

# Connect

## Tribunals Review Newsletter



**Edition four  
June 2009**

### **A message from the Director-General, Rachel Hunter**

Welcome to the fourth edition of *Connect*, the e-newsletter written especially for tribunal staff, members and stakeholders affected by the creation of the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).

Firstly, I would like to take this opportunity to say how pleased I am to be back at the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (JAG) as Director-General. Since my return, I have taken a keen interest in the creation of QCAT and I look forward to being involved in its ongoing success. The introduction of legislation into parliament last month represents a significant milestone in this endeavour.

Staff have also recently completed their transition survey to help identify positions they would like to transfer to in the new QCAT registry. Information sessions were held to provide details about the recruitment process that will be used for the transition. If you have questions about your transition to QCAT, I urge you to contact the transition team.

To begin the transfer process, I am pleased to announce that Louise Logan has secured the position of Principal Registrar – the first appointee to the new registry. Louise will bring extensive experience to the role having been the Principal Registrar for the Guardianship and Administration Tribunal (GAAT) and the Children Services Tribunal (CST) since September 2007. Staff will be advised when Louise commences in her new role. For now, I am sure you will join with me in wishing her every success as Principal Registrar of QCAT.

On behalf of the tribunals review team, I thank you for your support and appreciate the continuing quality service you provide to our clients.

Rachel Hunter  
**Director-General**  
**Department of Justice and Attorney-General**

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Department of  
Justice and Attorney-General

## Legislation update

In February 2009, two Bills were released for public consultation. The QCAT Bill 2009 establishes the tribunal, provides for the appointment of the president and members and sets out the generic functions and powers. The QCAT (Jurisdiction Provisions) Bill 2009 amends more than 200 pieces of legislation to give QCAT jurisdiction to deal with a range of different matters that are currently dealt with by individual tribunals.

The focus of the consultation was to ensure that the legislation will work in practice. Stakeholders consulted generally supported the Bills and made many useful suggestions to improve the technical operation of the legislation.

The Bills were introduced into parliament on 19 May 2009 and passed on 17 June. They are available at the Queensland Government [legislation website](#) and will commence on 1 December 2009.

## Workforce management update

Workforce management activities have been conducted for staff since the release of the Mercer Report, organisational chart and workforce management plan. Information sessions were conducted to provide amalgamating tribunal staff with the opportunity to learn more about the new registry structure and transition processes.

In addition, role description information sessions were also held in April, following the release of the role descriptions developed for QCAT. These sessions helped staff to identify roles into which they would have the necessary skills and abilities to transfer at level.

Staff are encouraged to regularly visit the JAGnet tribunals review project intranet webpage located under 'Justice Administration' to access key documents and more workforce management information.

For workforce management enquiries please contact Cherie Herbst on 3405 3769.

## Staff transition survey

All permanent tribunal employees have now submitted a transition survey, identifying their preferred transfer positions in the new QCAT structure.

Updates on the transition process will be provided as the project team begins reviewing the survey. Staff will be advised of vacant positions including those at a higher level, as they become known.

Should you have any enquiries about the survey or filling of positions, contact our human resources consultant, Cherie Herbst on 3405 3769.

## Upcoming events

### Change management

A range of support activities has been developed to provide support to staff transitioning to QCAT. An updated calendar of support activities including proposed dates for sessions is available on the tribunals review project intranet page. Staff are encouraged to take the opportunity to participate in the activities offered.

### Creating a positive culture

Understanding workplace culture and providing support to employees are important to the success of any organisation. Information sessions planned for 27 and 29 July will focus on creating and maintaining a positive workplace culture.

### Supervisory skills

Working as a supervisor requires specific skills. Sessions will be held on 5 and 11 August to assist staff taking on supervisory positions in QCAT to gain a practical knowledge of the responsibilities involved. Information about the sessions can be found on the intranet.

## Regional and rural service delivery

A key element in the delivery of effective, efficient and accessible justice services is being responsive to Queenslanders, wherever they live. QCAT will need flexible and adaptable arrangements for the delivery of services across the state.

The project team is consulting with stakeholders and researching current arrangements to develop a QCAT regional services delivery plan. All aspects of regional and rural service delivery are being considered to ensure the diverse needs of QCAT's clients will be met.

It is likely that existing departmental service delivery outlets (such as the courts) will deliver QCAT's regional and rural services. This will mean minimal change to the current registry support role provided in the regions.

The regional and rural service delivery plan will outline the recommended service delivery model. It will include details on the role of regional justice service delivery centres, facilities, information technology, registry support, marketing, financial management and governance.

Further information will be circulated in the coming months about QCAT's regional and rural service delivery.

For further enquiries please email or telephone Joanne Bugden, Assistant Director on 3247 5281.

## Training update

Our new training manager, Laura Liebrick has been busy developing training schedules to ensure staff have the necessary skills to perform their duties when QCAT commences. Further information on training will be released closer to the dates.

Guardianship and Administration Tribunal (GAAT) staff will move to the new case management system, CaseWorks on 3 August. Preparations are underway for their training which will be conducted in June and July. Contact Laura Liebrick on 3235 9305 if you have any training queries.

