AGENDA

IN-HOUSE LEGAL SUMMIT AUSTRALIA 2026

28 October I Melbourne CBD

Australia's most practical one-day summit for in-house lawyers — Managing operational execution, compliance enforcement, and cost pressures

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IN-HOUSE LEGAL SUMMIT AUSTRALIA

28 October, 2026
Melbourne CBD

Event overview

Format	**In-person and peer reviewed**
Audience	**In-House Counsel, General Counsel, Legal Operations Professionals**
Positioning	**Australia's most practical summit for In-House Lawyers**
Core Value	**Practical blueprints for In-House legal leaders to master operational efficiency, navigate aggressive regulatory enforcement, and drive commercial growth.**

About

A peer-driven, high-impact one-day summit designed for General Counsel, Chief Legal Officers, Legal Operations leaders, and Company Secretaries navigating unrelenting cost pressures and aggressive regulatory scrutiny, the Thomson Reuters In-House Legal Summit 2026 is the forum where corporate legal leaders come to master operational execution and commercial strategy.

Taking place on Wednesday 28 October 2026 in Melbourne, IHLS 2026 brings together Australia's foremost in-house legal community for an intensely practical day of strategic panels, high-stakes keynotes, crisis-response deep dives, and closed-door peer problem-solving—moving far beyond generic theory.

Every session is engineered around the critical operational and regulatory realities facing legal leaders heading into 2027: balancing the expanding multi-hat mandate (GC, CRO, and Company Secretary), deploying agile resourcing and legal ops to beat the budget squeeze, proving legal's commercial ROI to the Board, and navigating strict enforcement across mandatory climate reporting, greenwashing, AML/CTF reforms, and volatile global supply chains.

Designed for legal leaders managing complex, high-stakes environments, IHLS 2026 equips delegates with the operational resilience, regulatory foresight, and strategic influence needed to defend the enterprise and enable commercial growth the very next day.

Why attend?

Designed for General Counsel, Legal Operations leaders, and corporate counsel navigating flat budgets and aggressive regulatory scrutiny, the Thomson Reuters In-House Legal Summit 2026 provides actionable blueprints to master operational execution, manage risk, and drive commercial value. From deploying a 48-hour cyber crisis playbook and defending financial-grade climate disclosures to reining in external spend and achieving measurable ROI from AI governance, this summit equips senior legal leaders with the practical strategies needed to protect the enterprise and lead with commercial influence.

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What makes IHLS different?

Peer-Driven & Advisory Board–Curated: Returning for its second year, the agenda is shaped directly by a board of sitting General Counsel and legal leaders to address the immediate to mid-term operational, cost, and regulatory priorities facing lean in-house teams.

Closed-Door Candour Under Chatham House Rule: Features an unscripted, slide-free open circle under the Chatham House Rule, providing a confidential forum to share candid survival strategies, compliance challenges, and budget realities.

✓ Chatham House Rule

Not just the breakouts — every panel, keynote, and fireside chat is built for the kind of honesty you can't get on the record.

✓ Three pressures, one integrated agenda

Operational execution, compliance enforcement, and cost control — tackled together in every session, not siloed into separate tracks.

✓ Built for 2027, not a recap of 2026

From ASIC's pivot to active enforcement to AML/CTF's new regulated perimeter — this agenda gets you ahead of what's coming, not just what's already happened.

✓ Playbooks, not panels

Walk away with a 48-hour cyber crisis framework, AI governance KPIs, and rate-negotiation tactics you can use Monday morning — not just talking points.

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28 October, 2026
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2026 Advisory Panel



Craig Tidemann
Partner,
Thomson Greer



Deborah Banwell
General Counsel,
Company Director,
GAICD



Theo Kapodistrias
National Vice President,
Association of Corporate
Counsel Australia



Benjamin Di Marco
Cyber and Technology
Risk Specialist,
WTW



Darshana Parekh
Senior Legal Counsel,
Canon



Ivana Kovacevic
Group Chief Legal Officer &
Company Secretary,
Corporate Travel Management
Group



