

The Workings of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal ed. by John Goldring (Canberra Series in Administrative Studies, Seminar Proceedings 4, Canberra College of Advanced Education) Price \$7.95. ISBN 0 85889 182 4.

This handbook comprises a selection of papers delivered at a seminar held in late 1979 by the School of Administrative Studies of the Canberra College of Advanced Education. The theme of the seminar is stated as being 'the Workings of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal' (the 'AAT'). The booklet is of primary interest, however, for the insights which it gives into the *indirect* 'workings' of the AAT — the departmental responses which the existence and operation of the supervening review exercised by the AAT have elicited.

Valuable contributions are made by Stephen Skehill and John Broome whose papers describe the administrative procedures adopted by the Departmental of Business and Consumer Affairs and of the Capital Territory as a result of the establishment of the AAT. It is salutary to read that these Departments have adopted positive approaches to the role of the AAT. The Departments have established Administrative Review Sections responsible for coordinating internal policies and responses not just to the AAT but also to the other components of the 'new administrative law' — the ombudsman, freedom of information and the Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977 (Cth). The cost of these measures in terms of staffing and resources would appear to be high,¹ but these costs are considered worthwhile for the resultant improvement in decision-making.²

Of the other contributions, only the general paper by Lindsay Curtis is interesting. It contains many thoughtful observations on the position and operation of the AAT in the administrative process. The paper is particularly notable for its intelligent treatment of the relationship between the judicial and the administrative models of decision-making. The two models are not juxtaposed as incompatible but are treated as forming poles of a spectrum towards the judicial end of which lies the AAT.

The remaining papers are mediocre and unnoteworthy. The booklet is largely free from typographical errors. Only one such error significantly alters the sense of the text — the use of 'not' for what (presumably) should be 'now' on line 6 of page 14. Since the chief utility of the handbook is the description of the effects which the AAT has had on administrators, it is a collection which is of interest primarily to the specialist interested in government administration. Less specialized readers will find use only in the papers of Curtis and Skehill and, in respect the remaining papers, may well find appropriate the concluding contributor's verdict on the AAT — 'Is it, then, too high a price? . . . living with limited and scarce resources and many conflicting priorities . . . it is.'

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¹ Skehill at 49-50, Broome at 61.

² But *cf.* Davey at 71.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

Danish Law A General Survey edited by H. G. Ganumeltozt-Hansen, B. Gomard, A. Philip (GADS Publishing House, Denmark, 1982) ISBN 87-12-23525-3.

Cases and Materials on Equity and Trusts by J. D. Heydon, W. M. C. Gummow, R. P. Austin (22nd Ed., Butterworths, Sydney, 1982) ISBN 0 409 30937 0 (limp).

International Transactions and Australian Income Tax by E. F. Mannix (Butterworths, Sydney, 1982) ISBN 0 409 49355 4.

The Constitutional Challenge edited by M. James (Centre for Independent Studies, Australia, 1982) ISBN 9 949769 01 0.

Professions in the Marketplace by J. Nieuwenhuysen, M. Williams-Wynn (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1982) ISBN 0 522 84230 5.

The Politics of Secrecy by J. Michael (Penguin Books Australia Ltd., Melbourne, 1982) ISBN 0 14 02.2060 7.

Compulsory Acquisition of Land in Australia by L. Fricke (2nd Ed., Law Book Company Ltd., Sydney, 1982) ISBN 0 455 20466 7.

An Invitation to the Law by C. G. Weeramantry (Butterworths, Sydney, 1982) ISBN 0 409 30934 6.

A Modern Introduction to International Law by M. Akehurst (4th Ed., George Allen and Unwin Australia, Sydney, 1982) ISBN 0 04 341020 0.