



THE LAW SOCIETY  
OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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Mr John Cattle  
Acting Chief Executive Officer  
Law Council of Australia  
DX 5719 Canberra

By email: [alex.kershaw@lawcouncil.asn.au](mailto:alex.kershaw@lawcouncil.asn.au)

Dear Mr Cattle,

### **National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2024 – Public Consultation Paper**

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to a Law Council submission to the Department of Home Affairs regarding the Public Consultation Paper on Australia's National Action Plan to Combat Modern Slavery 2020-2024 ('the new National Action Plan').

The Law Society's response is informed by its Human Rights Committee.

#### **General recommendations**

The Law Society supports the overarching aim of the proposed goals set out in the Consultation Paper, namely to "address the full cycle of exploitation, from recruitment to reintegration, and... to give equal weight to the critical areas of prevention, enforcement and victim support." We have the following suggestions for the new National Action Plan to ensure it achieves this important aim.

- In relation to goal 1, the Law Society recommends the new National Action Plan takes into account relevant international instruments that Australia has either endorsed or voted to adopt since the *National Action Plan to Combat Human Trafficking and Slavery 2015-19* was prepared, including: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup>; the Call to Action to End Forced Labour, Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking<sup>2</sup>; and the UN General Assembly Third Committee resolution on improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons<sup>3</sup>.
- The Law Society suggests that the new National Action Plan should place emphasis on ensuring victims of modern slavery are aware of various support and protection measures available to them. This awareness-raising should make clear that foreign

<sup>1</sup> UN General Assembly, *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1.

<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister the Rt Hon Theresa May MP, *A Call to Action to end forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking*, 19 September 2017 <<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-call-to-action-to-end-forced-labour-modern-slavery-and-human-trafficking>>


<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, *Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 17 December 2015: Improving the coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons*, 16 February 2016, A/RES/70/179.

nationals without a valid visa who are suspected of being victims of modern slavery may remain lawfully in Australia, including both on a temporary and permanent basis, depending on the circumstances, under the Human Trafficking Visa Framework. This emphasis particularly relates to proposed goals 2 and 10 in the new National Action Plan.

- The Law Society recommends that the new National Action Plan make provision for additional education for business and corporations as a supplement to the Home Affairs Department's *Guidance for Reporting Entities* document, in order to assist these entities in identifying and addressing modern slavery occurring within supply chains.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Law Council's submission regarding the new National Action Plan. Questions may be directed in the first instance to Andrew Small, Acting Principal Policy Lawyer, at (02) 9926 0252 or [andrew.small@lawsociety.com.au](mailto:andrew.small@lawsociety.com.au).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R Harvey', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Richard Harvey  
**President**