

Annual Report

2021-2022



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QUEENSLAND LAW REFORM COMMISSION**

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(Queensland Law Reform Commission)

September 2022

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Queensland Law Reform Commission

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2021–22**

September 2022

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To: The Honourable Shannon Fentiman MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention
of Domestic and Family Violence

In accordance with section 15 of the *Law Reform Commission Act 1968*, the Commission is pleased to present its Annual Report 2021–22.

The Commission's work and key milestones

The reporting period ending 30 June 2022 covers work undertaken by the Commission, or key milestones that occurred, in respect of several reviews you have referred to the Commission.

On 27 August 2021, the Attorney-General asked us to conduct a review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland. This review also forms part of the program of law reform reviews you approved on 10 December 2021 and has been given priority in the Commission's work program during the reporting period. We are pleased that you value the Commission's contribution to the development of these important reforms.

On 16 September 2021, the Queensland Parliament passed the *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021*. The Act implements the recommendations and draft Bill contained in the Commission's Report No 79, A legal framework for voluntary assisted dying.

Secretariat

The existing structure and resourcing of the Commission's small Secretariat has limited the Commission's capacity to conduct more than one review at a time. In recent years, we have completed a series of large and complex reviews in very short timeframes. This has placed undue demands on the staff of the Secretariat and members and often required the engagement of additional temporary staff to support the conduct of the reviews.

Following an independent review of the Secretariat's structure and resourcing, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General has committed to an increase in funding over two years from 2022–23 for additional temporary resources to enhance the Secretariat's capacity to match future work requirements and to implement enhanced communication practices and technologies.

New members

On 17 March 2022, Her Honour President Fleur Kingham, President of the Land Court of Queensland, and Dr Alice Taylor were appointed as part-time members. We are fortunate to have the benefit of their significant legal expertise and experience.

Thanks

I wish to express my gratitude to the skilled and dedicated members and staff of the Secretariat who have worked diligently to ensure the Commission continues to produce the high quality and innovative work for which it is renowned.

The members of the Commission, who all serve in a part-time capacity, look forward to continuing the Commission's important contribution to law reform in this State.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PDT Applegarth', with a stylized flourish extending from the end.

The Hon Justice Peter Applegarth AM
Chairperson

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ABOUT US

Our role

The Queensland Law Reform Commission is an independent statutory body constituted under the *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (the 'Law Reform Commission Act').

The Commission's function, as provided in section 10(1) of the Law Reform Commission Act, is to review the law applicable to Queensland with a view to its systematic development and reform, including:

- (a) codifying laws;
- (b) eliminating anomalies;
- (c) repealing obsolete and unnecessary enactments;
- (d) reducing the number of separate enactments; and
- (e) generally, simplifying and modernising the law.

The Commission's key statutory duties, as provided in section 10(3) of the Law Reform Commission Act, include duties to:

- undertake law reform reviews referred to it from time to time by the Attorney-General;¹
- prepare and submit to the Attorney-General for review and approval a proposed program of law reform reviews, in order of priority;² and
- undertake any approved program of law reform reviews, subject to any variations made by the Attorney-General in terms of the proposed reviews or their order of priority.³

Our purpose and values

The Commission aims to meet the needs of the Queensland community by reviewing areas of the law referred to us by the Attorney-General and by making recommendations for reform. These recommendations are based on extensive research, public consultation and the principles of impartiality, equity, social justice and respect for human rights. They are published in its final reports, and presented to the Attorney-General for tabling in Parliament in accordance with the requirements of section 16 of the Law Reform Commission Act.

Our people

Our Commission members

During the reporting period, the Commission had seven part-time members, including the Chair.

¹ *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (Qld) s 10(3)(b), (e).

² *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (Qld) s 10(3)(c).

³ *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (Qld) s 10(3)(d), 10(4).

The Hon Justice Peter Applegarth AM, Chair

31 July 2020—current

Justice Applegarth was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland on 29 August 2008. His Honour served as a Supervised Case List judge in 2010 and as a Commercial List judge between 2011 and 2013. Justice Applegarth resumed duties as a Supervised Case List Judge in 2014.

His Honour was admitted to the Queensland Bar in 1986 and was appointed as Queen’s Counsel in 2000.

