

Short Minutes Transcript: Pressures of Practice

In the 2018 case of *Legal Services Commissioner and Boundy*, a solicitor was retained to act on behalf of a client, who was the executor of the estate of her late brother. A complaint was made against the solicitor alleging undue delay in the administration of the estate. Indeed, some nine and a half years after he was first retained by his client, the estate had still not been finalised.

It was clear that the solicitor was experiencing difficulties in his legal practice. He was dealing with a number of complex matters and found the weight of the work overbearing. By his own admission the solicitor should have sought assistance earlier when things got on top of him, but continued to struggle on, juggling his workload with other problems in his life.

A finding of unsatisfactory professional conduct was made and the tribunal noted that ‘this case is an exemplar of the pressures which are faced in contemporary practice by many...’

The everyday pressures of legal practice can become overwhelming, and if not acted upon early can cause significant problems.

Being alert to the challenges and every day risks associated with legal work, speaking up and knowing how to get help if you become overwhelmed can make all the difference to yourself and your legal practice.

There are a number of things that solicitors can do to seek support, manage large workloads and conflicting pressures, including:

- Joining a practice support group or legal practice community
- Not taking on more work than you can handle
- Being selective with the type of work that you take on
- Reviewing your resources and ensuring that you are supported in the right areas
- Talking to your doctor if you are feeling overwhelmed

A link to the case and resources can be found below:

- [Legal Services Commissioner v Boundy \[2018\] QCAT 55](#)
- [Lawcover’s Risk on Air Podcast – Episode 1 Mental Health](#)
- [The Resilient Lawyer – A Manual for Staying Well at Work, Robyn Bradey](#)
- [The Law Society of NSW Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources](#)

I’m Malcolm Heath