

Legal Aid (Commissioner – Law Society Nominee) Appointment 2025

Disallowable instrument DI2025-201

made under the

Legal Aid Act 1977, s 16 (Constitution of board)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

The *Legal Aid Act 1977* (the Act), at section 14, provides for the establishment of the board of the Legal Aid Commission (the Board). The functions of the Board are to determine the broad policies, priorities and strategies of the Commission for the provision of legal assistance, and to ensure that the commission's affairs are managed in accordance with the Act.

Section 16(1)(c)(iii) of the Act provides that the Board must be constituted by a member and commissioner chosen from a panel of not less than three people nominated by the Council of the Law Society of the Australian Capital Territory.

This instrument re-appoints Ms Lisa Gooneratne as a part-time member and commissioner of the Board for a period of three years commencing on the day after the notification of the instrument of appointment.

Members of the board appointed by the Minister are appointed on a part-time basis, under section 16(4) of the Act.

Ms Gooneratne is reappointed to the Board with the approval of the President of the ACT Law Society and the President of the Board. For her initial appointment in 2019 [DI2019–26] and re-appointed in 2022 [DI2022–30]. Ms Gooneratne was chosen from a panel of three members nominated by the Council of the Law Society of the Australian Capital Territory. Ms Gooneratne is not a public servant.

Under section 228 of the *Legislation Act 2001* (ACT), this appointment required consultation with the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Legal Affairs (the **Standing Committee**). The Standing Committee had no comment on the appointment.