

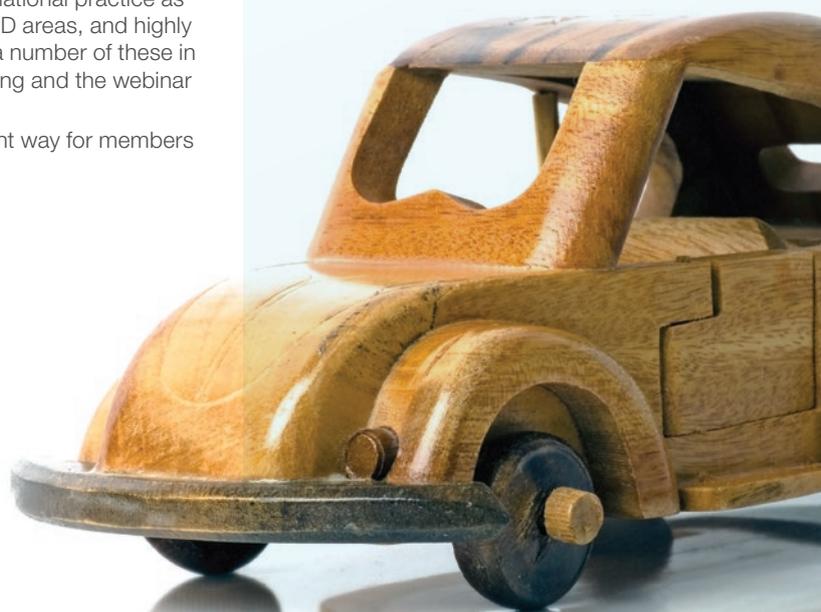
Driving process improvements

Learning and professional development review and outcomes

In late 2012 we undertook a comprehensive review of QLS's learning and professional development offering, supported by member research findings. The review included assessment of event attendance, profitability and delegate satisfaction ratings.

Members consistently rate learning and professional development as one of the most valuable services QLS offers, so it is imperative we deliver conferences, seminars and courses that are convenient, high quality and relevant to practice. Based on member feedback and results of previous events, we agreed the following changes to our program.

- We are tailoring events to specific member segments (eg early/mid-career/principals in small practices, mid-career/principals in mid-size practices). We started offering bespoke sessions in late 2012/early 2013, most notably in our ethics sessions.
- We launched the 'Essentials' series for practitioners with up to five years' experience in early 2013.
- For mid-career lawyers we commenced the Masterclass series. To date, both the early career and mid-career offerings have been well received with attendance near or at capacity and delegate satisfaction ratings of 4 and above out of 5.
- Our introductory courses for support staff have been popular. We will deliver the *Introduction to Wills and Estates* course, helping practice staff work towards their Diploma of Legal Services.
- Our sessions will be:
 - 1-2 hours in the morning or lunchtime, held later in the week
 - traditional formats of seminars and presentations that include case studies from in-house counsel and industry experts and panel discussions.
- We are investigating appropriate high profile speakers and the potential of co-branding sessions with other organisations that link to industry content. Delivery on this initiative started this year with:
 - Notable speakers Sydney Law School's Professor John Carter, BT Financial Group's Dr Chris Caton and Queensland University of Technology's Professor John Humphrey.
 - Popular co-branded events that included partnering with Certified Practising Accountants (CPA) Australia and the Institute of Arbitrators and Mediators Australia (IAMA).
- We will provide unique content relevant to Queensland and national practice as well as specific sessions on professional standards, core CPD areas, and highly targeted case law updates. We have successfully delivered a number of these in 2012-13, such as *Lawyers in the Asian Century*, *econveyancing* and the webinar *Seven deadly sins of profit leakage*.
- Webinars will be expanded as a cost-effective and convenient way for members to participate in events.



Stakeholder relationships

This year we added value for the profession from an advocacy, business development and service improvement perspective, establishing new, and strengthening existing, relationships.

Advocating for our members

We value the opportunity to discuss current issues with other organisations, sharing ideas and resources to obtain positive outcomes for the profession, their clients and the community.

- Queensland Attorney-General – this year we consolidated a strong professional relationship with the Attorney-General, one of our most critical stakeholders, through regular executive-level meetings.
- Government representatives – as part of Law Week 2013 we held a policy forum with influential government stakeholders to support future advocacy efforts and ensure the profession's voice was heard.
- Large Law Firm Group (LLFG) – we have a constructive relationship with the LLFG, a significant influencer of national and state-based professional issues who represent more than 1000 Queensland practitioners.
- Legal Services Commission – ensuring regular, open communication with the Legal Services Commission through a number of scheduled meetings in 2012-13 was, and remains, important to flag and address any professional issues facing members.
- Chamber of Commerce and Industry – we built a dialogue with the peak body for business in Queensland to progress issues of mutual concern such as reform of the workers' compensation system.

