to being reunited with her family, including her three children, breaking her cycle of offending, and taking back control of her life.



'I initially didn't understand the community interest in facilitating parole. Now I have seen that preparing a successful parole application requires clients to address past challenges, take responsibility for their actions and plan constructively for the future. It's a positive thing for them and the whole community.'

Giselle Kilvert, Lawyer



## Reconciliation

In 2009, Allens became the first top-tier law firm in Australia to institute a Reconciliation Action Plan (**RAP**), designed to help close the gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians.

The firm recognised that we have an important role to play on this issue. We decided that the steps we would take under the plan would be long-term and would be based on the premise that the most meaningful results emanate from relationships of equal trust, that in turn leads to real opportunities.

Below is a snapshot of what our firm has been doing in the area during the past year.

## Supply Nation

Formerly the Australian Indigenous Minority Supplier Council, Supply Nation facilitates the development of commercial relationships between corporate Australia and Indigenous-owned businesses. Allens continues to develop our supplier diversity program and to increase the diversity within our supply chain. We are working with various Supply Nation-certified suppliers, and providing mentoring to assist them in finding opportunities within our business and with others in the corporate community. This year saw us engage Yaru as the supplier of locally sourced mineral water for use in client events and meetings across all of our Australian offices.



## Building Cultural Capacity

The RAP Committees in each of Allens' Australian offices work to build cultural capacity and awareness across the firm through various events to mark occasions such as National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. In the past year, such events have included film screenings, art tours, cultural walks and debates on constitutional recognition. In addition, cultural awareness training is offered to all new graduates joining the firm, to further highlight the importance of the firm's commitment to reconciliation.



## Jawun

Jawun forms partnerships to benefit both corporate and Indigenous Australia. Together they improve the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people around Australia by supporting Indigenous communities on the ground.

Jawun works with Indigenous leaders to develop secondment programs between corporate organisations and Indigenous businesses. Jawun aims to foster economic and social development in Indigenous communities by focusing on long-term, sustainable initiatives.

Allens' relationship with Jawun commenced in 2011, with several Corporate Services employees seconded to work with Indigenous businesses over a 4-6 week period. These programs were undertaken across Cape York, Cairns, Shepparton and Redfern. In 2013, six Allens secondees took part in the program, and a further six will take part in 2014.



*above* Young attendees at the Garma Festival,  
North-East Arnhem Land.  
Photograph by Louise Law.

*right* Jawun secondees camping at Gulkula, during  
program induction week in North-East Arnhem Land.



## Indigenous legal internship program 2013

The firm's Indigenous legal Internship program gives Indigenous law students exposure to a commercial legal environment, and provides valuable learning and development opportunities. Building on previous years, this year saw us take on 21 interns nationally: eight in both Brisbane and Sydney, four in Melbourne and one in Perth.

'I'm currently working on a matter that is going to court next week. Essentially, I am researching surrounding case law which is going to help us advise our client in the lead up to the case.'

Corey Smith, Indigenous legal intern, who worked in the Competition group in our Sydney office.

'I met so many interesting, unique and inspiring individuals and I learnt a lot from them. It has re-ignited my motivation to continue to study hard. I know that this experience will be so valuable when completing the remainder of my university degree and when I make the transition into the working world.'

Clementine Pickwick, Indigenous legal intern, who worked in the Banking & Finance group in Melbourne.

## Indigenous mentoring: a different perspective

The Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (**AIEF**) is a private sector-led, not-for-profit organisation focused on empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in financial need to build a future through quality education and careers. AIEF is a product of strong partnership between the Australian Government and the private sector and has deep and broad support from all layers of the Australian community.

Allens' relationship with AIEF has touched all parts of the firm, whether it's through undertaking extensive pro bono work, providing funding, facilitating development workshops or hosting their annual report launch.

