

Butterworths Australian Property Law Dictionary

Nygh P and Butt P, Butterworths, 1997, pp cclxxviii, \$49.00 (pbk)

For those neither studying nor practising law 'legalese' can be mystifying. This is an easy-to-use, handy reference for anyone - practitioner, student or layman - who fails to recollect the meaning of all the technical terms and latin phrases used in property law.

Containing over 3 400 definitions, the *Butterworths Property Law Dictionary* covers a wide range of terminology, from medieval times to the present day. It clearly and succinctly explains terms that often provide difficulties in this area, and for the main part, provides the most applicable case citation for further reference. Where possible, current statutes (state and federal) are referred to when illustrating a point.

Each entry consists of a definition, a synonym (where one exists), a context statement referring the reader to a particular area of law, a cross-reference to *Butterworths Australian Legal Words and Phrases*² (where applicable), Australian judicial and legislative authority (where available) and phonetic spellings of Latin terms. Also in the introductory section is a guide to the phonetic symbols.

However, what sets this dictionary apart from those in a similar vein is the 'How to Use' page that explains, with examples, the different parts in a dictionary entry. Everyone has used a dictionary at some time in his or her life, yet how many could describe exactly what each part of the definition means? Similarly, the five-page 'Table of Abbreviations' is highly useful in rendering the shorthand used in some entries into comprehensible english.

The *Butterworths Australian Property Law Dictionary* provides concise definitions covering the more difficult areas of property law. For example, life in being, perpetuities, and hereditaments. Without an accurate and comprehensible definition of these terms, an understanding of property law is hard-gained. As a reference, the *Butterworths Property Law Dictionary* is easy to use and wide-ranging in scope, and would be a valuable tool for anyone interested in this area of the law.

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2 Providing an index to over 100 000 words and phrases from case law and legislation for use when a word is better or more specifically defined in another area.

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