

09 February 2024

Mr Alan Raine
Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Economics
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

By email: economics.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Raine,

Submission to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee's Inquiry into the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Tax Accountability and Fairness) Bill 2023*

Thank you for your invitation to make a submission to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee's Inquiry into the *Treasury Laws Amendment (Tax Accountability and Fairness) Bill 2023*. This correspondence addresses the provisions enabling the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and Tax Practitioners Board (TPB) to share protected information with prescribed professional disciplinary bodies, to enable them to perform their disciplinary functions.

As noted in our previous submission to the Treasury in October 2023 as part of the *Response to PwC – information sharing* consultation, we strongly support the information-sharing amendments in the Bill. As the independent regulator of the legal profession in Victoria, being able to receive protected information relating to a breach of professional standards by Victorian legal practitioners will allow us to act earlier and more effectively to prevent consumer harm, and to uphold the integrity of the legal system. We will apply to be a 'prescribed professional disciplinary body' in due course.

We also wish to reiterate our request that the TPB and ATO consider establishing formal information-sharing arrangements with VLSB+C, to ensure that we can become aware of information about likely breaches of professional standards by lawyers as soon as possible. We consider that formal information-sharing arrangements may address concerns raised by other stakeholders in the *Response to PwC – information sharing* consultation about how the amendments will work in practice, by setting out procedures and expectations regarding the sharing and use of protected information and establishing appropriate safeguards against misuse.

Our October 2023 submission to the Treasury as part of the *Response to PwC – information sharing* consultation provides more detail about our role as the legal profession regulator, our support for the information sharing amendments in the Bill, and the importance of formal information-sharing arrangements.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to make a submission to the Committee.

Yours faithfully

Kerri-anne Millard
Director, Policy and Outreach Division


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