[www.aief.com.au](http://www.aief.com.au)



Lawyer Faheem Anwar with mentee Jerome, an Indigenous student from Brisbane

## AIME Hoodie Day 2013

The Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience provides an educational program that enables Indigenous high school students to experience mentoring opportunities, to develop confidence in their abilities and to encourage them to complete high school at the same rate as their peers. In 2013 Allens once again supported Hoodie Day and engaged employees through an online community where they were encouraged to chat about our reconciliation initiatives and share ideas about our reconciliation strategy.



The Melbourne office shows off their AIME hoodies.



## National Indigenous Program

Each year, in recognition of our responsibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, Allens funds a separate 'National Indigenous Program' which forms part of our proposal selection process. We select specific projects aimed at redressing the inequalities which exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In 2013, the firm supported three targeted projects:

### David Wirripanda Foundation 'Moorditj Mums Program'

David Wirripanda Foundation (**DWF**) aims to improve the quality of life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by promoting strong role models and healthy life choices. This is the basis for all of their mentoring programs. The focus is to increase the retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in school, and improve their life choices after leaving school by encouraging further study or entry into the workforce.

The 'Moorditj Mums Program' is a 'mums and bubs' program delivered in Western Australia to provide mothers with the knowledge, skills, support and mentoring to transition into further education or employment while managing a family life. The program is delivered by DWF mentors and tailored specifically to Indigenous women to ensure a friendly, culturally-appropriate setting.



Jim Dwyer, Prue Mewburn (Project Officer, Charlie Perkins Trust), Richard Potok (Executive Director, Charlie Perkins Trust), Vanessa Kingston, Cynthia Anandajayasekaram, Alex Mason and Millie Grant.



Staff from Allens Perth office visit the team at DWF.

### Tooth Mob: providing free dental care to remote Indigenous communities

As part of the firm's National Indigenous Project, it is supporting 'Tooth Mob', an initiative of the Charlie Perkins Trust for Children and Students.

This project sends volunteer dental teams, comprising two qualified dental practitioners and two oral health assistants, to remote Indigenous communities for two weeks of each month between June and November. Volunteers provide free dental services, performing extractions and oral examinations and treating acute periodontal infections.

Allens has supported the Charlie Perkins Trust over many years through annual funding and pro bono work for the organisation. ([www.perkinstrust.com.au](http://www.perkinstrust.com.au))

### Australian Indigenous Education Foundation: improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth

Australian Indigenous Education Foundation provides scholarships to Indigenous Australians from remote backgrounds to attend private boarding schools and university residential colleges in Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane.

The Firm covered the costs of a new website to enable students to easily access information about the scholarships offered by the Foundation. This allows students to identify opportunities that may suit them and apply for these with greater ease.

## Annual Funding Projects

Alongside our National Indigenous Project, the Firm funds other targeted projects that contribute to our wider community. These projects are selected each year by a Committee of staff and partners and target a variety of marginalised groups in society including those who are disabled, homeless or living in poverty. The firm is proud to offer support to those in our community who are not as fortunate and assist them in building a future. A brief selection of some of the projects supported in 2013 are extracted below:

### Blackwood Youth Foundation: Maximising the potential of disadvantaged young people

Blackwood is a six-month early intervention program designed for students at risk.

Twice a year, the Blackwood Centre in Hallora, Victoria, opens its doors to a new intake of 20 at-risk students from schools throughout the local area, involving them in a semester-long program designed to develop their self-esteem and leadership skills and help ensure that these young people maximise their individual potential.

Allens has supported Blackwood for seven years. Over recent years, we have provided funding toward the construction of many of the facilities that the school enjoys, including a shower block and gymnasium.

More recently, Allens has also contributed to the school's Wilderness Camp, which forms a key part of its curriculum. The camp is an intense experience in which the students and adult supervisors must rely on each other for help and support in order to complete activities, allowing for the further development of students' social and leadership skills.

‘What Allens has done is have a direct hand in redirecting these kids on another life pathway through these camps.’

Julie Hayes, Teacher and Co-Founder of Blackwood

[www.blackwood.vic.edu.au](http://www.blackwood.vic.edu.au)

### CASE for Refugees: ‘Allens Interpreter Fund’

CASE for Refugees is a community legal centre providing free legal advice, representation and advocacy for refugees, humanitarian visa holders and those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

In 2013, Allens has continued its support of the ‘Interpreter Fund’, which enables CASE to provide an interpreter to their clients. This helps to improve access to justice and prevent marginalisation.





