

Law Firm Managing Partners Commit to Cultural Diversity Initiative

March 2017

The Managing Partners and senior leaders from many of Australia's major law firms (**Managing Partners' Diversity Forum**) have been meeting on a regular basis to determine ways that their firms can contribute to improving diversity across the legal profession. The Managing Partners' Diversity Forum started with the gender diversity initiative announced in May 2015, in response to the Law Council of Australia's National Attrition and Re-engagement Study.

The Managing Partners' Diversity Forum has agreed also to focus on cultural diversity. This is in response to (among other things) the release by the Asian Australian Lawyers Association (AALA) of statistics in relation to the level of Asian Australian participation in the senior echelons of the legal profession and the blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership produced by the Australian Human Rights Commission (amongst others) "Leading for Change".

Specific actions to be taken as part of these initiatives include:

- undertaking a survey within each firm to establish baseline data as to the level of cultural diversity at different levels of each firm, on a voluntary and self-identification basis;
- following the establishment of baseline data, tracking cultural diversity data at a Partnership and senior leadership level;
- reviewing position descriptions and key competencies for senior leadership roles to ensure that they incorporate the key traits of an inclusive leader; and
- sharing each firm's experience in relation to programmes (eg. unconscious bias training, leadership development programs, etc) to overcome barriers encountered by employees from culturally diverse backgrounds in progression to leadership positions.

Confirmed:

Allens Linklaters

Henry Davis York

Ashurst

Herbert Smith Freehills

Baker McKenzie

King & Wood Mallesons

Clayton Utz

Minter Ellison

Corrs Chambers Westgarth

Norton Rose Fulbright

DLA Piper