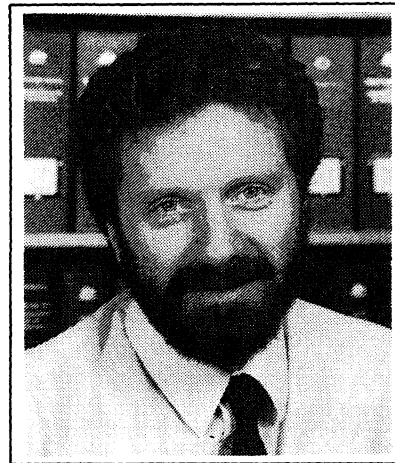


Constitutional Reform of the Law Council of Australia



Although I was unable to attend the March meeting of the Law Council of Australia, reports I have received indicate that there was strong support for constitutional change. These changes were mainly in respect of the management of Law Council business and membership of the Executive.

As you are aware, I and former Presidents of this Society have been dissatisfied with entrenched rights of some constituent bodies on the Executive and the lack (perceived or otherwise) of control of the day to day operations of the Law Council.

This Society has never had a representative on the Executive of the Law Council and has in the past been required to have its views on matters to be discussed at Executive Meetings, put forward by a non Northern Territorian. We have always considered this unacceptable. The majority of constituent bodies at the March meeting voted in favour of the following motion:

"That the Council approves in principle the following propositions:

- A. 1) *that the LCA should be governed by a Board comprising one representative from each of its constituent bodies and a President;*
- 2) *that the Board should, from its members, elect the President, who shall be its Chairman, a President-elect and a Treasurer;*
- 3) *upon the election of the President his or her constituent body shall appoint another representative to the Board;*

4) that the Board formulate the manner in which it should carry out its management functions, including the degree to which it should delegate any of those functions to a management committee chosen from its members or such other persons as the Board approves.

- B. *Council appoints a working party of not more than five persons to draft an outline of the provisions necessary to achieve the above objectives and proposals for any transitional or other measures required for their implementation.*
- C. *The working party should submit its report to the next meeting of the Council."*

Subsequent to the March meeting of the Law Council, the Queensland Law Society gave notice that it has suspended its notice of withdrawal from the Law Council pending the report of the working party established in accordance with the above mentioned motion.

I turn again to the question of court dress and report that the response is still rather disappointing.

Perhaps, as has been brought to my notice, it has been due to the option of status quo not being included in the options. I apologise for this oversight but note that this did not stop the one advocate of this option who has indicated support for no change.

In a last attempt to get sufficient responses to form a view, this issue of "Balance" will include a response form which I request those who have not

responded, to complete (anonymously if you wish) and return to the Society by Court Box, post or fax.

Law Week will soon be upon us and I urge all practitioners to participate in as many of the activities as possible. Law Week is a great public relations opportunity and also gives practitioners a chance to meet members of the profession who they otherwise only know as a person on the other end of the telephone.

The Secretariat puts a lot of effort into arranging Law Week on your behalf and I ask that you give them your support and co-operation.

For those of you who have not attended a Law Week lunch, this year's is one you should not miss, so get in early if want a seat. I know that regular attendees will be booking early as the last two lunches have been booked out.

The Secretariat has arranged something really special this year. The guest speaker is Mr Richard Ackland well known for his articles on the legal profession in the "Australian Financial Review" and his association with the publication "Justinian".

The venue is the parliament House dining room with catering being undertaken by Charles and Colette of C and C Catering.

Fine wines will be supplied by a long time supporter of the Law Society, Jeany's.

I also wish to record my thanks to other supporters of the Society and Law Week, Qantas, Sedgwick, Red Rooster and Tandys.