# LABOUR

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## PRINCIPLE 3

Business should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

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## PRINCIPLE 4

Business should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

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## PRINCIPLE 5

Business should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.

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## PRINCIPLE 6

Business should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.



## Commitment

Allens maintains employment arrangements and agreements that do not prohibit or discourage freedom of association or collective bargaining. The firm opposes all forms of forced and compulsory labour and seeks to abolish child labour. The firm is also active in its endeavour to eliminate discrimination in respect of employment.

## Systems

Allens has a number of systems in place that are designed to advance the UN Global Compact principles relating to labour. A number of these systems are highlighted below.

## Equal Employment Opportunity

Allens is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (**EEO**) and takes a zero tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment and bullying in the workplace. Providing a safe and supportive workplace for our partners and employees is critical to our business. We value the diversity of our workforce, respect the differences between employees, and recognise that each person has individual talents and skills to bring to their role. All partners and employees work in an environment in which they can enjoy their work and relationships with colleagues, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying.

All new employees have compulsory online EEO training upon commencement with the firm. Our EEO training module was updated during 2012 and was relaunched in February 2013.

Externally, the firm invested more than 1770 pro-bono hours towards advocating for women's organisations and/or matters related to women's rights.

## Diversity Strategy

Allens has long been committed to promoting diversity.

Our diversity and inclusion strategy is built on five key segments gender, flexibility, reconciliation, cultural competency and relationships (including family) and two broader focus areas, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex and disability.

Since 2010, we have produced an annual Equality and Diversity Report, which provides analysis of current gender outcomes within our firm and details recent achievements, performance and key areas for improvement. The framework of the report is the UN Women's Empowerment Principles and progress is reported against four key areas: building engagement and accountability, ensure compelling careers, invest in partnerships and profiles, and empowering our people.

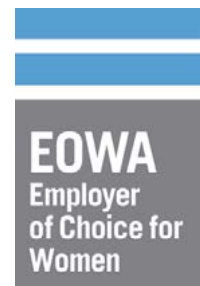


## Leadership

Between 2011 and 2013 our diversity strategy was supported by the creation of a Diversity Advisory Board which provided thought diversity leadership for the firm. The Board was composed of 60 per cent external members and 40 per cent internal members, and chaired by our Chief Executive Partner, Michael Rose. The Diversity Advisory Board met twice yearly, and made recommendations for diversity actions within the firm.

Building on the foundation set by the Diversity Advisory Board, our diversity strategy is now supported by an Inclusion and Diversity Council, which consists of internal representatives who oversee strategy and progress. We have also introduced a Diversity Thought Leadership Lunch Series, which brings together a group of 8-10 business leaders twice a year from four clients to provide diversity thought leadership and expertise within business and the broader community.

In March 2013, we were awarded the federal Employer of Choice for Women citation by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (formerly Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency). The citation is an acknowledgement of organisations that recognise and advance women in the workplace. Assessment is against rigorous application criteria which considers a number of workplace issues, including pay equity, women in executive management, flexibility, sex-based harassment and career development training. The citation also requires the organisation's CEO be the driving force behind the culture that supports the advancement of female employees.



Also, as part of our commitment to supplier diversity, information sessions were held with key recruitment suppliers outlining our approach to diversity and detailing supplier expectations.

## Gender

Allens Gender Action Plan is built on four pillars: empower our people; build engagement and accountability; invest in partnerships and profiles; and ensure compelling careers. The four pillars provide the structure for development of gender strategy, initiatives and the measurement of outcomes.

Since 2002, our professional development programs have included programs specifically focused on the engagement, career and professional development and promotion of women in the firm. In August 2009, we reinvigorated and extended our professional and career development programs for women.

Our Women at Allens Program plays an important part in the professional development of women in the firm, and reflects the value that we place on our people and on the relationships that we have with each other, our clients and the broader community.

