

The University of Tasmania Law Library

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The University of Tasmania Law Library services the teaching and research needs of the School of Law, which has approximately fourteen full-time staff, sixteen part-time staff, and a number of postgraduate and senior students who tutor overseas students. Student numbers have increased dramatically in the 1990s and the current enrolment in law is over 900, including those enrolled in Introduction to Law and the Legal Practice Course. In addition to students enrolled in the Law School, the Law Library meets the legal information needs of other disciplines such as government, history, sociology, environmental science, economics, accounting, and management, and is a repository of legal information for the university.

Although law was first taught at the University of Tasmania in 1893, the Law Library collection remained weak in most areas until the 1960s. Then a number of reports, most notably by Igor Kavass in 1961, prompted an enthusiastic band of dedicated staff to work to identify and fill the gaps in the collection.

This was spurred on in 1973 when a new Law Branch Library provided space for future development, but the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) report of 1986-87 found major deficiencies. The Law Library was further extended in 1990 to accommodate a large influx of students and with the aim of building a collection to meet the minimum CTEC standard of 100 000 volumes.

While seating is adequate, the collection is still well short of the CTEC standard at about 67 000 volumes, but is still the largest legal collection in Tasmania. Financial support from the Law

School has been crucial to the collection's growth.

The Moys classification system is used to catalogue the library collection. Growing strengths are in areas of criminal law and criminology, international law (including Antarctica), environmental law, and more recently, health law. An attempt has been made to collect the core materials needed for teaching and research in the Law School. There are solid holdings of law reports and journals for common law jurisdictions. The strength of the journal collection stems from the existence of two journals produced by the Law School, the *University of Tasmania Law Review* and the *Journal of Law and Information Science*, both of which are exchanged for journals around the world.

Except for a small rare-book collection and selected vulnerable titles, all material is on open access. In addition to strictly legal material, in the 1990s the Law Library took over the university's Australian official publications collection and microform collection.

With the help of university strategic grants, the Law Library has gained access to electronic information. CD-ROMs containing full-text cases and statutes, LEXIS and Butterworths On-



Staff at the University of Tasmania Law Library: (back) Helen Stafford, Stefan Petrow (front) Chris Hurburgh, Carolyn Jarvis and Moira Mahony

line, and index databases as well as the multifarious legal information on the internet can be accessed from the library's eight computer terminals. Students are trained to use these databases in groups and individually.

More information about the Law Library's electronic products, library guides (especially the Guide to Rare Books), and services can be found at <http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/library/law/law.html>.

The Law Library is situated in the Law School building at the lower end of the University's Sandy Bay campus. The staff of Stefan Petrow, Helen Stafford, Christine Hurburgh, Carolyn Jarvis, and Moira Mahoney invite interested conference delegates to visit the library during their stay. ■

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