

# Opening Address: The hard-fought arc to justice

7<sup>th</sup> National Access to Justice and  
Pro Bono Conference, Canberra 2019

Arthur Moses SC, President

14 March 2019



Law Council  
OF AUSTRALIA

# 2019-20 Pre-Budget Submission



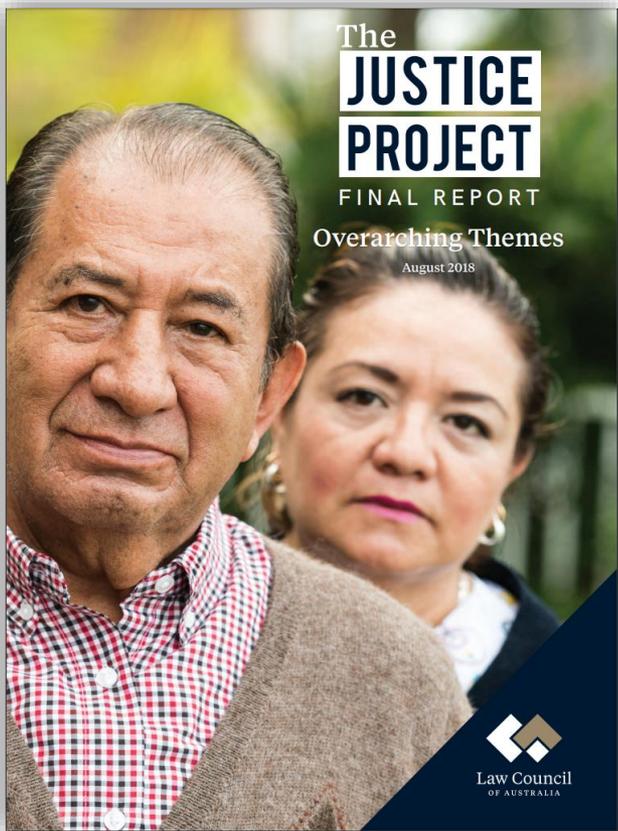
\$310 million p/a required for frontline legal services

Engage and consult with the legal assistance sector to develop a sustainable funding model

Additional funding to introduce Justice Impact Tests and a National Justice Interpreter Scheme

Urgent funding and review of the resourcing needs of the federal courts

# The JUSTICE PROJECT



“

*This Project was inspired by the realisation of a simple truth - that despite our lofty commitment to equality before the law, for many tens of thousands of Australians, equality, and justice, remain out of reach.*

*We accept this situation as inevitable when it is not. We do so perhaps because we consider the cost of access to justice for all is too high. Or perhaps because we do not understand the devastating impact of injustice upon lives, because the voices of those denied justice are not heard.*

”

**Fiona McLeod SC**, President,  
Law Council of Australia 2017

# The JUSTICE PROJECT



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# Resourcing of the legal assistance sector

14% of Australians live under the poverty line but **just 8% are eligible for legal aid funding.**

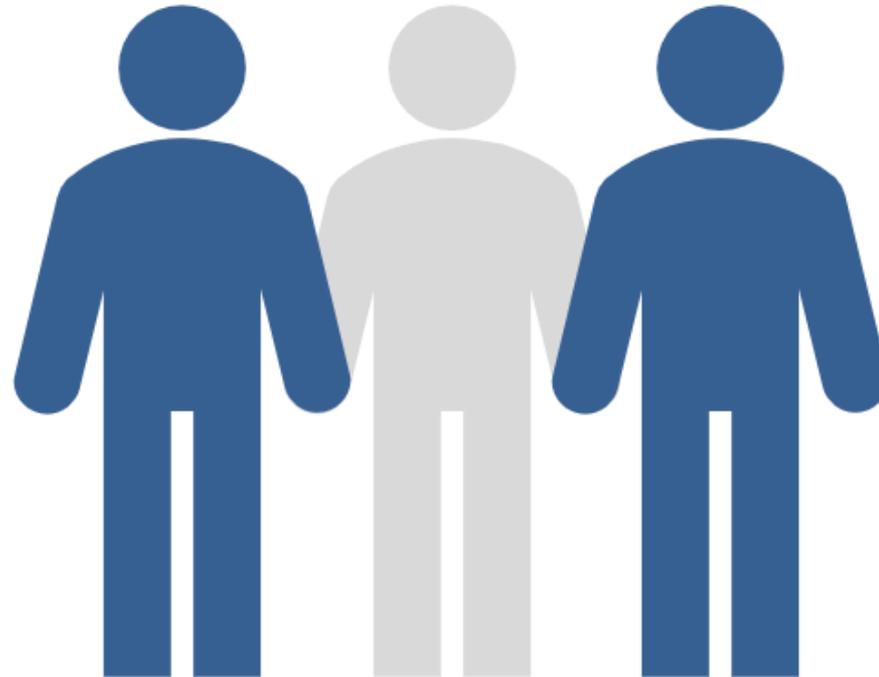
Community Legal Centres **turned away 169,513** people in 2015-16.

Cuts in government funding mean that in every jurisdiction, **only people who are likely to go to jail can receive legal aid grants for criminal law matters.**

Family Violence Prevention Legal Services **turned away 30-40% of women seeking legal assistance.**



# Addressing the challenges of the 'missing middle'



For people in the missing middle justice is  
**“no more than theoretically available”**

National Legal Aid submission to the Justice Project

# Joined-up services and holistic approaches



# Justice Impact Tests

- Now in place in the UK
- Every government policy process should consider & report on downstream impacts on the justice system
- Promotes a ‘whole of government’ approach to pressures on the justice system



# Where to from here?



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