## Career Sponsorship and Support

- [Women at Allens](#) – The Women at Allens Network Committees are responsible for planning networking and career development events, and offer important networking and profiling building opportunities for women across the firm's four Australian offices. In 2013, our Women at Allens Committees across our four Australian offices ran a total of 35 events related to the development and progression of women in business. In addition, they also ran events to raise awareness and funds for International Women's Day in March 2013.
- [New career model](#) – Our new career model offers more active sponsorship and engagement in career planning from partners, and more transparency about what is required to progress.
- [Mentoring Program](#) – In 2013, four of our high potential females were mentored by an experienced mentor outside the firm through our McCarthy Mentoring Program. This program has been designed to match senior associates who are on the path to partnership with an external mentor whose primary role is to offer support, strategic advice and inspiration.
- [Leadership Program](#) – Each year we provide an opportunity for high potential women to participate in the CEW's Leadership Program, a 12-month program that aims to inspire women to take on more senior leadership roles and enhance their leadership capacity. In 2013, four women (two corporate services managers and two senior associates) took part in the program.
- [Women Partners' Retreat](#) – In 2013, we held our first Women Partners' Retreat. The aim of the retreat was to target acceleration of women to partnership, and allow our female partners, particularly those from smaller offices and practice groups, to get to know each other and form a more bonded and supportive cohort.



## Community leadership

In 2013, we hosted a number of seminars for organisations committed to greater representation of women at senior levels in business. These included hosting an alumni event for Chief Executive Women (CEW) and a luncheon with the Australian Governor-General, Her Excellency the Honourable Quentin Bryce AC CVO. In 2013, the Asia Community Committee provided funding to Friends of Mongolian Children (FOMC), a charity that assists single-mother, at-risk families in Mongolia.

Externally, the firm invested more than 1770 pro bono hours towards advocating for women's organisations and/or matters related to women's rights.



The Melbourne office marks International Women's Day with a lunch for more than 70 of the office's women, with Chief Justice Marilyn Warren, the first female Chief Justice in Australia, as the guest of honour.

## Flexibility

Allens' goal is to create an engaging work environment that inspires our people to give their best.

Our approach to flexibility is broad and recognises that employees' flexibility needs will vary at different life stages and ages, will be different for each individual, and may change over time, particularly when family commitments change. Our policies and initiative, such as our Managing the Transition Program, purchased annual leave, part-time work, job sharing, flexible hours, working from home, access to emergency child and elder care, and graduated return from parental leave, have been developed to support this. Our new career model also offers a focus on mobility and flexibility in practice by being based on performance and potential rather than years of service.

We currently have 13 partners in the firm who work flexibly (five men and eight women).

All of our programs are supported by coaching, tools and information kits and are led by our Head of Flexibility and Diversity, Jacqui Abbott.

- [Managing the Transition](#) – Our Managing the Transition Program provides support and information for women and men to help them best manage their professional and personal commitments. Two key components of the Managing the Transition program are access for all partners and staff to information kits, and the opportunity for mothers and fathers to attend workshops to discuss strategies to manage work and external responsibilities. The information kits cover topics such as families and work, eldercare, mental illness and next phase/retirement.

## Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex (**LGBTI**) Interest Group

We are a member of Pride in Diversity, Australia's first and only not-for-profit workplace program designed specifically to assist employers with the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender employees. Through our client contacts and relationship with Pride in Diversity, we are regularly invited to participate in LGBTI events and round-tables.

As part of our membership arrangements with Pride in Diversity, all employees are able to participate in activities and events that are run by Pride in Diversity. Our LGBTI Networking Interest Group was established in 2011 and is open to all employees who identify as LGBTI as well as their supporters, associates, parents and friends. In early 2013, the firm participated in the online 'LGBTI inclusion in the workplace' survey via Pride in Diversity. The survey was open to all employees. In August 2013, we reviewed all of our policies to ensure they complied with the Australian Federal Government's amendments to the Sex Discrimination Act to provide greater protection to LGBTI employees.

