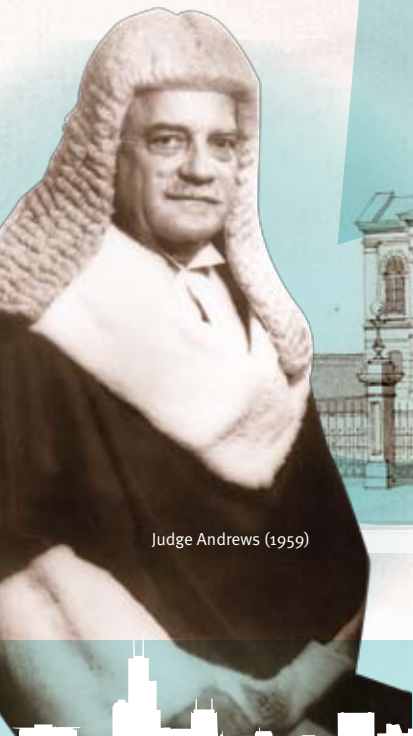




QUEENSLAND
COURTS

District Court of Queensland

Annual Report 2008–2009



Judge Andrews (1959)



The Law Courts, erected in 1880 for the Supreme and District Courts.



Front cover: Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the District Court of Queensland in 2009.

Judge Andrews (pictured), with Judge Cormack and Judge Grant-Taylor, were the first judges appointed to the reconstituted court. Judge Andrews held the first sittings in the Law Courts, Brisbane on 13 April 1959.

Eighty-six judges have been appointed to the District Court since 1959. The court deals with serious criminal offences. It also hears civil and planning cases and all appeals from the Magistrates Courts.

“There must be... a District Court of Queensland.”
Constitution of Queensland 2001, s. 57.



**DISTRICT COURT OF
QUEENSLAND**

CHAMBERS OF THE CHIEF JUDGE

30 October 2009

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The Honourable Cameron Dick MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations
State Law Building
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Attorney

Pursuant to s.130A(1) of the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967*, I enclose my report on the operation of the District Court of Queensland for the year ended 30 June 2009.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P.M. Wolfe'.

Chief Judge PM Wolfe

Table of contents

Chief Judge’s overview	1
Introduction	2
The judges	2
Performance	3
Disposition of caseload	3
Disposition of criminal caseload	3
Disposition of civil and planning caseload	5
Courthouses	9
Chief Judge’s calendar	9
Public outreach	14
Continuing professional development	14
International aspects	15
Judicial appointments	16
Judicial retirements	16
Personal	16
Conclusion	16
Profile of the District Court	17
Judges of the District Court	17
Regional, planning and childrens judges	19
The court’s administrative staff	20
The courts	22
The work of the District Court	22
Criminal jurisdiction	23
Civil jurisdiction	25
Applications Court	26
Appellate jurisdiction	26
The Planning and Environment Court	27
The Health Practitioners Tribunal	29
Childrens Court	31

Regional centres	32
Cairns	32
Rockhampton	33
Townsville	33
Maroochydore	34
Southport	35
Ipswich	36
Beenleigh	36
Circuit centres	37
Committees	38
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee	39
Civil Procedure Committee	40
Courts Planning Committee	41
Professional Development Committee	41
Registry services and administrative support	43
Office of Director of Courts	43
State Reporting Bureau	46
Courts Information Services Branch	47
Related organisations	49
The court library	49
Appendices	53
Appendix 1: Practice Directions	53
Appendix 2: District Court Associates	54

Chief Judge's overview



Chief Judge Patricia Wolfe

Introduction

This is the court's 13th annual report, dealing with the organisation, operation and performance of the District Court of Queensland in 2008–09.

The court's performance is a credit to the judges especially the Judge Administrator, Judge Kerry O'Brien, and the convenors and members of the judges' committees who contributed much to the good workings of the court and provided support to me in the administration of the court. The judges' committee system is essential to the advancement of the court through effective collegiate effort. A considerable administrative load was borne by the Judge Administrator and the 13 regional judges who efficiently coordinated the lists arising in the seven regional centres while providing valuable insight into conditions particular to their regions and the outlying districts which they serve.

This court is one of the largest, and busiest, of the higher courts in Australia and, according to the Commonwealth's *Report on Government Services*, one of the most efficient. Recognising its important and unique jurisdiction, it is the only District Court in Australia that is acknowledged and preserved by its state's constitution.

The judges

On 15 September 2008 Judge O'Brien was sworn in as the first Judge Administrator of the District Court of Queensland, an office for which provision was made by amendments to the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967*. During part of the 2008–09 year the court lacked its full complement of 38 judges, comprising the equivalent of 37 judges and for three months, two acting judges. The court achieved its full complement for a time with Judge Marshall Irwin assuming his

judicial workload in January 2009, after his retirement as Chief Magistrate. However the 2009 calendar year will see six judges having retired from the court or having ceased sitting in preparation for retirement. The retirements will have a significant impact on the court.

The efficient allocation of judicial resources through circuit allocations improves the overall functioning of the court and, by reference to the efficiency and quality of its output, produces more consistent decision-making. With the problems arising from a shortage of judicial resources due to illness and retirements of experienced judges, Judge O'Brien's administrative workload was intense at times, especially with the grim financial outlook placing constraints on the court's resources. This called for strenuous supervision of the lists and a concomitant reduction in about 40 weeks circuit in the 2009 calendar year compared with the number of circuits in 2008.

This reduction did have an adverse impact on some lists. To no little extent the peace and order on which Queensland's commercial and social interaction relies, are maintained because this court operates, and is seen to operate, throughout the state. Depending upon the lists, each year the judges sit at about 40 centres throughout Queensland—in Brisbane, the seven regional centres, 24 other centres where jury trials can be held, and the 15 remote or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including those in the Gulf, Cape and Torres Strait communities.

Secondly, courts are expected to manage their lists actively and with demands for judicial involvement in case management, most of the judges had some case management responsibilities, including those arising with circuit workloads. Undoubtedly, advances in technology have proved essential for the proper conduct of cases and the administration of the lists.

The court's invaluable technological support has proved far-sighted.

Judges of the District Court also constitute ancillary courts and a tribunal, and the court's resources are deployed to a considerable extent in discharging their functions. The judges with special responsibility for these entities during the year under review have prepared reports on their operations: Judge Rackemann on the Planning and Environment Court, this court's largest adjunct; and Judge Dick SC, the President of the Childrens Court of Queensland on that court.

Performance

The court's performance and workload are reflected in the statistics set out in this report. The court's statistical information accords with the method of reporting adopted by the Commonwealth Productivity Commission's *Annual Report on Government Services* (RoGS).

Performance is indicated by the clearance rate and the backlog indicator. The clearance rate indicates whether a court is keeping up with its workload by comparing the number of lodgments with the number of finalisations. A figure above 100 per cent indicates that the court is reducing its pending workload. The backlog indicator compares the age of pending caseload against nominated time standards. The court's attendance index is an output (efficiency) indicator and counts the number of times each case comes before the court prior to its being finalised. Fewer attendances suggest a more efficient process.

The 2009 RoGS shows that in 2007–08 the District Court of Queensland with its effective case management was one of the most effective and efficient, albeit most under-resourced, District or County Court in Australia. The Queensland District Court achieved best practice nationally under the attendance index indicator, with

an improvement of 0.1 in criminal attendances from 2006–07 and attendances for civil matters had not increased. The Queensland District Court was ranked second behind New South Wales in terms of the total number of criminal and civil matters finalised.

Further, in 2007–08 the number of criminal lodgments in this court was the second highest nationally, and the number of civil lodgments the third highest, with total recurrent expenditure less income for the court being 13.9 per cent of that for all District and County Courts.

Disposition of caseload

The court's performance and workload in 2008–09 has been creditable, but the statistics demonstrate that the court was under some stress with a reduction in circuits and an insufficiency of judicial resources.

The court employs judicial case management as does its adjuncts, the Planning and Environment Court, the Childrens Court of Queensland and the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

Disposition of criminal caseload

In the criminal jurisdiction, the workload is measured by the number of defendants¹.

Brisbane carries about 40 per cent of the criminal workload, the seven regional centres about 44 per cent, and the remaining 16 per cent is dispersed among the 23 jury circuit centres. The workload of a remote community is included in that of the regional or circuit centre closest to it. Most of the longer cases are heard in Brisbane, where there was a 17.1 per cent increase

¹ A "defendant" for these purposes is defined as "one defendant, with one or more charges and with all charges having the same date of registration": Review of Government Service Provision: 2007 Data Collection Manual – Court Administration Working Group, 08/08/07 p 7-3. Defendants with secondary charges such as breaches of court orders are excluded.

in adjudication by trial and verdict, whereas statewide, there was a slight decrease of 0.4 per cent. The judges of the Criminal Listing Taskforce, who manage the Brisbane criminal caseload, continuously refine and manipulate the lists so that parties, and witnesses, need not wait longer than absolutely necessary for a matter to be heard.

