

11 March 2016

Ms Kerin Leonard
Project Manager
Access to Justice Review
Departments of Justice and Regulation
Level 24
121 Exhibition St
Melbourne VIC 3000

Email: accesstojusticereview@justice.vic.gov.au

Dear Ms Leonard

Access to Justice Review

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) welcomes the Department of Justice and Regulation's review aimed at improving access to justice for Victorians.

The ICA is the representative association for the general insurance industry in Australia¹. Many member of the ICA are liability insurers. Our members are therefore very interested in matters concerning the resolution and adjudication of civil liability claims.

The ICA has previously provided a submission to the Australian Productivity Commission's Review of Access to Justice Arrangements².

As outlined in our submission to the Productivity Commission, access to justice frameworks that reduce dispute duration and legal costs benefit all parties involved in a dispute. Therefore the ICA supports measures that promote alternative dispute resolution and encourage more timely, efficient and fair resolution of legal disputes.

More specifically, the ICA supports the establishment of a single entry legal referral service that can provide people with information on the most appropriate avenue for resolving their dispute and where they can obtain further assistance.

¹ Our members represent more than 90 percent of total premium income written by private sector general insurers. Insurance Council members provide insurance products ranging from those usually purchased by individuals (such as home and contents insurance, travel insurance, motor vehicle insurance) to those purchased by small businesses and larger organisations (such as product and public liability insurance, professional indemnity insurance, commercial property, and directors and officers insurance).

² The ICA's Submission to the Productivity Report is available at:
http://www.insurancecouncil.com.au/assets/submission/2014/2014_05_21_Mr%20Warren%20Mundy_Productivity%20Commission.pdf

The ICA also acknowledges the difficulties faced by self-represented litigants in relation to understanding and navigating the legal system and the court process. These difficulties can lead to extensive delays in resolution of civil disputes, adding undue stress to claimants and significant additional legal costs to other parties to proceedings. Therefore the ICA supports investigation into options for providing greater support to self-represented litigants.

We trust these comments are of assistance.

The ICA would be happy to provide assistance and further feedback on any of the topics being examined as part the review.

If you have any questions, please contact Vicki Mullen, General Manager, Consumer Relations and Market Development Directorate via email vmullen@insurancecouncil.com.au, or phone (02) 9253 5120.

Yours sincerely



Robert Whelan
Executive Director and CEO