An example where Allens is helping this group externally was the central role played in a landmark High Court case that determined whether the concept of 'sex' extends beyond the categories of male and female for the purposes of a key New South Wales statute.

### Allens helps to put gender on the agenda

*NSW Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages v Norrie*, which has received national media coverage, concerned the effort of Norrie, an individual who was born male and commenced, but did not complete, sex reassignment surgery to become female, to be recorded on the NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages register as being of non-specific sex, rather than as 'male' or 'female'.

Last year, the NSW Court of Appeal held that the word 'sex', as used in the NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages Act, is not limited to 'male' or 'female' but can include other options, overturning decisions of the NSW Administrative Decisions Tribunal and its Appeals Panel. The High Court case concerned whether the Court of Appeal erred in finding that a person's sex can be registered as 'non-specific'.

Allens, with the Human Rights Law Centre (**HRLC**), represented A Gender Agenda, an organisation that represents intersex and gender diverse people and their supporters, on a pro bono basis as a 'friend of the court'.

The Allens team included Partner Rachel Nicolson and Lawyers Andrew Wilcock and Michela Agnoletti. In addition, Anna Brown, an Allens alumna, led the HRLC team, and Kris Walker and Liz Bennett, also Allens alumnae, acted as A Gender Agenda's barristers.

According to Rachel: 'Any decision made in this matter will set a precedent and therefore will affect the wider intersex and transgender community.'

'By representing A Gender Agenda, other people, beyond just Norrie, will be taken into account and understand how the impending decision will also impact on them.'

'Above all, we are contributing to ensuring, importantly, that all voices are heard on the issue of the inappropriate categorisation of intersex people—again, potentially impacting on their human rights and causing further marginalisation,' said Rachel.

The High Court unanimously ruled in favour of Norrie. The Court said that the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1995* (NSW) allows registration of change of sex to a category of non-specific – ie a category other than male or female.



The Allens and Human Rights Law Centre team, with A Gender Agenda's Sam Griffin





# ENVIRONMENT

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## PRINCIPLE 7

Business should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

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## PRINCIPLE 8

Business should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

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## PRINCIPLE 9

Business should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.



## Commitment

Allens has long been committed to sustainability and to supporting the environment and our past efforts to reduce our carbon footprint are culminating this year in the achievement of carbon neutrality.

As a law firm, we recognise that true sustainability comes from consistency in best practice, ranging from our procurement practices and the education of staff, to the way our offices are managed and maintained.

Allens has implemented many changes to reduce our impact on the environment, and these initiatives have been driven by our people. From the Leadership Team and partners to our staff and suppliers, everyone is charged with considering the environment in all aspects of their work. Our commitment to being sustainable leaders is driven, and formally monitored, by the Allens Footprint Committees. The Footprint Committees' goal is to reduce Allens' environmental footprint as much as possible in the areas of energy, water, waste (reuse and recycling), greenhouse emissions and procurement, with the balance of our impact offset by carefully selected carbon credits.

## Systems

The Footprint Committees have had a great impact over the past decade, making significant changes to the way the firm operates, from the small things – such as subsidising KeepCups and BPA-free water bottles for staff, supplying public transport tickets instead of cab charges and removing globes from all fridges – to the very large, some of which are listed below.

## Carbon neutral

Allens plans to become a carbon neutral firm in the current financial year. We have significantly reduced our carbon footprint over the past few years through the range of initiatives rolled out by our Footprint Committees. While we will continue that effort, we have decided that now is the time to offset the firm's remaining carbon footprint.

Through the purchase of fully accredited Carbon Credits, Allens will achieve the objective of becoming carbon neutral.

Allens will purchase carbon credits from organisations that, as far as possible, will be aligned with the goals of our In The Community program. All credits will comply with the Australian Government's National Carbon Offset Standard to ensure their environmental integrity. We will also apply for certification as carbon neutral through the NCOS Carbon Neutral Program.

The Footprint Committees are also in the process of preparing an Emissions Management Plan for the firm and will continue to develop and implement ways to reduce GHG emissions.

