



CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

2023-2024 VICTORIAN BAR COMMITTEES

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

REGULATORY, COMPLIANCE AND GOVERNANCE

1. AUDIT, FINANCE & RISK COMMITTEE

The Audit, Finance & Risk Committee assists the Bar Council in fulfilling its responsibility to members relating to:

- the integrity of the Victorian Bar's financial statements,
- the effectiveness of the Victorian Bar's internal controls concerning financial reporting,
- the Victorian Bar's compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and
- the independent auditor's qualifications and independence.

The role of the committee also includes oversight of audit and financial reporting, financial management and risk management.

2. ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Committee has responsibility for matters related to the ethical standards of members of the Victorian Bar.



In particular, the role of the Committee includes providing guidance to members of VicBar on ethical issues and making non-binding resolutions when requested to do so by a member of VicBar as to how the member should conduct himself or herself on an ethical issue. With respect to the latter, the Committee receives many such requests and deals with them often within the day, and sometimes within hours if the need arises.

3. INSURANCE COMMITTEE

The Committee advises and assists in relation to the current insurance arrangements in place for members of the Victorian Bar with the Legal Practitioners Liability Committee (LPLC).

- In particular, the role of the Committee includes:
- undertaking a review of the current insurance policy held by members of the Bar with the LPLC;
- providing advice to the Bar Council in respect of the current LPLC policy held by members of the Victorian Bar;
- advising and making recommendations to the Bar Council with respect to any proposed amendments to the policy held by members of the Victorian Bar with the LPLC;
- assisting the Bar Council and responding to any relevant matters relating to law reform and other enquiries pertaining to insurance policies and insurance matters generally affecting members of the Victorian Bar;
- advising and making recommendations to the Bar Council with respect to relevant amendments and/or modifications which should be sought in relation to the policy of insurance held by members of the Victorian Bar with the LPLC;



- making enquiries and providing relevant advice and recommendations to the Bar Council with respect to possible alternate policies which could be obtained by members of the Victorian Bar in relation to their insurance requirements other than the policy currently held with the LPLC;
- providing advice and making recommendations to the Bar Council in relation to matters relating to the insurance cover of members of the Victorian Bar.

EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

4. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee has responsibility for matters relating to the continuing professional development of barristers, and the compliance by barristers with the Barristers' CPD Rules.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- **Guidance:** Providing guidance to barristers, including the Victorian Bar's associations, in considering whether a CPD activity meets the requirements of the CPD Rules.
- **Determinations:** Deciding whether a particular activity is or is not a CPD activity for the purposes of the CPD Rules and CPD Policy, including which CPD category the activity relates to and how many points may be allocated to that activity.
- **CPD events:** Assisting in the planning, preparation, conduct and review of CPD events conducted by the Victorian Bar.
- **Exemptions:** Considering and deciding whether an exemption from compliance with the CPD Rules should,



upon application by a barrister, be provided (and if so on what terms).

- **Rectification plans:** Requiring barristers who have or will not comply with the CPD Rules to take steps to rectify non-compliance.

5. READERS' COURSE COMMITTEE

The Committee has responsibility for matters related to the management and administration of the Readers' Course of the VicBar.

The roles of the Committee include:

- determining the content of the Readers' Course and overseeing its organisation and delivery;
- overseeing the conduct and assessment of the Entrance Exam for the Readers' Course;
- co-ordinating training for instructors in the Readers' Course;
- publishing statements from time to time describing the role and duties of a mentor; and
- reviewing the Application and Reading Regulations and, making appropriate recommendations to the Education and Professional Development Executive.

6. INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Committee advises and assists with respect to matters related to the provision of advocacy training and other assistance by the VicBar to members of the legal profession of other countries.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:



- organising and delivering advocacy training to members of the legal profession of other countries;
- assisting with the provision of mentoring to members of the legal profession of other countries; and
- together with the Readers' Course Committee and the Education and Professional Development Executive, facilitating the participation by members of the legal profession of other countries in the VicBar Readers' Course.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

These Committees seek to provide leadership on issues that threaten or strengthen protection of fundamental legal rights, access to justice and the rule of law. This includes guidance on the provision of adequate Legal Aid funding, the promotion of court efficiencies and the administration of justice, the representation of disadvantaged groups before the law and human rights issues, as well as oversight of the Bar's pro bono activities.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE

The Committee has responsibility for assisting and advising the Bar Council on matters related to the recognition, protection and enforcement of human rights under Commonwealth and Victorian law. The Committee's task is to raise for attention issues that affect the liberty and dignity of all persons where those issues engage human rights.

