

Dear Committee Members

I wish to support the submission of the Coalition of Celebrants Associations to the Committee.

As a Civil Celebrant I am very concerned about the proposal to move to an annual registration process as this gives no certainty to Celebrants in forward planning. This year the proposed new requirement is to be a fee but who knows what future requirements may be placed upon celebrants to ensure that they can meet the annual registration requirements.

I am also very concerned about the introduction of an annual fee for Celebrants. It is inequitable that Civil Celebrants (the majority of whom perform a small number of ceremonies) have to pay this fee when State registered celebrants and religious celebrants do not. It is also unfair on the couples who choose a Civil Celebrant as ultimately they will have to pay for this fee.

I am concerned that the rationale for the fee is to increase the size and role of the MLCS in the Attorney General's Department and thereby to increase professionalism. The staff members of the MLCS are not professional celebrants. Celebrants like me take pride in our professionalism. We happily do our OPD and further training, belong to associations, have professional insurance and seek advice from the State Registrar when we have questions. We make sure that we do things properly. The statistics show that there are hardly any complaints or problems with the services that we provide. Over regulation is not necessary and will not improve our clients' experience.

I urge you to consider carefully the submission from CoCA and the concerns of celebrants.

Sonia Collins

Civil Celebrant.