Working with our building owners, our Australian offices have waterless urinals in the male toilets, saving eight Olympic-sized pools in water.



## Recycling

Allens provides employees with a suite of recycling options, ranging from battery recycling to confidential paper recycling. Employees are constantly reminded to 'reduce the use' and then recycle what's left.

Since 2004, Allens' paper consumption has gone from 61 million sheets to 18 million.

## Stationery Amnesty

Allens regularly runs a Stationery Amnesty. This occurs a few times a year, for instance around when our graduates rotate to new practice groups. Office supplies are recovered and redistributed throughout the firm.

## Partnering with Vodafone to recycle mobile phones

In 2013, the Allens Footprint Committee partnered with Vodafone on a sustainability initiative.

This initiative saw the firm work together to recycle old and unused mobile phones, batteries and chargers for one month in 2013.

When disposed of correctly, 90 per cent of the materials used in mobile phones are recyclable.

Recycling mobile phones reduces landfill, and helps to avoid future greenhouse gas emissions, saves energy, protects our environment and conserves scarce natural resources.



Phillip Cornwell and Tarsha Gavin draw the winners of the Footprint Committee's Earth Hour prize, as part of the Sydney office's Mobile Phone Recycling competition.

## Fitted for Work

Recycling at Allens goes beyond the firm.

Since 2005, Fitted for Work has transformed the lives of 6500 women. Their mission is to assist disadvantaged women to get work and keep it. They do this by providing free clothing appropriate for interviews and their mentoring and transition to work programs.

Last year, Allens ran a drive where staff donated corporate clothes for Fitted for Work to redistribute to disadvantaged and unemployed women as they prepare to re-enter the workforce.

## Reducing the need to travel

Allens is very focused on reducing our people's need to travel, especially flights.

During the past year, Allens has been working on a formal transport policy and, in doing so, has asked employees whether they can avoid the need to travel, reduce the distance travelled (or use a more environmentally friendly means of transport) and offset emissions where travel cannot be avoided.

In addition, our IT team has run a comprehensive audit across all offices for audio and video conferencing systems and have since made some major improvements to our systems. Video conferencing is now a very viable option for running training and holding meetings. This has reduced the need to travel, thereby reducing our carbon footprint and travel expenses, and has improved productivity.

## Turning off lights

Working with our landlords, all new fit-outs across our offices now have sensor lighting, where unused rooms will automatically have their lights switched off.

## Earth Hour

Hundreds of millions of people, businesses and governments around the world unite each year to support the largest environmental event in history – Earth Hour. More than 5200 cities and towns in 135 countries worldwide switched off their lights for Earth Hour 2013. Once again, lights were switched off across Allens' offices.



## Ongoing initiatives

A key part of Allens being the most sustainable firm it can be is to continually look at projects and initiatives that can further reduce emissions. Here is a look at some of the new projects currently in the pipeline from our Allens' IT team, alongside the Footprint Committees and Corporate Services departments:

- **IT Infrastructure pilots, including Wake-on-LAN:** This program allows staff to fully shut down their PCs every evening, to which they will automatically start up the following morning before staff arrive. This project aims to not only reduce power consumption, but PC start-up time.
- **Removing old servers:** Our IT is working on an ongoing project to remove old servers across the offices, and replace them with virtual servers. For instance, one server recently removed from the Sydney office has now saved the equivalent in power to the annual power usage of eight NSW homes.
- **Reducing colour printing:** Building on the success the firm has achieved in reducing printing generally, Allens is now focusing on reducing colour printing by rolling out a number of initiatives, including raising awareness and implementing changes to print management to reduce unintended colour printing.
- **Pin printing:** Pin printing, and piloting swipe cards, to stop uncollected printing off the printers.
- **Online forms:** A move to online forms, including credit card statements, leave forms and client bills. This not only reduces paper usage, but also record storage and couriers between states.
- **Online journals:** Our Business Operation team has worked with law institutes, conference organisations and news outlets to move from hardcopy publications being sent to staff to online subscriptions and journals.

