

## **Judicial Council on Diversity and Inclusion | Meeting Communiqué | 28 November 2024**

The Judicial Council on Diversity and Inclusion (JCDI) met in Hobart, on 28 November 2024.

The Council heard from two speakers. Dr Robin Banks spoke on her research into judicial discrimination, highlighting common biases affecting legal proceedings and how institutions can seek to be more accessible. Mr Rodney Croome, an LGBTQIA+ equality advocate, spoke about access to justice for the LGBTQIA+ community. Mr Croome illustrated harmful practices that hinder community engagement with the justice system and spoke of the importance of education for judicial officers and data collection on judicial diversity.

The Council gave feedback on a draft consultation paper from the Judicial Commission of Victoria on judicial discrimination, and it was resolved that the Council would nominate Dr. Banks as a contact person for the Commission.

The Judicial Diversity Working Group agreed to support and collaborate with the Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration (AIJA) to develop a survey on judicial diversity, and Judge Arushan Pillay was invited to attend the AIJA Research Committee meetings on behalf of the Council. It was resolved that the Chair would write to the AIJA to indicate the Council's support, and that the Judicial Diversity Working Group would remain active.

The Council heard a report from the *Recommended National Standards for Working with Interpreters* Subcommittee, which was seeking to address ongoing issues with the procurement process for interpreters. Members also received a draft script for judicial officers for use in matters involving an interpreter, and the Council resolved to provide feedback on the script before publication. It was agreed that the Chair would engage with the Council of Chief Justices to seek their support in further advocacy for the implementation of the *Standards*.

The Council heard an update on the Court Access Website, and the progress of the pilot in the Queensland Magistrates Court. It was resolved that Council members would seek to advocate for the expansion of the resource in their jurisdictions, and the Secretariat would confirm and distribute updated costs.

The Youth Justice Working Group proposed a resource aimed at enhancing young people's understanding of bail conditions. The initiative intends to improve comprehension and adherence to bail conditions by creating materials that are expressed in plain language and translated into various languages. The Council approved the approach of the Working Group and the project.

The Cognitive Impairment Working Group updated the Council on the development of a framework for access to justice for people with cognitive disability, a project pursued in collaboration with the RMIT Centre for Innovative Justice (CIJ). The Council approved the approach and resolved that the Working Group and the Secretariat would continue to meet with the RMIT CIJ representatives to discuss the proposal and framework.

The Council agreed to migrate the Legal Literate resource from an app to a website to increase accessibility and reduce maintenance costs.

The JCDI will hold its next meeting in Darwin in May 2025.