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FEDERAL COURT OF AUSTRALIA  
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Dear Presidents

Last year, at the outbreak of this COVID-19 pandemic, I communicated with you or your predecessors on a weekly basis. This was necessary because of the detailed information necessary to transmit each week as to how the Court was adjusting to the immediate problems that we were all facing.

As the Court and other courts institutionalised remote access and other procedures for dealing with this most difficult set of circumstances, the need for this weekly communication was removed.

I should, however, perhaps be communicating with you, and through you, with the profession on a more regular basis.

The judges of the Federal Court appreciate how difficult lockdowns and other like restrictions can be. They bring about personal and professional strains, difficulties and pressures of significant severity.

Many of the profession are coping with family commitments, home schooling and other domestic pressures that exacerbate the difficulties of undertaking the tasks required of the profession remotely.

I would like the profession to understand that the Court, and all the judges, is, and are, alive to the kinds of difficulties which the profession is experiencing. Members of the profession should not in any way feel constrained to bring these matters into account in how they express their ability to undertake their work and to fulfil the demands of the Court.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the profession for how they have assisted the Court in meeting the demands of this pandemic, and in meeting the expectations and needs of the Australian community insofar as it has required access to justice.

I am, and the Judges of the Court are, very grateful for the hard work and professionalism of the legal profession around the country.

Feel free to distribute this letter to your members.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Allsop'.

**The Hon James Allsop**  
Chief Justice