

# RPA News

## Regulation. Protection. Action.

*News update for all practitioners from the Victorian Legal Services Board + Commissioner*

**Bulletin No. 32**

**Issued June 2017**

### Practising Certificate Renewals – some good news

Every current Victorian practising certificate will expire on 30 June 2017.

The good news is that the vast majority of lawyers have already applied to renew their practising certificate for the 2017-18 year.

The Board was impressed to see that 89% of lawyers had applied to renew their practising certificate by 30 April – the highest proportion ever. On behalf of the Board, I congratulate the Victorian profession for your efforts.

Since then, a further 6% of lawyers have now completed their applications. This leaves only a small number (1,400) who are yet to renew for the 2017-18 year.

We know that each year around 800 lawyers leave the profession, either permanently or for a short period. Given that figure, we expect that there are only around 600 lawyers yet to renew. While this is a low number, among these people will be the 50 or so lawyers who forget to renew and end up engaging in unlicensed, and therefore unqualified, legal practice.

### **What happens if you fail to renew?**

There are serious consequences for failing to renew your practising certificate. The penalties were described in our [RPA News bulletin #27](#) sent last year.

The Uniform Law *allows no discretion* to backdate a practising certificate to cover the period of unqualified legal practice. Lawyers who practice law without a current certificate will need to advise their PII Insurer and deal with their clients directly and responsibly on the question of return of fees.<sup>1</sup>

Remember, your practising certificate is an individual privilege, and therefore keeping it current and annually attesting to your fitness and propriety is **your responsibility and yours alone**.

Renew via [LSB Online](#).

### **Michael McGarvie**

CEO Legal Services Board  
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<sup>1</sup> Rule 17 of the *Legal Profession Uniform General Rules 2015*, Section 10 of the Uniform Law