Jessica Giampiccol
Director,
JMLG Advisory Pty Ltd

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2026 agenda overview

28 October, 2026
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8:20 am Registration Open

8:55 am Opening remarks by the MC



John van Rooyen
Director of Corporate Sales, **Thomson Reuters**

9:00 am Industry Keynote

The regulatory and business environment facing GCs in 2027

The modern General Counsel is no longer merely a defensive gatekeeper or technical legal advisor—they are a core architect of enterprise strategy, corporate governance, and commercial resilience. However, this expanded influence arrives at a time of severe macroeconomic volatility and unrelenting margin pressure. Legal leaders are expected to act simultaneously as strategic advisors to the C-suite, trusted partners to business units, Chief Risk Officers anticipating geopolitical and market shocks, and Company Secretaries safeguarding boardroom governance.Balancing these multifaceted responsibilities requires a rigorous approach to resource allocation and operational efficiency. In an era where corporate mandates demand doing more with flat or shrinking budgets, GCs must master the art of financial and operational discipline. This keynote provides practical blueprints for navigating the multi-hat leadership mandate, ruthlessly optimising external legal spend, and structuring a high-performing, commercially aligned in-house legal function built to thrive in a volatile global market.

- Moving beyond standard panel discounts to deploy assertive rate-negotiation strategies, robust panel benchmarking, and fixed-fee/value-based pricing models that rein in escalating external counsel costs.
- Practical models for assessing true internal capacity, structuring team topology to eliminate low-value work, and balancing senior strategic counsel with operational support without driving team burnout.
- Practical frameworks for balancing overlapping and sometimes competing responsibilities across the GC, Chief Risk Officer (CRO), and Company Secretary roles—ensuring independent legal and risk oversight while actively enabling commercial growth.
- Strategies for translating complex cross-border regulatory exposure, supply-chain vulnerabilities, and operational legal risks into actionable, commercially quantified business metrics that resonate with the CEO, CFO, and Board of Directors.



Marion Hemphill
General Counsel and Chief Privacy Officer,
Australian Red Cross Lifeblood

9:30 am Regulatory Q&A

Panel in the GC's chair: Regulation, technology, and geopolitics through a GC's lens

The current General Counsel remit is multi-dimensional — where regulation, AI, cyber, and geopolitics are just four of the many balls a GC is juggling alongside commercial deal-making, board relationships, talent, and budget. This panel pulls back the lens to ask a broader question: what does it actually feel like to hold the GC mandate right now, when new regulation, emerging technology, cyber exposure, and geopolitical volatility are just four items on a much longer list that also includes commercial deal support, board politics, talent retention, and a budget that never quite matches the risk. Rather than another deep dive into any single threat, this session is a candid, wide-ranging conversation with sitting General Counsel about how they are actually prioritising, delegating, and staying sane while everything competes for their attention at once.

- How GCs are triaging an ever-expanding remit—when regulatory change, AI adoption, cyber risk, and geopolitical disruption all land in the same week, what actually gets a GC's personal attention versus what gets delegated.

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• How much technology and regulatory risk is genuinely new versus how much is existing risk simply becoming more visible and better reported to the board.
• Career reflections on building a personal operating model as GC—how panellists structure their own time, teams, and advisors to stay strategic rather than permanently reactive.
• What GCs wish the CEO, CFO, and Board understood about the true breadth of the role, and where their mandate is heading over the next 2–3 years.



Rachel Delaney
General Counsel & COO
Ovum AI



Janine Jansen
Former Group General Counsel. Company Secretary & Director
Aesop



David Artin
General Counsel,
Zepto



Rajeev Pillay
General Counsel & Company Secretary
Compensation Scheme of Last Resort



Lachlan Bradley
Assistant General Counsel and Assistant Company Secretary, **Ansell**

10:15am **Sponsor Keynote**

From legal gatekeeper to commercial advisor — measuring influence, not just matters closed



Johan Lundstedt
Solution Consultant, **Thomson Reuters**

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10:45 am **Morning tea break**

11:15am **Industry Keynote**

From legal gatekeeper to commercial advisor — measuring influence, not just matters closed

For decades, the in-house legal function has been measured by what it prevented: matters closed, disputes avoided, deals de-risked. But as GCs increasingly sit at the strategy table, that scorecard no longer reflects — or protects — legal's real value. The next evolution of the role isn't just about being present in commercial conversations; it's about actively shaping them, quantifying legal's contribution in terms the business already speaks, and knowing when to say "manageable" instead of reflexively saying "no." This session explores what it actually takes to shift legal's internal brand from risk-blocker to growth-enabler — and how to prove it.

