Law Summit International (LSI) Submission to the CPD Review

LSI welcomes the opportunity to submit details of its approach to continuing professional development for Victorian lawyers.

LSI conducts short (3-4 day) conferences on-line and in person, off-shore (when and where COVID safe) in compulsory and contemporary legal issues relevant to professional practice, with an emphasis on opportunities for bi-lateral legal services off-shore in compatible jurisdictions. Topics include international law, international trade relations, WTO issues, and Anti-dumping laws, work with the OECD, international arbitration and exporter/import. Courses also provide insight to services in the international education sector, inbound productive investment and tourism services. These are designed to provide a specialist update on relevant issues, highlight opportunities that may not ordinarily be understood in the domestic market in contemporary international issues - supply chains, FIRB determinations, extraterritorial anti-bribery laws, diversification from China as a trading partner or Free trade (opportunities for legal services arising from the Indonesia-Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement).

The approach of LSI addresses some shortcomings of traditional methods of accruing CPD points.

Essentially, it is a commitment to separate (in time and proximity) from the routine of billable hours by participating in an off-shore conference, attended by Australian and international lawyers (usually of the host country through their professional associations) over an extended period which captures the intent of continuing legal education by creating a venue for dialogue around the course subject and matters of mutual interest. This approach caters to those wishing to accrue their compulsory 10 annual CPD points in an immersive environment that combines practical learning in a social, cultural and collegiate atmosphere.

Presentations are a mix of live seminar, open debate, guest panel Q&A and self-directed on-line topics to suit the manner and timing of participants over an extended period as an alternate to the relatively ineffective classroom method of arranging last minute courses to meet Institute obligations.

This approach attracts those seeking a range of contemporary topics, supported in the learning process (and under a learning plan maintained by LSI) with the incentive of a recognised, verifiable commitment to completion of the Institutes requirements

An incentive is essential to addresses some of the issues expressed by practitioners that view CPD as an ‘obligation’ , leading to focus on the most convenient and lowest (no) cost means of fulfilling the requirement. The courses offered by LSI require forward planning, a commitment of time and money with an incentive that requires the participant practitioners’ attention as the focus of the activity rather than a series of compulsory hours.

Those willing to make the commitment to improving their professional skills also gain the benefit of socialising with colleagues and foreign practitioners of various experience and speciality with mutual interests in developing joint ventures, client contacts and agency representation. The ‘live’ experience of another culture, with local practitioners providing insight on issues of tax, property, retirement and immigration has an immediacy when conducted in the jurisdiction and provided by local experts.

In summary, this approach:

Provides expert tuition on substantive areas of law, avoiding the superficial late points scramble by requiring forward planning, a commitment of time and money and requiring thought be given to developing a learning plan to guide a considered path of tuition in a collegiate, social and professional atmosphere. This is achieved by the incentive of a seminar designed for the participant interested in expanding their practice to consider the potential of services in or to those engaging in foreign jurisdictions.