



Hon Jill Hennessy MP

Attorney-General
Minister for Workplace Safety

Level 26, 121 Exhibition Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Telephone: (03) 8684 1111
DX: 210098

Our ref: CD/19/295948

Ms Fiona Bennett, Chair, Victorian Legal Services Board
Ms Fiona McLeay, Victorian Legal Services Commissioner
Level 5, 555 Bourke St
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Ms Bennett and Ms McLeay

I am pleased to provide you with the Statement of Expectations (SOE) for the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner (VLSBC). This SOE applies for the period 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2021, or until otherwise amended.

Improving the administration and enforcement of regulation

The SOE sets out my expectations for VLSBC's contribution to the Government's program of better regulation. The SOE aims to reduce the regulatory burden on households, not-for-profit organisations and businesses by promoting more efficient and effective regulation. It also outlines my expectations for broader improvements in VLSBC's performance.

As Attorney-General, I am responsible for administering the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014* (the Act). The SOE should be read in the context of the objectives, obligations, and functions outlined in the Act.

The SOE outlines key governance and performance objectives and targets aimed at improving the administration and enforcement of regulation and thus reducing its cost impact on business and the community.

The SOE replaces the SOE issued to VLSBC on 20 December 2017.

Improvements and targets

Based on consultation between Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS) and VLSBC, I have identified key elements of governance and operational performance where there are opportunities for VLSBC to make improvements that would reduce cost impacts on business. In consultation with the Red Tape Commissioner, legal practitioners, the Victorian bar, and the broader community as appropriate, VLSBC is expected to identify activities that it will undertake to achieve the following performance improvements and targets:

Timeliness

To encourage regulatory compliance and reduce regulatory burden, I expect the VLSBC to investigate further ways to reduce the time taken by regulated entities and the public to access and submit information.

Improvement	Target
Improve timely access for consumers and legal practitioners by enabling access to the VLBSBC website from all mobile device types and a range of web browsers.	30 June 2021
Enable legal practitioners to complete and submit the full range of forms online and allow consumers a broader range of options to initiate contact with the VLSBC.	30 June 2021

Risk-based regulation

I expect the VLSBC to continually review its existing processes to ensure that they appropriately target risk, thereby minimising regulatory burden.

Improvement	Target
Collect data to understand the interaction of consumers of legal services with the legal industry and inform risk-based regulation.	31 December 2020
Prepare actions to respond to any of the potential consumer harms identified in the consumer research.	30 June 2021

Compliance-related assistance and advice

I expect the VLSBC to provide accessible information related to regulatory requirements.

Improvement-	Target
Provide advice to the legal profession to raise awareness, knowledge and skill development in workplace safety and the prevention and management of sexual harassment in the legal workplace.	30 June 2021

You will be aware that the Royal Commission into the Management of Police Informants has indicated that it will consider the role of legal profession regulators with respect to lawyers who might have acted as police informants. In the event that any comments or findings of the Royal Commission justify amending or adding to the above targets, I will write to you again with an updated SOE.

Reporting

Reporting on the VLSBC's progress to achieve these SOE performance targets should be undertaken in the context of annual financial reporting to avoid dual reporting streams. As part of annual reporting, regulators are expected to report on:

- current baseline levels for performance targets set in this SOE; and

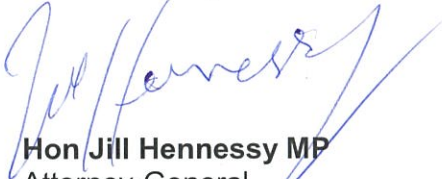
- activities to be undertaken to reach the performance targets and improvements set out in this SOE.

I also expect that these SOE performance targets will be incorporated into the VLSBC's corporate plan, and that the SOE will be published on the VLSBC website upon receipt.

I expect that within two months of receipt of this letter, the VLSBC will respond to the SOE, outlining how it intends to achieve the performance improvements and targets set in the SOE. The response should include details of the specific activities that will be undertaken by the VLSBC to achieve those improvements and targets and should be published on the VLSBC's website.

I look forward to receiving the VLSBC's response, and its report on how it is achieving best practice in the regulation of legal services.

Yours sincerely



Hon Jill Hennessy MP
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Minister for Workplace Safety

24 / 6 / 2019