The Committee has a particular focus on issues affecting access to justice, equality before the law, freedom from discrimination and from the arbitrary exercise of power, and adherence by Government at all levels to widely accepted human rights norms, including those established by the International Conventions to which Australia is a signatory.



In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- to monitor and discuss legal issues affecting human rights;
- to examine and report to the Bar Council on:
 - laws, cases, legislative proposals and administrative practices that impact on human rights; and
 - proposals for law reform on matters affecting human rights;
- to organise or sponsor continuing professional development on legal issues concerning human rights;
- to liaise and co-operate with other committees of VicBar and with other legal professional bodies in the furtherance of its role; and
- to carry out any task requested by the Bar Council.

8. PRO BONO COMMITTEE

The Committee has responsibility for advising Bar Council in matters related to the provision of pro bono services by members of VicBar.

The committee oversees the VicBar's pro bono schemes, including the scheme administered by Justice Connect on behalf of VicBar. The Committee's role also includes gathering data about the pro bono activities of barristers and having input into Bar Council policy and submissions regarding pro bono work.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- monitoring and improving the provision of pro bono services by the VicBar through the VicBar's pro bono



schemes and various duty barristers' schemes administered by Justice Connect and the VicBar Office;

- identifying and advising on the need for the provision of pro bono services to courts and tribunals which are not currently serviced through an established scheme;
- promoting and encouraging younger and newly admitted barristers to participate in the provision of pro bono services and encourage their involvement in the VicBar's Pro Bono Schemes.
- recognising outstanding pro bono contributions by members of the VicBar through the VicBar Pro Bono Awards;
- participating in forums and reviews concerning matters relating to access to justice in the State of Victoria.
- contributing to the VicBar's Continuing Professional Development Program by arranging lectures, and seminars for members of the VicBar in relation to pro bono issues.

MEMBER COMMUNITY

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

The Committee advises the Bar Council on policy and law reform initiatives which promote the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion; and to facilitate actions and programmes within VicBar to promote, educate and support its members to realise their maximum potential regardless of differences including but not limited to: (a) identifying as LGBTI; (b) disability; (c) gender; (d) cultural diversity; or (e) ethnicity.



10. INDIGENOUS JUSTICE COMMITTEE

The Committee advises and assists in relation to supporting Indigenous barristers to develop and maintain successful careers at the Bar, for attracting Indigenous lawyers and law students to the Bar, for generally implementing the Bar's vision for reconciliation and for undertaking the functions and responsibilities under the VicBar's RAP.

In particular, the roles of the Committee include:

- to support and promote the practices of Indigenous barristers;
- to administer programs for Indigenous lawyers, law students or secondary school students (current programs include: the clerkship program; the mentoring program; and the secondary school work experience program);
- to promote and facilitate the operation of policies of VicBar relevant to Indigenous barristers, including the Indigenous Equal Opportunity Briefing Policy, the Subsidised Chambers Policy and the waiver of the Bar Readers' Course fee for Indigenous Readers;
- to ensure that at least one CPD seminar on legal issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and/or working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is presented each year;
- to administer, promote and facilitate applications to the Indigenous Barristers' Development Fund and the Indigenous Barristers' Fund;
- to consult with VicBar's Indigenous barristers who are not members of the Committee and with Tarwirri (the Indigenous Law Students and Lawyers Association of Victoria), as appropriate;



- to undertake the other functions and responsibilities that have been assigned to it, or to particular members of it, under the RAP;
- to liaise and co-operate with other committees of VicBar and with other legal professional bodies in the furtherance of its role; and
- to arrange for the periodic updating of VicBar's webpage "Indigenous Barristers & Law Students".

11. NEW BARRISTERS' COMMITTEE

The Committee provides support for barristers under six years' call, assisting those members to adjust to the demands of practice at the Bar.

The Committee examines ways to improve professional opportunities available to, promote delivery of targeted CPD for, and provide networking opportunities for, new barristers.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- examining issues of interest and concern to New Barristers, and reporting on such issues to Bar Council;
- providing information of interest and relevance to New Barristers;
- representing the interests of New Barristers by way of advice to and assisting Bar Council;
- arranging and promoting continuing legal education targeting the needs of New Barristers; and
- arranging social functions to advance and promote collegiality among New Barristers and facilitate networking.



