



MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW ON TRACK FOR COMMON LEGAL SERVICES MARKET

NSW Attorney General Gabrielle Upton has introduced legislation that prepares NSW for a common legal services market with Victoria.

The Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 is another step toward ensuring NSW is ready for the new scheme on 1 July 2015.

Ms Upton said the uniform law reforms will slash red tape and better protect consumers.

“Consumers, lawyers and law firms are being forced to wade through rivers of red tape which are based on history not common sense. Our reforms will allow lawyers to focus on lawyering, give consumers consistent protections and make it easier for people to practice on both sides of the Murray,” Ms Upton said.

The uniform law will regulate the legal profession across NSW and Victoria, including admission to the profession and professional discipline issues.

The Legal Profession Uniform Law was passed by the NSW and Victorian Parliaments last year. The Legal Services Council and Commissioner for Uniform Legal Services Regulation were appointed late last year. The Legal Services Council will shortly announce the uniform rules that will apply to the common legal services market.

President of the NSW Bar Association, Jane Needham SC said “The New South Wales Bar Association welcomes the introduction of the legislation, which provides a blueprint for a single national system of regulation for the legal profession that would bring tangible benefits for legal practitioners and their clients around the country. The commencement of the new scheme on 1 July will involve challenges for regulators and professional associations alike, however any issues in the transition to the new system will be more than outweighed by the certainty and consistency that the new scheme will deliver.”

CEO of the Law Society of NSW, Michael Tidball said “The Legal Profession Uniform Law will create a single market for legal services across New South Wales and Victoria and is the important first step towards a unified Australian legal services market. The majority of Australian lawyers will be regulated under the new scheme from 1 July 2015 – with both a significant legal and microeconomic benefit. The Law Society of NSW has worked closely with practitioners from all segments of the profession over a number of years to deliver this vital piece of reform.”

Ms Upton added “The job isn’t finished. We need a common legal services market across Australia. NSW and Victoria have paved the way for other States and Territories. All that is needed from them is the will to reform.”

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