



From left: consultants Donna Cooper and Steven White, with TLG principal Tracy-Lynne Geysen

Animal law firm an Australian first

A NEW law firm in Queensland is representing clients of a different kind – by declaring itself the first firm in Australia to practise in animal law.

The firm, TLG Lawyers, is practising in both family and animal law and, says principal Tracy-Lynne Geysen, and it will look to expand over the next 12 months to include another four full-time lawyers.

Geysen said she was inspired by the visit to Australia by American lawyer Bruce Wagman as part of a Voiceless seminar series earlier this year. Wagman practices entirely in animal law and at

the time of his Australian visit, Voiceless members were encouraging Australian lawyers to follow his lead.

"[Voiceless] were saying somebody should be doing animal law in Australia," said Geysen. "Environmental law was scoffed at 15 years ago, and today it's huge in Australia."

Steven White, the first animal law lecturer in Queensland, will join as the animal law consultant at the new firm while Donna Cooper of QUT joins as the family law consultant.

Geysen said that while family legal work is still keeping her busy, she has

also been surprised by the steady stream of animal-related work she has received. She already has six animal law clients – in matters involving dogs that have been declared dangerous by councils and a woman seeking compensation for her cat that was killed by two dogs. She hopes to work with the legislative side of the animal welfare debate in the future.

Geysen is also a founder of the Brisbane Lawyers Educating and Advocating for Tougher Sentences (BLEATS) – a group set up to do RSPCA-related pro bono work.