Criminal lodgments decreased in 2008–09, from 6606 last year to 6286 this year (a decrease of 320 or 4.8 per cent). In Brisbane the decrease was 5.8 per cent with 2428 new criminal matters, down 150 from 2578 last year. Of the regional centres, Southport showed the largest decrease, down by 18.7 per cent to 452 new lodgments.

Finalisations decreased by 7.4 per cent from 6836 matters last year to 6328 in 2008–09. In Brisbane where most of the long trials were set down, 2480 matters were finalised, compared with 2578 last year, a decrease of 3.8 per cent.

The court's clearance rate was 100.7 per cent, slightly down on the 2007–08 clearance rate of 103.5 per cent. In Brisbane the clearance rate was 102.1 per cent also down from 104 per cent last year. The clearance rates in some of the regional centres were also impressive—especially Southport with a 3.3 per cent increase in finalisations translating to a 104.6 per cent clearance rate, up from 82.4 per cent last year. Rockhampton achieved a 103.2 per cent clearance rate (107.2 per cent last year), Beenleigh 100.8 per cent (112.3 per cent), and Maroochydore 99.6 per cent (100.6 per cent), Ipswich 98.4 per cent (99.5 per cent), Townsville 95.3 per cent (99.5 per cent) and Cairns 94.3 per cent (112.4 per cent).

The backlog has decreased by 0.9 per cent—at 30 June 2009 there were 2104 active pending matters, compared with 2123 in 2007–08. In Brisbane the backlog decreased by 7.6 per cent, with 858 pending matters at the end of 2008–09 compared with 929 at 30 June 2008.

The percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has decreased slightly from 11.2 per cent in 2007–08 to 11.0 per cent. The percentage of active cases older than 24 months has increased to 8.8 per cent from 8.4 per cent in 2007–08.

Brisbane achieved a significant reduction in the number of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months, down to 7.8 per cent from 10.6 per cent in 2007–08. The number of active cases older than 24 months also decreased from 10.0 per cent in 2007–08 to 7.9 per cent in 2008–09, despite the increasing complexity of some matters and the sheer volume of the criminal workload, combined with the judicial resources available to deal with that workload. Other obstacles to the timely progression of criminal matters include defendants awaiting psychiatric reports in order to consider an application to the Mental Health Court, those awaiting reports for sentencing; and sentences deferred, awaiting the committal of other charges to which a defendant also intends to plead guilty.

These statistics do not include pre-trial hearings or the Childrens Court workload. They do not include those defendants who were dealt with for breaches of court orders, such as suspended sentences.

More than 80 per cent of all criminal trials and sentences involving indictable offences are conducted in the District Court. Those matters involving child witnesses, as are most matters involving offences of a sexual nature, are even more complex and time consuming.

Affected child witnesses

Many children are required to give evidence in matters involving charges of sexual or violence offences. Their evidence must be pre-recorded from a remote witness room soon after the indictment is presented, and care taken to ensure that all pre-trial hearings are completed before that occurs. In the major cities, the pre-recording usually took place within eight weeks of the presentation of the indictment. The child's evidence is then played to the jury at the trial which usually takes place some months after the pre-recording.

To preserve their integrity and security, all videotapes, no matter where recorded in Queensland, are kept by the principal registry in Brisbane. The court's technological and IT administrators responded promptly in replacing or mending defective equipment. Unfortunately such dedication and expertise is not mirrored in many of the tapes of a child's earlier police interview, which are prepared outside the court, but are played to juries pursuant to s. 93A of the *Evidence Act 1977*.

Judge-alone criminal trials, majority verdicts and jury separation

Noteworthy amendments that were made during 2008–09 to the *Criminal Code* and to the *Jury Act 1995* have improved the practice of and administration of the criminal law. The amendments allow for trial by judge alone in most cases if this would be in the interests of justice.

The no-jury order cannot be made with respect to trials before a Childrens Court judge, nor to trials on indictment for offences against Commonwealth law, nor to trials where there are two or more defendants and one does not agree to a no-jury order.

In a trial of more than one charge, the no-jury order may only be made in respect of all charges. Amendments to the *Jury Act 1995* allow for majority verdicts in criminal trials, except in the case of Commonwealth trials, trials with only 10 jurors, and trials for grave offences such as murder. A majority verdict, with a jury of 12, is one on which 11 jurors agree, and with a jury of 11, one on which 10 jurors agree. However the jury must have been out for more than eight hours (not counting meal breaks, accommodation time or when the jurors are separated) before the judge may request a majority verdict.

Further, a judge now may allow a jury to separate, or an individual juror to separate from the jury, after the jury has retired to consider its verdict.

Disposition of civil and planning caseload

Civil

Brisbane carries about 56 per cent of the civil workload, the seven regional centres about 36 per cent, and about nine per cent is dispersed among the circuit centres.

The court's civil lodgments increased by 1.9 per cent in 2008–09, from 4849 last year to 4939 this year, (an increase of 90 new matters). In Brisbane the increase was 2.3 per cent with 2802 new civil matters, up from 2739 last year.

Finalisations increased with 5156 matters finalised this year, from 4715 last year (an increase of 441 or 9.4 per cent). In Brisbane where most of the long or more complex trials are held, 2825 matters were finalised in 2008–09, compared with 2715 last year, an increase of 110 or 4.1 per cent).

The clearance rate of 104.4 per cent was well up from the 2007–08 clearance rate of 97.2 per cent. In Brisbane the clearance rate was 100.8 per cent up from 99.1 per cent last year.

The backlog has further decreased by 218 cases or 5.0 per cent—at 30 June 2009 there were 4160 active pending matters compared with 4378 in 2007–08. In Brisbane the number of active cases also decreased. As at 30 June 2009 there were 2279 active cases, down from 2298 last year.

The number of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has reduced to 16.2 per cent this year (17.5 per cent last year) and the number of active cases older than 24 months has reduced from 4.9 per cent last year to 4.4 per cent. In Brisbane, the number of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has decreased by 0.6 per cent and the number of active cases older than 24 months has decreased by 0.3 per cent.

Some slight reduction in the lists was effected by Commonwealth legislation and pursuant to state referrals of power so that most de facto property disputes determined pursuant to Part 19 of the *Property Law Act 1974* are now within the exclusive jurisdiction of the Family Court of Australia which now deals with most of the claims that would have arisen under Part 19.

These statistics do not include appeals to the District Court or the matters dealt with by the judges sitting in the Planning and Environment Court or the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

Appeals

There was a considerable increase in the number of appeals lodged in the court during 2008–09. The District Court hears all appeals from the Magistrates Courts, the Commercial and Consumer Tribunal and other tribunals and statutory bodies.

Criminal appeals

There was a 40.5 per cent increase in the number of criminal appeals lodged in the court in 2008–09, with 475 new appeals this year (338 last year). Finalisations increased by 43 per cent, with 452 cases finalised, compared with 316 last year, achieving a clearance rate of 95.2 per cent. The percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has decreased most creditably from 30.9 per cent in 2007–08 to 4.3 per cent this year, and the percentage of active cases older than 24 months has also decreased from 3.2 per cent in 2007–08 down to 0.3 per cent.

In Brisbane there was a 10.8 per cent increase of in the number of criminal appeals lodged in the court in 2008–09, with 154 new appeals this year (139 last year). Finalisations increased by 43.5 per cent with 178 cases finalised, compared with 124 last year, achieving a clearance rate of 115.6 per cent (89.2 per cent last year). In Brisbane, the percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has decreased markedly, from 31.4 per cent in 2007–08 to 3.9 per cent this year.

Civil appeals

There was a 13.4 per cent increase in the number of civil appeals lodged in the court in 2008–09, with 110 new appeals this year (97 last year). Finalisations increased by 92.1 per cent, with 146 cases finalised, compared with 76 last year, achieving a clearance rate of 132.7 per cent (78.4 per cent last year). The percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has consequently decreased from 25.5 per cent in 2007–08 to 8.6 per cent this year, and the percentage of active cases older than 24 months has also decreased from 3.6 per cent in 2007–08 down to 1.4 per cent.

In Brisbane there was a 70.7 per cent increase in the number of civil appeals lodged in the court in 2008–09, with 70 new appeals this year (41 last year). Finalisations increased by 83.3 per cent, with 77 cases finalised, compared with 42 last year, achieving a clearance rate of 110 per cent (102.4 per cent last year). In Brisbane, the percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has decreased markedly, from 29.3 per cent in 2007–08 to 7.9 per cent this year.

