

Australian Legal Convention

16 — 18 September
Melbourne

These days the world demands that everything from eating to staying in touch be done quicker and more efficiently. From fast food to mobile phones, the demands of time have never been more pressing.

Now lawyers, who are not always seen as in the forefront of change, are getting their talking over more quickly!

Take this year's 30th Australian Legal Convention, to be held in Melbourne from 18 to 21 September. Once, those attending needed to be absent from their practices for a week. Now a survey of many lawyers has indicated that such a practice is impossible today. Instead, the Convention effectively starts on a Thursday morning and runs until Sunday afternoon, except for those wishing to take part in the Convention Golf Day, who will stay until Monday. The organisers are, however, packing a lot into the reduced time. Excellent working programs, organised by the specialist sections on Thursday, give way to plenary sessions on major topics of general importance on Friday and Saturday.

"What's Happening to Lawyers' Lifestyles?" becomes the talking point on Saturday afternoon, with a break later for social, cultural and sporting activities.

The Convention Banquet on Saturday night will be followed by a major debate on the republic on Sunday morning.

Melbourne in September is at its liveliest. The Convention is centred upon Melbourne's most prominent hotel, the Hyatt on Collins. This is an easy walk to many of the social events including an opening at the refurbished Plaza theatre, the musical "Sunset Boulevard" (tickets will be

organised for those wanting to go) and a restaurant program of great delight for people from interstate.

Those who chose to arrive on Wednesday evening are offered home entertainment if they wish. Receptions at a number of Melbourne's landmarks are also planned.

It is no coincidence that the September dates have been chosen. It is the weekend of the AFL Preliminary Finals, at least one of which will be in Melbourne (again, tickets will be arranged). The Spring Racing carnival is underway (another New Zealand bonanza?) and on Monday morning (22 September) the Convention Golf Championship will be played at the Metropolitan Golf Club that, two months later is hosting the Australian Open.

For those wanting to be a little more active, jogging and tennis (even royal tennis) will be offered.

To help people attend, reduced airfares will be offered on specified flights. Advantageous conference rates have been secured at the designated hotels and those who register early receive a substantial discount on the standard registration fee.

It's a great time for the entire family in Melbourne - yes, the kids can go to the football! - and childminding and entertainment for children, older and younger, will be offered. Add on a day if you wish, and have a visit to the extraordinary Penguin Parade at Phillip Island - the tourist attraction that seduces more visitors than any others in Victoria.

It's all happening, yet it's fitted into a timetable that doesn't leave your practice in chaos or your partners agitated.

See you in Melbourne in September!

- Law Institute of Victoria

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