

## Comments Q 27 on the AGD Marriage Celebrant Program

Below are the 258 comments made in response to Question 27.

They have been grouped into four groups. Some comments have been repeated (with their original number) as they referred to a number of issues.

This is the first pass over the comments.

Please **let us know if** there are comments that have inadvertently been put in the wrong category.

**Q 27. The Commonwealth Marriage Celebrant Program is regulated by the Marriage Law and Celebrant Section (MLCS) of the Attorney-General's Department. Do you have any concerns, recommendations or comments to make about the Program itself or the Department's management of the Program?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
yes	15.96%	219
no	73.25%	1005
don't know	10.79%	148
You may note your concerns, recommendations or comments here:		258
	<b>Answered</b>	<b>1372</b>
	<b>Skipped</b>	<b>25</b>

20 Comments relating to Marriage Forms

1	Regarding the format/layout of official documents NOIM, Certificate of Marriage- please, please have a civil marriage celebrant with experience completing the documents to develop / review them before they become mandated! Boxes are too small to enter data, or too big for simple numerical input, and there is far too much wasted real estate.
2	Just about the docs. They need to get it right the first time when issuing a new Marriage Form. Need to listen to CoCA properly.
10	The new NOIM forms have compressed columns to accommodate gender issues and there is very little room to write full addresses of the couple and father's name in full.
14	I'm sure that whoever designs the Forms we use are certainly NOT Celebrants! Form 14 for example .. a squashed together document. I liked the old ones that had top half for Bride or Groom and bottom half of page for Bride or groom. Also keeping records of Marriage Certificates for the Parties....why not record them on the relevant page of the Marriage Register? The Register is kept for several years and is easy to refer to. I cannot see the need for the other record (???)
46	Clarity and ease of use with Forms.
50	I have provided regular recommendations regarding the revision of the Notice of Intended Marriage form to suit the needs of those using it, but have never received a response, nor has the form been amended in a more useful way.
55	I remain frustrated by the style of Notice of Intention to Marry (NOIM) forms. They are very badly designed with spaces much too small and inequitable for the various information we're required to write in them!! New and better replacement forms are long overdue. When can we have newly revised / remodeled forms?
56	I have been a celebrant from 2004, when I felt I was in a washing machine of AG MCS change of rules regularly: OPD content, OPD providers, numbers of attendees at OPD, rulings on wording in ceremonies, an appalling change of forms especially to NoIM. Then all the confusion on forms, and indicating genders etc once Marriage Equality became law. But now feel that it has settled down, communication is better, celebrants are being consulted, and can't wait for the new forms, especially NoIM.
67	Perhaps they should consult the actual celebrants from time to time who have the practical experience prior to implementing certain decisions e.g. forms etc.
70	I don't agree that the compulsory topic at OPD no longer exists. I am constantly concerned about the fundamentals of the legal processes of marriage not being followed correctly nor understood by all celebrants.
83	The forms need bigger spaces to write long names. WA needs online submission of forms
93	Stop changing the forms!
109	Concerns - the Dept has still not finalised the Marriage Forms - consultation commenced in July 2014,
187	Think the NOIM should continue to collect information of relevance to family historians like parents' place of birth etc.
191	Regarding management of the program, too little attention was given to the production of new forms, despite the fact that the MLCS had ample time to design satisfactory forms expediently. It was obvious from the start that the new Notice of Intended Marriage had been redesigned on the run and would have to be reviewed. I submitted recommendations for the review and can only assume they were received: I was not sent an acknowledgement of receipt. Sadly, I get the impression that the MLCS approach is an ad hoc one.
204	Wording of all the official 'forms' is confusing. Simplify it...Form 1, 2, 3, 4...etc. Maintain the other old official numbers, though have them in brackets following the new, easier-to-follow numbering system. Know it's a little thing, and would cost a bundle to implement, though in every single OPD attendees are always asking, "Hold on, what form is number 15? Is it the No Legal Impediment, or the...?" Could be that such a high number makes you wonder (especially when unfamiliar with the forms, or using them rarely) at what the 14 forms preceding it are. New wording option - 'Every wedding in Australia needs 4 basic forms. Then there are the variations. These possibilities are...' Simple yet precise & easily understood wording, which still includes all necessary information. Archaic legal jargon was great at confusing commoners and making the learned seem worthy of awed respect and high fees. However, Celebrants do not sit 'above' the people, we are 'of' the people...and therefore our legal forms should reflect that. Just a small point I've seen confuse many Celebrants at OPDs over the years.



206	I would like the current forms reviewed, as I believe they currently are, because they are not at all well set out and the boxes, since the last change, have reduced in size, making it impossible to write long names, such as those of Sri Lankan people, in the space provided. I was advised to handwrite the names in, which looks extremely unprofessional in my opinion.
241	<b>It still appears that public servants are directing the changes to new marriage forms</b> and OPD etc for celebrants and these PS's many may not have any experiential knowledge on what celebrants actually do in real practise. Perhaps they may need some "field excursions"!
246	Not happy with the proposed removal of couples family history i.e. parents information. How are future generations able to trace family trees without knowing this information?
247	The format of the Notice of Intended Marriage form. The boxes for the information are too small, particularly the address box.

## 8 Comments relating to Celebrant Training

3	The Cert 1V course was long-winded and repetitive at times and mammoth task to finish...even in comparison to a uni course. Even though I found the ceremonies time consuming to film etc, they were worthwhile as I improved each time.
21	The course itself was also very unprofessional in parts in terms of assistance, the length of time it took to get answers, and the often confusing and grammatically incorrect questions that were part of the assessment. For a profession that needs preciseness and exactness in its legal obligations and knowledge I am left wondering if these courses are actually monitored properly by the AG Dept.
94	I am concerned about the adequacy and the variability of the training offered to prospective Celebrants and their understanding of the importance of their role in society. A marriage ceremony is distinct from a party. It a serious rite of passage, honouring and celebrating a solemn commitment that has ongoing repercussions for the well-being of couples, families, and communities.
106	Regularly I see really basic questions appearing on the Celebrant forums which surprises me. As a Celebrant we should know most of the required procedures, and then access the legislation or guidelines to ensure we have the facts. We can reach out if needed, for something quite unusual but knowledge of the basics should be a required process for all Celebrants
127	The course I undertook was 90% online ie feel for such an important & personal service this is not appropriate. Should be stricter on how much class time required. Too easy to qualify - I did not feel I had been equipped to standard I desired. Granted I set the bar high but shouldn't we all. Over populated as a result. For some too dear to remain active member of associations & licensed if work not sufficient.
180	I think there should be selection process before celebrants are trained - but that's a big ask! There are too many 'hobby' celebrants who deliver sub-professional service. But that's just because I believe it should be a professional occupation.
190	Are regular audit's undertaken of the student's presently enrolled with RTO's running the training program to become a new celebrant? I have found a repeat concern raised by enrolled student celebrants, specifically due to untimely/slow and quite difficult to contact, response times and care, by some distance training organisation(s).
242	2. As a trainer and educator I am concerned that the certificate course, which is currently compulsory for aspiring celebrants, is both expensive and unlike other vocational courses does not provide pathways to other/higher courses - for instance its components would not qualify as RPL for further university or TAFE studies. It is also not mandated for religious celebrants.