Planning and Environment Court

The Planning and Environment Court is structured as a de facto division of the District Court. Overall, there was a 2.8 per cent decrease in the number of new cases lodged with 760 new cases this year (compared with 782 last year). There was an overall decrease of 12.3 per cent in the number of cases finalised with 677 this year (compared to 772 last year), with a clearance rate of 89.1 per cent (compared with 98.7 per cent last year).

Consequently the percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has increased from 20.7 per cent in 2007–08 to 25.9 per cent this year, and the percentage of active cases older than 24 months

has also increased from 4.0 per cent in 2007–08 to 7.2 per cent this year.

However in Brisbane, which disposes of about 80 per cent of the planning workload, there was a 0.4 per cent increase in the number of new cases lodged with 559 new cases this year (compared with 557 last year). Finalisations increased in Brisbane by 2.7 per cent, with 531 cases finalised, compared with 517 last year, achieving a clearance rate of 95 per cent (92.8 per cent last year). The percentage of active cases older than 12 months and less than 24 months has increased from 20.9 per cent in 2007–08 to 25.7 per cent this year, and the percentage of active cases older than 24 months has also increased from 4.5 per cent in 2007–08 to 7.0 per cent this year.

Outside Brisbane:

- in Maroochydore, historically one of the busiest centres, there were 64 new matters (an increase of 1.6 per cent), with 37 cases finalised, leaving 79 active files
- in Cairns, there was a 34.7 per cent decrease in new matters with 32 new matters (49 last year), with 44 finalised (60 last year), and 37 active matters (55 last year)
- in Southport (36 new matters, 27 finalised, 45 active)
- in Townsville (26 new matters, 16 finalised, 28 active).

Judge Rackemann, who drafted the 2008 Planning and Environment Court Rules, presided over the Planning and Environment Court's first eTrial held in the Banco Court over three weeks resulting in considerable reduction in preparation and trial costs for the parties as well as support for the self-represented litigants who appeared in the matter.

The appointment of the first Planning and Environment Court (ADR) Registrar, Ms Peta Stilgoe, in March 2007 allowed the court to offer mediation, at no cost to the parties, as well as its judicial case management. Her appointment resulted in the faster resolution of disputes at lower cost to the community and litigants. In the year 2008–09, the ADR Registrar conducted 177 mediations in 227 sessions and of these 77 settled in full (43.5 per cent) and a further 25 settled in part. The court also provides, through the ADR Registrar, assistance to self-represented litigants and the supervision of court-ordered meetings of experts, thus promoting the resolution of technical issues prior to the hearing.

Childrens Court of Queensland

Judge Dick SC is the President of the Childrens Court of Queensland. A separate annual report of the Childrens Court of Queensland is prepared under the *Childrens Court Act* and further details of the Childrens Court can be found in that report. The Childrens Court of Queensland is a specialist jurisdiction established under the *Children's Court Act 1992*. There are 23 judges of the court who also hold commissions under the Act.

Health Practitioners Tribunal

All District Court judges are members of this tribunal. It hears appeals from health professional disciplinary tribunals. Judge O'Brien had day to day management of the lists. During the year under review, 31 matters were disposed of (30 in 2007–08). The number of new matters lodged fell 15.4 per cent from 26 in 2007–08 down to 22.

Regional centres

The lists in the seven regional centres at Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Maroochydore, Southport, Ipswich and Beenleigh have been well maintained by the 13 regional judges based in those centres.

Circuits

Through its circuit load, the court is accessible to those in remote, rural and regional Queensland so that matters can be heard and decided in a timely fashion no matter in what part of the state. The number of circuits was slightly decreased for the 2009 calendar year to accommodate the needs of the regional, rural and outback centres.

Indigenous and remote circuits

The judges, as in previous years, visited the remote Aboriginal and Islander communities on circuit. Judges sat in the Gulf (Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton), the Cape (Weipa/Napranum, Kowanyama, Aurukun, Pormpuraaw and Lockhart River), Thursday Island, Bamaga, Yarrabah, Cooktown, Woorabinda and in Murgon to deal with Cherbourg. From December 2008 circuits to Palm Island resumed.

Courthouses

The Supreme and District courthouse, Brisbane

With the Queensland Government's allocation of funds for the construction of the \$600 million metropolitan Supreme and District Court building, Queensland will lead the common law world in providing appropriate support and accommodation for those involved in the more serious aspects of the justice system, whether as witnesses, supporters, parties or members of the public. Construction has proceeded apace since 6 October 2008 when the Chief Justice, the Chief Judge and the members of the judges' joint committee, Justice Margaret Wilson, Justice P McMurdo, Judge Alan Wilson SC and Judge Griffin SC, attended the Premier's sod-turning ceremony in the presence of the Attorney-General and the Minister for Public Works. Excavation and the construction of retaining walls proceeded well and by late February with the arrival of cranes, the concrete pours began.

The indicative costings show that construction is proceeding within budget. The 19 storey courthouse will have 47 courtrooms. The courthouse forecourt, a significant grassed plaza, will give the city a major new public civic square. The Attorney-General and the Director-General are to be commended for their assistance in actively progressing this important Queensland landmark.

Ipswich courthouse

The new \$92 million Ipswich courthouse is expected to be open for operation by early 2010 for the three judges who will have Ipswich chambers. The courthouse will have four courtrooms for the District Court to cater for one of the largest regional workloads in the state.

It will be the first Queensland courthouse to provide separate, secure passages for jurors within the building.

Dual registries

The restructure of the Magistrates Courts service recognising the authority of the Director of Courts, Supreme and District Courts in matters pertaining to this court has greatly alleviated the more pressing concerns that arise in dual registries. The registry is integral to the court's core function. In Southport, Maroochydore, Ipswich and Beenleigh resources and staff are shared between the District Court and Magistrates Court registries, with both courts staffed by officers seconded from the Magistrates Courts service, where problems may arise when a registrar sits regularly as an acting magistrate. The Magistrates Court registrar also performs the role of the District Court registrar, Childrens Court registrar and Planning and Environment Court registrar in those places. The Magistrates Courts area managers now report to the Director of Courts, Supreme and District Courts, in matters that pertain to the District Court.

Chief Judge's calendar

This year, as in previous years, I sat in the various jurisdictions of the court, both in and out of Brisbane: the criminal court (18 weeks), civil, applications, planning and Health Practitioners Tribunal (six weeks) as well as circuits to Cairns, Maroochydore, Townsville, Palm Island, Toowoomba and Southport.

During the year I met with the leaders and representatives of the many organisations principally involved in the justice system, such as the Queensland Bar Association, the Queensland Law Society, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Queensland, law school academics, Court Network for Humanity, the

Public Defender and Protect All Children Today (PACT) and representatives of the College of Law Practical Legal Training (PLT) program to advance the implementation of a specific associates' course, designed to enable associates to undertake the PLT for admission to the legal profession.

Aside from monthly judges' meetings, meetings of the judges' committees and the Supreme Court Library Committee, conferences and public events, I met regularly with the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Director-General of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and senior officers of the department, directors-general and officers of other departments, the Director of Courts and her deputies, the Sheriff, listings managers and Higher Courts IT staff. There were also various conferences, seminars and forums that I attended, in Queensland and elsewhere.

I attended meetings of the Council of Chief Judges and many other groups, projects and meetings involved in the organisation of the District Court and its registries, the judges' Brisbane Supreme and District Courts metropolitan courthouse committee as well as the monthly judges' meetings and meetings of the judges' committees and the Supreme Court Library committee.

Practice Directions

During the year, three District Court Practice Directions were issued:

- *Filing of Written Submissions* (02/2008)
- *Costs Assessment: Interim Arrangements* (04/2008)
- *Recording Devices in Courtrooms* (01/2009).

Two Planning and Environment Court Practice Directions were issued:

- *Filing written submissions* (01/2008)
- *Case management procedures* (02/2008).

The Focus Group

The Focus Group, chaired by the Senior Judge Administrator and comprising the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal, the Chief Judge, the Chief Magistrate, the Deputy Director-General, met with the Director of Courts, Supreme and District Courts and other senior officers throughout the year. Its purpose is to keep the courts informed about actual and proposed departmental initiatives for the three state courts, to provide an opportunity for the courts to participate in the allocation of resources, and to ensure the regular monitoring of the courts' registry and administrative operations.

Rules Committee

The Rules Committee, chaired by Mr Justice Muir, includes, from the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice and Justice Wilson, and from the District Court, Judge Robin QC and Judge McGill SC. The committee met at least weekly out of ordinary court hours with the Director of Courts also attending.

