
Key performance indicators

Performance overview

Strategic and operational performance overview

The 2021-22 financial year marks the first year of QLS's new four-year strategic plan 2021-25, which sets out our new vision leading solicitors in Queensland and enunciates our purpose for good law, good lawyers, public good.

Our four-year strategic plan particularises six strategic objectives and seven measures of success (key performance indicators [KPIs]). Measurement of the first year of our strategic plan has been embedded in our Operating Plan 2021-22, with our operating plan categorised by strategic objectives, key actions, strategic KPIs and operational targets for the financial year. Measures include both qualitative and quantitative assessments to gauge engagement across the membership, staff and key stakeholders.

A summary of QLS's performance in the first year of its Strategic Plan 2021-25 and the annual Operating Plan 2021-22 is outlined in this report.

Strategic Plan 2021-25

On 1 July 2021 QLS embarked on its new Strategic Plan 2021-25, which includes 14 key strategies that align with our six strategic objectives. Intertwined with our strategies are an assessment of strategic opportunities and risks and challenges.

Our strategic performance this financial year centred heavily on advancing the public good with an engaged and high quality QLS committee volunteer base, as we surpassed our legal policy goals and furthered our purpose to be the authoritative voice of solicitors in Queensland. We strived to become a thought leader in workplace cultural change. This enabled us to lean into our strategic opportunities to lead the profession in this area. This has resulted in every Law Society in Australia being licensed to deliver our Sexual Harassment Workshops, with over 25 trainers nationally trained to continue workplace culture education.

Our strategic risks and challenges this financial year focused on digital innovation and technology as the Society embarked, in the first time in ten years, to use a new client relationship management (CRM) system, Dynamics, to roll out renewals. The process was not smooth and hindered by various complexities. We have now thoroughly analysed the issues and are resolving them ahead of next year's renewals process. QLS will continue to focus on digital and strategic risks and challenges into the next financial year.

Our operating plan 2022-23

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Advocate	1. Continue to position QLS as a trusted advisor of law reform in Queensland by engaging with Government in areas of legislative reform important to supporting the profession and the community generally.	1.1 Advocate to and engage with Parliament, Government and stakeholders to raise issues of concern to the profession.	30-Jun-22	Legal Policy	KPI3, KPI5	1.1.1 Ratio of 1:4 proactive to reactive legal policy submissions to relevant stakeholders.	Green	1.1.1 ACHIEVED – ratio – 1:3 (proactive: 49, reactive: 198).
						1.1.2 80% of all advocacy activities to demonstrate member benefit including practice benefits.		1.1.2 ACHIEVED – 90% of advocacy activities demonstrate member benefit (advocacy activities: 325, member benefit: 294).
		1.2 Undertake the Federal Call to Parties.				1.2.1 Federal Call to Parties document published.		1.2.1 ACHIEVED – 2022 Federal Call to Parties Statement was released to the parties and published.
		1.3 Host the Committee and Working Group Chairs Breakfast.				1.3.1 Committee and Working Group Chairs event hosted.		1.3.1 ACHIEVED – Committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs event was held on 9 November.
Advocate	2. Implement research projects – Graduate readiness and Practice readiness.	2.1 Launch member surveys on each research project and receive interim report.	30-Jun-22	Legal Policy	KPI3, KPI4	2.1.1 Member survey launched on each research project.	Green	2.1.1 ACHIEVED – member surveys launched for both projects.
						2.1.2 Interim Reports from each research project provided to Council.		2.1.2 ACHIEVED – early interim findings provided on job readiness research to Council. Future readiness research still in survey stage.
Regulate	3. To conduct a review of the <i>Legal Profession Act</i> , Queensland Law Society Administration Rule 2005 and Queensland Law Society Indemnity Rule 2005.	3.1 LPA, Administration Rule and Indemnity Rule are reviewed and recommendations put to Council for consultation and reform for efficient and modernised legal practice licensing regulation.	15-Dec-21	Regulation & OGC	KPI5	3.1.1 Recommendations put to Council.	Yellow	3.1.1 DEFERRED – Council has settled proposed amendments to the LPA and Rules. This has been deferred to the next financial year.
Regulate	4. To advance and strengthen key regulatory stakeholder relationships and regulatory practices.	4.1 To have Trust Accounts/ External Interventions/PCC and Executive Committee operating completely in accordance with the Part 3.3 Investigation Policy.	30-Jun-22	Regulation	KPI5	4.1.1 Progressive implementation as new staff come on line, as old policy investigations are completed.	Green	4.1.1 ACHIEVED – Trust Accounts/External Interventions/PCC and Executive Committee operating in accordance with the Part 3.3 Investigation Policy and progressive implementation enacted as new staff come on line, as old policy investigations are completed.
		4.2 To establish a central Intelligence network between QLS departments/LSC/QPS/CCC and Lexon.				4.2.1 Have proposal to CEO for approval 30 November 2021.		4.2.1 ACHIEVED – central intelligence network has been established between QLS departments, LSC, BAQ, QPS, CCC, QLS Solicitor Support and Lexon, as well as NSW LS, NSW LSC, VLSC, WA Board and NTLs.
		4.3 To establish regular profession wide updates in QLS Proctor/ update on the actions undertaken by Regulation.				4.3.1 Quarterly reports to the Profession.		4.3 ACHIEVED – trust policy update published QLS Proctor, as well as three articles on regulatory matters.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Guide	5. Continue to roll out the practice support consultancy service.	5.1 Quarterly report on the ILP Strategic Plan.	30-Jun-22	Ethics	KPI4, KPI6	5.1.1 Quarterly reports submitted to Council.	Green	5.1.1 ACHIEVED – quarterly ILP Strategic Plan Reports submitted to Council.
Guide	6. Introduce additional advisory support panels including financial advice service and legal costs advice service.	6.1 Tailor new advisory plan services to demonstrated member need for financial, business and legal costs assistance.	30-Jun-22	Ethics	KPI5	6.1.1 Engage panel providers for new Business Advisory Service and Legal Costs Advisory Service. 6.1.2 Launch to members the new Business Advisory Service and Legal Costs Advisory Service.	Green	6.1.1 ACHIEVED – panel members have been engaged with further confirmations received. 6.1.2 ACHIEVED – the new Business Advisory Service and Costs Advisory Service is being promoted to practitioners through PAS visits/ consultations.
Guide	7. Implement a dedicated workplace conduct central web page for education, guidance, complaints and policy resources to the profession.	7.1 Publish workplace conduct page.	30-Jun-22	Education	KPI4	7.1.1 Workplace conduct page is published and regularly updated as needed.	Green	7.1.1 ACHIEVED – workplace conduct page is published and has been updated with upcoming events.
Educate	8. Review existing PMC and implement new accreditation courses. Explore accreditation options for general practitioner solicitors.	8.1 Deliver accredited training course for each of (a) Practice Management for practice managers, (b) Corporate Governance, and (c) First Nations Cultural Competence. 8.2 Research and draft options paper on accrediting general practitioners. 8.3 Complete USQ review of PMC and implement key recommendations.	30-Jun-22	Professional Advancement	KPI1, KPI4, KPI5	8.1.1 Pilot Practice Managers PMC delivered to 40 delegates. 8.1.2 Certificate in Corporate Governance delivered to 20 members. 8.1.3 Cultural Competency course delivered to 1000 members. 8.2.1 Provide Options paper on general practitioners accreditation options to CEO by 31 March 2022. 8.3.1 Deliver updated PMC in 2022 for small to medium practitioners.	Green – Yellow	8.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – syllabus reviewed and planning for October 2022 test course to refine content. Further delivery continuing into the next financial year. 8.1.2 CANCELLED – engagement undertaken with GIA for Certificate in Corporate Governance but challenges in securing joint branding and mutual legal obligations made the project unfeasible to pursue as a partnership opportunity that offered QLS and members significant benefit. 8.1.3 ON TRACK & ONGOING – modules 1-4 of the Cultural Competency course complete (with the exception of one final lecture) and is live on the website and Learning Management System. Marketing campaign to follow for its official launch in the next financial year. During this financial year there has been interest and discussions from legal stakeholders in the course including other state law societies. 8.2.1 DELAYED – consultation with LIV and LSNSW was undertaken to assess possibility of developing the subject area as a new accredited specialisation and achieving interstate mutual recognition status (as exists for other specialist accreditation subject areas). Both bodies indicated a reluctance to develop this area, expressing a view there was too great a dichotomy between generalist practice and specialisation. 8.3.1 ACHIEVED – first draft of syllabus reviewed over period January – June. Second stage planning of presenter delivery and handbook materials continuing for launch in next Financial Year.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Educate	9. Deliver leading educational workshops on Sexual Harassment and Workplace Culture workshop.	9.1 Ongoing delivery of Sexual Harassment Workshops.	30-Jun-22	Education	KPI1, KPI4, KPI5	9.1.1 Sexual Harassment Workshop delivered to 2,000 members.	Green – Yellow	9.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – Sexual Harassment Workshop delivered to 1840 delegates in Queensland. Every Law Society in Australia licensed to deliver training using the IP and materials. Over 25 Trainers nationally undertaken train the trainer training.
		9.2 Develop and launch workshop 2: Active By standing.				9.2.1 Workshop 2 developed and delivered to 500 members.		9.2.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – workshop 2 Bystanding planning in progress during this financial year, with the workshop to be launched in the next financial year.
Educate	10. Introduce a 20 CPD university micro credentialed program for young lawyers.	10.1 Launch and deliver first year (10 CPD points) of 2 year 20 CPD point Micro-credential course in partnership with Bond University.	30-Jun-22	Education	KPI5	10.1.1 First year of QLS/Bond micro credential for Masters course launched to young lawyers achieving 30 enrolments.	Green	10.1.1 ACHIEVED – Foundations of Legal Practice program, a joint collaboration between QLS and Bond University that offers a post graduate micro credential which is also recognised as CPD points, launched 16 May 2022. Further promotional materials to be delivered over next financial year.
Educate	11. Continue to develop and lead outstanding and well attended CPD conferences and Build further LMS Education content.	11.1 Reduce prices of CPD conferences and double engagement levels of conferences.	30-Jun-22	Education	KPI1, KPI4, KPI5, KPI6	11.1.1 Annual delegate and financial targets for the conferences achieved with net promoter score > 50%.	Green – Yellow	11.1.1 ACHIEVED – all conferences taken place as planned. Symposium and and Specialty conference events offered at reduced prices (compared to 20/21) and total CPD hours purchased doubled (2,373.75 hours in 20/21 cf 40,315 hours in 21/22).
		11.2 Create and launch new CPD Intro and practice support courses in the LMS.				11.2.1 Add 5 new LMS CPD courses to existing LMS course library by 30 April 2022 and once launched achieve additional uptake of at least 40 self paced courses a month.		11.2.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – commenced development of 5 new modules in this financial year, which will continue into the next financial year.
Connect	12. Develop and implement member engagement strategies for QLS Future Leaders, District Law Associations, in house counsel and regional members.	12.1 Launch website.	30-Jun-22	Member Engagement	KPI4, KPI5	12.1 Website is launched.	Green – Yellow	12.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – FLC hub and DLA website developed and launched.
		12.2 Create and update content on dedicated pages.				12.2 Dedicated pages on website are created, revised and updated on a regular basis.		12.1.2 ON TRACK & ONGOING – dedicated content updated and created on FLC and DLA website with resources, and with the FLC podcast. Further pages and content to be developed for in house counsel and regional members into the next financial year.
Connect	13. Launch new QLS website and leverage the new platform for collaboration amongst the sector.	13.1 Launch website.	30-Jun-22	Information Management	KPI5	13.1.1 Website launched.	Green – Yellow	13.1.1 ACHIEVED – website launched 01 July 2021.
		13.2 Transfer QLS Proctor to Kentico platform.				13.2.1 QLS Proctor transferred to Kentico platform.		13.2.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – design and requirements gathering underway.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Connect	14. Continue the First Nations Cultural Outreach Strategy and annual First Nations Plan with a focus on profession Cultural support and education.	14.1 Roll out the second year of the First Nations Plan, with a focus on professional Cultural support and education.	30-Jun-22	First Nations Cultural Outreach	KPI5, KPI6	14.1.1 Achieved action items set out in the First Nations Annual Plan.	Green – Yellow	14.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – reported on action items in First Nations Plan 2021-22.
						14.1.2 Reported on achievements to Council, the Annual Report and the QLS website.		14.1.2 ACHIEVED – reported to Council on 2020-21 at August Council meeting and reporting is included in Annual Report, which is published on the website and tabled in Parliament. Reporting for 2021-22 will take place in August (Council) and September (Annual Report and website).
						14.1.3 Annual financial targets for the First Nations Annual Plan achieved.		14.1.3 ACHIEVED – annual financial targets for the First Nations Annual Plan were achieved.
						14.1.4 Report on advancement of profession Cultural support and education.		14.1.4 ACHIEVED – reported on advancement of professional cultural support and education.
Connect	15. Implement phase 2 QLS Proctor on a new platform.	15.1 Reposition content and market to members to deliver the optimal balance of content that attracts readership and advertising.	30-Jun-22	Member Engagement	KPI5	15.1.1 Content repositioned and marketed in members.	Yellow	15.1.1 DEFERRED – after further investigation it has been decided that the Kentico CMS used for the corporate website is not well suited to a news website. QLS Proctor will remain on WordPress and design and UX enhancements will be made to the existing site in the next financial year. QLS Proctor marketed weekly to members.
Connect	16. Launch to the public a trusted advisor/use a solicitor advertisement campaign across the State.	16.1 Liaise and secure a joint venture agreement with Law Society of NSW for the campaign and creative content and purchase media.	30-Jun-22	Member Engagement & Information Management	KPI5	16.1.1 Liaised with Law Society of NSW and secured a joint venture agreement for the campaign and creative content and purchase media.	Green – Yellow	16.1.1 ACHIEVED – agreement with NSW LS in place for a secured joint venue of the trusted advisor campaign.
		16.2 Subject to the completion of item 16.1, update QLS landing pages.				16.2.1 Subject to the completion of item 16.1, QLS landing pages updated.		16.2.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – all content on QLS Find a Solicitor landing pages are being updated and will be transferred to the new microsite in the next financial year.
		16.3 Subject to the completion of item 16.2, update and renew the Find a Solicitor webpage for members.				16.3.1 Subject to the completion of item 16.2, Find a Solicitor webpage for members is updated and renewed.		16.3.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – several improvements to the Find a Solicitor search function have been approved by Council and will be implemented on the new microsite in the next financial year.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Grow	17. Embed technological resilience and agility by implementing new CRM, intranet, payroll and HRIS systems.	17.1 Deploy new CRM within budget and scope.	30-Jun-22	Information Management	KPI5, KPI6	17.1.1 New CRM implemented and fully operational no later than 1 April 2022.	Green – Yellow	17.1.1 ACHIEVED – CRM project in full flight.
						17.1.2 External user adoption is 35% within 2 months of deployment.		17.1.2 ACHIEVED – adoption rate for PC holders 80% by 30 May.
						17.1.3 External user time to first log in is 50% within six weeks of go live.		17.1.3 ACHIEVED – adoption rate for log in was met.
						17.1.4 Decommissioning IMIS to be read only June 2022.		17.1.4 ON TRACK & ONGOING – decommission IMIS to be read only in Oct 2022, in the next financial year.
		17.2 Dry Run of Renewals completed within budget, timeframe and scope.				17.2.2 Deliver 2022 renewals on the new platform.		17.2.2 ACHIEVED – 2022 Renewals implemented on the new platform; old platform decommissioned for use of renewals.
		17.3 New QLS Intranet deployed.				17.3.1 Intranet deployed by Dec 2021.		17.3.1 ACHIEVED – intranet completed.
						17.3.2 Seamless and Wiki decommissioned by Dec 2021.		17.3.2 ON TRACK & ONGOING – Wiki decommission to commenced and Seamless remains active until Lexon website is signed off. Lexon website is with Lexon for business review. Expected Go Live is August 2022, in the next financial year.
		17.4 Payroll system implemented within budget, timeframe and scope.				17.4.1 Payroll system implemented within budget, timeframe and scope. Data migration completed.		17.4.1 ACHIEVED – payroll system implemented.
		17.5 HRIS Stage 1 completed.				17.5.1 HRIS system Stage 1 implemented by October 2021.		17.5.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – HRIS system implemented but after investigation seeking alternative suppliers.
		17.6 HRIS Stage 2 completed.				17.6.1 HRIS system Stage 2 implemented by February 2022.		17.6.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – HRIS system implemented but after investigation seeking alternative suppliers.
		17.7 Increasing DR/BCP capability.				17.7.1 Increasing compute and storage capacity in secondary data centre.		17.7.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – scoping exercise underway. Awaiting new hardware to arrive.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Grow	18. Enhance our data driven business model with accurate data, enhanced analytics and trend analysis.	18.1 Data review and where necessary cleanse of current active practitioner, member and organisation data.	30-Jun-22	Information Management	KPI5, KPI6	18.1.1 Review activities completed and cleanse completed by Dec 2021.	Yellow	18.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – cleansing underway.
						18.1.2 iMIS becomes a read only state and decommissioned from use by January 2022.		18.1.2 ON TRACK & ONGOING – iMIS becomes a read only state and decommissioned from use by July 2022.
		18.2 Data validation implemented in the new CRM.				18.2.1 Validation is applied wherever possible in the new CRM.		18.2.1 ACHIEVED – validation implemented where possible.
						18.2.2 Data governance is applied to the CRM.		18.2.2 ON TRACK & ONGOING – data governance program is in draft.
		18.3 Increase data literacy throughout the organisation.				18.3.1 Data literacy program developed by October 2021.		18.3.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – data literacy program is in draft.
						18.3.2 Program launched by January 2022.		18.3.2 DEFERRED – program delayed launch due to staffing vacancies.
						18.3.3 At least 30 people trained by June 2022.		18.3.3 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues this has not been completed.
						18.3.4 Intranet resources created by Dec 2021.		
		18.4 Decision reengineering implemented for identified key business decisions.				18.4.1 Three key business decisions identified for reengineering.		18.4.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – education subject matter analysis completed. Membership dashboard completed.
						18.4.2 Inventory of related decision making process, data and tools.		18.4.2 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues this has not been completed.
						18.4.3 Apply a decision intelligence model to business decisions.		18.4.3 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues, this has not been completed.
		18.5 Identified key trends for in-depth analysis.				18.5.1 Three key trends identified for analysis.		18.5.1 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues, this has not been completed.
						18.5.2 Working group formed for in-depth analysis.		18.5.2 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues, this has not been completed.
						18.5.3 Create an action plan to address any emerging issues.		18.5.3 DEFERRED – due to changes in priorities and resourcing issues, this has not been completed.
Grow	19. Continue development of Law Society House project.	19.1 Subject to external finance approval, commencement is subject to negotiations with the builder and completion expected within 6 months of commencement and, where possible, implement minor works to restore end of life assets and maintaining building compliance.	30-Jun-22	Finance	KPI5, KPI7	19.1.1 Works commenced regularly reported to Council on progress.	Green – Yellow	19.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – architect, project manager and consultants required for the design phase have been appointed. FDC has been appointed as Early Contractor under an ECI consultancy agreement. Council and FRC have been regularly updated on progress.

Strategic Objective	Initiative	Key Action	Timeline	Accountability	Strategic KPI	Performance target/KPI	Status (average)	2021-2022 Report
Grow	20. Implement year 1 of the 4 year financial road map.	20.1 Manage expense and revenue lines as per budget targets and ratios.	30-Jun-22	Finance	KPI2, KPI5, KPI6	20.1.1 Deliver budgeted surplus and agreed mix of revenue sources.	Green – Yellow	20.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – the medium term forecast has the cash surplus replenished and the labour/revenue metric tracking at the targeted 53%.
Grow	21. Build variable revenue sources.	21.1 Grow rental income, sponsorship, advertising, conferences and mediation and venue services at LSH as a percentage of overall revenues.	30-Jun-22	Finance	KPI5, KPI6	21.1.1 Variable revenue reaches 18% of overall revenues.	Green – Yellow	21.1.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – Variable Sales Report prepared, meetings scheduled monthly. Focus is also on securing cash for revenue reported. Note variable sales percentage 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022 is 12.7% (2,766,069/21,830,388).
Grow	22. Provide best available 1st Party Cyber Insurance cover to Lexon insured QLS member practices.	22.1 Provide 1st party cyber insurance policy coverage for QLS members.	30-Jun-22	Ethics	KPI5	22.1.1 Receive insurance confirmation of 1st party cyber insurance coverage for 2021/2022 year. 22.1.2 Develop plan for ongoing cyber response for member practices.	Green	22.1.1 ACHIEVED – received insurance confirmation of 1st party cyber insurance coverage for 2021/2022 year. 22.1.2 ACHIEVED – met with Marsh to develop plan for ongoing cyber response for member practices and options provided to Council.
Grow	23. Develop and implement a revised member benefits program.	23.1 To complete the QLS Professional Standards Scheme 2022-27. 23.2 Renew Law Care services.	30-Jun-22	Member Engagement & Regulation	KPI4	23.1.1 QLS Professional Standards Scheme 2022-27 is operative on 1 July 2022. 23.2.1 Law Care Services renewed.	Green – Yellow	23.2.1 ACHIEVED – QLS Professional Standards Scheme 2022-27 approved by Council and PSC and is operative on 1 July 2022. 23.2.1 ON TRACK & ONGOING – Law Care services renewed.

Strategic KPIS	First year of Strategic Plan	Status (average)
KPI1	Growing membership engagement and attendance numbers to events and CPD	ON TRACK & ONGOING
KPI2	Growing membership to PC conversion rate	ON TRACK & ONGOING
KPI3	Thriving, engaged and high quality QLS committee volunteer base	ACHIEVED
KPI4	High levels of profession and member engagement with QLS communications	ON TRACK & ONGOING
KPI5	An engaged, high performing and productive QLS team	ON TRACK & ONGOING
KPI6	Annual financial targets and non-financial performance targets achieved	ON TRACK & ONGOING
KPI7	Return on investment on upgrades to Law Society House	ON TRACK & ONGOING

Key

ACHIEVED

ON TRACK & ONGOING

CANCELLED

DEFERRED

DELAYED

NOT STARTED

President's review

The role of President requires a dedication to partnering with colleagues, volunteers and members to advocate for reforms to areas of the profession and law that are most needed and important for the growth of law and the legal profession in Queensland.

It has been my honour and privilege to engage in advocacy alongside the profession.

2021-22 was the first year of our Strategic Plan which sets out our vision and purpose and the strategies underpinning and advancing what we do. You will see the themes shine through in this Annual Report and I really do believe it highlights not only the change the Society has seen in its governance and makeup but also continues to keep us accountable and will inspire for years to come.

A voice in the time of change

Lawyers have powerful voices, advocating for those who are most vulnerable. As a Law Society we have a collective voice too which is often called upon by stakeholders. We do advocacy work with our specialist committees on legal policy issues trying to defend the rule of law, respect fundamental legislative principles and generally bring about good law.

As an example, the Law Society and our national federal body, the Law Council of Australia, participated in the Federal Election, giving a voice to matters our members considered important. We collaborated and put out Call to Parties documents listing some of the priority issues that our committees and our members told us were important to them, the legal profession and community.

The major parties responded and gave us and the Law Council commitments. We had a voice. We were seen as legitimate and authoritative. We could be heard.

Not everyone in our community is in such a position. For those people, lawyers have a key role to play in giving them a voice. The voice of our First Nations people is a priority.

The QLS First Nations Legal Policy Committee endorses the Uluru Statement from the Heart and actively advocates for its implementation. The Statement from the Heart seeks a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution and a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making and truth-telling.

Finally this issue may be on the table and there can be a proper discussion about what the Statement calls the torment of powerlessness.

Having a voice, making agreements, telling the truth – these are concepts lawyers are very familiar with and are the very basis of what we do and who we are. It's not really so very far, but perhaps if our nation is brave, we can find a voice and make change. This is something I continue to advocate for in my time as President and something I believe needs to be a focus in coming years.

The Law Society supports inclusion and diversity. The Society has been working for meaningful engagement with our First Nations people in the design and operation of a culturally competent justice system – one which walks with our First Nations People.

We have committed to our Cultural Outreach Strategy following on from our Reconciliation Action Plan and included the voice of First Nations people in our policy committees, our workforce and our education.

