

EDITORIAL

In compiling the second issue for 1996 of the *Australian Law Librarian* I was heartened to see the number of instances where libraries and related fields have been in the limelight, particularly with articles in the press and the inclusion of colleagues as members on major working parties. In a time of great change, both political and technological, librarians are lobbying to ensure our voice is heard.

I currently share a building with Senator Vanstone and have been an eyewitness to many of the University protests which have included groups from the University Libraries. Librarians are eager to publicly support their profession and media coverage is now becoming second nature - our views circulating well beyond the specific audience associated with our profession.

I believe that this influence will grow as we as a professional body strengthen. We have the opportunity to positively influence developments in the fields that directly affect us such as copyright, Internet access and standards, collection development policies, publication standards, online system charges and citation standards. As one voice of the profession, I encourage you to utilise this journal in this process through contributions in the form of letters, articles and notes for columns.

I hope that you enjoy this issue in which a number of the members of the ALLG have shared their tips and experiences on how to market their respective libraries. We are given an insight into the workings of the Australian Law Reform Commission. There is also an article on the steps involved in creating a web page for those of you who wish to make your presence felt on the World Wide Web.

More Web news! We would like to hear from you on particular sites of relevance, their strengths and their weaknesses. With the explosion of law-related sites, many members would appreciate expert views on their ease of use and standard of content. Please contact Chris Maher, our Online & Ondisc Columnist, if you would like to contribute (contact details can be found at the beginning of the column).

Also in this issue - 'Law Librarian of the Year'. Many of you would remember from the announcement at the last Law Librarians' Dinner, Computer Law Services are sponsoring this award. Look out in this issue for the brochure on how to nominate your colleagues.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor

I am writing in reference to Dennis Warren's article in *Australian Law Librarian* 4 (1) March 1996 pp27-31 "Australian Legal Literature: gaps in the indexing."

As the Manager of AGIS, I was pleased to see that AGIS was favourably reviewed regarding both its currency and the extensive indexing it undertakes.

AGIS has always prided itself on being a current legal indexing service for Australian material. We maintain that AGIS will have indexed a journal within 1 month of its receipt, with few exceptions. All the journals sampled by Mr Warren at 14 February 1996 (with the exception of the Criminal Law Journal) were indexed by AGIS by 29 February 1996 - no mean feat when you think of the total number of journals indexed by AGIS. These records were available either

through the AGIS database on SCALE or the hard copy publication of AGIS available on subscription through AGPS, both of which are updated fortnightly.

I agree with Mr Warren that "Whilst CD-ROM indexes have clearly improved access to scholarly Australian legal literature they need to be used with a degree of caution" AGIS on the AUSTROM CD-ROM is not intended to provide current up to the minute research. It is only updated three times a year and, although a wonderful research tool, it has always been the intention of AGIS producers that if researchers want currency they need to update the CD-ROM with either of the fortnightly update services AGIS provides, i.e. the hard copy publication of AGIS or the AGIS database on SCALE.

AGIS is also available online through KIWINET, LEXIS and OZLINE although these databases are updated monthly, they still provide useful updates to the AGIS database on AUSTROM.

I thank Mr Warren for an informative evaluation and his caution to users of CD-ROMs to update that information with more currently available sources.

Further information on AGIS is available in the AGIS pamphlet in this issue of the *Australian Law Librarian* or by contacting me direct

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Dear Editor

Since the publication of the article "Australian legal literature: gaps in the indexing" in the March issue of the *Australian Law Librarian*, I have received correspondence from Barbara Chen, Associate Director of Indexing Services for

Index to Legal Periodicals and Books acknowledging that a number of titles claimed to be indexed have indeed been missed and pointing out that procedures had been put in place to ensure 'that this sort of thing doesn't happen again'.

In addition, ILPB has increased the number of Australian titles it will include for indexing, by the addition of the following titles:

Australian Property Law Journal
Canberra Law Review
Deakin Law Review
James Cook University Law Review
Journal of Judicial Administration
Public Law Review
Revenue Law Journal

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Dear Editor

Re: Recent media coverage of Family Law on the Internet

I write to deplore the newspaper reporting of the availability of Family Court material on the Internet. The service provided by AustLII is an absolutely outstanding one that benefits the whole Australian community and any reduction in information that is freely available to all, particularly information that assists in the understanding of our legal system, is a tragedy. A newspaper should certainly understand this.

The information concerned is the publicly available decisions of one of Australia's major courts. It has been available in print for many years - to all, not just to law students - and available over electronic databases like LEXIS/NEXIS and SCALE. The implication of the newspaper reports is that court transcripts of

evidence and other private documents are available on the Internet. Nothing could be further from the truth. Court judgments, although containing summaries of the facts, are learned considerations of points of law, based on judicial precedents going back, sometimes, centuries. It is only by the publication of judicial decisions that our legal system advances and develops. Some simple enquiries to AustLII, the Family Court or any law librarian would have clarified these issues for the reporters and forestalled highly damaging and misleading publications.

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NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

Australian Law Librarian welcomes the contribution of articles and notes. Articles should be 1500 to 3000 words long and must be accompanied by a passport photo of the author.

All material should be submitted on an IBM compatible disk of either size in MS Word, Word Perfect or another major word-processing package. ASCII format is also acceptable. The disk should be accompanied by a hard copy, double spaced, on A4 size paper.

Please use **upper and lower case on headings** and for indenting use the "TAB" function and not individual spaces. Please don't use underlining. Contributors should follow the format of the current journal and contact the Editorial Co-ordinator: (Tel: (08) 202 8414, Fax: (08) 202 8410 or Email: bpcoat@camtech.com.au) to obtain a copy of the **ALL** Style Guide.

The Editorial Co-ordinator would appreciate notice of pending contributions to assist in planning future issues. Acceptance and publication of contributions are at the discretion of the Editorial Committee.

Deadline dates are published in the **Australian Law Librarian** several times a year. For the next two issues the dates are:

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