



The Hon Jarrod Bleijie MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice

In reply please quote: 564364/1; 2741457

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Mr Neil Laurie
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Dear Mr Laurie 

I refer to petition 2341-14 requesting amendments to the *Legal Profession Act 2007* (the Act) to provide certain individuals with a right to perform basic legal services for a fee or reward.

I acknowledge the petitioners' concerns that persons with legal training may experience difficulty in securing employment in their chosen career and have great sympathy for persons who find themselves in that situation. However, relaxing the current requirements for legal practice would not be an appropriate response to that issue.

Under the current regulatory scheme, to engage in legal practice, a person must first be admitted to the legal profession. An applicant must undergo checks as to their suitability for admission and have completed prescribed academic qualifications and practical legal training requirements. Upon being admitted to the legal profession by the Supreme Court, lawyers are officers of the court and have a fundamental duty to assist and promote the administration of justice.

To engage in private legal practice, an admitted lawyer must also hold a practising certificate, in Queensland, as a solicitor or barrister. Principals of law practices in Queensland must have the required professional indemnity insurance. Solicitors with employee practising certificates can only practise as employees and not on their own account. Solicitors are required to contribute to the Legal Practitioners' Fidelity Guarantee Fund which reimburses clients who have suffered financial loss as the result of a dishonest law practice default.

Under corresponding arrangements with other States and Territories, lawyers admitted in, or holding practising certificates from, other States and Territories are recognised.

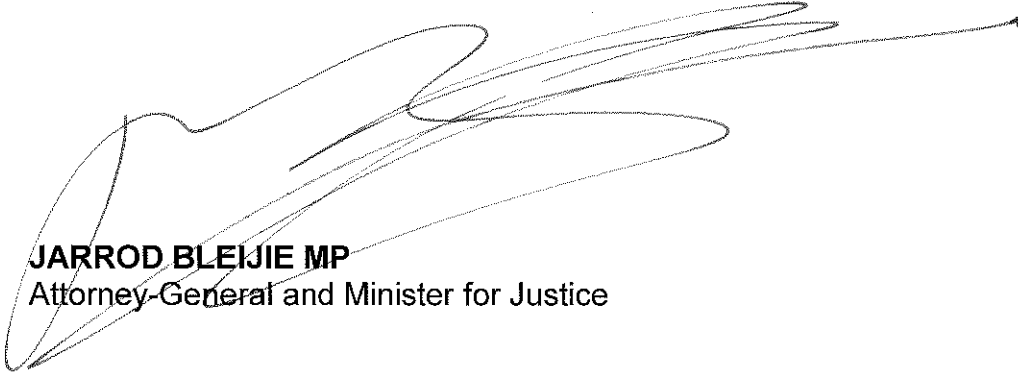
Lawyers are subject to a professional conduct rules and ethical requirements and associated complaints and disciplinary processes.

(2)

It would not be in the interests of the protection of consumers of legal services or the administration of justice to allow persons to engage in legal practice outside of the current requirements.

I thank the petitioners for raising this issue and trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

JARROD BLEIJIE MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice