

9 - 10 December 1999

History of Crime, Policing and Punishment Conference

Canberra

Tel: 02 6292 9000

Fax: 02 6292 9002

Email: confco@dynamite.com.au

8 - 15 January 2000

Australian Lawyers Conference

Aspen, Colorado

Tel: 02 9692 9022

Fax: 02 9660 3446

Email: conference@netinfo.com.au

9 - 16 January 2000

Europe Pacific Legal Conference

Cortina D'Ampezzo, Italy

Tel: 07 3236 2601

Fax: 07 3358 4196

16 - 11 February 2000

The right to know: human rights, censorship and access to information Oxford, United Kingdom

The British Council

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 316636

Fax: +44 (0) 1865 557378

19 - 24 March 2000

First Australasian Natural Resources Law and Policy Conference

Canberra, ACT

Tel: 02 6772 8753

Fax: 02 6772 8330

E-mail: country@northnet.com.au

5 - 7 April 2000

The challenges of change - Australian Insurance Law Association National Conference

Sydney, NSW

Tel: 02 9975 7198

Fax: 02 9975 2998

30 April - 4 May 1999

Inter-Pacific Bar Association Annual Conference

Vancouver, Canada

Tel: 02 9353 4199

Fax: 02 9251 7832

30 April - 5 May 2000

Britain Pacific Legal Conference

Stratford Upon Avon, United Kingdom

Tel: 07 3236 2601

Fax: 07 3358 4196

Email: boccabella@themis.com.au

14 - 20 May 2000

Environmental Law Conference: special education program for judges and law makers of the Asia Pacific Region.

Darwin and Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory

Contact: LAWASIA

Ph: (61 8) 8946 9500

Fax: (61 8) 8946 9505

2-5 July 2000

The Australian Bar Association Conference

Plaza Hotel, New York

Tel: 07 3236 2070

Fax: 07 3236 1180

3 - 6 July 2000

18th International Federation of Non-Government Organisations Conference for the Prevention of

Drug and Substance Abuse

Carlton Crest Hotel, Brisbane

Tel: 07 3832 3798

Fax: 07 3832 2527

Email: dinie@ats.com.au

9 - 13 July 2000

International Family Law 10th World Conference: Processes,

practices and pressures

Brisbane Sheraton Hotel, Queensland

Tel: 07 3369 0477

Fax: 07 3369 1512

Email: isfl2000@im.com.au

27 August - 1 September 2000 38th Congress of the International Association of Young Lawyers

Helsinki, Finland

Contact: International Association of Young Lawyers

facing criminal proceedings who may come from a background where the Anglo-Australian dialect is not the native tongue, they do not take steps to ascertain the need for an interpreter. Having ascertained an interpreter may be necessary, such legal representatives should ensure the need is drawn to the attention of the relevant judicial officer. Again, this second implication points to the need for an objective determinant of language ability in a legal context.

The High Court Cases and the Aboriginal Language Register

It is in the context of this High Court authority that the Aboriginal Language Register proposal should be considered. Practitioners are under an obligation to ensure that Non-English speaking clients have access to interpreters for the purposes of giving instructions and at committals and trials. Clearly in the Northern Territory where significant numbers of those brought before the criminal courts speak an Aboriginal language as their first language this requirement can only be discharged with the support of a suitable infrastructure. The minimalist model proposed by the Chief Minister would not seem able to support the requirements that have been imposed on both judicial officers and practitioners by the High Court. In these circumstances one can only hope that the clarification of the Aboriginal Language Register proposal sought by the Law Society indicates it is a substantially more significant proposal than it at first appears.

(1) *Kunnath v The State* 1 WLR at 1319 [1993] 4 All ER 30 at 35.

(2) *ibid* at 1319, at 35.

(3) *Lawrence v R* [1933] AC 699 at 708 per Lord Atkin.

(4) *R v Kwok Leung* [1909] 4 HKLR 161 per Gompertz J; *R v Lee Kun* [1916] 1 KB 337 at 341 per Lord Reading CJ.

(5) See also *R v Tran* [1994] 2 SCR 951.

(6) *R v Lee Kun* [1916] 1 KB 337 at 341; *R v Johnson* (1987) 25 A Crim R 433 at 435; *R v Lars* (1994) 73 A Crim R 91 at 115.

(7) *Ebalarinja* at 391 (footnotes in the original).