

Fee scale may resolve crisis

A task force charged with reconciling the Law Institute of Victoria with the Law Council of Australia has made a series of recommendations in an attempt to avert financial disaster for the Law Council.

The reason for the LIV's withdrawal was concern over the cost-effectiveness of the Law Council.

Victoria's President, Gordon Hughes, said that his organisation provided a capitation fee of \$65 per member.

At that time Victoria had more than 7,000 members and paid \$461,760 to the Law Council but had the same voting power as the ACT Bar Association which had 45 members.

A further reason for withdrawing

was the difficulty of the Law Council to represent the often conflicting views of law societies and bar associations.

The LIV's withdrawal would have left a massive hole in the Law Council's budget.

The recommendation which most affects the Territory, and other small societies, is a differential capitation fee scale.

That scale would see NT capitation fees rise from \$68 in the 1992-93 financial year to \$76 in the 1993-94 financial year.

The increase for the ACT Bar is from \$68 to \$117.

The payoff is that constituent bodies retain equal voting rights on the Law Council.

The Law Institute's capitation fee would fall to \$47.70 and the Law Society of NSW to \$42.40.

On the basis of the task force's recommendations, the Law Institute of Victoria has withdrawn its notice to withdraw from the Law Council.

However, the issue will be finally decided at a meeting of constituent bodies in Canberra in March.

The President of the Law Society, Neville Henwood, said he hoped the increased capitation fees would not mean increased membership fees.

"The Law Society is running very efficiently on the income it receives.

"Although it will mean tighter budgetary constraints, I think we should be able to absorb the fee increase next financial year," he said.

Law Week initiatives

The Society's Law Week Committee has agreed to introduce a couple of new projects this year.

Law Walks have proved extremely popular in other states in past years, and will be tried for the first time in the Northern Territory this year.

Three Law Walks are planned, subject to the approval of the relevant authorities.

The first is a tour of the Legislative Assembly and Supreme Court, the second is a tour of the Berrimah Police Complex, and the third is a tour of Berrimah Prison.

The tours will be on trial in Darwin and, if successful, may extend to Alice Springs next year.

Ads will be placed in newspapers prior to Law Week so that members of the public can register and numbers can be kept to manageable levels.

Another Law Week initiative is a Mock Parliament for school students which will be held at the Legislative Assembly.

New job for Nader

A former judge of the Supreme Court has been appointed to a commission of inquiry by the New South Wales Attorney-General.

John Nader QC has been appointed to "examine all available material relating to any prosecution of, or disciplinary action taken against, former Detective Senior Constable Paul Kenny relating to alleged misconduct in 1986 involving Lawrence Dias, the events surrounding such prosecution or action and any other matters that may be relevant to, associated with or arise out of that prosecution or action, with a view to reporting to the Attorney-General."

Former Detective Senior Constable Paul Kenny was a drug squad detective in the NSW Police Force.

A source close to the NSW Police told *Balance* that Kenny, along with two other officers, arrested Dias in relation to alleged heroin offences.

A fourth detective from another police station became involved.

Dias alleged that all four officers planted heroin on him prior to his arrest and demanded money from him to organise a "fair" trial.

These allegations were made to the now disbanded NSW Police Internal Security Unit.

Following that, certain anti-Dias evidence was apparently inadvertently destroyed.

The Internal Security Unit arrested Detective Brian Kenny; they meant to arrest Detective Paul Kenny.

Charges against Paul Kenny were dismissed by the lower court.

Charges against the other two officers were also dismissed by the lower court.

The fourth officer apparently spent some time in prison.

It is Mr Nader's job to unravel the mess and report to the Attorney.