

WOMEN BARRISTERS FORUM

MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

**HELD 5.00pm 28 August 2014
Conference Room 3, NSW Bar Association,
174 Phillip Street, Sydney**

PRESENT

Michelle Painter SC (Chair)	Ingrid King
Kate Morgan	Tamara Phillips
Lee-May Saw	Louise Burn
Amy Douglas-Baker	Brenda Tronson
Kavita Balendra	Ishita Sethi
Rosalind Winfield	Madeline Loucek
	Nipa Dewan

The Meeting opened at 5.00pm.

1. Apologies

Christine Melis, Susan Kluss, Kerrie Leotta, Jane Needham SC, Geraldine Hoeben

2. Chair's Report

- (a) Painter SC informed members of the following changes to the format of the WBF:
 - i. There would be one general meeting held every quarter
 - ii. The executive committee would meet once a month.
 - iii. It was expected that there would be an executive member of WBF sitting on every subcommittee and that there would be greater liaison between the executive committee and the subcommittees.
- (b) Painter SC informed members of meeting with Jane Needham SC and Trish McDonald SC regarding NARS response and the implementation of the best practice guidelines (see below item 4)
- (c) Painter SC informed members of the initiative to identify and celebrate achievements of women barristers. All members were asked to bring to the attention of the executive any achievements/appointments so that they could be highlighted in correspondence.
- (d) Request from Bar Association President for feedback on adopting a protocol for days when the court sits for extended hours. Highlighted that:
 - i. This should not occur as a matter of course
 - ii. That as much notice as possible should be provided

3. Subcommittees

NARS Subcommittee

Painter SC:

- i. Confirmed that a response to the NARS report has now been provided
- ii. The Subcommittee's does not currently have much work to do but the Bar Association is intending to create a working party

Social Subcommittee

Painter SC noted that there was important work to do as people were very interested in more opportunities for social events. Noted that the Janet Coombes Women Readers lunch was occurring on 12 September 2014 and encouraged members to attend.

CPD Subcommittee

Brenda Tronson reported that:

- i. There was a need to establish a collection of women barristers who could be speakers with a topic identified and abstract prepared.
- ii. The College of Law was interested in obtaining speakers for its CLEs and were asking for a range of speakers. We may need to cold call them.
- iii. The Bar Association is interested in between 2-5 CPDs a year as nominated by the WBF. A possibility is having a junior woman speaker paired with a senior woman speaker. Need ideas for speakers especially during February and March.
- iv. Tronson has had discussions with Thomson Reuters about a social media CPD. Thomson Reuters may be approached to present it.
- v. Law society mock trial program is seeking coaches and Magistrates. They are also looking for people willing to write a problem. Possibility of creating an email list of volunteers for coaching/judging

Equitable Briefing

The following people expressed an interest in being committee members:

Larissa Andelman, Ishita Sethi, Dominique Hogan-Doran with Lee-May Saw being the executive committee representative and chair.

Kate Morgan is a member of the Equitable Briefing working party.

Discussed the possibility of the NARS subcommittee being renamed the Equitable Briefing Subcommittee

4. NARS Response

4 issues have been raised by the Bar Association:

- i. Development of CPD to include best practice guidelines. Possibility of including a question about the guidelines in the bar exams.
- ii. A program addressing tutors and ensuring that tutors abide by the best practice guidelines. Initiative in conjunction with the education committee.
- iii. Adoption of the Guidelines created by the Bar Association. Explanation to be obtained from floors that do not adopt the guidelines as to why they are not adopting the guidelines.
- iv. Painter SC to present on conduct at the Bar in the Bar Practice Course.

5. Membership of Australian Women Lawyers Association

Painter SC noted that there were historical and structural reasons why the WBF has not been a member of the AWLA. Those reasons no longer apply.

May-Saw explained that AWLA has had 2 seats for each state. NSW's seats traditionally have been held by NSW WLA. But now have the opportunity for a seat/shared seat but WBF will need to be a member.

There may be a financial cost involved. There are about 350 women barristers, largest number in the country.

General agreement that joining AWLA is a good idea.

6. General Business

Painter SC discussed possibility of WBF tweeting news and establishing a LinkedIn profile. Note that Bar Council now has a social media policy. Also noted that the WBF terms of reference currently do not allow comment in the media but there is a possibility of amending the terms of reference.

Balendra reported that she has been discussing updating the website with Chris D'Aeth. The biggest stumbling block may be a cost involved in creating a template that can be used in conjunction with the existing Bar Association website. She will report once an invoice is obtained setting out the cost.

The possibility of creating a Social Media subcommittee was raised. Brenda Tronson, Ingrid King and Kavita Balendra confirmed interest in the subcommittee.

Reminder that the Janet Coombes Women Readers Lunch was occurring on 12 September,

Meeting closed at 6.15pm.

Next Committee Meeting date 10 September 2014.

UPDATED DRAFT CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2014

Date	Event
10 September 2014	Executive Committee Meeting (Conference Room 2)
12 September 2014	Janet Coombs Women Readers Lunch
8 October 2014	Executive Committee Meeting (Conference Room 2)
November 2014	Silks Cocktails and Canapés Function
19 November 2014	Executive Committee Meeting (Conference Room 2)
10 December 2014	Executive Committee Meeting (Conference Room 2)