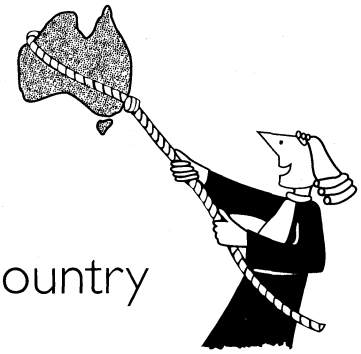


DownUnderAllOver
Developments around the country

FEDERAL

New Commonwealth scheme to encourage pro bono

Commonwealth government agencies must now consider the pro bono and community service contribution of a law firm when choosing which firm to hire. But the changes stop short of making pro bono performance an enforceable condition of the contract for provision of legal services, which is a feature of the current Victorian Government's tender scheme.

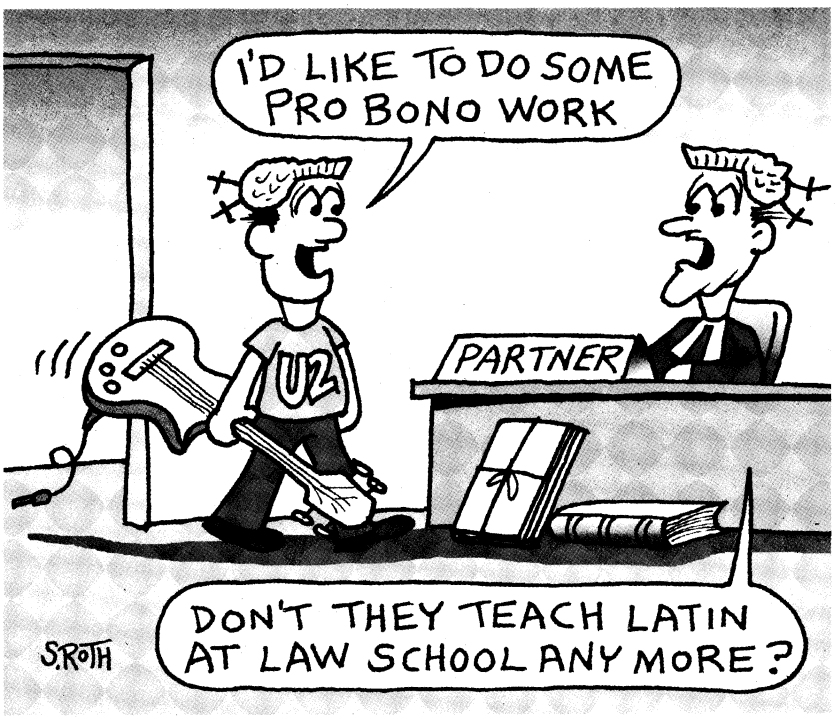
Amendments to the Legal Services Directions, binding on all Commonwealth Government agencies, now require each agency when procuring ongoing legal services to take into account the amount and type of pro bono work the law firm has carried out or will carry out and whether the firm is a signatory to the National Pro Bono Aspirational Target ('Target') developed by the National Pro Bono Resource Centre.

The only other mandatory considerations for Government agencies when purchasing legal services are the pricing and whether the firm will comply with the Deed of Standing Offer that records the agreement for panel firms. However, each agency will have the flexibility to decide the weight to be given to each tender criteria so for example, an agency could decide to weight legal expertise at 50 per cent, pricing at 30 per cent and pro bono contributions at 20 per cent. None of the criteria have a minimum weighting. Agencies must use a common form tender document to procure legal services which will require tenderers to provide a description of their pro bono work.

While the scheme is all about encouraging pro bono by using a carrot rather than a stick, it does come with an annual reporting regime with details yet to be settled. Issues are likely to arise around the broad definition of 'pro bono work'. It includes pro bono *legal* work (as defined in the Target) but also includes unpaid capacity-building work in the Asia-Pacific region and other community or charitable work carried out by the firm. These latter items are difficult to quantify and are not pro bono legal work. Some have expressed concern about a possible substitution of charity and community work for pro bono *legal* work.

