

## Accountants risk forgoing licensing until 2019

An industry lawyer has indicated that those accountants who fail to meet the 2016 licensing deadline may only be able to apply again in the future after July 2019.

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Jamie Lumsden Kelly of The Fold Legal emphasised that with less than a month until ASIC's soft licensing deadline, only 276 limited licence applications have been submitted, with only 31 per cent of applications granted.

"Some accountants are waiting until the last minute to lodge their licence application, but there are risks to this approach," Ms Lumsden Kelly stated.

"If you don't lodge your licence application by 30 June, the earliest you may be able to apply again is July 2019."

Ms Lumsden Kelly noted that after the ASIC-imposed deadline of 30 June 2016, accountants will need to accumulate three years of experience as an authorised representative to demonstrate to ASIC that they have the requisite experience to be a responsible manager on a licence.

"While most accountants have this experience for SMSFs, they cannot lawfully demonstrate they have that experience for class of product authorisations."

Ms Lumsden Kelly also emphasised that accountants should be mindful of ASIC's pre-lodgement check.

"If you lodge your application on 30 June, and ASIC assesses it as woefully inadequate, they will not accept your application for processing.

"You'll need to start all over again – and you just missed the licensing boat. Now you have to wait until 2019.

"There is no reason to delay until the last minute. SMSF advice will continue to be exempt until 1 July. No additional obligations will apply to you if you obtain an AFS licence early, and you'll have the comfort of knowing your licence is already settled," she advised.