

President's Report



Work is important, but so is taking the time to enjoy yourselves and support others.

With exciting initiatives completed, such as the launch of a Green Practice Project, the annual Bond

with the Bar evening and the annual Fun Run this month and the end of year AGM and Young Lawyers' Christmas Party on the horizon, new members to the profession can enjoy a lighter side to the work pressures they face.

With the busy year coming to a close, new lawyers need to take the time to smell the roses.

Most members I speak to are working frantically and using every spare minute of their day to get on top of things. The current economic crisis seems to have made new lawyers do this with its harsh message: you are lucky to have a job.

I want to leave you with these parting words – work as hard as you have to, but take some time out to enjoy, learn, socialise and support one another. In these trying times, this is more important than ever. ■

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This is the second of the two reports that I will contribute to, this year, in the *Young Lawyers Journal* (YLJ).

Many of you will know that my first report vowed to help as many young lawyers as we could and to confront the pressures affecting young lawyers.

I think it's only appropriate to report to our members on our progress to date, as well as what we plan for our membership towards the end of 2009.

First, the most prominent need which arose in the first half of this year for our members was to assist those members who became displaced because of the current economic crisis.

I am pleased to report that an advisory paper for these displaced members was developed and circulated to the membership. It also received interest from *The Australian* and the *Australian Financial Review*, with interviews and write-ups about what caused the need for the advisory paper.

This advisory paper provided members with practical advice, tips and a support group, as well as contact details for some Young Lawyers' Section (YLS) representatives to be able to provide direct and personal information about the sorts of problems the member was experiencing.

Second, the YLS held a discussion forum with world-renowned value-pricing guru Ron Baker.

Ron was in Australia for only a couple of weeks, touring professional firms and their clients, advocating the death of the billable hour.

The YLS was thrilled to be able to hold a discussion session with Ron and learn how it can further Ron's goal.

This was particularly so given many young lawyers face sizeable billable hour targets, with their KPIs often relying heavily on having to meet these targets.

Importantly, Ron's goal to kill the billable hour is being advocated across all levels of lawyers and management (and not just in law firms) and aims to price clients according to the value of the work, not the time taken to complete it, as professionals are "knowledge workers".

The remainder of the year now holds more challenges for me. I need to capitalise on the opportunities the YLS has had in the first half of the year and also keep members inspired, despite the current economic crisis and pressures that affect them.

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YLS

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