We see these partnering opportunities as invaluable. We have too few First Nations members and we see these steps as vital to ensuring adequate representation of First Nations lawyers in the profession and to ensuring First Nations community members are represented and have access to lawyers who understand their cultural needs.

The makeup of the profession

The solicitors of Queensland have reached gender parity in recent years. This is incredible and has been a long time coming.

The Law Society Council now includes ten female solicitors and the positions of President, Deputy President and Vice President are all held by women.

It is over a century since the first woman, Agnes McWhinney was admitted as a solicitor in Queensland, and almost a century since the first woman Katherine McGregor was admitted as a barrister in Queensland.

I am proud of the progression we can see to date. There is still work to be done, particularly in private practice and around retention but we are certainly making progress.

The attrition rate from the profession remains too high. If we get the balance right and women are encouraged through work life balance and respect to remain in the profession, we can only be the beneficiaries of what will be a stronger profession. Those benefits will flow on to ensure all practitioners, regardless of sex will have fair and equitable access to work-life balance and be better supported through the varying stages of their careers.

Prioritising mental health

Mental health continues to be a significant concern for our profession. The changing needs of the profession, societal expectations and challenges posed by the pandemic have resulted in pressures for the profession which have taken their toll and continue to linger.

In addition to all of the resources available to members regarding their practising obligations, the Society has a well-established mental health and well-being work group.

Our Practice Management Course is the only course of its kind that has a mandatory requirement for practitioners to complete a unit on mental health and leading wellbeing in the workplace.

We provide ongoing guidance on ethical issues and practice support through our Ethics and Practice Centre. We offer LawCare – a confidential, personal and professional support service for our members, your staff and your immediate family members. Through this service, we provide six sessions of counselling. We also provide members Mental Health First Aid Training.

These resources, and many more, are tailored to ensure, as best we can, that the Society is able to assist our members navigate mental health issues and ensure a sustainable and viable practice.

Connecting for change

This year I enthusiastically welcomed the opportunity to work with the Government in implementing the recommendations we made in response to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce report, Hear Her Voice.

The taskforce report, delivered late last year, set out a four-phase implementation plan to support the delivery of 89 wide-ranging and comprehensive recommendations directed at the Queensland Government, judiciary and legal profession, including a recommendation to create a new offence criminalising coercive control.

The Queensland Government has also released its response to the report, supporting or supporting in principle all 89 recommendations. We are aiming to meet and then exceed the taskforce recommendations to the greatest extent possible within the CPD framework in which we must work.

We are committed to developing comprehensive, up-to-date, trauma-informed education offerings so that Queensland solicitors can best support their clients. We will work with experts, including our Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Committee, to provide the best and most relevant resources. We are also considering the best ways to ensure that our accredited specialists in criminal law and family law meet and maintain a high level of DFV expertise.

The Society remains committed to supporting our members by providing high-quality ethical guidance on all matters, and we will work with the Ethics Centre and Senior Counsellors to further enhance practitioner skills in DFV.

Finally, I have had the honour of farewelling an incredible female Chief Justice and welcoming another. I have also been honoured to attend 14 welcomes and valedictories for judicial members over the last six months alone. A strong relationship with the judiciary means we can provide trusted advice to our partners in the justice system about the change necessary to meet the moment. This is something I know we will carry forward in years to come and I was proud to represent QLS in these momentous ceremonies.

The items I have highlighted here are only a snapshot of what has been achieved in the year 2021-22 and the promise the future holds for us all.

I look forward to what is in store for my presidency for the remainder of this year and continuing to work with the team at Queensland Law Society delivering a number of major outcomes and change for members and the future of the profession.

CEO Review

The past year has seen significant growth in demand for legal services across most regions and practice areas in Queensland. The increase in gross fee income for Lexon-insured practices was a double digit percentage and many of the members I spoke with throughout the year experienced this growth and the associated pressures on work volumes and staff shortages.

It seems that managing day-to-day unforeseen challenges and business interruptions while at the same time juggling to deliver services and execute longer term strategic plans is becoming the norm. This is a result of staff shortages and absences due to the continued impact of COVID-19. That certainly has been the experience at QLS.

Notwithstanding, the last twelve months have been rewarding for QLS in terms of the work we have done and the progress made on strategic projects.

This annual report sets out our performance in various key areas including the financial results. The surplus achieved was critical to our four year financial road map after 2020, where we budgeted a deficit as part of the QLS COVID-19 support package to the profession. The full financial results commence on page 100 of the report.

As always, one of the highlights each year is recognising the significant milestones of our members, particularly those who achieve Honorary Membership after 50 years of service or for exceptional contribution to the legal profession in Queensland. We also recognise our members who have achieved 25 years of service. The list of those members can be found on pages 70-71 of this report and I was privileged, along with the President, to be able to personally meet many of these individuals and present them with their certificates and QLS pins in recognition of their significant contribution to the Queensland profession.

Delivering education to the membership is one of our major strategic objectives, and notwithstanding COVID-19 disruptions, we offered 142.5 separate CPD hours of content. This attracted over 4,796 attendances to events and saw us achieve record attendances and sponsorship support at the Gold Coast Conference in June as well as very high attendance rates to specialty conferences and QLS Symposium.

Our sexual harassment and workplace culture workshop has now been delivered to just short of 2,000 solicitors in Queensland. This workshop has been licensed to all jurisdictions in the country and is being successfully rolled out nationally.

The Ethics Centre has had significant contact with members this year receiving over 3,500 calls and you can read more about that in this report. The team also completed 358 visits to law firms throughout the state providing practice support consultancy services. The feedback from those visits has been overwhelmingly positive and is adding real value to practices as they navigate through the current business environment.

The Trust Accounting team have also had a busy year taking over 4000 phone calls to the Trust Account Hotline and they also conducted 589 direct visits to law firms across the state.

Our advocacy work continues strongly on behalf of the profession and for the benefit of the public, more details on that can be found on page 30 in the Annual Report. However, a highlight of our advocacy was dispatching 247 individual policy submissions to government and also participating in 174 stakeholder consultations. We attended 19 Parliamentary Committee Hearings and had 145 mentions in Hansard in state parliament. Our relationships with government and the opposition are effective and it has been a pleasing year in terms of the advocacy work we have done.

One of the big projects which commenced in 2019 and advanced significantly this year was planning the refurbishment of the QLS premises at 179 Ann Street. The original building was completed in 1987 and a number of key parts of the building are now non-compliant and at end-of-life, requiring significant refurbishment and rectifications. As a result, we will make larger changes to the building so that we can accommodate Law Society staff across two floors leaving more floors for member services, rental income, and to be able to host more functions, events and educational programs in-house. This project will see fruition during the next financial year and I am looking forward to QLS hosting an opening of the refurbished building.

One of the challenges this year has been the implementation of our new customer relationship management system, Microsoft Dynamics. The legacy system which we rely upon for membership data and practising certificate renewals was decommissioned due to its age and transition to the new system occurred. Unfortunately, this meant delays and some difficulties in the renewals process for practising certificates and memberships. I greatly appreciated the support and patience from the profession as we undertook this significant systems transition. We have learnt much as a result of the implementation and are aware of the frustrations and difficulties it has caused the profession. We are committed to and have prioritised implementing the learnings from the renewals process moving forward.

An important win for the membership this year was to successfully secure first party cybersecurity insurance for members and insureds. This insurance is complimentary and covers up to \$50,000 and top up cover can be purchased. In the current environment where cyber incidents are becoming increasingly difficult to defend, this member benefit is crucial. You can read more about Cyber Essentials on page 63 in the report.

It has been another year where I have felt incredibly proud to have been able to support the Queensland profession and I know the our staff feel the same. I thank them for their significant efforts and contributions to support Good Law and Good Lawyers for the Public Good and we look forward to serving the profession and the membership in the year ahead.

Our Council

In accordance with the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (LPA), Queensland Law Society Council is comprised of 12 elected members: four office bearers (President, Deputy President, Vice President and Immediate Past President) and eight members and one appointed member, the Attorney-General's appointed Council representative.

The Council is elected for a two-year term. The QLS Council election was held in September-October 2021, for the Council term beginning on 1 January 2022 and concluding on 21 December. The President is elected for a term of one year. In the second year of the Council's term, the elected Deputy President succeeds to the office of President, and the term one President becomes the Immediate Past President. The Immediate Past President from term one retires from Council. This means there are no more than 13 Council members in the first year and 12 Council members in the second year of a Council term. The *Legal Profession (Society) Rules 2007* (the Rules) sets out where there is a vacancy in an elected role, the position is to be filled in either an election by the membership or appointment by the Council in accordance with the Rules.

During the 2021-22 year, an election was held for the 2022 and 2023 Council (see 2021 election below).

Our Council is responsible for leadership and governance of QLS, including the setting and review of the strategic plan and operating performance as reported via the CEO. The Council is also responsible for approving the annual budget, overseeing the financial management of QLS's affairs and its statutory duties. Our Council ensures QLS meets the needs of, and represents, our legal profession.

QLS's long established core values of respect, integrity and service are embedded in our Code of Conduct and the Council Charter and set the standards for stakeholder engagement. The Council is committed to excellence in corporate governance and references the Australian Institute of Company Directors' Good Governance Principles and Guidance for Not-for-profit Organisations and the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations as its benchmarks and as key guidance resources for QLS's corporate governance, with the Governance Committee noting the updated 4th edition of the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations in the discharge of its work.

The Council has delegated responsibility for management and day to day operations to QLS's CEO, and the CEO has the authority to carry out these responsibilities in accordance with the directions and policies established by the Council. The CEO supports the Council in carrying out its governance functions and ensures that QLS operates in compliance with all statutory obligations.

QLS Election 2021

Our biennial Council election was held in September-October 2021. The conduct of the election was governed by the LPA and the *Legal Profession (Society) Rules 2007*, and for the first time running was conducted via an online e-election platform supported by TrueVote. There were 11,085 (2019: 10,164) QLS members eligible to participate in the election, and of that number, no manual ballots were posted (2019: 114) however there were 19 letters with unique QR code and online voting instructions for those who did not have an email or the email bounced and 22 postings on myQLS of letters with unique QR code and online voting.

By the close of the election, 1,321 (2019: 1331) voted online and none voted via paper ballot (2019:20). Continuing with 2019, which had only the vice-president and ordinary members of Council positions contested, in 2021 only the ordinary members of Council positions were contested. The voting participation rate for the contested position in the 2021 Council election was 11.92% (2019: 13.29%). Our website received considerable traffic throughout the election, with 8,986 of unique page views of election pages during election period, spending an average of 1:51 on pages.

Council sub-committees

QLS Council has delegated a range of its powers to committees to ensure the efficient management of QLS's responsibilities. It operates three well-established subcommittees to help it carry out its core business:

1. **Executive Committee:** Makes decisions on practising certificate matters, external intervention and related occupational matters arising under the LPA, had delegated decision making and considers operational matters, including QLS committee appointments and resignations where required.
2. **Finance and Risk Committee (FRC):** Responsible for overseeing and ensuring the integrity of the financial reporting process, monitoring the QLS's risk management framework, and overseeing the responsible investment of surplus funds in accordance with QLS's investment policies as well as overseeing the QLS's insurances.
3. **Governance Committee:** Responsible for reviewing and providing recommendations to Council on corporate governance policies, processes and practices in accordance with the ASX Corporate Governance Principles and Recommendations.

During the year, following review and recommendations of the Governance Committee, the Council reviewed and approved amendments to the Legal Ethics Course Policy, Remedial Trust Account Course Policy, PMC Committee Charter, Ethics Committee Charter and approved a new QLS Network Charter and External Nominations and Appointments Policy. It also approved the delegations manual and accepted the audit recommendations and performance audit recommendations by Queensland Audit Office (QAO). The Council has been kept up to date and noted interim audit reports and progress.

In this financial year, the Executive Committee has considered and overseen approximately 43 matters with correspondence for 13 matters. Of those correspondence matters:

- 23% related to fitness matters despite show cause event
- 69% related to applications for a grant or renewal of a practising certificate, and
- 7% related to lay associate applications.

The demographic of practitioners in these matters has been:

- 76% male
- 24% female
- Average age 48 years (at time of decision), and
- Average PAE 19 years (at time of decision).

Our FRC is led by an independent chair, who is not a member of the Council but was originally appointed by the Council, based on a selection and recruitment process in February 2012. The Chair was reappointed in March 2021 by the Council for a one year term, from July 2021 to June 2022 and after loyal and dedicated service, retired as Chair on 30 June 2022. The Chair provides leadership to the FRC in fulfilling its duties and responsibilities, with the benefit of having current accountancy qualifications and other financial expertise and experience. Our FRC Chair for this financial year was Mr Grant Wallace, Director at Libertate Family Office. Mr Wallace is a qualified Chartered Accountant and advisor with more than 30 years' industry experience spanning all facets of accounting and financial services.

During the financial year, the FRC Chair received remuneration of \$2100 per month plus GST from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022. Mr Wallace was paid an additional \$13,031 plus GST for further consultancy work. QLS does not operate an internal audit function. Sufficiency of controls is assessed through the external audit process conducted by the Queensland Auditor-General and the FRC and Council consider risk and fraud risk on a quarterly basis.

During the year, the FRC—in observing its charter—addressed matters relating to financial management and strategy, considered financial statements, investments, retained earnings, cyber risk, fraud and risk management, workplace health and safety reports and insurance and made recommendations to the Council.

Other committees

Our Council has a number of long standing committees that have been established to assist it in discharging its statutory responsibilities and to carry out other business of QLS. These include:

- **Committee of Management for the Fidelity Guarantee Fund:** Established under s366 of the LPA to exercise delegated powers of the Council in managing the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund.
- **Practice Management Course Committee:** Established under Part 5 of the *Queensland Law Society Administration Rule 2005* to oversee the conduct and management of the Practice Management Course conducted by QLS.
- **Continuing Professional Development Committee:** Established under Part 6 of the *Queensland Law Society Administration Rule 2005* to assist Council in managing and monitoring the obligations of legal practitioners to complete Continuing Professional Development units each year.
- **Ethics Committee:** Established by the Council to assist, advise and report on matters relating to lawyers' professional ethics.

All committee chairs and members are appointed by the Council. Each committee is supported by QLS staff.

Council and Finance Risk committee meetings

During the financial year eight Council meetings and five Finance and Risk Committee (FRC) meetings were held. The attendance list for these Council and FRC meetings is set out below. The 2021-22 Council photo can be accessed on the website – qls.com.au

Meetings held 2021-22

Name, firm	Role	QLS Council 2021-22		FRC 2021-22	
		Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended
Kara Thomson Accredited Specialist – Personal Injury Law (Qld), Hughes and Lewis Legal	President 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		
	Vice President 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
	FRC Committee member 2021-22 (01.07.21-30.06.22)			5	5
Michael Brennan Trustee in Bankruptcy and Official Liquidator, Principal Offermans Partners	Deputy President 2022 (01.01.22-07.06.22)	3	2		
	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
	FRC Committee member 2021-22 (01.07.21-07.06.22)			5	4

		QLS Council 2021-22		FRC 2021-22	
Name, firm	Role	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended
Chloe Kopilovic Associate Director Ferguson Cannon Lawyers	Deputy President 2022 (07.06.22-30.06.22)	1	1		
	Vice President 2022 (01.01.22-07.06.22)	3	2		
	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	3		
	FRC Committee member 2022 (01.01.22-30.06.22)			3	2
Rebecca Fogerty Partner Jasper Fogerty Lawyers	Vice President 2022 (22.06.22-30.06.22)	0	0		
	A-G Councillor (01.07.21-22.06.22)	8	7		
	FRC Committee member 2022 (22.06.22-30.06.22)			0	0
Elizabeth Shearer Director Shearer Doyle Law	President 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
	Immediate Past President 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		
	FRC Committee member 2020-21 (01.07.21-30.06.22)			5	5
Allison Caputo Special Counsel, Accredited Family Law Specialist Barry.Nilsson.Lawyers	Councillor 2020-21	8	8		
	FRC Committee member 2022 (01.01.22-17.02.22)			1	1
Samantha Bolton Director Pippa Colman & Associates	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	3		
	FRC Committee member 2022 (17.02.22-30.06.22)			2	2
Michele Davis Special Counsel Vitality Law Australia	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	3		
Genevieve Dee Partner Lander & Rogers	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		
Sheetal Deo Principal Shakti Legal Solutions	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		
Bridie Edwards Lawyer Bradley + Bray Lawyers	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		

Name, firm	Role	QLS Council 2021-22		FRC 2021-22	
		Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended
Peter Jolly Partner Thynne + Macartney	Councillor 2022 (01.01.22-01.07.22)	4	4		
Rebecca Pezzutti Senior Associate MinterEllison	Councillor 2020-21 (01.07.21-24.06.22)	8	7		
	FRC Committee member 2020-21 (01.07.21-24.06.22)			5	5
Luke Murphy Accredited Specialist (Personal Injury), Succession Law Partner MurphySchmidt Lawyers	Immediate Past President 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
	FRC Committee member 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)			2	2
Kirsty Mackie Solicitor/Lecturer in Law University of Sunshine Coast – Clinical Law	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
Justin McDonnell Partner King & Wood Mallesons	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	3		
William (Bill) Munro Director, Accredited Specialist – Personal Injury Munro Legal	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	4		
Philip Ware General Counsel Stanwell Corporation Ltd	Councillor 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)	4	3		
	FRC Committee member 2021 (01.07.21-31.12.21)			2	2
Grant Wallace Director Libertate Family Office	FRC Chair 2021-22 (01.07.21 – 30.06.22)			5	5

The legal landscape and plans for the future: Strategic Plan 2021-25

This financial year saw the recovery and relative return to normal since the start of the pandemic, following our leadership at the forefront of emergency legislation response, whilst continuing support for the profession, creating and establishing QLS as the go to for breaking news in the Queensland legal profession.

This financial year saw the acceleration for the planning of the refurbishment for Law Society House, enhancing and creating an arbitration and member services hub for the profession.

The plans and projects for the future include:

- Law Society House refurbishment
- Research projects
- Membership engagement survey

- IT/ Dynamics enhancements
- Domestic and Family Violence and Trauma Informed Practice, and
- Employer of Choice for Gender Equality Citation renewal.

Our future goals include growing membership conversion, growing attendance numbers to events and education, grow member outreach, consultancy and supports, engaging our volunteer base and supporting, monitoring and responding to at risk practices and practitioners.

The QLS Strategic Plan 2021-25 is available on our website qls.com.au.

Operating plan 2022-23

Our new operating plan 2022-23, developed over the financial year and effective 1 July 2022, is the second plan under the 2021-25 Strategic Plan. Our new operation plan sets out 21 initiatives in advancing our six strategic objectives to see through the second year of the Strategic Plan 2021-25.

The QLS Operating Plan 2022-23 at a glance is available on our website qls.com.au.

Profession snapshot

Total QLS Members

13,002

Total Queensland Practising Certificates

14,637

Practising Certificate by type

Practising Certificate type	Total
Restricted Employee	3142
Unrestricted Employee	7451
Foreign Law	14
Other PC/Travelling PC	292
Limited Principal	41
Unrestricted Principal	3581
Restricted Principal	2
Unrestricted Volunteer	43
Restricted Volunteer	71
Total	14637

Total membership by Category

	Total
Full member	11728
Associate Member	387
Honorary Member	161
Student Member	726
Total	13002

Where our members practise

	Full Members
Sole	1054
Micro	2472
Small	2265
Medium	1036
Large	2040
Other*	2861
Total	11728

Member by generation

Year	Generation	Full Member
1925-1945	Builders	27
1946-1964	Baby boomers	1741
1965-1979	X	3374
1980-1994	Y	5259
1995-2010	Z	1316
NO DOB		11
Total		11728

Gender Balance

	Male	Female	Not available	Total
Full Member	5484	6237	7	11728
Associate Member	180	207		387
Honorary	133	28		161
Student Member	16	31	679*	726
Total	5813	6503	686	13002

**Gender details were not captured in data files for numerous student members*

ADVOCATE

We advocate for the role of solicitors and for balanced laws and the rule of law for the benefit of the profession and the community.

Advocating for good law

QLS's 29 standing policy committees comprise over 350 volunteer committee members who contribute their expertise, knowledge and valuable time to advocating for good law for the public good. Their dedication enables QLS to develop sound and balanced submissions to government when seeking legislative and policy reform which will have a positive impact for both the legal profession and the Queensland community. Our committee members come from a range of professional backgrounds, ensuring that our advocacy is truly representative on key issues affecting practitioners in Queensland and the industries in which they practise.

We value our relationship with the Queensland Government and the Opposition, and are regularly consulted on the development of policy positions and proposed legislative amendments, leading to better outcomes and responsive legislation. QLS also engages with the courts on procedural reform and practical issues affecting court users, including consultation on draft practice directions. We also appreciate the ongoing opportunities to be involved in a number of other Queensland Government consultative groups as outlined below.

Year of achievement

Legal policy statistics	
Total committee, subcommittee and working group meetings	125
Total submissions	247
	Proactive: 49 Reactive: 198
Mentions in Hansard	145
Public hearings	19
Requests for comment	256
Positive outcomes	28
Stakeholder consultations	182
COVID-19 specific publications	20

Criminal Procedure Review

QLS has been a key stakeholder in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's historic review of the *Justices Act 1886* (Qld) (Justices Act), led by retired District Court Judge, Mr Michael Shanahan AM. The Criminal Procedure Review will make findings and recommendations for a new legislative framework for contemporary and effective criminal procedure laws in Queensland's Magistrates Courts. This new framework will follow the order of events in a criminal proceeding in the Magistrates Courts, from starting proceedings to finalisation, including an appeals process.

Representatives of the Criminal Law Committee, Human Rights and Public Law Committee, Childrens Law Committee, First Nations Legal Policy Committee and Domestic and Family Violence Law Committee participated in multiple stakeholder consultations with the Criminal Procedure Review team, and made a significant submission in response to the Consultation Paper released in April 2022. QLS supported the review for three key reasons:

1. Criminal justice procedure in Queensland is skewed towards a trial as the probable outcome.
2. The prolix, archaic and complicated nature of the Justices Act presents a significant barrier to access to justice, especially for self-represented defendants, who may lack the necessary resources and understanding to enforce their rights and comply with their obligations in the Magistrates Courts.
3. There are concerns that excessive charging by police may create inefficiencies and costs to the criminal justice system in refining and negotiating appropriate charges and getting early pleas of guilty.

QLS's submission emphasised the need for increased use of technology and electronic Court processes for summary criminal procedure, including electronic lodgement, filing and service of documents, arguing that new criminal procedure laws should facilitate the use of digital technologies and electronic processes, and be sufficiently flexible to accommodate future technological advances. The submission also highlighted the need for laws that are culturally appropriate for the communities to which they apply, and for laws that are accessible to all Queenslanders. Further, the submission emphasised the importance of any new criminal procedure legislation being compatible with the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Qld).

Judicial Commission Working Group

QLS has established a cross-committee Judicial Commission Working Group with members from QLS policy committees as well as a members from the QLS Ethics Committee, District Law Associations and a retired Judge. The Group is examining an effective model for a Judicial Commission for Queensland and intends to liaise with the Queensland Courts and Government on such a model and the best way to progress these issues.

LGBTQIA+ Criminal Justice Working Group

There are many issues in the criminal justice system that uniquely affect LGBTQIA+ people. Some of these relate to the court system (such as gender options on the bench charge sheet) and others relate to experiences with police and criminal lawyers. QLS has convened a working group comprised of external criminal justice stakeholders to inform advocacy as it relates to issues in the criminal justice system that uniquely affect LGBTQIA+ people. The working group includes members of the Criminal Law Committee, Human Rights and Public Law Committee and the Childrens Law Committee.

The working group is exploring changes to the gender options on the bench charge sheet, court attendances and announcements for trans and gender diverse people, law reform and further CPD opportunities for practitioners to increase education among the profession.

Modernising document creation following temporary COVID-19 measures

In November 2021, the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2021* was passed by the Queensland Parliament making permanent many of the legislative reforms implemented in 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including modernising the way certain documents are able to be created. Documents such as affidavits, statutory declarations, general powers of attorney for businesses, deeds and particular mortgages can now be signed electronically and, if there is a requirement for a witness, this can be done via audio video link.

As noted into the Explanatory Notes for this legislation, QLS was consulted on these amendments and this follows our previous advocacy and liaison with government on these issues in recent years. QLS strongly supported these reforms, provided a submission to the parliamentary inquiry and appeared at the public hearing.