The message is clear. If a law firm wishes to do legal work for the Commonwealth, it should undertake pro bono work, and if it wants to be considered favourably by an agency, it would do well to become a signatory to the Target. Any lawyer or firm can sign up to the Target if they aspire to do at least 35 hours of pro bono legal work per year.

JOHN CORKER is Director, and **SKYE ROSE** is Senior Policy Manager, at the National Pro Bono Resource Centre.



Human Rights through national consultation

The National Human Rights Consultation announced by the Attorney-General on 10 December 2008 is an historic opportunity for individuals and communities throughout Australia to improve our democracy. The Government has appointed a Committee, chaired by Fr Frank Brennan, to undertake the Australia-wide community consultation.

The Committee's Terms of Reference are to ask the Australian community:

- Which human rights (including corresponding responsibilities) should be protected and promoted?
- Are these human rights currently sufficiently protected and promoted?
- How could Australia better protect and promote human rights?

Submissions to the Committee are due by 15 June 2009 and the Committee has been asked to report to the Australian Government by 31 August 2009 on the issues raised and the options identified to enhance the protection and promotion of human rights. The options identified should preserve the sovereignty of the Parliament and not include a constitutionally entrenched bill of rights.

Australia is the only developed democracy without a national Human Rights Act or constitutional protection for human rights.

An Australian Human Rights Act could be modelled on legislation such as the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Human Rights Acts in the United Kingdom and the Australian Capital Territory. These Acts ensure that human rights are taken into account by parliament, the courts and public services when developing and applying law and policy. They promote a conversation between the community and government about how best to protect human rights and community interests.

The evidence from bodies such as the UK Audit Commission, the British Institute of Human Rights, and the ACT and Victorian Human Rights Commissions is clear: the institutionalization of a human rights culture through this type of legislation leads to better public services and outcomes.

Human Rights Acts have great potential to address disadvantage and promote dignity. Some recent examples are illustrative.

In Victoria, the Charter has been used to promote better educational opportunities for children with disability, prevent the eviction of a single mother and her children from public housing into homelessness, and gain access to medical assistance for an elderly woman with a brain injury.

In the UK, the right to life has been relied on to require the state to support vulnerable persons and prevent destitution. The right to freedom from cruel treatment has required authorities to protect children from abuse and neglect. And the right to privacy has been used to ensure that an elderly couple could continue to cohabit in a nursing home after 65 years of marriage. These are commonsense decisions that have improved lives.

It is important that the debate about a Human Rights Act is evidence-based and avoids myths. A Human Rights Act would not shift power from parliament to the judiciary. Human rights are profoundly democratic. The Victorian Charter, for example, entrenches rights such as free expression, peaceful assembly and public participation, which enhance democracy. The Charter does not give courts the power to strike down legislation, but merely to remit a law to parliament for reconsideration if it cannot be interpreted compatibly with human rights. Parliament retains absolute sovereignty to respond to these declarations as it sees fit.

Another common myth is that Human Rights Acts are a lawyers' picnic. This is not supported by evidence. A two year review of the ACT Human Rights Act noted there has been no flood of litigation. In the UK, where the Human Rights Act has been in force for 10 years, a major report found that there has been no increase in the volume, length or costs of litigation.

For further information about the Federal Government's National Human Rights Consultation, see www.humanrightsconsultation.gov.au .

For resources and information regarding a Human Rights Act for Australia, see hrlrc.org.au .

PHILIP LYNCH is Director of the Human Rights Law Resource Centre.

UN HR Committee releases List of Issues on Australia

In late 2008, a coalition of Australian NGOs submitted a major report to the UN Human Rights Committee regarding Australia's implementation of and compliance with the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. Australia is due to be reviewed by the UN Human Rights Committee in March 2009.

In advance of the Committee's session — at which it will engage in a 'constructive dialogue' with the Australian Government — the Committee has developed a 'List of Issues' to be taken up in connection with the consideration of Australia's periodic report. The List of Issues contains a number of questions relating to issues about which the Committee would like further information from the Australian Government.