• Translating legal and regulatory risk into commercial choices the business can act on — reframing advice from binary "yes/no" positions into risk-weighted options the C-suite can actually decide between.
• Building a practical framework to distinguish genuinely unacceptable risk from manageable, commercially-acceptable risk — and giving business units the confidence to own that second category without escalating everything back to legal.
• Moving beyond "matters closed" and "costs avoided" as the only metrics of legal's value — developing forward-looking KPIs (deal velocity, revenue enabled, risk-adjusted commercial outcomes) that demonstrate legal as a value driver, not a cost centre.
• Practical tactics for influencing executives and the Board — building credibility in the room, choosing the right moment to push back versus enable, and turning legal counsel into a trusted voice in strategic decision-making rather than a final sign-off gate.
• Case studies or war stories: moments where reframing a "no" into a structured "yes, if..." materially changed a commercial outcome.



Alison Huitfeldt
General Counsel, **RMIT University**

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11:45am **Sponsored Keynote**

Anticipating the 2027 enforcement outlook: What legal teams need to prepare for

How can AI make everyday in-house legal work easier, not just contract review? In this 15-minute session, Legora will explore how regulatory monitoring, intelligent intake and reusable AI Skills can support teams from identifying issues to delivering legal work. With a short practical demo, discover opportunities to reduce manual effort, save time and manage costs, while keeping legal judgement and oversight at the centre.



Will Gale
Legal Engineer, **Legora**

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12:00 pm **Industry Panel**

Anticipating the 2027 enforcement outlook: What legal teams need to prepare for

General Counsel are no longer managing regulatory risk one domain at a time. Climate disclosure, cyber resilience, financial crime obligations, and AI governance are landing simultaneously — often overseen by the same overstretched legal team, frequently with overlapping regulators, and increasingly with personal liability attached for the people signing off. This keynote takes a cross-cutting view of the regulatory landscape heading into 2027, examining not just what's changing in each domain, but how legal teams build one coherent governance and risk framework robust enough to withstand scrutiny across all of them at once.

- Climate and ESG disclosure moving from implementation to enforcement
- Financial crime and sanctions exposure widening the regulated perimeter
- Cyber and data governance under compressed timelines
- AI adoption outpacing AI governance
- The connective thread: how GCs build a single, board-ready risk governance model that satisfies climate, cyber, financial crime, and AI obligations simultaneously — rather than running four disconnected compliance programs — and how to communicate that consolidated risk picture to the CEO, CFO, and Board in language they can act on.



Iain McLaren
Special Counsel & Deputy Chair, AI Governance
HWL Ebsworth Lawyers



Alison Rowe
Global Chief Executive Officer
Edge Impact



Farhana Islam
Privacy and Governance Specialist

12:45pm **Networking Lunch**

1:45pm **Peer to Peer Fireside Chat**

Peer-to-Peer fireside chat: AI Governance & tech stack ROI, moving beyond the hype

The honeymoon phase of Generative AI and legal technology is officially over. As corporate legal departments face intense budget scrutiny, General Counsel and Legal Ops leaders must move beyond small-scale pilots and "proof-of-concept" purgatory. The mandate for 2026 is clear: legal technology must deliver measurable, scalable business value.

However, scaling these tools introduces unprecedented legal and operational risks. From algorithmic bias and vendor lock-in to the terrifying risk of waiving legal professional privilege (LPP) through third-party data ingestion, today's legal leaders must be master risk managers as well as tech adopters.

This panel of leading General Counsel, Legal Ops pioneers, and technology experts will discuss how to transition from tech experimentation to safe, enterprise-wide deployment.

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• Moving past vague "time-saved" metrics to establish rigorous KPIs that measure true productivity gains, external spend reduction, and speed-to-contract.
• Establishing practical guardrails for corporate AI usage, including vendor risk assessment, mitigating "shadow AI," and protecting attorney-client privilege and work-product doctrine from accidental waiver when querying AI models.
• Strategies for overcoming lawyer resistance to new tools, managing change at scale, and auditing your existing tech stack to decommission underutilised, high-cost legacy software.