Since the reforms have been passed by Parliament, QLS has updated the profession and has also liaised with government and the courts about their implementation, including regarding updated forms.

New Civil Case Management System for the Queensland Courts

For the past 18 months, the Queensland Courts have been working to develop a new civil case management system. The system will allow for electronic filing and electronic access to court files for matters in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal's minor civil jurisdiction and the civil jurisdiction of the Magistrates Court. It is anticipated the system will be expanded to other Queensland Courts and jurisdictions in the near future.

QLS has formed a working group comprised of members of our policy committees, together with members of some of the District Law Associations. The group has met regularly with the Courts project team to review various features of the system and to provide feedback on behalf of the profession. Currently, user-testing of the system is being conducted, including with people nominated by the working group.

The working group has worked with the Queensland Courts to improve system usability in respect of document file sizes, required lodgement details and access to documents.

Review of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*

In 2021, the Queensland Government announced a review of Queensland's *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* to be undertaken by the Queensland Human Rights Commission. In order to comprehensively respond to the review, QLS convened a working group with members from a number of policy committees and sought input directly from committees and from the membership more broadly. In addition to providing a written submission to the review, working group members also participated in the practitioner roundtable conducted by the QHRC where feedback on the issues raised was provided directly to the review team.

The review is undertaking a thorough examination of the Anti-Discrimination Act and the practices and processes that flow from it. The review has considered the appropriateness of some of the current definitions in the Act as well as whether reform is needed to the list of attributes and exemptions. Issues around bringing claims, including who should bear the onus of proof and the ability to bring a claim in a court or tribunal were also examined. These issues have been considered by QLS members based on their experience in different types of claims, including those resulting from employment, education and as a result of age and disability.

The final report was due to be provided to the Queensland Attorney-General on 30 June 2022. The Working Group will consider the report and recommendations once released.

Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce

QLS welcomed the opportunity to be involved at each stage of consultation conducted by the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and looks forward to advocating for good law and the interests of QLS members as the government responds to the taskforce's reports.

The Domestic and Family Violence Committee and Criminal Law Committee led the QLS response to the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce's Discussion Paper 1 (options for legislating against coercive control and the creation of a standalone domestic violence offence), while also incorporating the views of members from a range of other committees, including the Family Law Committee, the Elder Law Committee, the Health and Disability Law Committee, the First Nations Legal Policy Committee and the Human Rights and Public Law Committee. The submissions recognised the diverse perspectives held by QLS members on the issues raised in the discussion papers.

QLS acknowledged the devastating impact of coercive control on women and children as well as the gaps in appropriate responses in the current system. In designing a response to coercive control, QLS recommended the government take a multi-faceted approach, including the implementation of comprehensive and well-resourced training and education campaigns. QLS highlighted the significant scope for improvement within current systems and processes as well as the need for any new offence to be carefully and specifically defined to avoid unintended consequences.

The taskforce released the Hear Her Voice Report 1 in late 2021. Report 1 set out a four-phase implementation plan to support the delivery of 89 wide-ranging and comprehensive recommendations directed at the Queensland Government, judiciary and legal profession, including a recommendation to

create a new offence criminalising coercive control. The government subsequently responded, wholly supporting or supporting-in-principle all recommendations.

A number of recommendations refer to, or are aimed at, legal practitioners and QLS specifically. The taskforce reported examples of excellent legal advice and representation in matters involving domestic and family violence. The taskforce also reported hearing accounts of negative experiences and found that the effectiveness of legal professionals directly depends on their knowledge and understanding of the nuances of how coercive control is perpetrated. QLS has responded to the relevant recommendations, committing to improve the profession's level of understanding in regard to domestic and family violence and trauma-informed practice. QLS is liaising with other legal profession stakeholders and commencing work on implementing the Report 1 recommendations.

The Criminal Law Committee led the response to the taskforce's Discussion Paper 3 (Women and girls' experiences across the criminal justice system as victims-survivors of sexual violence and also as accused persons and offenders) with input from the Domestic and Family Violence Committee and members of the Family Law Committee, Health and Disability Law Committee, Children's Law Committee, and Human Rights and Public Law Committee.

Our submission was broad ranging and addressed issues related to the experiences of women and girls with complex and intersecting needs as both victim-survivors of sexual violence and accused persons within the criminal justice system, human rights, the possibility of substantive changes to the Criminal Code regarding consent, and technical issues of evidence, criminal procedure and jury directions. In particular, the submission raised significant misconceptions within the lay-community about the content and application of current statutory and common law principles governing sexual offence and domestic violence proceedings, cautioning that amendment of these base evidentiary principles may have far-reaching ramifications and unintended consequences. The submission also raised the potential for evidentiary reforms to compound the legal technicality of sexual offence and domestic violence proceedings in a way that risks occasioning delay, legal error, burgeoning appellate case-load and increased trauma for complainants.

The Taskforce released Hear Her Voice – Report 2 on 1 July 2022. We look forward to the government's response and consulting on any legislative changes that may arise.

2022 Federal Election Call to Parties

In April 2022, QLS released its 2022 Federal Election Call to Parties Statement. The Call to Parties Statement was prepared by the QLS Legal Policy team in consultation with QLS legal policy committees, members and key stakeholders over a period of several months. It sought commitment from political parties and candidates to address issues critical to the effective delivery of justice to the Australian community including:

- making justice more accessible
- resourcing federal courts, tribunals and commissions
- preserving the integrity of our justice system and public institutions
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- fair resolution of family law disputes
- addressing violence against women and their children
- addressing gender inequality and unsafe workplaces
- protecting children
- implementing measures to combat elder abuse
- removing criminal law barriers to access legislated voluntary assisted dying schemes
- supporting disability services
- enshrining human rights

- fairness and assistance in migration
- sustainability, climate and disaster response
- protecting consumers
- supporting small and family business
- providing certainty and security for workers and employers
- ensuring compensation schemes are efficient and effective
- engaging the not-for-profit sector
- preserving privacy, and
- Commonwealth law reform processes.

The statement was sent to a number of political parties and candidates as well as disseminated through our own networks. QLS received a response to the statement from the Australian Greens, which was published on the QLS website.

QLS also contributed to the Law Council of Australia's Call to Parties document which was also sent to candidates and political parties.

Annual meeting of legal policy committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs

On 9 November 2021, the Queensland Law Society held its annual meeting of legal policy committee Chairs and Deputy Chairs. QLS was delighted to welcome the Attorney-General, the Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP, who delivered an address. The Attorney-General thanked QLS for its contribution and set out the Government's 2022 legislative agenda. The Attorney-General also participated in a Q&A discussion with 2021 QLS President, Elizabeth Shearer, during which the Attorney-General discussed suggestions for effective advocacy, the challenges of balancing priorities in the law reform agenda and gave some insights into how the QLS Call to Parties Statement is received and dealt with by the Government of the day. The Attorney-General also took questions from attendees.

After the Attorney-General's departure, the Chairs and Deputy Chairs participated in a facilitated workshop discussion, focusing on the challenges facing the legal profession in a post-COVID world and how QLS can support the profession at this time. Options for future law reform campaigns were also discussed.

Access to Justice and Pro-bono Law Committee

The committee have achieved great success this year. Of note is the committee's campaign for an increase to Legal Aid preferred supplier rates. After sustained advocacy, Legal Aid Queensland has confirmed that it will increase fees paid to solicitors and barristers representing financially disadvantaged clients in most State law matters. The committee published several QLS Proctor articles with an access to justice focus and have contributed to nine legal policy submissions. The committee have also published a draft Access to Justice Policy Position.

The committee published the 2021 Access to Justice Scorecard data analysis and report which assessed the views of the Queensland legal profession about Queenslanders' access to justice. Now in its ninth year, the report assessed the workings of our legal system through the lens of the profession, including the fairness of our laws, dispute resolution and Queenslanders' access to legal help. The 2021 survey questions adopted some multiple choice questions from previous years to create a comparable timeline of access to justice across the years. However this year, there are a number of brand new questions which were designed to obtain data on issues not canvassed by previous surveys, such as the uptake of Low Bono or discrete task legal services.

Accident Compensation/Tort Law Committee

The Accident Compensation and Tort Law Committee has contributed to 17 submissions and participated in over 15 stakeholder consultations during the financial year. The committee enjoys excellent stakeholder relationships with various government agencies, including the Office of Industrial Relations, the Motor Accident Insurance Commission and the Legal Services Commission.

In recent months, the committee has continued its advocacy in relation to the elimination of claim farming by making submissions in respect of the *Personal Injuries Proceedings and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022*, supporting the intention of the Bill but expressing concerns about the practicalities of the law practice certificate requirements and certain other aspects of the Bill, including a proposed retrospective change to the definition of *terminal condition* in the workers' compensation legislation. Those concerns were reiterated by QLS 2022 President Kara Thomson and the committee chair and deputy chair at the public hearing before the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee.

The Bill was enacted without the retrospective change to terminal condition and with a number of other changes proposed by QLS, though the law practice certificate requirements remain largely unchanged. The committee is continuing to consult with the regulators regarding implementation of the claim farming and law practice certificate reforms.

During the year, the committee has also been involved in advocacy regarding delays in Medicare's compensation recovery program, contributed to QLS feedback on court processes, and participated in QLS's education program through presentations at conferences and QLS Symposium.

Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Committee

The Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee has been working to assist QLS accredited mediators including by examining options to support mediators in meeting the requirements of the National Mediator Accreditation System's Approval and Practice Standards. Members of the Committee are engaging with various stakeholders, including the Queensland Courts, to discuss participation in volunteer/pro-bono mediation schemes. Participation in these schemes will provide assistance to the courts and to the community, as well as assist QLS mediators to reach their minimum hours required under the National Mediator Accreditation System.

The committee also contributed to QLS advocacy via written submissions to the Review of the *Farm Debt Mediation Act 2017* and to the inquiry into the Small Business Commissioner Bill 2021, where a member also appeared at the public hearing. Members of the committee have also updated the profession via QLS Proctor.

Banking and Financial Services Law Committee

The Banking and Financial Services Law Committee contributed to both broader QLS policy submissions and Committee specific submissions in financial year 2021-2022. The committee worked closely with the Competition and Consumer Law Committee to review the Treasury Laws Amendment (Measures for a later sitting) Bill 2021: Unfair contract terms reference, in particular advocating that further guidance be prepared by regulators to ensure certainty of application of the provisions. The committee also assisted the Elder Law Committee in its response to the 2021 review of the Banking Code of Conduct, making some recommendations to improve experiences for vulnerable customers.

The committee has focused its efforts on responding to the Australian Law Reform Commission's review of complexity in legislation regulating corporations and financial services. In particular, the committee responded to the ALRC's Interim Report A. In support of the ALRC's objective to facilitate a more adaptive, efficient, and navigable framework of legislation within the context of existing policy settings, the committee has stressed that the ALRC must ensure any restructuring of the legislation or changes to the definitions and terminology will still accurately reflect the current legislative settings. The committee also advocated for vital transitioning provisions to ensure industry is provided with sufficient time to effect any changes in detailed processes and computer programming that arise from the final legislative changes.

The committee contributed to the Law Council's important work on the Inquiry on the adequacy and efficacy of Australia's anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regime, on which the Senate References Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs released its report on 30 March 2022. The Committee contributed to a subsequent QLS Proctor article, informing practitioners of the significant consequences that will result from the implementation of tranche 2 of the anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regime.

In response to member queries about the National Consumer Credit Protection Amendment (Debt Management Services) Regulations 2021, the committee sought clarification from ASIC about the scope of the exemption for lawyers under the Regulations. Upon receipt of correspondence from ASIC, QLS notified the profession via QLS Proctor. The committee also assisted ASIC with its ePayments Code Review, providing multiple rounds of feedback and responding to specific enquiries from ASIC on revised positions and rationales. The committee also provided numerous rounds of feedback to the Property Law Committee on relevant aspects of the Property Law Bill 2021. Further, the committee is working through an updated independent solicitor certificate to capture advice provided on third party guarantees to clients remotely, in part because solicitors have indicated they wish to continue providing such advice to clients remotely beyond the pandemic.

Children's Law Committee

The committee had another busy year advocating for reform in the youth justice and child protection practice areas. The committee contributed to 15 policy submissions and numerous consultation processes. Of note is the committee's strong and sustained advocacy in relation to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility. This year, QLS made submissions and appeared as a witness before the Community and Support Services Committee on the Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021 and also made submissions highlighting the need for reform in the process of Supreme Court bail reviews for children and young people. Committee members also participated in a number of stakeholder groups including the Heads of Jurisdiction stakeholder forum, Childrens Court Committee, Court Case Management Committee and Legal Aid Child Protection Stakeholder group.

Competition and Consumer Law Committee

The Competition and Consumer Law Committee contributed to four written submissions over the past financial year in relation to Federal law reforms. Of note, the committee contributed to a submission to the Productivity Commission regarding the draft report on the Right to Repair, which was released as part of the Commission's Right to Repair Inquiry. The other submissions related to cybersecurity regulations and incentives, strengthening protections against unfair contract terms, and the ePayments Code review. The committee continues to maintain good stakeholder relationships with ASIC, the ACCC and the Queensland Office of Fair Trading, and regularly receives updates from these agencies.

Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee

The Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee has undertaken important advocacy work involving Queensland's construction and infrastructure sector, consistent with the Society's mandate for good law for the public good.

In this regard, the Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee has contributed to a number of submissions to government and proactively written to key stakeholders raising issues with Queensland's construction and infrastructure sector

The Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee consulted with the Developer Review Panel as an Industry Reference Group member. The Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee made a submission to the Developer Review Panel, where they raised their concerns with current practices in Queensland's building and construction industry. The Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee continues to engage with the Developer Review Panel to discuss the role of developers in Queensland's building and construction industry.

The Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee also attended the public hearing to the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, having made a written submission to the Bill. At the public hearing, QLS raised concerns with the breadth of the proposed regulation-making power under the proposed amendments, and argued that it did not have proper regard to the institution of Parliament.

Criminal Law Committee

The Criminal Law Committee contributed to a high volume of written submissions and attended various stakeholder meetings, roundtables and forums over the 2021-2022 financial year. The committee made 41 written submissions on a variety of wide ranging and important issues of criminal law reform. Of note was the committee's responses to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the most recent of which made recommendations relating to Queensland's consent laws, evidence laws and the experiences of women and girls as offenders in Queensland's criminal justice system. The committee has also played a key role in supporting the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's Criminal Procedure Review Team, who are undertaking a historic review of the *Justices Act 1886* (Qld), and have advocated for new criminal procedure legislation to ensure criminal procedure laws in Queensland respond to contemporary challenges and evolving community standards. The committee has also made submissions in response to various commissions of inquiry, including the Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence and the Commission of Inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission.

The committee also made an important submission to the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council in relation to its review of the Serious Violent Offences scheme. The committee reiterated QLS's long-held position against mandatory sentencing limits, and argued for the abolition of the scheme in favour of judicial discretion. In response to the Queensland Law Reform Commission's inquiry into a regulated sex work industry in Queensland, the committee supported the decriminalisation of sex work in Queensland and advocated for the recognition of sex work as legitimate work to ensure sex workers have the same rights, protections and obligations as other workers. The committee has also advocated for the establishment of a federal parole authority to replace the current role of the Commonwealth Attorney-General and be the independent decision-maker on parole applications by federal officers.

The committee has also undertaken a number of proactive projects. It made a submission to the Attorney-General advocating for law reform in relation to public intoxication and other public order offences in Queensland. It also established a working group comprised of external criminal justice stakeholders to inform advocacy as it relates to issues in the criminal justice system that uniquely affect LGBTQIA+ people, and is setting up a cross-committee working group to further investigate issues for people with mental illness in the criminal justice system.

Other issues the committee commented on include:

- call over lists
- the Queensland Intermediary Scheme Pilot Program
- possession offences for illicit drugs
- the operation and effectiveness of current laws pertaining to access to, and public reporting of, sexual offence and domestic and family violence matters
- the video recorded evidence-in-chief pilot program
- Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council's review of the serious violent offences scheme
- a new framework for parole decisions about life-sentenced prisoners convicted of multiple murders, child murder, and
- amendments to the No Body No Parole scheme.

Submissions have been made on proposed amendments to various legislative instruments, including: *Criminal Code Act 1899*; *Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000*; *Oaths Act 1867*; *Police Service Administration Act 1990*; *Weapons Act 1990*; *Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Offender Prohibition Order) Act 2004*; *Corrective Services Act 2006*; *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*; *Evidence and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2022*; *Police Powers*

and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021; Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021; and, Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021.

Finally, the committee continues to enjoy excellent relationships with key stakeholders, including: the Queensland Courts; Department of Justice and Attorney-General; Queensland Police Service; Queensland Corrective Services; AMA Queensland; and, Parole Board of Queensland. The committee attends regular stakeholder engagements with these bodies, including: the Streamlining Criminal Justice Committee; the Court Users Reference Group; and, the Courts Safety and Risk Committee. The Committee was also invited to attend roundtables held by AMA Queensland and Deloitte, and has appeared at public hearings in relation to some of the above mentioned legislative amendments, including the: Evidence and Other Legislation Bill 2021; Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021; and, Police Legislation (Efficiencies and Effectiveness) Amendment Bill 2021.

Domestic and Family Violence Committee

The Domestic and Family Violence Committee has contributed to 25 submissions and participated in a number of stakeholder consultations. It is a trusted source of expert advice to QLS regarding domestic and family violence policy issues.

In addition to contributing to submissions to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, the committee has responded to a number of confidential consultations, provided input into the QLS 2022 federal election Call to Parties and QLS submissions regarding legal assistance funding, given feedback on the draft National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032 and the Queensland Women's Strategy, worked with the Family Law Committee on submissions regarding improving the competence and accountability of family report writers and on a proposed national model definition of family violence, and advocated for improved legal education in relation to domestic and family violence.

The committee also provided feedback in relation to permanent changes to domestic violence legislation following changes initially made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in relation to legislation allowing for a trial of video recorded evidence in chief. Most recently, the committee made a submission to the Independent Commission of Inquiry into Queensland Police Service Responses to Domestic and Family Violence, building upon QLS's responses to the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce.

Elder Law Committee

The Elder Law Committee is committed to identifying areas of law that impact on older people and the provision of services to them and advocating for improvements to the law. In doing so, the committee has contributed to 20 submissions over the past financial year. The committee led QLS's work on its Elder Abuse Joint Issues Paper, released in conjunction with the Queensland Public Advocate in early 2022. The paper provides an overview of important recent reform developments to the elder abuse legal landscape in an effort to stimulate discussion and debate on the current legal issues associated with elder abuse. The paper also makes a number of recommendations for law and policy reform.

In response to the 2021 review of the Banking Code of Conduct, the committee made recommendations to improve experiences for vulnerable customers. For example, the Banking Code of Conduct should be updated to include:

- a specific commitment to offer
- use of interpreters for customers with English as a second language
- where appropriate, use interpreters for sight and hearing impaired customers and First Nations customers.
- dealing with customers with impaired decision-making capacity in a way that appropriately balances the need for safeguarding with the person's autonomy
- considering how banks identify and then interact with EPOAs and other similar documents, and
- clearly outlining how banks will respond to scams.

The committee continued its long-standing involvement in reform of the aged care sector, providing feedback to the Law Council of Australia to inform its position on the Aged Care and Other Legislation Amendment (Royal Commission Response No. 2) Bill 2021. The committee expressed concern about the consent-based model for the use of restrictive practices in residential aged care facilities, arguing the proposed definition of restrictive practices substitute decision-maker will give rise to outcomes where individuals without powers under State or Territory law to authorise restrictive practices will nonetheless be empowered to do so under the Commonwealth legislative framework, leading to further ambiguity under Queensland law.

The committee has made numerous submissions in relation to issues in retirement villages and manufactured home parks, and has undertaken extensive stakeholder engagement with: ARTD; the University of Queensland; the Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy; and, Associated Residential Parks Queensland Inc. Submissions have included advocacy on the need for more efficient and streamlined dispute resolution processes in retirement villages and manufactured home parks, the need for better pre-contractual advice, and a submission relating to the final report of the independent review of timeframes for exit payments in Queensland retirement villages.

Other submissions the committee has led or contributed to include:

- the proposed model definition of family violence (arguing that the scope of the definition must be wide enough capture instances of elder abuse)
- Queensland Government's Inquiry into Social Isolation and Loneliness
- review of the Public Trustee's fees and charges
- 021 Banking Code Review
- minimum standards for budgeting and financial reporting in Queensland retirement villages
- proposed new residence contract requirements under the *Retirement Villages Act (Annual Financial Statements and Other Matters) Amendment Regulation 2021*
- exempting resident-operated retirement villages from mandatory buyback requirements, and
- the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The committee is also facilitating, in conjunction with other legal policy committees, a review of the Queensland Handbook for Legal Capacity, to ensure it remains a valuable guide for Queensland's legal practitioners.

The committee has also continued its joint advocacy with the Health and Disability Law Committee and Succession Law Committee. Representatives of these committees attended a series of Commonwealth and Law Council of Australia roundtables on the proposed national register of financial enduring powers of attorney EPOAs and EPOA law reforms. The committees subsequently contributed to multiple submissions to the Law Council of Australia in relation to its ongoing work on EPOA law reform, stressing that more nationally consistent laws governing EPOAs and a national model enduring document should be matters of priority for Attorneys-General, and that this should be resolved prior to the implementation of a national register of financial EPOAs. The committees have also supported in principle the Law Council of Australia's model provisions, but considers a standardised national test for capacity is important, along with nationally consistent best practice guidelines for assessing capacity. The committees' joint advocacy has also continually highlighted the importance of supported decision-making where possible.

The committees also argued against retaining most of the COVID-19 permanency measures as they related to electronic signing and remote witnessing of wills and enduring documents. Rather, the committees advocated for further research into the effects of these practices on vulnerable persons before taking a position on whether permanency should be adopted in the future. The committees made several submissions to the Chief Health Office and Queensland Health to request an exemption for fully vaccinated legal practitioners to enter restricted facilities (e.g. residential aged care facilities, hospitals and disability accommodations) to provide essential legal services. This request was granted in relation to residential aged care facilities in September 2021.

In response to growing concerns over the use of the Statement of Choices documents by Queensland hospitals and aged care facilities, the committees continue to advocate for these documents to be reviewed for their legality. The committees were also instrumental in advocating to the Queensland Government for an increased funding allocation to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to assist with growing delays in its guardianship division.

Energy and Resources Law Committee

The committee continues to foster strong relationships with the Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy, who often provide confidential consultation drafts of proposed legislation and related policy documents. This is particularly useful for our members who operate in Queensland's complex and highly regulated energy and resources industries.

The committee has worked collaboratively with other policy committees to contribute to a range of submissions, including climate change regulatory proposals, assisting the Land Court with various procedural queries, and working with the QLS First Nations Law Committee on the review of the cultural heritage legislation.

Family Law Committee

The Family Law Committee contributed to 13 submissions and participated in a number of important stakeholder consultations, including regular consultations regarding the Lighthouse Project. The committee contributed to a range of legal policy and advocacy work including QLS feedback on a model definition of family violence and on improving the competency and accountability of family report writers.

Drawing on the expertise of the committee, QLS worked closely with the Family Court and Federal Circuit Court prior to the amalgamation of the courts on 1 September 2021 and provided regular updates to practitioners on operational and procedural changes, including harmonised rules and forms. Subsequent to the amalgamation, the committee has liaised with other membership organisations to collate feedback on the operations of the court.

First Nations Legal Policy Committee

The First Nations Legal Policy Committee held 5 committee meetings and contributed to 14 written submission over the past financial year. Committee members contributed to key advocacy around law reform and policy in Queensland and nationally. Of note, the committee contributed to submissions to the State Parliament's Community Support and Services Committee on the Criminal Law (Raising the Age of Responsibility) Amendment Bill 2021 and to the Queensland Human Rights Commission's recent review of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld). At a federal level, members also contributed to the Law Council of Australia's response to the Attorney-General's Department consultation on 'New family dispute resolution services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families'.

Franchising Law Committee

In the 2021-22 financial year, the Franchising Law Committee has meaningfully contributed to QLS's mandate for good law for the public good.

