

## OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR-GENERAL - NEWSLETTER

### JUNE 2020

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#### **Covid-19 Measures**

Reminder to respect social distancing requirements and maintain appropriate personal hygiene in the Land Titles Office (LTO) settlement room in Darwin and the Office of Births Deaths and Marriages (BDM) counters. The settlement room is capped to hold a maximum of 12 occupants at any time.

Weddings in the marriage room are still restricted to 5 people which includes the marriage celebrant until further notice.

#### **Fee Update**

There will be no increase to LTO or BDM fees for the financial year 2020-21. As part of the Jobs Rescue & Recovery Plan released on 18 March 2020, The Northern Territory Government announced a freeze on all fees and charges until 30 June 2021.

Accordingly, the value of a revenue unit will remain at \$1.21 for the 2020-21 financial year.

#### **On-Line Birth Registrations**

BDM will be introducing on-line birth registrations in the next couple of months. This will enable parents to register the birth of their child using the on-line birth registration portal from the BDM website.

#### **Births, Deaths and Marriages Remote Circuit**

Due to the Covid-19 epidemic all remote circuit visits have ceased for the time being.

For the first part of this financial year the Office of BDM visited Ngukurr, Jilkminggan, Beswick, Barunga, Gunbalanya, Galiwinku, Wurrumiyanga, Pirlangimpi, Milikapiti and Borrooloola.

#### **Covid-19 dispensations from LTO registration requirements**

The LTO has adopted a flexible approach in relation to the technical requirements associated with land transaction lodgements in cases where execution and witnessing of documents has been severely impacted by Covid-19 restrictions. Each matter is treated on a case by case basis. Contact the LTO if you are experiencing difficulties to discuss possible solutions.

#### **Corporations Act 2001 update**

The Australian Government has issued the *Corporations (Coronavirus Economic Response) Determination (No. 1) 2020*.

The Determination alters the operation of section 127 of the Act to give certainty that when company officers sign a document electronically (including an electronic document), the document has been validly executed.

The explanatory statement issued by the Australian Government outlines the procedures to be followed. One important step to follow is the use of electronic communication which reliably identifies the person and indicates the person's intention about the contents of the document. The Determination took effect on the 5 May 2020 and expires at the end of six months.

If executing under this Determination, the Land Titles Office requires modification to the signing clause on the form to provide, "Signed in accordance with section 127 of the Corporations Act 2001 and the Corporations (Coronavirus Economic Response) Determination (No.1) 2020."

#### **On-line Title Searches**

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics has nearly finalised an on-line portal for the Integrated Land Information System (ILIS). This will allow members of the professions and public to carry out title searches on-line. Name search will not be available on this portal. It is expected to be available by the middle June.

#### **Transfer of Land to Trustees**

Due to an increasing number of errors occurring on transfer to trustee forms, recording the name of the trustee and trust, the Land Titles Office will now require production of the trust deed (only for sighting) at lodgement.

### **Introducing Verification of Identity requirements**

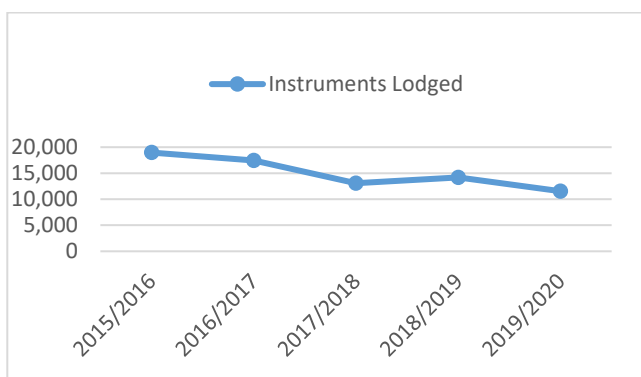
The Registrar-General is considering the introduction of Verification of Identity requirements in the later part of this year under the Registrar-General's Directions.

The main aim will be that reasonable steps must be taken to verify the identity of a client. A record of the steps undertaken must be kept in writing by the conveyancing/lawyer undertaking the verification of identity. A consultation draft will be circulated for feedback.

### **Lodgement Statistics**

The below table and graph show the total number of Instruments lodged in the Land Titles Office from various financial year periods. \* The 2019/2020 financial year period covers the total number of Instruments lodged from 01 July 2019 to 30 April 2020.

<b>PERIOD (Financial Year)</b>	<b>INSTRUMENTS LODGED</b>
2015/2016	18,964
2016/2017	17,457
2017/2018	13,053
2018/2019	14,190
*2019/2020	11,542



### **E-mail Distribution List**

We are updating our email distribution list. If you want to be put on our list or have any changes to your contact information please email:

[AGD.RegistrarGeneral@nt.gov.au](mailto:AGD.RegistrarGeneral@nt.gov.au)