

WA commits to uniform law

If all goes according to plan, the scheme will cover about 75% of all practising lawyers in Australia



By [Sol Dolor](#)

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Western Victoria has signed an agreement to join the Legal Profession Uniform Law scheme, the attorneys-general of New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia have announced.

It is planned that the state will join the scheme by 1 July 2020, moving Australia closer to a national legal market. NSW and Victoria have implemented uniform law since 2015.

“Around 68% of Australia's practising lawyers are regulated by uniform law, and that will increase to around 75% when Western Australia comes on board. Importantly, the uniform law provides strengthened protections for consumers, including through applying consistent regulations in different states,” said Mark Speakman, NSW’s attorney-general.

Australia has almost 85,200 registered lawyers, including almost 36,000 in NSW, nearly 22,500 in Victoria, and about 6,100 in Western Australia.

Jill Hennessy, Victoria’s attorney-general, encouraged the holdout states to adopt uniform law.

“In the 21st century, people work across borders and it makes sense for lawyers to operate under the same rule book, which is why we are urging our counterparts in Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, the ACT and the Northern Territory to adopt the uniform law,” she said.

For John Quigley, WA’s attorney-general, joining the scheme sends a message across Australia and the world of the state’s competitiveness.

“Our resource-based industries and the law firms that represent them will be among the big winners when the uniform law commences in Western Australia. We want to send a message



across Australia and internationally that WA is a great place to do business, and the introduction of the uniform law will help to do this," he said.

Later this year, legislation will be introduced into the Victorian and Western Australian Parliaments to apply the uniform law in WA. From the date that WA joins the scheme, the Legal Services Council, which oversees the implementation and operation of the law, will be expanded to seven and include at least one member from WA.

The Legal Profession Uniform Law and its implementing rules lay out the regulatory framework for the legal profession in territories that adopt it. The scheme governs admission to the Australian legal profession, legal practice, business practice and professional conduct, legal costs, dispute resolution and professional discipline, and the functions and powers of local authorities.

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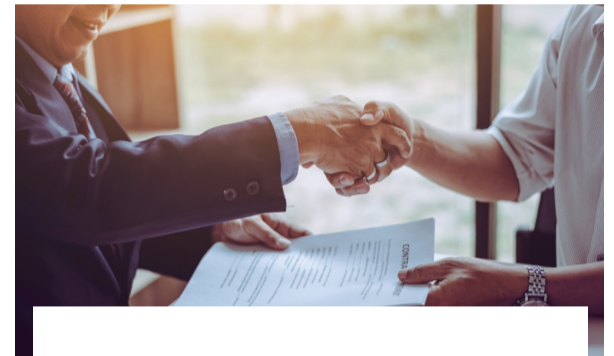
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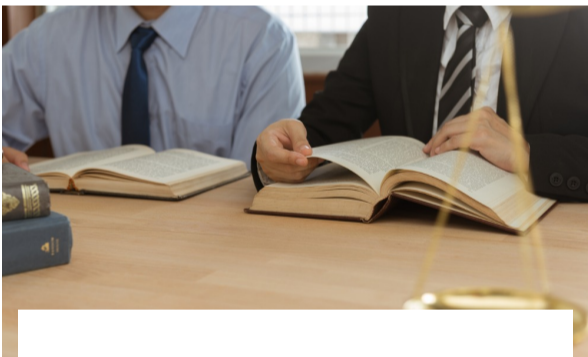
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