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Release of National Action Plan to Reduce Sexual Harassment in the Australian Legal Profession

Eliminating sexual harassment in the legal profession is part of the Law Council's long-running commitment to inclusion and diversity in the legal profession. Today's release of the [National Action Plan to Reduce Sexual Harassment in the Australian Legal Profession \(NAP\)](#) heralds the start of a united and coordinated process to address the issue.

Law Council President, Pauline Wright said that the NAP is aimed at addressing the regulatory and cultural change factors necessary to facilitate better experiences for legal professionals.

"Sexual harassment is unacceptable in the legal profession and the Law Council and its Constituent Bodies are committed to its elimination," Ms Wright said.

"One way of achieve this, is to outline specific law reform proposals as policy positions of the Law Council.

"The NAP also includes measures that the legal profession can implement to drive cultural change," Ms Wright said.

Recommendations include:

- Advocating for federal law reform amendments to the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) (**SDA**).
- Supporting the work of the Australian Human Rights Commission, particularly in relation to the establishment of a Workplace Sexual Harassment Council, amending the SDA, the harmonisation of federal and state and territory discrimination laws; and the establishment of education and training programs for judicial officers and tribunal members
- Driving cultural change in the legal profession through a proposed reformulation of Rule 42 of the Australian Solicitors' Conduct Rules; the development of national model sexual harassment policy and guidelines and a centralised source of information and suite of educational tools; the facilitation of a consistent complaints process; the consideration of bystander provisions; and supporting those who have experienced sexual harassment.
- Advocating for the establishment of a Federal Judicial Commission.

"The NAP and the measures proposed will not solve every problem relevant to sexual harassment," Ms Wright said.

"It is important to note that this a living document, setting out a framework for change, the specifics of which will continue to evolve as each measure is developed.

"The NAP is just the start of a united and coordinated process that will continue to be reviewed and refined as the measures are developed and implemented in consultation with the Law Council's Constituent Bodies.

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