During his time as a barrister Justice Applegarth was a board member of Legal Aid Queensland (1998–2001), and a part-time member of the Queensland Law Reform Commission (2001–2004).

Justice Applegarth’s Extra Judicial Positions include:

- Fellow, Australian Academy of Law
- Council Member, Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration
- Part Time Lecturer, TC Beirne School of Law, University of Queensland (2008-)
- Member, Faculty Advisory Board, Griffith Law School
- Patron and Board Member, UQ Pro Bono Centre

Justice Applegarth was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2020 for his significant service to the law, judiciary and social justice.

His Honour was appointed Chair of the Commission on 31 July 2020. He was appointed as a full-time member of the Commission from 1 February 2021 until 31 May 2021.

Her Honour President Fleur Kingham

17 March 2022—current

Fleur Kingham was appointed as the President of the Land Court of Queensland on 8 August 2016. Her Honour is the President of the Australian Association of Women Judges.

President Kingham is a graduate of the University of Queensland—Bachelor of Laws (Honours) (1982), Bachelor of Arts (1988), and the University of Nottingham—Master of International Law (Dist) (1990).

President Kingham is a continuing member of the Griffith Law School Visiting Committee (2004–) and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Griffith University in 2016.

Prior to her current appointment, her Honour held judicial positions on the Land and Resources Tribunal (Deputy President 2000–2006), the Land Court of Queensland (Member 2004–2006), the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Deputy President 2009–2012), and served as a Judge of the District Court of Queensland (2000–2016) with commissions in the Childrens Court of Queensland and the Planning and Environment Court.

His Honour Judge Anthony Rafter SC

17 September 2020–current

His Honour was appointed a Judge of the District Court of Queensland and a Judge of the Childrens Court of Queensland on 15 December 2006.

His Honour was appointed a Judge of the Planning and Environment Court on 23 February 2007.

Judge Rafter is a graduate of the Queensland Institute of Technology completing a Bachelor of Laws.

His Honour was admitted as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 1985 and practised as a barrister in Queensland from 1987 to 2006.

Judge Rafter was appointed Senior Counsel in 2003.

His Honour served as director of Barrister Services Limited from 2003 to 2006. Judge Rafter has also served as member of the Queensland Police Service Academic Advisory Committee (2006) and the Board of Legal Aid Queensland (2006).

Judge Rafter was chairperson of the Nursing Tribunal in 2006 and Commissioner of the Queensland Thoroughbred Racing Commission of Inquiry (2004–2005).

His Honour served as an Acting Justice of the Supreme Court of Queensland from 1 February 2021 until 31 May 2021.

Mr Mark Hinson QC

17 September 2020–current

Mr Hinson QC is a graduate of The University of Queensland completing a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws (Hons).

He completed a Master of Laws at the University of Cambridge.

He was admitted as a barrister in 1981.

He tutored law at the University of Queensland until commencing full-time practice as a barrister in 1986.

Mr Hinson QC was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1998.

He was appointed an Acting Judge of the District Court between August and November 1998.

Ms Penelope White BBus LLB

15 September 2017–current

Ms White was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland in 2000. She practised as a criminal defence solicitor for 17 years. As a solicitor, she was a Queensland Law Society Accredited Specialist in Criminal Law since 2006. She was a member of the Queensland Law Society Criminal Law Specialist Accreditation Committee from 2008 to 2010.

Ms White was appointed as Counsel Assisting the Commission of Inquiry into Organised Crime in Queensland in 2015.

In 2018 Ms White was admitted as a barrister of the Supreme Court of Queensland. She practises primarily in the area of criminal law.

Ms Clare Endicott

17 September 2020–current

Ms Endicott is a graduate of The University of Queensland completing a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws.

She was admitted as a solicitor in 1978.

Ms Endicott completed a Master of Laws in 1987.

She has practised as a litigation solicitor until 2005 and was a partner in Brisbane legal firms for almost 25 years.

Ms Endicott has extensive experience on tribunals and boards, including the Social Security Appeals Tribunal, the Solicitor’s Complaints Tribunal and the practitioners’ panel of the Legal Practice Tribunal. She was appointed as a member of the Guardianship and Administration Tribunal from 2005 until 2009, and Deputy President of the Guardianship and Administration Tribunal from 2006 to 2009.

She was appointed as the senior member of the Human Rights Division of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal since its inception until her retirement from that role in June 2017.

