









1. Are you doing this survey as (please tick)

		Response Percent	Response Count
A member of a participating law firm at your firm's request?		100.0%	102
An interested individual on your own initiative?		0.0%	0
answered question			102
skipped question			0





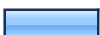


2. If you are completing this survey as a member of a participating law firm, please enter the code for your firm. IMPORTANT: PLEASE ENSURE YOU ENTER THE SIX LETTER CODE EXACTLY AS GIVEN TO YOU BY YOUR FIRM'S SURVEY MANAGER ENTER CODE HERE

		Response Count
		78
answered question		78
skipped question		24



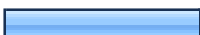
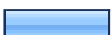
3. What best describes the legal practice where you work?

		Response Percent	Response Count
A sole practice with one practising certificate holder		25.0%	17
A sole practice with a principal and employed solicitors		39.7%	27
A partnership with two or more principals		2.9%	2
A partnership with two or more principals and employed solicitors		5.9%	4
An incorporated legal practice with one practising certificate holder		4.4%	3
An incorporated legal practice with a principal and employed solicitors		16.2%	11
An incorporated legal practice with two or more principals		0.0%	0
An incorporated legal practice with two or more principals and employed solicitors		5.9%	4
Other (please specify)		0.0%	0
answered question			68
skipped question			34





4. What is the primary area of practice of your law firm?

		Response Percent	Response Count
General practice		23.9%	16
Personal injuries		3.0%	2
Conveyancing		6.0%	4
Wills and estate planning		4.5%	3
Family Law		14.9%	10
Deceased estates and trusts		0.0%	0
Commercial		22.4%	15
Other (please specify)		25.4%	17
answered question			67
skipped question			35

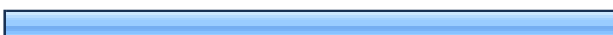

5. Where is your law practice located?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Brisbane CBD		23.9%	16
Brisbane Suburbs		28.4%	19
Regional City		31.3%	21
Regional Town		16.4%	11
Interstate		0.0%	0
answered question			67
skipped question			35



6. Please tick the box below that describes your role in the practice

		Response Percent	Response Count
Principal		71.6%	48
Employed solicitor		19.4%	13
Paralegal		1.5%	1
Law clerk		0.0%	0
Conveyancing clerk		0.0%	0
Other		7.5%	5
answered question			67
skipped question			35










7. This survey is for legal practitioners and practice staff who are actively involved with clients and billing clients. Does your work in the practice meet that description?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		98.5%	66
No		1.5%	1
Other (please specify)			0
answered question			67
skipped question			35



8. Do you hold a current practising certificate?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		92.5%	62
No		7.5%	5
answered question			67
skipped question			35

9. If you hold a current practising certificate, for how long have you held it?

		Response Percent	Response Count
<5 years		16.9%	11
5 to 9 years		10.8%	7
10 to 14 years		13.8%	9
15 to 19 years		12.3%	8
20 to 24 years		12.3%	8
25 to 29 years		15.4%	10
30 to 34 years		9.2%	6
35 to 39 years		0.0%	0
40+ years		4.6%	3
N/A		4.6%	3
answered question			65
skipped question			37

10. What is your gender?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Male		54.5%	36
Female		45.5%	30
answered question			66
skipped question			36

11. At a client's first interview, do you (or does somebody in your practice) discuss the following with clients?

	Yes	No	I don't know	Response Count
The basis for calculating their bill for legal costs	89.4% (59)	7.6% (5)	3.0% (2)	66
Preferred billing method (eg hourly rate, fixed fee etc)	80.3% (53)	15.2% (10)	4.5% (3)	66
Preferred format of bills	30.8% (20)	58.5% (38)	10.8% (7)	65
Arrangements for on going costs disclosure	71.2% (47)	24.2% (16)	4.5% (3)	66
Time frames for costs updates	50.8% (33)	41.5% (27)	7.7% (5)	65
Arrangements for dealing with complaints	41.5% (27)	50.8% (33)	7.7% (5)	65
How often the client would like to receive accounts	45.3% (29)	48.4% (31)	6.3% (4)	64
Who in the practice will be working on the matter and their charge out rates	83.3% (55)	13.6% (9)	3.0% (2)	66
How and when payment will be made	76.9% (50)	18.5% (12)	4.6% (3)	65
Other (please specify)				6
answered question				66
skipped question				36


