

Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity Meeting Communiqué 14 October 2022

The Judicial Council on Cultural Diversity (JCCD) met in Brisbane on 14 October 2022.

The Chair welcomed Ms Una Doyle, CEO of the Judicial Commission of NSW, to the Council.

The Chair introduced a series of changes to the Council, approved by the Council of Chief Justices. The Council will transition to the Judicial Council on Diversity and Inclusion (JDCI), with the Network similarly transitioning to the Diversity and Inclusion Justice Network (DIJN). The Chair outlined the Council's broadened remit, which includes access to justice for people with disabilities, LGBTQI+ people, women, and older people, in addition to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and culturally and linguistically diverse people. The Council approved this change and welcomed the opportunities the broadened remit presents.

The Council heard from two speakers. The Honourable Margaret McMurdo AC presented on the Queensland Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce, which she chaired. She discussed the taskforce's findings relating to responses of courts to matters involving domestic and family violence, including poor responses from judicial officers. She spoke on the benefits of judicial officers and court staff having specialty training in these issues. Mr Joshua Creamer discussed the objectives and strategies of Legal Aid Queensland to improve its engagement with First Nations people, which included strategies for providing pathways for First Nations young people to study law, and join the profession and the Bar.

A series of action items from the previous Council meeting were discussed. The Chair noted the *Interpreters in Criminal Proceedings* benchbook had been published and encouraged Members to share the resource widely. The Secretariat noted that the Magistrates' Court of Queensland had agreed to participate in a pilot of the QR Code Posters project, and a working group was formed to develop the pilot project. Judge Soulio noted the legal profession eLearning course had been launched and that the launch of the judicial officers' course was expected to be held online soon. The Secretariat raised that a successful pilot of the Culturally Responsive Practice Training for Judicial Officers had been run in the ACT Supreme Court.

The Council discussed two proposals from the Network, one for a project on diversity in the judiciary and another Network regarding a draft Pronunciation Protocol for courts and tribunals it had developed. Members discussed the Council's potential role in designing or assisting with a judicial diversity data collection project. A working group was formed to investigate judicial diversity statistics. Members also agreed to consider potential ideas for advocacy for diversity in the judiciary for the next meeting. Members agreed that once finalised, the Pronunciation Protocol should be circulated with heads of jurisdiction for consideration.

The Secretariat outlined two proposals for consultation projects, one relating to domestic and family violence and the other to youth justice. Members noted that considering the significant work already underway in the domestic and family violence domain, the Council was better positioned to address other issues. Members agreed to pursue a consultation on issues in youth justice. Additionally, Members discussed cognitive impairment as an important justice issue, noting the difficulties people with cognitive impairments face in courts and tribunals. The Council agreed to pursue this as another consultation area.

In other business, Members discussed the utility of a 'one-stop shop' for judicial education programs, noting that each organisation has their own calendar and the relative value of in-person meetings over online or hybrid meetings. Members also agreed that the transition to the JCDI presented a logical time to consider the Council's membership. The Chair and Judge Soulio, as Chair of the Network, agreed to conduct a review of the membership of both the Council and the Network.

The JCCD will hold its next meeting on Friday 12 May 2023 in Sydney.