

Australian Legal Sector Alliance

News Release

15 July 2010

Top law firms form alliance to promote legal sector sustainability

Seven of Australia's top law firms have formed a new alliance with a mission to work collaboratively to promote sustainable practices across the legal sector. The Australian Legal Sector Alliance (AusLSA) will use benchmarking and knowledge sharing to develop best practice sustainability guidelines specifically for the Australian legal industry. The aim is to reduce the sector's environmental impact and enhance its corporate social responsibility.

The Foundation Members of the AusLSA are (in alphabetical order) [Clayton Utz](#), [DLA Phillips Fox](#), [Henry Davis York](#), [Maddocks](#), [Mallesons Stephen Jaques](#), [Norton Rose Australia](#) and [Swaab Attorneys](#).

AusLSA is modelled on the [Legal Sector Alliance](#) (LSA) founded in the United Kingdom in 2007 which now has nearly 200 legal firms as members. This represents 30% of all solicitors in private practice in England and Wales. Although a separate organisation, it is anticipated that AusLSA will work in association with LSA.

AusLSA Foundation Members are collaborating to create of a suite of tools, resources and guidelines to record, report and improve the sustainability performance of the sector. These resources will be offered to all firms that join AusLSA when it is opened to sector-wide membership in 2011.

Key motivations for Foundation Members joining AusLSA include a desire to identify opportunities for business efficiencies, an enthusiasm to enhance the reputation of the legal sector as a whole, and the growing demand from employees for their employers to take sustainability issues seriously.

According to Kelvin O'Connor, Chief Operating Officer from Henry Davis York, "HDY has been developing and demonstrating its commitment to sustainability and CSR principles over the past few years through its public participation in the Corporate Responsibility Index and integrated Sustainability Reporting. Following from the UK model, we see AusLSA as a perfect vehicle to encourage our peers and external stakeholders to adopt the same principles and help develop industry benchmarks that others can adopt".

Brendan Bateman, Partner at Clayton Utz, said that "Clayton Utz joined AusLSA with the aim of working with other firms to develop a cohesive, strategic best practice approach to sustainability. Applying these practices will enable Clayton Utz to reach targets and minimise the firm's overall footprint, while at the same time contributing to an industry wide sustainability improvement process. We are proud to be a founding member of AusLSA and are inspired by the collaborative approach."

The AusLSA idea was developed by a group of enthusiastic lawyers in collaboration with [Net Balance Foundation](#), one of the largest and fastest growing providers of sustainability advice, assurance and research in Australia. Net Balance Foundation is a not-for-profit entity within the Net Balance Management Group, and utilises Net Balance resources to offer sustainability research and advisory services to SMEs, not-for-profit organisations and industry associations.

Terence Jeyaretnam, Founding Director of Net Balance considers that "AusLSA is an excellent model for bringing together the experience and expertise of member firms to help carve out a path towards a more sustainable sector, while also enhancing the competitiveness of member firms in the market."

Emily Wilson has been recruited to project manage the development of AusLSA.

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