Ms Endicott is currently appointed as a sessional member at the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Dr Alice Taylor LLB (Hons), BPolGov (Griffith), PhD (ANU)

17 March 2022–current

Dr Taylor is an Assistant Professor at Bond University. Her field of research expertise is human rights law with a specific focus on discrimination and equality rights. She regularly engages in public policy debates surrounding these issues.

She received her PhD from ANU in 2020 which focused on discrimination law in Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada. This research will form the subject of a monograph to be published in 2023. She has undertaken visiting positions at universities in the UK and Canada. She has taught across a range of subjects including human rights, torts, contracts, and public and constitutional law.

Prior to entering academia, she was admitted as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of New South Wales in 2013. She has worked as a solicitor at a top-tier commercial law firm, an Associate at the Supreme Court of Queensland and the Legal Research Officer at the High Court of Australia.

Commission Secretariat

The Commission’s Secretariat comprises the Director, the Assistant Director, three senior legal officers, a part-time Commission Secretary, a part-time administrative officer and a temporary administrative officer. Secretariat staff are employed by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General under the *Public Service Act 2008*.

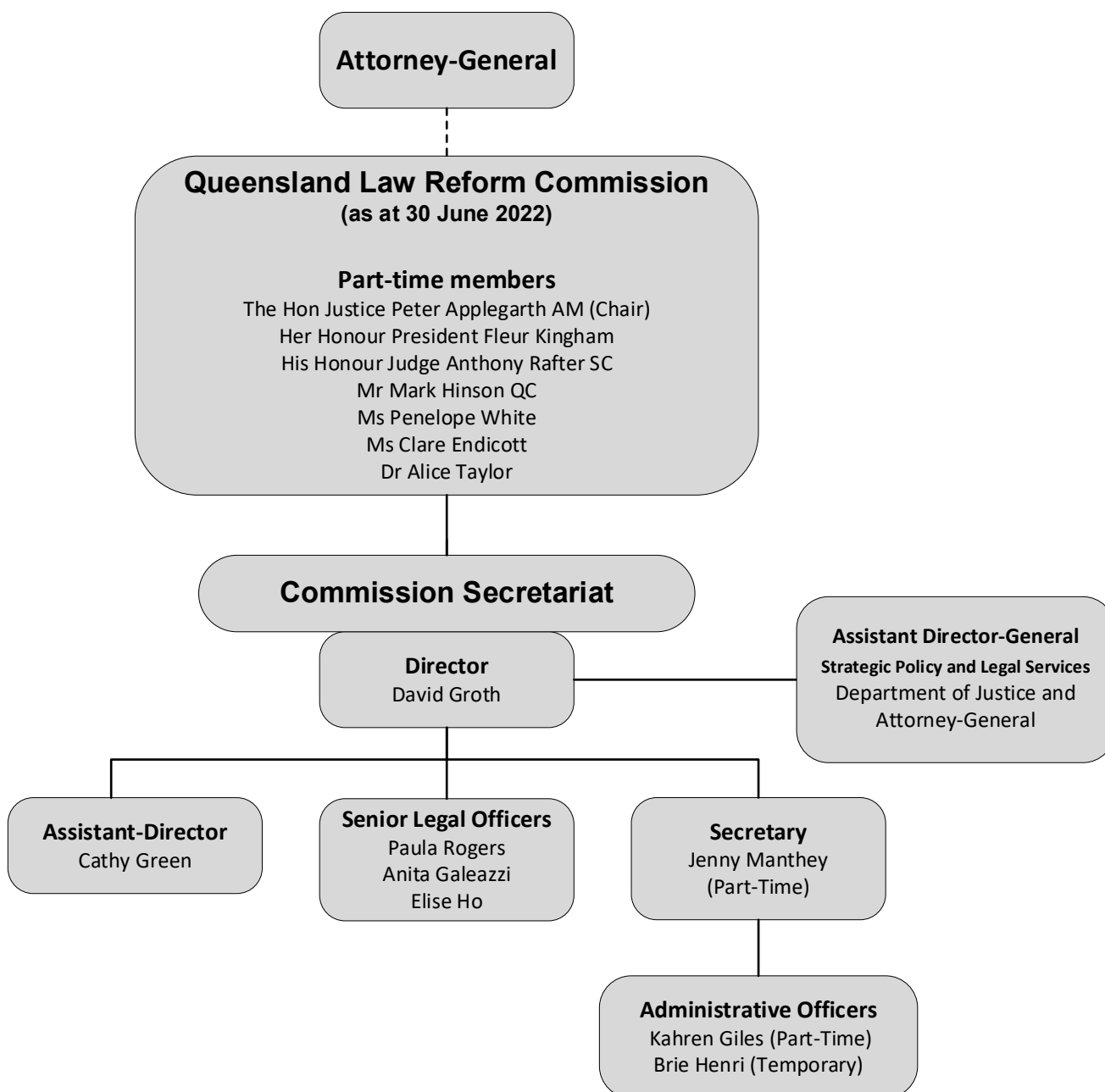
The Secretariat has the day-to-day responsibility for conducting the Commission’s reviews, including undertaking research and consultation. It also provides the Commission with administrative and secretarial