In this context, the Franchising Law Committee produced two submissions which contributed to QLS's advocacy work, including a submission to the Queensland Parliamentary Education, Employment and Training Committee on the Small Business Commission Bill 2021 and another submission to the Commonwealth Department of Treasury regarding the exposure draft of the Competition and Consumer (Industry Codes – Franchising) Amendment (Franchise Disclosure Register) Regulations 2021. In both of these submissions, the Franchising Law Committee supported the overarching policy objective, but advocated for further consideration to ensure there was certainty and clarity.

During the 2021-22 financial year, the Franchising Code of Conduct was amended by the *Competition and Consumer (Industry Codes—Franchising) Amendment (Penalties and Other Matters) Regulations 2022*, bringing in new civil penalty provisions and increased maximum penalties. The Franchising Law Committee assisted in preparing QLS Proctor articles and updates, including a Lexon update, to inform practitioners of the recent change to the Franchising Code of Conduct.

Human Rights and Public Law Committee

The committee had an exceptionally busy year advocating for issues in relation to the Human Rights Act 2019. The committee published several QLS Proctor articles with a human rights and public law focus and have contributed to 31 legal policy submissions. Of note, is the committee's advocacy in relation to the decriminalisation of public intoxication which now forms part of a Community Support and Services Committee Parliamentary Inquiry into the decriminalisation of certain public offences, and health and welfare responses. The committee also published a Policy Statement on Human Rights and contributed to professional development in this space.

Health and Disability Law Committee

The Health and Disability Law Committee has led or contributed to 28 submissions over the past financial year in relation to a broad ambit of legal issues. The committee was heavily involved in submissions on the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021* (Qld) and also appeared at a public hearing in relation to the Act. The committee continues to prepare the profession for the Act's commencement on 1 January 2023, and published a series of QLS Proctor articles that were subsequently picked up by a number of regional Queensland news outlets. The committee has also advocated for the need to amend the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) to provide medical practitioners with certainty as to their criminal liability under Commonwealth laws as regards Queensland's voluntary assisted dying legislation. It should be placed beyond doubt that the Commonwealth suicide material offences do not extend to conduct in compliance with voluntary assisted dying laws enacted by state legislatures.

The committee appeared at the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme's (NDIS) public hearing for the Inquiry into Independent Assessments under the NDIS, advocating strongly against the implementation of independent assessments. The committee was pleased to know that, in line with the majority of other stakeholder recommendations, the Australian Government has discontinued efforts to implement independent assessments. More recently, the committee made a submission to the Law Council of Australia to inform its national position and advocacy in relation to the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The submission supported the use of victim impact statements in situations where NDIS-funded service providers are being held to account for their actions, but highlighted this would need to be carefully regulated in order to avoid unintended consequences and delays to proceedings against service providers. The submission also highlighted issues relating to parity of funding for scheme participants in NDIS litigation and adherence to model litigant rules during NDIS proceedings.

The committee has also focused on advocacy relating to the authorisation framework for restrictive practices, both in residential aged care and disability service settings. The committee made a significant submission to the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships in late 2021 on its Consultation Paper titled 'Reforming Queensland's authorisation framework for the use of restrictive practices in NDIS and particular disability service settings'. The submission highlighted that the authorisation framework for restrictive practices in NDIS and particular disability service settings cannot be considered in isolation, and stressed the need for a consistent authorisation framework across all settings in which restrictive practices are applied in Queensland. Of note, the submission recommended the authorisation of restrictive practices should be removed from the guardianship space altogether, and should not be tied to issues of decision-making, capacity or consent. Rather, should the application of a restrictive practice be necessary in a particular setting, the decision to authorise or not authorise a restrictive practice should be independent of both the person subject to the restrictive practice and the service provider, informed by relevant clinical experience, and subject to an administrative merit review process.

The committee has continued its longstanding tradition of strong proactive advocacy and stakeholder engagement. For example, the committee wrote to the Queensland Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) to raise some member concerns relating to procedural fairness and the continued lack of audio recording and transcription services at the MHRT. The MHRT continues to be the only court or tribunal of record in Queensland to lack this critical court infrastructure. Members of the committee, along with members of the Human Rights and Public Law Committee, met with the Deputy President of the MHRT to discuss ways QLS and MHRT can collaborate in the future to ameliorate these concerns. The MHRT subsequently issued a practice direction to address a number of our concerns, and has indicated it is continuing to investigate the viability of a permanent recording and transcription service.

The committee authored a submission to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, to support changes to the *Mental Health Act 2016* (Qld) that further embed human rights principles into the procedure for authorising electroconvulsive therapy. The committee attended a public hearing on the Bill and raised three important additional issues for the Government's consideration, namely: the need for an administrative process for adjournments, the need for legislative amendments to enable lawyers acting in a best interests capacity to initiate appeals to the Mental Health Court and, the urgent need for the MHRT to implement electronic audio recording and transcription services to ensure procedural fairness for people who come before the Tribunal.

The committee has also continued its joint advocacy with the Elder Law Committee and Succession Law Committee. Representatives of these Committees attended a series of Commonwealth and Law Council of Australia roundtables on the proposed national register of financial enduring powers of attorney EPOAs and EPOA law reforms. The committees subsequently contributed to multiple submissions to the Law Council of Australia in relation to its ongoing work on EPOA law reform. It stressed that more nationally consistent laws governing EPOAs and a national model enduring document should be matters of priority for Attorneys-General. The submission further stated that the above should be resolved prior to the implementation of a national register of financial EPOAs. The committees have also supported in principle, the Law Council of Australia's model provisions, but considers a standardised national test for capacity is important, along with nationally consistent best practice guidelines for assessing capacity. The committees' joint advocacy has also continually highlighted the importance of supported decision-making where possible.

The committees also argued against retaining most of the COVID-19 permanency measures as they related to electronic signing and remote witnessing of wills and enduring documents. Rather, the committees advocated for further research into the effects of these practices on vulnerable persons before taking a position on whether permanency should be adopted in the future. The committees made several submissions to the Chief Health Office and Queensland Health to request an exemption for fully vaccinated legal practitioners to enter restricted facilities (e.g. residential aged care facilities, hospitals and disability accommodations) to provide essential legal services. This request was granted in relation to residential aged care facilities in September 2021.

In response to growing concerns over the use of the Statement of Choices documents by Queensland hospitals and aged care facilities, the committees continue to advocate for these documents to be reviewed for their legality. The committees were also instrumental in advocating to the Queensland Government for an increased funding allocation to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to assist with growing delays in its guardianship division.

Industrial Law Committee

The Industrial Law Committee has conducted advocacy on a number of reforms relating to state and federal industrial laws, processes in courts, commissions and tribunals as well as assisting stakeholders on legal issues and updating the profession. Members of the committee contributed to the five-yearly review of Queensland's *Industrial Relations Act 2016*. Following the review the committee also engaged with Government about proposed reforms to the legislation. Members of the committee also contributed to the review of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* as well as considered broader federal anti-discrimination issues.

Over the course of the year, the committee contributed to a number of QLS submissions including:

- Fair Work Commission consultation on the future of online proceedings
- Sex Discrimination and Fair Work (Respect at Work) Amendment Bill 2021
- Migration Amendment Protecting Vulnerable Workers Bill 2021
- Senate Select Committee on Job Security
- issues about medical exemptions for mask wearing where we wrote to the Queensland Human Rights Commission

- issues of paid non-lawyer advocates in industrial commissions and tribunals where we wrote to the Legal Services Commission, and
- Queensland Law Reform Commission inquiry – A framework for regulating the sex work industry in Queensland.

The committee also engaged with the Office of Industrial Relations and the Queensland Industrial Court and Queensland Industrial Relations Commission. Further, the committee provided advice and updates to the professions including in respect of employment issues in rural, regional and remote law firms.

Insolvency and Restructuring Law Committee

This committee, which also is the Queensland branch of the Law Council of Australia's national committee, contributed to a number of submissions, stakeholder engagements and education events. For example, submissions were made to the Federal Government regarding proposed amendments to the *Bankruptcy Act 1966* (Cth) including proposals to reduce bankruptcy to one year, to promote debt agreements and to target untrustworthy advisors.

The committee has also engaged with the Federal Court of Australia and Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department. At its regular meetings, the committee engages with representatives from ASIC and AFSA who speak to matters of importance to those organisations and market developments.

Innovation Law Committee

The Innovation Committee published its Stage 1 Report exploring a number of key issues associated with innovation in the legal profession, including:

- putting innovation and disruption into context
- the knowledge and skills required of good lawyers today and for tomorrow
- the challenges and hallmarks of successful use of tools and technology in legal practice
- identifying attributes of successful law practices for the future, and
- how innovation can improve access to justice.

The committee then set an ambitious work plan, establishing taskforces to progress materials on issues relating to hybrid work, innovation success case studies, e-litigation, demystification of innovation and technology videos and thematic policy issues affecting the whole profession arising from disruption and new technology. The committee also conducted a successful in person workshop identifying the blockers to innovation in the legal profession.

Litigation Rules Committee

Members of this committee have continued to lead the QLS work with regard to the establishment of an electronic civil case management system, including providing feedback on proposed rule changes and practical use of the system. They have also been key contributors to the reforms to modernise the execution of documents.

Members of the Committee have frequently responded to member queries and requests from other policy committee to contribute to advocacy work where litigation or interaction with the courts is involved.

The committee, and QLS more broadly, is a key stakeholder for the Queensland Courts and committee members regularly engage with the courts through Court User Reference Group meetings and similar forums, with the Rules Committee and with judges and court staff responsible for administering specific programs and court lists. This year, the committee engaged with the Queensland Courts in relation to:

- Amendments to the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999* including the Scales of Costs;
- The recording and transcription services project; and
- Updating court processes and guides.

The committee also provided a submission to the Queensland Government on its consideration of shield laws to protect journalists' confidential sources. Following this consultation, members of the committee provided a written submission on the Bill to introduce shield laws and appeared at the public hearing in relation to this inquiry.

Migration Law Consulting Committee

The Migration Law Consulting Committee is a new committee which has contributed to several submissions since its formation, including in respect of the Migration Amendment (Strengthening the Character Test) Bill 2021 and the Migration Amendment (Protecting Migrant Workers) Bill 2021.

The committee also made a proactive submission regarding reforms necessary to ensure the timely processing of visas for unaccompanied minors evacuated from Afghanistan and their potential difficulties in accessing the split family provisions. As a result of consulting committee's expertise, migration was included as a topic in the QLS Federal Call to parties for the first time.

Not For Profit Law Committee

The committee continued its work across a range of issues affecting charities and not for profits in Queensland, including contributing to submissions about fundraising reforms, using technology to hold meetings and sign documents and advocating for improvements to charitable donation processes during natural disasters.

The committee also met with the Queensland Revenue Office seeking clarification of their interpretation of the requirements for registering a charitable trust as a charitable institution for the purposes of Part XIA of *Taxation Administration Act 2001* (Qld), in light of recent decisions received by our members.

The committee also responded to proposed legislative fundraising reforms in the Casino Control and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The committee supported the reforms and also appeared at the parliamentary public hearing on the Bill. QLS was pleased that our advocacy resulted in a specific recommendation from the parliamentary committee in support of the Queensland Government engaging with stakeholders to review charitable fundraising regulation giving consideration to legislation in other jurisdictions, including consumer law.

Occupational Discipline Law Committee

The Occupational Discipline Law Committee contributed to a number of inquiries considering Bills and other discrete issues. These included inquiries conducted by the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and the Commission of Inquiry into the Crime and Corruption Commission as well as those relating to the:

- Police Powers and Responsibilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021
- Police Service Administration and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2021
- Racing Integrity Amendment Bill 2022, where a committee member also appeared at the public hearing
- inquiry into the functions of the Independent Assessor and the performance of those functions, where a committee member also appeared at the public hearing, and
- Health Practitioner Regulation National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022.

Members of the committee have also attended stakeholder meetings and updated the profession via QLS Proctor.

Planning and Environment Law Committee

The committee has continued to engage in stakeholder consultation work with the Land Court and the Queensland Government on various proposals, including confidential consultations. The committee has also established a number of sub-committees to progress particular items of work for the calendar year. The sub-committees will conduct a detailed analysis of practical experiences and issues in the areas of decision making for code assessable applications, minor change processes, the making of planning schemes and dispute resolution processes (P&E Court, costs provisions, ADR Registrar and other options). The intent is to identify opportunities for proactive advocacy on behalf of the membership.

Privacy, Data, Technology and Intellectual Property Law Committee

Recently, the Privacy and Data Law Committee and the Technology and Intellectual Property Law Committee merged to form a single committee. The committee has contributed to nine written submissions over the past financial year in response to both State and Federal consultations, including a number of confidential consultations. Of note, the committee contributed to a detailed submission in response to the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Digital Technology Taskforce consultation on positioning Australia as a leader in digital economy regulation – automated decision making and artificial intelligence regulation. Other submissions related to strengthening Australia's cybersecurity regulations and incentives, the use of data obtained by check-in apps, the right to repair, and draft digital identity legislation. Committee members have also contributed to a number of articles for QLS Proctor.

Property and Development Law Committee

The Property and Development Law Committee continues to be an extremely busy and productive committee.

In January 2022, QLS and the Real Estate Institute of Queensland released new editions of the standard sale of land contracts known as Contract for Houses and Residential Land (17th ed.) and Contract for Residential Lots in a Community Titles Scheme (13th ed.) for use by our members. Significant changes included the ability of either party to obtain a short extension to settlement if the party is unable to settle for any reason, responding to ongoing difficulties faced by our members and their clients experiencing settlement delays caused by events outside of their control. The new contracts also addressed new smoke alarm requirements, the payment of deposit by direct debit and pool compliance updates.

QLS and its committee members were actively involved in Community Titles Legislation Working Group established by the Department of Justice & Attorney-General. This is a valuable opportunity to give our practitioners' perspectives on potential reforms under consideration.

The committee has also engaged with the members and the Department of Justice & Attorney-General in relation to the anticipated introduction of the mandate for the use of e-conveyancing platforms to settle property transactions in Queensland. QLS was specifically consulted by the Department. QLS surveyed our members to assist in its advocacy with the Department, to ensure the profession's views were represented as part of this critical change to the practice of property law in Queensland.

In addition, the committee drafted and contributed to 31 written submissions and also participated in numerous stakeholder discussions with various government agencies. The committee remained involved in ongoing COVID regulatory changes.

Revenue Law Committee

The committee continued to engage with the Queensland Revenue Office through the Taxation Consultative Committee, raising issues of concern to the profession. This is an excellent stakeholder consultation forum where QLS can raise administrative challenges faced by our members and seek improvements to processes by directly engaging with officers. The relationships built through this forum also generate the opportunity for confidential consultation discussions on a range of issues. In consultation with the Succession Law Committee, the committee raised ongoing concerns about the need for urgent and permanent legislative reform to replace certain administrative arrangements, as discussed below. As a result of our advocacy, QLS was pleased these concerns were addressed in amendments to the revenue legislation introduced as part of the 2022 Budget in the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2022.

Succession Law Committee

The Succession Law Committee contributed to 16 submissions over the past financial year. Notably, the committee undertook a substantive review of the *Succession Act 1981* (Qld) and related succession matters in late 2021. This involved a lengthy submission to the Queensland Government on issues practitioners are facing in relation to the current legislation, with recommendations as to how to modernise and improve the legislation. In doing so, the committee engaged with colleagues from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal Service, and also the NSW Law Society who provided some useful preliminary observations from its Elder Law, Capacity and Succession Committee.

In addition to this significant review, the committee contributed to a number of targeted advocacy pieces to assist the Queensland legal profession. In late 2021, the committee wrote to the Treasurer raising concerns about the *Duties Act 2001* (Qld) and its application to deceased estates, as a result of QLS members inquiring about the operation of this aspect of the legislation. This submission was crafted jointly with the Revenue Law Committee, as similar issues arise in the context of particular small business restructures. The submission recommended that Treasury progress amendments to the *Duties Act 2001* (Qld) to give legislative effect to the administrative arrangements currently in force by way of a Public Ruling. The committee is pleased to note that these legislative amendments were enacted via the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2022.

In response to member feedback, the committee responded to the Banking Code of Compliance Committee's Inquiry into Code-subscribing banks' compliance with Chapter 45 of the Banking Code of Practice, raising two discrete issues: first, that members are facing substantial delays in dealing with banks on deceased estate matters; and second, banks are taking inflexible approaches to small deceased estates which increases costs and complexities associated with managing small deceased estates, for example requiring probate where it is not otherwise required by courts. The committee continues to engage with this review.

The committee also responded to member concerns relating to superannuation death benefits and is engaging with specific superannuation funds and the Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees in relation to two matters of concern: first, funds refusing to provide a breakdown of the death benefit so that a comparison can be made as to the most tax efficient manner in which to distribute the funds and second, funds not replying to a request for written confirmation that the death benefit nomination has been received and accepted by the trustee after delivery of the completed nomination.

Practitioners wrote to the committee querying whether they need to retain the original death certificate when filing applications for grant electronically, or whether the original can be returned to their clients. In response to these queries, the committee authored a QLS Proctor article explaining the rules relating to death certificates, advising that practitioners must retain the original death certificate (as well as other original electronically filed material) for a period of seven years. The Committee has resolved to advocate for changes to the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules* in relation to original death certificates.

The committee has also continued its joint advocacy with the Elder Law Committee and Health and Disability Law Committee. Representatives of these committees attended a series of Commonwealth and Law Council of Australia roundtables on the proposed national register of financial enduring powers of attorney EPOAs and EPOA law reforms. The committees subsequently contributed to multiple submissions to the Law Council of Australia in relation to its ongoing work on EPOA law reform, stressing that more nationally consistent laws governing EPOAs and a national model enduring document should be matters of priority for Attorneys-General, and that this should be resolved prior to the implementation of a national register of financial EPOAs. The committees have also supported in principle the Law Council of Australia's model provisions, but considers a standardised national test for capacity is important, along with nationally consistent best practice guidelines for assessing capacity. The committees' joint advocacy has also continually highlighted the importance of supported decision-making where possible.

The committees also argued against retaining most of the COVID-19 permanency measures as they related to electronic signing and remote witnessing of wills and enduring documents. Rather, the committees advocated for further research into the effects of these practices on vulnerable persons before taking a position on whether permanency should be adopted in the future. The committees made several submissions to the Chief Health Office and Queensland Health to request an exemption for fully vaccinated legal practitioners to enter restricted facilities (e.g. residential aged care facilities, hospitals and disability accommodations) to provide essential legal services. This request was granted in relation to residential aged care facilities in September 2021.

In response to growing concerns over the use of the Statement of Choices documents by Queensland hospitals and aged care facilities, the committees continue to advocate for these documents to be reviewed for their legality. The committees were also instrumental in advocating to the Queensland Government for an increased funding allocation to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal to assist with growing delays in its guardianship division.

Water and Agribusiness Law Committee

The Water and Agribusiness Law Committee was established in 2020 to support QLS's advocacy on legal policy issues impacting agribusiness and water – issues of significant importance to the Queensland economy and community.

This year, the committee contributed to the Law Council's Tools for Rural, Regional and Remote Practitioners and Law Practices and QLS advocacy on the anticipated e-conveyancing mandate. Members of the committee worked with the Banking & Financial Services Law Committee to discuss updates to independent solicitor certificate to capture advice provided on third party guarantees to clients remotely. The committee also engaged with the newly formed Titles Queensland to discuss issues of concern to regional and rural practitioners.

Delayed judgements service

QLS is a party to protocols with state and federal courts, tribunals and commissions, which permit QLS, on behalf of its members, to approach these entities where there has been undue delay in delivering a reserved judgment or decision. In this context, there will be undue delay where a judgment or decision has been outstanding for at least 3 months.

Following an enquiry by a member, QLS will write to the head of jurisdiction of the relevant court, tribunal or commission, asking for advice on the anticipated delivery of the judgment or decision. Generally, the relevant court, tribunal or commission will respond to QLS with information about when the judgement or decision is expected to be handed down.

Where the court, tribunal or commission has not responded to the initial enquiry, QLS may make further enquiries, provided it is appropriate to do so. Generally, QLS will make further enquiries where a period of two months has elapsed since the initial enquiry was sent.

In the 2021-22 financial year, QLS received and processed 87 delayed judgment applications, which comprised 87 initial enquiries and a further 24 follow up enquiries. In total, QLS made 110 delayed judgment enquiries with state and federal courts, tribunals and commissions in the 2021-22 financial year.

In a majority of applications, QLS received a response from the relevant head of jurisdiction, with 57% of all delayed judgment applications receiving a response from the court, tribunal or commission.

Jurisdiction	Initial enquiries	Follow up enquiries	Total enquiries
Administrative Appeals Tribunal	1	N/A	1
Body Corporate and Community Management	1	N/A	1
District Court of Queensland	11	1	12
Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia – Division 1 (Previously the Family Court of Australia*)	16	6	22
Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia – Division 2 (Previously the Federal Circuit Court of Australia*)	11	2	13
Federal Court of Australia	3	N/A	3
Magistrates Courts of Queensland	7	N/A	7
Planning and Environment Court	1	N/A	1

Jurisdiction	Initial enquiries	Follow up enquiries	Total enquiries
Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal	24	11	35
Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal – Appeal Tribunal	1	N/A	1
Queensland Industrial Relations Commission	2	N/A	2
Supreme Court of Queensland	7	3	10
Supreme Court of Queensland – Court of Appeal Division	2	N/A	2
Total	87	23	110

**On 1 September 2021, the Federal Circuit Court of Australia and the Family Court of Australia merged into the Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia (FCFCOA). The number of enquiries listed above includes the number of enquiries involving the former court (i.e. Federal Circuit Court of Australia or the Family Court of Australia) and the newly formed divisions (i.e. Division 1 and Division 2).*

Based on advice from the enquiring members, 62% of enquiries made in this financial year have now been resolved, meaning that QLS has been advised a judgment or decision has been delivered.

Legal policy stakeholders:

- Courts/Commissions/Tribunals
 - Administrative Appeals Tribunal—Migration Review Tribunal
 - Chief Justice Alstergren
 - Chief Justice Holmes
 - Chief Magistrate Gardiner
 - Childrens Court Committee
 - Court Case Management Committee meeting
 - Court Users Reference Group
 - Court Services Queensland
 - Family Court of Australia
 - Federal Circuit Court
 - Fmr Justice Byrne
 - Industrial Court of Queensland/Queensland Industrial Relations Commission
 - Fair Work Commission
 - Justice Davis
 - Justice Philippides
 - Justice Lyons
 - Land Court
 - Land Court Resource Users Groups
 - Land Court Valuation Appeals Reference Group

- Magistrates Court of Queensland
- Mental Health Tribunal
- Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal
- Queensland Courts
- Queensland Courts Safety and Risk Committee
- Supreme and District Courts including the Planning and Environment Court
- Supreme Court consultative group
- Supreme District and Land Courts Service, Queensland
- The Honourable Margaret McMurdo AC
- Government departments
 - Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission
 - Australian Securities and Investments Commission
 - Australian Taxation Office
 - Attorney-General of Australia
 - Attorney-General and Minister for Justice Leader of the House
 - Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Women and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
 - Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department
 - Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors
 - Department of Housing and Public Works
 - Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy
 - Department of Justice and Attorney-General
 - Department of Natural Resources Mines and Energy
 - Department of Premier and Cabinet
 - Department of Transport and Main Roads
 - Department of Youth Justice
 - Dispute Resolution Branch
 - Fair Work Ombudsman
 - Inspector General of Taxation
 - Motor Accident Insurance Commission
 - Minister for Police and Corrective Services
 - Office of Industrial Relations
 - Office of State Revenue
 - Office of the Chief Psychiatrist – Department of Health
 - Office of the Child and Family Official Solicitor

- Office of the Public Advocate
- Public Trustee
- Office of the Public Guardian
- Office of the Work Health and Safety Prosecutor
- Representatives from Liberal National Party of Queensland
- Queensland Corrective Services
- Queensland Building and Construction Commission
- Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council
- Queensland Family and Child Commission
- Queensland Health
- Queensland Human Rights Commission
- Queensland Legal Assistance Forum
- Queensland Police Service
- Registrar of Titles
- Senator Kim Pate
- Shadow Attorney-General
- Small Business Commissioner
- Taxation Ombudsman
- Valuer-General
- University/Academic
 - Professor Nadja Alexander, University of Queensland
 - Equity and Trusts 2020 Semester 2 Cohort, Queensland University of Technology
- Industry Groups
 - AMA Queensland
 - Advanced Care Planning
 - Asian Australian Lawyers Association
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service
 - Australian Law Reform Commission
 - Auscript
 - Bar Association of Queensland
 - Chartered Accountants
 - Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis Stakeholders Reference Group
 - Clinical Excellence Queensland
 - Environmental Defenders Office
 - Firearms Advisory Forum

- First Mortgage Services
- Guardianship Implementation Reference Group
- GasFields Commission
- KPMG
- Law Council of Australia – National Electronic Conveyancing Committee
- Law Council of Australia
- LawRight Management Committee
- NSW Independent Chair of Interoperability Working Group
- Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
- Legal Aid Queensland
- Legal Aid Child Protection Stakeholder Forum
- Lexon Insurance
- Mediator Standards Board
- McKell Institute
- National DV Policy Solicitors Network
- Probate Liaison Group
- Property Exchange Australia
- Property Council of Australia, QLD
- Queensland Law Reform Commission
- Queensland Council of Social Service
- QPS Vulnerable Persons Group
- Real Estate Institute of Queensland
- RespectInc and DecrimQLD
- Salvation Army Chaplaincy Service
- Sheep and Wool Policy Director – AgForce Queensland
- Streamlining Criminal Justice Stakeholder Group
- Suncorp
- Sympli
- Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce

Media

Queensland Law Society maintained and improved its position as the peak authority for legal profession commentary, reach and activity during the past year. This position guarantees a stronger position and clearer voice on both the national and Queensland stage to provide commentary and thought leadership on key legal topics. Our media strategy is designed to complement our advocacy for the role of solicitors, balanced laws and the rule of law for the benefit of the profession and the community.