## 30 Comments relating to OPD

4	I believe the screening & regulation of specified providers should be more stringent to ensure higher quality of delivery of OPD.
5	In the years when the MLCS can't think of a compulsory topic, OPD should be available for those who need to develop public speaking skills, social media skills etc etc but not mandatory for professionals with wide experience who may not. I am also concerned about the ongoing revision of the NOIM form, and what should be included, when the design (allocated space to include anything) seems to be a major unresolved problem.
18	OPD is not necessary for what I do
35	Some of subjects covered in OPD are at times could be a little more interesting
45	Keep the compulsory activity
49	When a Celebrant has done over say 7 years OPD there are very little options for them that they have not already learned or done. There should be more to make it worthwhile for more experienced Celebrants so that they get value for money and make it worthwhile for them to attend - I often see Celebrants disengaged and just going through the motions because they have to, where I like to find subjects that I can learn or improve from and that is getting very hard.
85	With the exception of mandatory legal material, OPD is generally frothy and irrelevant. I would rather undertake reading or study in a relevant area of interest.
92	Many other federally regulated professionals and other groupings (migration officers, APHRA regulated professionals, etc) have better OPD terms and conditions that could be used as models for Civil Marriage Celebrants.
109	Concerns - the Dept is too involved in determining what is happening with OPD.
112	There is no need for the mandatory professional development. It is a waste of everyone's time and the topics are useless at best. I think that there needs to be some thoughts as to why this is required and why you are essentially forcing celebrants to donate money to organisations that really ought not be called "training organisations".
114	the staff turnover is a joke and the lack of consistency and professionalism is embarrassing.
123	Some attending OPD have no idea about their responsibilities
129	I would prefer a compulsory topic be included in the OPD
132	The OPD seems un-necessary on a yearly basis. The OPD's I have attended seem to struggle to fill the 5 hours. Why not reduce this to cover any new or changed regulations only.



135	MLCS exempted itself from offering a compulsory unit for 2019 OPD. Given our \$240 registration fee, this is inadequate practice. There is always room to revisit the Marriage Law. Perhaps the 5 hour requirement could be reduced accordingly when MCLS fails to deliver.
157	Celebrants need to have more OPD topics available. Eg, first aid/ in case of emergencies, understanding + operating a PA system correctly, how to avoid errors before/during/after a ceremony.
159	The MLCS should focus on its role as a regulator - they have too much involvement with OPD
175	Opd should be cheaper or free considering the annual fee we have to pay each year.
177	OPD is waste of time for experienced celebrants. It should be optional for celebrants of over 10 years experience
179	Recommend OPD delivery is monitored/observed by MLCs
181	After being a celebrant for nearly 24 years and conducted thousands of weddings I rarely learn anything in the compulsory unit of OPD.
184	I believe that we should only be required to complete our Professional Development Courses every 2 years. Why - we pay for our OPD and our Celebrant Registration Fees yearly, at present, and if you don't get very many weddings in a year, you are not covering your costs for these registration fees that we are required to pay. Also, when we do the OPD, I would have thought that once completed and the Training Organisation has sent the documentation to the AGD we would receive notification in a very "early" timely manner, not months later do we receive communication that the AGD has updated our records that we have completed the OPD for that year.
192	I want OPD to be about ceremony not quasi legal circumstances that one will probably never encounter, but if one does then MLCS is available for advice.
209	I would like to have the option of doing the compulsory activity separate from the additional PD hours. And to be able to do additional non-compulsory PD sessions with a training institution, even if I have already done the Compulsory training (ie not pay for and do the compulsory twice). Perhaps I could just ask the training institution for this but it seems that you have to choose which compulsory session to do based on the additional PD you want rather than mix it up.
228	I'm concerned that OPD is obligatory for Authorised Marriage Celebrants, yet seems to be including far more to do with funeral celebrancy which in fact requires no legal definition or qualification. It makes a mockery of the OPD in general, especially for those full time Marriage Celebrants who do not wish to officiate at funerals. I think it's a total rip off & an attempt to justify the fees charged for OPD. This whole system is currently shooting itself in the foot in my opinion.
232	I also think scrapping the compulsory OPD is a bad decision. It's like they want to regulate us less and less all the time. If so, scrap the fee.
240	3 hours of compulsory is always too long. I think 1.5 - 2 hours is plenty.
241	It still appears that public servants are directing the changes to new marriage forms and OPD etc for celebrants and these PS's many may not have any experiential knowledge on what celebrants actually do in real practise. Perhaps they may need some "field excursions"!
250	As you can tell from my answers, I am not a fan of the current OPD. I find it repetitive, boring, and ridiculous really - it's just a cut and paste exercise. I feel that if celebrants don't already know the material that is presented, they shouldn't be practising. The OPD is a tick a box exercise at best and I find it incredibly painful in its current form.
252	Dept should stay out of OPD

## 8 Comments relating to Equity amongst all marriage celebrants

6	re Ques 21. In fairness to Celebrants C, and quality assurance for clients, should there be a 'corporate' registration fee /regulation offered for Celebrants A/ B?
11	centralise the registration to Commonwealth away from the states. Central place and uniform NOIM to RIO
109	Recommendation - All authorised celebrants should be under the Commonwealth, so we are all treated fairly and all pay a fee - which would mean we all should pay less than what Commonwealth celebrants currently pay for their work to look after us. ie divide their costs across 32000 celebrants, not just 8000.
126	I am slightly concerned at the inconsistencies with information coming from the department and the lack of return for the registration fees.
126	It would like to see ALL marriage celebrants treated equally under the act particularly with respect to training, ongoing professional development and registration. I would like to see a minimum wage set for Celebrants just as there is a minimum wage set for every other category of employment.
196	The same regulations and annual fee should apply to religious celebrants too. The current situation is discriminatory and unfair. Why should one class of celebrants be exempt from OPD etc?
257	It seems inefficient to have marriage law regulated by the commonwealth, but registration by state government.
258	We shouldn't have to compete with BDM either offering weddings in locations other than their offices.

