

In conversation with Sally Sievers, NT Anti-Discrimination Commissioner

Sally also outlined the process that the ADC uses to deal with complaints of sexual harassment. It was positive to hear that a significant number of these matters are able to be resolved in short periods though conciliations. In discussing the sort of complaints that the ADC received, Sally advised that whereas interstate the most common form of complaint made to ADCs are reportedly sexually suggestive comments or jokes; in the NT, such complaints often involve actual unwanted physical contact.

Sally also spoke about what each of us can do in our workplaces in terms of ensuring that there are appropriate policies and procedures in place that make it clear that there is zero tolerance of sexual harassment; setting out clearly what to cover and then how to respond to support individuals when complaints are made. She encouraged us to return to our workplaces and find out whether such a policy existed and if not, work on putting one in place which is something that each of us can actually achieve easily in the short-term.

The other major significant area that Sally spoke about is the importance of bystander intervention. This is important in two ways. Firstly in supporting those who make complaints and secondly, when conduct is witnessed, expressing that such conduct is not tolerated or acceptable—supporting those experiencing abuse and assisting in setting the culture of the workplace where everyone calls out inappropriate behaviour.

For organisations who are interested in having training delivered or tailored to your workplace on sexual harassment or for individuals who need information about



the ADC complaints process, please contact the ADC on 8999 1444. Information regarding education and the complaints process for sexual harassment can be found at www.adc.nt.gov.au. Complaints of sexual assault, including attempts, can be made to the NT Police. If there is any difficulty in making those complaints or assistance is needed determining the proper avenue in the particular circumstances, the ADC can provide support.

We would like to thank Sally Sievers for her outstanding CPD and Law Society NT for their support in hosting this event.

The next in our series of CPD is planned for September 2018 with Suzan Cox QC speaking about judicial bullying. Please email ntwomenlawyersassoc@gmail.com for further detail.

Bronwyn Haack, President NTWLA; with the assistance of Sally Sievers, NT Anti-Discrimination Commissioner