

1. Imposing increased costs on civil marriage celebrants is undesirable and an unfair method to fund "cost recovery".
2. No detail of what new (and presumably accountable) 'new services' will be delivered to Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrants as described in the Bills.
3. No guarantee the fee will ensure civil marriage celebrants are professional, knowledgeable and provide legally correct services.
4. The Bills are discriminatory in that they are applied to Commonwealth registered celebrants and not to celebrants connected to a religious organisation. Any religious organisation not only the main stream like the Church of England, Catholic etc, will not have to pay the fee.
5. The Bills do not require any cost-cutting, on behalf of the Department, but instead allow ever increasing levies on celebrants.
6. When I was appointed in 2004 there were about 2000 active celebrants and I worked every weekend, now there are about 12000 celebrants and I am lucky if I officiate at one wedding a month.
7. If the government wants to increase revenue in the future will they appoint many more celebrants? Or will they limit the number of appointments so there is a chance for civil celebrants to earn an income.
8. The Bills impose unreasonable additional costs on income deprived celebrants by way of annually renewable appointments plus costs of compulsory annual ongoing professional development (OPD). The government already imposes a compulsory fee with the annual OPD's now this too.
9. The Department originally proposed an annual fee of \$600 and when celebrants said the amount was outrageous, reduced it to \$240 without explaining it could revert to \$600 (only discovered when Bills made available).
10. Exemptions from the annual fee may be made to celebrants in 'remote' locations when all celebrants battle to make ends meet .with average annual number of weddings per celebrant being 6 (in 2003 average was 30 weddings per annum per celebrant). The government appointed many Civil Celebrants without taking into consideration where they lived or how many celebrants were active in the area. Many city civil celebrants are no better off than their country cousins. In south east Queensland there are more civil celebrants than elsewhere – with celebrants retiring here from Vic/Tas NSW. The numbers of celebrants in the cities and coastal regions make it difficult to gain work.
11. A country celebrant would not have the expensive advertising and marketing costs incurred in the city. It should be a level 'paying' field for everyone (including religious celebrants).