Elle Jones
Fractional General Counsel
Essential Legal Solutions



Lisa Fitzgerald
Partner
Norton Rose Fulbright



Lara Peralta
Senior Manager - Advance, Legal Operations
Ashurst Perkins Coie



Tess Lynch
General Counsel
PaperCut

2:35 pm **Industry Panel**

The GC's 48-hour cyber crisis playbook: Legal defence, tech triage, and regulatory containment in the era of automated threats

When a major cyber incident strikes, manual response processes fail and the clock starts ticking immediately. The first 48 hours represent a high-stakes crucible where rapid technical triage and high-pressure legal decisions permanently dictate the organisation's class action liability, regulatory exposure, and brand survival. With the OAIC armed with expanded civil penalties, regulators coordinating joint probes, and class action plaintiff firms monitoring breach alerts in real time, General Counsel cannot rely on generic IT response plans or post-hoc legal reviews.

• Best practices for multi-party retainer structures and protocols when engaging external forensic IT and PR firms, ensuring investigative root-cause reports remain strictly protected from discovery in subsequent class action litigation.
• Balancing compressed, statutory notification windows while facts are still emerging—coordinating cross-agency responses without prematurely admitting liability or inadvertently waiving privilege.
• Moving beyond spreadsheet triage to deploy automated data clean rooms and AI-driven discovery tools that rapidly pinpoint exposed datasets, identify affected individuals, and map actual risk exposure in hours rather than weeks.
• Practical frameworks for listed entities to satisfy market disclosure requirements while maintaining narrative discipline and starving plaintiff firms of early litigation leverage.
• Transitioning the legal and executive team from reactive panic to regular, scenario-tested crisis muscle memory through tabletop breach simulations.



Emily Bartlett
Senior Legal Counsel
CyberCX



Mitchell Wright
Partner (Technology, Cyber, Privacy)
Gadens



Gerard Wheeler
Enterprise Cloud Architect, Security & Governance Risk and Compliance Lead
Australian Government

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3:20pm **Afternoon tea break**

3:50 pm **Industry Panel**

Financial crime, sanctions and supply chain integrity: Navigating risk across legal, compliance and operations

Managing financial crime risk, sanctions exposure, and supply chain integrity is no longer confined to isolated silos. These fast-moving challenges demand active, coordinated leadership across legal, compliance, risk, procurement, and executive functions. As Australia's AML/CTF reforms bring an entirely new cohort of businesses into the regulated perimeter—and as geopolitical volatility deepens sanctions and supply chain complexities—organisations must bridge the gap between legal advice, compliance frameworks, and frontline business operations.
This session examines how these responsibilities are evolving across the enterprise, exploring how legal, compliance, and risk professionals can work together to build robust, defensible frameworks—legally, operationally, and strategically.

- Understanding the practical scope of the reforms, what triggers obligations under the new "designated service" test, and what legal, compliance, and operational leaders must establish from day one.
- Navigating the complex intersection of AML, sanctions, and payments regulation, and overcoming the operational and legal risks created by static screening systems in dynamic geopolitical environments.
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- Clarifying where legal's advisory role meets formal compliance ownership and business execution, and why director and officer liabilities demand seamless enterprise-wide alignment.
- Practical guidance on navigating the "reasonable grounds to suspect" threshold, establishing clear internal escalation pathways, and making sound, defensible reporting decisions.



Kylie Oliver
Senior Manager Enterprise Sanctions Compliance
ANZ



Katherine Shamai
Partner, Risk Consulting
Grant Thornton



Andi Subardjo
Senior Manager Financial Crime Compliance
Cbus Super Fund



Nitin Saby
Tax Surgeon & Managing Partner
Saby + Partners

4:30 pm **Speakers Circle**

No slides, no scripts, and strictly under Chatham House Rule

- Guided by a facilitator, this rapid-fire, open-mic circle is a raw, honest discussion for GCs, Legal Ops leaders, and Chief Risk Officers. Bring your compliance horror stories, your legal tech disappointments, and your budget frustrations. This is a safe space to exchange practical survival strategies, debate the true ROI of your legal stack, and figure out how to keep your sanity while wearing five different hats.

5pm **Conference Close**

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Contact us

If you have any questions or require any further information, please feel free to contact ***eventsanz@thomsonreuters.com****. We would be delighted to assist you.*

Ask me about speaking opportunities



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