

## ACICA CONTINUES ITS GROWTH

- A.A. de Fina

**The Australian Centre for International Commercial Arbitration, which was established about four years ago on the initiative of The Institute of Arbitrators Australia to promote arbitration as a means of the resolving of international commercial disputes, has grown rapidly, both within Australia and in its activities outside Australia.**

The Centre's principal activities are to promote Australia as a suitable and desirable situs for the conduct of international commercial arbitrations, particularly for disputes involving parties in and around the Pacific Rim and Asia, and the export of arbitral services by experienced and highly qualified Australian arbitrators for the resolution of disputes outside Australia.

Initially established in Melbourne, which still remains the headquarters of the Centre, separate hearing facilities have been established around Australia with the principal locations being in Darwin in the Northern Territory to take advantage of the close proximity of Darwin to Asia and the cultural and traditional heritage of Darwin with Asian countries and peoples, and a newly opened Centre in Sydney.

The Darwin Centre has a high quality hearing room and facilities located in the central business district of Darwin and provides ready access to both Australian and overseas disputants.

The recently opened Sydney Centre is also within the central business district, approximately 100 metres from the New South Wales Supreme Court and major Barristers' Chambers. The Centre has two hearing rooms and support facilities.

The Melbourne Centre incorporates five hearing rooms with retiring rooms, office and support facilities.

Hearing facilities throughout Australia are utilized principally for arbitrations and dispute resolution processes involving domestic parties. In Sydney and Melbourne the hearing rooms are booked out continuously many months ahead and are already proving inadequate for the workload.

A number of significant international arbitrations have already come to Australia, sometimes utilizing Australian arbitrators and at other times relying upon arbitral tribunals formed of arbitrators from outside Australia.

International arbitration is a significant export earner for Australia and benefits not only the legal fraternity, who are almost invariably engaged by overseas disputants to act either totally or in part in representation within Australia, but also the service industries generally.

Another important function of the Centre and a function which is also growing dramatically in its demand is the nomination of Australian arbitrators to act in disputes outside Australia.

Because of the unique training and qualification requirements of senior Australian arbitrators they are seen as being desirable members of tribunals by many disputing parties throughout the world. Over the past 12 months

nominations have been made for arbitrators to act either as sole arbitrators, chairmen of arbitral tribunals or members of arbitral tribunals for disputes in Asia, America and Europe. A total of 15 nominations have been made during this period.

The Centre has also been active in the promotion of the incorporation of dispute resolution clauses relying upon arbitration in international contracts entered into between Australian entities and overseas parties and there is a greater recognition of the value of international arbitration in arriving at a final and enforceable award which might not otherwise be available through the legal process of any particular country where one of the parties is not resident or domiciled within that country. Enforcement is guaranteed through an international convention to which most major trading countries are signatories.

For further information contact -

Mr H Ambrose  
Secretary General  
Australian Centre for International  
Commercial Arbitration  
Building B, 6th Floor  
World Trade Centre  
Melbourne 3005  
Tel: (03) 614 1800