

What to Look For in a Traffic Defence Lawyer

WHITEPAPER



A close-up, profile view of a man with a beard and dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, white shirt, and dark tie. He is looking down and writing in a notebook with a black pen. A watch with a dark face and a black strap is visible on his left wrist. The background is a blurred office setting with bookshelves.

russo

L A W Y E R S

Table of Contents

- 3 Introduction
- 4 Prioritise experience
- 4 Expect a high success rate
- 5 Location, location, location
- 6 Ensure they cut through the legalese
- 6 Demand financial transparency
- 7 Open to any and all questions

Australia is well-known for its Outback – the vast desert swaths of the country that are desolate and largely uninhabited.

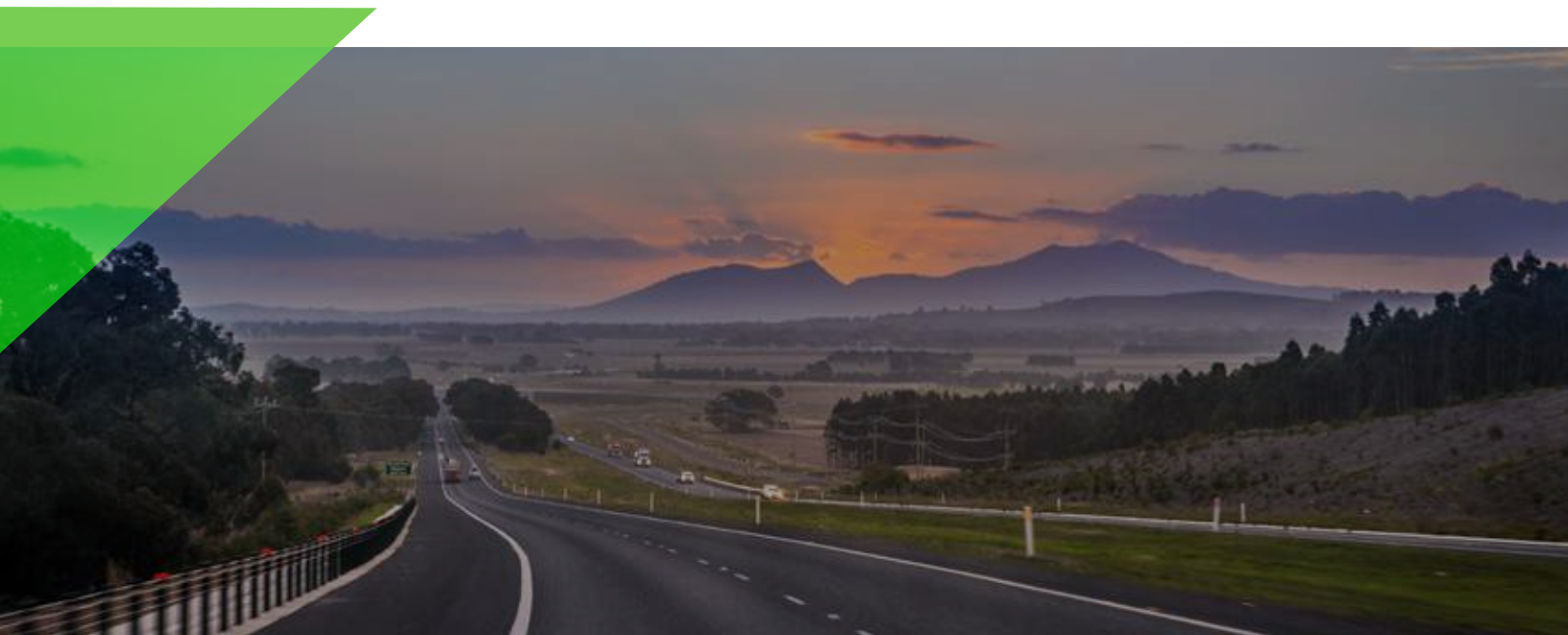
But with over 823,000 kilometres of paved and unpaved roads – making it the ninth-largest highway network in the world – Australia could just as easily be described as an infrastructure oasis.