Benchbook

The Supreme and District Courts Benchbook provides model directions for the judges conducting criminal trials, specifically designed to apply the *Criminal Code*, which in significant respects differs from the common law applied in some other states. It is a work

of collegiate endeavour. During the year under report, Judge Shanahan, Judge Dick SC and Judge Rafter SC were its District Court members. The committee works over extended periods updating and adding to this essential and important work. This year the committee extensively revised the Benchbook in view of the significant amendments to the *Criminal Code* and the *Jury Act 1995* that now allow for no-jury trials, majority verdicts and juries to separate during deliberation. The committee also revised the information distributed to jurors before and during trials.

Moynihan review

During the year the Hon. Martin Moynihan AO consulted with the judges in undertaking his review of the civil and criminal justice system. The government has supported some of his recommendations, and extensive increases to the jurisdiction of this court are expected to take effect after 1 July 2010.

Other new legislation

Acting judges and other amendments to the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967*

On 17 November 2008 the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967* was amended by the *Justice and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2008* (2008 Act No. 59) to allow for the appointment of current or former judges of a Supreme Court, District Court or County Court of another state or of the Federal Court of Australia. The amendments also provide for the appointment, by the Governor in Council, of a principal registrar and for the appointment of the court's registrars, deputy registrars and other officers, by the chief executive. The Act also amended the *Criminal Code*, to allow the court to make an order for the issue of a warrant to bring a witness before the court.

QCAT

During the year the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT) review panel, comprising Hon. Glenn Williams AO QC, Peter Applegarth SC and Julie-Anne Schafer, consulted the Chief Judge, the Judge Administrator, Judge Shanahan and other judges about QCAT's establishment and jurisdiction. The review culminated in the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 2009* and the *Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (Jurisdiction Provisions) Act 2009*. The Health Practitioners Tribunal is to go within the auspices of QCAT, whose Deputy-President, Judge Fleur Kingham was appointed to that office in July 2009.

50th anniversary of the restoration of the District Court

This year as part of its celebrations to mark the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the District Court of Queensland, the court celebrated 150 years of good government in this state.

The first District Court was established in 1865, and a District Court first sat in 1866 and so it continued until it was abolished in 1922. The court was reconstituted by the *District Courts Act 1958*, now replaced by the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967*.

On 19 March 1959, three barristers Dormer Andrews, Ralph Cormack and William Murray Grant-Taylor were appointed judges of the court as and from 2 April 1959. On 13 April 1959 Judge Andrews—later Chief Justice of Queensland—presided over the first sittings of the reconstituted court in the Law Courts. The historic courthouse was built in 1880 for the Supreme and District Courts and designed by the colonial architect F G D Stanley. It was destroyed by fire in 1968.

On 11 May 2009, 23 of the judges convened for the ceremonial sittings held in the Banco Court to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the court's reconstitution. This ceremony also marked the beginning of Law Week 2009. The presence of the Chief Justice and 15 judges of the Supreme Court was symbolic of the joint endeavour between two great courts whose history has been intertwined since separation. The role of the court is sustained by the public confidence in it and the judges value the expressions of confidence and goodwill earned by its work over the past 50 years.

On 28 May 2009 Judge Pack, Judge Durward SC and I joined the Chief Justice and the Northern Judge, Justice Cullinane AO, at a ceremony at the refurbished Bowen courthouse as part of the celebrations for 150 years of good government in this state, to acknowledge the judges who had sat in Bowen in the early years. The first Northern District Court Judge, Joseph Long Innes, appointed to Gladstone in 1865, conducted regular circuits to Bowen as did other judges until the abolition of the court in 1922. The first Supreme Court Northern Judge, Edmund Sheppard a former District Court judge, was appointed to Bowen in 1874. Bowen has been a substantial District Court centre since 1959.

On 19 June 2009, also in the Banco Court, Her Excellency the Governor-General, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, launched a history of the District Court of Queensland, *A Court Apart*. The author, historian Dr Denver Beanland, is a former Queensland Attorney-General. This publication owed much to the Supreme Court Librarian, Mr Aladin Rahemtula, whose vision has inspired the library's preservation of historical legal materials.

Also to mark the anniversary, the Supreme Court Library, under the inspired guidance of the Supreme Court Librarian, Mr Aladin Rahmetula and assistance of Ms

Helen Jeffcoat, devised the exhibition that featured all District Court Judges since 1865. It was displayed in the Law Courts complex and is travelling to other courthouses throughout the state.

The registry

The reorganisation of the registry's management structure to streamline the registry's operations has been essential to ensure the efficient operation of the court.

Future Courts

The Future Courts eTrials project and the information management electronic courtroom project improved the framework to exploit technology in court, and has established systems, services and practical tools to assist practitioners to use this new framework.

However, as the court has limited capacity to support eTrials, the court cannot afford to promote the service actively at this stage. The eTrials initiative is being run as a pilot until such time as it demonstrates sufficient benefit to justify the allocation of permanent extra registry staff to support eTrials.

State Reporting Bureau

The State Reporting Bureau's transcript standardisation and management project identified a number of recommendations relating to the streamlining of transcript production during the year under report.

QSI

The Queensland Sentencing Information Service, available to all Queensland judges and magistrates, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal

Aid Queensland, has proved a valuable aid in achieving consistency in sentencing. It is now available, free of charge, to more than 100 other entities, including sole practitioners and law firms. The electronic sentencing database contains legislation, case law, statistical information and other relevant resources for research of sentencing matters.

wi-fi

Unlike other Australian courts, the media and the legal profession has access to the internet, from all courtrooms in the Law Courts Complex, the library as well as in other major courthouses, through the courts' Wi-fi service. It is available free of charge. Consequently practitioners appearing in the courtrooms are in real-time contact with colleagues elsewhere, without any disruption to the proceedings

Access to the court

The accessCourts initiative provides useful assistance to court users and the public generally, and operates through two volunteer services and the registry. The services are:

Court Network for Humanity

The Court Network, a volunteer service, has operated in the Law Court Complex since December 2007, giving support and information to court users attending at the court, whether as litigants or witnesses or their families and supporters. The volunteers support court users in the courtroom during the proceedings, show them around the courthouse, provide court users with a safe place in the courthouse and refer them to those community services or charities that can provide relevant assistance. The volunteers receive extensive training and they do not give legal advice. Since 14

January 2008 the trained volunteers have shepherded more than 14 000 litigants, witnesses and their supporters through the Law Courts complex.

On the 20 November 2008, the 'Blue Jacket' volunteers program was launched. This group of 10 volunteers run an information kiosk for those entering the Law Courts complex helping to direct people where they need to go and otherwise provide assistance and support. So far it has assisted 7797 people.

Queensland Public Interest Law Clearing House (QPILCH)

Since December last year the Queensland Public Law Clearing House (QPILCH) provides the Self-Representation Civil Law Service. The service assists litigants prepare for a civil action in the District Court or the Supreme Court. It is a pro-bono legal organisation completely independent of the courts and government. The service is designed to assist litigants without legal representation take the practical steps necessary to have their case fully heard and determined. The service includes preliminary legal advice from voluntary practitioners as well as the provision of legal assistance in the preparation of documents for a trial.

Self-Represented Litigants Service (Registry)

The registry also has provided practical but non-legal assistance to self-represented litigants in civil matters including the provision of facilities such as computers and private meeting rooms. The service is located on the ground floor of the Law Courts complex and is operated by staff from the court's civil registry users who also provide advice of a non-legal nature. The service is designed to assist and support those litigants appearing in person in civil matters and provides both

private meeting rooms in which to prepare for court as well as computer and printing access.

Public outreach

Judges attended the annual church service to mark the commencement of the 2008 law year at the Albert Street Uniting Church on 7 July 2008.

The judges took part in the Aboriginal flag raising ceremony in the courtyard of the Law Courts complex to celebrate NAIDOC Week, on 7 July 2008. The Aboriginal flag was flown at the Law Courts complex and the Torres Strait Islander flag is now flown at the Brisbane Magistrates Court as a mark of respect to the history of our country.

On 8 October 2008 Judge Julie Dick SC presided in live broadcast over a mock trial held in the Banco Court on 612 ABC Brisbane. There was also a discussion by a panel consisting of the Chief Justice, the Queensland Corrective Services A/Deputy Director-General, Fiona Rafter, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Tony Moynihan, Legal Aid Queensland barrister, Rob East, Bond University Law School head, Professor Geraldine Mackenzie, journalist Mark Oberhardt and presenter Madonna King. The jury was comprised of ABC 612 listeners.

Law Week 11–17 May 2009

The Law Courts hosted a series of free activities to celebrate the week including the ceremonial sittings to mark the 50th anniversary of the reconstitution of the District Court of Queensland. More than 100 people attended the event including judges (past and present), barristers, solicitors and members of the public.

