

19 October 2016

Our ref: BDS ND Criminal Law Committee

Parole Review
c/o Social Policy Department of Premier and Cabinet
PO Box 15185
City East QLD 4002
By email: parolereview@qld.gov.au

Dear Mr Sofronoff

Queensland Parole System Review

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the review of the parole system in Queensland. The Queensland Law Society appreciates the opportunity to participate in this important review.

This response has been compiled with the assistance of the Criminal Law Committee who have substantial expertise in this area.

The Queensland Law Society (QLS) is the peak professional body for the State's legal practitioners. We lead a profession of more than 9,500 members throughout Queensland. The QLS is comprised of several specialist committees who provide policy advice to the QLS Council on law reform and areas of concern to the profession.

For your information, in relation to parole in Queensland, the Society has advocated for:

- Prisoners' timely access to appropriate programs prior to their parole eligibility date. This has been a serious concern for prisoners, as well as for the community because prisoners may complete their sentence without the benefit of appropriate programs. Further, the community bears the cost of unnecessary extended periods of imprisonment.
- A system of judicial discretion exercised within the bounds of precedent as the most appropriate means by which justice can be attained. The Society does not support standard non-parole periods. In practical terms, this would introduce a mandatory component to sentencing and involve an erosion of judicial discretion.
- Re-incarceration following breaches of parole to be directed at the threshold of substantial conduct affecting community safety rather than low level or technical non-compliance with conditions.

We note that the review examines all facets of the parole system in Queensland, including matters outside the Committee's area of expertise. For this reason, this submission does not address all discussion points outlined in the issues paper. However, we would welcome the

Queensland Parole System Review

opportunity to provide further comment or feedback on any specific matters you would like the Society to address.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact our Senior Policy Solicitor, Binari De Saram on 07 3842 5885 or b.desaram@qls.com.au or our Policy Solicitor, Natalie De Campo on 07 3842 5889 or n.decampo@hotmail.com.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Potts', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Potts
President