

## APLA Members Win Top Pro Bono Awards

In 1992 the Law Society established the Pro Bono awards for outstanding achievement in pro bono services by New South Wales solicitors. This year there were two awards, a Principal Award and High Commendation.

Both these prestigious awards were won by APLA members. The following is an excerpt from the speech given by David Fairlie, NSW Law Society President at the award ceremony:

"Although they work in very different areas, both award winners in 1994 share the same commitment to service and especially those unable to afford legal services to assert or preserve their legal rights.

The winner of the 1994 Pro Bono Award is a solicitor who gives freely of his time during and after hours to various of the Community Legal Centres in Sydney, schools, non-profit organisations and persons from non-English speaking backgrounds. Perhaps most impressive of all his work is taking urgent instructions from terminally ill patients at hospitals such as Prince Henry, Prince of Wales and St Vincent's Hospice.

The solicitor has had a number of nominations for this award from various of the agencies which he assists on a regular volunteer basis. One of the nominations reads in part: "His willingness to assist agencies which provide services to people from non-English speaking backgrounds and the terminally ill show a special dedication over and above the more usual pro bono activities."

The committee believes that he has made a unique, outstanding contribution to pro bono services in Sydney in recent years and was unanimous in resolving that the 1994 Pro Bono Award be made to Peter Bollard.

Our winner of the 1994 High Commendation for Pro Bono Services is a solicitor from a very different environment. He is a country practitioner and is honoured tonight for his work in acting for a client who was the plaintiff in a difficult product liability case.

The matter was very close to being statute-barred and had been rejected by a number of other solicitors,

when he commenced acting. Thus began a long haul which took the client, solicitor and counsel through Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal and ultimately an unsuccessful application by the insurer for leave to the High Court.

I can hear many of you saying 'well that was obviously a speculative matter'. Nevertheless, though the legal representatives ultimately did get paid, the solicitor and indeed the barristers originally took on the matter pro bono and carried it through over a period of six years against a persistently litigious insurer.

Perhaps the best thing about this nomination is that it was made by the family of the client. It is instructive to note the comments made in a letter from the client's mother:

'I approached lots of people to help us and our crippled son Mark. Not too many were anxious to say the least, to wear us. The relief from pressure and trauma. The chance of a future. The friend in need. Terry took us on. Not too many would; through the highest of courts of justice in Australia and won justice. Please consider for this award our friend and saviour, Mr Terry Broomfield'.

APLA congratulates both members for their awards and outstanding achievements.

### ATTENTION

The Law Reform Commission is conducting a review of the Costs Indemnity Rule.

The Commission has requested that APLA conduct a survey of its members to form part of a submission to the Review Committee.

Please complete the questionnaire inserted in this issue of the Update and return it asap to the APLA Office, GPO Box 2658, Sydney 2001 or Dx 643 Sydney.