

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I noted with great interest Mr Colin Fong's article regarding the importance of material published in the Government Gazette. Based upon our experience in the past which suggested many users of legislation were unaware of the critical "links" and "additions" the gazettes created, we recognised the need and subsequently established a "Legislation Hotline" service which covers the impact of material published on Victorian, New South Wales and specific Commonwealth legislation.

Our subscribers are able to determine the status of legislation without the need to review the gazettes, and Mr Chris Nolan of our office (ph: (03) 645-1111) would be pleased to discuss the nature of the service with your readers should they have a need for same.

Sara Simpson
Managing Editor
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Dear Editor

As a non-librarian but someone who has been associated with the world of libraries for a number of years I would like to offer my congratulations on the style and content of the *Australian Law Librarian*. I've read each issue from cover to cover and the contributions are first class. They certainly broaden my knowledge and help me in my day-to-day contact with librarians. The "newsy" bits from the States on new appointments and who has moved where and when are most helpful too. You're a hard lot to keep up with you know!

I am also prompted to comment on Kendall F. Svengalis' article "Cutting Deals: Controlling

Costs with Vendors and Dealers" which appears in the April 1993 issue. Now it seems to me that all legal publishers are being portrayed as, for want of better words, "Profiteering Svengalis" (pardon the pun) and I should hate the thought that by default, The Law Book Company should be represented as such to Australian librarians. Whilst I cannot speak for other legal publishers I can assure you that The Law Book Company recognises the difficulties faced by librarians in these days of "economic rationalism" and we do our best to keep our prices to a minimum by streamlining our operations and constantly reviewing our production methods. We often offer discounts across the range of our publications and many of you will be aware that we also offer reduced price biennial subscriptions to some of our journals.

The supplying of books and services to librarians "on approval" has no sinister implications as far as we are concerned. Most librarians have to submit new publications to a library committee and, as we have to have some sort of record that the item has left our warehouse we raise an "on approval" invoice. The unsolicited goods legislation should be sufficient to prevent any devious practices!

Finally, our Managing Director has already expressed to Jane Ponting The Law Book Company's complete willingness to co-operate with, and hopefully participate in, the ALLG's Publishers Liaison Committee when it is established.

Clive McMurray
Special Sales Manager
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Dear Editor

Congratulations on the new and excellent format *Australian Law Librarian*. In Vol 1 No. 1, Steve Porch made some interesting comments concerning online information and telecommunications.

I do agree that AOTC has through its respective public access networks, Austpac and Vanguard, restricted speeds to 2400 baud rate.

But, I take issue with some of his comments concerning online access at faster data transmission speeds.

LINK as a major gateway service to online legal and commercial databases has always been concerned that AOTC charged our users on a time elapsed basis. LINK pursued the issue of faster dial up access through Austpac but to no avail.

LINK now provides a restricted but expanding range of dial up services using the CITEC network at a considerable saving to users. Gone are online time-based charges for major information services such as ASC and Victorian and Queensland land information. LINK now only charges a delivery fee for each unit of such information.

Australian Legal Literature Index, which should be back online by the date of publication, is charged on a time basis but as LINK now supports 9600 baud speed, in fact, users can take advantage of the faster modem speeds referred to by Steve, albeit, not 24,000 baud. (The AR 4 Software which LINK supports and distributes supports 4800 baud and we are Beta testing a 9600 version at present.)

(Literally in parenthesis, it would be of interest to know just how many law librarians as distinct from organisations whose law accounts software is supported remotely, have modems with a baud rate in excess of 2400.)

Many online services are in the hands of the public access system. Given the small market in Australia for online services, the provision of their own, faster networks by means of leased

lines is uneconomical for most specialist information providers.

As Steve correctly points out, much depends on the telecommunications monopoly/duopoly and the charging principles adopted. (For more information, check out a cost comparison between Austpac access and leased line(s)).

All best wishes for further success with *Australian Law Librarian*.

John Macmillan LL.B.

General Manager

Lawyer's Information Network Pty Ltd

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Dear Editor

Australian Law Librarian Vol 1 No.2 p.70-71

Congratulations and thanks to Lorraine Weinman for her prompt and succinct report of the New Zealand Law Librarians' Inaugural Conference.

I should point out, however, that some of the matters mentioned on p.71, regarding the availability of government publications, are not quite as severe as they appear.

For example, Gazettes are indexed, but the indexes are currently several years in arrears - a matter which is apparently going to be rectified soon.

While it is true that some material presented to Parliament is not ordered to be printed, the majority of "government reports, annual reports, Parliamentary reports" are printed in the "Appendices to the Journals of the House of Representatives".

Finally, New Zealand does have a "statutory interpretation act". The Acts Interpretation Act 1924 is based on the Interpretation Act 1888, which in turn had origins in an interpretation act of 1858. The (New Zealand) Law Commission proposed a new interpretation act in its 1990 Report no 17 "A New Interpretation Act", but

the flood tide of legislative reform of recent years seems to have prevented it from surfacing in the House.

A J Edwards
Law Librarian
University of Otago
New Zealand

PS. May I add to my verbal congratulations, passed on at the Wellington Conference; the *Australian Law Librarian* is a great credit to you and your team. (Has Colin Fong asked yet if the editors are going to assign a correct, formal method of citation/abbreviation?)

Dear Editor

I have just received a copy of the new *Australian Law Librarian* and was very impressed with the layout and design of the new journal format. I also found myself reading the fascinating articles on the Pacific Islands with interest. Congratulations on a great job.

Vivienne Denton
Manager, Information Services
Borden and Elliot
Barristers and Solicitors
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Editor

I would like to congratulate you on the publishing of the first issue of the *Australian Law Librarian*. You have finally created a fully fledged journal, and this is a step in the right direction. It also signifies to me that the profession of law librarians is growing in Australia. We hope to feature the journal in one of the next issues of the *International Journal of Legal Information*.

The issue I received contains an interview with Ted Glasson, and I wondered whether we may have permission to republish parts of this interview in the IJLI. Ted was a steadfast member of the International Association of Law Libraries. For some years he served on its board. Through his activities in the Association he made many friends in other parts of the world. I am convinced that they would like to read about him and also see what he has to say about law librarianship. I hope that you will grant us permission to reprint the interview.

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DEADLINES

23 July Vol.1 no.4 (August 1993)

24 September Vol.1 no.5 (October 1993)

19 November Vol.1 no.6 (December 1993)