

Litigation at Sunrise seminars

Since the last issue of *Plaintiff*, there have been two seminars. The first was on the topic of tobacco litigation (see above). On 7 August, the APLA Medical Negligence Special Interest Group presented a specialised session on laparoscopic surgery.

We heard from two experts in the field: Professor Michael Bennett who has a private obstetric practice at the Royal Hospital for Women in Sydney and also lectures in obstetrics and gynaecology at the University of Sydney. Professor Bennett also has a sizeable medico-legal practice and has often provided expert reports for plaintiffs. The second speaker was Stephen Walmsley, one of Sydney's leading medical negligence barristers. The session was very well received given its very practical orientation.

Papers, as usual, are available for a small charge from APLA.

Launch of "Passive Smoking in the Workplace" WorkCover Authority of NSW and NSW Cancer Council

NSW branch was invited to the launch of this publication on 24 June 1997 which is available from the WorkCover Authority (phone (02) 9370 5000) or from APLA.

Launch of "Class action" supplement: PIAC

APLA (NSW Branch) was also invited to the launch on 4 August of an updating publication prepared by the Public Interest Advocacy Centre for the Coalition of Class Actions. Entitled *Representative Proceedings: Supplement*, the publication provides a very useful and contemporary analysis of how class actions are developing in Australian courts and tribunals.

Given the activity (and recent publicity) in the area of tobacco litigation class actions, this publication is partic-

ularly timely as it is a succinct punchy guide to how to use the class action mechanism.

It is available from PIAC (phone (02) 9299 7833) at a cost of \$10.00.

Coming up:

- 4 September 1997: Litigation at Sunrise: Computer resources
 - 2 October 1997: Litigation at Sunrise: Environmental Health litigation including a presentation by Tim Robertson, Barrister
 - November 1997 (date TBA): Litigation at Sunrise: Commonwealth workers' compensation
 - 3 December 1997: AGM & Drinks (nomination forms for the Executive and Committee positions from Terry Stern, Branch Secretary, Stern & Tanner). Venue to be advised.
- See you at the conference in Coolum! ■

Catherine Henry is a solicitor with Craddock Murray & Neumann in Sydney, and is NSW President of APLA.

APLA WA report

Sukhwant Singh, Friedman Lurie Singh, Perth

APLA WA has not held another meeting since its last report. We have been focussing on the following:

Submissions to the Civil Reform Committee of the District Court chaired by his Honour Judge Blaxell which includes focussed proposals relating to Court procedures affecting personal injury claims and in particular motor vehicle accidents. The State Government Insurance Commission has made submissions and proposals for amendments. These amendments were discussed at the last APLA WA meeting in May 1997.

Arising from the meeting, submissions have been made to his Honour Judge Blaxell with a copy to the WA Law Society's Personal Injury Committee highlighting APLA's view of proposals

and making further proposals in relation to the submissions. A copy of the submissions can be obtained by contacting APLA WA President, Mr Sukhwant Singh, on (08) 9325 6133.

APLA WA has also been invited to discuss with the Registrars of the District Court proposals relating to refinements to the procedures relating to pre-trial conferences (where negotiations are undertaken in the District Court prior to matter being listed for trial in an attempt to conclude claims, including personal injury claims, however arising). Members are urged to contact Sukhwant Singh by or before 29 August 1997 with any suggestions relating to refinements and improvements in the system relating to pre-trial conferences.

Brochures for the APLA conference in Queensland have been distributed with a personal letter from the President (WA) urging them to attend the conference. Brochures have also been personally delivered to various APLA members and non-members urging attendance particularly in the light of the excellent programme and subjects covered at the conference. ■

Sukhwant Singh is a Partner at Friedman Lurie Singh, Perth, and is Western Australia branch President of APLA.