

RRR LAW

Recruitment and Retention of lawyers in Rural, Regional and Remote (RRR) Australia

THE LAW COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA BELIEVES UNLESS CURRENT AND FUTURE LAWYER SHORTAGES IN RRR AREAS ARE ADDRESSED, THERE WILL BE A DRAMATIC NEGATIVE IMPACT ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE THROUGHOUT RRR AUSTRALIA.

The Law Council of Australia has identified and actively pursued a number of initiatives by the legal profession, employer legal firms and organisations, and the Government through advocacy, lobbying, education and strategy development.

In May 2010, the Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Hon. Robert McClelland MP, announced \$1.1 million in funding to boost the recruitment and retention of lawyers in RRR areas.

The majority of the funding was provided to the National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc. for the engagement of regional coordinators to develop strategies to attract and retain lawyers in selected RRR areas, including support for services to coordinate recruitment and to provide mentoring and professional support to lawyers for

all Commonwealth Government funded legal assistance services.

Some of this funding has been provided to the Law Council of Australia through the National Association of Community Legal Centres Inc. for the Law Council to develop a range of awareness activities to assist in attracting and retaining lawyers in RRR areas.

The online survey was sent by law societies throughout Australia to their members working in RRR areas.

Significant results from the survey showed that:

- Over 40% of principals surveyed indicated their practice did not have enough lawyers to service their client base.
- The situation will continue to worsen in the following five to 10 years, as experienced

lawyers cease practising or retire with nobody to take over their firms.

- Practitioners are concerned about the future of the profession in RRR regions as experienced and young lawyers depart.
- The situation is compounded given practitioners working in RRR areas undertake a significant amount of legal aid, pro bono and other unpaid voluntary work.

The survey results formed the basis of a funding submission to the Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Hon. Robert McClelland MP, for the development of a campaign to assist in the recruitment and retention of lawyers in RRR areas.

RRRLaw online

RRRLaw.com.au is the key

<http://rrrlaw.com.au/> | info@rrrlaw.com.au

resource for the RRR initiative. The website links people to job opportunities in RRR Australia. It has everything practitioners need to know about legal careers in RRR Australia including:

- Interactive case studies from people working in RRR destinations to provide those considering a move a look at different types of work opportunities.
- Interactive regional profiles highlighting the lifestyle opportunities available in RRR Australia.
- Development opportunities available in RRR areas, including a range of training programs and incentives available to RRR practitioners.
- Comprehensive links to RRR related research and statistics.

The survey results formed the basis of a funding submission to the Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Hon. Robert McClelland MP, for the development of a campaign to assist in the recruitment and retention of lawyers in RRR areas.

RRRLaw provides an overview of the many exciting opportunities that exist in rural, regional and remote areas across Australia.

It offers law graduates as well as current practitioners a centralised source of information and the ability to explore the varied career options and benefits on offer.

Regional Coordinators for the Recruitment and Retention of lawyers in RRR Australia

Like many other professional groups, such as doctors and nurses, lawyers in RRR areas are experiencing increasing difficulties in attracting and retaining suitable staff. These recruitment problems have a direct effect on the legal sector's ability to service the legal needs of RRR communities.

Regional coordinators have now been engaged in western New South Wales, the Northern Territory, South Australia and north/west Queensland.

Northern Territory Support

Debi Bodden is based in Darwin and brings diverse community development experience and an

appreciative eye for the beauty of the bush.

National Support

Helen McGowan is based in Albury Wodonga and supports the national team using her knowledge of rural legal practice, the community sector and management skills.

The regional coordinators provide assistance and support in RRR areas through:

- Developing recruitment networks and strategies to recruit lawyers;
- Developing a pool of possible applicants;
- Assisting newly arrived lawyers to settle in;
- Providing local support (advice on housing, education, transport, contacts, support networks);
- Developing professional support and mentoring networks; and
- Providing regular forums, communication, one-on-one assistance and links with the private sector.

The regional coordinators are skilled in professional transition support and community development and the team includes three lawyers who have worked within publicly funded legal assistance programs and the private profession. Using their knowledge and variety of RRR experiences, they aim to develop processes to ensure regional lawyers get better support both professionally and personally.