We continued to extend our role providing informed expert commentary, policy views and education on the law from the Society's key office holders, its committee heads and members.

We have proactively engaged and encouraged mainstream and digital media to utilise QLS's media team when seeking authoritative and insightful comment on various complex legal issues and publicly debated topics.

This strategy has successfully cemented QLS as the peak legal authority as the first point of contact for advice on who is a legal subject matter expert or leader for comment on all legal matters. Issues on which QLS has provided proactive media commentary include topics as diverse as legal aid funding, raising the age of criminal responsibility, new Chief Justice announcement and numerous judicial appointments and changes to REIQ property contracts.

QLS's media activity was a resounding success in 2021-22 with numerous mentions of Queensland Law Society in radio, newspaper, television and online. These results are below.

During the year, QLS responded to the following requests from media outlets:

- Inquiries – 70
- Interviews – 33, and
- Queries, assistance and background – 62.

Leading established media outlets to publish content or comment mentioning QLS included:

- **Print:** The Courier-Mail, Sunday Mail, The Australian, Weekend Australian, *Australian Regional Newspapers*.
- **Broadcast:** *National, Metro and Regional – Channel 9, Channel 7, Channel 10, ABC TV, 4BC and regional radio.*
- **Online:** *ABC, Brisbane Times, The Courier-Mail, The Australian and News Limited and Fairfax national mastheads.*

Mentions of Queensland Law Society, Associations, Key Issues and Key Spokespeople:

- Radio – 721 mentions
- Newspaper – 698 mentions
- Online news – 7,760 mentions, and
- TV – 342 mentions.

REGULATE

We regulate solicitors in Queensland to protect the community and to foster, promote and protect the good reputation of the profession.

Regulation

Practising Certificates

There were nine Show Cause matters (ss67 and 68 LPA 2007) reported by practitioners this year, down from 12 in each of the last two years. In respect of those nine matters:

- two showed cause
- three were found fit and proper to hold Practising Certificates upon conditions, and
- four remain to be decided.

The Society also issued four Show Cause Notices (s60 LPA 2007), well down on 23 last year and 11 in 2019-20 and 15 in 2018-19.

Of these matters:-

- one showed cause
- one was found not to be fit and proper to continue to hold a Practising Certificate, and
- the other two notices, which relate to one practitioner remain on foot.

There were two determinations on Show Cause Notices issued before 1 July 2020. Both of those resulted in findings that the practitioner was unfit to hold a practising certificate.

QLS undertook investigations into 75 other matters that may have resulted in the issue of a Show Cause Notice. Of these:

- one was subsumed by a show cause event
- 32 were completed with no action required
- four were completed with the imposition of conditions
- two practitioners surrendered their certificates, and
- 36 investigations continue.

The vast bulk of these matters are investigations of declarations made in accordance with the Tax and Superannuation Policy.

QLS also issued 88 notices regarding the fitness of practitioners upon their applications for grant or renewal of a Practising Certificate (s51 LPA 2007).

Of those, 45 were issued for non-payment of PII by 1 July 2021. Of those, five resulted in a refusal to renew Practising Certificate. The other 40 paid their insurance levies.

Another 32 notices were issued regarding outstanding monies owing under the indemnity rule. These were monies in the nature of EMR adjustments, adjustments to levies payable because of adjustments in annual gross fee income and outstanding excesses. All monies were paid and no action was required.

The Society made 11 other determinations upon notices issued under s51 in the course of the year. Upon those determinations, six were found fit and proper upon conditions or undertakings (though one later lost their PC under s60), one was found not to be fit and proper to hold a Practising Certificate, one applicant withdrew their application, one was found fit and proper on response and two remain to be considered.

Two other matters were resolved with undertakings from the practitioner without the issue of a notice.

There were 13 other matters where after investigation it was determined no action was required and the Certificate was issued.

QLS received 13 notifications from 13 practitioners that they had been charged with serious offences this year. Of those notifications the charges against three practitioners were determined. There are currently 14 practitioners awaiting the determination of charges of serious offences that were notified to QLS either this year or last.

An injunction pursuant to s703 of the LPA 2007 was obtained against a former practitioner to prevent their unlicensed practice of law.

Section 56(3) of the *Legal Profession Act 2007* allows QLS to give an exemption or reduction in the requirement of two years supervised legal practice when obtaining a first Practising Certificate. This provision means that condition is attached to Practising Certificates given to not only newly admitted practitioners but also to any experienced practitioner obtaining a Practising Certificate for the first time. This year saw 54 exemptions or reductions provided, down from 60 last year.

External Intervention

QLS intervenes in a law practice when the property of clients is at risk. During 2021-22, QLS undertook 18 interventions in 18 law practices. Three of those interventions have since been terminated. Six of the interventions were supervisions and 12 were receiverships.

The supervisions were imposed because the trust accounting of the law practice was substandard.

The reasons for the 12 receiverships were:

- Disciplinary action against the Principal (4)
- Death of Sole Principal (4), and
- Abandonment of Practice (4).

QLS is currently responsible for 24 trust accounts with the number varying monthly with new appointments and the closure of old trust accounts. In the 2021-22 Financial Year Trust Ledger, balances totalling \$428,455 were cleared from practices in receivership. The supervisors approved 984 distributions from trust accounts under supervision.

We conducted, in the Magistrates Court, an oral examination of 4 people regarding an ongoing receivership.

Trust Account Investigations

We completed 141 investigations, which were more intensive investigations when compared to the 127 investigations last year. We completed 236 trust account reviews compared with 257 last year.

We continue to receive favourable reviews from the profession for the quality of our trust account investigations and reviews scoring an average team rating of 4.69 out of 5 in relation to trust account investigations and 4.58 out of 5 in relation to trust account reviews.

We provided 82 Trust Account Consultancy Services this year. We conducted two Trust Account Remedial Courses attended by 19 Practitioners.

The Trust Account Information Service answered 4047 requests for assistance this year up from 3,900 last year. We achieved a same day request response of 98%.

Limitation of Liability

At 13 April 2022, 6,782 practitioners were participants in Queensland Law Society's Limitation of Liability Scheme. A total of 3,367 practitioners had elected to be exempted from that Scheme.

The scheme, conducted pursuant to the provisions of the *Professional Standards Act 2004* (Qld) caps damages that can be awarded against a participating member to \$1.5 million and \$10 million or any higher amount approved by QLS. To participate in the scheme a practitioner must be a full member of Queensland Law Society with the benefit of professional indemnity insurance.

A new scheme commenced on 1 July 2022. That scheme extended the cap on damages to participating incorporated legal practices.

Legal Practitioners Fidelity Guarantee Fund

Practitioners contribute each year to this fund. It exists to compensate members of the public who lose trust property or trust money because of the dishonest acts or omissions of associates of law practices. It is a rare and positive thing that the profession makes good on the dishonesty of its own. This year the fund paid to members of the public \$684,603.16 on 5 claims. Those claims were paid in full with interest.

Lexon Insurance

Our Purpose

Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Queensland Law Society, is a captive insurer providing professional indemnity insurance to members of the legal profession in accordance with the QLS Indemnity Rule 2005.

Stable Levy Rates

With the rising cost of doing business an ongoing challenge for practices, Lexon remains committed to delivering rates at the lowest possible levels. Whilst insurance and reinsurance markets have seen substantial increases in recent times, Lexon has been able to keep rates for 2022-23 at the same level as for 2021-22. This reflects Lexon's desire to avoid rate increases which may adversely impact our insured practices.

The ability to maintain rates at very low levels (most band rates have fallen over 40% since 2014-15) is in no small part due to Lexon's careful and prudent management of the insurance reserves we hold to meet future claims coupled with the profession's strong commitment to risk management which has lowered overall claim values in recent years.

Risk Management

Lexon's support of the profession's risk management efforts continued in 2021-22. Our 9 full time risk staff are responsible for delivering workshops, developing tools and identifying emerging areas of risk with a view to reducing both the number of claims made against the profession and their severity. During the financial year our team delivered over 1,100 individual workshops to insured practices and successfully completed a number of key projects, including updating our risk tools to address the substantial changes made by REIQ to standard residential and commercial contracts in 2022.

Claims Performance

As at 30 June 2022, overall file numbers for 2021-22 were 315 (down 4.0% compared to the prior year) which is the lowest level since 2016-17. Furthermore, estimated claim values decreased substantially year on year, by over \$2M (to \$10.6M). Our claims performance was the second lowest 12-month value we have seen in the last 10 years (the range being \$10.6M to \$15.6M), with no material adverse trends having developed to date. Cyber fraud losses remain a live issue and these are being managed via Lexon's innovative risk management program.

Conveyancing continued to be the most frequent type of matter in the 2021-22 year (37.8% of all files, contributing 35.0% to overall portfolio cost), but this was not surprising given the substantial increase in conveyancing activity we saw in 2021-22. Commercial matters contributed the next largest proportion, representing 18.2% of the portfolio cost, whilst only 13.3% of the file numbers. This reflects the larger average value of commercial claims.

Investment Returns

Investment performance was poor in 2021-22, with both equities and fixed interest portions of the portfolio substantially underperforming. Overall, Lexon achieved a -4.7% return. Our portfolio continues to be managed by a leading investment house.

Types of Law practiced by the Insured Profession

Lexon insured practices generated around \$2.72B of Gross Fee Income (GFI) in 2021, having grown over 14.8% year on year. This was the highest rate of growth seen since GFI figures were first collected by Lexon in the 2007/8 year. Substantial rises in areas such as conveyancing (up over 40%) reflect increasing activity following the early stages of the pandemic and suggests that the profession overall has weathered COVID-19 far better than was initially expected.

Personal injuries work remains the largest area of activity (by GFI), falling somewhat year on year to 18.4%. Conveyancing (residential and commercial) now represents 17.9% of the work performed by insured practices. Litigation remains a significant area at 14.3% with family law next at 11.8%.

You will find more detail on Lexon's performance in the financial statements, starting on page 98 of this report.

GUIDE

We partner with solicitors in Queensland to guide, advise, promote and support their role as trusted advisors

QLS Ethics and Practice Centre

Professionalism and guidance

The QLS Ethics and Practice Centre provides a variety of services to the profession and the wider community through guidance, education, advocacy of professionalism and practice support of practitioners.

Through QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd, the Centre's well-respected telephone service continues to provide responsive and confidential ethical guidance and practice management advice to QLS members.

Calls to the Centre range from complex conflict and confidentiality issues to more sensitive matters such as threats to harm or harassment / bullying. The Centre responds within 1-2 hours of the call and receives consistent positive feedback on this responsiveness and support from members, particularly those who are a sole practitioner or are in a small firm.

A total of 3,538 matters were opened during 2021-22.

We provide ethical guidance and leadership in different ways:

- QLS Ethics Committee: This committee provides expert ethical input to QLS and its members. The Centre manages this committee and its sub-committees: Guidance Statement Sub-committee, Non-binding Ethics Ruling Sub-committee and the Rules Review Sub-committee.
- The Guidance Statement Sub-committee published substantive guidance statements in the following areas:
 - acting for family and friends
 - ethical considerations on the use of social media and law practice websites
 - professional standards when appearing in court remotely
 - multi-disciplinary practices – CLCs
 - second opinions
 - applying the 'no contact rule' – individuals and organisations
 - transfer of files
 - courtesy in communications
- The Rules Review Sub-committee has had continued oversight and review of the *Australian Solicitor Conduct Rules 2012* (ASCR). The review of the ASCR went out for consultation to both the profession and the community on 6 June 2022 and the Sub-committee will be considering the submissions and feedback and make their recommendations in due course.
- The Centre and several of its Ethics Committee members are now part of the Judicial Commission Working group which was recently formed to advocate and consider appropriate models for a judicial commission in Queensland.
- National Ethics Solicitors Forum: This group consists of ethics solicitors from law societies from various jurisdictions across the country and continues to be facilitated by QLS. The group holds bi-monthly teleconferences and meets annually to discuss ethical issues faced by practitioners across Australia. The Forum maintains connectivity between the different jurisdictions.

- Professional Ethics Committee: Stafford Shepherd, Director of QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd, is a member of this national Committee and provides QLS and our members with a strong voice on the national ethics issues including the final review of the ASCR.

The QLS Ethics and Practice Centre also provides services to help our members maintain their professionalism. The Practice Advisory Service engages with the profession via proactively contacting firms and offering on-site or in-person visits to discuss issues which can affect professionalism and productivity, such as management systems, billing, communications, staffing and marketing. In particular, new firms and those in the sole-to-small practice demographic are targeted, although the service is also available to established or merging practices.

QLS visited 358 firms during 2021-22.

The Centre receives overwhelmingly positive feedback on the usefulness of this service and the value of the interaction with, and guidance provided by our Practice Advisory Service solicitors.

Community

The Centre received over 1000 calls from members of the public and practitioners. Assistance was provided by referring callers to other services within the Society or external entities such as the Courts, Legal Services Commission, other law societies, government departments, Fair Work, Public Trustee or Solicitor Assist.

Referral Services

The QLS Ethics and Practice Centre offers and manages four external referral services:

- Business Advisory Service (budgeting, financials, pricing, succession planning staffing, business development, technology and cybersecurity)
- Costs Advisory Service (regulatory, disclosure, cost agreement, assessment)
- Employment Law Advice Service, and
- Workplace Conduct Advisory Service.

These services offer 2-4 hours of free legal advice to QLS members who may need assistance in the above areas. The Centre referred 186 practitioners to these services for the year 2021-22. The majority of these were directed to the Business Advisory Service. Our services continue to be well-received by practitioners due to the expertise of the referral members.

Locum Service

The Centre now manages the QLS Locum Service which was designed to connect sole to small practices seeking short term assistance with experienced solicitors. There are presently 12 solicitors who are on the panel.

Resources

The Centre drafted and published over 66 articles/notes/checklists/precedents for practitioners addressing various issues:

- Ethics
- Costs
- Employment
- Supervision
- Cybersecurity

- Practice management
- Disciplinary cases, and
- COVID-19.

This is part of an overall strategy to continue to educate and guide practitioners on ethical and practice management type issues and to promote professionalism and courtesy within the profession and the community.

QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd

QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd (a wholly owned subsidiary of Queensland Law Society) continues to provide ethical and practice support and guidance to practitioners. The purpose of QLS Solicitor Support is to advance Queensland Law Society's strategic goal to guide the profession and to advance the objectives of providing legal services for the delivery of guidance, support and counsel, education and publications on legal ethics and practice management to members of QLS and the legal profession as a whole.

The Practice Advisory Service sits within QLS Solicitor Support and is designed to assist the practitioner in financial, practice, management and organisational culture issues. Our practitioners travelled throughout Queensland and conducted 358 consultations in Brisbane, Brisbane North, Brisbane South, Whitsundays, Mackay, Biloela, Gladstone, Rockhampton, Yeppoon, Darling Downs, Cairns, Atherton Tablelands, Mareeba, Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Ipswich, Beaudesert, Logan, Redlands, Townsville, and Mt Isa.

The ILP is a wholly owned subsidiary of QLS and is governed by its Constitution. In April 2022, QLS, as the ILP's sole shareholder, approved the ILP's annual Strategic Plan, which outlines the ILP's authority, vision, purpose, annual initiatives and KPIs for the 2022-23 financial year.

Bespoke ethics sessions

Through the QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, QLS is committed to ensuring solicitors are equipped with a comprehensive and practical working knowledge of their ethical duties and the *Australian Solicitors Conduct Rules 2012* as well as an understanding of how to resolve ethical dilemmas. We engage with law firms, community legal centres, District Law Associations, government departments, in-house counsel, universities and practical legal trainers.

Our Bespoke Ethics Sessions are delivered to firms and in response to the individual firm's specified needs. This year 85 sessions were delivered:

- 11 bespoke ethics sessions to firms
- 21 universities including PLT
- 38 internal professional development sessions (including PMC and sessions on Cybersecurity)
- 4 District Law Associations (including sessions on Cybersecurity)
- 5 pro-bono (including Government and In-House)
- 4 Other (including sessions on Cybersecurity), and
- 2 QLS Legal Ethics Courses

QLS Senior Counsellors

QLS continues to provide access to the QLS Senior Counsellors service, which is a confidential, free service offered to practitioners on a broad range of practice areas. Our Senior Counsellors continue to offer their knowledge and expertise to their colleagues in a private, confidential setting. This year, our Senior Counsellors took over 196 calls from colleagues. The majority involved specific queries pertaining to their area of expertise.

We have the following senior counsellors:

- Anne English (Atherton Tablelands)
- Guy Dunstan (Brisbane)
- Russell Beer (Cairns)
- Peter Elliott (Townsville)
- Gary Hutchinson (Redcliffe)
- Anthony Ryan (Bundaberg)
- Dr Matthew Turnour (Brisbane)
- Glen Cranny (Brisbane)
- Terry O’Gorman AM (Brisbane)
- Bill Potts (Brisbane)
- Garth Smith (Cairns)
- Mark Peters (Cairns)
- Rob Stevenson (Brisbane)
- Belinda Winter (Brisbane)
- Katharine Atkins (Brisbane)
- Deborah Awyzio (Brisbane)
- Jennifer Hamilton (Mackay)
- Vicki Jackson (Rockhampton)
- Peter McLachlan (Mackay)
- Wendy Miller (Brisbane)
- Stephen Rees (Toowoomba)
- Elizabeth Shearer (Brisbane)
- Michael Beirne (Sunshine Coast)
- Lucia Taylor (Townsville)
- Glenn Ferguson AM (Brisbane)
- George Fox (Brisbane)
- Ross Lee (Gold Coast)
- John Hayward (Cairns)
- Justin McDonnell (Brisbane)

- Ross Perrett (Brisbane)
- Peter Eardley (Sunshine Coast)
- Travis Schultz (Sunshine Coast)
- Brad Shanahan (Mackay)
- Chris Trevor (Gladstone)
- Peter Apel (Mareeba)
- Bill Purcell (Brisbane)
- Jim Reaston (Cairns)
- Dr Jeff Mann AM (Brisbane)
- Martin Conroy (Brisbane)
- John Ryan (Cannonvale)
- Michele Sheehan (Chinchilla)
- Christine Smyth (Gold Coast).

Cybersecurity

A law practice's ability to protect confidential information in electronic form is essential to the digital economy. Threats to firm and client data increase year-on-year.³ Improvement in data security and risk management processes surrounding funds transfer in property transactions has led to a substantial⁴ decrease in theft of client funds from law firms, but that is only one part of the equation.

Criminal groups are now using other ways to monetize cyber-attacks, in particular ransomware. It is an important policy objective to ensure that ransomware attacks are not successful, both to minimise immediate harm and to deter future incidents.

Professional bodies have a central role in assisting members to resist data intrusion and defend client interests, especially SME practices without internal information security staff. This year, QLS has again devoted significant resources to this challenge. The QLS information security strategy rests on three limbs:

- Assisting members to respond to incidents
- Awareness, prevention and risk minimisation, and
- Working towards consistent national information security standards for law firms.

In contrast to resources which start and end with awareness, QLS has a comprehensive framework of materials available to assist member firms of all sizes minimise data intrusion risk. As at 2022 we maintain over sixty resources to support firms of all sizes implement appropriate cybersecurity. Such tools are practical and are tailored specifically to SME legal practices, supplying guidance that is not available elsewhere.

³ The UK Government estimates that over 1400 criminal organisations specialising in fraud on law firms were active as at December 2019, <https://www.legalfutures.co.uk/blog/safeguarding-your-law-firm-against-cyber-criminals>; <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/report/the-cyber-threat-to-uk-legal-sector--2018-report>

⁴ From as many as four successful attacks per day in 2017 to approximately one every four – six months in 2021.

COVID-19 specific challenges and response.

In response to COVID-19, many legal practices rapidly transitioned to remote working. Cybercriminals sought to exploit this increased vulnerability targeting insecure domestic networks and a distributed workforce more reliant on electronic communication. In response, QLS has provided:

- advice and support to firms in safely implementing remote working, and
- specific education and guidance sessions alerting practitioners to the emerging threats and practical measures to lower their risk profile when working remotely.

Cyber Essentials Insurance

QLS has been able to renew the Cyber Essentials policy for 2022-23 despite significant tightening in the cyber insurance market. This policy provides each QLS member firm⁵ \$50,000 free cyber incident cover underwritten by Chubb. The insurance is tailored to complement the Lexon third party professional indemnity policy, providing cover for first party losses rather than just loss to clients.

Any QLS member firm which experiences or suspects a data loss incident can access top tier expert assistance, including:

- Urgent incident assessment
- Forensic investigation
- Ransom negotiations (and ransom payments if necessary)
- Data loss assessment and stakeholder communication
- Network and database repair
- Regulatory compliance guidance, and
- The services of a Breach Coach to coordinate other services and ensure timeframes and Service Level agreements are met.

Prompt and expert response significantly reduces the impact upon clients and member firms in the event of a serious incident. The renewed policy for the 2022/23 calendar year is subject to a number of important changes and exclusions:

A ten million dollar total liability cap for all claims under the group policy. QLS member firms which wish to be excluded from the possibility that they may suffer loss after the policy has been exhausted may purchase top-up cover.

Firms now have a defined period to apply software patches and replace unsupported software. Benefits under the policy progressively decline after specified periods.

Some forms of attack (which rely upon software vulnerabilities which can be repaired if correctly updated) are excluded from cover.

QLS is preparing an education campaign for all member firms and insured entities to explain the new exclusions and how to avoid being impacted.

⁵ These are Lexon-Insured law practices in which all Principals are full QLS members at the date of loss, Community Legal Centres & LAOQ.

Membership research surveys

Membership surveys play a vital role in helping QLS uncover the needs of the legal profession. The results from membership surveys ensure we are able to best guide the legal profession on facing our future challenges along with enabling us to develop the correct strategies/products/services to assist.

QLS partnered with a number of universities during this financial year to deliver research projects designed to support the health and future success of the legal profession, in the midst of an ever changing landscape.

Bond University – Job readiness of graduates and new lawyers

In a Queensland legal industry first, QLS engaged Bond University to conduct critical research into the job readiness of graduates and new lawyers entering the profession.

This survey explored whether there are discrepancies between employers' expectations and the current legal education system's standards, and will provide valuable insights that can be used to support development of the next generation of legal practitioners and ensure firms are equipped to better understand generational change.

The research garnered more than 1200 responses and the report will provide essential insight into how QLS can assist the key stakeholders improve the job readiness and the experience of law graduates and new lawyers when entering the profession.

University of Southern Queensland and University of Queensland – Future ready

A team of researchers led by the University of Southern Queensland were asked by the Queensland Law Society to find out how regional/rural/suburban sole, micro, small and medium sized law firms can better survive and thrive in a climate of dynamic change, especially with regard to COVID, technology and intergenerational impacts.

Regional and small law firms are important for our Queensland communities. In addition to providing legal advice to clients, these firms play a huge role of offering volunteer legal support for the community such as hospitals, schools, sporting clubs, and rural fire services, as well as many social justice organisations.