Judge Irwin participated in a hypothetical in the Banco Court on 15 May 2009, *You be the judge 3: Indigenous over-representation in the justice system*. A DVD of the proceedings was made for distribution to secondary schools and universities.

Visitors also learned more about the law, the civil registry and volunteering during Law Week. A number of free workshops were held. Visitors learned about searching files in the civil registry, becoming a court volunteer, representing themselves in the civil jurisdiction and online legal research. The workshops were conducted by staff from the civil registry, Court Network, the Queensland Public Interest Clearing House and the Supreme Court Library.

Continuing professional development

The judges gained professionally through their participation and contribution to legal and professionally orientated conferences, meetings and discussions with other jurisdictions during the year.

The judges' 14th annual conference, at Marcoola on 10–12 August 2008, allowed the rare opportunity for the judges, 13 of whom were based outside Brisbane, to meet as a body for professional discussion.

- Many of the judges presided over moots, and spoke or presented papers at many important professional meetings and conferences, details of which appear in this report.
- Judge Shanahan represented the judges on the Governing Council of the Judicial Conference of Australia.

- Judge Rafter SC assisted the Australian Bar Association Advocacy Training Council.
- Judge Griffin SC and Judge Rafter SC led sessions at the International Crime Cooperation Workshop held for officers from South Pacific nations under the auspices of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department.
- Judge Bradley served as a member of the National Judicial College of Australia's Indigenous Justice Committee.
- Judge Dearden served as a member of the University of Southern Queensland Law School Advisory Committee.
- Judge Wilson SC, representing the judges of the District and County Courts, served as a member of the Council of the National Judicial College of Australia.
- Judge Wilson SC and Judge Griffin SC with Justice Wilson, Justice P McMurdo and me, constituted the Judges' Metropolitan Supreme and District Court Building Committee.
- Judge Rafter SC with Justice A Lyons constituted the Judges' Learning and Development Committee.
- Judge Shanahan and Judge Forde were members of the Statewide Community Justice Reference nominate.
- Judge Shanahan and Justice Wilson constituted the joint courts' committee on interpreters in the courts.
- Queensland Corrections arranged another tour for the judges of prison facilities on 14 August 2008.

International aspects

Judge Rafter SC assisted with the Malaysian Prosecutorial Practice course held in Kuala Lumpur at the Institut Latihan Kehikiman and Perundangan (ILKAP), the teaching centre for government lawyers on 22–24 September 2008. He was involved in the presentation of a component of the post graduate Prosecutions Program for the Master of Laws (Prosecutions), the Graduate Diploma in Law (Prosecutions) and the Graduate Certificate in Law (Prosecutions). Ross Martin SC from the Queensland Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions assisted. The course was conducted by Associate Professor Peter Ridgway, Centre for Transnational Crime Prevention (CTCP), Faculty of Law University of Wollongong.

Judge Shang Xiuyin of a senior juvenile court judge of the Haidian District People's Court, Beijing, observed proceedings and held discussions with the Judge Administrator on 9 October 2008.

At the invitation of the Commonwealth Attorney-General, the Hon. Robert McLelland, Judge Griffin SC led the presenters at the Pacific Judges' workshop on *Proceeds of crime and money laundering* in Brisbane on 31 March – 3 April 2009.

In November 2008 Judge Wilson SC spent a week in Port Moresby, conducting a fairly exhausting four day judgment writing course for senior PNG magistrates. The course was sponsored by AusAid.

During the year under report, the District Court at Brisbane received a number of international visitors, including:

- on 9 October 2008, Judge Shang Xiuyin a senior juvenile court judge of Haidian District People's Court, Beijing
- on 23 and 24 February 2009, Judge Daisaku Kaneko from the 11th Criminal Division of the Tokyo High Court.

Judicial appointments

On 12 September 2008 Brian Gerard Devereaux SC was sworn in as an Acting Judge of the District Court, in which office he acted until to 31 December 2008.



On 15 September 2008 Judge Kerry O'Brien was sworn in as Judge Administrator of the District Court.

*Judge Kerry O'Brien
Judge Administrator,
District Court*

On 15 September 2008 Brendan John Butler AM SC was sworn in as a Judge of the District Court. His appointment as Chief Magistrate precludes him from exercising any of the powers or duties of a District Court judge while he is Chief Magistrate.

On 15 September 2008 Anthony William Collins, barrister at law, was sworn in as an acting judge of the District Court, in which office he acted until to 31 December 2008.

Judicial retirements

On 26 September 2008 Senior Judge Nelson Anthony Skoien who was appointed to the District Court on 29 October 1982, retired.

On 31 May 2009 Judge Warren Howell who was appointed to the District Court on 27 July 1984, retired.

Personal

On 23 October 2008 Senior Judge Gilbert Trafford-Walker attained 25 years of judicial service and is currently the longest serving sitting Judge on the Supreme or District Court.

On 29 December 2008, one of the court's outstanding associates, Jonathan Farr, died after a short illness. He was the associate to Judge Howell.

Conclusion

During the year under report the court made considerable progress implementing a number of initiatives enhancing the accessibility and quality of the court's services to the Queensland community. The Attorney-General's support of the courts, and that of his immediate predecessor's, is much valued, as has been the support of the Director-General, Ms Rachel Hunter and her predecessor, Ms Julie Grantham.

Profile of the District Court

Judges of the District Court

During the year under report the judges were:

Chief Judge

Her Honour Chief Judge Patricia Mary Wolfe

Judges

His Honour Judge Kerry John O'Brien
His Honour Senior Judge Nelson Anthony Skoien (retired 26 September 2008)
His Honour Senior Judge Gilbert Trafford-Walker
His Honour Judge Warren Howell (retired 30 May 2009)
His Honour Judge Keith Stuart Dodds (Maroochydore)
His Honour Judge Hugh Wilfrid Harry Botting
His Honour Judge Michael John Noud
His Honour Judge Philip David Robin QC
His Honour Judge John Elwell Newton (Southport)
Her Honour Judge Helen O'Sullivan
His Honour Judge John Mervyn Robertson (Maroochydore)
His Honour Judge Michael William Forde
His Honour Judge Charles James Lennox Brabazon QC
His Honour Judge Douglas John McGill SC
His Honour Judge Clive Frederick Wall RFD QC (Southport)
His Honour Judge Robert Douglas Pack (Townsville)
His Honour Judge Nicholas Samios
His Honour Judge Grant Thomas Britton SC (Rockhampton)
Her Honour Judge Deborah Richards (Ipswich)
Her Honour Judge Sarah Bradley (Cairns)
His Honour Judge Michael John Shanahan
Her Honour Judge Julie Maree Dick SC



Judges of the District Court

His Honour Judge Alan Muir Wilson SC
His Honour Judge Marshall Philip Irwin
His Honour Judge Michael Edward Rackemann
His Honour Judge Walter Henry Tutt
His Honour Judge Milton James Griffin SC
Her Honour Judge Julie Ann Ryrie
His Honour Judge Ian Francis Macrae Dearden (Beenleigh)
Her Honour Judge Fleur Yvette Kingham (Southport)
His Honour Judge Stuart Gordon Durward SC (Townsville)
His Honour Judge Anthony John Rafter SC
His Honour Judge Terence Douglas Martin SC
His Honour Judge David Graham Searles
His Honour Judge Gregory John Koppenol
His Honour Judge David Charles Andrews SC
Her Honour Judge Leanne Joy Clare SC
His Honour Judge William Garth Everson (Cairns)
His Honour Judge Brendan John Butler SC *
His Honour Acting Judge Brian Gerard Devereaux SC (until 31 December 2008)
His Honour Acting Judge Anthony William Collins (until 31 December 2008)

* Judge Butler SC could not perform any of the duties or exercise any powers of a District Court judge as he held the office of Chief Magistrate: s. 11 of the *Magistrates Act* 1991.

