

Internal review of agency decision making

The Council will shortly publish a Report and Best Practice Guide on Internal Review of Agency Decision Making. The project is aimed at identifying the needs that Commonwealth agencies seek to satisfy in those internal review systems. In turn, the extent to which those systems meet those needs, and the values and principles of administrative law, was examined. It is hoped that the Best Practice Guide will offer practical help by enabling agencies to re-examine their internal review systems with a view to improving them.

The project is partly based on interviews conducted with officers of five Commonwealth agencies (Centrelink, Australian Customs Service, CRS Australia, the Therapeutic Goods Administration and the Department of Veterans' Affairs).

Professional standards for tribunal members

The Council is currently examining the ethical responsibilities, accountability, and personal and professional standards of members of merits review tribunals.

The aim of this project is to discuss the issues in a forum that will be of assistance to tribunal members, tribunal managers and tribunal users, including: members of the public, government departments and relevant professionals.

Coercive powers of Commonwealth regulatory agencies

The Council will be undertaking a project to examine the coercive powers available in legislation to be used by Commonwealth regulatory agencies. The project will concentrate on powers used by those agencies regulating business and commercial entities, and will aim at producing a model set of coercive powers for those agencies.

Use of technology in administrative decision making

The Council is taking an interest in the issue of the use of technology in administrative decision making, in particular the use of rulebase or expert decision support systems.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Appointment of new members

Two new members were appointed to the Administrative Review Council on 8 December 1999, for a period of three years. Robin Creyke is a Reader in Law at the Australian National University. Stephen Gageler is a barrister in private practice at the New South Wales Bar.

Robert Cornall, the Secretary of the Attorney-General's Department, was appointed to the Administrative Review Council on 7 June 2000, for a period of three years.

Retirement of member

Tony Blunn retired as Secretary to the Attorney-General's Department, and from the Administrative Review Council, on 14 December 1999.