This survey which commenced at the beginning of 2022 and is due to be finalised by September 2022, will help us uncover what is needed to help regional and small law firms now and into the future. The results of this survey will be reported in the Queensland Law Society Annual Report 2022-23.

Mental health, wellbeing and resilience

QLS's Wellbeing Working Group is the primary group for leading wellbeing initiatives, with a focus on providing the legal profession with guidance, education, events and publications on mental health and wellbeing.

As part of its yearly professional development program, QLS offers a range of sessions on wellbeing, resilience and mental health, with the following delivered in 2021-22:

PD: Panel	Mental Health Week plenary
PD: Livestream	Building Resilient Habits
PD: On demand video	Wellbeing – Isolation, implications and solutions
PD: Symposium	Lawyers mental health: what the last 2 years has taught us
PMC – 7 sessions	Leading wellbeing in the workplace
Bespoke Education Sessions to firms and in-house legal teams	Wellbeing and Resilience

We continue to support Minds Count and its objectives to decrease work-related distress, depression and anxiety in the legal community and promote workplace psychological wellbeing. QLS is a signatory to the Minds Count Psychological Wellbeing Best Practice Guidelines and welcomes its adoption by law firms.

Wellbeing resources relevant for early career lawyers are provided via the FLC Hub on the QLS website. These resources have been developed and sourced with direct input from the Future Leaders Committee, helping our early career lawyers to find their balance.

EDUCATE

We develop and deliver leading education experiences to advance the expertise and accreditation of solicitors and their businesses.

QLS Education Mission Statement:

Offer all of our members the highest quality and best value CPD syllabus and education pathways to enable them to perform their best and to develop as ethical and healthy lawyers, with sustainable and successful careers.

The summary of QLS Education activities for the 2021-22 year:

Activity	Total number
CPD hours	92,373.75*
Speakers/Presenters	395**
Attendees	4,796**
Practice Management Course graduates	184
Specialist Accreditation graduates	13

**Includes on demand content sold*

***Represents total number of event attendees/speakers, not unique individual attendees/speakers*

Continuing Professional Development program

QLS is committed to supporting, strengthening and inspiring the way our members practise law. We do this by curating a comprehensive calendar of market-leading continuing professional development (CPD) education events, offering a variety of options to ensure that at whatever stage a member is within their legal career, they can easily access quality, affordable education resources to support them:

- to meet their CPD compliance obligations,
- keep updated on latest legal developments and court practice,
- to upskill and take the next steps in their career and reach business goals, and
- develop healthy and inclusive work practices.

COVID-19 pandemic restrictions still applied for part of the year and by using technology such as a Learning Management System and online conference delivery platforms, QLS CPD content continued to transform to meet members' learning needs and expand accessibility and affordability, regardless of location or any pandemic restrictions.

Live events

QLS delivered 45 live CPD events in various formats by way of panel discussions, livestreams, in-person workshops, conferences, lectures and local conferences. These events were run to address practitioners' needs across every level and stage of their career and included Foundations, Essentials, Advanced, Masterclasses, Introduction Courses and Hot Topics.

Restrictions did force some CPD live events to be delivered as livestreams rather than face to face. As restrictions lifted in early 2022, our members felt more confident returning to face to face events, however some were delivered with a limited in person component due to the restrictions and most also involved live streaming.

Our annual flagship event, QLS Symposium, was completely redesigned into a blended event, with a face to face core stream and 6 livestreams. This attracted over 800 delegates. Advanced workshops and masterclasses were held in Personal Injuries, Criminal and Business law.

This financial year also saw the return of the specialty 1 day conferences for Succession, Family, Government, Property, Personal Injuries and Criminal law. These were well attended by members and provided a welcome opportunity for the profession to come together, network and learn.

QLS offered 18 webinars which attracted over 1800 attendees. Webinars covered a range of topics including Substantive law as well as ethics, practice management, business skills and professional skills.

Working in partnership with the Australian Advocacy Institute, QLS also provided 4 hands on advocacy live streamed training courses. These courses were aimed at Foundations and Building on Foundations level, as well as Family law.

On Demand content

QLS continued to build its library of on demand recordings and Learning Management System courses. These resources continue to grow in demand as a convenient way to access CPD content either as post event recordings, fresh straight to video materials or self-paced courses.

Local District Law Association (DLA) events

QLS worked closely with district law associations to deliver successful, local CPD events in regional centres. The Annual Gold Coast Legal Conference was run as a low cost face to face event that offered more affordable ticket prices and increased attendance numbers to over 260 delegates, a record attendance for this event. QLS also partnered with Central Queensland Law Association to run the annual CQLA Conference in Yeppoon.

In other regional areas, QLS provided speakers to the Sunshine Coast, Fraser Coast and North Queensland DLA events on topics such as ethics, cybersecurity, and workplace behaviour and culture.

In addition, QLS worked closely with the Downs and South Western Queensland Law Association to run a regional panel update via webinar.

Future Leaders framework

In conjunction with the Future Leaders Committee, a Future Leaders Professional Development framework was developed to specifically support early career lawyers (under 35 years). The framework is based on the need to fill young lawyer competency gaps in the 3 core CPD categories (PLE, PS, PMBS) and soft skills.

From the framework, a Future Leaders Education Program 2022 has been planned with scope to expand further in 2023. The program incorporates:

- *FLC webinars and workshops.*
- *Substantive law – Introduction courses.*
- *Bond University microcredential* – The Foundations of Legal Practice was launched in May 2022 and is a collaboration between QLS and Bond University. It offers post graduate microcredentials that are recognised for both CPD points with QLS and credit towards further study at Bond. The program cost is set at an affordable price and comprises two courses. Completion of each course leads to a 'Certificate of Attainment', which can be counted as advance credit towards a postgraduate subject if the graduate enrolls in a Masters with Bond, and fulfils QLS annual CPD requirements.

In-house consultancy products

QLS developed a series of bespoke in-house legal training seminars provided directly to staff of member firms. QLS delivered over 40 bespoke sessions on various subjects including wellbeing and resilience, and developed tailored packages of CPD content for in-house legal teams.

Joint events

QLS partnered with the Bar Association of Queensland to bring important events to the whole legal profession, including the annual Minds Count lecture and International Women's Day, where Women Lawyers Association of Queensland were also a partner. These events were offered at either low cost or complimentary with any profit donated to associated charities.

Preventing workplace sexual harassment

QLS continued its commitment to addressing the issue of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination in the legal profession. QLS developed a leading edge interactive workshop Sexual Harassment: Changing workplace culture. The workshop was offered as face to face training on 6 occasions for members at a nominal price and also by way of in-house bespoke training to law firms. It has been licensed to each law society in the country for use in their jurisdictions, with provision of comprehensive train the trainer training. To the end of the financial year, this workshop has been delivered to over 1800 members of the Queensland legal profession (including legal and support staff).

Complimentary and low cost events

QLS offered three streamed complimentary CPD lecture events in 2021-22 as part of the Modern Advocate Lecture Series (MALS). These lectures were delivered both as face to face and livestream, with virtual registrations exceeding 200 delegates for each lecture.

QLS also provided:

- three livestreams targeted specifically to Early Career Lawyers at a 50% discount to provide affordable learning for this demographic.
- at least seven hours of free on demand recorded CPD content on a variety of topics including appropriate workplace behaviours and mental health wellbeing.

Practice Management Course

All solicitors who aspire to be principals in Queensland must successfully complete the Practice Management Course (PMC).

QLS's PMC is the premium pathway to achieving a principal practising certificate and prepares practitioners to be successful practice managers. QLS's PMC is divided into two practice focus streams (sole practitioner to small practice focus and the medium to large practice focus) to ensure each workshop delivers tailored and cutting-edge practical knowledge and skills.

Workshops are delivered by facilitators with expert knowledge and insights into important facets of practice management – including modules tailored for business, regulatory, and people management.

In particular, participants are educated by QLS's in-house experts in the areas of legal ethics, appropriate management systems and law practice trust accounting. Participants also receive unrivalled access to, and support from, the regulatory and compliance arms of QLS through the practice support and trust accounting consultancies.

A total of seven PMCs were delivered in the 2021-22 financial year, with all workshops being successfully conducted entirely online in response to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was a combined total of 184 successful graduates for those seven workshops, with 43 graduates from the medium to large practice focus and 141 graduates from the sole practitioner to small practice focus.

Specialist Accreditation

The Specialist Accreditation Scheme is part of a national framework of peer-reviewed and practically-based competency accreditation programs for solicitors in Queensland.

The rigour of QLS's Specialist Accreditation programs ensures that each accreditation conferred upon a successful candidate is meaningful and a reliable marker of expertise. The title of Accredited Specialist remains the benchmark for excellence in the individual areas of accreditation.

Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, the Specialist Accreditation Scheme was run as an online program through the online Learning Management System. Four accreditation programs were run: Family law, Succession law, Property law and Commercial Litigation, noting that Family law ran in conjunction with the Law Institute Victoria and the Law Society of New South Wales.

A total of 13 graduates from the 2021 programs joined QLS's community of over 500 Accredited Specialists in 2021.

Specialist Accreditation Board 2021-22

- Peter Jolly
- Kathy Atkins
- Glen Cranny
- Neil Henderson
- Michael Klatt
- Michelle Sheehan
- Fiona Fitzpatrick
- Stephen Colbran
- Dan Bottrell
- Allison Caputo

CONNECT

We connect the profession with each other, stakeholders and the community to foster relationships, collegiality and co-operation.

Here for our members

The value of solicitors should never be underestimated and Queensland Law Society is committed to supporting the Queensland legal profession through our vision of Good Law, Good Lawyers for the Public Good. Our support is delivered through our key strategic objectives of Advocate, Regulate, Guide, Educate, Connect and Grow.

Supporting, assisting, guiding and advocating on behalf of our members is a history we are proud of. Inspiring our members to have satisfying, balanced and rewarding legal careers safeguards the profession's values of Fidelity, Service and Courage.

Each year we endeavour to deliver education opportunities, increase our engagement with regional practitioners and provide more opportunity for early career lawyers to connect with QLS and the wider profession. We are reaping the benefits of our endeavours in these areas with increasing attendance numbers to our professional development events, better engagement with our District Law Associations and new initiatives for our early career cohort.

We have a long standing commitment to diversity with continued focus on increasing the number of First Nations practitioners. We continued with our reconciliation journey with the development of the First Nations Cultural Outreach Strategy 2020-25 and annual First Nations Plan 2021-22. We also ensure we connect with diverse abilities within the profession via our own Diverse Abilities Network and building relationships with organisations such as Pride in Law.

Our 29 standing policy committees comprise over 350 volunteer committee members who work hard to advocate on behalf of our members. All of our committees and working groups assist us to strengthen our vision of Good Law, Good Lawyers, Public Good and we are grateful for their contribution along with the contribution of our members who provide feedback for our policy submissions. Equally important is the work our Legal Policy team and the QLS Ethics and Practice Centre do to engage, educate and inform our legal community.

Acknowledging our members and celebrating their contributions to the profession is central to our vision. This report will outline the many different ways we appreciate and value our members which includes our QLS Awards program. We also acknowledge our long-standing members through Honorary QLS Membership and 25-year and 50-year member pins.

Congratulations to the following individuals awarded Honorary QLS Membership during the 2021-22 year:

Judge Chris Bowrey

Robert Cartwright

Peter Chappel

William Dillon

Gregory Ford

Magistrate Kurt Fowler

Judge Amanda McDonnell

Hilton MIsso

Timothy O'Dwyer

Magistrate Edwina Rowan

Ignazio (Toby) Sciacca

Robin Thomson

John Tiley

Congratulations to the following individuals who were awarded 25-year and 50-year Member Pins during the 2021-22 year:

50-year pin

Robert Cartwright
Peter Chappel
William Dillon
Gregory Ford
Hilton Misso
Timothy O'Dwyer
Ignazio (Toby) Sciacca
Robin Thomson
John Tiley

25-year pin

Thomas Adames
Bruce Adkins
Jo Atkinson
Frederick Banks
Justine Beirne
Paul Betros
Ian Bisson
John Blayney
John Briggs
Brook Burke
Jason Burkitt
Simon Chan
Fiona Chapman
Bronwyn Clarkson
Sandra Clive
Anthony Colavitti
Janet Cook
Patricia Cope
Jonathan Corby
Jennifer Crowther
Kenneth Cuthbertson
Nicola Davies
Andrew Davis
Grant Dearlove
Amy Deeb
Timothy Delaney
Sean DelPopolo
Christine Dwyer
Michael Dwyer
Frank Dzelalija
Dale Ellerman

Lance Ensor
Scott Eustace
David Evans
Don Fenwick
Thomas Forster
Stephen Fox
Susan Gandini
Justine Garvin
Kylee Ghodsi
Kym Greinke
Colin Hardie
Brett Hart
Leanne Henriksen
Darren Ho
Timothy Horrell
Patricia James
Rosslina Janes
Suzanne Jensen
Peter Keenan
Scott Keft
Andrew Kerr
Rhonda King
David Lang
Heinz Lepahe
David Lester
Sandra Lim
Andrew Mackenzie
David Mackie
Elisa McCutcheon
Bruce McDiarmid
Leah McDonnell

William (Mark) McGrath
Paul McHugh
Yvette McLaughlin
Jamie McPherson
Colin Mildwaters
Keith Mole
Janelle Moody
James Naughton
Cecil O'Dea
Rebecca O'Loan
Sandra Padgett
Joseph Parker
Bruce Pasetti
Bruce Patane
Catherine Pereira
Kenneth Petty
Paula Phelan
Despina Priala
Kathryn Rayner

LawCare

LawCare is a QLS member benefit that provides a confidential, personal assistance program available to all full and associate members, their staff and immediate family.

Provided by Converge International, the service offers up to six hours of free counselling per year, along with access to EAP Connect online portal and mobile app, which gives members instant access to wellbeing resources and online counselling appointments.

During the 2021-22 financial year, approximately 358 members, their staff or immediate family accessed LawCare, which is a decrease from the previous financial year.

The top five personal issues reported to LawCare:

- Ongoing Stress
- Anxiety
- Spouse/Partner
- Other Mental Health Conditions
- Extended Family

The top five work issues reported to LawCare:

- Workload/Time Pressure
- Career Transition
- Bullying/Harassment
- Work Trauma/Injury
- Challenging Personalities/Behaviours

The public good: Our corporate citizenship

Our continued focus on contributing to the public good has seen us deliver significant financial and in-kind support to a number of legal not-for-profit organisations throughout the state, helping Queensland practitioners to experience more fulfilling legal careers—and all Queenslanders access to justice:

Organisation	QLS contribution	Benefit
District Law Associations throughout Queensland	Financial and in-kind support across various events and initiatives, both Brisbane and regional based	Additional support of Queensland practitioners
LawRight	In-kind support and fundraising for the 2022 Queensland Legal Walk	Support for LawRight's mission to improve the lives of vulnerable people by increasing access to justice through strategic partnerships with pro-bono lawyers
Minds Count (formerly Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation)	Financial and in-kind support	Supporting the mental health of Queensland legal practitioners
Pride in Law	Financial and in-kind support	Encourages diversity and inclusion in the profession
The Legal Forecast and TLF Creative initiative	Financial and in-kind support	Supporting lawyers at an early stage of their careers and encouraging lawyers' creativity

Organisation	QLS contribution	Benefit
Various charities	Financial support on behalf of our speakers and presenters in lieu of payment	Support of a range of community-based not-for-profit organisations
Various not-for-profit Organisations	Use of Law Society House for no cost or significantly reduced fees	Approximately \$9,833 of foregone revenue contributed to a range of not-for-profit organisations

Our publications

QLS produces publications to ensure our members are the first to know and have ready access to the latest legal news.

The publications QLS produces means our members have ready access to legal news and information through a variety of mediums. Our publications allow us to share information from the latest QLS events and updates on our legal policy and advocacy work but also news and views from the wider legal community.

QLS Update

QLS Update remained an integral part of QLS's communication with our members. QLS Update's mix of professional information, QLS news and events, ethical guidance and feature articles is delivered to around 11,000 members and associate members each week. It is an important source of information for many in the legal profession.

QLS Update has continued to achieve open (41.1%) and click (11.3%) rates which are consistently higher than industry benchmarks confirming the value of this publication.

QLS Proctor

QLS Proctor continues to provide the profession with a unique mix of legal news, opinion and legislation updates that is unrivalled in Queensland. Staffed by a team of experienced journalists, QLS Proctor covers breaking news from the court, the community and inside the profession, while also publishing deeper insights contributed by some of the State's finest legal minds on issues including domestic violence, voluntary assisted dying and human rights.

QLS Proctor has continued from strength to strength since switching to its online platform in 2020. It has had a solid increase in users and is becoming established as the place to go for the latest information on the legal profession.

Users: 242,042

Page views: 713,410

The news section, along with profession updates, career moves and job vacancies were among the top ten viewed sections of QLS Proctor during this year.

This Week in Proctor

This Week in Proctor is an email newsletter promoting the best articles published each week, driving traffic to the QLS Proctor website and affirming the brand's authority as the top source of news for the Queensland profession.

This Week in Proctor has been very successful with an average open rate of 46.2% and click rate of 16.3%, both of which are above industry standard.

Recognising and celebrating our members

Our annual awards program provides QLS the opportunity to honour and recognise those members who serve as role models to the profession.

The Queensland Law Society Awards recognise our members' deep commitment and exceptional contribution to the practice of law in Queensland. They highlight the calibre of leadership, innovation and commitment that is delivered and the impact this is having on the profession and the greater community.

Winners were announced at various prestigious events throughout the year, including the Legal Profession Dinner, the Legal Profession Breakfast and the Queensland Law Society Annual General Meeting.

In late 2021 the decision was made to consolidate the awards under the banner of the QLS Excellence in Law Awards, and present them at a new, dedicated awards ceremony event. As a result of this change, the Agnes McWhinney and the Emerging Leader Awards will now be presented in August 2022 as part of the QLS Excellence in Law Awards Gala.

The award winners for 2021-22 were:

President's Medal, awarded to Bruce Crowley

The President's Medal is awarded in the spirit of Queensland's rich legal tradition, recognising commitment, contribution and outstanding performance in the profession. The winners show excellence in work, instilling confidence within the profession and the community and are highly valued by the profession and community and are an inspiration to others. The 2022 medal was awarded to Bruce Crowley. Bruce has distinguished himself both professionally and in his service to his community. Bruce practiced in corporate law for nearly 40 years, starting with Morris Fletcher & Cross, which we now know as MinterEllison. Bruce has also served on a wide variety of health, philanthropic and corporate boards including Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service, Children's Hospital Foundation Queensland, Australian Retirement Trust and The Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Access to Justice, awarded to Kelli Martin

The Access to Justice Award is presented to a practitioner who has made outstanding contributions to improving fair and equal access to justice for all through advocacy, leadership, innovation and influence. In 2021, this award was presented to Kelli Martin. Kelli of KLM Solicitors is an outstanding example of a woman living the values of improving access to justice for everyone in the community. Kelli's desire to educate the community and her work to bring about an end to domestic and family violence is demonstrated through her consistent legal representation, community service and advocacy for equality and empowerment. Over the past six years, Kelli has been proud to provide a voice for some of the most vulnerable in our community, many of them women who have been physically, emotionally and psychologically abused.

Dame Quentin Bryce Domestic Violence Prevention Advocate Award, awarded to Cybele Koning

This award is presented to an individual who demonstrates commitment to addressing domestic violence and advocating for change within workplaces, through fundraising, academia, the legal and/or social systems. Cybele is a family lawyer with experience in family law litigation and dispute resolution. Having initially worked in private practice, Cybele has been employed at Caxton Legal Centre, a not-for-profit community legal center, for over nine years. At Caxton, she was initially a duty lawyer in the Family and Magistrates (Domestic Violence) Courts, followed by becoming the practice director of the Family, Domestic Violence and Elder Law Practice (FDVELP). She then went on to take up the mantle of Chief Executive Officer of Caxton Legal Centre in 2019. In all her roles, she has championed change and the enhancement of Caxton's services to meet the needs of disadvantaged people in our communities, including systems change for domestic and family violence, including elder abuse.

First Nations Solicitor of the Year, awarded to Nareeta Davis and Darren Lewis

The First Nations Solicitor of the Year Award is presented to an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander individual for outstanding achievements in the law and for pursuing justice outcomes in the legal profession for First Nations People in Queensland. In 2021, there were joint winners of the award – Nareeta Davis of Holding Redlich and Darren Lewis from Legal Aid Queensland. Nareeta is a Kullilli Thargomindah woman whose name means wild water lilly and was named by the late Oodgeroo Noonuccal of Minjerribah. Nareeta was admitted as a solicitor in Queensland in 2018 and was the recipient of the 2018 QLS First Nations Legal Student of the Year. She was also awarded the Associate Vice Chancellor Medal at Central Queensland University

Nareeta divides her time between two careers; as a Senior Accountant at BDO (NTH QLD) and as a Solicitor at Holding Redlich Lawyers undertaking pro-bono cases. Nareeta serves on multiple Boards and committees, working for the advancement of First Nations Peoples.

Darren is an Iningai man whose family hail from the Barcaldine region. He has been employed in private practice and as a legal aid solicitor in Queensland and NSW, since his admission in 1994. He serves on many committees and is involved in various initiatives to advance the lives of indigenous Australians in the Darling Downs and the Granite Belt. Darren is an accredited specialist in family law and a duty lawyer. He is a Senior Lawyer at Legal Aid Queensland in Toowoomba, an Independent Children's Lawyer and Separate Representative for children, and a member of the Legal Aid Queensland State-wide NAIDOC Committee. He has been appointed as a Family Dispute Resolution Practitioner, an arbitrator for family law property matters and as an Ordinary Sessional Member of QCAT. Darren has numerous social and professional memberships including the Indigenous Lawyers' Association of Queensland as well as being a committee member and past President of the Downs & Southwest District Law Association.

First Nations Student, awarded to Renee Kyle

Highlighting exceptional results in study and contribution to improved justice outcomes for First Nations communities, the First Nations Student Award recognises a law student with passion, dedication and positivity. Renee Kyle is a proud Koa woman of Central Queensland and is currently enrolled in Bachelor of Laws (Honours) degree at QUT. Renee has been working in the area of Indigenous Justice since 2006 and is the Manager of Indigenous Justice Programs (Projects) within Courts Innovation Programs. Renee has devoted 22 years to a career with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. In her role, Renee leads a team of three staff who provide training and support to the 40+ community justice groups across Queensland and manages other Indigenous projects. For many years she has been active member of the Brisbane Native Indigenous Sports Corporation and is a casual relief worker with the Indigenous community agency, Bahloo, supporting homeless young women.

Outstanding Accredited Specialist, awarded to Zinta Harris

This award recognises the outstanding contribution, commitment and professionalism of an Accredited Specialist in the Queensland legal profession. Zinta Harris has demonstrated a proactive commitment to the Specialist Accreditation community through mentoring and educating other professionals in succession law and encouraging peers to undertake specialist accreditation. She has developed a new pathway to help families resolve conflict over inheritance without going to court, introducing a collaborative practice model for wills and estates in both the pre-death estate planning context and the post-death dispute resolution context, and developed training on this model for the succession law profession nationally. Zinta is the only solicitor in Queensland with a dual specialist accreditation in succession law and business law.

Pride in Law, awarded to Emile McPhee

This award recognises and rewards outstanding contribution and commitment to the practice of LGBTIQ+ inclusion in the legal profession in Queensland. Emile has a long history of demonstrating outstanding leadership, addressing LGBTIQ+ inclusion both within McCullough Robertson and with their clients and the broader legal community. Emile leads by example and is an active role model and advocate.

As one of the founding members of McColour some five years ago, Emile continues to drive our Inclusion and Diversity strategy, supporting LGBTIQ+ staff and allies to bring their whole self to work.

In his role as Chair of McColour, Emile has displayed significant leadership, coordinating the initiatives activities and ensuring strategies and goals are brought to life and progressed. He has been active in setting annual goals and stretch targets, and working to foster an inclusive culture across all levels and offices. He has also been involved in mentoring LGBTIQ+ law students, supporting them to navigate study and preparing to commence a career in the law.

Regional Practitioner of the Year, awarded to Rebekah Sanfuentes and Carol Taylor

Presented to a regional practitioner for their outstanding commitment to their local profession and community. An individual who's professional excellence and fidelity to their profession and region inspires others. This year there were two winners of this award: Rebekah Sanfuentes and Carol Taylor.