### 33 Comments relating to Annual Registration Fee for Commonwealth Marriage Celebrants



15	We don't get much for the \$240 registration we pay per year. In fact we don't even get an ID badge. Any change of at least getting that from the Department? We go one many years ago which was a paper-based one and only good for one year.
39	Why should we be paying any ongoing fees to do what is effectively the Departments work? We deliver the legal requirements so why are we paying every year to do this and why is the Departments stationery not provided for us free of charge? <b>It's ridiculous that the Department takes money off us while opening the field wide for unlimited numbers of celebrants which lowers our work rate and floods the market at the same time that the registry then competes with us for that market. No other industry does this.</b>
43	Costing to a celebrant is a concern.
51	The Registration Fee should be directly proportionate to the number of marriages conducted by a Celebrant
53	It should not be funded by celebrants. In many cases being a celebrant is a community service.
62	<b>The management of the program is a joke! MLCS doesn't communicate with it's Celebrants, let alone with Government. Too much reliance is placed on Celebrants to do BDM's work. Too many new Celebrants continue to be registered, when the industry is already swamped. There are no checks and balances for some Celebrants "operating on the cheap, just to get the gig", pumping out cheap and nasty, non-individual ceremonies, which devalues ritual and Celebrancy.</b>
81	i really don't understand what we receive for the money that gets raised every year from the registration fees. Certainly nothing that wasn't available before...and the forms are still quite unsatisfactory.
81	<b>i really don't understand what we receive for the money that gets raised every year from the registration fees. Certainly nothing that wasn't available before...and the forms are still quite unsatisfactory.</b>
84	I am still dissatisfied that I am required to pay a full annual fee when I am doing so few marriages per year and have kept my fees comparatively lower than many of my city colleagues who are performing up to 4 marriages a week and are charging considerably more. I do not qualify for remote rural concession as I am I am considered to be just outside this margin. The annual fee should be on a sliding scale dependent on the number of marriages performed per year to be fair and justified.
88	Why the need for an ongoing annual fee? Annual OPD I can understand.
89	Disappointed they charge a fee and do not answer emails and are hard to contact for advice
90	they enforce us to pay the annual license fee to be professional but i'm not sure that it's working the other way around!!
99	The annual celebrant fee to secure license to practise is expensive. Should be regulated to \$150 only considering there is the OPD or attendance to convention like the one in Canberra in May
101	The registration fee is excessive. As a part time teacher in SA our registration is \$300 every three years and our work encompasses the safety and security of children 24/7. As a celebrant I feel the \$240 pa is far too difficult to maintain and needs to be revised.
109	<b>Recommendation - All authorised celebrants should be under the Commonwealth, so we are all treated fairly and all pay a fee - which would mean we all should pay less than what Commonwealth celebrants currently pay for their work to look after us. ie divide their costs across 32000 celebrants, not just 8000.</b>
137	The annual registration fee is too high, especially when most Celebrants struggle to cover costs and earn a profit when the average number of weddings per Celebrant is less than 10 per year
139	I think the fees are too much compared to the the value of the program.
144	I have not needed to contact the Department other than to pay the annual registration fee. Consequently, I tend to think of the Dept solely as a money taker/maker.
168	The length of time it takes to have the completed OPD confirmed. It seems to me that we pay \$240 for very little service.

178		Paying to be a celebrant (annual fee) when only a few ceremonies each year is debatable enough, having to do a rubber stamp OPD as well. That's one ceremony you do for nothing once you take out these fees. It should be based on pro rata of ceremonies officiated at
182		I think the fee is too high, given that I have only done one ceremony in the past year and the fee and OPD cost more than what I made from the ceremony. I have also not done many/any ceremonies over the past few years as I have been travelling a lot and therefore have been unable to do any ceremonies as I could not commit too far in advance to any ceremonies. Prior to this I was very busy with ceremonies.
189		I don't think we should have a pay a registration fee. We are performing a service FOR the government.
197		The registration fee is ridiculous. We get next to nothing for our had earned payments.
198		MLCS is merely an office that takes Celebrant money to register them, report their OPD requirements, and deregister them if payments are not met on time. They do not give legal advice when really needed and as none are Celebrants they do not actually understand the day-to-day needs of a Celebrant.
203		Any advice I've needed I have received from my association (AMC). I would be interested to know how MLCS spend the substantial revenue they receive from celebrants.
211		We should not have to pay the Attorney Generals \$240.00 for the privilege of being Marriage Celebrants. After all we are appointed as Commonwealth officers to carry out our duties on behalf of the AG's and the Marriage Act. We have paid to be registered. We pay for our 5 hours of OPD. We are required to purchase the ceremonial Marriage Certificate as well as the Envelope to go with the certificate. We have other expenses to carry out our duties as Marriage Celebrants. I would like to see the \$240.00 scrapped.
222		I don't see how the yearly fee has improved services to celebrants. It appears to be another unnecessary govt fee that has provided no actual benefits to celebrants.
234		Reduce the cost of Celebrant annual registrations.
236		What are we getting for our registration costs. Absolutely nothing.
245		I really cannot see the need to have to pay an annual fee to Attorney Generals. If I have questions to be answered I always contact NSW Births Death and Marriages who are excellent with their assistance.
253		The cost of maintaining celebrancy status is too high. I was forced to resign because of this.
254		It would be a great idea if the celebrant fee could be regulated or at least a minimum charge this would elevate under cutting by most celebrants.
193		<b>We pay the fees to Ag's dept. But the State BDM office staff do all the work. and are poorly staffed. The AG's dept could pass on some funding to the state offices cos they are the ones we talk to if we have any issues with registrations.</b>

## 8 Comments relating to Communication and the Attorney-General's Department

26		A hotline for questions would be good.
27		The changes and updates that occur, unless you regularly visit the website or are updated through various associations, you would not be aware. Could an email (standard for all celebrants) alerting them to check for current updates be sent when changes occur please?
32		A mthly email that focusses on latest changes or complex matters would be good.
91		I guess communication of changes could be better. It is a pain to think to go to tge website to "check" for anything new.
108		A "Hotline" for fiddly questions, or interpretation of the Marriage Act.
130		More information flow
165		Communication is not always clear from AGD. The website can be 'clunky' to use.
169		I Appreciate the regular emailed communications with updates and guidance.