support. This includes the management of corporate governance, human resources and financial matters relating to the Commission and the Secretariat staff.

Section 9 of the Law Reform Commission Act also enables the Commission to engage, on a temporary basis, any person who has technical or specialist knowledge or who is experienced in a particular branch of the law.⁴

⁴ For example, the Commission has engaged a small team of experts with relevant experience to assist it in undertaking its current review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland.

Organisational chart



Notes

1. During the reporting period:
 - a. Cathy Green acted as Director from 17 March 2022 to 30 June 2022.
 - b. Paula Rogers was appointed as a temporary Principal Legal Officer from 22 March 2022 to 30 June 2022. She also acted as Assistant Director from 9 April 2022 to 30 June 2022.
 - c. Anita Galeazzi acted as Principal Legal Officer from 4 April 2022 to 30 June 2022.
 - d. Elise Ho was on secondment from 4 January 2022 to 30 June 2022.
 - e. The Commission engaged Robert Wallace, Rachel Gallagher, Hayley Rayment, Amanda Reeves and John Alizzi as Research Consultants on the review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry for various periods between 1 November 2021 and 30 June 2022.

Meetings of the Commission

During the reporting period, the Commission held nine Commission meetings.

Appointment of Commission members

Members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor in Council on the advice of the Attorney-General. The Law Reform Commission Act provides that the Commission must consist of at least three members, who may be full-time or part-time members.

Each person appointed to be a Commission member must be a person appearing to the Governor in Council to be suitably qualified by the holding of judicial office or by experience as a barrister or as a solicitor or as a teacher of law in a University.

Remuneration of Commission members

Part-time members of the Commission who are not judicial officers are remunerated in accordance with the Queensland Government policy, Remuneration procedures for Part-time Chairs and Members of Queensland Government Bodies.

The total remuneration paid to part-time members for work performed in 2021–22 was \$19,525.⁵

Part-time Commission members who are judicial officers do not receive remuneration for performing the duties of a part-time member.

Right to Information Act 2009

In accordance with the requirements of the *Right to Information Act 2009*, the Commission's website includes a Publication Scheme. That scheme describes and categorises information routinely available from the Commission and the terms on which the information will be made available.

Public Sector Ethics Act 1994

Section 10(1) of the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994* (the 'Public Sector Ethics Act') provides that 'in recognition of the ethics principles and values for public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials, codes of conduct are to apply to those agencies, entities and officials in performing their official functions'.

Section 10(2) of the Public Sector Ethics Act provides that the purpose of a code of conduct is to provide standards of conduct for public service agencies, public sector entities and public officials consistent with the ethics principles and values.

Commission members

The Commission, as a public sector entity, has an approved code of conduct that applies to the members of the Commission in their capacity as public officials. The Commission's code of conduct is available on the Commission's website.

Commission Secretariat

The staff of the Commission Secretariat, as employees of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, are covered by the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Government Public Service.

⁵ See Appendix 1.

Section 12K of the Public Sector Ethics Act requires public officials of a public service agency to be given access, including at regular intervals during their employment, to appropriate education and training about public sector ethics covering:

- the operation of the Public Sector Ethics Act;
- the application of ethics principles and obligations to the public officials;
- the contents of the approved code of conduct for public service agencies; and
- any approved standard of practice.

During the reporting period, officers of the Secretariat undertook annual 'Workplace Ethics' refresher training from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

OUR WORK⁶

The Commission reviews areas of law referred to it by the Attorney-General under section 10(3)(a) of the Law Reform Commission Act.

