

HIB Number: 000823

Date/Time
Transmitted: 06/05/2011 19:07

Subject: CHANGES TO PARTNERS IN DLA PIPER INCLUDING MELANIE MCKEAN
Comment:
Action Area HDL

LIMITED DISTRIBUTION - NOT TO BE FORWARDED

**ISSUE: CHANGES TO PARTNERS IN DLA PIPER
INCLUDING MELANIE MCKEAN**

SENSITIVITY: The Media may ask whether the review by DLA Piper into the allegations of sexual and other abuse is compromised by six of the eight Canberra-based partners, including one of the partners directly involved, announcing that they will be leaving the firm.

KEY ISSUES:

- Defence has this afternoon been advised that six Canberra-based partners of DLA Piper (formerly DLA Phillips Fox), including Melanie McKean, will not be continuing with DLA Piper.
- DLA Piper has been identified as the external law firm to undertake the review of the allegations of sexual and other abuse received by the Minister's office and Defence in the wake of the ADFA incident.
- Melanie McKean has been identified with Gary Rumble and Dennis Pearce as leading the review.
- DLA Piper assures Defence that it is committed to providing continuity of service and ensuring that ongoing matters, including the review, are not disrupted.
- DLA Piper is expected to release a media statement mid-morning Monday, 9 May 2011.

Contact Officer: David Lloyd **W:** 6127 0003 **M:** [REDACTED]
Authorised by: Mark Cunliffe **W:** 6266 4143 **M:** [REDACTED]

Date issued: 6 May 2011

BACKGROUND:

A DEFGRAM to be issued early next week identifies Melanie McKean as the female partner participating in the review to enable those individuals who are more comfortable speaking with a woman to contact her.

DLA Piper has indicated that it is likely the full review team will remain with DLA Piper until at least phase 1 of the review is complete (currently due by 30 June 2011). DLA Piper, Ms McKean and the other departing partners, have assured Defence that when they transition to another firm, this will be seamless.

Ms McKean's departure date is to be confirmed. She has indicated that her hope and intention is to complete phase 1 of the review before she departs.

Phase 1 will involve receiving the allegations and conducting an initial review to provide advice on the initial review and possible options for next steps. Ms McKean is not essential to the later phase which is currently expected to involve oversight rather than direct review of individual matters.

Defence believes that this announcement will not compromise the review as two of the three key lawyers will remain involved. Ms McKean will be available for phase 1 which was the key role always envisaged for her.

Further, DLA Piper can draw on the remaining resources of the Canberra firm of which there are 34 remaining lawyers of whom about 14 are senior lawyers. More importantly, they are able to draw upon the resources of the national firm which comprises 400 lawyers in total of whom around 120 are partners.