## 5 Comments relating to De-registration of Commonwealth Marriage Celebrants for the non-payment of the Annual Fee



31	<p>Although it has not happened to me, I am disappointed at the "Heavy Handed" approach to payment of annual fees and deregistering "Regardless" of reason. There should be an appeals section to at least hear the situation that had resulted in non-payment and deregistering, and assess case by case. A Very rude and brutal action by the AG without care or concern. Also, the inability to pay in advance if you know you will be unavailable, out of the country, medical reasons, etc. This Department MUST look into this as I feel it is unacceptable practices to NOT BE FLEXIBLE OR APPROACHABLE in regard to these matters. It gives the impression that the MLCS Department has a very uncaring, unfriendly, unapproachable, "Do as we say or else", and "We Don't Care" attitude to the celebrant industry.</p>
113	<p>I think there needs to be a warning to celebrants who don't pay the annual fee on time rather than immediate de-registration. There may be extenuating circumstances the fee was overlooked so there should at least be an appeal process.</p> <p>For celebrants who are de-registered and then are sneaky about it and not tell their couples or rope in new celebrants to 'sign' the paperwork and they pay them nothing for this or they continue to advertise they are a celebrant and take booking while they are waiting to be approved again by AG - I think they should be monitored more closely as it's not fair on others who do the right thing.</p>
118	<p>Non payment of Registration on time - I really believe it should have a two strikes and your out, even if the initial late payment fee is doubled. NO other profession is deregistered for not paying their fees and we are all human and have different circumstances in our lives.</p>
150	<p>I was a Marriage Celebrant from 2009 till September 2018 when I was deregistered for my late payment. The only Marriage Celebrants are Islamic - Cocos Islands are experiencing a significant increase in Tourism with Weddings being a niche market. There are very few long term residents and limited people interested in providing celebrant services. The MLCS showed no understanding of the issues faced on the islands with regards to tourism and the impact of deregistering the only Marriage Celebrant available to people from mainland Australia and or overseas visitors, looking to have a destination wedding on the islands. The late payment was an oversight on my behalf at a time that we were experiencing an unexpected spike in tourist numbers for our tourism business of which Weddings was a huge part. We are now turning many people away due to the fact that there is no Civil Marriage Celebrant available on island. This has had an impact on many people that provide services to the Wedding couples such as hairdresser, cake maker, photographers, caterers, accommodation providers, etc. The government fund and support the Tourism Association in one hand and yet don't appear to understand some of the more complicated issues of small remote communities. We are currently relying on the Administrator on Christmas Island to fulfil the forward Wedding bookings that we had committed to. This is obviously not an ideal situation and may well change with the up-coming election.</p>
170	<p>Deregistration of celebrants due to a late fee- is extremely unjust. Celebrants who have been practicing for over a decade- prior to the requirement for a Cert IV cannot simply pay a re- registration fee- so effectively are cut off.</p>

## 22 Comments relating to Marriage Celebrants Section (MCS) of Attorney-General's Department (AGD)



162	Management is good
57	They do a great job with limited funds and CoCA needs to be less selfish in understanding this
25	When making any decisions which relate to Marriage Celebrancy, I would urge MLCS to qualify respected and practicing Marriage Celebrants to be involved. This can ensure that the majority of authorised and practicing Marriage Celebrants are not affected in a negative way.
30	They don't treat celebrants with flexibility and respect and like business owners. They need to encourage more, be positive and find ways to not punish. They are an awful department with an awful culture.
42	Other than charge me an annual fee, send out an uninteresting newsletter which reads like a lawyers may and send an email eventually telling me that my old has been completed. Not sure what they do really. Only time I contacted them I got a goblydook answer telling me to seek legal advice as they could not provide me guidance on the guidelines?
52	Alignment of BDM requirements with AG's requirements. Lack of practical knowledge of celebrancy by the department.
68	There is the ever-present paradox that public servants who have no experience or knowledge of the ceremonial arts or the psychology of well-done ceremony are the arbitrators of our professional activities. Perhaps this is true in other professions but surely legally trained people oversee the legal professions and people trained in social work oversee social workers, etc. The employees of MLCS should be required to take <u>training themselves from experienced celebrants, and be required to attend several well done weddings.</u>
69	Not one person in the Dept is a marriage celebrant. This hampers relationships.
71	I think of them as big brother and only needed if you have an issue. Not someone who you can have an easy going chat with!
74	I think MLCS has become more responsive and accountable due to the hard work of COCA and Celebrant Associations in recent years, which has been welcome.
77	I would hope the A/G dept would be open to suggestions from various bodies/associations in helping them formulate the Program
97	Like all regulatory programs they are only as good as the integrity and commitment of people involved. I have not 'been around' the profession long enough to know about the reporting procedures or mechanisms used to gauge effectiveness of the program; i.e. who audits and what measures are taken to ensure practices are observed.
208	Constant changes can be confusing. For instance the latest couples could marry was, 1 month and 1 day. Then it was changed to 1 month, then back to 1 month and 1 day and now it is 1 month. That is just an example. I find the Guidelines difficult to wade through. They refer to specific sections of the Marriage Act by stating (as per...xxxx of the Marriage Act section xxxx and to look it up you have to wade through the whole thing to find what section xxxx actually said. It is time consuming and hard to find. Just my personal thoughts.
212	The guidelines on sighting identification do not align with the Electronic Transactions act which says that if a federal act requires you to see documents like ID, then it can happen electronically.
215	My OPD for 2018 still has not been recorded on my self service portal by AG. It says I have not completed the OPD and I just heard (grapevine) that one of the people I attended the course with has been sent letter from AG saying they didnt do their OPD in 2018. first question is - why didnt AG ask if they had done it and then went to training org. Now training org name is going into the mud. but is it justified.
216	THE MLCS SHOULD MAKE THEMSELVES MORE FAMILIAR WITH THE ACTUAL WORK AND HAPPENINGS THAT OCCUR 'OUT IN THE FIELD'. THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED BY EITHER HAVING A CELEBRANT WORKING IN THE DEPT., OR BY MORE GENUINE FACE-TO-FACE CONSULTATION.
217	They only care about the legal aspects of Marriages and do not care about the occupation as a whole. They should not be our peak body from a development point of view with such a narrow focus.
223	I think consultation is generally good from the Department and you will never please everyone. I think the wording of some sections of the Guidelines still need to be clearer and we missed some opportunities with the latest revision. However, I applauded MLCS for the degree to which they consult in relation to changes to forms etc.
227	Too many lawyers and not one celebrant amongst them
232	When the Department did its roadshow all those years ago telling us about the introduction of the fee etc, they promised the 'portal' that would be funded in part by the fee would be filled with resources. But it has never progressed beyond being a payment receptacle for the fee. All the resources are freely available on the MCLS website.
241	It still appears that public servants are directing the changes to new marriage forms <b>and OPD etc</b> for celebrants and these PS's many may not have any experiential knowledge on what celebrants actually do in real practise. Perhaps they may need some "field excursions"!
256	No interest in connecting with celebrants, only do pretend stakeholder engagement. Dictorial.