Regional, planning and childrens judges

During the year under report the following judges were allocated to the regional centres as shown:

Maroochydore:	Judge Dodds and Judge Robertson
Cairns:	Judge Bradley and Judge Everson
Southport:	Judge Newton, Judge Wall QC and Judge Kingham
Townsville:	Judge Pack and Judge Durward SC
Rockhampton:	Judge Britton SC
Ipswich:	Judge Richards and Judge Koppenol
Beenleigh:	Judge Dearden

Planning and Environment Court

The Planning and Environment Court judges for 2008–2009 are listed below:

Chief Judge Wolfe	Judge Wall QC	Judge Durward SC
Senior Judge Skoien	Judge Pack	Judge Rafter SC
Judge Dodds	Judge Britton SC	Judge Martin SC
Judge McLauchlan QC	Judge Wilson SC	Judge Searles
Judge Robin QC	Judge Rackemann	Judge Andrews SC
Judge Robertson	Judge Griffin SC	Judge Everson
Judge Brabazon QC	Judge Kingham	

Childrens Court

The Childrens Court judges for 2008–2009 are listed below:

Judge Dick SC – President	Judge Britton SC	Judge Kingham
Senior Judge Trafford-Walker	Judge Richards	Judge Durward SC
Judge O'Brien	Judge Bradley	Judge Rafter SC
Judge Newton	Judge Shanahan	Judge Martin SC
Judge Robertson	Judge Wilson SC	Judge Clare SC
Judge Wall QC	Judge Tutt	Judge Everson
Judge Pack	Judge Griffin SC	Judge Irwin
Judge Samios	Judge Dearden	

The court's administrative staff

The administrative and registry staff of the District Court are essential to its operation in the performance of its functions. Those exercising supervisory roles or who work more closely with the judges in Brisbane and major centres are set out below:

Director of Courts	Robyn A Hill
Director of the Future Courts Program and Director of Operations (Supreme and District Courts)	Julie Steel
Director, State Reporting Bureau and Courts Corporate Services	Stephanie Attard
Director, Courts Information Services	Ashley Hill
Executive Manager (Reporting Operations), State Reporting Bureau	Kevin Meiklejohn
Manager, Judicial & Client Support	Cameron Woods
ADR Registrar, Planning and Environment Court	Peta Stilgoe
Executive Manager, Supreme and District Courts	Diane Antonsen
Sheriff of Queensland and	
Team Leader Criminal Jurisdiction	Nick Dower/Neil Hansen
Team Leader Civil Jurisdiction (Brisbane)	Jo Stonebridge
Team Leader Specialist Jurisdiction (Brisbane)	Neil Hansen/Peter Brandon
Team Leader Client Relations & Records (Brisbane)	Mark Slaven/Clare Scott
Registrar (Cairns)	Wendy Baden
Registrar (Townsville)	Robyn Wegner
Registrar (Rockhampton)	Ben Cooke
Deputy Registrars (Brisbane)	Vanessa Bamford/Tracy Dutton (Criminal Registry)
	Di Palmer (Appeals and HPT)
	Peter Irvine (Appeals)
	Ian Enright (Civil Applications)
	Kerri Bellchambers (Civil Applications)
	Vera Maccarone (Jury & Enforcements)
	Lisa Duell (Records)

Chief Judge's Executive Assistant	Jan Daniels
Chief Bailiff	Adrian Kosch/Mark Slaven
Deputy Chief Bailiff	Michael Hinge
Listings Coordinator	Angela Karageozis
Criminal List Manager	Janette Conway
Criminal Team Supervisor	Tara Linnan
Assistant Criminal List Manager	Chris Stamp
Childrens Court List Manager	Brendan Naidoo/Jodie King
Civil Applications List Manager	Julie Wilson
Planning and Environment List Manager	Chris DeMarco
Judges' Secretariat	Bev Morgan
	Jennifer Samiec
	Fiona Pepper
	Nicole Gallant
	Jennifer Browning
	Ann Slater

The staff listed above are assisted by other registry, court administration staff and bailiffs.

The courts

The work of the District Court

The work of the District Court is the hearing and determination of appeals and the conduct, trial and determination of matters commenced by indictment (criminal), claim (civil) or originating applications (civil). It also includes the determination of interlocutory applications, that is, applications in pending matters, whether commenced by claim, originating application or on indictment. The Chief Judge is responsible for the administration of the court.

The District Court is the largest trial court in Queensland. It is the principal court in Queensland for the trial of persons charged with serious criminal offences. It deals with almost 80 per cent of all criminal matters which are prosecuted on indictment. The court exercises equitable and other jurisdiction within its civil monetary limit. Criminal trials are heard by a judge with a jury. Civil matters are normally heard by a single judge. The judges have adopted a protocol that, save in exceptional cases, judgments are to be delivered within three months of the conclusion of the hearing.

The District Court hears all appeals from the Magistrates Courts as well as from decisions of a number of tribunals and other statutory bodies. Many of the judges

are also appointed to the Planning and Environment Court and to the Childrens Court of Queensland, and are members of the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

Many of the judges also serve on committees with responsibility for developing and implementing policies and procedures for the continual improvement of the functioning of the courts. These include:

- the Supreme and District Courts' Benchbook Committee
- the Judges' Metropolitan Supreme and District Courthouse Building Committee
- the Learning and Development Committee
- the Rules Committee
- the judges' committees.

Organisation of work

The work of the District Court judges is organised in terms of the following categories:

- Criminal
- Civil

- Appellate
- The Planning and Environment Court
- Health Practitioners Tribunal
- Childrens Court.

Criminal jurisdiction



Janette Conway,
District Court Criminal
List Manager

In practice the court deals with all indictable matters other than homicides and serious drug offences. More than 80 per cent of all indictments are presented in the District Court. The court regularly conducts trials involving more than 24 offences attracting a maximum penalty of life imprisonment, as well as offences under corporations law and against federal and

state revenue laws. These may involve many millions of dollars.

The judges of the Criminal Listing Taskforce, the Chief Judge, Judge O'Brien, Judge Shanahan, Judge Dick SC, Judge Griffin SC, Judge Rafter SC, Judge Martin SC and Judge Clare SC managed the criminal list in Brisbane.

In the regions, the lists are managed by the resident judges.

For the larger circuit centres, Judge Dodds has special responsibility for the Bundaberg and Kingaroy lists, Judge Shanahan for the remote communities, Judge Dick SC for the Mackay lists and Judge Dearden for the Mount Isa region.

Many of the cases are reviewed or managed by the judge before the review date, to ensure that the prosecution has provided the defence with all witness' statements and particulars and that the defence has considered whether a s. 590AA hearing is required. In smaller centres the court conducts a 'running list'. In this way the court in these centres deals with its criminal workload having regard to the effect on the list of 'late' pleas and *nolle prosequis*.

The common measurement of workload is by the number of defendants. A 'defendant' for statistical purposes is defined as 'one defendant; with one or more charges; and with all charges having the same date of registration.'² Defendants with secondary charges, such as breaches of court orders are excluded.

The table that follows summarises the activity of the District Court criminal lists.

² Review of Government Service Provision: 2007 Data Collection Manual – Court Administration Working Group, 08/08/2007 p 7-3.

District Court—Criminal jurisdiction 2008–2009

	Number of defendants			Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator **	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 months	% > 24 months
Brisbane and regional centres						
Brisbane	2428	2480	858	102.1 %	15.7 %	7.9 %
Beenleigh	484	488	187	100.8 %	23.5 %	10.2 %
Cairns	576	543	186	94.3 %	18.8 %	9.1 %
Ipswich	431	424	78	98.4 %	10.3 %	6.4 %
Maroochydore	237	236	53	99.6 %	20.8 %	7.5 %
Rockhampton	187	193	54	103.2 %	16.7 %	1.9 %

District Court—Criminal jurisdiction 2008–2009 (continued)

	Number of defendants			Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator **	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 months	% > 24 months
Southport	452	473	241	104.6 %	29.5 %	10.4 %
Townsville	363	346	137	95.3 %	27.0 %	12.4 %
Total for Brisbane and regional centres	5158	5183	1794	100.5 %		
Circuit centres						
Bowen	31	33	6	106.5 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Bundaberg	142	127	42	89.4 %	23.8 %	11.9 %
Charleville	14	23	3	164.3 %	33.3 %	0.0 %
Charters Towers	0	1	0	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Clermont	0	0	0	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Cloncurry	0	0	0	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Cunnamulla	1	1	2	100.0 %	50.0 %	50.0 %
Dalby	26	38	11	146.2 %	9.1 %	9.1 %
Emerald	18	17	11	94.4 %	27.3 %	0.0 %
Gladstone	57	67	5	117.5 %	60.0 %	0.0 %
Goondiwindi	17	19	11	111.8 %	18.2 %	0.0 %
Gympie	23	23	5	100.0 %	40.0 %	40.0 %
Hervey Bay	93	108	30	116.1 %	33.3 %	10.0 %
Hughenden	0	1	0	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Innisfail	27	33	20	122.2 %	10.0 %	10.0 %
Kingaroy	33	35	10	106.1 %	50.0 %	30.0 %
Longreach	6	4	6	66.7 %	33.3 %	33.3 %
Mackay	106	119	22	112.3 %	22.7 %	18.2 %
Maryborough	109	98	24	89.9 %	16.7 %	4.2 %
Mt Isa	105	114	38	108.6 %	21.1 %	7.9 %
Roma	11	16	5	145.5 %	20.0 %	0.0 %
Stanthorpe	1	1	0	100.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Toowoomba	290	229	45	79.0 %	13.3 %	4.4 %
Warwick	18	38	14	211.1 %	7.1 %	0.0 %
Total for circuit centres	1128	1145	310	101.5 %		
State total	6286	6328	2104	100.7 %	19.8 %	8.8 %

* Clearance rate

Finalisations/lodgments

** Backlog indicator

The number of active defendants with proceedings older than the specified time. Time is measured from date of lodgment to the end of the reporting period.

