

Law Book Company
"Queensland Civil Practice" Launch
Thursday 22 July 1999, 5.30 p.m.
Banco Court

Chief Justice's Remarks

Your Honours, Ladies and Gentlemen: May I begin these brief words by acknowledging Mr Eddie Costigan, Managing Director of LBC Information Services, our generous host; and, for their having originated this work in a large sense, the members of the Rules Committee. I note the presence of the Chairman, Justice Williams, Justice Muir who acted as Chairman during Justice Williams absence on leave, and that I might observe occurred during a somewhat frenetic phase of the work, Justice Wilson, Judges McGill and Robin . . . It must not be thought however that my singling out the members of the Rules Committee is borne of any craving for attention on their part: it was a rather dreary if not sometimes arid task we undertook, but we willingly fulfilled it out of our well developed sense of public responsibility! Indeed, I confess the only break I can recall was the offering of some mild libation one evening in my chambers - although I should acknowledge that they had by that stage been refurbished!

I am very pleased this evening to have the opportunity to launch this extremely valuable work. The Rules Committee sought to keep the new Uniform Civil Procedure Rules as simple as possible. We yielded, I am afraid, to the demands of so-called "user friendliness" and abandoned some rather delightfully obscurantist tags - such as the writ of *fi fa*. Writs are indeed no more, of course, although unlike the English, we resisted the temptation of restyling "affidavits" as "statements of truth". But my point is that however friendly the form of these new rules, lay litigants and legal practitioners alike will need a lot of help in comprehending and applying them. All practising lawyers appreciate the enormous value of services like this one, and it is not overstating the position to observe that access to such a service is frankly indispensable.

And so I congratulate Law Book Company on yet again bringing its extensive experience and expertise so effectively to bear in support of the litigating public. You may be interested to know that the Company's contribution to legal understanding in this State goes back at least as far as 1902, with *Power on the Real Property Acts 1902*, which was a commentary, and its published law reports go back very much further, to the middle of the last century. This work provides a fine illustration of the experience and expertise which the Company has accumulated over that lengthy period. The exercise was I expect particularly challenging for the need comprehensively to cover the position with relation to all three State courts. The format of the work is very helpful, and I am impressed by

the extent to which it already includes commentary. This will naturally expand as practice decisions on the new rules filter through. It is noteworthy and commendable that the publisher has been able to release the work proximately with the commencement of the new rules, very helpfully to the profession and the lay litigants also.

I am told that the main work, the two volume work, and the forms on CD-rom, will be updated regularly, with the remaining chapters in the practice guide to be completed by 1st October 1999. As I say, the publisher and the authors are to be congratulated on the extensive commentary already there. That so much has been achieved so quickly is, I am also told, due in part to substantial assistance from the Supreme Court Librarian, Mr Aladin Rahemtula and his staff, and that also should be gratefully acknowledged.

Law Book Company is especially fortunate to have as authors, Mr Justice McPherson, Mr Paul McQuade and Professor Bernard Cairns. His Honour's eminent credentials with respect of this role are beyond question; as indeed is the relevant expertise of Mr McQuade and Professor Cairns. Professor Cairns, I should add, contributed very substantially and valuably to the work of the Rules Committee, a matter which I have gratefully acknowledged in personal correspondence with him.

In launching this excellent work, I warmly congratulate Law Book Company as publisher and His Honour, Mr McQuade and Professor Cairns as authors, and enthusiastically commend it to the profession and to the public as an initiative to be warmly and gratefully acknowledged.