

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



As we move into 2015-16, QCAT is embracing a new vision: *fair and just outcomes*.

This vision is articulated in the *QCAT Strategic Plan 2015-19* and sits alongside a mission of *actively resolve disputes in a way that is fair, just, accessible, quick and inexpensive*.

This vision speaks to the ultimate role of the tribunal, and indeed the justice system; all we do must be in service of fairness for all parties. Every day we must work towards just outcomes whether through decisions of the tribunal or resolution of matters through our commitment to alternative dispute resolution.

It is this vision that drives us to deliver accessibility, to make our information easy to find and understand and to place a firm focus on those using our services. It is for those users that we apply our mission every day, in every proceeding, for every matter.

In service of our vision, in 2015 we have appointed senior members, ordinary members, sessional members and adjudicators.

Our membership reflects the diversity of the community, and ensures we fulfil our functions outlined in the QCAT Act to maintain specialist knowledge, expertise and experience of members and adjudicators.

Our registry staff, both in Brisbane and those magistrates court staff who deliver QCAT services throughout Queensland, continue to provide excellent service in support of fair and just outcomes.

It is the skill and commitment of our decision-makers and staff that ensure fairness and excellent service delivery to meet the needs of the community.

We look forward to working with this Government as they respond to the review of the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009*. The new consultation will build on feedback from the community and stakeholders.

We will continue to deliver on our vision as a key part of the Queensland justice system.

Justice David Thomas – QCAT President
September 2015

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Many of the 60,000+ members of the community using QCAT services each year will have no prior experience with the justice system. They are much more likely to be involved with a civil or administrative legal matter than a criminal case.

QCAT was created with the specific philosophy that it exists to serve the community in resolving everyday issues as quickly, fairly and inexpensively as possible. As part of this role we must meet the unique challenge of self-representation; we must remain mindful of our obligation to provide accessible and responsive services.

A key part of responsive service is meeting community expectations for accessible online and digital services.

In 2014-15 QCAT launched a new online service for completion and submission of [QCAT Form 22 Application or referral – disciplinary proceeding](#). We have formed an Online Services Committee to build internal capability and to guide our collaboration in the coming year with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General's Digital Transformation team.

In support of providing new online services to the community, we are pursuing amendments to the QCAT Rules to enable electronic filing of applications and online payment of fees.

We must balance the need for development of new channels for services, with existing demand. In 2014-15 we managed a 12 per cent increase in provision of interpreter and translation services to ensure accessibility to those of a culturally or linguistically diverse background. We have managed a 30 per cent increase in requests for searches of tribunal records and register and a rise of almost 5 per cent in calls to QCAT.

Despite service demand and financial challenges, our delivery of a 109 per cent overall clearance rate is an 16 per cent increase from our first reporting year in 2010-11. The quality of our service delivery is reflected in our outstanding results in user satisfaction (71 per cent). These results would not be possible without the skill and commitment of registry staff, magistrates court staff delivering services outside of SEQ and our decision-makers.

Our commitment to accessibility can impact our financial position. For example, as applications rise in no-fee jurisdictions in human rights, there are increasing demands on our services without additional revenue. A decrease this year in residential tenancy applications (6 per cent) has also resulted in a decline in revenue.

We will continue to meet the challenges ahead to actively manage cases to ensure the best possible outcomes for the community.

Mary Shortland – QCAT Executive Director
September 2015