

EDITORIAL

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Welcome to the first edition of the *Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Journal* (“ANZSLJ”), a specialist refereed legal journal, highlighting sports law, published annually by the Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Association (“ANZSLA”).

The publication of the *ANZSLJ* is yet another important step in the ongoing development of sports law in Australia and New Zealand, which has its origins in the formation of ANZSLA in 1991.

The birth of ANZSLA in 1991 was significant on two fronts. Firstly it brought together academics and legal practitioners with an interest in sports law in Melbourne for its inaugural Conference in May that year, the theme appropriately being “*The Law of Professional Team Sports*”. Secondly, it was the catalyst for the publication of the *ANZSLA Newsletter*, which addressed current sports law issues and was distributed to ANZSLA members. The *ANZSLA Newsletter* was the pre-cursor to *The Commentator*, which is now an on-line periodical published on the ANZSLA website.

The driving force behind ANZSLA and both of these initiatives, only 15 years ago, was the then President of ANZSLA and now Director of the Sports Law Program at the University of Melbourne and ANZSLA Life Member, Hayden Opie.

It is from this lineage that the *ANZSLJ* is born.

As a consequence of the growth in sports law, both from a professional and an academic perspective over the past two decades, a considerable body of case and regulatory law addressing sporting issues is beginning to emerge from Australia and New Zealand. Also, many law schools in Australasia are now offering sports law subjects at both undergraduate and graduate level.

In light of these developments, not surprisingly, there has been a steady increase in recent years in the number of quality journal articles addressing Australasian and international sports law issues, which have been published locally in peer-reviewed journals relating to other practice areas of the law and in overseas sports law journals. Accordingly, it would therefore seem that the time is now right for the publication of a quality, refereed Australasian law

journal, which focusses exclusively on the development of sports law in Australia and New Zealand, and internationally, which provides a central location or obvious “home” for the publication of such articles, written largely by Australian and New Zealand legal practitioners and academics. The *ANZSLJ* will be the publication which provides such a “home”.

The mission of the *ANZSLJ* is to:

- Endeavour to become one of the world’s leading sports law resources, showcasing the contribution being made to the development of sports law in Australasia, and also internationally, both in the cases which are being conducted before courts and tribunals by practitioners and also in the research which is being undertaken by legal practitioners and academics;
- Address important current developments in the area of sports law in Australia and New Zealand;
- Operate as forum for free intellectual debate and the development of ideas in the field of sports law, which may sometimes challenge the status quo, in a liberal environment, whereby editorial independence is a distinguishing feature of the journal’s credibility;
- Provide a means by which Australian and New Zealand sports law academics and legal practitioners, can have their research published here in Australasia, in a quality peer reviewed/refereed sports law journal, which qualifies as a Australian Government, Department of Education Science and Training, HERDC publication; and
- To be a credible and well cited resource (in both academic material and legal proceedings) and to be highly regarded and valued by ANZSLA members, subscribers and courts and tribunals.

The *ANZSLJ* will commence as an annual publication (2006 and 2007) and it is hoped that by 2008 it will develop into a half-yearly publication. It is intended that an Australian and New Zealand Sports Law Reports section will be added to the *ANZSLJ* in 2007.

Collegiality amongst Australian and New Zealand sports lawyers is the defining hallmark of ANZSLA. The *ANZSLJ* takes this collegiality to a new level by providing a platform for the sharing of knowledge and exchange of ideas amongst peers on important sports law issues and nowhere is this more apparent than here in this, our inaugural edition.

The *ANZSLJ* is the result of the efforts of many.

ANZSLA is the publisher of the *ANZSLJ* and has provided the necessary funding for this venture to take place, while at the same time recognising the editorial independence of the *ANZSLJ*, which is entrusted to me as Editor and the Editorial Committee. On behalf of the Editorial Committee and also the members of ANZSLA, we extend our thanks to the ANZSLA Board, ably led by Simon Rofe as President, for its generous support of the *ANZSLJ*.

Appreciation is also due to the Editorial Committee of the *ANZSLJ*, (Andy Gibson, Deborah Healey, Kit Toogood QC, Mel Mallam and David Thorpe), each of whom I thank for their endeavours in helping bring the journal to life, some of whom have led by example and contributed material for this inaugural edition. Of course special thanks are due to Andy Gibson in particular, for his exceptional support, seemingly endless knowledge and steady hand of experience.

Finally, and on behalf of the Editorial Committee, we express our gratitude and thanks to the anonymous reviewers who attended to the at times challenging task of reviewing articles submitted for publication.

The success of the *ANZSLJ* will in many ways depend upon how it is supported by our members and subscribers, which in turn will drive, but will also depend upon, the quantity and quality of material published, which we hope over time will be carried to greater heights.

Together, we all have an important responsibility to build and maintain the reputation of the *ANZSLJ* here at home and abroad and it is certainly one, with the support of the members of ANZSLA and our contributors, reviewers and subscribers, which I and my Editorial Committee shall have much pleasure in upholding in the years ahead.

**Melbourne
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