Rebekah heads McNamara Law's Wills and Estates department. In addition to showing significant dedication and commitment to her clients and colleagues, Rebekah has also had a positive impact on her community, instilling confidence in and enhancing the reputation of the profession. She has also been a frequent guest speaker at various events throughout the year in her local region. Rebekah performs a significant amount of pro-bono work each year as an Honourary Solicitor for the Salvation Army and serving on the panel of solicitors for the Cancer Council Wills program. Rebekah also helped initiate and implement a 'drive-thru' Will and Power of Attorney service during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Carol Taylor is a lawyer, designer, artist and disability advocate from the Gold Coast. In 2001, Carol sustained a spinal cord injury rendering her a quadriplegic. In 2015 after a 14 year absence from the law, she established Taylor Law & Conveyancing. Carol also shone a spotlight on the issue of fashion inclusivity, believing that how one dresses directly impacts how the world perceives you. As the world's first quadriplegic designer, her debut collection opened a runway event for the 2019 Mercedes Benz fashion festival in Brisbane. As a solicitor, advocate and speaker Carol has done much to enhance the perception of the legal profession. In advocacy, Carol tirelessly pushes for change in our built environment, in our institutions, and in society's attitudes. Carol is a thought leader and in demand speaker. She is a Non-Executive Director on the Board of Spinal Life Australia and is campaigning to extend the NDIS to those over the 65 years of age. Carol previously held positions as Honorary Solicitor for the Irish Australia Welfare Bureau and was Co-opted Non-Executive Director to the Board of Arts Access Australia, the peak body for arts and disability. Carol is also a founding member of the QLS Diverse Abilities Network, championing equal opportunity and inclusion for people with disability within the legal profession.

Workplace Culture and Health Individual, awarded to Kerry Gibb

Recognising a commitment to equity, diversity and wellness initiatives in the legal profession, the Workplace Culture and Health Award, is presented to one legal practice of any size and one individual, who promotes sustainable, healthy workplace cultures in the profession and embraces workplace diversity and inclusion in a meaningful way. In 2021, Kerry Gibb of Minter Ellison was the recipient of this award. Kerry has a strong focus on the mental and physical health of her employees, particularly during COVID. She has embraced flexible working for her team and ensuring her team was able to work flexibly while remaining connected to their team and the wider firm. Kerry has also has a focus on the physical health of her team and the wider firm and leads her team in staying active from activities involving team nature hikes through to cycle events to raise money for children's health charities. Kerry also has a keen interest in LGBTI+ matters and is a proud ally of the LGBTI+ community. She was instrumental in establishing MinterEllison Gold Coast's relationship with the Gold Coast's leading LGBTIQA+ organisation and has ensured their contribution to the LGBTIQA+ community is impactful and meaningful.

Our diverse and inclusive profession

Queensland Law Society (QLS) is committed to promoting the principles and practice of diversity and inclusion in the Queensland legal profession.

To champion this important work, the QLS Diverse Abilities Network has been formed to support, educate and strengthen the legal profession by breaking down the barriers to disability inclusion and encouraging disability confidence, throughout the membership of the QLS. The network is comprised of Diverse Abilities advocates from within the profession and is facilitated by QLS. They provide advice and assistance to QLS on diversity and inclusivity as well as championing QLS's goals of leading the profession in this area.

The inaugural First Nations Cultural Outreach Strategy 2020-25 (COS)

As part of our commitment to diversity and inclusion in the Queensland legal profession, the inaugural five year First Nations Cultural Outreach Strategy 2020-25 and annual First Nations Plan 2020-21 launched on 1 July 2020.

The five key objectives are to Advocate, Educate, Connect, Support, and Embed, which underpins our five year Cultural Outreach Strategy. The annual First Nations Plan monitors our progress, ensuring we meet our objectives and move closer to quadrupling the number of First Nations solicitors in Queensland by 2025 and we are proud to report on the second year of the plan.

During the financial year we achieved the following under our five key objectives:

Education

- Completed the Cultural Competency Course (LMS – Aboriginal modules).
- Reached out to First Nations legal stakeholders to work together to increase the number of First Nations solicitors.
- Rolled out Cultural On-boarding to DLA Presidents and QLS staff.

Advocacy

- Undertook 14 submissions in First Nations matters.
- Published and raised awareness on Aboriginal Deaths in custody.

Connect

- Profiled 11 First Nations solicitors, legal students, barristers and judges in QLS Proctor, raising awareness of their work and journeys throughout the law.
- Held the 4th annual First Nations Solicitor and Legal Student of the Year Awards (2021) to increased number of applicants.
- Bestowed the First Nations Legal Student of the Year Award winner with a \$2,000 scholarship prize.

Support

- Celebrated Indigenous Business Month with staff, encouraging staff to share and raise awareness of First Nations businesses, whilst simultaneously engaging in First nations procurement.
- Raised over \$1k for QLS's nominated charity – Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

Imbed

- Promoted cultural inclusion and awareness through a dedicated First Nations page on the QLS website, providing resources and articles to lawyers and the wider community.
- Published the annual cultural calendar to encourage lawyers and the wider community to celebrate and be a part of important cultural events.
- Maintained two external First Nations committees to oversee our Cultural Outreach Strategy and to be involved with First Nations legal advocacy as well as an internal QLS committee to support the roll out of the Strategy.

Internal staff contribution to COS

Throughout the year, QLS staff participated in a number of cultural events including Indigenous Business Month in October 2021 and in 2022 the Stolen Generations Exhibit, and National Reconciliation Week with a trip to the Mabo Legacy Exhibit.

Staff have maintained a strong focus on researching and raising awareness of First Nations matters, publishing number of articles in QLS Proctor raising awareness about Deaths in Custody and the 30th anniversary of the significance of the Mabo decision.

Beyond 2022

Our primary focus is to increase the number of First Nations Peoples practicing as solicitors in Queensland by 2025 and we have continued to engaged with First Nations Legal Stakeholders to come together in this ambitious aim. The 2020 National Profile of Solicitors sets out there are 85 practitioners who identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent. QLS is aiming for an ambitious number of 144 First Nations people to practice in Queensland by 2025. This is to quadruple the number of the 36 First Nations solicitors who identified in 2018 National Profile of Solicitors. Throughout this financial year and continuing into the next financial year, the Society will be reaching out to legal stakeholders to assist with this ambitious aim. As of 30 June 2022 it has been reported there are 95 First Nations PC holders.

Acknowledgement and thanks

The roll out and continuing support of the strategy is not possible without the support, commitment and dedication of QLS's First Nations Consulting Committee Chair and Committee members, First Nations Legal Policy Chair and Committee members and our (internal) Cultural Champions and Stakeholders Committee. QLS would also like to acknowledge current and past staff and committee members who contributed to the work and development of our plan and strategy. To that end it is important to recognise the work and support of the chairs of all committees, stakeholder committees and all other stakeholders for their commitment and generosity of time in joining with us on our cultural journey that positively contributes to closing the gap.

QLS looks forward to working with all members and stakeholders in achieving these laudable initiatives. The annual reporting of our commitments is set out below.

First Nations Annual Plan 2021-22 (QLS FNP)

Strategic Goal	Initiative	Status	1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022
Advocate Goal	1. Be at the forefront of identifying issues that affect First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Community and consult with First Nations stakeholders.	Proper deadly (target exceeded)	1.1.1 COMPLETED – there have been 14 submissions.
Advocate Goal	2. Actively represent First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Community with lawmakers, policy makers and law enforcers that promote laws that are just and equitable for First Nations Peoples.	Deadly (target achieved)	<p>2.1.1 COMPLETED – engaged in seven governmental/developmental stakeholder consultations: LAF (DJAG) in September 2021; ATSILS and Succession Law Committee Chair, regarding First Nations Wills & Estates; ATSILAF (DJAG) in December 2021; QFCC in August (Confidential) and Inspector of Detention (Bill).</p> <p>2.2.1 COMPLETED – published two QLS Proctor items: First Nations deaths in custody: Will the profession stand with us? (16 December 2021, Josh Apanui) and 31 years on: The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (14 April 2022, Yale Hudson-Flux and Jaime Gunning).</p> <p>2.3.1 COMPLETED – reported to CCS, FNCC and Council through quarterly reports and through QLS Proctor.</p>
Educate Goal	3. Roll out a cultural education syllabus (Cultural Competency) for the Queensland Legal Profession.	On the way to deadly (On track)	<p>3.1.1 IN PROGRESS – during the pilot period (as the program is yet to be publicly released), 6 people have commenced the cultural immersion program and 9 practitioners have commenced the cultural onboarding.</p> <p>3.2.1 IN PROGRESS – this is in the process, to continue into the next financial year.</p>
Educate Goal	4. Advance the First Nations Legal Student Strategy to identify and encourage more First Nations people to study, graduate and practice in law.	On the way to deadly (On track)	<p>4.1.1 IN PROGRESS – throughout the financial year, QLS has reached out to and met with stakeholders. QLS has reached out to key stakeholders for a roundtable, with the meeting moved from June 2022 to 4 July 2022.</p> <p>4.1.2 IN PROGRESS – recommendations and actions will be reported on following the Round Table in the next financial year.</p> <p>4.2.1 COMPLETED – reported to Council in June 2022.</p>
Educate Goal	5. Supporting and advancing the District Law Associations in Cultural Competency.	On the way to deadly (On track)	<p>5.1.1 IN PROGRESS – DLA Presidents have had access to the Cultural Onboarding and 9 have accessed the course.</p> <p>5.2.1 COMPLETED – reported to Council in June 2022.</p>
Educate Goal	6. Working with the Bar and the Judiciary in growing and advancing Cultural Competency.	On the way to deadly (On track)	6.1.1 IN PROGRESS – discussion with FNCC regarding conference and award planning. However this is being investigated further and progressed internally, with a business case and options to be prepared and due to staff shortages it is recommended this item be progressed into the next financial year, with consideration in the roll out of the LMS.

Strategic Goal	Initiative	Status	1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022
Connect Goal	7. Promote and connect with First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Legal students.	On the way to deady (On track)	7.1.1 COMPLETED – gained traction with LawLink with LawLink held at Mabel Park High School with Carter Newell Lawyers, 15 First Nations students were in attendance and positive feedback was received following the event.
			7.1.2 IN PROGRESS – profiled Lawlink Alumni in QLS Proctor – LawLink: Bridging the cultural divide between Indigenous law students and the legal profession – Mikaela French (5 May 2022, Cayla Marchant) and in early 2022-23 there are plans for another Lawlink Alumni to be profiled. First Nations Legal Student Josh Apanui was profiled in Bond University's Bond Law graduate's journey from offender to legal executive (11 October 2021) and in Lawyers Weekly podcast Protégé: From one side of the system to the other: How this new lawyer is building a legal career with unique first-hand experience (7 November 2021, Robyn Tongol).
Connect Goal	8. Raise the profile of First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Legal Students through QLS publications and other initiatives.	Proper deady (target exceeded)	8.1.1 COMPLETED – 11 First Nations Solicitors, legal students, barristers and judges profiled in QLS Proctor including First Nations award winners, Nareeta Davis, Renee Kyle and Darren Lewis. Josh Apanui has been profiled in a lawyers weekly podcast and in The Australian, Joel Murgha has been profiled in QLS Proctor, as has Nareeta Davis' work with NAIDOC. Talitha Burson and Simone Matthews as QCAT Tribunal Members have also been profiled and celebrated in Proctor as has his Honour Justice Lincoln Crowley and Mikaela French. FNLP Committee Co-chairs Kristen Hodge and Lyndell O'Connor have also had advocacy profiled and published in QLS Proctor.
Connect Goal	9. Recognise First Nations Solicitors and First Nations Legal Students through annual Awards.	Deadly (target achieved)	9.1.1 COMPLETED – First Nations Solicitors and Legal Students Awards were held in August 2021, the next award ceremony is in August 2022. 9.1.2 COMPLETED – from 2020 to 2021 there was an increase of the number of First Nations Solicitor and Legal Student applications and from 2021 to 2022, there has been an increase of applications (6 for First Nations Students and 3 for First Nations Solicitors).
Support Goal	10. Connect, promote and highlight First Nations Businesses.	Deadly (target achieved)	10.1.1 COMPLETED – promoted Indigenous Business month to staff through Yammer and all-staff email, awarding weekly prizes to staff profiling/raising awareness of First Nations businesses.
Support Goal	11. Investigate a trust or fundraising initiative to support First Nations Legal Students, Solicitors and Community.	Deadly (target achieved)	11.1.1 COMPLETED – reported to Council in June 2022.
Support Goal	12. Connect, support and promote a First Nations Charity on an annual basis.	Proper deady (target exceeded)	12.1.1 COMPLETED – Indigenous Literacy Foundation charity event raised over \$1,000, doubling efforts from last financial year.
Imbed Goal	13. Provide cultural competency training annually for internal staff and a Cultural Outreach on boarding induction for new staff.	On the way to deady (On track)	13.1.1 IN PROGRESS – Cultural Competency training to be rolled out to staff following the release of the LMS and recruitment of new Cultural Consultant.
			13.1.2 COMPLETED – new staff have access to the Cultural Onboarding via the LMS each month, with a quiz to test knowledge. 11 new staff have completed cultural onboarding.

Strategic Goal	Initiative	Status	1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022
Imbed Goal	14. Connect with First Nations Elders and community members that promote the benefits of cultural inclusion and awareness.	Proper deadly (target exceeded)	14.1.1 COMPLETED – we are in regular contact with Elders.
			14.2.1 COMPLETED – this year we have held an IBM event, held an online and in-person display for the Stolen Generations and organised a staff trip during NRW to the Mabo Legacy Exhibit. We have promoted these events to members and staff via our Cultural Calendar available on the QLS website.
			14.3.1 COMPLETED – we have exceeded our targets for engagement on the QLS website, social media channels, yammer and via email to celebrate, acknowledge and raise awareness of First Nations matters.
Imbed Goal	15. Imbed cultural key dates within the organisation annually.	Deadly (target achieved)	15.1.1 COMPLETED – the 2022 Cultural Calendar is finalised and published externally and internally.
			15.2.1 COMPLETED – Cultural Calendar events are shared on Yammer and is on the QLS website annually.
Imbed Goal	16. Imbed long term operational structures for cultural safety and unconscious bias prejudices.	Deadly (target achieved)	16.1.1 COMPLETED – reviewed by the FNCC with recommendations for the next plan.
			16.2.1 COMPLETED – the FNCC has met quarterly and is in line with the progress of the First Nations Plan and Cultural Outreach Strategy. The final meeting of 2021 was an informal and get together to build our core relationships between the committee and QLS.
			16.3.1 COMPLETED – the CCS has met 6 times and good discussions and support has been had with the CCS.
			16.4.1 COMPLETED – website digital strategy planning finalised in consultation with the IM Team.

Key

Proper Deadly (Exceeded Target)

Deadly (Target Achieved)

On the way to deadly (On track)

Which Way? (Target not achieved)

KPIs

1. We are listened to by government and members of parliament.
2. There is increased engagement by the legal profession and community in cultural resources.
3. Proportion of First Nations solicitors and First Nations legal students that are recognised and that grows each financial year and by the 5th year of the COS, the number of First Nations solicitors in Queensland has quadrupled to 144.
4. Annual financial targets are achieved.
5. Increased awareness and participation in cultural initiatives by QLS staff and the Queensland legal profession.

District Law Associations

Queensland Law Society represents the interests of the most geographically widespread legal profession in Australia. Queensland's 17 district law associations (DLAs) play a crucial role in bridging these distances and connecting the profession with their community and with each other.

QLS partners with District Law Associations throughout Queensland to deliver targeted training and professional development opportunities, ensuring that regional lawyers have access to relevant resources and information along with a community of collegiate practitioners they can connect with locally. The enthusiastic involvement of regional solicitors in a wide range of local community activities is crucial to our efforts to educate and inform the community about their rights and responsibilities under the law.

We also regularly engage with associations to identify regional matters of importance to the profession. The DLA Presidents workshop is held annually in March, and provides an important opportunity for Presidents to meet with the QLS President and CEO to discuss priorities for the coming year. QLS also holds quarterly briefings with our CEO and President, providing an opportunity for QLS to connect DLAs with key stakeholders and leaders in the legal profession as well as opportunity to raise issues relevant to their particular region.

The future of the profession – our future leaders

The new voices of the legal profession are lawyers with 0-5 years of post-admission experience and lawyers aged under 36. This cohort makes up 40% of our membership and will continue to grow over the coming years.

QLS has recognised that this segment needs a range of products and services to help them in their early career to cement their knowledge and skills and building their professional confidence.

We are increasing our focus on these emerging lawyers to not only prepare the next generation of lawyers and leaders, but also prepare ourselves for the generational change that comes with them.

QLS has ensured the voice of this segment of our membership is heard through our Future Leaders Committee.

In October 2020, the inaugural Future Leaders Committee (FLC) was democratically elected. Consisting of full members 35 years old or under or with less than 5 years PAE, the current committee have represented and advocated on behalf of their peers. The main duties and responsibilities of the FLC are to:

- prepare and submit to Council and annually review the Future Leaders Committee's two year Strategic Plan.
- provide advice and recommendations to Council regarding Queensland Law Society Strategic Planning with a particular focus on Future Leader Members.
- provide advice and recommendations to Council regarding matters affecting Future Leader Members
- research and consult on programs of interest and value to Future Leader Members and the community and produce newsletters or articles for Future Leader Members.
- develop and extend areas of mutual interest between the Committee and other related organisations, district law associations, and stakeholders across all parts of Queensland.
- further the vision, purpose and objectives of Queensland solicitors generally, with a focus on Future Leader Members in Queensland.

The FLC Committee 2021-22:

2021 (until 31 Dec)

President	Minnie Hannaford
Vice President	Matthew Hollings
Deputy President	Storm Scarlett
QLS Law Council of Australia representative, Young Lawyer Committee	Simon Playford
Ordinary members	Georgia Athanasellis Rebecca Murray Zoe Navarro Kate Pidgeon Ella Thomas

2022

President	Matthew Hollings
Vice President	Simon Playford
Deputy President	Vacant
QLS Law Council of Australia representative, Young Lawyer Committee	Simon Playford
Immediate Past President	Minnie Hannaford
Ordinary members	Georgia Athanasellis Stafford Mortensen (commenced 17 February) Michael Murray (commenced 17 February) Rebecca Murray Zoe Navarro Kate Pidgeon Sarah Plasto (commenced 17 February) Ella Thomas

The FLC Committee has consulted on the development of several products and services specific to the early career cohort, including:

- The Callover – a podcast developed specifically for young lawyers by young lawyers. The Callover has new episodes monthly and covers topics of interest to young lawyers around career growth, women in law, what makes a good lawyer, First Nations culture.
- The FLC Hub – a dedicated hub on the QLS website to help ensure young lawyers are connected, be it through social networking events, bespoke professional development courses or information and resources that will help career development.
- Professional, personal and wellbeing development events – face to face and online education sessions to help career, social and wellbeing development of young lawyers.

Queensland law students

QLS recognises that the future lawyers of Queensland demand more from their membership organisation. Our future lawyers value convenience, quality and collaboration.

In 2020-21, QLS again collaborated with 21 mid to top-tier law firms and the 8 law schools to institute transparency and consistency in the Queensland legal recruitment cycle with the QLS Seasonal Clerkship and Graduate Recruitment Guidelines.

- 17 firms participated in the seasonal clerkship program
- 16 firms participated in the graduate program

The guidelines offer both firms and students the opportunity to simultaneously make and consider offers, ensuring students can make informed decisions.

Legal Careers Expo

The Legal Careers Expo (LCE) has been the flagship event for law students for the past 15 years, and has a reputation among some national firms as the preferred avenue for student recruitment. Bringing together employers and potential employees, the event is held in-person and virtually ensuring access to regional participants.

In 2022, LCE was held at the Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre in May with more than 170 law students attending. The journey from law student to lawyer is a profound and impactful experience within a prospective members' career journey and it is important QLS is not only present, but a partner in this critical transition.

By opening doors, creating connections and introducing opportunities, QLS is well-positioned to support law students in their early career journey. Importantly, this growing cohort will form our future membership base.

GROW

We grow the member centric capability of QLS and embed a positive work place culture, technological resilience and financial sustainability.

Our people

Our people, their skills and commitments contribute to a leading professional society, valued by our members.

Strategic workforce planning and performance

QLS employs people across diverse areas, including law, accountancy, membership services, events management, human resources, ethics, policy and administration. Our people, their range of skills and their commitment to our values of *Respect*, *Service* and *Integrity* ensure we are a leading professional society valued by our members.

Diversity and inclusion

QLS is seeking recertification for the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) 2022-2024 Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation. The citation encourages, recognises and promotes active commitment to achieving gender equality in Australia workplaces. QLS is proud of our commitment to gender equality and our strategies to attract and retain the best possible talent. This is key to underpinning a culture that values equality, diversity, and inclusion of all employees.

The QLS Diversity and Inclusion Committee (D&I Committee) has continued to flourish this year and is working promote and achieve diversity and inclusion both within and outside the workplace.

Over the course of the year the D&I Committee have provided staff with the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of diversity and inclusion through education and awareness activities. They have run several successful events, including International Women's Day and the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. QLS also continues to be a member of the Diversity Council of Australia and all staff have free access to the resources and events DCA provide.

The People and Culture team support D&I Committee initiatives. For example we have a dedicated bub hub for working parents and continue to be a Breastfeeding Friendly Accredited Workplace.

QLS continues to drive the First Nations cultural outreach initiatives. See page 77 for further information.

QLS Charity Committee

The QLS Charity and Volunteering Committee continued to raise funds for worthy causes this financial year and participate in events, despite the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 2021-22 financial year the committee raised \$1520 across a range of initiatives which were supported by QLS staff. Our most successful fundraiser was the QLS Christmas raffle which again raised funds to support the important work of the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. For the first time this year, the Committee held a chocolate fundraiser which provided a donation to the Lung Foundation. QLS staff also proudly participated in the Queensland Legal Walk, an annual fundraising walk in support of LawRight.

Graduate program

Our graduates are in their last year of our two year Graduate Program. During the course of the program our graduates have gained experience under the guidance of our senior QLS Solicitors in areas such as QLS Ethics and Practice Centre, Legal Policy and the Office of General Counsel.

Workplace wellness

We continued to build on our commitment to workplace wellness, encouraging staff to be involved in initiatives such as R U OK day, Queensland Legal Walk and Mental Health Month. We have also continued to maintain and promote our Wellness Rooms.

QLS staff have access to LawCare counselling services and are encouraged to seek help if they need it at any time. In FY22 QLS has funded the training of an internal resource to deliver Mental Health First Aid certification, extending our commitment to supporting the mental health of our employees and normalising conversations about this important topic within our workplace.

Flexible working arrangements and support

QLS is committed to a diverse and inclusive culture that recognises the benefits of workplace flexibility. Over the last year QLS has continued to operate with flexible working arrangements available to employees including remote working, staggered hours and part time opportunities. Our advanced systems and technologies have meant we have pivoted quickly to remote working to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff during the pandemic lockdowns and the weather events that have impacted us in this financial year.

Attraction and retention

QLS is committed to attracting and retaining quality staff. Our remuneration policy and strategy is aimed at achieving internal parity for like-for-like roles, addressing gender inequity and working towards market parity. This strategy underpins our recertification application for the Employer of Choice for Gender Equality (EOCGE) citation. Our policy also supports the link between on-the-job performance and remuneration.

In addition to this, QLS is implementing a Retention Action Plan to address the general market retention issues emerging post the pandemic lockdowns. This plan seeks to identify critical risk employees and address retention at an individual, team and organisational level.

Policy and guideline reviews

Over the past year we continued to review human resource policies and guidelines to ensure they remain current and promote staff wellbeing, gender equality, diversity and inclusion. We developed remote working guidelines to support our flexible working arrangements. The QLS Code of Conduct was reviewed and approved. We also updated and combined all our leave policies under one Leave policy for easy access and application. Our parental leave policy remains as a stand-alone policy.

QLS continues to recognise and support Human Rights and the principles they are based on including dignity, equality and mutual respect. We continue to embed consideration of the *Human Rights Act* in all administrative decision making and has stated its purpose in the new Strategic Plan 2021-25 to respect, protect and promote human rights in our decision making actions. In addition to our Strategic Plan, there is access and reference to the *Human Rights Act* in our administrative decision making guideline which includes guidance, commentary and an annexure checklist. Further, QLS's template Council submissions including a heading for the author to include commentary on Human Rights considerations, Administrative decision making is made in consultation and consideration of the *Human Rights Act* and is either reflected or referenced in written decisions. QLS has had no human rights or public interest disclosure complaints during the financial year.