The List of Issues, released on 24 November 2008, contains 24 questions relating to, among other issues: ensuring comprehensive protection of human rights in Australia; the withdrawal of Australia's reservations to the *ICCPR*; Australia's lack of response to adverse findings of the Committee against Australia; Indigenous rights; refugee and asylum-seeker issues; conditions of detention for people with mental illness; and measures being taken to reduce domestic violence against women.

A copy of the full List of Issues is available at: http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/docs/AdvanceDocs/CCPR-C-AUS-Q5.doc .

BEN SCHOKMAN is the DLA Phillips Fox Human Rights Lawyer with the Human Rights Law Resource Centre.

Australia moves to promote and protect disability rights

On 3 December, the government tabled its National Interest Analysis (NIA) on the *Optional Protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. The NIA proposes that Australia accede to the Optional Protocol.

The Optional Protocol establishes two procedures designed to supplement the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* and strengthen and promote its implementation. The communication procedure allows individuals or groups to submit a communication to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities alleging violations of the substantive rights protected under the Convention. The inquiry procedure allows the Committee to initiate inquiries into reliable information indicating grave or systematic violations of the Convention by a State Party.

The NIA advises that accession to the Optional Protocol would:

- render Australia more accountable for its obligations under the Convention;
- promote disability rights within Australia; and
- present Australia as an international leader committed to protecting the rights of people with disability.

The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties called for submissions on Australia's possible accession to the Optional Protocol by 13 February 2009.

For further information, including dates for public hearings, see aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/3december2008/index.htm .

RACHEL BALL is a lawyer with the Human Rights Law Resource Centre.

Workplace relations

The current overhaul of federal workplace laws will address many of the harsher elements of WorkChoices, including a provision that had been highly prejudicial to certain employees in the way it excluded them from the unfair dismissal remedy. In AltLJ 33(2), DownUnderAllOver reported on the application

of the unfair dismissal qualifying period to employees who transfer from one business to another when the business changes hands ('transferring employees'). That report referred to an employee who had worked for a childcare centre for 17 years but the business changed hands and the employee was sacked five months later. The employee was excluded from an unfair dismissal remedy under the *Workplace Relations Act* 1996 (Cth) ('the Act') as she did not have a written agreement with the new owner that the six month qualifying period under the Act did not apply. Such a provision was extremely harsh given its reliance on transferring employees knowing that they needed to have such an agreement in writing when there was a transmission of business.

The Fair Work Bill 2008 ('the Bill'), which is currently before the House of Representatives, makes a welcome change to the way the qualifying period for unfair dismissal remedy will apply when there has been a transmission of business. While the six-month qualifying period remains (with a 12-month qualifying period for businesses of fewer than 15 employees), the onus will now be on new employers to inform transferring employees that their period of service starts over. Sect 384(2)(b)(iii) of the Bill provides that the qualifying period will only exclude a transferring employee where the new employer has informed employees in writing that their previous period of service will not be recognised.

Until this comes into force, however, the problem remains for transferring employees who are unlikely to know that they need to obtain a written agreement to protect their access to a remedy for unfair dismissal.

LINDA TUCKER is a solicitor at Kingsford Legal Centre.

Freedom of religion inquiry

The Australian Human Rights Commission (formerly known as HREOC) is seeking submissions on issues of *Freedom of Religion and Belief in the 21st Century* in Australia. The Commission is especially interested in responses to any or all of the questions in the Discussion Paper that is available on the Commission website at hreoc.gov.au/frb/index.html as well as to any other related issues of concern.

Justice Virginia Bell

Just for the record, we report what most readers would be aware of: the 48th appointee and 4th woman on the High Court of Australia is also the first former community legal centre employee. Virginia Bell was a solicitor at Redfern Legal Centre in Sydney, from 1978 until 1986.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Same-sex adoption inquiry

The NSW Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Law and Justice is currently conducting an inquiry into adoption by same sex couples. Submissions closed on 13 February 2009, with plans for public hearings in late February.

