

OFF BALANCE

BY PRESIDENT
NEVILLE HENWOOD

Judicial appointment overdue

The time has come to express the profession's deep concern over the continuing shortage of a Supreme Court judge.

The Supreme Court has done well to juggle the listings so that a list based on six judges has been handled by five, but with 1994 fast approaching is time to begin planning next year's calendar and it is unsatisfactory, to say the least, to begin working on that without a full bench.

It became generally known that the former Chief Justice would become Administrator in mid 1992.

Almost 12 months down the track, we are no closer to having a full complement on the Supreme Court.

The Government should be do-

ing all it can to expedite the appointment of a new judge. At a time when the profession at all levels is being subjected to criticism for deals in litigation, the additional pressure of being a judge short is something we can well do without.

With the end of the financial year come certain renewals, one of which is Law Society membership.

Practitioners will have noticed that membership fees have increased from \$100 to \$120 this year.

The decision to increase fees was not a decision Council reached lightly and it directly reflects the increase in capitation fees payable to the Law Council of Australia by the Society.

The Society's continued membership of the Law Council will be up for discussion at the Annual General Meeting in late August.

Regrettably, due to financial pressures brought about principally by additional expenditure in the exercise of the Society's disciplinary functions over the past year, it has been necessary for Council to look to increasing practising certificate fees.

Any change to practising certificate fees must be approved by the Attorney-General and we will inform practitioners as soon as we have the Attorney's determination.

It is hoped that the increases will put the Society's finances back on a firm footing and that no further increases will be necessary for some years.

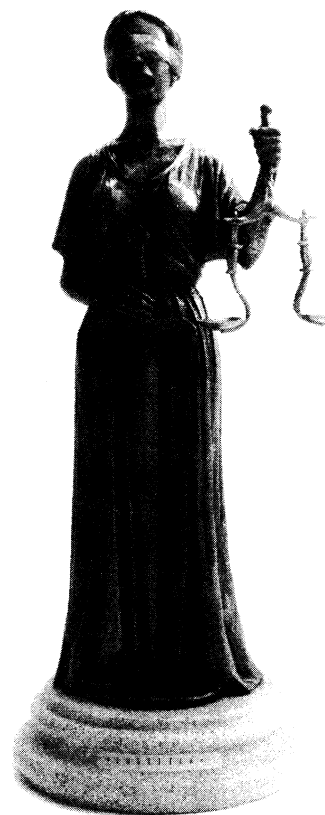
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