

Tue, 24 Feb at 11:13 am

Community legal centres provide an important service to everyday Australians facing legal difficulties.

In my view they should not be pursuing ideological or political aims.

I was deeply concerned at comments made about the EDO by the Federal Court in relation to the Barossa case.

Community legal centres do important work. They help everyday Australians who cannot afford a lawyer.

But community legal centres are not political campaign vehicles. They are there to provide legal services to the community, nothing more.

I have been deeply concerned at comments made by the Federal Court in relation to the conduct of the EDO, which included allegations of witness tampering and confecting evidence.

In being forced by the courts to cover nearly \$10 million in defendant costs, the EDO's resources are now significantly depleted.

I think the community is right to demand a higher standard of conduct.

The task for the EDO moving forward is simple: it must consider whether it is a community legal service or a political campaign vehicle. It cannot and should not be both.

Public confidence depends on organisations like the EDO staying within their proper role.