

Tasteless cartoon evokes response from magistrate

A cartoon in the *Centralian Advocate* trivialising a sexual assault case prompted a strong reaction from the magistrate who dealt with the matter.

Cathy Deland, SM, wrote to the editor of the paper objecting to the cartoon.

Her letter appeared in the *Advocate* late last month, and is reproduced here for members' information:

Dear Editor,

I write to strongly protest the publication of the cartoon in the *Advocate* on Tuesday 16 March 1993.

In my view it exhibited a total disregard for the feelings of the victim of the offence, upon which the cartoonist relied for his/her material.

Its inclusion in your newspaper shows a blatant lack of consideration for the innocent victim of a serious offence.

The distress she suffered as a result of the commission of the offence upon her, I have no doubt, will be greatly exacerbated by the publication.

One can only imagine her reaction if she is unfortunate enough to open the paper and to be confronted without warning by such a tasteless comment.

For goodness sake, *Advocate*, raise yourself out of the gutter press.

Cathy Deland

17 March 1993



Work cut out for commercial group

The Law Society's Commercial Law sub-committee will take up a number of issues with the office of the Registrar-General.

One of the greatest concerns is the procedure for the issue of search certificates.

Apparently prior to computerisation, a certificate was drafted by one person, forwarded to another for checking, then forwarded to a third person for further checking and authorisation.

Under the present system there are no checks. A computer operator keys in the relevant information and a certificate emerges from a printer.

This system has proved less than accurate.

One firm discovered that its name appeared as the registered proprietor of some 15 titles when, in fact, those titles belonged to clients of the firm and the firm's name was listed only as the address for service.

Further cause for concern is that Search Certificates have, on at least one occasion, been issued on the same type of paper as Certificates as to

Title.

On one occasion recently, Search Certificates were being issued on paper normally reserved for such Title Certificates.

This is of great concern as such Searches could easily be confused with the new style Certificates as to Title issued by the Registrar-General's office.

Another task for the sub-committee is a review of the Law Society's standard form of contract.

The committee has received a number of suggested amendments, including compliance with swimming pool by-laws and pest inspection clauses.

The cooling-off period is also under review.

Status reports have been identified as a problem as have requisitions.

Draft amendments to the existing contract will be presented to the committee at its April meeting.

The committee is also pursuing the Tenancy Working Group's discussion paper on Tenancy Review under almost impossible time constraints.

LAW WEEK 1993

Practitioners will soon be asked to volunteer to staff the LAWLINE, a 008 free-call number which will operate Territory-wide each evening during Law Week (3-8 May).