

COX SCOUT II RIDE ON MOWER

Information is sought regarding design and warning deficiencies, and any claims experience in respect of the above product for the purposes of a liability claim for injuries to an infant (just turned 18) arising from a demonstration on 15 April 1984. The manufacturer is Cox Mower and Machinery Co. 61 Ipswich Road, Wooloongabba, Brisbane, Queensland. The distributor is Ongmac Trading Co. Lismore.

CONTACT Neil Francey, Barrister, Wentworth Chambers

ADDRESS 180 Phillips Street, Sydney, NSW 2000

PHONE (02) 9233 5892 **FAX** (02) 9223 4204 **EMAIL** neilfrancey@onaustralia.com.au



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It's law: sisters doing it for themselves

BERNARD LANE

THINK of it as a firm within a firm — a group of women lawyers dedicated to women clients.

"Women seek out women," says Catherine Henry, explaining the rationale behind the new women's legal department at her law firm Craddock Murray Neumann, launched yesterday to coincide with national law week.

Ms Henry, the partner who will take charge of the firm within the firm, says she believes it is a first for Sydney.

Maurice Blackburn Cashman in Melbourne already has a women's law section — claimed to be Australia's first — and other firms in the highly competitive market for legal services may follow suit.

Audrey Jamieson, senior partner with Maurice Blackburn Cashman's women's law section, says: "We've had really positive responses from women in the community, and even from other women practitioners."

"It's obviously been successful for us and so it should be for other law firms."

Ms Henry agrees: "Apart from the fact that women have this greater degree of sensitivity to a woman's perspective and needs, I think it also makes sense from a marketing point of view.

"It's a good means of differentiating your product."

The two known women's law sections focus on areas such as medical negligence, family

law, the workplace, property and finance.

At Craddock Murray Neumann, 10 women lawyers will staff the section while Maurice Blackburn Cashman's section has 22 and is in the process of expanding to Sydney.

The idea, Ms Henry says, is that women clients may prefer to deal with women lawyers more likely to understand the sensitivities of, say, a gynaecology negligence case or a workplace sexual harassment complaint.

Ms Jamieson agrees: "It empowers women because it gives them a choice ... it gives them back a bit more control over the issues."

Another factor in the rise of private-sector legal services for women may be the strained financial circumstances of legal aid and community legal centres.

Ms Henry says in some cases her department will have scope for contingency fees — useful for plaintiffs with little money — and will also take on some "pro-bono" or no-fee work in the public interest.

Tomorrow night at 11.15pm the law week debate — "that women make better lawyers than men" — will go to air on ABC television.

Other highlights of law week include a re-enactment of Ned Kelly's trial, sessions on the practical and legal aspects of dementia, and seminars on the contentious subject of immigration law.

APLA diary 2000

6 June 2000

LITIGATION AT SUNRISE:

"Spinal Smorgasbord"

NSW Law Society

23 June 2000

PLAINTIFF COPY DEADLINE

Theme - "Public Authorities"

29 June 2000

LITIGATION AT SUNRISE

"Preparing Claims under recent Workcover Changes", Victoria

July 2000

LITIGATION AT SUNRISE

Hilton Hotel, Brisbane

16 August 2000

SPECIAL SEMINAR

NSW Motor Accident Compensation Act 1999
Masonic Centre, Sydney

20 October 2000

PLAINTIFF COPY DEADLINE

Theme - the AMA Guides

26-27 October 2000

APLA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Gold Coast Marriott

July 2000

**Australian Institution of Health,
Law and Ethics**

National Conference

University of Sydney

Info: aihle@cryptic.rch.unimelb.edu.au

19-25 November 2000

**Injury 2000 Prevention and
Management Conference**

National Convention Centre, Canberra

Info: injury2000@im.com.au

26-28 November 2000

**Road Safety Research, Policing and
Education Conference**

Sheraton Hotel, Brisbane

Info: rs2000@im.com.au

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