## Outside the firm

Allens' impact on the environment goes beyond the work of our Footprint Committees, to the environmental organisations with which we associate, and which we can support through our Pro Bono, Charity and Reconciliation committees.

Here are just some recent examples of Allens supporting environmental work through our Pro Bono practice.

### EarthWatch

EarthWatch is a not-for-profit organisation that combines volunteer opportunities for individuals with scientific research expeditions to conserve wildlife and the environment.

In 2013, a Melbourne team worked with EarthWatch on a couple of matters, one of which is helping on their Bush Blitz II project.

This project involves a number of expeditions to document the plants and animals in hundreds of properties across Australia and to provide a base map of all species of plant and animal life in Australia. The team has helped draft the contracts for the project's major sponsor, BHP Billiton, and also for the Australian Government through the Department of Environment.

They are also helping EarthWatch to get their latest venture off the ground.

'EarthWatch sees real opportunity in the overseas market, especially targeting young people looking for "gap year" opportunities. Korea is their first market and we are in the middle of drafting a contract with a travel company there,' said one team member. 'Hopefully, the work we are doing in this instance can go some of the way to help EarthWatch further develop this business model, ensuring this important organisation can grow.'

To say thank you for the pro bono work that the firm is currently providing, EarthWatch recently gave Katherine Kirby and Michael Gomm the opportunity to see the organisation's work first hand by taking part in a one-day expedition exploring the wetlands and lakes in and around Melbourne as part of its *Turtles on the Move* project, which measures the population status of local freshwater turtles.





## Bicycle NSW

Allens has worked pro bono with Bicycle NSW since 2004.

Bicycle NSW's mission is to create a better environment for cycling. It runs programs and events, advocates for better conditions for riders, and provides a variety of information for bicycle users.

According to Partner Richard Kriedemann, Allens has worked with Bicycle NSW on a mix of projects.

'This work has ranged from helping them to update their governance arrangements, to formalising its agreements with their affiliation groups, like Bicycle User Groups.

'More recently, we have helped to set up the Cycling Promotion Fund as a charitable trust and advised on trade mark protection issues, as well as helped with commercial arrangements for their current and former premises, and the terms and conditions for their major events and event management contracts.

'It's been fantastic to be able to help Bicycle NSW on its strategic issues and projects over such a long period of time, especially as it's an organisation that promotes an activity that so many of our people are so passionate about,' added Richard.

Between 2006 and 2010, we have reduced our emissions by 31 per cent.



Richard Kriedemann on one of his bike trips.





# ANTI-CORRUPTION

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## PRINCIPLE 10

Business should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.



## Commitment

As a leading law firm, Allens is committed to ensuring that our employees abide by the law. This includes laws that prohibit corruption in all its forms.

## Systems

Allens has its own policies that aim to prevent corruption in all its forms, including a Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy. Two of the firm's systems that relate to anti-corruption are outlined below.

### Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy

The Fraud and Corruption Policy aims to ensure that Allens personnel, as well as third parties that act on behalf of Allens, do not engage in corruption and minimise the risk of Allens breaching anti-corruption laws. All Allens partners, employees and contractors are responsible for the prevention of fraud and corruption when acting on behalf of Allens and must ensure their own actions do not result in fraud or corruption. Additionally, all personnel have an obligation to report (anonymously, if preferred) suspected fraud or corruption.

### Ethics Committee

Allens' Ethics Committee continues to help our people deal with ethical issues encountered during the course of their work, including situations where it might be suspected that a party to a transaction is engaging in corrupt conduct. The Ethics Committee is closely involved in a wide range of training at the firm, covering the issues of ethical conduct, professional responsibility and anti-corruption.

## Activities

During the past year, Allens engaged in a range of activities that demonstrated support for the Global Compact principle on anti-corruption. These included:

- holding seminars for clients detailing compliance requirements according to Australian and overseas anti-bribery laws;
- leading the work of the UN Global Compact Australian Network's anti-bribery leadership group; and
- providing extensive advice to a range of clients on establishing anti-bribery policies and compliance programs in Australia and overseas, and on conducting anti-bribery due diligence on client-proposed transactions and business relationships.



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