



## Release of Fee Deregulation Position Paper for Consultation

The Commissioner for Consumer Protection, Anne Driscoll, has released a position paper proposing that government regulation of the fees charged by settlement agents and land valuers cease.

Western Australia is the only Australian state or territory that regulates the fees charged by settlement agents. The fees are fixed under the maximum remuneration provisions of the *Settlement Agents Act 1981*.

Fee deregulation is not a new proposal. Over the past decade, the Australian Institute of Conveyancers WA Division (AICWA) and some individual licensed settlement agents have made submissions about the relevance of the prescribed maximum fees to current circumstances. These views were most recently submitted in 2012 and 2013 when the Department increased maximum fees as an interim step prior to consulting with the industry about fee deregulation.

In making the case for deregulation, the position paper assesses the continued need for fee regulation and provides supporting data. It considers interstate approaches, the experience of fee deregulation in related occupations, the degree of competition within the market and other protections available to consumers should fees be deregulated.

A three-month consultation period has commenced that provides peak organisations, licensed settlement agents and consumers with an opportunity to comment on the proposal to deregulate fees.

There is no specific format for submissions to the Department. Participants are welcome to provide a brief submission outlining general views or a comprehensive submission covering specific issues the position paper raises. Participants may also choose to make a submission by responding to a short survey which is attached to the end of the position paper. The survey is also available online via the Department of Commerce [website](#).

The position paper is available online at: [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consultations](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/consultations).

The **closing date** for submissions on the discussion paper is 5.00pm WST on **Thursday 31 July 2014**.

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