The Committee's Terms of Reference are to inquire into and report on law reform issues regarding whether NSW adoption laws should be amended to allow same sex couples to adopt, with particular reference to:

a. ascertaining whether adoption by same sex couples would further the objectives of the Adoption Act 2000
b. the experience in other Australian and overseas jurisdictions that allow the adoption of children by same sex couples
c. whether there is scope within the existing programs (local and international) for same sex couples to be able to adopt
d. examining the implications of adoption by same sex couples for children, and
e. if adoption by same sex couples will promote the welfare of children, then examining what legislative changes are required.

SHIRLEY SOUTHGATE is Principal Solicitor, Kingsford Legal Centre

Activist Rights Manual

The Redfern Legal Centre launched their new Activist Rights Manual at their Christmas Party on 10 December 2008.The Manual is targeted at political activists in NSW and outlines the laws, tactics and strategies needed to effectively lead campaigns within the law. Guest speaker at the launch was former NSW Upper House speaker (and veteran activist) Meredith Bergman.

Bergman outlined the importance of having such a manual readily available, and spoke of her earlier contact, as an activist, with the criminal justice system.

One of the strengths of the Manual, according to Redfern Legal Centre, is that it is published only on the net, and so can be updated regularly. Anyone can print out individual pages as information sheets for selected actions.

The author has been contracted for the next 3 years to update the website on a regular basis. These updates will involve close liaison with activists who come into contact with the police or courts. Apart from noting changes in the law, the site will report sentences delivered by the courts and changes in police practices. Such updates can temper advice given to activists where a public order offence may attract a serious maximum penalty — say, 10 years imprisonment — when in practice the sentences handed down are much more lenient.

Changes in police practice can occur while operating within the same legal framework. Changes in the last couple of years have included the purchase of a water cannon at a cost of $650 000 (it has never been used), the up-sizing of CS (pepper) spray canisters from the size of a body spray to the size of a small fire extinguisher, and the distribution of Tasers to general duties police. Continuing concerns around policing at protests include the failure of police officers to wear identification badges, threats to arrest protesters for filming police officers arresting suspects (without lawful authority) and the improper use of move-on directions at protests.The Manual can be found at www.activistrightsmanual.com . Updates and suggestions for new sections are welcomed.

DALE MILLS is the author of the Manual dalemills@cantab.net

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Alcohol Management Plans

Local communities and regions throughout the Northern Territory are working to reduce alcohol related harm through the development of 'Alcohol Management Plans', community driven initiatives that seek to reduce the supply or alcohol, reduce the demand for alcohol and reduce alcohol related harm in a community a town or a region.

The plans might include measures such as:

- supply restrictions, whereby licensees agree or have their licence conditions formally varied to limit the amount or type of alcohol that can be sold, or the times during which it is available;
- permit systems, whereby all residents of a region are require to hold a permit to buy takeaway alcohol, and
- agreements to work together to provide better links between sobering up shelters, detoxification and rehabilitation services.

The Plans are overseen by community based Alcohol Reference Groups with representatives from local government, key service providers and relevant Northern Territory agencies, such as NT Police.

Alcohol Management Plans currently exist in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Palmerston, Groote Eylandt and the East Arhnem region. Plans are under development or discussion in Timber Creek, Borroloola, Jabiru and the West Arnhem region and Elliot.

For further information, contact Alyson.Brown@nt.gov.au .

Pornography education

With funding from the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, the Northern Territory's Department of Justice is educating Indigenous Territorians about the Australian film and literature classification system and the harmful effects of pornography. Through workshops in 17 remote communities, the project is aiming to raise awareness among Indigenous people that:

- there is a classification system for film and literature;
- it is against the law to have some materials (with serious penalties arising from breach); and
- watching or being exposed to pornographic material is harmful to children.

A men's project team has been employed within the Department of Justice to deliver workshops for men. Separate women's information sessions and workshops are being convened by program partner National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN).

Workshops have been scheduled for remote and regional communities across the Territory, including in Tennant Creek, Nguiu, Wadeye, Katherine, Maningrida, Angurugu, Nhulunbuy, Ngukurr, Gunbalanya, Borroloola, Elliott, Kalkaringi, Tennant Creek, Ti Tree, Papunya, Alice Springs, and Mutijulu. Workshops will also be delivered at the Darwin and Alice Springs Correctional Centres, Don Dale Juvenile Detention Centre and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education.

