

21 February 2020

Our ref: Gen

Mr John Cattle
Acting CEO
Law Council of Australia**Attention**Israel Machuca
Senior Policy Lawyer
Policy Division

By email: israel.machuca@lawcouncil.asn.au

Dear Mr Cattle

Rural, Regional and Remote Lawyers – Proposed study

Thank you for your memorandum of 5 December 2019 seeking preliminary views regarding the proposal to update the Rural, Regional and Remote (**RRR**) lawyers survey and for your patience in awaiting a response.

The Queensland Law Society (**QLS**) appreciates being consulted on this important matter.

On the basis of feedback QLS has received from its District Law Associations and from regional practitioners sitting on its policy committees, QLS is of the view that there is value in the LCA updating the survey. Anecdotal feedback indicates that, 10 years on from the original survey, it remains difficult to attract and retain lawyers in RRR areas. Obtaining up-to-date data would allow the LCA and constituent bodies to better support RRR practitioners and assist principles in those areas to attract staff.

Suggested survey questions include:

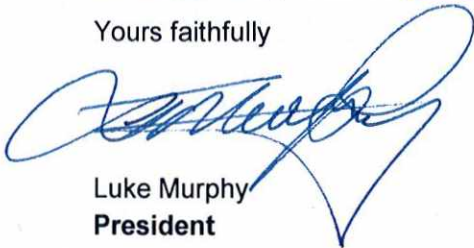
1. Demographic data around the age and gender of RRR lawyers.
2. Information on diverse abilities amongst RRR lawyers.
3. Information regarding where any work experience, work integrated university units and/or professional legal training was completed.
4. Period of time practising as an RRR lawyer.
5. Intended years of future practice as a RRR lawyers.
6. Likely reason for ceasing to practice as a RRR lawyer.
7. Perceived rewards of practising as a RRR lawyer.
8. Age and number of various categories of staff in RRR law businesses to understand:
 - a. whether practice teams are aging
 - b. the mix of qualified lawyers, paraprofessionals and support staff.
9. Additional expenses associated with RRR practice, particularly in relation to the need to travel to cities, which may involve travel and accommodation for:
 - a. professionals and support staff

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- b. clients and their spouses or other support persons
 - c. witnesses.
10. How regional practitioners are able to access both professional and paralegal staff and how they see their business transition/succession occurring.
 11. Whether firms have enough lawyers to service their client bases and if not, the perceived reasons why (financial ability to fund staff, difficulty attracting candidates etc).
 12. It would also be useful, if possible, to survey lawyers who have left RRR practice in order to glean information as to why practitioners are departing.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact our Legal Policy team via policy@qls.com.au or by phone on (07) 3842 5930.

Yours faithfully



Luke Murphy
President