

## Fines and Traffic Law Working Group Report Quarter 4 | October to December 2020

### 1. Meeting of the Fines and Traffic Law Working Group (FTLWG)

The Fines and Traffic Law Working Group met on 11 November 2020. The following member organisations attended the meeting: the Aboriginal Legal Service, Community Corrections, Department of Communities & Justice, Just Reinvest, LawAccess, Legal Aid NSW (Chair), NSW Registry of Births Deaths & Marriages, NSW Police, Redfern Legal Centre (representing Community Legal Centres NSW) and Revenue NSW.

### 2. Correspondence to NSW Attorney General following collaboration with Dr Julia Quilter

In this quarter members of the FTLWG prepared a letter to the NSW Attorney General raising concerns about the unintended impact of mandatory bicycle helmet fines in NSW and making recommendations for reform. The letter is the outcome of months of collaboration with Dr Julia Quilter and follows her presentation to the NLAF Plenary Group in June 2020. The letter to the NSW Attorney General invites discussion of the concerns raised by NLAF members about the impact of the mandatory bicycle helmet laws and proposes meeting to address the concerns raised and explore suggestions for reform. The letter has been copied to the NSW Police Commissioner and Minister for Transport and Roads and is included in the papers for the December 2020 Plenary meeting.

### 3. Fines Fixer and Traffic Offences Guided Pathway demonstration - Judy Archer, Legal Aid NSW

Judy Archer from Legal Aid's Client Services Unit attended the November 2020 meeting as Guest Speaker and gave an informative demonstration of the FinesFixer NSW and the Traffic Offences Guided Pathways. These are digital tools launched by Legal Aid NSW that are targeted at clients with both capability and low complexity matters. The objective of the digital tools is to enable practitioners to refer capable clients to self-help and enable resources to be focused on more vulnerable clients and complex issues. It was beneficial for members to see the tools in action and members agreed to provide feedback on content to Judy Archer and her team. Judy will also provide information to the group on analytics reporting use of the tools.

### 4. Progress report on Fairer Fines amendments

Revenue NSW provided a progress report on the amendments to the *Fines Act* 1996 which have resulted in a decrease in people electing to go to Court, a substantial increase in election of payment plans and fine reviews. These early indicators suggest the intention of the amendments is being met. Revenue NSW will continue to engage with the FTLWG seeking feedback on client applications for the 50% reduction and outcomes of those applications.

### 5. Working Development Order Scheme Guidelines update

Group member the Department of Communities & Justice gave an update on proposed changes to the Work and Development Order Scheme Guidelines which have been in development for 12 months. There have been some delays due to the impact of COVID-19, but the changes are progressing towards the consultation stage, at which point members of the FTLWG will be consulted.

### Next meeting

The **next meeting** of the FTLWG is on **Wednesday 17 February 2021**, from 10am to 11:30am.

Meredith Osborne

**Chair, Fines & Traffic Law Working Group**

November 2020