The project has attracted a great deal of interest nationally, and is being evaluated by the Australian Institute of Criminology.

For further information, contact Kenneth.Vowles@nt.gov.au .

Public Safety Model

In 2007, the Northern Territory Government approved the implementation of a Public Safety Model, with various initiatives addressing anti-social behaviour such as camping illegally, loitering and drinking in public spaces.

Although funded Public Safety Model initiatives for each region vary according to local circumstances, the common elements are various services funded by the Department of Justice including:

- a user-pays return to home/return to country program for Indigenous visitors
- local transport services
- proof of identity services
- prisoner release and repatriation assistance
- information and referral services including assistance in obtaining accommodation or welfare payments.

The Public Safety Model is being implemented in Darwin, Katherine and Alice Springs over three years.

For further information, contact Marianne.Conaty@nt.gov.au .

MARIANNE CONATY is Coordinator, Public Safety, Community and Justice Policy with the NT Department of Justice.

QUEENSLAND

Defence companies in most parts of Australia have been given exemptions from State laws against race discrimination. Queensland has refused to extend a previously granted exemption in *Exemption application re: Boeing Australia Holdings Pty Limited and others (No. 2) [2008] QADT 34*, but did so on the basis that an exemption within the Queensland *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* already applied.

When the Australian defence industry imports US military technology it does so subject to US laws requiring racial discrimination. The US *International Traffic in Arms Regulations* (ITAR) prohibits nationals of countries other than the US and the importing country from coming into contact with the US technology, including people born in certain countries who have dual Australian citizenship.

Tribunal President Douglas Savage SC found that the exemption Boeing wanted was unnecessary because the *Anti-Discrimination Act* allows genuine occupational requirements to be imposed for a position, and the nationality requirement is a genuine occupational requirement (applying *Qantas Airways Ltd v Christie* (1998) 193 CLR 280).

But the President did go on to say that if he was wrong on that point, he would not have granted an exemption for a number of reasons, including because 'the regulatory regime…is not demonstrated to be reasonably necessary to advance the stated purpose of discovering hostile national allegiance'. This would have been the second refusal of an exemption on the merits of the application, after a decision in the ACT in 2008 that was subsequently overturned on review.

Unlike state and territory anti-discrimination laws, the Commonwealth *Racial Discrimination Act 1972* has no provision for individual temporary exemptions, but nor does it prohibit discrimination on the ground of nationality.

YASMIN GUNN is a solicitor with Legal Aid Queensland.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

'Water, water everywhere, but not a drop to drink'

The plight of the lower Murray River continues to be a major issue in South Australia. Fresh water levels in several lower lakes are so low that there is a risk of soil acidification with a devastating impact on local flora and fauna. The preferred remedy is to have more fresh water reaching the end of the river and entering the lakes. This is the main environmental battle ground in the fight to save the lower lakes and the

Coorong. However, with continuing low rain falls in the Murray-Darling basin and with States higher up the river fighting to protect their water rights, it now seems unlikely that enough fresh water will be able to reach the lower lakes to keep them alive beyond 2009.

The South Australian government has been working on a contingency plan to remove barrages between the Coorong and Lake Alexandrina which separate the fresh water in the lakes from the sea, and effectively 'flood' the lakes with sea water via the Coorong. This plan would include building a weir to separate fresh and salt water further up the river. The weir is required to preserve Adelaide's water supply, not to mention the river's ecology and the irrigation and other needs of river users. Preliminary work on the weir began in August 2008, including work on roads, fencing and stockpiling of rocks and soil needed for construction. This preliminary work needs to be done at least a year out from any decision to flood the river, and the SA government has committed to the preliminary work despite the cost, regardless of whether the flooding proposal is ever undertaken.