Civil jurisdiction

The court has an extensive general jurisdiction enabling it to deal with:

- all personal claims and any equitable claim or demand up to the monetary limit of \$250 000
- any claim (without monetary limit) referred to the court by the Supreme Court for assessment
- any claim where the parties consent to increase the monetary jurisdiction of the court
- actions to enforce by delivery of possession any mortgage
- actions to grant relief from mistake and for rectification
- actions seeking declarations and consequential orders arising from partnership disputes
- administration of estates where the estate does not exceed in value the monetary limit of the court
- family provision pursuant to the *Succession Act 1981*
- construction of deeds and other documents.

This table shows the clearance rate in civil cases.

District Court—Civil jurisdiction 2008–2009

	RoGS non appeal cases			Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator ** from filing date	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 months	% > 24 months
Brisbane	2802	2825	2279	100.82%	21.24%	5.13%
State total	4939	5156	4160	104.39%	20.65%	4.45%

* Clearance rate Finalisations/lodgments

** Backlog indicator The number of active pending defendants with proceedings older than the specified time. Time is measured from date of lodgement to the end of the reporting period.

The ambit of the District Court’s civil jurisdiction is described in s. 68 of the *District Court of Queensland Act 1967*.

Disposition of civil cases

Some matters are disposed of by judges dealing with interlocutory applications in actions commenced by claims. The more complex matters are case managed by the judges, leading to their early disposition.

Civil jurisdiction

The *Report on Government Services* (RoGS) unit of measurement for the civil jurisdiction is a case. Secondary processes, such as interlocutory applications, are excluded. RoGS files include all claims and the majority of originating applications.

A civil case is considered active if it has not been finalised by adjudication, transfer to another court, settlement by mediation, default judgment, notification that parties have discontinued, or else is deemed to be resolved as, for example, where there has been no activity for 12 months.

Applications Court

The *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules* provide for a proceeding to be commenced in some circumstances by an application, and also provide for an application to be made to the court in the course of a proceeding which will ultimately be dealt with fully at a trial or hearing.

Interlocutory and originating applications were dealt with quickly and efficiently by the court. There was no great delay for reasons associated with the court in hearing either type of application, at any centre where there is at least one resident judge.

Appellate jurisdiction

During the year this court heard and determined all appeals from the Magistrates Courts and from various tribunals and other statutory bodies, as well as appeals under the *Children Services Tribunal Act 2000* and several other Acts.

The District Court also heard appeals from the Commercial and Consumer Tribunal.

Case management of appeals to the District Court continued with regular reviews of outstanding appeals throughout the year. Intervention notices are generated by the registry for the parties to assist them in adhering to predetermined timeframes in accordance with Practice Direction 5 of 2001.

This table shows the clearance rate in criminal and civil appeals.

District Court—Appellate jurisdiction 2008–2009

	RoGS appeal			Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator ** from filing date	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 months	% > 24 months
Criminal						
Brisbane	154	178	76	115.58%	3.95%	0.00%
State total	475	452	327	95.16%	4.59%	0.31%
Civil						
Brisbane	70	77	38	110.00%	10.53%	2.63%
State total	110	146	70	132.73%	10.00%	1.43%

* Clearance rate Finalisations/lodgments

** Backlog indicator The number of active pending defendants with proceedings older than the specified time. Time is measured from date of lodgement to the end of the reporting period.

The Planning and Environment Court



*Peta Stilgoe,
ADR Registrar, Planning
and Environment Court*

This court is constituted by a District Court judge appointed to it. It was constituted by the *Integrated Planning Act 1997*, which came into effect in March 1998. The court has unlimited monetary jurisdiction and exercises jurisdiction over all planning and like appeals in the state. Matters are often complex, involving property or investments of many millions of dollars. The

court's decisions often have significant economic, health or lifestyle impact on large communities throughout the state.

This court hears applications and appeals relating to planning, development, environmental protection and other like matters. Its judges are based in Brisbane and in most regional centres. The court also sits in other regional cities, towns and localities, in order that matters may be heard at a place close to the site or development and the community which it affects.

During 2008–09, Judge Rackemann took general responsibility for the court's listing. The judges actively supervise the court's list in each centre and individually manage each case towards resolution, through directions hearings and reviews. Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) is a key element of that case management. The court's ADR registrar, Ms Peta Stilgoe, performs mediations and provides other forms of ADR free of charge to the parties. Matters are often resolved, in whole or in part, prior to any formal hearing.

The retirement of Senior Judge Skoien, who had served and helped to shape the court for nearly 26 years, since his appointment in 1982 had its effect. Greatly respected and much admired, his Honour is sorely missed.

The 2008–09 year was something of a watershed year for the court. During the year Judge Rackemann drafted the court's new rules (the 2008 PECRs). These rules and Practice Direction No 2 of 2008, which came into effect in December, were the culmination of the court's progressive review and reform of its own procedures. The new rules and practice direction recognise and provide for:

- the court's active list supervision and flexible individual case management approach
- the court's commitment to case management which promotes consensual resolution, including by use of ADR
- the position, function and powers of the ADR registrar who may
 - conduct mediations
 - convene and chair without prejudice meetings
 - convene and chair meetings of expert witnesses
 - convene and chair case management conferences
 - list matters for review or further review by a judge
- the management of expert witnesses in a way which fosters and protects their professional objectivity, reduces the areas of difference and better informs the parties and the court in relation to matters of expertise.

The court's rules and practices have received attention and acclaim, including internationally. In January, Judge Rackemann accepted an invitation to speak to academics and students at the Sturm College of Law, University of Denver, Colorado. He also met with Justice Hobbs of the Supreme Court of Colorado (that state's highest court), to discuss the management of expert evidence. Justice Hobbs was in the process of reviewing expert evidence in Colorado's specialist water courts. The rules in that state have subsequently been amended to incorporate essential features of the Planning and Environment Court's approach to the management of expert evidence. Justice Hobbs has kindly acknowledged the encouragement he received from the 2008 PECRs.

The court successfully trialled eFiles, which permit court files to be searched electronically, obviating the need for attendance at the registry for that purpose.

The judges continue to engage with those interested in the jurisdiction:

- Judge Brabazon QC was a presenter at the Queensland Environmental Law Association (QELA) seminar on concurrent evidence.
- Judge Robertson participated in two Planning Institute seminars which were held in the Maroochydore courthouse, in order to demonstrate the practical application of the court's rules and practice direction.
- Judge Wilson SC spoke at the inaugural meeting in Brisbane of the young members division of the National Environmental Law Association.
- Judge Rackemann prepared a seminar (presented by Dr Gore QC due to Judge Rackeman's illness) for the Bar Association of Queensland on the 2008 PECRs and Practice Direction 2 of 2008.
- Judge Rackemann presented a seminar, on the same topic, to a seminar for QELA and presented a paper at the judges' session of QELA's annual conference.
- The judges were consulted by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning, in relation to the Sustainable Planning Bill.

The judges again disposed of the court's caseload with expedition. Judge Robin QC's determination was exemplified by him, at one stage, conducting two sittings per day. The Chief Justice generously permitted Judge Rackemann to sit in the Banco Court to conduct an eTrial of a large matter, involving many senior and junior counsel as well as self represented parties. Judge Everson achieved a substantial reduction in the court's list in Cairns.

This table shows the clearance rate in planning and environment cases.

Planning and Environment Court 2008–2009

				Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator ** from filing date	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 months	% > 24 months
Brisbane	559	531	588	94.99%	32.65%	6.97%
State total	760	677	818	89.08%	33.13%	7.21%

* Clearance rate Finalisations/lodgments

** Backlog indicator The number of active pending defendants with proceedings older than the specified time. Time is measured from date of lodgment to the end of the reporting period.

The Health Practitioners Tribunal

All District Court judges are members of this tribunal under the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999*. The tribunal hears appeals from disciplinary tribunals in respect of and is the ultimate disciplinary body for:

- most health professional groups
- medical practitioners
- chiropractors
- dentists
- dental technicians and prosthetists
- occupational therapists
- optometrists
- pharmacists
- physiotherapists
- podiatrists
- psychologists
- speech pathologists.

The tribunal has an appellant jurisdiction and a review jurisdiction. Appeals are by way of rehearing and the tribunal may give leave to adduce fresh, additional or substituted evidence.

