

It's just not cricket

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law as one of the foundations of a civil society is too often obscured behind what again can often be mistakenly perceived as indifference, arrogance and secretiveness.

It is a potentially dangerous situation, and one that can only be overcome if we allow ourselves to come out into the open: to explain ourselves; to talk about what we do; and talk about the importance of the role of the law in a civil society. So that the public is given the opportunity, in an open and frank way, to engage with us and learn about how law operates — one hopes — as an impartial defender of that society.

To ignore the importance of being more open to the general public will be to the detriment of us all. I can't figure out how bookies could make a quid out of us, but if we maintain an air of secrecy and clubbishness, we should not be surprised if the general public regards us with the kinds of

suspicion that seems to be befalling the cricket world. Dishonesty and secrecy in any game will carry the seeds of self destruction — and the legal profession will not be an exception.

Law Week is one of the few times of the year when we come out for a bit of show-and-tell, and I am pleased that this year's celebrations is focused on reaching out to the general public. From the workshops provided by the Young Lawyers Association to the Case by Case Crime Tour of Darwin to the re-enactment of Tuckiar's Trial, the public is very much the "guest of honour", whether the activities be educational or just plain good fun.

After looking at the Law Week program I've decided I kind of like the fact the profession doesn't brag about its pro bono work. After all, while the law might seem a strange game at times, we are not sports people waiting for our next media fix — let alone a quick sling from the bookies.



Legal information stalls held in Darwin mall last year will be a feature of Law Week 2000 in both Darwin and Alice Springs.

We can work for our community and explain what we are about without self aggrandisement or self promotion. It's something we can all be proud of.

I guess what Max has to learn is that what Cronje, Waugh and Warne got themselves involved with is just not cricket. As long as he is open and honest, and treats his fellow players with respect, that's the main thing.

I will continue to be proud of him.

NT TO JOIN NATIONAL LEGAL SERVICES MARKET

Legislation introducing a national travelling practising certificate regime to the Northern Territory is due to be introduced to Parliament this month.

A draft of the Legal Practitioners Amendment Bill 2000 was forwarded to the Law Society for comment on Christmas Eve last year.

Based on similar legislation in other states, the Bill is designed to allow Northern Territory practitioners to practice in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the ACT without having to apply and pay for a practising certificate in each jurisdiction.

Practitioners from interstate will also be able to practice in the Northern Territory without the need to apply to the Law Society Northern Territory for a certificate. Those wanting to practice in the Northern Territory on

a more permanent basis will be required to register an office in the Territory.

Admission requirements of courts in all jurisdictions remain unchanged.

In order to establish the regime, the Legal Practitioners Amendment Bill necessarily makes changes in a number of areas including amendments to facilitate regulations which introduce a national code of conduct, consideration of contributions to the fidelity fund and a requirement on the Law Society to keep a publicly available register of all local, interstate and foreign practitioners.

Access to fidelity funds, levels of minimum insurance and protocols concerning the regulation of the profession are issues subject to final negotiations between each of the participating jurisdictions.

The Law Society requested legislation be introduced that gives the Society power to promulgate conduct rules.

The Law Society has proposed that the Northern Territory legal profession should have similar powers to New South Wales professional bodies which gazette conduct rules.

Under the NSW system the Attorney-General retains the power to disallow any rules that are anti-competitive or not in the public interest within 12 months of gazettal.

The Law Society has also called for a tighter definitions of "legal practitioner" and "interstate legal practitioner."

For further information about the draft Bill or the Law Society submission please contact 8981 5104.