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Office of the President

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Our ref: [PD-WD]

Committee Secretary  
Economics and Governance Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

By email: [egc@parliament.qld.gov.au](mailto:egc@parliament.qld.gov.au)

Dear Committee Secretariat

#### **Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 – supplementary submission**

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the Committee on 27 April 2021 for the public hearing on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021 (the **Bill**).

At the hearing, Queensland Law Society (**QLS**) representatives were asked about the privatisation of the New South Wales land titles registry. In the limited time available, we have not been able to obtain comprehensive comments from colleagues in New South Wales.

However, in light of the question, we have given further consideration to some of the challenges which might arise when transitioning a registry service from a government agency to a new operator. We are aware that there was considerable disquiet amongst the legal profession when other States have privatised their registries.

To manage stakeholder concerns throughout this process, we highlight two strategies for particular consideration by the Committee.

The first is the critical importance of retaining the corporate knowledge of current registry employees.

We understand the intention is to transfer eligible public service employees of the Registry to the operator and we recommend further consideration be given to strategies for long-term retention of key staff after the transfer. The retention of knowledge will ensure continued high levels of service. In turn, this will help to maintain the confidence of those who utilise Queensland's registry service that the transfer will not adversely affect the operation and integrity of the registry.

The second strategy is to implement a stakeholder reference group to work with the Department and the new operator during the transition process.

A stakeholder reference group will provide the opportunity for early identification and resolution of concerns. Open and transparent consultation with representatives of key stakeholders in this

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type of forum will not only give all parties a clear mechanism for raising concerns but will engender confidence in the transition process, provided that there is a genuine commitment to addressing and resolving issues.

QLS has participated in similar reference and advisory groups in other contexts and we find that these can be extremely beneficial in helping to mitigate industry and stakeholder concerns. In this context, the group could also be consulted on policy development and reform.

If the Committee was to recommend the formation of such a group, QLS would be keen to participate. Our members are frequent users of registry services on behalf of their clients and are well-placed to identify any emerging issues with the transition process.

If you have any queries regarding the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact our Legal Policy team via [policy@qls.com.au](mailto:policy@qls.com.au) or by phone on (07) [REDACTED].

Yours faithfully



Elizabeth Shearer  
**President**