

17 June 2020

Ms Margery Nicoll
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Law Council of Australia
CANBERRA ACT 2601

By email: nathan.macdonald@lawcouncil.asn.au

Dear Ms Nicoll

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON COVID-19 (COMMITTEE)

Thank you for the memorandum dated 1 May 2020 inviting the Law Society of Western Australia to provide comments for a Law Council submission to the above Committee.

The Law Society acknowledges that the deadline for providing input has passed. However, the Law Society also understands that this is only the first round of consultations for the Committee and there will be other opportunities to provide submissions. The Law Society would be grateful if the Law Council could consider the following comments at the next opportunity to make submissions to the Committee.

The Law Society notes that the issues listed in the Law Council's memorandum that are to be addressed in the Law Council's initial submission to the Committee are fairly broad in scope. The Law Society considers that an additional issue to be addressed is the significance of differences between legislative frameworks in each State and Territory in comparison to the Commonwealth, and, accordingly, the Commonwealth's capacity to influence (or direct) State or Territory responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. This Federal/State divide is an issue that has impacted the overall capacity of the Commonwealth to effectively respond to this pandemic and may be worthy of study—at the least to identify the strengths or deficiencies in the Commonwealth capacity to respond effectively.

The Law Society would be grateful for the Law Council's consideration of this issue in further submissions to the Committee.

If you have any queries please contact Mary Woodford, General Manager Advocacy on (08) 9324 8646 or mwoodford@lawsocietywa.asn.au

Yours sincerely



Nicholas van Hattem
President