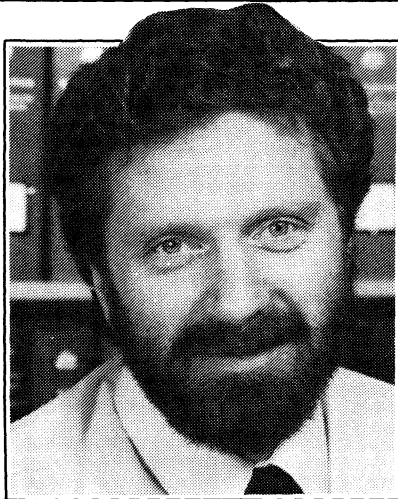


BY PRESIDENT
TERRY GARDNER

OFF BALANCE



Terry Gardner
President

I commence my first column on a sad note. Ted Rowe, the first Executive Officer of the Law Society died on 17 October 1994. Ted was appointed Executive Officer in late 1979 and held the position until 1991. The Society owes a great debt to Ted for his dedication and hard work in managing the affairs of the Society during its formative years. I have conveyed the condolences of the Executive, Councillors and Members of the Society to the Hon Justice S G Thomas.

On 7 and 8 October 1994 I attended my first meetings of Law Societies and the Law Council of Australia.

The blue print for a National Profession was discussed but as certain proposals required further work and fine tuning, a special meeting of the Law Council has been scheduled for 10 December 1994 to settle the final draft.

A matter of concern which I have raised previously was the possible loss of \$65,000 in income currently gained from the issuing of practising certificates to interstate practitioners. This will occur when the proposal to issue national practising certificates is introduced. Following representations by Neville Henwood and myself and other small Societies, it has been agreed by the Law Council of Australia that applicants for national practising certificates will be required

to contribute to a fund set up to re-imburse the smaller Societies for any financial loss suffered due to the introduction of a national practising certificate scheme.

The Victorian Bar put forward a proposal to set up a trust fund to pay the costs of the former Victorian Accident Tribunal judges in their legal challenge over their dismissal. The fund would only be called upon if the challenge was unsuccessful. It was also proposed to levy all members of constituent bodies to set up the fund. The motion was lost but all constituent bodies agreed that the proposal was worthy of support. I commend the proposal to members and if any member wishes to voluntarily contribute to the fund please send your cheques to the Law Council of Australia. Another matter of concern was the financial report from the Treasurer of the Law Council of Australia. Unless other areas of income can be found it will be necessary to increase capitation fees in the 1995/96 financial year.

Last but not least, I would like to congratulate Stuart Fowler on his election as President of the Law Council of Australia and to thank the outgoing President, John Mansfield, for the excellent job he did as president during a very difficult time for the Council.

Acts Commence

The Department of Law advise that the following Acts commence operation on 7 November 1994:

- *Misuses of Drugs Amendment Act 1994*
- *Police Administration Amendment Act (No 2) 1994*
- *Choice of Law (Limitation Periods) Act 1994*

Local Court Act Review Committee

The Chairman of the Local Court Act Review Committee has now advised that the question of costs, is now on the Committee's agenda.

The Chairman invites any practitioners who wish to do so to make submissions to the Committee.

As the Chairman hopes to complete the review by the end of October, an early response would be appreciated.

Submissions should be sent to the Chairman of the Local Court Act Review Committee, PGPO Box 1722, Darwin NT 0801.

Phone Link for free information on the Migration Reform Act 1992

The Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs has set up a free telephone information service to assist migration agents and others with general enquiries concerning the Migration Reform Act (MRA) 1992.

The number 1-800-656813 provides a choice from recorded messages covering a range of topics or ask questions directly of an operator.