Given the wide array of options people have to drive along Australia's thoroughfares, police have plenty of opportunities to cite drivers for traffic offences. If you're accused of being on the wrong side of the law, you need the right traffic defence lawyer to protect your rights.

Traffic offences aren't just a regular occurrence in Australia – they're more common than any other crime. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, traffic crimes **accounted for 28% of all offences** between July 2020 and June 2021. During this period, traffic-related offences totalled 176,600 as well, representing more than one-third of all charges.

Such frequency is the reason why defendants have as many options as they do for legal representation. But just as there is a lot of room for error when it comes to abiding by all traffic laws, if you're not careful, you can just as easily select a defence lawyer or law firm that doesn't have your best interests in mind.

The following are a few things for you to keep in mind that will help you choose a truly competent traffic defence lawyer:





Prioritise experience

Of all the qualities that are important for a traffic defence lawyer to have, experience may top them all. Experience doesn't just refer to a lawyer's credentials, such as their Juris doctorate or whether they graduated from a prestigious law school. It's also manifested in familiarity with the traffic offence(s) with which you're charged, be it speeding, drink driving, parking violations, licence violations, vehicular manslaughter, moving violations or aggressive driving. Ideal questions to ask that help you gauge their expertise include:

- ▲ Does your law firm specialise in any specific type of traffic law?
- ▲ Do you have any unique accreditations that speak to your experience in traffic infractions?
- ▲ How long have you been practising traffic law?

Expect a high success rate

Knowing that your legal defence team comes from experience is crucial, and what speaks to that expertise is their track record: namely, how many cases they've won. Success can also be measured in ways that go beyond verdicts. It can also entail a history of successful plea bargaining, thereby avoiding the costs associated with going to court.

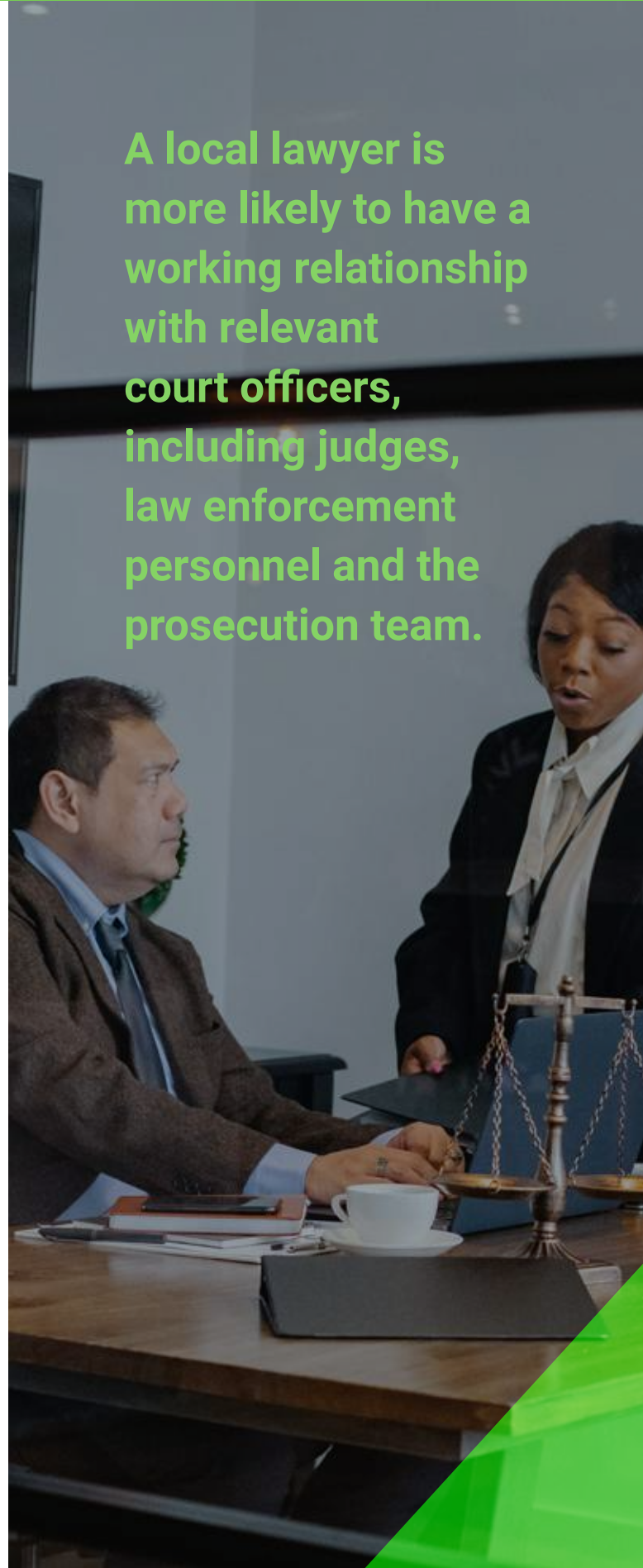
To corroborate their success, a competent traffic lawyer will be able to cite relevant casework and testimonials from former clients who were fully satisfied with their experience. There is no such thing as a perfect lawyer, so in those instances where they lost a case, you may want to ask about what they would do differently, or if certain legal technicalities were what led to the negative outcome. Context is key when it comes to a traffic defence lawyer's win-loss record.