Staff learning and development

This year we have hired a Learning and Organisational Development Consultant, to support and enhance the learning capability of QLS employees.

Learning and development opportunities for staff included:

- a custom designed Feedback Workshop for Managers, based on their direct feedback
- Mental Health First Aid training. QLS continues to be Gold Accredited with Mental Health First Aid Australia
- First Aid training
- custom HRIS training for all QLS employees
- MS Excel upskilling for the EI and Licencing Teams
- Contact Officer training for two new employees
- targeted industry development seminars for the OGC team
- on-boarding sessions for all new starters including Workplace Health and Safety, Legal requirements, Information Management and a structured new starter program.
- appropriate workplace behaviour training sessions including how to address bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination were held
- cultural awareness training including the Share our Pride online course for all new starters
- study assistance for team members
- annual refresher of our work health and safety compliance requirements
- attendance at external workshops and conferences, and
- continued support for individual learning and development including leadership, change management, innovation and technical training opportunities.

The previously mentioned Retention project also includes the development of individual employee action plans, a significant component of which includes development opportunities. Our individual training commitment was an average of \$545 per full-time equivalent (FTE) employee.

HR Information System (HRIS)

In 2022 we commenced an HRIS upgrade project of our existing system. This project will deliver improved leave management capabilities and general HR efficiencies in the team. The system will support an enhanced performance management process and allow for richer reporting to deliver data driven insights and action.

Welcomes and farewells

QLS welcomed 58 new team members this year, including casuals, contract and permanent staff, all of whom took part in a comprehensive on-boarding program. Employee headcount at 30 June 2022 was 117 people with 108.85 FTE. The majority of staff (79%) are employed on a permanent full-time basis with the remainder being permanent part-time (17%), short term contracts (3%), and those on parental leave (1%).

QLS farewelled 47 staff over the same timeframe and our turnover rate at 30 June 2022 was 41% for the financial year.

Gender composition

The gender composition of QLS workforce at 30 June 2022 was 71% female and 29% male.

Outlook for 2022-23

Key people initiatives for 2022-23 include our application for the recertification for the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's Employer of Choice for Gender Equality citation. We aim to finalise the HRIS and payroll upgrade and the Retention Action plan projects. We will also realign our internal employee performance review process to ensure a continual flow of regular feedback between managers and their teams. Our on boarding content will be reviewed and we will continue to support our wellness initiatives such as Mental Health First Aid and access to counselling services through our LawCare provider.

Our working environment

Sustainability

QLS is committed to sustainable work practices designed to cut greenhouse gases, reduce waste & landfill, and save water and energy.

The culture of sustainability is embedded in our work practices in three key areas:

Decreasing landfill contributions

We continue to commit to protect the environment and reduce landfill through recycling office paper, toners & ink cartridges as well as computers, photocopiers and other office equipment.

Lowering our energy consumption

A strong focus remains on reducing energy consumption through the use of energy efficient lighting. This helps us reduce our power consumption.

Decreasing our carbon footprint

QLS has always been committed to reducing food and beverage wastage through actively identifying areas of waste such as continuing to supply bottled beverages instead of poured beverages at the majority of our in-house events. We continue to source catering from local CBD suppliers who deliver on foot, to reduce carbon emissions.

Room hire

Room bookings for 2021-22, which included bookings for member, internal and corporate functions were approximately 7,758. The Society remained open during the lockdowns of 2021 to facilitate court ordered mediations and other alternative dispute resolution events such as arbitrations and compulsory conferences. During the year, QLS hosted approximately 17,023 people in our meeting and function rooms.

The total revenue from room hire for 2021-22 was approximately \$156,191.

Our Corporate Structure

In this financial year, there are eight departments that report to QLS's Chief Executive Officer:

- **Legal:** Provides in-house legal advice.
- **Membership and Engagement:** Provides marketing, media and communications services with an in-house marketing and communications team, design team, partnerships and growth team and events team.

- **Regulation:** Oversees QLS's regulatory arm in trust account investigations, external interventions, management of the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund, practising certificates, Records and Member Services as well as supporting the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board.
- **Finance and Facilities:** Oversees finances and in-house facilities.
- **Information Management and Technology:** Oversees the management of information, databases, information systems, associated business processes and IT.
- **Advocacy, Guidance and Governance:** Advocates for QLS and the profession through submissions, public hearings, consultation and updates to the profession, oversees the QLS's reach in mainstream media through public comment, speeches and media releases and includes the office of the secretariat which oversees the governance of QLS, including risk management, insurance and implementation of QLS's First Nations Cultural commitments. The guidance arm provides legal ethics and practice support guidance and ethical legal education to QLS members.
- **Education:** Oversees QLS's provision of continuing professional development, seminars, conferences, Symposium, and masterclasses as well as overseeing professional advancement with the roll out of Specialist Accreditation and Practice Management courses.
- **People and Culture:** Oversees recruitment, staff performance and evaluation and people and culture policies and education.

Our Leadership team

Rolf Moses

Chief Executive Officer

BCom, Dip Corporate Director, Post Grad Dip Counselling

Rolf joined Queensland Law Society in March 2018 as CEO having previously been a founding member and chair of the Queensland Law Society Wellbeing Working Group and a faculty member of the QLS Practice Management Course. Rolf has over 25 years' executive and leadership experience in the legal sector having occupied senior leadership roles in large, international legal firms throughout Australia and Asia. Rolf is an active facilitator and trainer, particularly in the areas of workplace culture and behaviour.

Matt Dunn

General Manager – Advocacy, Guidance and Governance

BSc LLB (Hons) GAICD

Matt started at QLS in a policy and in-house legal role in 2005, establishing a successful policy team. He led that team until he took on the role of first Director of Policy at the Law Council of Australia in 2014. Matt returned to QLS in late 2015 to take on the role of Government Relations Principal Advisor, growing and maintaining QLS's vital relationships with government at both state and federal levels. Matt served as QLS's Acting CEO between February 2017 and March 2018 when he returned to a General Manager position with its heart in legal policy, public affairs, stakeholder relations, ethical and practice guidance for the profession and corporate governance for QLS.

Matt shares his love of fine wine in a long-running and popular column in QLS's online publication, QLS Proctor.

Catherine Ellemor

People and Culture Manager BSc., ATCL

Catherine joined Queensland Law Society as People and Culture Manager in 2021. Catherine has over 20 years' experience in human resources, having held management roles in national and international law firms, as well as senior roles in the education and government sectors.

Catherine's human resources expertise include performance management and coaching, reward and recognition, recruitment and selection and organisation development. As a human resources business partner she is passionate about providing stakeholders with human resources best practice advice and solutions to support the growth and success of their business.

Catherine is a member of the Australian Human Resources Institute.

Peter Gamin

Chief Financial Officer BBus MCom FCA GAICD

Peter joined QLS in August 2021 and is responsible for all aspects of finance, facilities and administration functions. Peter is a Chartered Accountant with 20 years' experience in strategic financial leadership, risk management, taxation, business process improvement, governance and creation of commercial value. He has a finance background spanning superannuation (profit for member fund), government funds management, private sector group finance and chartered accounting. Peter has a professional approach to stakeholder engagement and is committed to personal integrity, ethical business practice and the achievement of results.

Megan O'Brien

Director, Information Management BSocSc LLB GradCertProfLegalPrac GradDipDInfoM

Megan has nearly twenty years of experience working with information technology, projects and implementing change in the legal sector. She has held positions responsible for providing expert advice on strategy, policy, legislation and systems regarding all information management matters as well as leading digital transformation projects. Megan is a Churchill Fellow.

Sandra Pepper

General Manager, Education BA LLB

Sandra is a senior lawyer with over 20 years' experience in the legal profession. Sandra practised in the areas of property and finance law before moving in to the legal Knowledge Management and Learning and Development fields. Her experience spans all stages of adult learning and includes syllabus development, content creation and training delivery. She has a strong track record in implementing digital solutions and building relationships with stakeholders, to provide quality learning outcomes.

Sandra is passionate about enabling lawyers, through continued education, to develop their professional skills and build successful careers, while maintaining wellbeing in a positive and inclusive cultural environment.

Louise Pennisi

Corporate Secretary, Manager, Corporate Governance and Cultural Outreach Strategy
BA/LLB LLM GIA (Cert) GAICD

Louise is tasked with overseeing corporate governance for Queensland Law Society as well as managing and monitoring QLS's cultural commitments, risk management and corporate statutory functions. Louise is also responsible for working with Council and the Executive Leadership Team to develop, implement and report on strategy. Louise joined QLS in 2010 and commenced in this role in March 2017.

Louise was admitted to practise as a solicitor in the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2006 and has extensive experience in succession and commercial law private practice as well as governance, risk management and policy law reform. Louise completed the AICD course in 2014, is a member of the Star of the Sea Parish Finance Council, Chair of the Star of the Sea Parish Workplace Health and Safety Committee and 2016-2018 Vice President of the Australian Breastfeeding Association.

Craig Smiley

General Manager, Regulation
LLB (Hons)

Craig joined Queensland Law Society in June 2004 and heads our Regulation division. Craig's leadership spans Licencing, Trust Account Investigations, the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund, the QLS Professional Standards Scheme and External Interventions.

Maree Westbrook

General Counsel, Office of General Counsel
LLB, LLM, Grad. Dip. LP.

Maree's experience is predominantly with Queensland Government. She has been with Queensland Law Society since 2008, commencing as a Solicitor in the Office of General Counsel and is now General Counsel for the Law Society.

Rachel Young

General Manager, Membership and Engagement
BBus, Grad. Cert. BA

Rachel joined Queensland Law Society in September 2021, bringing over 15 years' experience in delivering growth through strategic marketing, digital transformation and member experience design. An experienced executive leader, Rachel has led large, multi-disciplined teams, across diverse industries including finance, non- for-profit, construction and hospitality, in both B2B and B2C markets. Rachel is currently working towards gaining her MBA and has a keen interest in emerging digital technologies.

Committees

Recognising member contributions

We thank all QLS policy committee Chairs, Deputy Chairs and members for applying their expertise and supplying their time throughout the year. In particular, we are grateful for the dedicated efforts of the Chairs and Deputy Chairs who are central to coordinating research and submissions, and engaging with priority stakeholders.

QLS would like to acknowledge the outgoing Chairs and Deputy Chairs:

Deborah Awyzio	Chair, Domestic and Family Violence Committee
Ivan Ingram	Chair, First Nations Legal Policy Committee
Andrew Lind	Chair, Not for Profit Law Committee
Rebecca Fogerty	Chair, Criminal Law Committee
Kristin Ramsey	Chair, Industrial Law Committee
Ken McKenzie	Deputy Chair, Criminal Law Committee

Committees, Chairs and Deputy Chairs

Committee	Chair and deputy chair
Access to Justice / Pro-bono Law Committee	Chair: Elizabeth Shearer Deputy Chair: Stephen Herd
Accident Compensation / Tort Law Committee	Chair: Michael Garbett Deputy Chair: Luke Murphy
Alternative Dispute Resolution Committee	Chair: Toby Boys Deputy Chair: Paul Coves
Banking and Financial Services Law Committee	Chair: Michael Anastas Deputy Chair: Karla Fraser
Children's Law Committee	Chair: Damian Bartholomew Deputy Chair: Kate Grant
Committee of Management	Chair: Vacant Deputy Chair: Allison Caputo
Competition and Consumer Law Committee	Chair: Kathryn Finlayson Deputy Chair: Tanja Mitic
Construction and Infrastructure Law Committee	Chair: Samantha Cohen Deputy Chair: Nathan Chalmers
Corporations Law Committee	Chair: Derek Pocock
CPD Committee	Chair: Rachael Miller
Criminal Law Committee	Chair: Dominic Brunello Deputy Chair: Patrick Quinn

Committee	Chair and deputy chair
Domestic and Family Violence Committee	Chair: Tracey De Simone Deputy Chair: Rachael Field
Elder Law Committee	Chair: Rebecca Anderson Deputy Chair: Madeline Walsh
Energy and Resources Law Committee	Chair: Vacant Deputy Chair: Madeline Findlay
Equity and Diversity Committee	Chair: Ann-Maree David
Ethics Committee	Chair: Joe Siracusa Deputy Chair: Petrina Macpherson
Family Law Committee	Chair: Kathy Atkins Deputy Chair: Margie Kruger
First Nations Consulting Committee	Chair: Terry Stedman Deputy Chair: Magistrate Jacqui Payne
First Nations Legal Policy Committee	Chair: Lynell O'Connor and Kristen Hodge
Franchising Law Committee	Chair: Derek Sutherland Deputy Chair: Simone Pentis
Future Leaders Committee	President: Minnie Hannaford (2021) President: Matthew Hollings (2022) Deputy President: Storm Scarlett (2021) Deputy President: NA (2022)
Governance Committee	Chair: Michele Davis
Government Lawyers Committee	Chair: Jill Petrie Deputy Chair: Natasha Camphorst
Health and Disability Law Committee	Chair: Margaret Arthur Deputy Chair: Karen Williams
Human Rights and Public Law Committee	Chair: Dan Rogers Deputy Chair: Emma Phillips
Industrial Law Committee	Chair: Giri Sivaraman Deputy Chair: NA
In-House Counsel Committee	Chair: Philip Ware Deputy Chair: Eve Fraser
Innovation Committee	Chair: Terri Mottershead Deputy Chair: Richard Gardiner
Insolvency and Reconstruction Law Committee	Chair: Vacant

Committee	Chair and deputy chair
Litigation Rules Committee	Chair: Andrew Shute Deputy Chair: Andrew Smyth
Migration Law Committee	Chair & Deputy Chair yet to be appointed
Not for Profit Law Committee	Chair: Paul Paxton-Hall Deputy Chair: Joanne O'Brien
Occupational Discipline Law Committee	Chair: Calvin Gnech Deputy Chair: Andrew Forbes
Planning and Environment Law Committee	Chair: Michael Connor
Practice Management Course Committee	Chair: Greg Spinda Deputy Chair: Natasha Hood
Privacy, Data, Technology and Intellectual Property Law Committee	Chair: Anna Sharpe Deputy Chair: Ben Thorn
Professional Conduct Committee	Chair: Deborah Awyzio Deputy Chair: Michael Gapes
Property and Development Law Committee	Chair: Matthew Raven Deputy Chair: Kim Teague
Revenue Law Committee	Chair: Duncan Bedford Deputy Chair: David Stitt
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Business Law	Chair: Vicki Comino
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Commercial Litigation	Chair: Paul Betros
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Criminal Law	Chair: Callan Lloyd
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Family Law	Chair: James Steel
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Immigration Law	Chair: Glenn Ferguson
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Personal Injuries	Chair: Brady Cockburn Deputy Chair: Kate Avery
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Property Law	Chair: Anthony Boge Deputy Chair: Peter Townley
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Succession Law	Chair: Renee Bennet
Specialist Accreditation Advisory Committee: Workplace Relations	Chair: Rob Stevenson
Specialist Accreditation Board	Chair: Peter Jolly Deputy Chair: Kathy Atkins

Committee	Chair and deputy chair
Succession Law Committee	Chair: Angela Cornford-Scott Deputy Chair: Bryan Mitchell
Water and Agribusiness Law Committee	Chair: Brian Healy Deputy Chair: Alex Ramsey

Many QLS members also volunteer their time and expertise to participate in Working Groups convened by QLS to address important topical issues. We thank all those members who do so.

Working groups, chairs and deputy chairs

Working group	Chair and deputy chair
Diverse Abilities Network	
Judicial Commission Working Group	Chair: Dan Rogers
Wellbeing Working group	Chair: Noela L'Estrange Deputy Chairs: Belinda Winter & Philip Ware
QLS Cybersecurity and Scam Prevention Working Group	

Information Management strategic objectives

The objectives for QLS's Information Management and Technology program support the broader QLS strategic objectives and include:

1. Driving information governance across the organisation to ensure compliance and management of our information assets through:
 - oversight provided by the Information Management and Technologies Governance (IMTG) Board
 - continuous improvement by developing, implementing and educating about our governing processes, policies and procedures, and
 - establishment of a rolling business systems improvement plan.
2. Extracting the best value from information management investments at QLS to exploit opportunities and avoid waste through:
 - successful delivery of information capability supported by integrated line of business systems
 - strategic alignment for delivery of services, and
 - improved member and public satisfaction with a focus on efficient, effective, informed and timely service provision.

Initiatives

The following activities under the IMBI (Information Management Business Initiatives) Program of Works were accomplished in the report year:

- Maturing QLS's data and analytics governance. This has included data migration to the new CRM and development of new data models.

- Further development of the electronic document and record management system (EDRMS).
- Continued development the web content management platform to include an ecommerce solution.
- Launch a new intranet.
- Implementing the membership management system replacement project. The new system will allow QLS and those who conduct business with QLS to work digitally end to end.

The overarching goal for the program of work is to progress QLS's information management governance and service delivery. This will allow QLS to continue to grow its level of digital maturity, ensuring we can improve what we do for members, the broader Queensland legal sector and further, the Queensland community.

Information systems and record keeping

The Law Society's Information Management and Technologies Governance Board meets six times a year. This Board is responsible for oversight of all QLS's information systems and recordkeeping activities. It is responsible for enterprise-wide record, information and data matters, including governance, standards and management.

QLS continues to develop its electronic Document and Records Management System (eDRMS). A comprehensive Trust Account Investigations (TAI) module has been developed that utilises sophisticated workflows and is due for delivery in August 2022. The TAI module will improve QLS's investigative capability, streamline business processes and reduce paper usage. QLS has also developed a suite of Information Management procedures and guidelines as part of its recordkeeping framework. QLS completed the QLS Retention and Disposal Schedule: QDAN 674 in 2021 and can now sentence and destroy classes of records not previously addressed in the General Retention and Disposal Schedule or in earlier QLS-specific Record Disposal Schedules. In the reporting year, there was one information security breach, which was managed in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth) and the *Information Privacy Act 2009*. Consolidating physical records holdings commenced and will continue into the next financial year. Significant reductions in paper records are anticipated as a result. Education on recordkeeping is a mandatory training requirement for all QLS staff as part of their on-boarding process. Refresher training is provided as required.

Risk management

QLS's risk is overseen by the FRC and Council, with a risk management and compliance framework that includes clear accountabilities for managing areas of risk and compliance, quarterly monitoring and updating of a centralised risk register and centralised fraud risk register and oversight of the framework and key risks. We perform risk assessments routinely when developing and reviewing policies, business cases and in the normal course of business. We also supply the FRC and Council with quarterly reports on QLS's risk register and fraud risk register. QLS's in-house legal team provides advice on risk and compliance issues and delivers regular compliance training to staff. During the 2021-22 financial year, the FRC and Council also reviewed and approved a risk appetite statement as well as the LCLF Investment Policy, Investment Policy for Membership and Regulatory Funds, QLS Builder Procurement Policy and Indemnity Policy.

We have a well-established centralised short and long term risk register that assists executive staff to identify, classify, assess and monitor current risk and also seamlessly review archived risks. During the 2021- 22 financial year, QLS continued to use the risk register to mitigate current risks, analyse residual risk trends as well as to identify, assess, monitor and report new organisational risks and fraud risks to the FRC and Council, in line with good governance practice. The risk register was also revitalised to identify long term latent risks to review annually so that there is a dedicated focus on current risks.

Our Ethics

QLS is a public sector entity under the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, and in this financial year the Queensland Law Society's code of conduct was updated, which applies to all staff, Councillors and Society committee members. QLS continues to encourage its Council, committee members, and business

colleagues to partner with us in implementing our new code and a copy of the Code is publicly available on the QLS website, and on appointment and induction, committee members and Councillors are provided with a copy of the Code. Education and on-board training of all new staff include the Society's policies, with education and the importance of the Code of Conduct, bullying and sexual harassment awareness training, wellbeing and cultural on boarding.

Complementing the Code of Conduct, is QLS's Gift Policy and Public Interest Disclosure (PID) policy, in which QLS staff, Councillors and stakeholders are asked to report any disclosures and for the latter, the FRC and Council are updated on any reported PIDs.

Our staff values of respect, integrity and service are reinforced in our people and culture policies and procedures and staff awards as well as staff performance agreements.

Right to information

The RTI Act allows members of the public access to certain information controlled by government and government agencies. QLS supports RTI principles by operating in an open, transparent and accountable manner, while endeavouring to protect the privacy of members, the public and staff. QLS is required to report the number of applications made to it for access to documents under the RTI Act and submits these figures to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for inclusion in its Right to Information and Information Privacy Annual Report. This report can be found on the Queensland RTI website. Our publication scheme is designed to release information we routinely make available to the public, without people having to apply through the formal RTI Act or the IP Act application processes. The publication scheme and its information are currently being reviewed and updated.

Information privacy

QLS is committed to ensuring that personal information collected is dealt with in accordance with the Information Privacy Principles contained in the *Information Privacy Act 2009* (Qld) and the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). We continually review the procedures in place to prevent unauthorised access to, and use of, the personal information we collect and have raised awareness with Society staff regarding Privacy Awareness Week which took place in May 2022. QLS members and the public have the right to request access to any personal information which relates to them, and the right to request that the information be corrected should it be inaccurate.

QLS's Privacy Policy and Privacy Code of Practice can be found on our website: qls.com.au.

FINANCES

Comprising the results of Queensland Law Society Incorporated (parent entity), the Law Claims Levy Fund (LCLF) and QLS's wholly owned subsidiaries, Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd (Lexon) and QLS Solicitor Support Pty Ltd

Our financial performance

Group results

In 2021-22, the Group made an operating deficit of \$0.9m after tax and net assets as at 30 June 2022 were \$164m, a decrease of \$0.9m from the previous year.

Increased retained surpluses over a number of years supported the Group's ability to take advantage of opportunities to deliver strategic improvements for members, including major projects in information management. These crossed the 2020-21 and 2021-22 years to deliver benefits to our members and the profession. The Group continued to provide initiatives throughout COVID-19 which included subsidies on membership fees and Practising Certificates in the 2020-21 year as well as a significant amount of free education resulting in reduced revenues in both 2020-21 and 2021-22.

Investment returns (distributions plus fair value movements through profit or loss) for the Group decreased from \$22.4m in 2020-21 to negative \$8m in 2021-22. This is a result of inflation, rising interest rates and recession fears affecting recovery in investment markets after the initial COVID-19 impact. Investment income (cash component) decreased by \$2.5m compared with the previous year.

Employee expenses for the Group increased by \$1m or 6.8% while overall group expenses (excluding unearned premium reserves) decreased by \$6m, driven mainly by lower insurance claims.

Insurance scheme

Insurance scheme results are from Lexon and the LCLF. The scheme recorded an operating surplus before investment returns and tax of \$7.8m (2021: \$1.1m) driven by a lower unearned premium reserve. Due to an assistance package provided to the profession during COVID-19 ceasing in 2020-21, insurance levies collected have increased by \$5.9m while claims expenses decreased by \$9.5m during 2021-22.

Queensland Law Society Incorporated (parent)

Queensland Law Society Incorporated exceeded its overall financial targets, with an underlying surplus of \$1.1m achieved against a budgeted surplus of \$0.2m. QLS's results were significantly boosted by the return of various conferences and events being able to be held, increasing both revenue and costs. More members continually have joined the Society, and membership and Practising Certificate renewals were above budget.

Information Technology project delivery

The information technology initiatives designed to improve QLS's core systems and processes, thus providing benefits to our members was completed during 2021-22. The key initiatives included a new membership database, website, learning management system and electronic document and records management system. Cloud computing costs of \$0.6m were expensed during 2021-22.

Assets

Parent net assets as of 30 June 2022 were \$66.9m, an increase of \$1.1m, due to the year's operating surplus.

Revenue

Revenue from Membership fees, Practicing Certificates and Education that impacted 2020-21 results have returned to pre COVID-19 levels. The assistance package in 2020-21 was beneficial to Practitioners and considered a one-off event.

Expenses

The lifting of COVID-19 restrictions allowed QLS to re-engage with members and hold various conferences and events during 2021-22 resulting in an overall increase in conference and events expenditure. The implementation of the Information Technology roadmap has also resulted in additional professional consulting expenses incurred during 2021-22.