

# Later Lawyers Committee Report



By Carol Geyer, Chair of the Committee

**T**he Later Lawyers Network was launched in October 2003. It is the newest branch of the Young Lawyers.

We have many interested and enthusiastic members who bring to the Committee the same eagerness they bring to their new careers.

Later Lawyers, as the title suggests, are those lawyers (or law students) whose career in the law is not their first. The backgrounds of Later Lawyers are varied, some are artists, teachers, accountants, doctors, marketing gurus... and the list goes on. All bring experience and verve to their new career.

The first task of the Later Lawyers Committee this year will be to define our aims and objectives as a new committee in the Young Lawyers group. It is anticipated that this network will differ fairly significantly from other Young Lawyers committees.

Rather than being a "service" group, the Later Lawyers Network was constituted with more of a "support" function in mind. This means that we intend to support Later Lawyers and promote them to the profession by raising the profile of Later Lawyers and by conveying and emphasising the advantages that a Later Lawyer can offer a law firm.

At our first meeting, we addressed these issues as well as made decisions about the type of networking events we consider will be beneficial to Later Lawyers.

We look forward to an exciting year of new beginnings, new networks and promotion of our new careers. If you are interested in joining the Later Lawyers Committee or being part of the Later Lawyers Network, please contact Carol Geyer on [CGeyer@mooreslegal.com.au](mailto:CGeyer@mooreslegal.com.au). ■

# Law Reform Committee Report



By Caroline Pascoe and Annabelle Nilsson, Co-chairs of the Committee

**O**ur first meeting in 2004 was full of enthusiasm from both new and continuing members. There are several new projects for the Committee to focus on this year, including the following:

**Environmental Issues:** The Environmental Issues Sub-committee is considering whether to write a letter of support for the *Kyoto Protocol Ratification Bill 2003* (Cth) which was introduced into the Senate in October 2003 by Greens Senator Bob Brown, and Senator Lundy of the ALP. The sub-committee is also investigating the introduction of a plastic bag levy in Australia. However, the Commonwealth Minister for Environment and Heritage, Dr David Kemp, recently announced that supermarkets are well on track to reduce their plastic bag usage by 25% by the end of 2004, an encouraging trend.

**Discrimination in the Law Inquiry:** The Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee is conducting an inquiry to identify any provisions in Victorian legislation that discriminate or may discriminate against any person, based on the attributes listed in s6 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 1995* (Vic). The attributes are broad ranging and include gender

identity, age, sex, political belief, pregnancy and personal association. The Committee is currently brainstorming to determine which legislation it will focus on in order to make a submission.

**Assisted Reproduction & Adoption:** The Victorian Law Reform Commission (VLRC) is undertaking a reference on assisted reproduction and adoption, which addresses the question of whether the current eligibility criteria in Victoria should be changed. A consultation paper was recently released by the VLRC, and submissions are due by 30 June 2004. The Committee will consider making a submission in response to the consultation paper.

**Corrections Act amendments:** During the autumn session, State Parliament will consider changes to the *Corrections Act 1986* (Vic). These changes will include allowing victims of violent crime to make a submission to the Adult Parole Board before an offender is considered for release. The Committee is currently investigating the details of the changes and is interested in writing a letter of support.

**Provision of drinking water in licensed premises:** Several members of the Committee were interested in seeking changes to the *Liquor Control Reform Act*

1998 (Vic) so that drinking water would be provided free of charge or at reduced prices in licensed venues. In early January 2004, three members of the Committee met with representatives of the VLRC to discuss the possibility of jointly researching the issues and preparing a submission. However, within the same week, the State Government released voluntary guidelines addressing the issue. The Committee is currently reviewing the guidelines and assessing whether legislative reform may be necessary.

**Future possibilities:** The Committee is excited about a proposal that is currently being drafted by the VLRC, which, if it proceeds, will enable the Committee to collaborate on community law reform projects with the VLRC. Such a collaboration would undoubtedly raise the profile of the Committee and increase the strength of submissions made, and it would be a privilege for Committee members to have the opportunity to work with the VLRC.

If any Young Lawyers' Section members are interested in any of the above projects or in becoming a member of the Committee, please contact co-chairs Annabelle Nilsson and Caroline Pascoe on [a\\_nilsson2000@yahoo.com.au](mailto:a_nilsson2000@yahoo.com.au), or [caroline.pascoe@rbg.vic.gov.au](mailto:caroline.pascoe@rbg.vic.gov.au). ■