### **39 Comments relating to Marriage Celebrant Section's provision of advice to marriage celebrants**

7	I've been given conflicting, non consistent advice, and ambiguous advice, on the occasions I have sought guidance from the MLCS. I find this very frustrating, and means I lack in confidence in the department overall.
73	Someone is needed to answer questions from celebrants.
78	I don't believe anyone in the section of the dept. realises many of the issues to which we are exposed. They appear to be very autocratic in their approach to celebrants, eg when fees were first introduced and they had a consultation process with celebrants. Previously on the few occasions I have sought advice, never given a clear answer. I get no benefit whatsoever from doing OPD, apart from networking. Was extremely annoyed that they had introduced the topic funerals (not compulsory but optional) as it isn't relevant to their section nor to me.
79	Help is very thinly spread. It would be helpful if there was someone who actually understood the act and guidelines and could answer Yes or No to straight forward questions... not have to make a decision according to ones interruption of the Act/guidelines without an explanation. Occasionally a definite answer or clarification is required. We have a body in Canberra and yet are very much out on a limb. Associations cant make decisions on interruptions and state BDM's don't administer the act of marriage only the registrations
98	It is not uncommon to see comments on my Association's facebook page that the MLCS is not prepared to give definitive answers to certain questions. In some cases, they suggest celebrants engage the services of a legal advisor in order to interpret the Act. Most celebrants earn a fairly small amount pa in proportion to the amount of work they do and would not be a position to do this; hence they ask their associates and often receive conflicting opinions.
124	They could provide more definitive answers when asked. Their usual reply is "we can't give you an answer on that.", you'll have to seek legal advice. What do we pay them for, if not to help us with tricky questions?
125	Wording and use of the website could be more 'user-friendly'
126	I am slightly concerned at the inconsistencies with information coming from the department and the lack of return for the registration fees.
143	Need to respond quicker to ALL email enquiries; I have two outstanding from early August 2018 that I followed up in later September and they've never been responded to
145	<b>I have always found the MCLS people friendly and useful.</b> I still think the homophobic XXXXi s given fart too much weight and say, compared with other organisations.
7	I've been given conflicting, non consistent advice, and ambiguous advice, on the occasions I have sought guidance from the MLCS. I find this very frustrating, and means I lack in confidence in the department overall.
73	Someone is needed to answer questions from celebrants.
78	I don't believe anyone in the section of the dept. realises many of the issues to which we are exposed. They appear to be very autocratic in their approach to celebrants, eg when fees were first introduced and they had a consultation process with celebrants. Previously on the few occasions I have sought advice, never given a clear answer. I get no benefit whatsoever from doing OPD, apart from networking. Was extremely annoyed that they had introduced the topic funerals (not compulsory but optional) as it isn't relevant to their section nor to me.
79	Help is very thinly spread. It would be helpful if there was someone who actually understood the act and guidelines and could answer Yes or No to straight forward questions... not have to make a decision according to ones interruption of the Act/guidelines without an explanation. Occasionally a definite answer or clarification is required. We have a body in Canberra and yet are very much out on a limb. Associations cant make decisions on interruptions and state BDM's don't administer the act of marriage only the registrations
98	It is not uncommon to see comments on my Association's facebook page that the MLCS is not prepared to give definitive answers to certain questions. In some cases, they suggest celebrants engage the services of a legal advisor in order to interpret the Act. Most celebrants earn a fairly small amount pa in proportion to the amount of work they do and would not be a position to do this; hence they ask their associates and often receive conflicting opinions.
124	They could provide more definitive answers when asked. Their usual reply is "we can't give you an answer on that.", you'll have to seek legal advice. What do we pay them for, if not to help us with tricky questions?
125	Wording and use of the website could be more 'user-friendly'
126	I am slightly concerned at the inconsistencies with information coming from the department and the lack of return for the registration fees.
143	Need to respond quicker to ALL email enquiries; I have two outstanding from early August 2018 that I followed up in later September and they've never been responded to
145	<b>I have always found the MCLS people friendly and useful.</b> I still think the homophobic XXXXi s given fart too much weight and say, compared with other organisations.



107	<p>Each time I call the department I get conflicting information. For example I was emailed by the dept (they initiated contact) to tell me that the No Legal Impediment form could be completed on the day of the wedding - to later be told that it has to be completed prior to the wedding day but not when the NOIM is signed. I was also advised that I could accept id (birth certificates) up to 14 days after the ceremony (so long as I was comfortable that I knew who I was marrying) to later be told that I can only accept id when the NOIM was signed.</p> <p>I found that when I actually phoned to clarify the conflicting information that the staff were extremely rude and denied that certain information was even given. When I emailed them the original email that I received they would not discuss the matter further!</p> <p>I have asked numerous times to be contacted by the dept however they do not contact me.</p> <p>The dept sent me an email asking for a stat dec to be signed however, I never received the email. The marriage was not registered until the bride contacted over 18 months after her wedding to find out where her marriage certificate was. Again the staff were extremely rude putting the blame on me even though they confirmed the original email was not sent! There should be something in place to follow up marriages that have not been registered within a timely matter rather than no follow up at all.</p> <p>I pay my registration fee every year and I do not receive the service that was promised!</p>
143	Need to respond quicker to ALL email enquiries; I have two outstanding from early August 2018 that I followed up in later September and they've never been responded to
146	What help do they provide, when I have called in the past the answers to my questions have not been particularly helpful.
154	sometimes the staff are unaware of the law..
160	Too often we hear of either conflicting or confusing advice, or uncertainty about whether BDM or MLCS has the correct information.
172	I recently asked a question (very specific) and instead of a clear response I was emailed a copy of the policy - to which I could not understand/interpret and usually I am good with this! I still do not have answers!
176	It has been very helpful to me as a new celebrant last year.
194	Would prefer them to give clear legal advice to individual questions rather than just referencing the Act.
199	I wish they would take note of the wide range of representations they receive from all the the Celebrant Associations. Too many good things, put to them in good faith, are not considered.
201	I've been very happy with the information available on the website and through the mandatory training
202	<p>I have found it to be a very useful, professional service for a new celebrant. I am constantly amazed that celebrants post questions on Facebook groups etc rather than call the MLCS for clarification about The Marriage Act. I wonder why this is as I would always go straight to the MLCS. Within minutes I have always obtained the answer to any question. It is an excellent initiative and I don't mind paying the annual registration fee for such accessibility and knowledge.</p>
220	The difficulty in making timely contact with the Department. If I have had to make contact it is usually something urgent, but the Department can take up to one month to respond, and in that time I have had to make the decision myself. Very poor service levels, probably due to a lack of understanding as to the time constraints of our work.
221	They are supposed to advise but insist "we do not provide legal advice"
235	They will not give you a straight answer. There are too many lawyers working in the Department
238	Could get more helpful notes and ideas from section.
239	Very happy with my dealings with the Department to date.
249	constant changing of the paperwork is <b>confusing</b> <b>some instructions from MLCS are contradictory</b>
251	Advice given is too vague. Complaints are not dealt with.
255	Be clearer and more defined with you responses.