Location, location, location

Retaining a local defence lawyer or law firm accomplishes a few things. For starters, working with a local lawyer is more convenient for you, so don't have to travel as far for ongoing hearings, meetings and consultations. But their location goes beyond simply being more practical. A local lawyer also has greater familiarity with relevant case law. After all, traffic laws in Queensland aren't exactly the same as they are in South Australia, Tasmania or New South Wales.

Additionally, a local lawyer is more likely to have a working relationship with relevant court officers, including judges, law enforcement personnel and the prosecution team. Your lawyer's familiarity with those professionals can positively influence a case's outcome. For example, the prosecutor's office may be more willing to consider a plea bargain or lighter sentence if they're on good terms with your defence team.

A local lawyer is more likely to have a working relationship with relevant court officers, including judges, law enforcement personnel and the prosecution team.



Ensure they cut through the legalese

From “appellant” to “ex parte” to “peremptory challenge” and so much more, the legal profession is filled with words and phrases that you may not know — even if you’ve binge-watched every courtroom drama you can think of. Some of the words are difficult to pronounce, never mind to understand what they actually mean.

A good traffic defence lawyer won’t force you to guess what’s happening at any given time.



They should be able to explain what various legal terms mean (without you having to ask them) and keep you in the loop about concepts that are relevant to your case. In short, they ought to be able to cut through legalese and technical jargon so you’re always in the know — and never on the outside looking in.

Demand financial transparency

Trust and full disclosure is pivotal in counsel-to-client relationships. A respectable traffic lawyer — or any other lawyer, for that matter — is completely transparent and forthcoming about what retaining their legal services will cost you. It’s no secret that obtaining a defence lawyer can be expensive, between consultation fees, retainer fees, hourly rates, costs associated with discovery and more.

Much like you shouldn’t have to guess as to what terms mean, you shouldn’t be caught by surprise when you receive your bill.

Additionally, a responsible traffic defence lawyer will lay out how you’re billed. This will usually be discussed during the initial consultation.



Open to any and all questions

There is no such thing as a silly question when you're looking to hire a traffic defence lawyer and attempting to gauge if they're the right fit for your case. So if you have a question, don't hesitate to ask it —and they should invite you to do so. These may include

- ▲ Do you offer any kind of guarantee (e.g. money back if a case is lost)?
- ▲ Why are you the best lawyer to represent me?
- ▲ Do you have assistants and what will their role be in my case?

Based in Brisbane and with over 45 years of experience in traffic law, Russo Lawyers has the transparency, proficiency, tenure and success rate that has made us a leading law firm in Australia.

When you need traffic law services you can rely upon, **contact us.**

russo

L A W Y E R S

russolawyers.com.au

1 800 558 533