

ACC Australia National Conference 2017

A report from the Practice Development Committee

by Liz Cheeseman SC, Chair, and Michele Kearns, Clerk Representative



ACC Award for Excellence in Corporate Social Responsibility sponsored by the NSW BAR Association presented by Liz Cheeseman SC to Ailsa Bailey, Senior Legal Counsel, NAB

The Practice Development Committee is a committee of the NSW Bar Association. The committee comprises silks, juniors and clerks from a variety of practice areas. The committee's charter includes as one of its objects, the promotion of the work of barristers to solicitors, in-house counsel and clients.

NSW Bar sponsorship of ACC Australia National Conference

One of the ways in which the committee has sought to promote the work of barristers to in-house counsel, both corporate and government, is by forming a close working relationship with the Association of Corporate Counsel Australia (ACC Australia), formerly known as ACLA. ACC Australia is the premier organisation representing the interests of lawyers working for corporations and government in Australia. The NSW Bar Association is a National Corporate Alliance Partner of ACC Australia and has in recent years been a major sponsor of the ACC National Conference.

In the last edition of *Bar News*, we reported that the Bar Association was sponsoring the ACC National Conference in Alice Springs in November 2017. We are pleased to report that the conference was a great success.

The Bar Association was represented at

various events during the conference by Liz Cheeseman SC, Ingmar Taylor SC, Kellie Edwards, Michele Kearns, Angela Noakes and Emma Hoolahan.

The Bar Association sponsored the Australian Excellence in Corporate Responsibility Award which was awarded to National Australia Bank. The NAB team's work included:

- support for the Refugee Advice and Case-work Service's Refugees Clinic, which provided about 125 free legal appointments a week ahead of the 1 October 2017 visa application deadline;
- providing legal and commercial expertise to develop the first public offshore green bond from an Australian bank (the proceeds of which will be used to refinance renewable energy and low carbon transport projects) and a world first social bond to specifically promote workplace gender equality; and
- helped develop and maintain documentation for NAB's Microfinance partnership with Good Shepherd Microfinance, which provides fair and affordable financial products to more than 26,000 vulnerable Australians each year.

The 2017 ACC Australia Benchmarks and Leading Practices Report identified employment and workplace relations as one of the top three areas of work that in-house legal departments are most likely to outsource. Ingmar Taylor SC, Kellie Edwards, Michele Kearns and Justin Moses, Head of Knowledge & Development, Legal, Westpac lead an engaging masterclass looking at direct and early briefing of the Bar in a workplace relations context.

One of the hits of the exhibition space, was the Barista Bar run by our indefatigable clerks, Michele Kearns, Angela Noakes and Emma Hoolahan. The clerks were kept busy throughout the conference, engaging directly with delegates, explaining the organisation of the NSW Bar and promoting the services of NSW barristers to the in-house community.



Future events

The committee will continue to work in close partnership with the NSW Barristers Clerks Association and has a number of joint projects in the pipeline.

In response to feedback received from the ACC National Conference delegates the committee is planning a roadshow which will visit various in-house legal teams to provide information on how in-house counsel can best engage the NSW Bar.

In addition, a series of presentations directed to the practicalities of finding and briefing a barrister is in development for each of the NSW Law Society's Young Lawyers committees.