## 10 Comments relating to Commonwealth Celebrant Registration and other matters

8		The main comment I have is that my experience had been that the Marriage Celebrant Section actively tries to hinder celebrants from registering. When I had an issue with my registration I felt more than a lack of support, I felt positively blocked from registration.
17		If a future celebrant does not comply when they first apply to be a celebrant they should not be given a second chance to submit an application for appointment. If they cannot get the paperwork corrected when submitting their application how can you be sure they will do the right thing when they are appointed.
148		There appears to be a relaxed attitude to the authorisation process with a number of celebrants unable to grasp the marriage act and the guidelines once authorised.
20		I think the 3mth registration process is to long.
21		The length of time it has taken to do all the AG application paperwork (a lot of which was a straight repetition of what was done in the course) and then wait to hear back from them has left me feeling very unsure of what to do next now that I am registered. I feel I have forgotten everything and there is no guidance as to which professional organisation to join.
12		Old Celebrants should be considered to undertake the new Cert IV in celebrancy course. There are so many bad celebrants in the industry. The stories you hear are just horrendous. Staff from the AGD should be coming to observe Celebrants at their rehearsals and weddings - to see the calibre of celebrants out there. If only you could regulate the fee's celebrants charge - as there are so many celebrants under cutting to get bookings and charging a ridiculously low fee - that makes it almost impossible for a full time celebrant to charge good money to make it a full time income.
38		please state clearly on official website, we authorisrd marriage celebrant are to solemnise the wedding ceremony. Prefer disclose my mobile phone number to the memberd of the public. Thanks.
86		I am concerned about the label of "religious marriage celebrant" - it is a deceptive label as these people do not conduct religious ceremonies & it is confusing to the general public. All celebrants should be free to choose which ceremonies they perform without having to hide behind the word "religion". Freedom to choose is a democratic right of all Australians, gay or otherwise.
66		I am actually not very comfortable to conduct weddings for same sex couples. After the change to the definition of marriage there was an option to be a religious celebrant which I failed to apply for in time. The deadline has now ended and I am locked in to this. At present celebrants are unable to make that change to a religious celebrant but I would like this option to remain open. I would change if that option was given again. I think it is fairer to me and to any same sex couple clients.
163		Please see my answer above about non aligned Religious celebrant and the public not really knowing what this means. Help please please

#### 14 Miscellaneous Comments relating to MCS / AGD



249	<b>constant changing of the paperwork is confusing</b> some instructions from MLCS are contradictory
40	Why change from CIVIL Celebrant to Authorised Celebrant? Civil rites are still used. The cost of this change is considerable.
41	I understand that once I give notice to quit being a Celebrant I cannot later return. I think this should be altered and perhaps either registration or pay per ceremony
164	I have a brand new Marriage Register book which I ordered a few months before change of document and would like to be able to return it to Can Print as it is unused and a new one had to be ordered when bill was passed for equality of marriage. I ordered a whole lot new books etc for wedding season and then bill went through... I think we should be reimbursed if we have that problem as at that time it was unforeseen as to whether the law would change for quite a while?
178	With the law changing to allow SSM, the information coming out should have been and should be more transparent. Basically the ceremony, other than the monitum had any changes. However, as I did officiate a ceremony on day one (9/1) the information wasn't released in time to change the wording fully, nor were the relevant forms and wedding certificates available causing me to get a warning after a complaint was made. I feel that when wording is changed, it would be helpful for a basic wording to be pointed out by writing an example. Not by saying part A section B. For celebrants it would make it more clear. We work on a ceremony example when writing a ceremony then personalised for the couple. I also feel many celebrants aren't sure how to relate gender to a couple that isn't the standard couple M-F, F-F, M-M, other to other. Not wanting to declare a gender is a grey area for 99% of celebrants.
207	I've never used the portal - never ever been able to log in. Have queried it, and not received appropriate assistance. When I have had any questions about legalities or anything, they have been helpful and quite prompt in their reply. But I think in all my years as a celebrant I've contacted them twice. While they're a useful resource for checking on the legalities involved in marriages, they are not a useful resource to my day to day operation of my Celebrant Business.
241	<b>It still appears that public servants are directing the changes to new marriage forms and OPD etc for celebrants and these PS's many may not have any experiential knowledge on what celebrants actually do in real practise. Perhaps they may need some "field excursions"!</b>
241	<b>It still appears that public servants are directing the changes to new marriage forms and OPD etc for celebrants and these PS's many may not have any experiential knowledge on what celebrants actually do in real practise. Perhaps they may need some "field excursions"!</b>
243	I would like included in the 42a Happily Ever...Before and After, the definition of Marriage by the Australian Gov't. Marriage is the union of..... It's not in there and if they can't agree to that, they are wasting our time. It was in the old one but not the new one and I think it should definitely be in there.

  

75	I think the AG's Department should be able to de-register celebrants who do the wrong thing and regulate more strictly.
83	Marriage celebrants should be subject to the conflict of interest policy.
116	check celebrants websites, you will find enough on there to keep you busy for years. also spot check wedding ceremonies ... i know that may be impracticable but there are celebrants out there who are continually making mistakes and acting unprofessionally. Makes it hard for us who do the right thing.. (eg.. telling guests it was ok to cover their ears as the monitum was read pre SS weddings... still using the old wording in the monitum.. the list goes on.
133	The portal and payment system is poor and could be reworked to be more user friendly Payment process should be instant
155	Two major concerns are: Celebrants backdating NOIMs. I have had couples cancel bookings because they found someone who would conduct the ceremony inside one month ( When ever this occurs and I have couples full names it is reported to BDM) Trainee celebrants not yet appointed advertising for business and accepting bookings.

