

## ETHICS CHECKS FOR LAW FIRMS

### Instructions for survey managers at ILPs undertaking a compliance audit

The Commission expects the legal practitioner directors of incorporated legal practices that are undertaking a web-based survey as a form of compliance audit to appoint a survey manager to oversee the process. It is not a difficult or time consuming role but it's crucial to the success of the exercise and best fulfilled by someone who has management authority within the firm (a legal practitioner director, say) or alternatively someone who has clear delegated authority to see the process through to completion.

The survey manager has 4 key tasks as follows:

Key tasks	Tick when completed
<p><b>1. to ensure that all the firm's employees complete the survey.</b></p> <p>The surveys work best when all or most of a firm's employees take part, and if it has more than one office, all or most of its employees at each of its offices.</p> <p>This allows the firm to gauge the consistency of its ethical culture by testing whether the different levels and classifications of its employees and where relevant employees at its different branch offices are all 'on the same page' in relation to the issues being surveyed. The more people who complete a survey, the better and more reliable the results.</p>	
<p><b>2. to give the firm's employees clear instructions about how to complete the survey.</b></p> <p>Send them an email that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ attaches the document 'Instructions for employees at ILPs undertaking a compliance audit'</li> <li>▪ includes the link to the survey instrument</li> <li>▪ gives them the firm's (and, where applicable, their branch office codes) to enter at question 2.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> the Commission will have assigned the firm an 8 digit code and conveyed the code to the firm's legal practitioner director(s) in the letter requiring the firm to undertake the survey. It is crucial that everyone enters the code correctly. This is the mechanism that allows us to calculate the survey results for the firm as a whole and, for those firms that have more than one office, to calculate the results for each of its branch offices and so to gauge the consistency of its culture across its various offices.</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ gives them the answer to question 3 (which asks them to identify their firm’s business structure)</li> <li>▪ gives them the answer to question 4 (which asks them how many people at their firm hold practising certificates)</li> <li>▪ tells them the end date by which they must have completed the survey.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> the Commission will have specified the end date in the letter it sent the firm’s legal practitioner director(s) requiring the firm to undertake the survey. Experience tells us it helps for survey managers send out reminders.</p> <p>Survey managers should also consider asking everyone at the firm to complete the survey at a particular time on a particular day. The surveys sometimes work best when everyone at the firm completes the survey at the same time.</p>	
<p><b>3. to notify the Commission’s Practice Compliance Manager when the survey has been completed.</b></p> <p>The survey should ordinarily be completed by the specified end date but that might not always be possible. The confirmation that the survey has been completed tells us when to pull off the results.</p>	
<p><b>4. to consider convening a staff meeting or other relevant forum to discuss the results.</b></p> <p>Consider also asking the Commission to produce more detailed cross-tabulated results comparing, for example, how more senior and more junior people at the firm or people from the firm’s different branch offices answered the questions.</p> <p>The results can be very useful in helping the firm identify ways and means by which the firm can strengthen its ethical culture.</p>	

Please don’t hesitate to contact the Commission’s Practice Compliance Manager on 3406 7737 or by email at [lsc@lsc.qld.gov.au](mailto:lsc@lsc.qld.gov.au) if you have any queries.