

REFERENCE

Sue Milne

High Court of Australia Library

Case Digests

Digests of cases on Australian court decisions have proliferated in recent years, often in parallel with the increasingly subject-focussed nature of our legal publications. Firstly, to look at the familiar, we have *Australian Current Law* and the *Australian Legal Monthly Digest* which supplement their respective *Halsbury's Laws - Australian Commentary* and *Australian Digest* and of course, *Laws of Australia*. To accelerate the currency of such digests, Law Book Company is now offering the fortnightly *ALMD Advance* while the equivalent Butterworths product is *Fastlaw*. Both echo the format of the Sweet & Maxwell "News Sheets" for their *Archbold* and *Supreme Court Practice* texts. The attraction of the latter publications is of course frequency and an easily "digestable" broadsheet style. They reach across jurisdictions and subjects and offer us an alert service to recent changes and interpretations on the law.

In addition, and not to get too caught up in semantics, Butterworths also offer "FaxLaw"; an SDI service which encompasses summaries of all superior court decisions as well as new regulations and legislation for both state and federal governments, tailored to the information needs of each subscriber. For information in the absence of an "Online" column this issue, the "Fax" aspect of the Butterworths service is to take the form of electronic publishing, where information is sent direct to a subscriber's computer network. The immediacy of information supply is extremely attractive, however the level of computer sophistication required of

a client site might be problematic, given that we operate on different computer platforms with varying degrees of computer support.

CCH too are widening their electronic publishing portfolio by providing their looseleaf newsheets in a new service known as "electronic summaries".

To return to the print format, case notes in Australian law review journals, particularly the specialist journals, provide us with more in-depth authoritative comment on recent, or relatively recent, cases. I think Law Book Company are to be congratulated on the "New Developments" feature provided in such journals as the *Public Law Review*. This journal covers developments not only in Australia, but New Zealand, the Pacific Region and the international scene. Hilary Charlesworth is the contributor for the "International Law Notes" section and I find her summations on Australia's involvement in the international legal arena an excellent source of information. With her commentary, and reference to *International Law News* one can quickly "get up to speed" in this area.

The "New Developments" section covers not only cases but statutes, commissions, reports and treaties - for example, the New Zealand section is comprehensive in its coverage of developments in indigenous law-making. While in the Pacific, I must ask Law Book Company why they have entered Western Samoa Court of Appeal decisions under "Solomon Islands"? ((1993) 4(4) *Public Law Review* at 263).

In contrast, the respective Butterworths publications such as *Journal of Contract Law* and *Torts Law Journal* tend to include case notes as short form articles, providing only

one or two case notes and exchanging breadth and currency for analytical depth

In a sense then, we should view these publishing ventures as complementary and thus of far greater value to us than a duplicative effort. Whether we seek currency and the convenience of an electronic SDI service, academic commentary or a survey of a field, we are now offered publications and services which may satisfy any of these demands.

New Reference Titles

COMPILED BY **ROY JORDAN**

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National Library of Australia

This list of recent reference items is a by-product of the compiler's scanning of the National Library's daily intake of incoming material. Titles of ready reference value in the subject areas of law and government documents have been included. General material has been listed when there is substantial law content. "Back of the book" bibliographies are included where these are substantial, i.e. more than 200 items or about ten pages.

To help the reader the list has been divided by country. The titles of publications included are usually self-explanatory. Annotations have been made in some cases where the subject or legal content is not clear.

Prices and ISBNs appear only if they were easily ascertained. Full addresses have been provided for minor publishers.

International

Insurance contract law Volume 2 M. Fontaine. [Bruxelles]: International

Association for Insurance Law, 1992. 267p
ISBN 2802708139; 3884872230 (both printed in book)

Volume I of this work, published in 1990, covered the law of insurance contracts in fifteen European countries. Volume II covers Argentina, Australia, Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Finland, Japan, South Africa, South Korea, Tunisia, United States and Venezuela. For each country both the history and present law are outlined, together with a bibliography of books and periodicals.

Australia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Commonwealth records : a guide to records in the Australian Archives, ACT Regional Office. Ros Fraser. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, c1993. 478 p. ISBN 0642196516.

Includes records from the Attorney-General's Dept 1901+, Crown Solicitor's Office 1903+ and the Royal Commission on the Constitution 1927-1929. A very detailed index is included on pages 339-478.

Australian dictionary of biography Volume 13 : 1940-1980 A-De. Carlton, Vic : Melbourne University Press, 1993. 626 p. ISBN 0522845126 (v.13); 0522842364 (set). \$59.95.

Although this volume does not contain an occupations index, there are several biographies of the legal profession. These include Harry Ross Anderson, 1917-1961, Professor of Law, University of Queensland, written by K.W. Ryan; Alfred Theodore Conybeare, 1902-1979, NSW judge, written by Michael Kirby, and Elias Godfrey Coppel, 1896-1978, Victorian barrister, written by Zelman Cowen.

