



QWCDEC LAUNCH

Wednesday, 7 February 2007 at 1.15pm

Level 9, Brisbane Magistrates Court

363 George Street, Brisbane

Judge Marshall Irwin
Chief Magistrate

I acknowledge the traditional owners of land on which we gather. This is a place where the traditional owners once drew water from waterholes and met with neighbouring groups. It is appropriate that this site remains a meeting place today.

I also welcome the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the Honourable Kerry Shine MP, Commissioner Ingrid Asbury representing the Queensland Industrial Relations Commissions, fellow magistrates, the Honourable Paul Braddy, the Chair of Q-Comp, Q-Comp Board members and all of you, our distinguished guests to this launch of Quick-Deck.

I am delighted to introduce you to this valuable resource in my capacity as the Chief Magistrate of the court, which as the Industrial Magistrates Court hears appeals by workers and employers from reviews by Q-Comp of insurers' decisions under the Queensland Workers' Compensation scheme.

All Queensland Magistrates and Acting Magistrates are Industrial Magistrates. Since 22 August 2005 the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission has also been given jurisdiction to hear these appeals.

It is a busy jurisdiction. In 2005-2006, 97 matters were heard in the Industrial Magistrates Court or the Commission, and of these, only 17 were subsequently appealed to the Industrial Court.

My personal connection with the Industrial Magistrates Court commenced about 30 years ago, appearing for the predecessors of Q-Comp. At that time I found the Workers' Compensation Reports which have been referred to by Ms Wood to be a valuable resource.

It has therefore been a pleasure to have the opportunity to be involved in this project with Q-Comp over the past 12 months to develop and now launch this data base.

Quick-Deck will fill the gap which has existed since the last hard copy report was published – at least back to those appeal decisions made since 1 July 1999 by the court, and more recently by the commission.

Appropriately the database will allow access to decisions within a month of handing them down, by the use of modern technology.

This court is dedicated to working collaboratively to provide timely access to justice to all who appear before it, and to delivering high quality and consistent decisions.

The new database will facilitate this by making appeal decisions readily accessible to decision makers, whether they be claims officers, members of this court or the commission, or the lawyers, workers and employers who appear before us.

It will enable lawyers and those who represent themselves to readily identify the legal principles and precedents which will apply in a particular case. This will often enable an assessment to be made by the represented and unrepresented alike, as to the prospects of success.

As a result a more informed decision can be made as to whether to proceed with an appeal, with the resulting saving of time and costs.

This can only help to improve the outcomes for all those involved in the Queensland workers' compensation system.

I therefore encourage you to become familiar with Quick-Deck and take full advantage of its convenience and accessibility.

I am sure it will be a resource that you will use regularly.