

News and updates

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The process of reviewing the Society's Constitution is now drawing to a close with a Special General Meeting scheduled to follow the Society's Annual General Meeting on 15 November 2017 for members to vote on whether or not to adopt a new constitution. Thank you to the members who participated in the consultation process, especially by attending the forums held in Katherine, Alice Springs and Darwin. Your feedback was greatly appreciated and led to some further adjustments to the draft constitution. The exercise of reviewing our current constitution has been valuable and, in line with the Society's 2017-19 Strategic Plan, the work of the Society's Governance Committee will now continue with a fresh focus on other aspects of the Society's governance framework.

This year's AGM will see the usual refresh of Councillors with some familiar faces continuing and some new faces joining the Council. It will, however, also see the end of Tass Liveris's three-year term as President. I'd like to express my gratitude to Tass on behalf of the Secretariat—it has been a pleasure to work with him as an active and engaged President during his term. His support and contributions to the Society's work has been valued by the Secretariat. I have personally also enjoyed the opportunity to work more closely with him in that role over the past twelve months and thank him for his support and counsel in that period.

Looking further forward, next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Society—its inaugural meeting was held on 7 May 1968. This is a significant juncture in the Society's history. Work has begun to plan various events to mark this special occasion so keep your eye on *Practitioner* and your emails for further information and updates.

On the national stage Dale Boucher's term as the Commissioner for Uniform Legal Services Regulation (in the

two 'uniform law' jurisdictions—Victoria and New South Wales) is drawing to a close and we await a decision on who the next Commissioner will be.

The review of the *Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules* (ASCR) continues as a work in progress for the LCA with the next step being a nationwide consultation. Some jurisdictions have decided to proceed to adopt the ASCR even though this review is still pending—Tasmania being the most recent jurisdiction to do so. This now leaves Western Australia and the NT as the only jurisdictions not to have adopted the ASCR. The Society's Council has previously resolved to await the outcome of the review, particularly any proposed changes to the ASCR arising from that review, before taking any further steps to consider adopting the ASCR in this jurisdiction.

The past few months have seen further change in the staff at the Secretariat. Our Licensing Officer Ella King left us to return home to the United Kingdom and our Professional Development Officer Bella Basilides also left to return interstate. Both were valued members of the Secretariat with whom a significant number of our members would have had dealings at some time over the past few years. We wish both Bella and Ella all the best on their future ventures.

With those departures we also see new faces at the Secretariat. We welcome Cassandra Kenchington as the new Executive Assistant to the Corporate Services Manager and myself. Tizi De Grandi has also joined the team as Receptionist for the Secretariat. Filling Ella's large shoes is Leonie Stokes as the Society's new Licensing Officer. So next time you call the Society please make yourself known to our new staff who will be more than happy to try and assist you.