The flooding proposal clearly has profound implications for the ecology of the lakes, and expert and local opinion is divided on the merits of the proposal. Because of the international significance of the lower lakes and the Coorong, the South Australian government was required to refer its proposal to the Commonwealth. In early January the Federal Environment Minister, Peter Garrett, announced that the Department of Environment, Heritage, Water and the Arts had made a determination that the proposal was a 'controlled action' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) and that, as a result, the proposal would be subject to a Commonwealth process of environmental assessment and public consultation. The first step in this process is the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement by the SA Government in accordance with guidelines established by the Federal Environment Minister.

ALEX REILLY teaches law at the University of Adelaide.

TASMANIA

Historic apology to gay community

In early December 2008, in an extraordinary reception hosted at the Hobart Town Hall, Lord Major Rob Valentine formally apologised to the gay community over the persecution, arrest and incarceration of gay activists and their supporters who 20 years ago established a stall at Tasmania's popular Salamanca's Markets calling for an end to same-sex discrimination. When Council staff informed the activists that the stall would be closed, 130 activists and their supporters were arrested. At the time, sex between men was illegal with a penalty of up to 21 years jail. In his speech, the Lord Mayor informed those gathered at the reception that in 1988 the Council was discriminatory and had helped foster prejudice against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people. The apology, which extended to those arrested, their supporters and council officers, was responded to by Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group spokesperson Rodney Croome. In the words of Mr Croome:

> ...listening to the Lord Mayor read the apology, I realised he hasn't asked us to forget the past. Instead, he and his fellow Aldermen have asked us to have faith in the future and in each other. They have expressed their belief that our society can be an inclusive one which respects human rights and diversity. They want us to take the apology as a sign that this is possible. I too share this optimistic outlook, passionately and unshakably. For this reason I not only accept the Council's apology, I embrace it.

The council is planning to develop a plaque or public art installation to commemorate the 1988 arrests.

Tasmania's drug court trial extended

The Court Mandated Diversion of drug offenders (CMD) program will continue, following the release of a 12-month evaluation report in early January 2009. The report found that, of the 250 offenders offered places on the CMD program, 157 had agreed to participate and 51 offenders opted for intensive rehabilitation. The report concluded that CMD has been 'largely successful' in achieving its goals.

In a media release dated 7 January 2009 the Minister for Justice Lara Giddings proclaimed that the CMD program would continue and that the rehabilitation program has since been improved. According to Lara Giddings MP,

> Almost half of this mainly high-risk group had not undertaken any form of drug treatment before. The fact that they opted for rehabilitation not only saved them a gaol term, but hopefully steered some away from long-term drug use and the consequences for themselves and the community. Effective responses to the reasons people commit crimes will lead to a safer community for us all.

The report can be downloaded from justice.tas.gov.au/corporateinfo/projects/court_mandated_diversion .

BENEDICT BARTL is a solicitor in Tasmania.

VICTORIA

Department of Justice Guidelines on Victorian *Charter*

The Victorian Department of Justice has recently published comprehensive *Guidelines on the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities*.

The **Charter Guidelines** provide information for lawyers and legislation officers across government on the *Charter*. They seek to explain the practical application of the *Charter* to policy development and to identify the content of the rights protected. In respect of each right there is a discussion of the scope of the right and circumstances in which the right may be engaged, limits on the right, measures to improve compliance, and history and jurisprudence of the right.

For a copy of the Guidelines, see justice.vic.gov.au > Publications > H > Guidelines for Charter of Human Rights .

PHILIP LYNCH is Director of the Human Rights Law Resource Centre.

Assistance for Victorians with autism

Disability advocates have welcomed the Victorian Government's recent decision to recognise Autism Spectrum Disorders as neurological impairments under the *Disability Act 2006* (Vic).

The decision came after lawyers representing a young man before VCAT invoked the Victorian Charter of Human Rights to expand the definition of 'disability' under the Act. The young man has Asperger Syndrome but was ineligible to receive disability support services because, until recently, the Department of Human Services did not consider Asperger Syndrome to be a 'disability'. The lawyer advocated that an

inclusive and contextual interpretation of 'disability' should be adopted pursuant to the *Charter*.

