

Law Reform Committee

Following on from a bumper year last year, the Law Reform Committee (LRC) has some exciting new events and projects planned for 2005 spanning a broad range of areas.

First is a discussion forum to be held in conjunction with the Community Issues Committee, the Bureau of Animal Welfare and any solicitors interested in forming an animal rights legal organisation. This has been scheduled for 6pm, 18 May 2005 (during Law Week) and will be held at the Kitten Club.

The response to this discussion forum has been overwhelming with so many responses that the venue has now reached full capacity.

In conjunction with this event, the LRC will be involved in developing an animal rights law reform interest group and will work with interested parties to address the dearth of animal rights laws in Victoria.

Later in the year the LRC plans to conduct two other legal interest seminar sessions with the Community Issues committee and one of these sessions will canvass the proposed changes to media ownership laws.

The LRC Environment sub-committee will continue to work on its advice on environmental compliance for

office environments. The response to this discussion forum has been overwhelming with so many responses that the venue has now reached full capacity

Our investigation into the legitimacy of the police trial of sniffer dogs in night clubs is also due to be concluded shortly. Further, the LRC will be involved with issues arising from the Justice Statement, particularly in relation to the Human Rights Charter.

This promises to be a big year for law reform, particularly given the changes to the Senate in July and the introduction of proposed legislation. We will be monitoring Bills as they are introduced and are open to suggestions on tackling any issues arising throughout the year. As you can see from our current agenda, we take on a diverse range of projects.

If you are interested in any of these issues (you do not need to be involved in everything!), or have ideas of your own in relation to law reform, please register your interest with us or come along to one of our regular meetings. We hope to you soon. If you have any questions, please contact Janey Tootell at janey.tootell@corr.com.au and Dan Creasey at daniel.creasey@corr.com.au. ■



By **Janey Tootell** and **Dan Creasey**, LRC co-chairs

Professional Development Committee

The Professional Development Committee (PDC) has an exciting year ahead in 2005.

Just for some background, the PDC organises and initiates competitions, workshops, continuing professional development conferences and careers seminars in conjunction with professional network/social gatherings to assist the learning of newly admitted (up to sixth-year) practitioners.

The PDC has a number of events currently in the pipeline. *The Articled Clerks 2005 Information Kit* is now available at the LIV Bookshop for \$35. It can be ordered at <http://bookshop.liv.asn.au/categories.asp?cID=752>. This guide has been compiled by practitioners who have recently completed their articles and contains practical tips and information they would like to have had when they went through the process. There are handy tips and contacts in there to save you time when needing to find out a simple answer to admission rules or support services for young lawyers.

The Annual Lecture Series, seminars targeted at lawyers in the early stages of their career, has commenced. Please view the topics to see what interests you at <http://www.cpd.liv.asn.au/categories.asp?cID=14>.

The first event that the PDC presented was the Planning Assembly on 16 April at the Werribee Mansion Hotel. As the theme of this year's Planning Assembly was

"Professional development issues" we invited speakers to talk about mentoring, networking and alleviating stress. The second part of the day focused on brainstorming and planning activities for the next financial year. After the business sessions, some stayed for wine-tasting at the Shadowfax Winery followed by a social night over drinks and dinner.

The PDC is starting to gear up for the annual Hanover and LIV Mooting Competition, which runs for nine weeks from 2 June to 28 July in the Supreme Court, with proceeds again being donated to Hanover Welfare Services.

Additionally, the PDC is continually developing careers-based seminars. A new Negotiation Skills Competition is planned to be held in mid September. We hope to have many young lawyers from different firms participating in it. All proceeds raised from this competition will be donated to Plan Australia. A sub-committee has been formed, which is in the midst of finalising the competition format and rules.

Remember, if you would like to get involved in any of the events mentioned or others or would like to join the PDC, it's free (and not counted as an extra practice section), when you join as an LIV member. You can contact Emma Langton-Bunker at ebunker@leocussen.vic.edu.au or Donna Adams at donna.adams@dse.vic.gov.au. ■



By **Emma Langton-Bunker** (top) and **Donna Adams**, PDC co-chairs