

President's Column

Bon Voyage

Jim Campbell has resigned as Chief Executive Officer of the Law Society so that he can be with his wife and family in Jakarta. His wife has been assigned a job there with the Australian Embassy. His resignation takes effect from early 1999.

Jim will be missed. He has been the Chief Executive Officer of the Law Society since the 25 January 1991. During his period of employment with the Law Society Jim has made a number of major contributions. He has:

- Reviewed the operations of the Law Society and has modernised the secretariat.
- Reviewed the complaint handling procedure.
- Introduced new financial systems and reports.
- Assisted in establishing the new premises of the Law Society.
- Significantly improved professional indemnity insurance including helping obtain lower premiums and following up on profit share.
- Increased the membership of the Law Society.
- Introduced a new computer system which has resulted, among other things, in an increase in the speed at which annual practising certificates can be issued.
- Increased and improved services to members and the general public.
- Made constructive suggestions at the quarterly National meetings of Chief Executive Officers.
- Established good working relations with the public and with Government.
- Found ways of improving the income position of the Law Society.

I wish Jim and his family well in Indonesia and thank him for the very good service he has given the Law Society.

Law Society of New South Wales

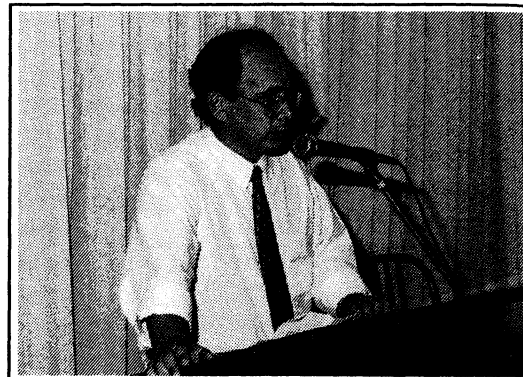
The Council of the Law Society of NSW is considering whether it will give notice of ceasing to be a constituent member of the Law Council of Australia. The NSW Council believes that it is paramount that the following six proposals should be adopted by the Law Council of Australia.

1. Policy statements supporting in principle the limitation of liability, multi-disciplinary partnerships and giving definition to the reservation of legal work should be finalised at the December 1998 meeting of the Law Council.
2. An ongoing campaign by the Law Council to promote the introduction of the National Legal Services Market throughout Australia should be undertaken. The campaign is to involve the Law Council making regular submissions to the Attorney General in those jurisdictions yet to join and to the Standing Committee of Attorney General with a view to achieving full application of the National Legal Services Market by the end of 1999.
3. A restructuring of the voting rights of constituent bodies of the Law Council should occur to reflect on a pro-rata basis the total financial contribution made by the constituent bodies by way of capitation fees.
4. An amendment to the constitution of the Law Council should be made to give the Law Society of New South Wales an entrenched position of the Executive of the Law Council.
5. An independent review of the relationship between the Law Council and the Sections should be undertaken which is to examine financial considerations and explore structured changes to the relationship.
6. Management processes within the Law Council should be developed by the Law Council, its Executive and senior management. These processes should include an annual business plan containing objectives, strategies and performance indicators. The plan must be linked with the budget and form the basis for examining the performance of the Law Council.

Consideration will be given to these matters at a meeting of the Working Party on National Cooperation on 6 November 1998 and at the December meeting of the Law Council of Australia.

Seminar

The Law Society is planning to hold a Seminar on developments within the National Legal Services Market and on implementing competition policy. The seminar will be held at the start of the next legal year.



Steve Southwood, President

Further details will be published in the next issue of *Balance*. It is important that such issues are thoroughly considered by the profession.

Performance Criteria

The Council of the Law Society has resolved to oppose any introduction of a 1 year term of employment for magistrate. However, the Council shares community concerns to ensure the best performance from its judicial officers. As a result the Law Society is preparing a submission on performance criteria for magistrates. It is hoped to discuss such submissions with the Chief Magistrate and with the Attorney-General.

Statehood

The Northern Territory Legislative Assembly Inquiry into appropriate measures facilitate Statehood by 2001 has requested submissions from the Law Society. A Committee has been set up to prepare such submissions. If there are any matters which anyone believes should be addressed in the submissions, would you please contact either myself or Merran Short.

Proposed Merger

The Council of the Law Society has resolved to oppose the merger of the NT Law faculty with the Business Faculty and a meeting has been organised with the Vice Chancellor on 11 November 1998. It is the Council's view that the Law Faculty has done exceedingly well for a small Faculty. A number of graduates of the Law Faculty are now partners in various legal firms and hold senior positions in the public service. The Council believes the Law Faculty should be encouraged to maintain and improve its standards and that this can only be effectively achieved if the Faculty remains a separate Faculty. It is the Law Society's understanding that Law staff at other universities who there have been such mergers regret the decision to merge.