## Are you playing your part in the changes?

What you can (and need) to do to help us move forward:

- stay informed
- provide regular and honest feedback
- share information, knowledge and concerns with the project team and your co-workers (e.g. at team or management meetings)
- take action to get clarification on issues, contact the project team if necessary and then tell others about the facts
- support your co-workers – understand and respect the differences you encounter. Allow staff to express how they are feeling – some staff will be naturally excited while others will be naturally hesitant or nervous.

For further enquiries please call Gayle Jolly on 3234 1301 or email [gayle.jolly@justice.qld.gov.au](mailto:gayle.jolly@justice.qld.gov.au).

## Next round of lunchbox information sessions

The next information sessions are planned for 14 and 16 July.

Topics to be discussed include:

- the status and recent achievements of the project
- legislation update
- corporate branding
- the QCAT website
- registry accommodation
- support activities.

These sessions will have a practical focus providing staff with current and relevant information as we count down the final months prior to QCAT going live.

More information about the sessions above will be available on the intranet in early July. For further information, call Gayle Jolly, Change Manager on 3234 1301.



Example of QCAT brochure

## Project team

Our project team is strengthening with the commencement of additional staff to assist with preparations for QCAT's go live on 1 December. Members of the team will continue to liaise with tribunal staff during the coming months as roles are finalised, business processes refined, and training conducted. One special member of our team who helps keep everything together behind the scenes is our executive assistant, Mia Latimer. Mia is always happy to assist and can direct your queries if you are unsure who to contact.

While the majority of project staff are located on Level 2, 50 Ann Street, the information technology and training teams have now moved to Level 11, 259 Queen Street. Other staff will also be working from this location from time to time to be more accessible to tribunal staff.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact the project team. For a current list of contact details please visit the intranet page.

## Marketing and communication team update

After refining and reviewing concepts, QCAT's corporate identity has been approved by the steering committee.

We now have a brand that is uniquely QCAT which will become instantly recognisable to the general public via the name style, icons, colour palette and other graphical elements used to represent the amalgamated tribunals.

The marketing and communication team is pushing ahead with applying QCAT's new look to a range of marketing and information media, including:

- website and intranet
- factsheets
- forms
- publications
- banners
- document templates.

Although final designs will be presented to registry staff during the coming months, draft examples appear throughout this newsletter.

## Information technology and business processes update

The business processes development for QCAT has begun. The initial phase involves developing standard processes and procedures for QCAT. Following this, variations of these general processes for specific jurisdictions will be developed.

For enquiries please call our IT Manager, Georgia Maw on 3227 8188.



*Example of QCAT brochure*



*Above: Melinda Standfield, Vanessa Sandhu and Belinda Delacour from the marketing and communication team working on QCAT corporate branding.*

## Focus on: The Children Services Tribunal

We chat with the registrar of the Children Services Tribunal, Luke Tilley.

### What is the role of the tribunal?

The tribunal provides merit-based reviews of administrative decisions made concerning children in care by the Department of Communities (Child Safety Services). Decisions include those about:

- in whose care a child is placed
- restricting a child's contact with parents and family members
- people who want to adopt a child
- child care licensing.

The tribunal also reviews employment screening (blue card) decisions made by the Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian.

### Who typically uses the tribunal?

Parents and other relatives of children in care, foster and kinship carers, children and young people, and prospective employees (child-related services).

### How many registry staff does the tribunal have?

Eight - principal registrar, registrar, senior case manager, senior tribunal support officer, two tribunal support officers, and two administration officers.

### How many members does the tribunal have?

The tribunal is comprised of a part-time president; a part-time deputy president and 30 sessional members.

### What happens when a matter is referred to the tribunal?

After a matter is lodged, the registry may seek further information from the applicant or decision maker to confirm jurisdiction. A panel will then be constituted, taking into account the knowledge, qualifications and experiences of members to best suit each individual case.

A preliminary conference is conducted to clarify issues in dispute and identify what further information and other preliminary processes need to occur prior to the full hearing of the matter. If the issues in dispute are unable to be resolved a full hearing will be conducted.

### What types of hearings does the tribunal have?

The tribunal conducts preliminary conferences, stay hearings and final hearings.

### What is the role of registry staff in the tribunal process?

Registry staff look after intake, case management, hearing support and administrative services for the tribunal.

### What would you like other amalgamating tribunals to know about your tribunal?

The main principle guiding the tribunal's work is that the welfare and best interests of a child is paramount. The tribunal conducts proceedings in a way that promotes the interests, rights and wellbeing of children involved in the proceedings.



Above: Staff from the Children Services Tribunal



Example of QCAT brochure

### Visit our intranet pages

Full of useful information, documents and presentations, visit the new [tribunals review project JAGnet page](#).

### Visit our website

Full of useful information, presentations and demonstrations, click to [visit our website](#).

### Join our mailing list

[Visit the tribunals review website](#) then follow the link.

### Want to have your say?

[Contact us via email](#) or [ask us a question](#) via the website.