



Online submission

24 November 2021

WGEA Review Team – Consultation
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
PO Box 6500
CANBERRA ACT 2600

To whom it may concern

Review of the Workplace Gender Equality Act

Law Firms Australia (**LFA**) appreciates the opportunity to provide a submission on the targeted review (**the Review**) of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012* (Cth) (**the Act**).

LFA represents nine multi-jurisdictional law firms, being Allens, Ashurst, Clayton Utz, Corrs Chambers Westgarth, DLA Piper Australia, Herbert Smith Freehills, King & Wood Mallesons, MinterEllison and Norton Rose Fulbright Australia. LFA is also a constituent body of the Law Council of Australia, the peak representative organisation of the Australian legal profession.

This submission has been informed by the Managing Partners' Diversity and Inclusion Forum, which includes representatives from Allen & Overy and Baker McKenzie in addition to the nine LFA member law firms (**the Firms**).

The Firms are strongly committed to promoting the objects of the Act in their respective workplaces, including:


- to promoting and improving gender equality (including equal remuneration between women and men) in employment and in the workplace, and
- to improving the productivity and competitiveness of Australian business through the advancement of gender equality in employment and in the workplace.

The Firms welcome the opportunity to engage with the important issues raised by the Review, including in relation to diversity measures, the regulatory burden on employers, and the unique challenges faced by law practices with respect to the categorisation of employees in the workplace profile component of compliance reporting. The Firms would, however, appreciate an extension of time in which to do so, given the relatively limited period of consultation and the breadth of issues raised.

The need for further consultation is particularly acute in respect of matters that LFA understands have, or will, be raised by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (**WGEA**) to the Review, but have not been included in the Review consultation paper. Such matters include recommendations on expanding reporting provisions to include data on partners at professional services firms. The Firms are willing to discuss the WGEA proposals, but it will be important to clarify scope and implementation issues should the Federal Government be minded to act on them.

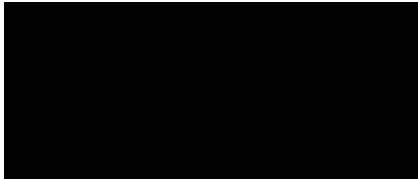
Given the approach of the holiday season, LFA submits that the consultation period be extended until the end of January 2022.





Please do not hesitate to contact me if the points above require clarification or if LFA can provide further information that will be of assistance.

Yours faithfully



Mitch Hillier
Executive Director
Law Firms Australia

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