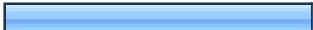




12. How does your practice estimate what the costs will be for a client?

	Yes	No	Response Count
Use of historical costs information to identify what similar work has cost	91.1% (51)	8.9% (5)	56
Predicted time-cost calculation	86.5% (45)	13.5% (7)	52
Going over earlier accounts	42.5% (17)	57.5% (23)	40
Reference to standard fees	77.1% (37)	22.9% (11)	48
		Other (please specify)	9
answered question			62
skipped question			40

13. Does your practice use any of the following billing methods ?

	Yes	No	Response Count
Time based (hourly)	93.7% (59)	6.3% (4)	63
Hourly fee with cap or limit	36.7% (18)	63.3% (31)	49
No win No Fee	18.4% (9)	81.6% (40)	49
Fixed fee by agreement	86.4% (51)	13.6% (8)	59
Task based billing (for routine work eg production of wills, EPAs)	72.4% (42)	27.6% (16)	58
Value billing (value agreed at the end of the matter)	22.7% (10)	77.3% (34)	44
Other (partial) conditional fee arrangements	16.3% (7)	83.7% (36)	43
Interim billing	84.5% (49)	15.5% (9)	58
Hybrid arrangements (eg part fixed/part time-costing)	60.4% (29)	39.6% (19)	48
		Other (please specify)	3
answered question			66
skipped question			36




14. Where time billing is utilised in relation to hours worked, what is your practice's policy/guideline as to when times should be entered onto a timesheet? (pick one only)

		Response Percent	Response Count
There is no policy		14.3%	9
Immediately		49.2%	31
Same day		28.6%	18
Within the week		1.6%	1
By the end of the month		1.6%	1
Other (please specify)		4.8%	3
answered question			63
skipped question			39





15. Does your practice have a policy or procedure in place to

	Yes	No	Response Count
Manage the matter to ensure consistency with the original estimate(s)	81.4% (48)	18.6% (11)	59
Ensure the costs being charged are consistent with the practice's own internal costs/billing policies	85.7% (48)	14.3% (8)	56
Discuss a provisional bill with the client	62.5% (35)	37.5% (21)	56
Make valid costs disclosures	94.9% (56)	5.1% (3)	59
Adhere to the costs agreement	94.9% (56)	5.1% (3)	59
		Other (please specify)	4
answered question			63
skipped question			39

16. Do you provide clients with regular costs updates?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		73.4%	47
No		9.4%	6
The matters I deal with have short time frames only		17.2%	11
answered question			64
skipped question			38



17. If you provide clients with costs updates, which of the following methods or procedures do you most frequently use?

		Response Percent	Response Count
IT systems (time recording/accounts) to prompt when milestones are met in terms of accrued WIP		20.0%	11
A personal bring up system		34.5%	19
The client can check WIP or current costs on-line		0.0%	0
Regular itemized accounts unless inappropriate eg for a routine conveyance		80.0%	44
Other (please specify)		5.5%	3
answered question			55
skipped question			47

18. Does your practice review a client's bill before sending to

	Yes	No	I don't know	Response Count
Ensure the costs you charge are consistent with the client agreement	100.0% (65)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	65
Ensure the costs you charge are consistent with your professional obligations	95.2% (59)	3.2% (2)	1.6% (1)	62
Ensure that disbursements claimed have been reasonably incurred	98.4% (63)	1.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	64
Ensure that disbursements claimed are reasonable in amount	96.9% (62)	3.1% (2)	0.0% (0)	64
Ensure the amount of the bill is fair and reasonable and not excessive	98.5% (64)	1.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	65
Other (please specify)				0
answered question				66
skipped question				36

19. Does your practice measure estimate accuracy? (eg by comparing initial estimates to the actual bill)

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		72.3%	47
No		27.7%	18
answered question			65
skipped question			37

20. What is the procedure in your practice if it seems a client's bill will be different to the original estimate for dealing with their matter?

