

Mocks - Carry on Regardless

The 1996 Inter-school Mock Trial Competition, run by the Law Society for the Dept of Education has begun with a flourish despite the fact that the industrial dispute in the education sector has limited the number of teams able to compete.

The preliminary round took place on Wednesday 6 March in both Darwin and Alice Springs. The case, *R-vs-Galore*, in which rising TV starlet Kitty Galore was accused of stealing the watch of Abigail Piquant, ageing soap queen, was argued in Darwin by Kormilda College for the defence and St Johns College for the prosecution.

Mock Magistrate, Mr Alan Woodcock, was not persuaded by the prosecution that their case was proven and Kitty's meteoric rise to stardom would continue unhampered by a criminal record. However, he decided that the St John's College team was the winner of the round on points. Kormilda College will be back for revenge in the next round.

The Alice Springs region has been affected by the industrial action to the extent that the competition has become intra- rather than inter-school. St Philips College Team 1 appeared the defence against St Philips Team 2 for the prosecution. The Mock

Magistrate, Mr Roger Bennett awarded the round by a narrow margin to the defence.

By all accounts, the exercise was enjoyed by the participants and the St Philips legal studies teacher paid particular homage to the friendly rivalry of the coaches of his teams.

Both the Law Society and the Dept of Education are pleased that the competition, which has been run in the Territory since 1989, is able to go ahead despite the limited participation. Whilst it was hoped that the dispute between the teachers and the NT Government would be resolved in time to allow government schools to rejoin the competition for Round 1 it now appears that this will not be possible.

The enthusiasm of those students who are able to take part and the reaction of disappointment from the teachers and students who are unable to take part indicate that this activity is highly valued by the school community. This validates the efforts put in by the volunteer practitioners who provide so much of the skill needed to run the competition.

Round 1, the first of three scoring rounds will take place on Wednesday 27 March in both centres.

Advocacy Workshops

The Australian Advocacy Institute will conduct advocacy skill workshops in Alice Springs from 31 May - 2 June and in Darwin from 19 - 21 June. These workshops will provide an opportunity to fine-tune courtroom skills and sharpen advocacy techniques.

Institute Chairman, Justice George Hempell of the Victorian Supreme Court will lead the Darwin workshop.

For further enquiries contact Anne Craig, Australian Advocacy Institute, telephone 06 249 7600, fax 06 248 0639

New Premises for Dept of Lands - Environment Section

The Environment Protection Division of the Dept of Lands, Planning & Environment advises that they have moved to 2nd Floor, Darwin Plaza, 41 Smith St Mall.

Legal update

Review of Copyright Law

Following the Minister of Justice's request to the Copyright Law Review Committee (CLRC) to conduct a wide-ranging inquiry into the Copyright Act of 1968, the Secretariat of the CLRC has released a general publication outlining in straightforward and non-technical terms rationales and issues related to the review of Copyright Law.

The Committee will continue throughout 1996 to release discussion papers in the process of consulting with all interests. Its final report is due in 1997.

The Law Society holds a copy of the general publication *Copyright Reform: A Consideration of Rationales, Interests and Objectives* and the Secretariat advises that this publication and other

relevant material is available on their world wide web page at the following address:

<http://www.agps.gov.au>

Price Rise at High Court

The High Court of Australia advises that the charges for room hire and associated facilities for visiting counsel and solicitors will increase to take account of CPI adjustments.

Charges will be as follows:

- Room hire \$25 per day
- Telephone 30c per local call
- Photocopier 25c per copy
- Outgoing fax \$4 per page
- Incoming fax (non Court related matters) \$1.30 per page

Code of Practice in Life Insurance Industry

The Insurance and Superannuation Commission advises that a Code of Practice for Advising, Selling, and Complaints Handling in the Life Insurance Industry was issued in August 1995.

Whilst participants in the industry are not yet required by law to comply with the Code of Practice, it is expected that the government may in the future give statutory backing to the Code and an industry-based adviser registration board.

Practitioners who provide advice outside the definition of 'merely incidental advice' in relation to life insurance products are advised of the potential application of the Code to their activities. The Law Society holds a copy of the Code for consultation.

Mr John Primrose (tel: 06 267 6821) is given as a contact in the Insurance and Superannuation Commission.