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SEXUAL HARASSMENT COMPLAINT FORM

Update on the launch of the OLSC online anonymous sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination reporting platform

Announcement by the Office of the Legal Services Commissioner

In the Autumn 2021 edition of *Bar News*, the New South Wales Legal Services Commissioner, John McKenzie, announced that the Office of the Legal Services Commissioner would soon launch an online anonymous reporting tool to receive notifications of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination in the legal profession. This exciting development is forecast to be operational later in 2021 or early in 2022.

In addition, since 2019 the OLSC has had facilities to receive anonymous reports of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination alleged against barristers and solicitors, with those reports able to be made by

telephone, email or post, including via downloadable anonymous notification forms on the OLSC website.

In the Autumn 2021 edition of *Bar News*, John McKenzie said that, since the introduction in 2019 of the facilities to receive anonymous reports, the reports received by the OLSC of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination had risen then from 3-4 per year to between about 140 to 150 per year.

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Where formal complaints are received and determinations are made that disciplinary action is to be taken as

a result of a finding of breach of rule 123 of the *Legal Profession Uniform Conduct (Barristers) Rules 2015*, this is recorded on the OLSC's Register of Disciplinary Action, which is publicly available on the OLSC website. A number of formal complaints are currently before the OLSC.

Upon its launch, the new OLSC online anonymous reporting platform will be downloadable via smartphone and other smart devices. Where clusters or 'hotspots' of such alleged conduct are identified in chambers or law firms, or where it is identified that such conduct may be condoned, the Legal Services Commissioner carries out investigations.