	Yes	No	Response Count
Send an email to the client detailing the change	76.1% (35)	23.9% (11)	46
Discuss the change in person with the client	84.6% (44)	15.4% (8)	52
Follow up an initial phone call with a letter that requires a response	51.2% (22)	48.8% (21)	43
Inform the client of the change and assume they have no objection to the change if they do not respond	41.3% (19)	58.7% (27)	46
		Other (please specify)	4
answered question			62
skipped question			40

21. Does your practice provide clients with an itemised account ("itemised" in this question broadly means that the account allows the client to readily see what services are being charged at what fees).

	yes	no	Response Count
Routinely at regular billing intervals	72.4% (42)	27.6% (16)	58
Not routinely, only when requested by the client	33.3% (13)	66.7% (26)	39
Routinely at the completion of the matter	56.5% (26)	43.5% (20)	46
Dependent on agreed client preference at the start of the matter	35.0% (14)	65.0% (26)	40
		Other (please specify)	6
			answered question 66
			skipped question 36

22. Does your practice have billing policies and/or procedures in respect of when it is appropriate to bill for any of the following?

	Yes	No	Response Count
Drafting/document preparation	81.0% (51)	19.0% (12)	63
Research	74.2% (46)	25.8% (16)	62
Travel	74.2% (46)	25.8% (16)	62
Waiting (eg for Court/meetings)	63.9% (39)	36.1% (22)	61
Internal conferences	67.2% (39)	32.8% (19)	58
Internal reviews of files	63.8% (37)	36.2% (21)	58
Supervision meetings	56.1% (32)	43.9% (25)	57
File Management	64.9% (37)	35.1% (20)	57
Administration	67.2% (39)	32.8% (19)	58
Recycling a document prepared for another client	46.3% (25)	53.7% (29)	54

Please comment if you wish

9



answered question

64


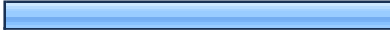
skipped question

38



23. Does your practice usually bill for care and consideration?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		9.2%	6
No		90.8%	59
answered question			65
skipped question			37

24. If you do bill for care and consideration, is it appropriate to charge care and consideration when the bill is drawn up on a time basis?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		37.5%	12
No		62.5%	20
answered question			32
skipped question			70






25. Is it appropriate to charge care and consideration when you draw the bill up on a court scale?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes		66.7%	32
No		33.3%	16
answered question			48
skipped question			54

26. Under what circumstances do you believe you are entitled to claim care and consideration?

	Response Count
	38
answered question	38
skipped question	64

27. Do you review your billing practices to ensure that you comply with your professional obligations? Please tick any that apply

		Response Percent	Response Count
Regularly as a matter of course		61.3%	38
When there are legislative changes		62.9%	39
If it seems problems are arising for clients		33.9%	21
If prompted by good advice received when attending external training		56.5%	35
I am confident that my billing practices always comply with my professional obligations		29.0%	18
answered question			62
skipped question			40

28. Does your firm gauge client satisfaction with costs disclosure and/or billing?

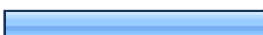
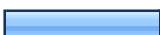
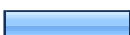

	Yes	No	Response Count
We ask the client at the end of the matter through a meeting or phone call	33.3% (16)	66.7% (32)	48
We monitor for any problems arising	89.3% (50)	10.7% (6)	56
We ask clients to complete our client satisfaction survey	27.5% (14)	72.5% (37)	51
We rely on clients telling us if they are dissatisfied with costs disclosures or billing	89.1% (49)	10.9% (6)	55
We gauge satisfaction by the recovery percentage or % of bill amounts that are ultimately recovered	35.4% (17)	64.6% (31)	48

Other (please specify) 7

answered question 63

skipped question 39

29. In the last 12 months, approximately how much training or instruction have you received from external providers on billing practices?

