



REGISTRAR CHANGES PRO BONO LEGAL SCHEME TO ASSIST TRANSFERRING ENTITIES

The Registrar of Indigenous Corporations, Anthony Beven, has today announced changes to the pro bono legal scheme, LawHelp, to make it easier for entities to transfer their registration to the *Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act 2006* (CATSI Act). The changes will take effect immediately.

LawHelp was established on 1 July 2010 by the Registrar with the assistance of the Australian Government Solicitor. It provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations with free legal assistance from some of the leading law firms in Australia. The law firms providing their services free of charge through LawHelp are:

Allens	Ashurst	Australian Government Solicitor
Clayton Utz	DLA Piper Australia	HWL Ebsworth Lawyers
Jackson McDonald	Lipman Karas	Minter Ellison Lawyers
Bradley Allen Love Lawyers	Castledine Gregory Law & Mediation	TressCox

Previously, only Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander corporations already registered under the CATSI Act were eligible to apply for free legal assistance through LawHelp.

The Australian Government’s Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) outlines certain requirements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. From 1 July 2014 organisations that receive funding of \$500,000 or more in a single financial year from the Indigenous Affairs portfolio within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet must incorporate under the CATSI Act and maintain that registration while they receive funding.¹

The changes to LawHelp that take effect from today will enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations not registered under the CATSI Act to obtain high-quality free legal advice about transferring their registration to the CATSI Act.

‘My office has seen an increase in requests for assistance from organisations wanting to transfer to the CATSI Act in anticipation of the IAS funding,’ Mr Beven said. ‘The changes announced today should address concerns some organisations had about how to access affordable legal advice on how to transfer.’

The amended LawHelp guidelines and more information about LawHelp are available on the Registrar’s website at www.oric.gov.au.

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¹ www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/about/indigenous-advancement-strategy.

