

2. Brown, R.L. Adapting Token Economy Systems in Occupations Safety Accidents Analysis and Prevention, 1978, 10, pp 51-60.

3. Grandjean, E. Fitting the Task to the Man, 1988, Taylor and Francis, London.

4. Harris, G.W. and Shaw, S.R. Slip Resistance of Floors: Users' Opinions, Tortus Instrument Reading and Roughness Measurement, Journal of Occupational Accidents, 1988, 9, pp 287 - 298.

5. Miller, J.M., Lehto, M.R. and Frantz, T. Instructions and Warnings, 1990. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Fuller Technical Publications.

6. Snook, S.H., The Design of Manual Handling Tasks. Ergonomics, 1978, 21 pp 963 - 985.

7. Snook, S.H. and Ciriello V.M. The Design of Manual Handling Tasks: Revised Tables of Maximum Acceptable Weights and Forces. Ergonomics, 1991, 34 pp 1197 - 1213.

8. Triggs, T. Observations of Driver Braking and Steering Performance. Ergonomics International 1988, pp 469 - 471

9. Whittaker, L.A. and Sommers, R. Perception of Traffic Guidance Signs Containing Conflicting Symbol and Direction Information. Ergonomics, 1986, 29, pp 699 - 711.

Ian R. Coyle - B.A. (Hons), Ph.D., M.A.PsS., M.Erg. Soc.A., M.S.I.A. is Principal Consultant, Safetysearch Pty Ltd, Ph: (07) 5574 0766 fax: (07) 5574 0132.

Dismissal of Dormant Actions

Bill Madden, Blessington Judd, Sydney

An important amendment to NSW District Court Act 1973 - Rule has been gazetted and took effect on and from 6 December 1996.

The amendment, among other things, provides for an additional rule Part 12 Rule 4C relating to the dismissal of dormant actions commenced before January 1997, and significant changes have been made to Part 25 - Evidence Otherwise than at the Trial.

Copies of the Rule are available from Cheryl O'Loan at the Law Society of NSW, phone (02) 9926 0213.

APLA NSW Report

Catherine Henry, MacMahon Drake Balding, Sydney

In the prevailing politico-economic environment of economic rationalism, there are constant threats of erosion to the rights of workers and consumers. In NSW in 1996, we saw this in the area of workers compensation.

In 1997, the scope of the health professional's liability to the victim of his/her negligence is at risk of being substantially narrowed if the irrational scaremongering of the medical profession is accepted by the state Government. It is fortunate that the Review of Legal Liability of Medical Practitioners, which is currently under way in NSW, is operating within the context of a *fault-based* system (unlike its Federal counterpart - the Tito Review). Notwithstanding, it is crucial that the Government gets a strong message from APLA that the capping of future care and future economic loss claims is completely unacceptable. Details of APLA's response to this Review and the work of the Medical Negligence Special Interest Group in NSW is detailed elsewhere in this Update.

The battle to keep intact the common law regime is also exemplified by the proposal to transfer all personal injury actions from the Supreme to the District Court, again a move that is said to be justified on grounds of cost cutting within the portfolio of the Attorney-General's Department. APLA wrote to the Attorney prior to the Christmas break and will be lobbying the Government on the issue in conjunction with other groups who have an interest in seeing the Supreme Court continue to hear and determine major claims involving the seriously injured.

NSW looks likely to break away from the joint Commonwealth/State legal aid agreement. In this state, legal aid has been unavailable for civil proceedings since January 1993. Whilst we deplore the Federal Government's decision to slash more than \$120 million from legal aid spending over the next three years, the shakeup of legal aid funding will provide the legal profession with the opportunity to completely renegotiate the distribution of the legal aid dollar. This is particularly timely given the recent suspension of the NSW Law Foundation's disbursement funding scheme.

There is clearly a lot on the agenda politically for NSW this year. We begin the year with more than double the state membership of the same time last year and a number of new faces with significant