



**Questions for firms that are/have been Victorian Government Legal Services Panel
("Panel") firms – March 2008**

1. What is your position in the firm?
2. How many lawyers are there in the Victorian office of your firm?
3. Since 2002, how many years has your firm been a member of the Panel?
4. Did your firm derive revenue from the Victorian government in the 2006/2007 financial year?
 Yes No
5. Has the total amount of pro bono legal work undertaken by members of your firm increased over the period that your firm has been a member of the Panel?
 Yes No Don't know
6. If the amount of pro bono legal work has increased during the time that your firm has been a member of the Panel, has the "pro bono condition" in the scheme been a factor in that increase?
 Yes No
7. If yes, to what extent has the "pro bono condition" been a factor in that increase?
 A minor factor
 A major factor

What other factors have contributed to this increase?

8. Did your firm commence/increase pro bono work because of the scheme?
 Yes
 No
 Don't know
9. Has compliance with the "pro bono condition" affected the diversity of pro bono activity undertaken by members of your firm?
 Yes
 No
 Don't know

If yes, has the diversity of pro bono legal work

- Increased
- Decreased
- Not changed?

10. Do you believe the Victorian scheme to be beneficial? If so why? If not, why not?
11. Is completion of the annual Pro Bono Activity Report to government straightforward? If no, how could the reporting process be streamlined/improved?
12. The Policy Guidelines for the delivery of Pro Bono Services for an Approved Cause under the Legal Services to Government Panel Contract defines 'Approved Cause' as:

The provision of any services by lawyers or other staff based in Victoria which will enhance access to justice for disadvantaged persons or organisations and/or promote the public interest including circumstances where a Panel firm:

1. *without fee or expectation of a fee or at a reduced fee, advises and/or represents a client in cases where:*
 - a. *a client has no other access to the courts and the legal system; and/or*
 - b. *the client's case raises a wider issue of public interest;*
2. *is involved in free community legal education and/or law reform;*
3. *is involved in the giving of free legal advice and/or representation to charitable and community organisations;*
4. *provides staff (legal or other) on secondment to a community organisation; or*
5. *provides financial or in-kind assistance (e.g. equipment, sponsorship etc) to a community organisation.*

Do you support the definition?

13. Should there be other matters included that are not presently included or certain matters excluded?
14. Are there areas where further guidelines would be helpful to clarify what activities count and don't count? If so please identify these areas.
15. How else could the Victorian scheme be improved?
16. If the Commonwealth Government were to introduce a scheme similar to the Victorian scheme, how should it differ (if at all) from the Victorian scheme?