

New Planning and Environmental Law Group – LCA

The Law Council of Australia's General Practice Section is inviting lawyers to join its newly-established Australian Planning and Environmental Law Group.

The group's main purpose will be to undertake lobbying on the legal aspects of planning and environmental, policy issues, and to keep its members informed of current legal issues in those sectors. The group also anticipates forming networks with other environmental, planning and related bodies and individuals.

The formation of the group comes at a time when the Federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Robert Hill, has signalled that a comprehensive review of Commonwealth environmental law will be undertaken this year.

According to the Chairman of the Council's General Practice Section, Mr Anders Anderssen, there is a strong need for such a committee.

"There are currently a myriad of environmental and planning issues at play in Australia, which have legal and legislative ramifications. The Law Council was of the view that it should have a means by which it could address such issues and ramifications."

"It is hoped that, by the Law Council having the Australian Planning and Environmental Law Group, it will be in a sound position to have an input into decisions which are being made on environmental and planning issues."

"Of, course, members of the group will enjoy various benefits including newsletters updating them on the legal aspects of current environmental and planning issues. They will also have the opportunity to liaise with numerous practitioners and groups who are expert in this field, thus widening their network of relevant contacts. Most importantly, members will belong to a group which will contribute to the development of planning and environmental laws in this

Business **N**ews

Bank Cheques

Chief Manager of Westpac Bank's Client Relationship section, Vernon Kelly, advises that recent system and procedure changes have enabled Westpac and Challenge Bank branches to issue automated bank cheques through their branch computer systems.

The computer-issued bank cheques retain similar layout, colour scheme and security features as non-computer-issued bank cheques, but carry only one signature. These cheques comply with all requirements of the *Cheques and Payment Orders Act* (1986).

Dual signature cheques will continue to be used for some time to come, but many Westpac and Challenge Bank cheques used in everyday situations, including conveyancing, will be of the single signature type.

Westpac Bank had noted that some members of the legal community had expressed reservation about accepting the single signature cheques, seeing the practice as a departure from the traditional.

Westpac requests that members of the Society are advised of this change in procedure in order to allay uncertainty about the validity of single signature cheques.

country.

The group's committee is:

Peter McGregor (Chairman)	QLD
Kim Bennett	Tas
Wayne Cochrane	QLD
Mark Dwyer	Vic
Annette McKenzie	NT
Noni Shannon	SA
Colin Touyz	WA
Bruce Woolf	NSW

Enquiries regarding the group should be directed to Gerard O'Neill, LCA, tel: 02 6247 3788.

Rosemary O'Grady

Barrister
& Solicitor

has commenced practice
in Darwin
and is accepting briefs

to advise
to appear
to attend
to mediate
and
to settle in

all jurisdictions

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Apology to TS Lee

On 15 March 1996, in the precincts of the Local Court, I made certain defamatory comments about TS Lee in the context of Local Court proceedings in which we were both involved. My comments were prompted by certain statements which TS Lee had made which I now realise I may have misunderstood. It was not my intention that my comments would be overheard by any persons without an interest in the proceedings. I withdraw the comments and apologise unreservedly to T S Lee for any hurt, embarrassment and damage to reputation the publication of my comments have occasioned him.

Signed

Martin Hardie