



MEDIA RELEASE

NEW GUIDE TO DRIVE PRO BONO WORK BY IN-HOUSE CORPORATE LAWYERS

A new guide to support in-house corporate legal teams to do pro bono legal work was launched at an event held at the Law Society of New South Wales on 3 August 2017 as part of a new joint initiative by the Australian Pro Bono Centre, the Law Society of NSW and the Association of Corporate Council.

The guide was launched by Brian Salter, Group General Counsel, AMP Limited, and Chairperson, ACC Australia GCC 100 who said:

“the golden thread of modern contemporary legal practice is the opportunity to participate in pro-bono.”

He noted that pro bono practice in the private profession has become ubiquitous, a feature of modern practice, and that all lawyers want and expect their employers to provide pro bono opportunities.

Approximately 80 people attended the launch. In-house counsel representing a considerable number and wide variety of corporations and industries were present, including Westpac, QBE, Macquarie Group Ltd, Insurance Australia Group, and Hewlett Packard Enterprise. Many expressed enthusiasm for pro bono work, and a strong desire to establish robust in-house programs to encourage participation. They discussed the many benefits, including enhancement of professional and personal development of staff involved and the long-term benefits for corporations themselves.

The guide is part of a concerted effort to increase participation by in-house lawyers in pro bono legal work and to assist corporations to develop policies and see their legal teams integrated with, and contributing to, the corporation’s community engagement program. It is also a prompt to corporations to encourage their panel law firms to undertake pro bono work.

Topics in the Guide include:

- the benefits of establishing a pro bono program
- pro bono and corporate social responsibility
- current models of in-house pro bono
- tips on how to establish a pro bono program
- the regulatory requirements applying to pro bono legal work by in-house lawyers
- in-house pro bono FAQs
- case studies on successful in-house pro bono partnerships
- corporations currently providing in-house legal teams with pro bono opportunities

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It also includes precedent documents to help corporations set up, manage and evaluate their programs.

Carmel Mulhern, Group General Counsel, Legal Services, Telstra Corporation Limited, says in the Guide:

“Telstra Legal Services has had a long-standing commitment to support the community through its pro bono legal program. This Guide helps to enable any in-house legal team, regardless of size, to participate in pro bono legal work. It provides a great opportunity for in-house legal employees to experience the rewards and engagement that come from using their skills to give back to the community.”

Speaking at the launch of the guide were representatives of the Law Society of NSW, the Association of Corporation Counsel, the Australian Pro Bono Centre, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC), Justice Connect’s Not-For-Profit Law Service and the Arts Law Centre.

This guide is available free of charge on the Centre’s website.

Download the Guide from <http://www.probonocentre.org.au/in-house-guide/> .

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