Contact the Regional Coordinators

Northern Territory Debi Bodden 08 8982 1137 debi_bodden@clc.net.au	National Support Helen McGowan 0417 245 710 rrraustralia@gmail.com
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RRRLaw and the Territory

All of the Northern Territory is classed as RRR. The Territory case studies include filmed interviews with the Hon Justice Jenny Blokland and Shahleena Musk.

Advertising a job on RRRLaw

Firms may advertise a job in an RRR area of Australia for listing on this site by registering and filling in the form.

- Go to the jobs page: <http://rrrlaw.com.au/jobs/create/>
- Register an account. You'll need to create a user name (using letters, numbers, underscore, no spaces), give an email address and create a password. Once you have registered, you will receive an automated email from RRR Law to activate your account. Simply click on the link in the email and your account will be ready to go.
- Post job details including State, organisation name, job title, job description, salary, category, closing date for applications, job location, and contact details.

- These will be uploaded to the site after a quick moderation process (to filter any potential spam).
- Once someone registers an account, they will be able to

to work in Australia, will need to contact both:

- The Australian Practising Certificate authority in the State or Territory where they are interested in practising to see what is required to gain admission to practice.
- The Australian Government's Department of Immigration and Citizenship, or seek the services of a registered migration agent, for accurate visa information and advice that will apply to their specific case.

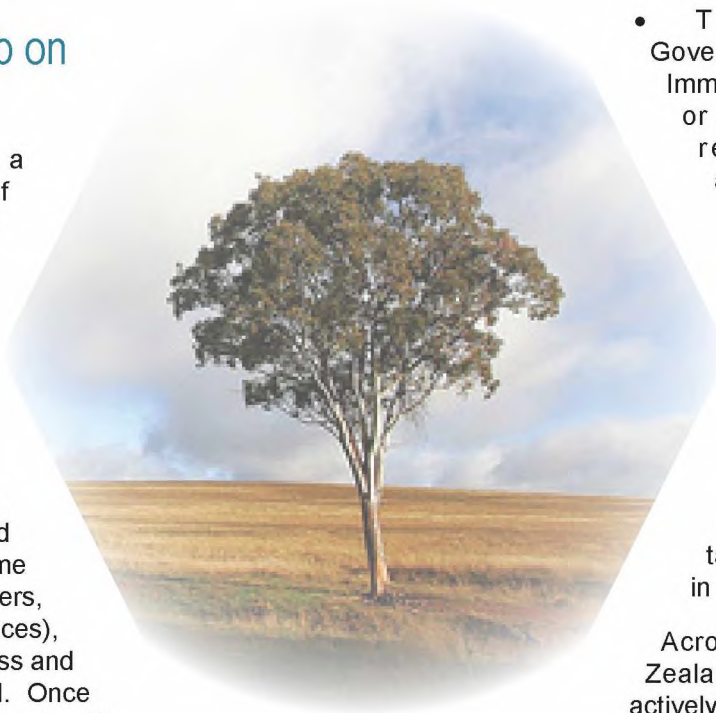
The Law Council is currently working with The Law Society of Ireland on a proposal to enable unemployed Irish law graduates to take up work-placements in regional Australia.

Across the pond, the New Zealand Law Society is also actively promoting opportunities in regional Australia to its members following discussions with the Law Council. New Zealand lawyers may be admitted to practice in all states and territories of Australia under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition regime. That regime makes admission in Australia very easy... just as it does for Australian practitioners seeking admission in New Zealand. ●

login any time in the future and post as many jobs as they please.

Overseas practitioners

Lawyers working in any country other than Australia, who are interested in exploring opportunities



2012 Advocacy Workshops

In 2012, the Hon Chief Justice Trevor Riley and Rex Wild QC will again be conducting, with other senior practitioners, **ADVOCACY WORKSHOPS** in both Darwin and Alice Springs. The dates have not yet been fixed. However, interested practitioners are invited to contact Karen Beach at the Law Society indicating what areas of practice, from a forensic point of view, that they would like considered at the Workshops and in the practical exercises. To take account of suggestions previously made, it is tentatively contemplated including an exercise[s] involving a straightforward application for an interim injunction [based perhaps in civil proceedings and/or crime forfeiture] and exercises involving Sentencing Pleas. In both cases the calling of evidence would be necessary, so that evidentiary skills can again be practised.