

Australian Legal Citation: A Guide

By Colin Fong

Prospect, 1998, pp cliv, 1427, \$25 (pbk)

In Law, more than in most disciplines, the importance of accurate and uniform citation can hardly be overestimated. Judges, practitioners and researchers cannot be taken on trust. They must provide verifiable citations for their sources, whether they be cases, statutes, textbooks, or journal articles, and any reader must be able, easily, to follow up the sources. The appearance of so much useful information on the Internet, as well as the electronic versions of cases and statutes on CD-Rom databases have created new citation problems. This new book by the well-known legal researcher and biographer Colin Fong has therefore appeared at an appropriate time and should be widely welcomed.

The book has been divided into two main parts. Part 1 discusses the principles of legal citation, different sources of information, and how to cite them. Fong points out a number of problems: that many cases were noted as not reported when they appeared in a loose-leaf service or electronically; that some publishers did not cite their rivals; and that for Internet citations the site might have moved or disappeared altogether. He recommends that, especially for recent citations, the citation be listed in full with the abbreviation in brackets. The first chapter deals with cases. Fong provides a brief history of Australian law reporting and discusses the role of the Incorporated Councils of Law Reporting, the role of publishers, noting differences between their law reports series and the judgements handed down in court, and the conventions of case citations. He suggests ways of citing popular or alternative case names, cases with the same parties, individual judges, authorised reports, unreported and electronic judgements, Australian material on Lexis, Austlii cases, CCH cases, criminal cases, and court transcripts. He notes ambiguities in some Australian case citations. For example, in the *Australian Law Reports* you cannot tell if the case cited is from the High Court or Federal Court or a State court exercising federal jurisdiction. The appendix to the chapter on cases lists the Australian authorised and unauthorised law reports.

Chapter 2 on statutes is also helpful, covering the citation of Acts of Parliament, reprinted Acts of Parliament, annotated Acts, changing citations from a Bill to an Act, repealed or superseded Acts, electronic sources, and popular names of Acts. Other chapters deal with dele-

gated legislation, other parliamentary materials, codes, treaties, administrative and quasi-judicial materials, media and press releases, government reports, books, digests and encyclopaedias, journal articles, loose-leaf services, conference and seminar papers, electronic material (including discussion lists, email and Intranets), and overseas material (the United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Europe and Papua New Guinea). The final chapter of Part 1 looks briefly (all too briefly) at citation reform and recent developments.

Part 2 provides a citation guide to Australian law reports, journals, and other materials. Fong includes overseas journals with regular Australian content or with an Australian on the editorial board. He provides alternative citations, notes the title and any change in title, the duration of the title, and the preferred citation followed by alternatives. This is a valuable list of 54 pages. I found one typographical error on page 137 where '19 University of Tasmania Review 36' intrudes on the citation for the *Tasmanian Law Reports* (LBC). But that is a minor glitch in what is a remarkably useful and sensible book; particularly for students, who need to have the importance of correct legal citation ingrained in them from the start of their legal studies.

*Stefan Petrow**

Business Law of Australia

By R B Vermeesch and Justice K E Lindgren

9th Edition, Butterworths, 1998, pp mcdxxvii, \$70 (pbk)

The three main criteria for assessing a book of this type are (1) that it covers the area of law; (2) that it is interesting to read; and (3) that it is understandable.

Business Law of Australia (9th Edition) is likely to be the most highly used and respected text in the areas of business and commercial law in Australia because, on the whole, it covers these broad areas of law in such extensive detail. It is a valuable resource to both practitioners and academics alike, and also to the targeted audience: students. Although the authors are at times forced to briefly summarise some topics which are broad in nature leading to those particular areas being difficult to understand, and the restriction of the book and its references to pure 'black-letter' law makes reading a bit 'dry' at times for students, this text remains a resource of great quality for the areas of

* Law Librarian, University of Tasmania.