Section 10(3)(c) requires the Commission to prepare and submit a proposed program of law reform to the Attorney-General for approval. A proposed program is subject to variation by the Attorney-General, before or after its approval, under section 10(4). The Commission has a protocol for developing proposed programs. The protocol outlines our process for identifying and selecting suitable law reform issues to include in a proposed program.

Law reform reviews referred to the Commission by the Attorney-General

Review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland

On 27 August 2021, the Attorney-General requested the Commission to carry out a review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland.

Our terms of reference ask us to consider:

- the extent to which existing laws should be repealed to decriminalise the sex work industry;
- who the framework would apply to;
- appropriate safeguards:
 - including economic, health and safety protections for sex workers and their clients;
 - to deter the involvement of illegal activity and the exploitation of vulnerable people in the sex work industry; and
 - to maintain public amenity, including in relation to the location of sex work;
- compatibility of the framework with the *Human Rights Act 2019*;
- whether there are any public health or public safety implications associated with the framework;

⁶ The Commission prepares its own annual reports pursuant to s 15(2) of the *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (Qld). Section 15(1) also requires that the annual report of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General 'must include a report about the operations of this Act during the year'.

- how the framework would be administered;
- ways to monitor and enforce compliance with the framework;
- potential impacts for the sex work industry and government, including the current licensed brothel industry, in moving to the new framework; and
- limiting the administrative and resource burden on government and industry.

Within the context of the recommended decriminalisation framework, the Commission must also consider what, if any, changes to the law are needed to deal with situations where a person has promised to pay money to a sex worker for a sexual act but the payment is not made.

After receiving our terms of reference, we consulted with people and organisations with relevant experience and knowledge of the sex work industry and the current regulatory framework in Queensland to help us identify the issues raised in the review.

We released our consultation paper, 'A framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland' (WP 80), on 11 April 2022. The closing date for submissions was 3 June 2022.

After the release of the consultation paper, we conducted a range of consultation activities with key stakeholders to help inform and develop our recommendations—including sex worker organisations, the Prostitution Licensing Authority, licensed brothel operators, local and state government departments, industry regulators, police officers, Australian and New Zealand academics and other interested people and organisations. These activities included roundtable discussions and other meetings with key stakeholders.

Work is continuing on the review to develop our recommendations.

The final report, including any draft legislation needed to give effect to the Commission's recommendations, is due to the Attorney-General by 27 November 2022.

Review of Queensland's laws relating to workplace surveillance

On 24 July 2018, the Attorney-General referred to the Commission for review 'the issue of privacy protections for workers in the context of current and emerging surveillance devices in workplaces'.

The terms of reference require the Commission to have regard to the findings from our review of civil surveillance and privacy. Our report on civil surveillance and privacy was completed in 2020. In it we made several recommendations for legislative change, including changes to provide avenues for resolving complaints and disputes.

The proposed review about workplace surveillance has been overtaken by new references and other events. The Commission's work on new and complex reviews about voluntary assisted dying and the sex work industry had to be prioritised, so we could not start on the workplace surveillance review. Other events made it inefficient to start on that review. These include consideration of our report on civil surveillance. Possible enactment of reforms in that area will apply also to workplace surveillance, and there have been developments at a Commonwealth level concerning privacy.

Depending on the nature and scope of reforms at both a state and federal level, the scope for new State laws specifically about workplace surveillance may be reduced. Any new State civil surveillance laws will affect the content of any State workplace surveillance. So will developments in the federal arena.

Against that background, the Commission's proposed program of law reform did not include workplace surveillance laws. Other matters were thought to have a higher priority. The workplace surveillance review is therefore on hold.

Program of law reform 2021–26

In accordance with our protocol for the development of proposed programs, we sought and considered suggestions for suitable law reform issues to include in a proposed program of law reform.

On 10 August 2021, the Commission submitted a proposed program for the period 2021–26 for approval by the Attorney-General, as required under section 10(3)(c).

