**REPORT TO BENEFICIARIES 2021 – 2022**

**Profile**

I have much pleasure in delivering the Annual Report of the Law Foundation-Queensland Trust (LF-Q).

The LF-Q Trust Deed was settled by the then Chief Justice for Queensland, His Excellency the Honourable Paul de Jersey AC on the 15th November 2002.

Queensland Law Foundation Pty Ltd (QLF) is trustee for LF-Q, which by Court approval received the assets previously held by Law Foundation Insurance Trust.

The following is the twentyieth annual report to beneficiaries setting out the activities and business affairs of LF-Q for the 2022 – 20223 financial year. Included in this report are the

LF-Q’s Annual Accounts and Auditor’s Report.

The beneficiaries of the LF-Q are named in the Trust Deed and include the Queensland Law Society Inc. (QLS), as well as practitioner members of the QLS.

The mental health of practitioners continues as an area of great need and never more so than these last four years with the flow on effects of Covid 19 and the effects of inflation on the cost of living and business operations.

The Board continues to support the QLS in the assistance it offers its members via projects administered by the QLS for the benefit of members who are having difficulty in these unusual times.

QLF continues to support its beneficiaries through the operation of its own programs designed to assist the solicitor practitioners who are members of the QLS.

This assistance is made available through the Solicitor Assist Hotline Program, the Solicitor Assist Helping Hand Program and the Benevolent Fund.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**Mr Raoul Giudes,**

* Elected to Chair the Board from 29 August, 2001;
* Re-appointed a Director in December, 2019;
* Partner of Guides & Elliot; and
* A QLS Past President.

**Mr Michael Meadows**

* Re-appointed a Director in December, 2019;
* Former senior partner of Flower & Hart;
* Former consultant to the firm of K&L Gates Lawyers; and
* Deputy Chair of Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd.

**Mr Glenn Ferguson AM**

* Re-appointed as a director in December, 2019;
* Managing Director at FC Lawyers;
* Former Chair of WorkCover Queensland;
* Past President of Law Asia;
* Past President of the Law Council of Australia;
* Govenor of the College of Law Queensland;
* Foundation Fellow of the Australian Academy of Law;
* Chair of Lexon Insurance Pte Ltd;
* Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors; and
* A QLS Past President.

**Mrs Joan Bennett**

* Re-appointed a Director in December, 2019;
* The former principal of Bennett & Associates and
* A former consultant to Forbes Dowling Lawyers.

**Mr Peter Short AM**

* Re-appointed as a Director in December, 2019;
* A former partner of Allens;
* A past president of QLS; and
* A past president of the Law Council of Australia.

**Ms Annette Bradfield**

* Re-appointed as a director in December, 2019;
* Former partner of Fox Bradfield Lawyers and now a consultant to the firm of Porter Davies Lawyers; and
* A past president of QLS.

**Mrs Claire Hart**

* Re-appointed as a director in December, 2019;
* Formerly employed by K&L Gates Lawyers; and
* Now an associate of McCullough Robertson Lawyers.

**Mr Warren Denny**

* Appointed to the Board in December, 2019;
* Former partner of K&L Gates Lawyers;
* Now a partner of Piper Alderman Lawyers

**Mr Luke Murphy**

* Appointed to the Board as the representative of the Queensland Law Society in February, 2021;
* Partner of MurphySchmidt Lawyers; and
* A past president of QLS.

**Investment of Funds**

Under the provisions of the Trust Deed, the capital and income of the trust fund is held on behalf of the beneficiaries named in the trust.

The Board, represented by a Committee comprising three of its members, works closely with the investment advisors.

**Support for the Beneficiaries affected by the Covid 19 pandemic**

By way of support to its beneficiaries during this last financial year, the Board has continued its support of the QLS in its provision of specialists services to members who continue to be affected by the Covid 19 pandemic.

Through the success of the projects initially undertaken, support to the QLS has broardened to meet the external costs of a suite of member-facing services to improve the quality of law by assisting the competences of small and micro practices in identified areas of need.

**Schemes to assist solicitors in need**

For many years, the QLF Board has acknowledged the personal and practical difficulties experienced by a number of QLS member practitioners. These difficulties have come to light through the QLS’s Professional Standards Department and the profession’s insurer, Lexon Pte Ltd.

Reports from these bodies indicate that some solicitors unfortunately continue to face health and/or personal or financial difficulties, including serious illness of a family member etc. In consequence, these solicitors often encounter difficulties within their practices usually of a health or financial nature.

In co-operation with QLS, QLF has established programs to provide on the spot advice, as well hands on, in practice, assistance to the member practitioners of QLS, free of charge to that QLS member.

Confidentiality is assured, with the Solicitor Assist services being provided by practising solicitors on a Solicitor/Client basis. Other service providers (eg accountants, practice managers etc) similarly operate under strict confidentiality arrangements.

The services provided by these programs are:-

**1**. SOLICITORS**HOTLINE**

 The Hotline is a telephone advisory service which operates, so far as is practicable,

 24/7.

It is manned by two (2) experienced practitioners who have each operated in private practice in Queensland for over 30 years, and who fully understand the day to day difficulties which arise from running a practice while attending clients’ needs.

This service, the QLF is very pleased to advise, continues to be extensively used by member practitioners in need of practical advice, or even just as a “sounding board” for a sole member practitioner.

**2.** SOLICITORS**HELPINGHAND**

In the event that a phone call is not enough, and in-depth specialist advice is required, or if there is a need for support to address difficult issues arising in the course of practice, the QLF has established the Solicitors’ Helping Hand Panel.

 This panel comprises experienced legal practitioners who are willing to assist in this

 role.

Their areas of expertise are varied and comprehensive and any member practitioner seeking assistance is referred to a panel member, appropriate for the matter at hand.

As previously mentioned, confidentiality is assured as all advice is offered on a solicitor/client basis.

1. **PRACTITIONERS’ BENEVOLENT FUND**

In addition to the HOT**LINE** and the HELPING**HAND** projects, the QLF has also established a Benevolent Fund to assist practitioner members of the QLS, their families and dependents in times of financial difficulty.

Assistance is provided:

* On a strictly confidential basis;
* Through a modest, but unsecured and interest free short term loan;
* To applicants approved by the QLF.

Financial difficulty could arise from a range of circumstances, not necessarily from a

practice related issue, example, serious illness or an accident.

1. **PRIMARY PRODUCERS’ LEGAL HANDBOOK**

As the Primary Producers Legal Handbook was last revised in 2012, the Board considered that this most popular booklet should be updated to reflect the most recent position of the law in this area.

Messrs Thynne & Macartney, through its most senior expert in this area, Mr Peter Kenny, was again engaged to revise the material provided in the handbook. The revised edition has been distributed in hardcopy, and is available on the QLS or QLF websites.

1. **GENERATIVE AI AND ITS USE BY LAWYERS**

The Queensland University of Technology has approached QLF suggesting that the QLF partner with it in a research proposal on the impact of incorporating AI into legal practices and its impact on these businesses.

1. **QLF WEBSITE**

The QLF has established its own website which can be accessed by all QLS member practitioners.

The website, [www.qlf.com.au](http://www.qlf.com.au) informs visitors of the philosophy of QLF, and provides information on all areas of assistance offered by QLF, as well as contact details for QLS members to access the assistance provided through its programs.