

# **Marriage Celebrants Australia (Inc)**

(Est. WA)

## ADMINISTRATION

11/33 Brookside Avenue  
KELMSCOTT 6111 WA  
President Jeff Munn.

Executive Officer  
Dorothy Harrison (08) 9495 4092

## **Submission to the Senate Standing committee for Legal and Constitutional Affairs**

### **Re Marriage Amendment (Celebrant Administration and Fee) Bill and the Marriage (Celebrants Regulation Charge) Bill 2013**

The above association offers its sincere support to the submission made by the Coalition of Celebrant Associations (CoCA).

In our common commitment to professional and high quality marriage celebrants, both civil and independent religious celebrants, we urge consideration be given to the following points.

1. As 70% of the Australian public are now choosing a civil marriage ceremony, they are being made to pay extra to cover the cost of the planned registration fee. The other 30%, using religious celebrants, will not have this fee imposed upon them. This Government has supported anti-discrimination in law, and yet is supporting this blatant discrimination.
2. MCA (Inc) supports a substantial fee to new applicants for registration as marriage celebrants. The Attorney General's Department (Marriage Law and Celebrant Section) has told us repeatedly that the processing of applicants is extremely time consuming.

Why should established celebrants have to pay for this? It is of no advantage to have more appointments made when the current average of 7 weddings per year per celebrant providing an average gross income of \$3,500 per year is already stretching our budgets.

3. We recommend that the Peak Body (the Coalition of Celebrant Associations) be further consulted to assist in regulation and improving standards.

*Affiliated with the Coalition of Celebrant Associations (CoCA)  
- the peak body representing Marriage Celebrants nationally*

4. As we approach the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil Celebrant Program, celebrants themselves should be regulating the professional standards. The Dept should concern itself with appointing, registering and applying legal guidance.
5. Regional capping of numbers of Commonwealth marriage celebrants on a 5 year cycle with new appointments based on the best applicant and need in the area.

Marriage Celebrants Australia (inc) hopes that our submission will be appreciated as a support for the Coalition of Celebrant Associations Submission.

Yours sincerely,

Dorothy Harrison,  
Executive Officer

April 24, 2013

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