



# Strategic plan (2020-2025)

Australian Bar Association

1 November 2019

## Overview

This strategic plan sets out the direction for the Australian Bar Association (ABA) over the next five years. The plan describes the ABA's priorities in pursuit of four strategic objectives:

1. Promote the rule of law and access to justice
2. Foster a collegiate, inclusive and diverse national association of barristers
3. Maintain and enhance professional standards
4. Provide opportunities for members to enhance professional performance.

The strategic plan will be used to prioritise resources and effort and to inform the decision making of the ABA Council and Executive over the next five years. We will use the strategy to shape the work of the ABA to deliver on our purpose: *to promote the administration of justice, the rule of law and the excellence of the Bar.*

The plan was developed in consultation with members and other interested parties, including government and the judiciary.

# Strategic plan on-a-page

Vision	To be the national voice for the independent Bars of Australia			
Purpose	To promote the administration of justice, the rule of law and the excellence of the Bar			
Strategic Objectives	<p>Promote the rule of law and access to justice</p>	<p>Foster a collegiate, inclusive and diverse national association of barristers</p>	<p>Maintain and enhance professional standards</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for members to enhance professional performance</p>
Strategic Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and strengthen an independent judiciary and legal profession by speaking out on issues that threaten judicial independence and access to justice</li> <li>• Champion the effective administration of justice by providing expert leadership and input on legal policy and law reform issues.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to collaborate across the legal sector to safeguard the rule of law.</li> <li>• Support and empower our Committees so that we effectively and efficiently draw on expertise of our members.</li> <li>• Support the rule of law in international jurisdictions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and promote opportunities to identify as an Australian Barrister, including by strengthening the ABA brand.</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to share resources, materials, information and ideas between state and territory Bar Associations.</li> <li>• Promote an inclusive and diverse national profession, including by supporting barristers from a range of backgrounds to come to, and prosper at, the Bar.</li> <li>• Communicate regularly with members about issues affecting the profession and the ABA's work to demonstrate value from membership.</li> <li>• Facilitate interpersonal connections and networking among members, including by hosting professional development opportunities and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver high quality training, including through the Advocacy Training Council, ensuring that the ATC is adequately resourced.</li> <li>• Promote greater national consistency of rules pertaining to barristers.</li> <li>• Promote high standards of conduct across the profession.</li> <li>• Host professional development opportunities to promote collegiality and share resources and good practices.</li> <li>• Promote the ABA's website as a medium for distributing resources, materials and information to members.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities to members that promote professional growth, now and into the future.</li> <li>• Promote barristers' distinctive role and competencies to clients and the community via the ABA's website and other platforms.</li> <li>• Promote Australian Barristers abroad.</li> <li>• Advocate on behalf of the profession by speaking out on issues that affect our members.</li> <li>• Provide education services to promote the excellence of members.</li> </ul>

# Our vision, purpose and strategic objectives

## *Vision: To be the national voice for the independent Bars of Australia*

The ABA is the national body that represents and serves the interests of barristers across Australia. We provide a forum for state and territory Bar Associations to come together to express and exchange their views. We are committed to supporting the existence and growth of an independent Bar in Australia.

## *Purpose: To promote the administration of justice, the rule of law and the excellence of the Bar*

**"To promote ..."** – The ABA supports the state and territory Bar Associations to work together to advance common interests of the profession and promote fair and equal justice. We support the states and territories to share ideas, information, materials and resources.

**"...the administration of justice..."** – The ABA seeks to advance the efficient and effective administration of justice by representing the profession nationally, supporting barristers to provide high quality specialist advocacy services, and providing expert input on legal policy and law reform issues.

**"...the rule of law..."** – As the national body representing barristers, we uphold the rule of law by speaking out on issues that threaten access to justice and the independence of the judiciary and legal profession. We support our members to provide high quality, independent legal advice and representation to all in the community.

**"...and the excellence of the Bar."** – We promote the excellence of individual barristers and the Bar as a whole. We provide opportunities to our members that enhance professional performance and growth, including advocacy training and education services. We promote the excellence of the Bar by supporting the states and territories to share ideas, materials and resources, and by maintaining and enhancing high standards of professional conduct.

## Strategic objectives

Our strategic plan is underpinned by four interrelated and complementary objectives:

1. Promote the rule of law and access to justice
2. Foster a collegiate national association of barristers
3. Maintain and enhance professional standards
4. Provide opportunities to members that enhance professional performance.

We will focus on achieving these objectives to ensure we prioritise our effort and maximise impact for the benefit of members and the justice system.

# Objective 1 – Promote the rule of law and access to justice

To achieve this objective, the ABA will:

**Maintain and strengthen an independent judiciary and legal profession** by speaking out on issues that threaten judicial independence and access to justice.

**Champion the effective administration of justice** by providing expert leadership and input on legal policy and law reform issues that have been identified as strategic priorities.

**Identify opportunities to collaborate** across the legal sector to safeguard the rule of law.

**Support and empower our Committees** so that we effectively and efficiently draw on expertise of our members, including by clarifying objectives and focus areas, formalising roles, raising profile of committees to prospective applicants and promoting collaboration.

**Support the rule of law in international jurisdictions** by providing resources and assistance, and coordinating the work of state and territory Bars to maximise impact.

## Objective 2 – Foster a collegiate, inclusive and diverse national association of barristers

To achieve this objective, the ABA will:

**Develop and promote opportunities to identify as an Australian Barrister**, including by strengthening the ABA brand and building awareness among barristers of the ABA's work.

**Identify opportunities to share resources, materials, information and ideas** between state and territory Bar Associations, including through collaborative policy development.

**Promote an inclusive and diverse national profession**, including by supporting barristers from a range of backgrounds to come to, and prosper at, the Bar.

**Communicate regularly with members** about issues affecting the profession and the ABA's work to demonstrate value from membership.

**Facilitate interpersonal connections and networking among members**, including by hosting professional development opportunities and events that are valuable and relevant to our diverse members.

## Objective 3 – Maintain and enhance professional standards across the profession

To achieve this objective the ABA will:

**Deliver high quality training, including through the Advocacy Training Council (ATC),** ensuring that the ATC is adequately resourced.

**Promote greater national consistency of rules** pertaining to barristers.

**Promote high standards of conduct** across the profession.

**Host professional development opportunities** to promote collegiality and share resources and good practices.

**Promote the ABA's website** as a medium for distributing resources, materials and information to members, including through innovative use of technology.

## Objective 4 – Provide opportunities for members to enhance professional performance

To achieve this objective the ABA will:

**Provide opportunities to members** that promote professional growth and excellence now and into the future, with a focus on equipping barristers to use emerging technologies to improve their practice.

**Promote barristers' distinctive role and competencies** to clients and the community via the ABA's website and other platforms, including by educating the public on the valuable role of barristers and independent Bar within the legal system.

**Promote Australian Barristers abroad.**

**Advocate on behalf of the profession** by speaking out on issues that affect our members.

**Provide education services** to promote the excellence of members.