On 12 December 2008, the Victorian Government issued a media release advising that it has decided to acknowledge Autism Spectrum Disorders (including Asperger Syndrome) as a disability under the Act and 'Victorians with autism will now be able to request disability assistance'. The Government's announcement was backed by $2.75 million in additional funding.

The announcement reflects the hard work of many people who have advocated for change in this area. Meredith Ward, President of the Autistic Family Support Association, said that the VCAT proceedings were critical to the State Government's change in policy and, in her view, the policy change would not have occurred but for the contributions of the lawyers and barristers involved. David O'Callaghan SC and Penny Neskovcin of Counsel, together with Johnathan Quilty, Elon Zlotnick and Zara Durnan of Lander & Rogers provided outstanding and significant pro bono assistance in this matter.

MELANIE SCHLEIGER is on secondment to the Human Rights Law Resource Centre from Lander & Rogers.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WA teachers' new legal obligations

Schools operate in an era of unprecedented accountability. Teachers are now confronted with the task of addressing the needs of the *whole* child. No longer just teaching and learning specialists, teachers are required to embody the skills of counselors, psychologists and, now, mandated reporters.

Mandated reporting of child sexual abuse has been introduced in Western Australia by means of amendments to the *Children and Community Services Act 2004*. From 1 January 2009 the amendments inserted by the *Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008* require doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers and police officers to report beliefs formed on reasonable grounds in the course of their work (paid or unpaid), that a child or young person has been the subject of sexual abuse or is the subject of ongoing sexual abuse to the Department of Child Protection (DCP). The obligation to report this class of abuse is the first statutory obligation to be imposed on teachers in WA.

The Act focuses on the failure to report child sexual abuse. Failure to report other forms of abuse such as physical or emotional abuse and neglect does not incur a penalty. The critical issue in making a report is that the reporter has formed a 'reasonable belief'. The reporter does not need to have proof that a child is being abused. The DCP has provided possible indicators of child sexual abuse in order to assist mandatory reporters in forming a 'reasonable belief'. However, mandatory reporters will need to consider each situation on its own merits to determine whether the situation is abusive.

Mandatory reporters who fail to report a belief to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the DCP (or to other persons approved by the CEO) as soon as practicable, will be liable to be charged with a civil offence, attracting a fine of up to $6000. It must be noted that in conformity with all other states and territories in Australia, the Act confers immunity from legal liability in any proceedings brought concerning the report, provided the report is made in good faith.

As amended, the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* is intended to play a vital role in the detection of child sexual abuse and the facilitation of necessary intervention and assistance for children. Features specific to the teaching profession provide strong reasons why teachers should be mandated reporters. However, arguments may also be advanced against extending such legal obligation to teachers. It remains to be seen whether the new compulsion on teachers to report suspected cases of child abuse will be effective in practice.

KATE WALAWSKI is a final year Graduate Law student at UWA.

MENTIONS

Forthcoming conferences

April 2009

Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism Financing Conference: 'Managing Risk: Australian and International Perspectives'
1–2 April, Hilton Hotel, Sydney
aic.gov.au/conferences/2009-anti-money_laundering/index.html

Building a fair Australia in tough economic times: ACOSS National Conference 2009
2–3 April, Australian Technology Park, Sydney
http://users.tpg.com.au/adsl444m/bulletinfinal.htm

Crossing Borders: Promoting Regional Law Enforcement Cooperation – European, Australian and Asia-Pacific Perspectives
8–9 April, Canberra
anu.edu.au/NEC/conferences_workshops/2009_CrossingBorders/CrossingBorders.php

Crime Against and the Policing of Emerging Communities
8 April 2009, Sydney University Law School, Sydney
Contact Rachel Miller, Sydney Institute of Criminology <R.Miller@usyd.edu.au> or phone 02 9351 0444, to register your interest.

June 2009

European Conference on traumatic stress studies: 'Trauma in Lives and Communities —Victims, Violators, Prevention and Recovery'
14–18 June, Oslo, Norway
ecots2009.com

August 2009

Sixth Australasian Women and Policing conference: 'Making it Happen'
23–26 August, Duxton Hotel, Perth
acwap.com.au