The proposed program was approved and varied by the Attorney-General on 16 December 2021. It was varied to include the Commission's current review to recommend a framework for a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland. The program includes a proposed review of objections processes for mining leases under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989* and particular related matters. The Commission anticipates that it may be asked to commence such a review after it concludes its current review about a decriminalised sex work industry in Queensland

Other matters which the Commission suggested might be the subject of future reviews include:

- *Transplantation and Anatomy Act 1979*
- Self defence
- Charitable and not-for-profit fundraising regulation, including the *Collections Act 1966*
- *Coroners Act 2003*
- Modernisation of the *Oaths Act 1867*

Legislative action on Commission reports

The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021

On 21 May 2020, the Acting Attorney-General gave the Commission terms of reference to develop an appropriate legislative scheme for voluntary assisted dying for Queensland and to prepare draft legislation to give effect to its recommendations.

We commenced the review on 1 July 2020 and provided a final report including draft legislation to the Attorney-General on 10 May 2021.

We developed the draft legislation with the aim of providing Queensland with a framework for voluntary assisted dying that is 'compassionate, safe and practical'. The draft Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill:⁷

- allows eligible people to access voluntary assisted dying as an additional end of life option in Queensland, should they satisfy the eligibility criteria;
- sets out a legal process for people who are suffering and dying from an advanced and progressive life-limiting condition the right to choose the timing and circumstances of their death;

⁷ The Commission's draft Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 is set out in Appendix F of Report No 79, *A legal framework for voluntary assisted dying*, available on the Commission's website at <<https://www.girc.qld.gov.au/publications>>.

- includes many safeguards, including that:
 - the person must be separately and independently assessed by two doctors (who meet the law’s qualification and training rules) to be eligible;
 - the process of request and assessment involves three separate requests that are clear and documented;
 - the process has a waiting period of at least nine days between the first and final request;
 - the person must also be told, more than once, that they may decide at any time not to continue the voluntary assisted dying process;
- outlines the minimum qualifications, experience and training required for health practitioners to perform particular roles under the proposed scheme;
- permits doctors, nurses and other health practitioners who have a conscientious objection to voluntary assisted dying to choose not to participate; and
- reconciles competing rights of individuals to access the scheme (including to obtain information about voluntary assisted dying, request it if they choose, engage in the assessment process and, finally, if eligible, to administer the substance) and the rights and interests of entities to not provide services they do not wish to provide and to not facilitate their provision by others.

To facilitate the efficient and effective implementation of the proposed scheme, we also recommended the establishment of a Voluntary Assisted Dying Review Board, a State-wide Care Navigator Service and a State-wide Pharmacy Service.

On 25 May 2021, the Queensland Government introduced the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2021 into Parliament. The Bill implemented the Commission’s draft legislation. The *Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2021* was passed without amendment on 16 September 2021.

Our publications

A list of our Reports, Working Papers and Miscellaneous Papers is available on our website at <<http://www.qlrc.qld.gov.au/publications>>. Copies of the Commission’s recent publications, and most of its older publications, are also available on the website. The website also details legislative action taken on Commission reports.

APPENDIX 1: MEMBERS, MEETINGS AND REMUNERATION⁸

Position	Name	Meetings / sessions attendance	Approved annual, sessional or daily fee ⁹	Approved sub-committee fees if applicable	Actual fees paid ¹⁰
Chair	The Hon Justice Peter Applegarth AM	9	Nil	N/A	Nil
Member	Her Hon President Fleur Kingham	3	Nil	N/A	Nil
	His Hon Judge Anthony Rafter SC	9	Nil	N/A	Nil
	Mr Mark Hinson QC	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting (4 hrs or less): \$250 • Meeting (more than 4hrs): \$500 • Additional work (4 hrs or less): \$250 • Additional work (more than 4hrs): \$500 	N/A	\$5,775
	Ms Penny White	8	As above	N/A	\$6,600
	Ms Clare Endicott	9	As above	N/A	\$5,225
	Dr Alice Taylor	3	As above	N/A	\$1,925
	Total fees paid				
No. scheduled meetings/sessions	9				
Total out of pocket expenses	Nil				

⁸ The Commission is not a 'statutory body' within the meaning of s 9 of the *Financial Accountability Act 2009* as it is 'a part of a department' within the meaning of s 8(3) of that Act (given the source of its funding).

⁹ A part-time member who is a judicial officer does not receive any salary or fees for performing the duties of a part-time member of the Commission: *Law Reform Commission Act 1968* (Qld) s 13.

¹⁰ Actual fees paid include superannuation.