

CCH LAUNCHES 3RD DATABASE AT SOCIETY MEETING

CCH Australia Limited launched its third public database at a meeting of the New South Wales Society on 2 October last. The new database is the CCH Looseleaf Publications Database (CCHP), and is accessible through the Ausinet network. The database was launched by Judith Sperling, Deputy Managing Editor of CCH, whose introductory remarks are reproduced below. Adrienne Lambert represented ACI Computer Services, operators of Ausinet.

Tonight we have a special surprise for you. We are going to show you not only CCH's two currently available databases but here tonight we are going to launch our third database which will be available on Ausinet, the ACI Computer Services Network, from tomorrow morning.

If you look at the way we describe CCH on some of our general publications, you will see the words "CCH Australia Limited, the Information Professionals". That is what we are. We are professional at collecting, sifting, sorting, explaining and disseminating the information you need in today's business environment.

It is true that we publish most of our information in print form. However, we have never had any exclusive loyalty to print. In the past we have produced our information on cassette tape and through seminars.

We started looking at disseminating information by computer in the early 1970's. Our parent company in the United States had been doing some work in this direction long before that. Today, while others are still talking computerised legal information retrieval, we have produced the only Australian legal databases offered publicly.

We believe in computerised legal information. We also know about its problems and shortcomings. We, and our related CCH companies around the world, are doing a great deal of research and development so that we can offer you the best of the new technology. But, quite frankly, we are also proceeding cautiously and commercially in our release of databases.

In April 1984 we launched our first database, the **AUSTRALIAN TAX INDEX**. The codename for this is **CCHI**. This was developed from an idea brought to us by the people at Triad Information Management Pty. Ltd. They are specialists in library management and, in working for accountants and lawyers, found out how hard it was to track down information on taxation. Our immediate reaction was: "Who needs to go further than CCH's tax publications". But we did follow up the idea and we found that, after the tax specialist has consulted our Federal Tax Reporter and topical tax publications he or she often wants to find out all the published opinions on a section or topic from the various conference papers, journal articles and books produced by other publishers. That is where computer technology and CCHI can provide quick answers that no print index can. CCHI is an index to tax books and loose-leaf services from all Australian publishers, including government, as well as conference and seminar papers and journal articles from an array of sources.

The actual research and indexing work for that database has been done and is kept up to date for CCH by Triad. It is available on Ausinet and you will see it tonight.

I've been asked why CCH databases are available on **Ausinet** and what our tie-up is with **ACI Computer Services**. At the time we started preparing databases to go public we did a lot of research and concluded that the only network we were satisfied about working with was Ausinet. Adrienne Lambert of ACI will be giving you some information on how Ausinet works later this evening. CCH does not have any exclusive arrangement with ACI. They treat us like any other information provider. They are the network. They do their part of the job and charge their costs for that. We provide our information and have our costs for that. The total of their costs and ours come to the \$1.50 a minute you are charged by ACI while you are actually using a CCH database. I must say that we are delighted with the working relationship that we have established with ACI Computer Services, at their efficiency and at the way they respond to new ideas and suggestions for improved services.

CCH's second database is our Australian and New Zealand **CASE DIGEST LIBRARY**. The codename is **CASES**. That database contains digests of any cases that have been reported in full text in any CCH reporting service. It currently goes back to the beginning of 1984 but we are working on making it fully retrospective. The digests have been designed to take full advantage of electronic searching techniques. Each digest contains the headnote of the case, taken from the CCH print publication, as well as the CCH catchwords for the case, the citation, deciding Court or Tribunal and Judges, date of decision and topic. The appeal status of the case is also noted.

And now for our database, the **CCH LOOSELEAF PUBLICATIONS DATABASE**, available from tomorrow on Ausinet under the codename **CCHP**. This new database provides quite a lot of information on each of CCH's current loose-leaf publications. There are now 45 of them.

Some of the really useful paragraphs you can search are Acts in full text, or Regulations in full text, or Legislation extracts, of Legislation noted. You won't, of course, get the actual text of the Acts or Regulations but you will find the latest consolidated version.

Whilst you might be able to take a guess and look in our tax services for legislation and regulations that relate to tax, you will be really surprised at the number of Acts and Regulations that we have reproduced in our services on Industrial Safety Health and Welfare, or Consumer Sales and Credit, to give but two examples. This database will be invaluable if you are looking to find out where you would go for the text of an Act or Regulations.

