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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BAR ASSOCIATION

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**Monday 22 May 2017**

### **Western Australian Bar Association adopts National Model Gender Equitable Briefing Policy**

Western Australian Bar Association (WABA) has strengthened its commitment to a more equitable, diverse and inclusive profession with the adoption of the National Model General Equitable Briefing Policy, announced WABA President, Matthew Howard SC.

“While the Western Australian Bar Association has always worked to promote the diverse and high quality skills of its members, the adoption of the Law Council of Australia’s equitable briefing policy is a significant statement that sets targets to achieve a level playing field for all barristers,” said Matthew Howard SC.

WABA will officially launch the Law Council of Australia’s (LCA) Equitable Briefing Policy on Thursday 25 May 2017 at a special ceremony at the Federal Court of Australia to be attended by the WA Chief Justice, the Hon. Wayne Martin AC, WA Attorney General, the Hon. John Quigley, Minister for Women’s Affairs, the Hon. Simone McGurk, senior members of the Judiciary, and members of the WA Bar.

“The event provides an excellent opportunity to present the policy to corporate counsel who have been, and continue to be, significant in driving change within the legal profession and will, no doubt, be partners in the success of this policy.”

“We’re already witnessing some excellent initiatives and progress in this area and by continuing the discussion we can better promote the available avenues to identifying the vast array of extremely talented women at the bar. The ultimate goal is to ensure clients are being provided with the best representation available, regardless of gender,” said Matthew Howard SC

The Equitable Briefing Policy includes the objective of briefing women in at least 30 per cent of all matters and paying 30 per cent of the value of all brief fees by 2020.

The Chief Justice of Western Australia, the Hon. Wayne Martin AC said, “It is important that everyone supports this policy, because not only does it work to redress the underrepresentation of women as barristers in Australia, it also acknowledges that diverse groups bring a greater variety of experience and enhance decision making. That result is in everyone’s best interests.”

WABA’s commitment to the LCA equitable briefing policy will help to ensure a nationally consistent approach towards bringing about cultural and attitudinal change within the legal profession with respect to gender briefing practices.

**MEDIA:** To register your interest in attending the event please email [kknox@wabar.asn.au](mailto:kknox@wabar.asn.au)

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