Providing opportunities for business development

Members have the opportunity to connect with other professions and industries, expand their horizons and grow their business through our comprehensive events schedule.

- Bar Association of Queensland (BAQ) – we have long had a productive working relationship with the BAQ and recently had our first networking drinks for early career lawyers and young members of the Bar. The event was extremely popular.
- Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA) – our early career lawyers are regularly given the opportunity to establish long-standing business and social relationships with ICAA members at social events.
- Chartered Secretaries Australia – experienced practitioners had the opportunity to attend the August Leadership Luncheon.
- Hong Kong Law Society – this year we started coordination of a panel of member firms interested in exploring Australia-Hong Kong commercial opportunities.

Building and refining our membership offering

Our professional relationships help build a diverse and relevant selection of resources for members.

- Supreme Court of Queensland Library – we received endorsement for law firm librarians to have library access and plan to implement this change in 2013-14.
- Law Foundation – Queensland (LF-Q) – we worked with the LF-Q and Thynne & Macartney to update the *Legal guide for primary producers* that informs the public of legal issues and aims to build business for regional practitioners.
- Conference of Regulatory Officers – in November Brisbane hosted the annual national conference of law societies, bar associations, statutory regulators and administering authorities. Our attendance ensures awareness of regulatory changes and approaches.
- Queensland and interstate universities – our close relationships with universities' law schools through QLS events, open days and cultivating working relationships enabled us to present leading legal minds in professional development events, as well as prepare future solicitors for practice through our student membership program.



Planning for corporatisation

In 2012-13 we completed the groundwork for changing our corporate structure. Queensland Law Society proposed to convert from a statutory body to a company limited by guarantee. Corporatisation is expected to reduce some of the more burdensome government compliance regulations including gazetting membership fees, lodging the annual report with Queensland Parliament and compliance with state government document retention and purchasing guidelines and the Government Information Technology Contracting Framework.

The intended benefits are to improve QLS' corporate agility and align us more closely with the operating structures of law firms. We will continue to access value for money arrangements through established relationships with vendors and suppliers, acting with integrity aligned to requirements of the *Corporations Act 2001*. Corporatisation requires a change to the *Legal Profession Act 2007* and we aim for implementation in the first half of 2014.

Prior to this we will undertake member communication about the changes, and the corporate governance model will be proposed for endorsement at the 2013 AGM.



New member benefits scheme

In June we launched a new member benefits scheme, providing full and associate members with access to a wider range of quality goods and services compared to the previous program. The new scheme was selected as offering benefits relevant to our members and their lifestyles at exclusive prices not available to general consumers.

Special deals included offers for:

- **Cars and car services** from manufacturers such as Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, Volkswagon and Volvo with benefits on pricing, car servicing and roadside assistance.
- **Travel and entertainment** from organisations such as Marriott Hotels, Qantas, Virgin and Travel Club Getaways with offers for reduced hotel rates and event tickets, and corporate scheme membership.
- **Health and fitness** with exclusive deals from Specsavers and Executive Health Solutions.
- **Domestic and utility services** including trade pricing from Harvey Norman and Optus deals from Altitude Communications.
- **Financial services** from Ord Minnett.

We will assess member program take-up in 2013-14.

Recordkeeping

We take our recordkeeping obligations seriously. The combination of established standards and informed staff ensures our records, and importantly our members' information, are professionally managed and effectively protected.

This year we conducted organisation-wide education on our recordkeeping obligations with all staff completing online training in early 2013. The training included recordkeeping awareness, special circumstances regarding public records and requirements of the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. We provided comprehensive resources on the intranet, including two relevant retention and disposal schedules – the Queensland Law Society Retention and Disposal Schedule QDAN 674 version 1 and the Queensland State Archives General Retention and Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records QDAN 249 version 6. We also had briefings at team meetings.

Our paper-based and electronic filing systems intersect through our recordkeeping system. Only appropriately designated and trained people can access the system. Each division within Queensland Law Society is assigned a partition in the electronic file directory to control access to information and the risk of incorrect file or folder edits or moves/removals. In the coming year, planning will commence for introduction of a new electronic Document Records Management System.

Environmental credentials

QLS is proud to report that in the last twelve months we have increased our co-mix recycling (cardboard, plastics and metals) by 25% to 69,960 cubic litres and office paper recycling by 6% to 3.4 tonnes. The increase in co-mix recycling is attributed to effective internal communication and greater staff awareness regarding recyclable materials. Our office paper recycling efforts saved 11.32m³ in landfill. In total we recycled close to 20% of our waste. In a 12-month period recycling general office paper (excluding secure destruction) has saved:

Trees	35.6
Landfill	11.32 cubic metres
Electricity	11,193kWh
Barrels of oil	2.52
Water	86.61kl
Carbon emissions	6.78 tonnes, equivalent to removing one car from the road