.....Continued on page 15 

➡ **CLIRS Corner (cont. from page 12)**

It should be added that with any full text system available in the world today it is possible to ask question that will give less than satisfactory answers.

Conclusion

CLIRS' approach and system design has ensured that the final product will be at the leading edge of information retrieval technology. A team of experienced information retrieval technicians have been assembled, together with an efficient and highly sophisticated computer installation. All raw data capture procedures have been undertaken to ensure portability which will permit, should the desire ever be manifest, the transference to any future superior technology.

The technical resources of Computer Power will be used to constantly evaluate software products and other information retrieval technology. Should the Computer Power Group identify any product that would produce a better performance and service to the user, CLIRS Australia will be in the forefront of a move to upgrade accordingly. Of note, is that all of the leading systems in the world, LEXIS, WESTLAW, EUROLEX, QUICKLAW use the same technology as STATUS.

CLIRS' stated policy is to develop a comprehensive and efficient legal information retrieval system, designed specifically to meet the needs of the Australian profession.

We are confident that the system we provide will be acknowledged as the most practical system in the world.



➡ **CCH Launch (cont. from page 4)**

We have also listed all the Acts on which we have reasonably significant commentary. The criterion we used was that if you searched for the location of commentary on, say, sex discrimination and the database told you to look in CCH's Personnel Reporter, you would not feel, after you had gone to the trouble of consulting that Reporter, that the reference was so inconsequential that you had been led on a wild goose chase.

The principal topics dealt with by each loose-leaf publication are listed so that you can look up subjects by topic words.

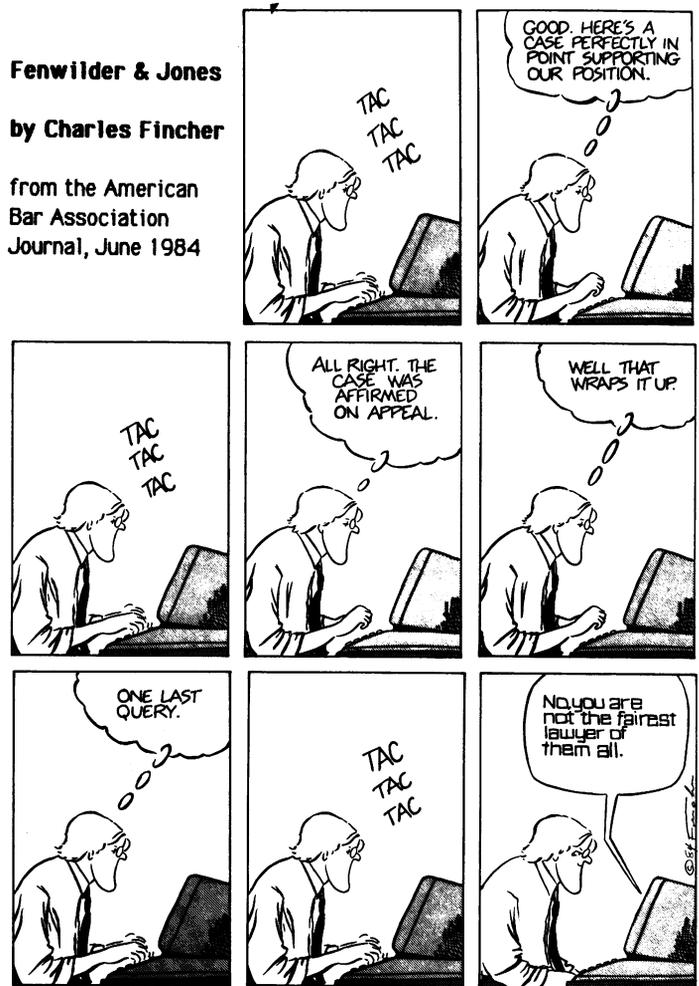
The database will give you lots of other information - the publication's name, authors, commencement date, price and what is included with the publication, for example case books and what the case citations for that series are.

(The database demonstration followed: Ed.)

Fenwilder & Jones

by Charles Fincher

from the American Bar Association Journal, June 1984



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NSWSCL PROCEEDINGS

The NSW Society for Computers and the Law has published the first volume of its proceedings. See review on p.10 of this newsletter. To order your copy please supply the following information:

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