Blackstone's guide to Australian legal books 1986-1990 Paul K. Cooper. Bondi Junction, N.S.W. : Blackstone Press, 1993. 589 p. ISBN 1875114211.

Catchwords : standardised list of catchwords for the Family Court of Australia (Family Court of Australia, Library network series; no. 3). Sydney: Library Network, Family Court of Australia, 1993. 44 p. ISBN 0642193711. Available from the publisher at GPO Box 9991, Sydney NSW 2000.

Includes a standardised list of catchwords, thesaurus of preferred and non-preferred terms, catchwords arranged under equivalent *Australian digest* headings and a bibliography.

Family law : how to find out? (Family Court of Australia, Library network series; no. 2). Sydney : Library Network, Family Court of Australia, 1993. 34 p. ISBN 0642193703

Covers policy on access to Family Court libraries, Australian and overseas family law, and other sources of information such as non-print material and do-it-yourself self help books.

Guide to environmental legislation in Australia and New Zealand a summary and brief description of environment protection and related legislation of the federal, state and territory governments of Australia, and of New Zealand. 3rd ed Christian P Fabricius (Report (ISSN 0725-5195) ; no 28). Canberra : Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council, 1993. 175 p. ISBN 0644056207 ; 0642195285 (both printed in book). Available from ANZECC, Dept of the Environment, Sports and Territories, GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601

A revised edition of works published in 1984 and 1986. Contents include: Environmental Legislation and Brief Description (a subject arrangement), Legislation Reprints and Amendments (arranged by jurisdiction), Commonwealth Environmental Legislation (summary of all reprints and subsequent amendments and constitutional powers under which the legislation was made), and Administrative Arrangements (a list of contacts for determining which department administers the legislation listed in this document).

Holdings list & location guide law reports, legislation, journals, treaties, gazettes, parliamentary debates, August 1993. Monash Law Library Clayton, Vic : Monash Law Library, 1993. 147 p. Available from the publisher at Monash University, Clayton Victoria 3168.

Ministerial responsibility a bibliography Compiled by Lorna Mathie. Canberra: Lionel Murphy Library, 1993. (Bibliography; no 6) 30 p. ISBN 0642198012. Available from: Senior Librarian, AGIS, Lionel Murphy Library, Attorney-General's Dept., Robert Garran Offices, National Circuit, Barton ACT 2600

This bibliography revises and updates Bibliography No 3 (1983)

Register of reports from committees of the House of Representatives and joint committees 1970-1993. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1993. (Parliamentary paper (ISSN 0727-4181) ; no. 211 of 1993) 233 p. ISBN 0644326867

Great Britain

Business and law: a guide to sources for Scotland John Coll (1993) 24 *Law Librarian* 112-115. ISSN 0023-9275

The Dictionary of substances and their effects M L Richardson. Cambridge, England: Royal Society of Chemistry, 1992. ISBN 0851863418. 180 pounds (v. 2)

A multi volume work still being published which lists over 5000 chemicals which are known to have an adverse effect on living organisms. For each chemical its legislative control is given. For example, legislation for Copper(I) cyanide includes the World Health Organization *Guidelines for drinking water quality* 1984; the EC directive relating to the quality of water intended for human consumption 1982 (80/778/EEC); and Great Britain Statutory Instrument 1991 no 472 *The Environmental Protection (Prescribed Processes and Substances) Regulations*, schedule 6 (release into land: prescribed substances)

Pacific Region

South Pacific islands legal systems Michael A Ntumu. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, c1993. 660 p. ISBN 082481438X

An outline of legal systems, giving references to legislation and sources of law, plus a research guide to the following jurisdictions: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Norfolk Island, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Island, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Micronesia, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia.

California Laws on Internet

Recent messages on the various law and government document discussion groups on Internet have indicated that on 21 January 1994 the California Legislature began offering global access to information about legislation in progress, including full text of bills, and the text of the California Codes, including the California Constitution, and all statutes enacted on or after 1 January 1993.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, California is the first state to offer almost all of its public legislative, statutory and constitutional information via Internet, and without charge

There are two methods for retrieving this data via Internet: Direct File Transfer and File Transfer by way of Electronic Mail. Both methods use File Transfer Protocol (FTP), an Internet tool which allows you to transfer files from the public access computer to your local computer.

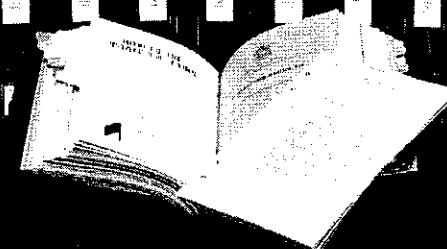
To access the Internet FTP prompt, enter the "connect" or "open" FTP command and the following address of the public access computer :

leginfo public ca gov

For more information contact Roy Jordan, Information Services, National Library of Australia.

INTERNET: rjordan@nla.gov.au
Tel: (06) 262-1608
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