12. HEALTH AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

The Committee advises, assists and provides services to barristers in relation to the provision of education, encouragement and support in order to help barristers achieve and maintain good physical and mental health.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- the review and formulation of recommendations to the Bar Council as to what psychological and other services should be provided to barristers to promote good health and wellbeing;
- providing information about particular aspects of health and wellbeing;
- organising events and seminars to promote the physical and mental health of barristers; and
- considering and organising training programs for barristers to promote good health and wellbeing.

13. LIBRARY COMMITTEE

The Library Committee oversees the quality and suitability of VicBar's library resources.

In particular, the roles of the Committee include:

- assisting and advise as to the organisation and running of the Bar Library;
- making arrangements for access to the internet and specialist legal sites in the Library;
- overseeing the acquisition of books and journals and online resources;



- making recommendations from time to time to the Bar Council in connection with the Library.

14. ART AND COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE

The Committee advises and assists Bar Council with acquiring, maintaining and developing VicBar's collections of art and artefacts, and to assist in the promotion, preservation and protection of material culture belonging to and associated with VicBar.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- to act as an advisory committee to the Peter O'Callaghan QC Gallery Foundation Ltd (Gallery Foundation) and provide assistance with regard to:
- developing and maintaining a catalogue of portraits in the Gallery Foundation's collection;
- the display and care (including conservation) of the Gallery Foundation's portrait collection in the Peter O'Callaghan QC Gallery and other locations;
- the commissioning of portraits of past and present luminaries of VicBar to grow the Gallery Foundation's collection;
- appointing, from time to time, an Honorary Curator of the Peter O'Callaghan QC Gallery (Honorary Curator); and
- such other activities as the Committee and the Gallery Foundation may agree from time to time;
- to provide assistance to the VicBar and make recommendations in relation to the custodianship, maintenance, development (whether by soliciting donations, purchase, or otherwise), cataloguing, care



(including conservation), and display of art and artefacts associated with or relevant to VicBar; and

- to promote access to, understanding of, and appreciation and enjoyment of VicBar's collections of art and artefacts, not only to VicBar but also to the wider community.

15. VICTORIAN BAR NEWS COMMITTEE

The Committee was established to manage the preparation and distribution of the bi-annual Victorian Bar News publication.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

16. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION COMMITTEE

The Committee advises and assists with the development of Alternative Dispute Resolution opportunities including mediation, arbitration, adjudication, and conciliation. It facilitates the continuing education of barrister as mediators, advises the Bar Council on the accreditation of barristers and other matters relating to VicBar's role as a Recognised Mediator Accreditation Body, and makes recommendations as to the promotion of barristers as mediators, arbitrators, adjudicators and conciliators within VicBar, the legal profession and the wider public.

17. INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

The Committee shares and promulgates information as to technology-led change in the legal sector generally, opportunities for barristers to use technology to their advantage in their day to day practices, court driven changes and changes to the way in which barristers may be briefed.

In particular, the roles of the Committee include, where directed by Bar Council:



- a watching brief over developments in technology that may affect the way that barristers practice;
- liaison with other organisations and committees in relation to activities relevant to them, including seminars and other events aimed to ensure that all barristers are aware of developments relevant to them;
- organising and promulgating resources for barristers relating to technology;
- arranging seminars and other events in order to inform barristers of technological developments relevant to their practices; and
- liaison with both the Victorian Bar office and Barristers' Chambers Ltd on issues involving the use of technology and the provision of such of their services to barristers as have a technology focus.

18. INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION COMMITTEE

The Committee was established in recognition of the importance of commercial arbitration and the significant area of commercial opportunities for members of the VicBar.

The Committee advises and assists in relation to:

- providing a variety of services to help members of the VicBar develop their arbitration practices; and
- engaging with key stakeholders to promote the aims of the Committee.

19. STUDENT ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee engages with secondary school and university students to raise awareness as to the work of barristers, facilitate opportunities for students to undertake work experience, and promote the Bar as a career choice.



20. PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Committee was established to consider and propose to the Bar Council and the Executive, ways to increase the volume and quality of work available to members of the Bar in all practice areas and of all levels of seniority, with a particular emphasis on the work available to new and other junior members of the Bar.

In particular, the role of the Committee includes:

- considering and proposing ways to promote the work of barristers to solicitors, in-house counsel and clients;
- identifying new and emerging practice areas of relevance to the Bar;
- advising the Bar Council in relation to practice development matters;
- conduct continuing professional development seminars, presentations, and information sessions to assist barristers, particularly new and other junior barristers, in practice development; and
- work on such projects in relation to practice development as the Bar Council or the Executive shall refer to the Committee.