

BY PRESIDENT
TERRY GARDNER

OFF BALANCE

A NATIONAL PROFESSION

The Northern Territory Law Society was accused of "squealing" in a recent edition of a daily national financial publication.

Why? Because we had raised our concerns at losing practising certificate income from interstate practitioners wishing to practise in the Northern Territory if a current proposal for a national practising certificate is adopted by the Law Council of Australia.

Such a loss of income would result in the need to raise Practising Certificate fees for local practitioners.

The article stated in part:

"They (the Northern Territory and Western Australia) make money out of interstate practitioners to appear in their courts."

The article also stated:

"The Northern Territory Law Society with its 250 members will be out of pocket by about \$65,000 on its interstate admission business."

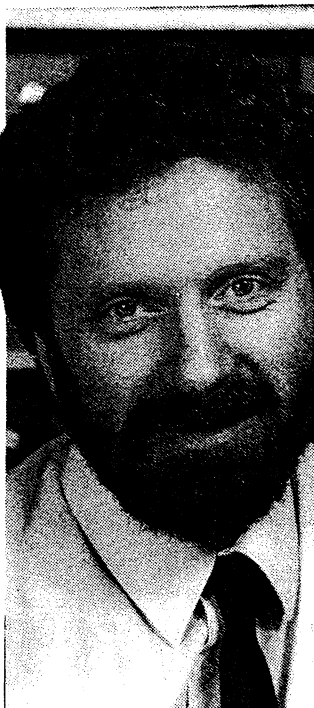
At the risk of entering into a debate with the journalist concerned, I wish to state categorically that at no time has this Society "squealed" at losing income.

This Society does not make money out of admitting interstate practitioners and is definitely not in the "interstate admission business".

In order to undertake the role as provided in the Legal Practitioners Act, this Society is required to charge practising certificate fees as fixed by Regulation.

These fees are charged to all practitioners who wish to practise in the Northern Territory — whether they are local or from interstate. The Law Society believes this arrangement to be fair and equitable.

I do not know the source of



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the information used by the journalist nor whether the interpretation of events was the subject of poetic licence by his informant or the journalist himself.

What I do know is this: the release of such information to the press and the reporting of such information in a biased way will not contribute in any shape or form to resolving the problems being considered by members of the Law Council of Australia in respect of the creation of a national legal services market.

If the circumstance continues to arise where the views of our Law Society (as expressed during Law Council meetings) are portrayed as "squealing", and where current Law Council proposals may require greatly increased practising certificate fees for local practitioners, I must wonder whether our membership on the Law Council of Australia remains of value to the members of this Society.

Office of Courts
Administration

Supreme Court Library update

Euthanasia

A recent article in the Journal of Law and Medicine may be of interest.

"The law and active euthanasia: whose life is it anyway" by Patrick Thompson compares the approach taken in Canada with that of The Netherlands and Australia.

The article is 14 pages in length. If you would like a copy, contact the Supreme Court Library on (089) 89 6583 or facsimile (089) 89 6181.

Native Title Tribunal

The Supreme Court Library has been placed on the mailing list to receive the determinations of the tribunal. They will be listed in WIG.

Statutory Rules 1995 No. 1

Evidence Regulations

The Governor-General made Regulations under the Evidence Act 1995 at the Executive Council meeting on March 7 1995.

A copy of the regulations are available from The Law Society of the Northern Territory.

The Regulations will begin on April 18, when the Evidence Act 1995 begins.

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