

yet at the same time more complex this text provides the inexperienced researcher with a handy and easily accessible quick reference guide to the main research tools and techniques used in this country.

*Rachel Butwell**

Outline of Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law

Anne Hurley and Graeme Wiffen

Second Edition, Butterworths, 1999, pp 363, \$65

Trade Practices has become one of the most commonly utilised bodies of law in this country in recent years and a significant volume of case law has evolved dealing with the provisions of the *Trade Practices Act 1974* (Cth). This Act has itself been the subject of frequent scrutiny and amendment as government policy has shifted and changed since its enactment. The first edition of *Outline of Trade Practices and Consumer Protection Law* by Hurley and Wiffen considered the effects of the recommendations of several of the early review committees: the Swanson, Griffiths and Cooney Committees having particular effect. In this new edition the authors highlight the importance of the Hilmer Committee as the most significant of the Committees to have considered the Act and attempt to lead the reader through the changes that it has brought about.

The most significant of the reforms recommended by the Committee covered by this text are the amendments to the restrictive trade practices provisions of the Act and the restructuring of Australia's competition policy. Both of these changes are examined in some detail by the authors.

The aim of the authors of this text is to provide a comprehensive introduction to the contents and operation of the Act. The reader is taken through a brief introduction to the background and policy context in which the Act was created and continues to operate today, as well as an outline of the administrative framework of the Act.

Most of the text deals with an explanation of the substantive and procedural provisions of the Act and the judicial interpretations of these that have been developed by the courts. Further, the authors contextualise these developments by taking note of the policy reasons which prompted and shaped these developments.

The authors present a highly readable and informed discussion relating to both the original two-part focus of the Act on restrictive trade

* BA/LLB (University of Tasmania).

practices and consumer protection while also discussing the ways in which the Act has been considerably expanded since it was first enacted. In particular, the authors consider the new Parts which have been amended to the Act dealing with the telecommunications industry in Parts XIB and XIC; access to infrastructure services in Part IIIA and the amendments to consumer protection provisions in Parts IVA; IVB and VA.

Unlike some texts on the area, Hurley and Wiffen firmly place the Act in the context of microeconomic reform and government policy, both of which have helped to shape the current form of the Act. The *Competition Policy Reform Act 1995* (Cth) is discussed in some detail throughout the text and its main features highlighted. This Act altered significant aspects of the *Trade Practices Act* and these alterations are discussed by the authors, who attempt to assess the implications of these amendments.

This text has managed to take an extremely complicated and often confusing body of law and reduce it to a readable and succinct discussion. The text is surprisingly comprehensive for a book of its size, at 363 pages an easily manageable read. The authors have provided the reader with a well-written and informative introduction to the field of trade practices. This text should prove useful to both the student coming fresh to this area and those who already have some knowledge and experience in the field.

Rachel Butwell

Understanding Company Law

Phillip Lipton and Abe Herzberg

Ninth Edition, LBC Information Services, 2000, pp 690

Understanding Company Law by Lipton and Herzberg has been, for many students, the one text that has helped them through the confusing and complex world of the Corporations Law. This new edition of the much-utilised text includes the amendments introduced by the CLERP Act 1999, which commenced in March 2000 and has made major changes to five key areas of the Corporations Law.

The text takes the reader through the main features of both the Corporations Law and the common law relating to companies in Australia. The main changes, which have been made are highlighted and often compared to the law as it previously stood. Where possible the authors have attempted to assess how these provisions will operate in practice and the effects of this upon companies, directors and members.