

INTERNET

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SHORTCUTS TO AUSTRALIAN LAW ON THE INTERNET

Librarians with a good knowledge of their library's collection will often bypass the catalogue and go straight to the shelves to find the answer. When you know the source of the answer and where it is, a catalogue search is redundant. This approach is just as relevant when searching the Internet. For example, if you need to find a State Bill or Hansard, the obvious source is the web site for the particular State Parliament. **Belinda Weaver's** paper from the ALIA 2000 conference, 'Making the most of the Web', www.alia.org.au/conferences/alia2000/proceedings/belinda.weaver.html argues that using search engines is generally a waste of time. Those of us faced with 1,000+ hits after refining the search would probably agree wholeheartedly. Her strategy is to work out who has the answer and go directly to their site or use a suitable directory to find that site.

Remember that if the site you choose does not give the answer, it may give a link to the answer. The value of some sites lies not just in the original content but the organisation of links. The right information can be literally only a few clicks away. For example, I was asked recently for copies of some acts passed by the States of Jersey (the British island, not the American state). I went to BAILII but was unsuccessful, so I went to AustLII's World Law section and found a link to the legislation of Jersey which had two of the acts I was seeking.

A few well chosen bookmarks can help you find answers to most of the questions you will ever be asked about Australian law. Among the obvious choices are AustLII, SCALEplus, any commercial services to which you subscribe, the Australian Government www.fed.gov.au, and the Australian Parliament www.aph.gov.au/. There is also the Australian National Library's guide to 'Australian Law on the Internet' www.nla.gov.au/oz/law.html. It offers links to major law sites (free or fee), bills, legislation, cases, courts, subject law. In short, it covers everything you might need to find.

Supreme Court WA Library. Cassie can be contacted on cjones@dwyerdurack.com.au or (08) 9220 4836. **Diane Cooper** has been appointed full-time as Knowledge Manager at the Small Business Development Corporation. Her email address is cooperd@sbdc.com.au and her phone number (08) 9220 0211.

Murdoch University Library has been restructured with significant impact on the law library. The three subject libraries, which each had a senior librarian managing them, have been amalgamated into one division – Liaison Services – managed by a senior librarian. Experienced reference librarians have been upgraded to the newly created Liaison Librarian positions. **Anne Greenshields** is now the Law Liaison Librarian. **Soun Wong** is the Business Liaison Librarian and **Helen Bronleigh** has taken up a part-time position as Library Web Coordinator. In her other part-time position Helen maintains responsibility for the government publications collection and will act as ‘backup’ to law if Anne is unavailable. **Simone Staaden**, an honours student in environmental science, has joined the library as a part-time Library Officer.

Fiona Archibald is Acting Manager of Library and Information Services (WA) at the Federal Court Library. **Jenni Cornish**, who has been Acting Director of Court Services (WA) since 5 March, retired from librarianship on 21 September to take up rural life in the

south west of the State. **Kelly Clarke** is currently on temporary transfer from the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions as Library Assistant at the Federal Court.

Shelley Campbell departed the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Library on 5 July after almost seven years there. The family is embarking on an adventure – relocating to Kalgoorlie, where Shelley’s husband, Martin, has been transferred.

The **Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions** has moved to:

Level 5, Allendale Square, 77 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000.

Please note that the GPO Box, phone and fax numbers remain unchanged.

Contributed by **Clare Steele**

Below is a list of a few web sites on Australian law arranged by category. Please note that it is a selective list and does not include fee-based services as not everyone has access to them

For categories such as abbreviations, citation and legal research there are obviously more sites than I have mentioned. Finding others is simply a matter of applying the strategies discussed above: work out who has the answer or who would link to the answer. *Who would need to provide information on these subjects? Law schools. Where can I find out which universities teach law?* The National Library's guide to Australian law mentioned above provides links to lists of law schools, one of these links is to AustLII. Once you find the list, it is a matter of investigating the sites to see which ones are most useful to you.

ABBREVIATIONS

There is a searchable database of law reports held by the University of New South Wales – search by abbreviation or by keyword at:

www.library.unsw.edu.au/~law/repsearch.html

There are lists of the more common law report abbreviations on the web sites of some university libraries: e.g. see Murdoch's *Abbreviations of Law Reports* (Legal Aids no.7) wwwlib.murdoch.edu.au/guides/law/7.html

CASES

The first two sites to check are AustLII and SCALEplus but don't forget to check the court web site as well. See my column in the last issue for more detail.

CITATION

The *Legal Citation Guide* by **Helen Bronleigh** of Murdoch University is available at: wwwlib.murdoch.edu.au/guides/law/lawcite.html As it is the 2nd edition, published in February 1999, it includes medium neutral citation.

DICTIONARIES

Look up words in the *Legal Word Dictionary*: a selective listing of legal terms from ab ante to zoning:

www.butterworths.com.au/legalwords/default.htm

Or go to

www.lexislegal.com/aus/butterworths/butterworths.asp

select the 'Legal Info' tab and then select *Legal Words Dictionary*.

Most of the online legal dictionaries are published overseas or are international in scope. AustLII provides a link to some of them at:

www.austlii.edu.au/links/Australia/Research/Encyclopedias_and_Dictionaries/

WORDS AND PHRASES

You can find words and phrases judicially considered by the High Court, Federal Court and the various Supreme Courts at:

www.legal-bulletin-service.com.au/bwintro.htm

This service has a number of virtues: it is updated daily, it is free and the emphasis is on quality. Reported and unreported judgments are covered.

LEGAL ENCYCLOPAEDIAS

The *Australian Legal Encyclopaedia* can be searched at:

www.lexislegal.com/aus/legal_info/ale/ale.asp

Or go to

www.lexislegal.com/aus/butterworths/butterworths.asp

select the 'Legal Info' tab and then select *Legal Encyclopaedia*.

LEGAL RESEARCH

There is a concise guide to legal research by **Colin Fong** available at

www.lexislegal.com/aus/legal_info/Researchguide/researchguide.asp

or go to

www.lexislegal.com/aus/butterworths/butterworths.asp

select the 'Legal Info' tab and then select *Legal Research Guide*.

LEGISLATION

It goes without saying that you can search AustLII and SCALEplus. There are also other sites worth looking at. Lawlex provides a free

subject and title index of principal Australian legislation (Commonwealth and State) at

www.lawlex.com.au/

Anstat links to this site at

www.anstat.com.au/legislation/index.jsp

DIRECTORIES

Need to find a lawyer? Let your fingers do the walking through the web sites of the law societies as these will have a directory of members:

Law Society of the Australian Capital Territory
lawsocact.asn.au/content/home2/index.htm

Law Society of New South Wales
www.lawsocnsw.asn.au/

Law Society of the Northern Territory
www.lawsocnt.asn.au/

Queensland Law Society
www.qls.com.au/

Law Society of SA
www.lssa.asn.au/

Law Society of Tasmania
www.taslawsociety.asn.au/index.html

Law Institute of Victoria
www.liv.asn.au/

Law Society of WA
www.lawsocietywa.asn.au/