

CHARTER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN LEGAL PROFESSION

The Women Lawyers Association of South Australia

The Women Lawyers Association of South Australia (WLASA) is an organisation that aims to promote justice, equality and the improvement of career prospects for women in the legal profession. Our organisation advocates on behalf of women in the law and promotes initiatives that ensure equal opportunity is available to the female members of the legal profession, regardless of their age, heritage, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

Charter for the Advancement of Women in the South Australian Legal Profession (the Charter)

The purpose of the WLASA's Charter for the Advancement of Women in the South Australian Legal Profession is to ensure that female lawyers in the South Australian legal industry are afforded as much opportunity in their careers as their male counterparts.

Despite the fact that women make up approximately 50% of the legal profession, there remain obvious and constant barriers to their progression within the industry. This Charter aims to eradicate those barriers.

Any signatory to this Charter is committing to ensuring that female lawyers within their organisation are provided with equal opportunity and subject to inclusive workplace cultures, this will, in turn favourably impact on all members of the organisation and result in a positive business reputation for the signatory, as well as the South Australian legal profession as a whole.

The practical ways in which this Charter will be implemented by its signatories are as follows:

- remove gender and unconscious bias and discrimination in the legal workplace;
- develop and sustain a culture that supports the retention of women legal practitioners and recognises their value in senior roles;
- implement recruitment and promotion strategies that include gender diversity as an important consideration - including ensuring equal entry salary pay for legal graduates within the same organisation regardless of gender;
- promote and support mentoring and sponsorship of women in the legal profession;
- encourage and support flexible work practices in the legal profession to assist men and women to better balance professional and other (notably family) commitments;
- adhere to equitable briefing policies.

Signatories agree to implement these strategies within 24 months of signing the Charter, with the exception of equal pay for graduates, which will be implemented within 12 months. The WLASA will meet with each signatory on a regular, informal basis to discuss the progress of the signatory in fulfilling the Charter commitments.