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Society news and updates



The three months since the last edition of *Balance* has seen the legal profession impacted by many issues but none more topical or relevant than the worrying issue of sexual harassment in the legal profession and the continuing impact of COVID-19.

The recent sexual harassment revelations at the highest level of our profession will hopefully continue to reverberate until there is real and permanent change. There are early good signs that the profession's response will result in such change and I am hopeful we can become a profession with workplaces free from any form of harassment. The momentum of the past few months must continue.

The Society has continued to deal with the impact of COVID-19 by modifying its approach to undertaking its operations as appropriate. The Society's office reopened in June and most, if not all, of its operations and services have continued unaffected.

The annual practising certificate renewal process has been completed and the Secretariat's focus is now on finalising end of year accounts, the finalisation of trust account audits, preparing this year's Annual Report and early preparation for the AGM. Whilst on the subject of the AGM, I urge you all to start thinking about whether to nominate for a role on the Society's Council or for membership of one of its Committees next year.

The reaction to the Society's free CPD program has been very positive with Zoom proving very popular and increased number of attendees.

Please also note that in response to issues raised by members, this and future editions of *Balance* will be published on the Society's website.

The Secretariat has recently welcomed two new members of staff with Des Crowe joining as a Complaints Investigator in July and

Kieren Ko commencing in the role of Regulatory Services Solicitor in early August. These roles have been created in recognition of the importance of the Society's regulatory functions and the need to deal with complaints and disciplinary matters generally in a timely fashion.

It's the day before the Northern Territory election as I write this and I cannot help but to ponder on the outcome and impact of the election on the legal profession and wider community. What is important however is that, no matter the outcome, the Law Society on behalf of the legal profession, continues to have a seat at the government table and to be heard.

Hopefully we are also inching closer to being able to resume normal social activities and that there will be opportunities to discuss the election outcome and other things.

Finally I remind members to feel free to raise any issues concerning the profession with me at any time. ■

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Recent Law Society NT advocacy and activities

Criminal Justice Forum	02/06/20
Media: Don Dale Detention Centre Use of Tear Gas – High Court of Australia Ruling	04/06/20
Submission: Draft Practice Directions – Alice Springs Specialist Approach to Domestic Violence (Chief Judge NT Local Court)	15/06/20
Darwin Correctional Services quarterly meeting	15/06/20
NT Business Council meeting	18/06/20
Conference of Law Societies	26/06/20
Law Council of Australia Director's Meeting	27/06/20
NT Legal Aid Commission 30 year anniversary	16/07/20
Conference of Regulatory Officers	02/07/20
NT Business Council meeting	16/07/20
National State/Territory Regulators Inaugural meeting	29/07/20
Criminal Justice Forum	04/08/20
NT Business Council meeting	20/08/20

NT legislation

	INTRODUCED	PASSED
Firearms Legislation Amendment Bill 2020*	19/02/20	—
Planning Amendment Bill 2020**	13/02/20	25/06/20
Justice Legislation Amendment (Domestic and Family Violence) Bill 2019**	28/11/19	25/06/20
Return to Work Legislation Amendment Bill 2020**	19/02/20	24/06/20
Sexual Offences (Evidence and Procedure) Amendment Bill 2019**	28/11/19	24/06/20
Ports Legislation Amendment Bill 2019**	28/11/19	24/06/20
Judicial Commission Bill 2020**	13/02/20	23/06/20
Transport Legislation Amendment Bill 2020	13/02/20	23/06/20
Treaty Commissioner Bill 2020	12/02/20	23/06/20

* Private Member's Bill: Bill lapsed because Parliament prorogued on 30/07/20

** Amendments made.

Legislation information sourced 10.28 am, 21/08/2020 from:

<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/LegislationPortal/Bills/By-Session>

