



A movement to simplify legal language

*Patron: Lord Justice Staughton*

## Newsletter

No 35: June 1996

### The journal

For some time we have been unable to cope with the burdens of work and expense needed to bring out four issues of the journal each year. This leaves members not knowing when to expect their copy and it delays publication of news.

To solve the problem, the committee proposes to bring out a full "journal" issue each January and July, and a single-sheet newsletter each April and October. The newsletters will be used for urgent notices and to keep members informed of current events. This system will also meet recent suggestions that the journal should be shorter but more frequent.

The newsletters and the July journal will be edited by Mark Adler; the January journal will be produced by guest editors. The first July journal may be a little late by the time it is printed and distributed, and will not be as long as some recent issues, but we hope that the new system will be running smoothly in time for the January issue. However, members are asked to bear with the volunteer editors, as the work is very time-consuming and invariably takes longer than we would like.

### A serious problem of funds

The main purpose of this first newsletter, produced just a month before the July journal, is to collect arrears of subscriptions due in September 1995. Without them, for the first time in our history, we may not be able to print and distribute the journal.

Funds were down to about £1,500 before paying for this newsletter, with some 120 members behind.

We will enclose a standing-order form if we have no record of your 1995 subscription, and would be grateful if you would return it completed, or send a cheque (preferably including this year's subscription for convenience) if you want to continue membership. If you do not want to continue, please tell us.

The problem has been exacerbated by a bank error: they did not identify the source of all the standing orders. Nick O'Brien has traced many but still not all of the anonymous payments. If your standing order should have been paid but he is not sure that it has been, this paragraph will be highlighted by a line down the left border. In that case, would you please check your bank statements for last August and September and give us details of any payment.

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### CLARITY Awards 1996 and Annual supper and meeting

The CLARITY Awards ceremony will be included this year as part of the annual supper and meeting evening,

to be held on Friday. **Date from Alexandra. Has she asked the judges? Overseas entries? Entries good and bad? To go to AM? Timetable? Categories? Anyone to enter or permission from copyright holder?**

As before, the awards will be sponsored by City solicitors

D.J. Freeman & Co, whose proposal they were. The first awards, last year, were fairly low key as we felt our way. Now that they have been established we intend to use them to publicise the plain legal language movement.

#### Timetable

We will start to meet in the

bar at the Law Society's Hall at 6pm, moving to a private room at 6.30. The annual meeting and elections will last about half an hour. The awards ceremony will follow, and will include a guest speaker. After the ceremony we will move to the nearby **Name of restaurant** for an informal supper (which normally costs about £20 a head). All members are invited, and we hope that even those who do not take an active part will accept our welcome to a pleasant social evening.

## **CLARITY's drafting seminars**

In an effort to revive the once successful but recession-hit CLARITY drafting seminars we are reducing the price. Half day seminars will now cost £450 + VAT (although, as before, the speaker will be entitled to negotiate an extra charge for long-distance travel). A full day is available for an extra £200.

## **Committee changes**

We are sorry to record that Alison Plouviez and Patricia Hassett have stood down from the committee, under pressure of other work. In

their place, and to strengthen the committee, we welcome John Pare, who joined at the annual meeting, and Richard Oerton and Simon Adamyk, who have since been co-opted.

Appreciations of the outgoing members and background sketches of the incoming ones will appear in journal 36.

Justin Nelson has also been under pressure from his rapidly expanding one-man practice, and Mark Adler is helping out as deputy chairman.

## **Conferences**

**Skills development for tomorrow's lawyers: needs and strategies.**

**College of Law, Sydney Univ  
4th - 8th September**

Organised by the Australasian Professional Legal Education Council

Fee: Aus\$ 795

For information contact:

The Organising Committee  
APLEC Conference  
Fax: 61 2 436 1265

**Learning from the disciplines: a conference for teachers and administrators of legal writing programs**

**Seattle University  
18th - 20th July**

Organised by the Legal Writing Institute

Fee: \$350

For information contact:

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Tacoma, Washington  
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## **Law & Society**

**University of Strathclyde,  
Glasgow  
10th - 13th July**

Organised by the Law and Society Association and the International Sociological Association's Research Committee on the Sociology of Law

Includes seminar on *Plain language around the World:* Peter Tiersma, chair

\*Barbro Ehrenberg-Sundin (Ministry of Justice, Stockholm): *Plain Swedish statute drafting*

\*Dennis Kurzon (Haifa University): *The language of legal documents and multi-ethnicity: the case of legal Hebrew*

Mami Hiraike Okawara (Tagasake City University of Economics): *Comprehensibility of Japanese legal language*

\*Mark Adler (Adler & Adler, England) standing in for \*Joe Kimble (Thomas Coolley Law School, Michigan): *Attitudes to plain legal English*

\* CLARITY member

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