



**ATTORNEY-GENERAL  
HON ROBERT McCLELLAND MP**

---

**MEDIA RELEASE**

---

21 April 2010

**NATIONAL LEGAL PROFESSION REFORM BILL**

Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, welcomed the presentation of draft legislation to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to achieve national regulation of the Australian legal profession.

In April 2009, COAG agreed on a concrete plan to achieve national regulation of the legal profession through the appointment of a specialist Taskforce and Consultative Group to produce draft uniform legislation within 12 months.

The presentation of the draft Legal Profession National Law and the accompanying National Rules fulfil this commitment.

The draft Bill proposes a number of key reforms, including:

- establishing a National Legal Services Board and Ombudsman to act as the central, uniform standard setter and deal with compliance and complaints handling issues;
- creating national practising certificates and a national register of lawyers' admissions to allow lawyers to practise nationally without any additional requirements;
- requiring lawyers to disclose sufficient information to their clients to allow them to make informed decisions about services that are provided and the likely costs involved; and
- introducing a new option of 'conditional admission' to allow foreign lawyers to more easily practise in all Australian jurisdictions.

Australia is now very much a national economy and for that reason we need to tackle disparate, complex systems of regulation to deliver a truly national profession

Currently, regulation of the legal profession across the country totals over 4,700 pages of legislation, regulations and rules.

The proposed Bill, comprising fewer than 200 pages, would for the first time represent a truly national legal profession with simple, uniform regulation.

The Government thanks the Taskforce and Consultative Group for their work in the delivery of the draft Bill and accompanying Rules which will be open for a period of further consultation prior to the presentation of a finalised legislative package and Inter-Governmental Agreement in the second half of this year.

Submissions may be made to the National Legal Profession Reform Taskforce until 13 August 2010. Further information about the proposals and how to make a submission are available at [www.ag.gov.au/legalprofession](http://www.ag.gov.au/legalprofession).

**Media Contact: Adam Siddique 0407 473 630**

Parliament House, Canberra ACT 2600 • Telephone (02) 6277 7300 • Fax (02) 6273 4102