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Editor's note

Geoff Coates, Ballarat



Geoff Coates

The two most recently formed special interest groups, employment and equal opportunity law and commercial litigation, generate the themes for this and the next issues of Plaintiff.

APLA is seen to be an organisation of injury lawyers, yet the philosophy that gave birth to APLA is shared with lawyers working in other areas of individual rights/industrial relations, equal opportunity, native title, trade practices and environmental law.

Some of the major Plaintiff firms have increasingly broadened their practices to include actions outside injury law. Slater & Gordon took action against BHP in respect of environmental damage caused by the Oktedi Mine in New Guinea and recently Maurice Blackburn Cashman took actions against GIO regarding information provided to that company's shareholders.

Featured in this issue are articles dealing with industrial and employment law issues. These topics will also be covered by speakers at this year's National Conference in Sydney.

It has become a tradition for this October conference issue of the Magazine to feature reports from each of the Branch Presidents. Reading the reports reinforces how much APLA has grown and how its influence is strengthening.

Each member needs to be an active recruiting officer for APLA so that we can expand and broaden our membership. The larger our numbers the stronger will be our voice.

As usual I end with a plea for articles, book reviews and case notes. Letters are also welcome too, particularly feedback on the style and content of the magazine both positive and negative. ■

Employment and discrimination special interest group

John Kotsifas, Melbourne

Interested members of APLA are reminded that the Employment and Discrimination Special Interest Group will be meeting on the morning of Friday 22nd October 1999 to discuss relevant issues and particularly the establishment of State SIGs. All APLA members who practice in the area of employment and discrimination law or who have an interest in this area are encouraged to attend the meeting. The group has a desperate need for more members who can coordinate the establishment of State SIGs and who can assist in establishing a forum by which relevant issues can be discussed whilst also providing the opportunity to interact, network and share information with members throughout Australia.

Interested members are encouraged to forward to me any matters which they wish to have raised at the SIG meeting. Amongst other matters, it is proposed to explore the various legal and public interest issues arising from the proposed *Federal Workplace Relations Bill*. I can be contacted by **phone** (03) 9349 4822, by **fax** (03) 9349 4383 or by **email** to jkotsifas@rct-law.com.au