## 6 Comments relating to the Annual Registration Fee

23	Price regulation. Should be a set fee for a wedding. Need to weed out the people just grabbing quick money without giving the couple the dedication deserved.
16	I think that the fee a celebrant charges should be upheld and celebrants should not be able to charge ridiculously low fees and undercut other celebrants. It takes away the serious nature of the job and becomes a circus.
64	I encourage the department to put a limit of what Celebrants are Charging. There are Celebrants getting working solely on their ridiculous low fee and giving a terrible ceremony, giving the industry a bad name. For those of us who are doing taking our job seriously, we put in approximately 15 hours per wedding. Unable to charge more than \$600 due to present economy, plus overheads, this is more of a community service, than an income source. Many Celebrants are charging as low as \$250 for a ceremony. The general opinion of the public is that our job involves an hours work on the day, so when celebrants charge \$250, it puts us out of the running. We have a great deal of selling and explaining before we even get them through the door. It's just not a fair industry at all.
157	There should also be a minimum fee for celebrants, to provide worth, to avoid undercutting and to set an average for fee structure.
158	A minimum fee should be enforced. It is difficult to compete in a smaller community (featuring destination weddings) when others charge well below the BDM registry fee or consider their role as a Marriage Celebrant to be a hobby.
185	I believe that there should be a standard fee for all celebrants work. As would stop bargaining for prices of services

### 30 Comments relating to the Number of Commonwealth Marriage Celebrants



24	There should be an immediate moratorium on the registration of new celebrants until numbers are at a rate that allow celebrants the ability to make a fair and decent living from their vocation.
28	I believe there should be a cap on the number of authorised Marriage Celebrants
33	The MLCS has to limit (cap) the number of Marriage Celebrants as previously was the case. Now anyone that does the course can be a Marriage Celebrant. Since the numbers have increased, I believe the quality of services being provided are falling because they are just doing it for monetary gains.
37	Stop registering so many new celebrants and allow those of us who have trained and invested to reap some financial reward
39	Why should we be paying any ongoing fees to do what is effectively the Department's work? We deliver the legal requirements so why are we paying every year to do this and why is the Department's stationery not provided for us free of charge? <b>It's ridiculous that the Department takes money off us while opening the field wide for unlimited numbers of celebrants which lowers our work rate and floods the market at the same time that the registry then competes with us for that market. No other industry does this.</b>
44	Cap the number of celebrants being registered each year.
48	Do not allow so many graduate CCMC - too many for the number of marriages = little work for us all
54	I am concerned that too many celebrants are being ordained. In my area we are struggling to get bookings due to the influx of so many new celebrants who are offering their services for very small cost. Surely numbers should be regulated?
62	The management of the program is a joke! MLCS doesn't communicate with its Celebrants, let alone with Government. Too much reliance is placed on Celebrants to do BDM's work. <b>Too many new Celebrants continue to be registered, when the industry is already swamped.</b> There are no checks and balances for some Celebrants "operating on the cheap, just to get the gig", pumping out cheap and nasty, non-individual ceremonies, which devalues ritual and Celebrancy.
63	To be honest the general standard of celebrants seems to have slipped considerably - it is now a free for all profession with people in it just to make money. I do not consider all celebrants registered to be fit and proper for the role, nor conducting their business in a manner befitting someone who is appointed by a government body to officiate over legal proceedings
76	Has there been a limit put on how many courses can be run per year yet? We are still experiencing a flood of celebrants on the market. It was irresponsible in the first instance to allow thousands of people to give their time, money and effort to join the profession without the demand for so many. It would be nice to think something has been done to manage this situation.
80	I think they are rushing celebrants through. There are new celebrants out there charging ridiculous fees without any experience and they have no idea what they are doing. This is evident by the questions associations receive daily. There should be a high standard we all work to but does the government really have any idea of any standards held by Celebrants? The majority of us do it because we believe in marriage and the law and we love people (and love). <del>We do not do it to "become rich" / "make money" / "is off"</del>
96	The market is flooded with celebrants and it now appears that every family has a celebrant!! Most of them are just hobby celebrants and have a regular job. It has meant a huge loss of income for us experienced professional celebrants who do this as our sole occupation.
105	flooding the market with celebrants does not necessarily provide or improve quality
110	With so many Celebrants I feel that many devalue the service in the hope of attracting more business
111	The Attorney General's department should limit the number of Marriage Celebrants as it is becoming over-supplied and quality of the MC's are falling
138	I would love to be gainfully employed full-time as a marriage celebrant, however, the Department has <del>overwhelmed us with too many celebrants onto the market place, hence this is why I had to go full-time</del>
147	Needs a review- long overdue. Too many celebrants for market available.
152	Far too many Celebrants. There needs to be a halt on future training. Price discounting is rife in some areas. Ceremonies as low as \$350 is discouraging to me.
167	When I was appointed as a celebrant in 2000 there was moratorium on the engagement of new celebrants so I had to apply for the advertised position to service a particular area. There were enough celebrants to service the wider region. Now there has been an influx and I don't believe in regional areas there needs to be as many as there is at the moment.



173	The influx of celebrants would seem to force marketing on price rather than quality thus making it difficult to obtain sufficient work for all. Perhaps a cap on the number of celebrants appointed to each state would have merit
174	There seems to be many celebrants starting business in tassie but no rise in marriage rates. The number of celebrants needs to be capped if business is to be sustainable
186	Numbers should be controlled to prevent over provision
195	Would like to see Celebrant intake numbers regulated as this is becoming a price driven service
200	I feel that the annual cap on new registrations should be reintroduced. There are a ridiculous amount of Celebrants which makes it hard to make a living.
213	Celebrant Registrations should be limited - and charges should be standardised. Too many celebrants and the undercutting of fees leads to bad representation of celebrants
233	There are too many celebrants. It is now turned into an entertainment industry.
242	1. I have been approached from time to time by celebrants concerned that there are too many celebrants currently appointed. This means that even with the passing of marriage equality legislation there are a large
244	There are far too many celebrants
248	Yes there are too many celebrants being registered. Some celebrants are not solemnising ANY ceremonies per year. Celebrants that were performing over 60 ceremonies per year are now only solemnising less than 30.

