

It also fulfils its mission of education by sponsoring high level courses and seminars for young practitioners (and not so young!) around the world: In doing so, it provides a unique opportunity for lawyers to meet and exchange ideas.

AIJA activities are many and varied and include:

- An annual congress, usually lasting one week in late August, early September. The 2001 congress was in Montreal, Canada and was attended by around 400 members for a week of learning and fun.

The annual congress is the best way to meet members of the organisation as it always attracts a good turnout. Next year, the congress will be in Lisbon, Portugal (26.08.02-31.08.02) and the following year, a little closer to home in Hong Kong.

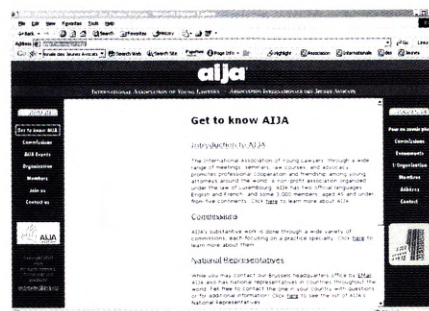
- Consulting as a non-government organisation with the United Nations and the Council of Europe on issues such as legal practice, democratic freedoms and human rights.

- Regional meetings where members of neighbouring countries meet to study and discuss topics of interest.
- Standing commissions and special committees covering a range of practice areas as diverse as mergers & acquisitions, human rights, family law and civil litigation.
- Regular educational seminars on topics of interest.
- Helping to set up young lawyers' groups in countries where none yet exist and taking an active role in the development of the profession.
- Providing the opportunity for members to participate in a trainee/exchange programme to gain professional experience abroad.

Many AIJA events take place overseas, particularly in Europe.

The more members that join the Association in Australia, the greater the opportunity for activities to be held in Australia and the Pacific region.

The AIJA community is vibrant, motivated and wants to make a difference. We are very happy to be working with



the Young Lawyers Section of the Law Institute of Victoria to promote AIJA to Victorian members as there is a clear overlap of interests and goals in both organisations.

If anyone would like more information about the work of AIJA, membership or any of the forthcoming seminars, they should contact:

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You are not alone....

If you find you are waking up in the middle of the night panicking about work or fear going into the office, don't despair because you are not alone!

There is no need to wait until you fall into the deep doldrums or conclude that you can't cope with the practise of law altogether, there are a number of avenues of assistance offered by the Law Institute to lawyers in distress.

Senior Counsellors

Why not bend the ear of a Senior Counsellor appointed by the Law Institute of Victoria? You might think that your problem is unique but the Institute's Senior Counsellors have heard similar tales before.

Senior Counsellors are sympathetic and approachable senior legal practitioners who are available to consult free of charge about ethical and practical legal issues.

Most Senior Counsellors have been in practice for over 30 years and have experience in a range of sectors of the legal industry.

By Jacqui Boymal, Manager, Young Lawyers' Section

Don't be shy! There is a wealth of wisdom available to you through the Law Institute's Senior Counsellors.

Please see the list of state-wide Senior Counsellors on page 374 of the Law Institute diary, or contact Sue Patrone on tel: **9607 9365**.

LAWCARE - Solicitor's Counselling Service

Are your personal problems interfering with your work? Are your work problems encroaching on your personal happiness?

Take advantage of the free initial LAW CARE consultation offered to members by the Law Institute of Victoria.

LAW CARE provides professional psychological counselling to members whose professional lives are threatened by stress, financial concerns, career pressure, alcohol or drug abuse or other problems.

These consultations are strictly confidential and are regularly used by a great number of practitioners.

Common issues dealt with by the LAW CARE'S principal psychologist, Michael Clarebrough, include: workplace bullying, harassment, depression, the pressure of meeting billable hours, communication difficulties and dissatisfaction at work.

Michael Clarebrough can be contacted 24 hours on tel: **9625 1388** or via e-mail to clarebr@attglobal.net

Law Institute of Victoria Human Resources Department

If you have a query about industry awards, salary rates, employment conditions or other employment law related matters, contact Annette Rush or Suzie Hilder at the Law Institute's, Human Resources Department, tel: **9607 9411**.

Voluntary Conciliation Procedure

In an effort to help prevent harassment and discrimination in the legal workplace, the Institute offers a formalised complaint conciliation process.

This free and voluntary conciliation process is open to Institute members who believe they have been harassed, vilified, disparaged, discriminated against or insulted in any way within their workplace.

If you would like to take advantage of this procedure, please contact the Law Institute of Victoria, on tel: **9607 9410**.

All complaints will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Once the conciliation process is started and

if the complainant consents, the Institute will appoint an approved and experienced conciliator, to provide counselling and advice. After this stage the conciliator may, with the consent of the complainant, inform the solicitor concerned of the complaint and provide that solicitor with an opportunity to respond to the complaint. The solicitor concerned will then have the opportunity to be counselled and advised in respect of the complaint. Finally, if both parties consent, the conciliator will conciliate the complaint.

The conciliation process provides a non-confrontational way to find a solution before irreparable damage is caused within the workplace environment.

This policy does not preclude the complainant from lodging a complaint, to be treated as any other complaint, by the ordinary disciplinary procedures under the Legal Practice Act or under the general law.

Ethical Dilemmas

If you are concerned about an ethical matter, brushing it under the carpet will still leave the fear of future disciplinary action hanging over your head.

If you are facing an ethical dilemma at work, you may wish to obtain over the phone advice from a duty solicitor at the Victoria Lawyers RPA.

Please contact the Professional Standards Division on tel: **9607 9427**.

This service deals with questions relating to conflicts of interest, trust accounts, legal professional privilege, solicitors liens, duties owed to clients and matters arising under Section 86 of the Legal Practice Act.

If you require more formal advice, you may wish to raise an ethical issue for consideration by the Law Institute Ethics Committee.

The Ethics Committee considers ethical matters put to them in writing, when consent is forthcoming from both parties.

The rulings of the Ethics Committee are published anonymously each month in the Law Institute Journal. These rulings are recommendations only and are not legally binding.

Those seeking to have a ruling on an ethical matter should write to The Secretary, Ethics Committee, Victorian Lawyers RPA, 470 Bourke Street, Melbourne, 3000.

Young Lawyers' Section

Of course, the Young Lawyers' Section is there specifically to assist junior practitioners in times of distress.

If you are not sure which of the above options to try first, please contact the Young Lawyers' Section on tel: **9607 9379**, for further confidential advice.

Recommended Reading

The following titles are available from the Law Institute Bookshop.

Please check the website for ordering details.

Handy Hints on Legal Practice,
2nd ed. by Gordon D Lewis &
Emilios J. Kryou.

***Transition – Navigating the Path
from Law School to Law Firm***
by Michael Rush & Ben Ross.

Managing Difficult Personalities
by Dr Helen McGrath &
Hazel Edwards.

***Feeling Good the New Mood
Therapy***
by Dr David Burns.

***Bullying from Backyard to
Boardroom***
edited by Paul McCarthy,
Jane Rylance, Robin Bennett &
Helga Zimmerman.