

Technical Alert

12 December 2022

Proposed amendments to APES 215 *Forensic Accounting Services*

Accounting Professional & Ethical Standards Board Limited (APESB) invites comments from accountants, professional accounting bodies, firms, regulators and other stakeholders on an exposure draft on proposed amendments to APES 215 *Forensic Accounting Services* (APES 215).

A stakeholder has raised concerns relating to evidence presented to the court as summaries of documents under section 50 of the *Evidence Act 1995* (Evidence Act), and when such evidence is a Lay Witness Service or Expert Witness Service for the purposes of APES 215.

The key proposed amendments to APES 215 consist of:

- amendments to the definition of Lay Witness Service to note that such services generally do not require the Member to use the Member's specialised knowledge derived from the Member's training, study or experience;
- the addition of a new paragraph 3.14 to provide that if a Member's Report to communicate evidence refers to the Member's specialised knowledge and/or training, study or experience, then the Member must perform the service as an Expert Witness Service;
- amendments to Example 7 of Appendix 3 to illustrate when evidence presented under section 50 of the Evidence Act may or may not be a Lay Witness Service and where the Member's Report refers to specialised knowledge and/or training, study or experience, it is an Expert Witness Service; and
- Quality management-related conforming amendments due to the issue of revised Quality Management standards by APESB and AUASB.

The proposed amendments are anticipated to be effective for engagements or assignments commencing on or after 1 October 2023, with earlier adoption permitted.

The Exposure Draft, which provides details of the proposed revisions, is available on the APESB website: www.apesb.org.au.

Specific comments and feedback on the proposed changes should be received by the APESB no later than **20 February 2023**.

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