#### 6 Comments about different aspects of the Marriage Celebrant Program.

12	Old Celebrants should be considered to undertake the new Cert IV in celebrancy course. There are so many bad celebrants in the industry. The stories you hear are just horrendous. Staff from the AGD should be coming to observe Celebrants at their rehearsals and weddings - to see the calibre of celebrants out there. If only you could regulate the fee's celebrants charge - as there are so many celebrants under cutting to get bookings and charging a ridiculously low fee - that makes it almost impossible for a full time celebrant to charge good money to make it a full time income.
22	in the many years being a minister and a celebrant, I have found that there is no love any more in helping couples in their marriage, it has become a business, money, money. ?
87	Frankly I believe many Celebrants do not have the personal empathy for every wedding situation - I hear it all the time. I'm so fortunate (as a beginner) that I get referrals from every wedding however I invest too many hours into each couple. I don't know how the AG Dept can structure fees - there are the professionals out there that can give up to 30 hours of time and others who deliver and charge similar fees and leave the couple and guests with no personal input, research or memories. Sadly I hear too often that celebrants do not deliver !
103	I feel it is unethical when a celebrant pays a fee to a wedding planner for being recommended by same.
210	I feel that the program does not equip the celebrant for the day to day of trying to link with couples. There should be some honesty about how hard it is to get business if you live in certain areas or even if you are older before the program is even started. I work every day at this so that is not the problem. If I had known how hard it was I would have saved my hard earned money. The program makes money for trainers so I feel they want to get as many as possible in the door. Clear, honest statistics about who gets to do the wedding in your area, information about how to run the business including setting up a website, social media - how to get the best out of it, wedding expos and wedding 'groups' eg vendors all pay a certain amount and then all recommend each other. This locks out every one else. We have just had expos everywhere but they are all fully booked with celebrants. Would be so good to know all of this. Thank you for the opportunity to vent.
229	Even though I have to pay for ongoing registration and OPDs, and have associated costs (office, stationary, clothes & all other Celebrant costs, etc), if for whatever reasons I don't make sufficient \$\$ in a year, the ATO doesn't allow me to claim costs on tax - I believe that is unfair and the AGD should try and have that changed !

#### 14 Comments about Registry Offices and Services



29	We should receive confirmation of the marriages we perform, having no contact at all is very odd.
47	The new RIO system in Victoria needs a major review and the time period for sending marriages in by mail needs to be extended until the RIO system is more user friendly for all.
52	Alignment of BDM requirements with AG's requirements. Lack of practical knowledge of celebrancy by the department.
58	The Program is not extensive. The Program is great in that it includes many industry related topics and improved every year; it would be ideal if each celebrant was to complete say 6 - 10 hrs, after all, the time frame to be able to complete this is twelve months. As an example, other industry bodies make their members
62	Too much reliance is placed on Celebrants to do BDM's work.
72	I would have liked more face to face in regarding learning to upload marriage documents. the only courses held in our area I was booked, should have been more.
91	I have more concerns with bdm.
149	Why oh why is there a difference between the states requirements when we are governed by the same Federal law and department. In some cases the requirements are contradictory.
183	I would like more information and help using the new structure of doing the legal paperwork online instead of manually!! We need courses to teach us how to do the online portal and should be covered in the OPD course!!
193	We pay the fees to Ag's dept. But the State BDM office staff do all the work. and are poorly staffed. The AG's dept could pass on some funding to the state offices cos they are the ones we talk to if we have any issues with registrations.
193	<b>We pay the fees to Ag's dept. But the State BDM office staff do all the work. and are poorly staffed. The AG's dept could pass on some funding to the state offices cos they are the ones we talk to if we have any issues with registrations.</b>
231	it appears the BDFMs across different states offer different services to celebrants
254	I also believe that BDM offices should not be allowed to perform ceremonies outside the office it should be in house only. It was my understanding people went to a registry office to have a simple two witness ceremony and a cost effective price.
258	They need to somehow regulate what celebrants are charging for weddings so there is a consistent fee for couples as I'm tired of our services being undervalued. We shouldn't have to compete with BDM either offering weddings in locations other than their offices.

## 6 Comments about CoCA

19	good that actual celebrants are consulted
104	I think the members of COCA have many issues to address, especially given the turnover of departmental staff. It would be good if continuity could be maintained, regardless of departmental staff changes ... paperwork in timely manner. Often what is missing is the WHY changes are made by the Department. It is often difficult for COCA members to relay this to relevant associations. Another thing I'm concerned about is the lack of direction for the COCA meetings.
121	No concerns about the Program. But a note about this survey. I think COCA could have included a broad sweep question to determine the existing educational levels/qualifications of Celebrants that respond. Would be demographic information that might determine a bit better the training needs of the target audience.
141	I believe those such as you and your association, overlook all that is happening and are doing marvellous work to foster the professionalism of all celebrants.
158	Q20 would not allow me to answer Yes to both questions.
224	CoCA should be the Peak body and other stand alone organisations should not get a seat at the table.

NB: Apologies for the error on Q20. The question was reset and only figures reported are those where the question was working correctly.

## 23 Non-specific Comments

9	I need to get more info about these issues. I have been busy with other things and didn't have the time to boost my CMC work.
13	As a new celebrant, I have no issues at this stage.
34	Only as mentioned in the previous response.
36	See my response to the last question.
60	I'm unsure of what to reply as I have not been a Marriage Celebrant for that long. I rely on other more experienced Marriage Celebrants for guidance and feedback.
82	Support all recommendations provided by mcawa
95	comments as above
100	i have not had a great deal of time to sit & read everything, so i will just treat all people the same & all should be ok, if there is any special issues i am not sure of when & if that may occur i will deal with that then.
122	Far longer and more complex than it needs to be
131	Unsure if where this is leading to
134	none
136	have some respect for their clients (Celebrants).
151	I don't understand this question to answer it effectively...?
166	It is obviously sensitive of the needs of non heterosexual couples and should not go overboard as the new monitor wording probably says it all.
205	Not doing weddings
214	Only do few weddings. Not a business for me. Enjoy doing weddings!
219	At times too much emphasis on social media which some celebrants aren't comfortable with
225	To have relevant up to date information from one to another.
230	Conflict of interest issues
226	The celebrant fee, in conjunction with OPD, insurance and association member fees, are a considerable cost each year
218	cost
237	I am happy for all couples to marry but my concerns are for the future when a couple have to declare that they are not related. I feel same sex couples will be using sperm donors or surrogacy for their child planning and what happens then? Or may not know parents name. I guess time will tell.
145	<b>I have always found the MCLS people friendly and useful. I still think the homophobic XXXX (celebrant association) is given far too much weight and say, compared with other organisations.</b>

Independent celebrants are also invited to offer their interpretation of the survey data in the [CoCA Feedback section](#).