

Tuesday, 14 December 2021

Joint Press Release: The Law Society of Western Australia and Law Access

Planned Law Access Leadership Transition Creates New Opportunities for Growth

Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC is retiring as Chairman of the Law Access Board on 31 December 2021 after more than three years in the role.

He will continue his close association with Western Australia's state-wide pro bono legal referral service as Patron of Law Access.

Immediate Past President of the Australian Bar Association, Matthew Howard SC, will take on the role of Chair in January 2022.

Law Access and parent company, the Law Society of Western Australia are pleased to announce that three new Directors have agreed to join the nine-member Law Access Board, bringing their expertise and extensive connections to the service. The new Directors are:

Valerie French, the first woman to practise as a barrister in Western Australia, and former District Court Judge and President of the Children's Court of WA; Clare Thompson SC, President of the Women Lawyers Association of Western Australia; and Adam Levine, Partner for global law firm K & L Gates.

Chief Executive Officer Dominique Hansen will be retiring on 28 January 2022, after a decade spent planning, establishing and running Law Access. The retiring Chairman, on behalf of the Board, thanked Dominique for her dedication to the important community service Law Access provides, and the high standard she has set.

Referring to the leadership transition, he said: *"This important leadership transition is taking place at a time when the Law Access service is going from strength to strength. Our 2021 Impact Report sets out significant recent achievements.*

“Matthew Howard SC is well placed to lead the service in the next stage of its development. He has a deep understanding of the service, strategy and vision of Law Access, having been a Board member since 1 January 2019; and has demonstrated a strong commitment to taking pro bono referrals throughout his career.”

At the final meeting of the Board for 2021, the Directors thanked Mr McCusker for his significant contribution as Chairman of the Board. Incoming Chair Matthew Howard SC said: *“The service has undergone significant growth and transformation under the leadership and guidance of Mr McCusker, and we thank the outgoing Chair for all that he has achieved in his term. We also thank Mr McCusker for the generous philanthropic support of Law Access by the McCusker Charitable Foundation; of which he is Chairman.”*

The President of the Law Society Jocelyne Boujos agreed: “On behalf of the Law Society and wider legal profession, I would like to thank Mr McCusker for generously giving his time and patronage to Law Access these past three years. Under his leadership, Law Access has grown and provided increased access to justice for vulnerable members of our community. The Law Society warmly congratulates Mr Matthew Howard SC on his new role as Chair of Law Access. Mr Howard is a longstanding member of the Law Society and has been a valued member of our Council.

Ms Boujos also acknowledged and thanked the retiring Chief Executive Officer of Law Access, Dominique Hansen who prior to the establishment of Law Access held the position of Executive Manager Community Services at the Law Society with responsibility for Law Access from February 2012 to June 2015.

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