

Mediation 2.0 is coming: Australia's Mediator Standards Board to modernise national accreditation standards for 2021 rollout.

The Mediator Standards Board (MSB) has announced it will work with Melbourne-based Resolution Resources (RR) to review the National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS) governing Australia's professional mediators.

The NMAS sets professional standards for the training and assessment of mediators across Australia and is delivered by 25 registered mediator training providers across the country.

Originally introduced in 2008, the NMAS was last revised in 2015. With the developing nature of this relatively new profession, the MSB has chosen to revise the accreditation system over the next 12 months to ensure it maintains relevance and keeps up with the pace of change.

Cautious around framing the project as 'an overhaul', MSB National Chairperson Ms Bianca Keys stated "The review does not equate to a rewrite. Rather, it is designed to address some interpretive, drafting, and operational issues that our members have pointed out in an ongoing series of consultations."

The MSB undertook a comprehensive tendering process earlier in the year, with Resolution Resources officially announced as the successful tenderer on 31 August 2020.

RR will conduct a thorough consultation process with MSB members and the broader dispute resolution community, then make recommendations for the MSB by mid-2021.

"Resolution Resources brings exceptional international and local experience to bear on what will be an intensive process. We have every confidence they will ensure the NMAS is positioned to guide the profession into 2021 and beyond" said Bianca Keys, national Chairperson for the MSB.

Danielle Hutchinson and Emma-May Litchfield of RR say they are excited to be offered the opportunity to lead this very important work. "It provides the chance for us to introduce an evidence-based approach to reviewing the NMAS standards that is well-established in other disciplines, yet only in its early stages of application in dispute resolution."

Since the NMAS was introduced, the role of the mediator has become an important and ubiquitous part of managing neighbourhood, workplace, family and commercial disputes. Courts and other organisations have almost universally adopted mediation, or some variant, as part of their dispute management process.

Keys notes that, "Mediation and associated processes are now firmly part of the rich fabric of our society. We must ensure that benchmarks for the training and best practice of mediators evolve and reflect the changing times and include some prefiguring of what is to happen in the future. By engaging independent professionals with advanced research and consultative experience, we hope to build a solid evidence-based approach to this crucial system."

ABOUT

Mediator Standards Board is responsible for the ongoing development and maintenance of the National Mediator Accreditation System (NMAS) introduced in 2008. Website > <https://msb.org.au/about-msb>

MEDIA QUERIES

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