		Response Percent	Response Count
None		41.5%	27
Less than one hour		24.6%	16
One to two hours		20.0%	13
More than two hours		13.8%	9

Please describe the training that took place if you received training 12

answered question 65

skipped question 37

30. A client retains a firm on the basis that they will be charged on an hourly rate. The client is given an estimate of work for \$10,000.00. At the conclusion of the matter, the account comes to \$5,000.00 on a time costing basis. The practice charges the client \$9,000.00 as the work performed by the firm was of a high quality and the outcome exceptional.


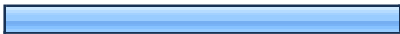


	Yes	No	Response Count
In your opinion, is the billing practice ethically appropriate?	6.5% (4)	93.5% (58)	62
Would your practice encourage this practice?	6.6% (4)	93.4% (57)	61
Does your practice have a policy/procedure in relation to this issue?	50.0% (29)	50.0% (29)	58
Have you ever been given guidance/advice in relation to the practices described above?	41.0% (25)	59.0% (36)	61

Please comment further if, for example, some answers depend on the circumstances or the matter.




18

answered question	62
skipped question	40

31. You work in a conveyancing practice where clients agree to pay professional fees plus disbursements. You become aware that your firm commenced a policy of including a surcharge of \$10.00 in all property search disbursements. (eg property search actual costs is \$20.00. The bill would show the disbursement as \$30.00). What would you do?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Nothing		1.6%	1
Discuss the matter with a supervisor or managing partner/legal practitioner/director		63.5%	40
Inform the Legal Services Commission after speaking to management.		3.2%	2
Other (please specify)		31.7%	20
answered question			63
skipped question			39

32. You act for a client in litigation and schedule court appearances for three different files on the same day which deal with the same issue (eg they are all applications by your client to strike out three different claims for want of prosecution). You spend a total of four hours at court (including waiting time). What do you bill the client?

		Response Percent	Response Count
4 hours for each matter		1.6%	1
The actual time spent on each matter		81.0%	51
Other (please describe)		17.5%	11
answered question			63
skipped question			39

33. You research an area for one client which takes two hours. A few months later the same issue arises in respect of a second client and as a result of the previous work product, the time to complete the advice for the second client takes only one hour.

	Yes	No	Response Count
Do you bill the second client the same as you did for the first client?	8.2% (5)	91.8% (56)	61
In your opinion, is it ethical to use re-cycled work product which leads a practitioner to billing more than the number of hours actually worked?	13.6% (8)	86.4% (51)	59
Would the culture of your firm encourage this practice?	10.2% (6)	89.8% (53)	59
Does your firm have a policy/procedure in relation to this issue?	44.1% (26)	55.9% (33)	59
Have you ever been given guidance/advice in relation to the practices described above?	32.8% (19)	67.2% (39)	58
Please comment further if, for example, some answers depend on the circumstances or the matter.			19
		answered question	61
		skipped question	41

34. Please give us some feedback on this survey. In your experience of participating in the survey, how satisfied are you

	Satisfied	Not satisfied	Neutral	Response Count
That the survey was easy to work through	87.3% (55)	1.6% (1)	11.1% (7)	63
That the questions are relevant to your small law practice	68.3% (43)	4.8% (3)	27.0% (17)	63
That the questions raised useful issues for your small law practice	77.8% (49)	4.8% (3)	17.5% (11)	63
That the majority of scenarios are relevant to your small law practice	69.8% (44)	11.1% (7)	19.0% (12)	63
The the majority of scenarios raised useful issues for your small law practice	76.2% (48)	6.3% (4)	17.5% (11)	63

Please comment further if you wish

11

answered question	63
skipped question	39