

those bodies have the opportunity to scrutinise applications before the applicant is able to practise in the local jurisdiction.

The LCA has sought clarification as to how the mutual recognition principle is to operate in relation to jurisdictions with separate branches of the legal profession and those with fused professions.

The LCA President has asked all constituent bodies to consult urgently with the admitting authorities in their jurisdictions to discuss admission arrangements and to settle what post-admission, academic and practical requirements might be needed. □

Mediation Training for the Bar

On 23 April 1992, the Bar Council accepted recommendations from its alternative dispute resolution task force (Coombs QC, McColl, Walker and Angyal) and resolved to offer two types of training courses in mediation to members of the Bar.

The first course is a three-evening, six-hour course providing a basic grounding in the techniques of mediation. This course is designed to cater for barristers likely to be briefed to appear for a party at a mediation in Settlement Week 1992, as a result of the Chief Justice's pilot project of court-annexed mediation, or in a privately-arranged mediation. (The former two schemes are described elsewhere in this issue.)

The second course, to be held in August, will be an intensive four-day course designed to equip participants to mediate disputes and is expected to satisfy accreditation requirements for, eg. participation as a mediator in settlement weeks and probably for inclusion on the panel used by the Australian Commercial Disputes Centre to select mediators for its compulsory third-party mediation scheme (described in this issue at page 9).

Final timing, content and costings of the August courses are currently being finalised and will be announced to the Bar as soon as possible. □



CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUPS

Two ecumenical Christian Meditation groups meet in the crypt of St James' Church at the top of King Street in the city.

One meets on Wednesday mornings at 7.45 a.m. and concludes at 8.30 a.m. The other meets on Fridays at 12 noon, concluding at 1.00 p.m.

The groups follow the method and teaching on Christian Meditation of Benedictine Monk John Main and are affiliated with a network of similar groups.

Anyone who already meditates, or who is interested in starting to meditate is welcome. Enquiries:

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Balancing the Bar's Books

By Lyn Murray, who founded Barristers Management Services based on seven years' experience managing barrister's financial and administrative affairs.

When the cold west winds of June begin to blow and the Tax Man cometh, barristers can be left asking themselves some leading questions: How much have I earned? What tax deductions do I need? What can I claim? What about superannuation?

Though sometimes caricatured as distracted figures, hurrying along, robes flapping and papers flying, barristers more often appear awesomely competent.

And yet I have found that there is one area in which (naturally with many honourable exceptions) they let their control and self-confidence falter and even become disorganised, and that is the area of ... money.

Many have only limited administrative assistance. They work in less structured business systems than solicitors, and often make do for secretarial support with help from the floor typists, paid by the hour. Computers are being used increasingly, but many barristers do not have time for the discipline and changes that computers require.

An awareness of their needs, derived from seven years spent managing finance and administration for barristers, led me to set up Barristers Management Services (BMS). The idea came to me after observing a similar external service set up for specialists at a major Sydney hospital, which administered all the doctors' accounts, including raising invoices, issuing receipts and following up overdue accounts.

BMS is designed to meet the particular requirements of each individual barrister, as the time their work requires may range from several days to only a few hours each week. No job is too small, since the system is set up to accommodate all barristers' requirements.

All BMS client's affairs are handled on the BMS computer system, using purpose-designed software, with each barrister's fees and accounts being maintained separately (and in full confidence).

BMS does all its work, except for initial interviews and periodic consultations, off barristers' premises, since work space there is usually at a premium.

Services provided by BMS include:

- Preparing memo of fees.
- Following up all outstanding fees.
- Monitoring and reporting on cash flow and profitability.
- Reconciling and analysing chequebooks, bank accounts and credit cards accounts.
- Recording and controlling expenses.
- Paying accounts.
- Preparing tax records for accountants' purposes and helping maximise potential tax savings.

BMS offers a free initial one-hour consultation, in which an analysis of the barrister's administrative needs is carried out. □