

Diminished Responsibility? The Changing Role of the State

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Diminished responsibility? The changing role of the State This was the theme of the 1996 Conference of the Australasian Law Teachers Association, hosted in Adelaide by Flinders University Law School from July 10-13.

Plenary sessions were held at the Adelaide Convention Centre, with delegates transferring to the University on one day for the special interest group sessions.

Speakers at the plenary sessions included Chief Justice John Doyle, Supreme Court of SA, Justice Michael Kirby, High Court of Australia and Mr Pat Dodson, Chairperson Aboriginal Council for Reconciliation

Sharon Venne, Lawyer for Indigenous Women, Canada (Law Foundation of SA Speaker) and Professor Ruthann Robson, (City University of New York), also travelled to Adelaide to address the Conference.

The proceedings of the plenary sessions will be published in a special issue of the *Flinders journal of law reform* to be issued in December.

ALTA conferences are famous for their special interest group sessions and the 1996 Conference was no exception. Twenty-six different groups met at Flinders to discuss matters of common interest. The Law Librarians' Special Interest Group was one of these which enjoyed a full professional and social program. A very representative group of Australian and New Zealand university law librarians, thought to be the largest to date, attended.

The first major event on the Law Librarians' agenda was a meeting with the Committee of Australasian Law Deans. Representatives of the Committee of Australian University Librarians also attended. Topics of discussion included LEXIS-NEXIS, University Law Library Standards and a proposal for closer co-operation between university librarians and law deans on law library matters.

At a joint session of ALLG (SA Div) and ALTA Law Librarians SIG, held at University of Adelaide, Nick Pengelley (Monash University) gave a slide presentation on the twinning visit of Monash University Law library staff to Kiribati in late 1995.

University law library statistics were the focus of another session. Following agreement at the 1994 Hobart ALTA Conference and discussion mainly via the ANZ law librarians email discussion list, a trial gathering of 1995 statistics was carried out, co-ordinated by Nick Pengelley. The responses have been collected and published in the *Australian legal education yearbook 1995*. It was agreed at the session that the trial had been successful and that the process should continue.

At a brief discussion, led by Dick Finlay (University of Adelaide) on another of the Group's initiatives, Law Library Standards, it was noted that no amendments were proposed at this time. Dick was thanked for his ongoing work on the Standards.

Dennis Warren's paper on *Australian law journals: an analysis of citation patterns* followed. The results presented by Dennis will greatly assist librarians in management of review of journal holdings.

The next meeting of the Interest Group will be held in Perth at the Special, Health and Law Librarian's Conference in October 1997.



The happy delegates at the Alta Conference at Flinders in July.