

News and updates

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On 6 March 2017 Australia-wide unconscious bias training for the legal profession was launched. This important initiative was driven by the Law Council of Australia and all Australian law societies and bar associations. I encourage you to go to the Society's website and click on the link to access this training which is a one-hour online learning module at a cost of \$110. You can claim this training as a CPD point. This training is relevant for all sectors of the legal profession to help understand how our affinity bias influences our decision making—for hiring staff to client engagement.

The annual regulatory compliance period is now well-underway and some critical dates are approaching. By now you should have submitted your Annual CPD Certificate for the CPD year ended 31 March 2017 and your application to renew your practising certificate for 2017/18. Law firms should also have submitted their various annual notices about trust monies and arranged an external examination of the trust account. If you haven't already taken care of any of these requirements make it a priority—all of these need to be done by 31 May 2017 at the latest, especially if you don't want to incur a late fee on your practising certificate renewal application.

The Society strives to continually improve the processes and compliance reminders for regulatory requirements each year. Your feedback about your experience with renewing your practising certificate or complying with the other annual regulatory responsibilities for legal practitioners and law firms is welcomed.

Law Week is now upon us. The Society is excited about the program for this year's Law Week activities. We are honoured to have the former Chief Justice of the High Court, The Hon Mr Robert French, as our guest speaker for the annual Law Week luncheon in Darwin and dinner in Alice Springs. We'll see the mettle of the new Chief Justice's XI at the annual bench versus profession cricket match, which will also be Tass Liveris's last tour as leader of the President's XI. My thanks go to the hard working staff at the Secretariat for the smooth staging of all the Society's Law Week events.

Last year the Council resolved to conduct a review of the Society's Constitution. This is the first full scale review of the Society's Constitution in more than a decade, the last one incorporated the changes necessitated by the *Legal Profession Act*. Upon completion of the review, the Society will consult with members about any proposed changes to the Constitution—keep an eye out in July for information about this in *The Practitioner*, in the members' only section of the Society's website and via email alerts.

We are still awaiting a decision from the federal government about its intentions for any expansion of the application of the anti-money laundering/counter terrorism financing regulatory framework to the legal profession. The Law Council of Australia submission on behalf of the profession can be found on the LCA website and is well-worth a read.

During the first quarter of this year the Society has been working to recruit a new Manager Regulatory Services. Hopefully we'll be able to introduce our new Manager Regulatory Services in the next edition of *Balance*.