Hearings are conducted before the judge who is the constituting member and who sits with assessors appointed from gazetted lists, two from each list of members from the relevant profession and one from a public list of persons of good standing in the community. All questions of law and fact must be decided by the judge, and the judge may have regard to the views of the assessors on factual issues.

The Chief Judge, as chairperson of the tribunal, nominates a judge as the constituting member for a particular hearing. During the year Judge O'Brien, assisted by Judge Forde coordinated the tribunal's lists, with Judge Wall QC, Judge Richards, Judge Dick SC and Judge Griffin SC also acting as constituting members.

In 2008–09, 22 new matters were lodged in the tribunal, down from 26 last year. Most of them were from the Medical Board.

This table shows the clearance rate in the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

Health Practitioners Tribunal jurisdiction 2008–2009

				Clearance rate *	Backlog indicator ** from filing date	
	Lodged	Finalised	Active		% > 12 mths	% > 24 mths
Brisbane	22	31	23	140.91%	39.13%	8.70%

* Clearance rate Finalisations/lodgments

** Backlog indicator The number of active pending defendants with proceedings older than the specified time. Time is measured from date of lodgment to the end of the reporting period.

Childrens Court

The District Court judges appointed to the Childrens Court of Queensland determine serious criminal charges brought against children. They also provide speedy access for the hearing of bail applications and sentence reviews, especially for young children being held on remand.

The Childrens Court of Queensland is a specialist jurisdiction established under the *Childrens Court Act Queensland 1992*. The President of the Court is Judge Dick SC and there are 23 judges of the court who also hold commissions under the Act. In the year under review Judge Irwin was granted a commission.

The efforts of the judges holding commissions under the Act have contributed to the efficiency and productivity of the Childrens Court.

A separate annual report of the Childrens Court of Queensland is prepared under the *Childrens Court Act Queensland 1992* and further details of the Childrens Court can be found in that report.

Regional centres

The court sits in Brisbane and the seven regional centres where 13 of the judges are based:

- Cairns
- Southport
- Rockhampton
- Ipswich
- Townsville
- Beenleigh
- Maroochydore

Judges also travel on circuit to other centres throughout the state. At most circuit centres and at some regional centres the judges rely on such registry support as is available from staff of the Magistrates Courts' service.

Cairns

Judiciary

Judge Bradley

Judge Everson

During the year under report, Judge Bradley and Judge Everson were the resident judges in Cairns and managed the court's lists there. This centre is also served by the Supreme Court's Far Northern Judge. The region includes Innisfail and Cape York. Both judges held commissions in the Childrens Court, and Judge Everson also holds a commission in the Planning and Environment Court. Both judges undertook circuits in the Cairns region and elsewhere in the state. Some assistance was provided by judges on circuit from other centres.

During the year under report, there was a 3.4 per cent decrease in the number of criminal matters lodged in the court at Cairns, with 576 new criminal matters (596 last year) and 543 matters being disposed of there, a decrease of 19 per cent from 670 last year, resulting in a 94.3 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 18.8 per cent were older than 12 months and 9.1 per cent older than 24 months. The number of criminal

appeals lodged in Cairns decreased by 16.7 per cent (from 30 last year to 25 this year) resulting in a 164 per cent clearance rate.

There was a 10.7 per cent increase in the civil workload with 249 new civil matters lodged in Cairns (225 last year), and an 11.2 per cent increase in finalisations with 317 being disposed of (285 last year), achieving a 127.3 per cent clearance rate.

In the planning jurisdiction, there was a 34.7 per cent decrease in the number of new cases filed with 32 new cases (compared with 49 last year). Of the planning workload, 44 cases were finalised, 26.7 per cent fewer than last year when 60 cases were finalised. However the number of active cases at the end of the year under report was reduced to 37 (55 last year) resulting in a creditable 137.5 per cent clearance rate (122.4 per cent last year).

Rockhampton

Judiciary

Judge Britton SC

The resident judge in Rockhampton, Judge Britton SC, who also holds commissions in the Planning and Environment Court and the Childrens Court of Queensland, manages the court's Rockhampton lists. Rockhampton is also served by the Supreme Court's Central Judge. Judge Britton undertakes circuits in the region and elsewhere in the state.

During 2008–09, 187 new criminal matters were lodged in the court at Rockhampton (a 3.6 per cent decrease from 194 lodged last year), and 193 matters disposed of (208 last year), achieving a 103.2 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 16.7 per cent were older than 12 months and only 1.9 per cent older than

24 months. The number of criminal appeals lodged in Rockhampton increased by 275 per cent (from 4 last year to 15 this year), with a 100 per cent clearance rate.

There was a 1.1 per cent increase in the civil workload with 88 new civil matters lodged (87 last year), 96 were disposed of (82 last year), achieving a 109.1 per cent clearance rate.

In the planning jurisdiction, there was a 50 per cent decrease in the number of new cases filed with seven new cases (compared with 14 last year). Of the planning workload, eight cases were finalised, 60 per cent more than last year when five cases were finalised.

Some assistance was provided by judges on circuit from other centres.

Townsville

Judiciary

Judge Pack

Judge Durward SC

Judge Pack and Judge Durward SC are the resident judges, and Townsville is also served by the Supreme Court's Northern Judge. Judge Pack and Judge Durward SC hold commissions in the Childrens Court and the Planning and Environment Court and they also undertake circuits in their region which includes Palm Island. Some assistance is provided by judges on circuit from other centres, although the reduction in the number of circuit judges available to assist Townsville had an impact on the Townsville criminal and planning lists.

During the year under report, there was a 1.6 per cent decrease in the number of criminal matters lodged in the court at Townsville, with 363 new criminal matters

(369 last year) and 346 matters being disposed of there, a decrease of 5.7 per cent from 367 last year, resulting in a 95.3 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 27 per cent were older than 12 months and 12.4 per cent older than 24 months. However the number of criminal appeals lodged in Townsville increased by 552 per cent (from 23 last year to 150 this year) with a 57.1 per cent increase in finalisations (33 this year, 21 last year).

There was a 49.2 per cent decrease in the civil workload with 193 new civil matters lodged in Townsville (380 last year), and a 23.9 per cent decrease in finalisations with 315 being disposed of (414 last year), achieving a 163.2 per cent clearance rate.

In the planning jurisdiction, there was a 13.3 per cent decrease in the number of new cases filed with 26 new cases (compared with 30 last year), and 16 cases were finalised, compared with 40 last year.



Judge Pack and Judge Durward SC

Maroochydore

Judiciary

Judge Dodds

Judge Robertson

Most of the work of the Maroochydore Court is undertaken by the resident judges, with some assistance from other judges who visit on circuit. In addition to the usual work within the jurisdiction of the District Court, each of the resident judges sits as a Childrens Court judge and also deals with proceedings in the Planning and Environment Court.

Maroochydore has a significant workload in the busy planning jurisdiction, with 64 new cases (an increase of 1.6 per cent). The reduction in the number of circuit judges available to assist Maroochydore had an impact on the Maroochydore planning lists. Of the planning workload, 37 cases were finalised, compared with 100 cases finalised last year. The number of active cases at the end of the year under report was 79 (63 last year), with a 57.8 per cent clearance rate (158.7 per cent last year).

There was also a 6.0 per cent increase in Maroochydore's civil workload with 249 new civil matters lodged (235 last year), 294 were disposed of (278 last year), resulting in a 118.1 per cent clearance rate.

During the year there was a sharp drop in the criminal workload in 2008–09 with 237 new criminal matters lodged in the court at Maroochydore (310 last year), a 23.5 per cent decrease. There were 236 matters

disposed of (312 last year), resulting in a 99.6 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 20.8 per cent were older than 12 months and 7.5 per cent older than 24 months. The increase in the number of older matters also reflects the decrease in the number of circuit judges available to assist Maroochydore.

The Maroochydore-based judges undertake much of the circuit work at Gympie (achieving a 100 per cent clearance rate in the criminal jurisdiction) and Kingaroy (with 106.1 per cent in the criminal jurisdiction). The Kingaroy district includes the largely Indigenous community of Cherbourg and the judges visit the nearby town of Murgon on circuit. Judge Dodds also has responsibility for the Bundaberg circuit lists and has achieved an 89.4 per cent clearance rate in Bundaberg. Both judges undertake circuit work elsewhere in the state.



Judge Dodds and Judge Robertson

Southport

Judiciary

Judge Newton

Judge Wall QC

Judge Kingham

In addition to the usual District Court work of the resident judges, Childrens Court and Planning and Environment Court cases were disposed of in Southport and each of the judges performed circuit work at centres elsewhere in the state.

During the year under report, there was an 18.7 per cent decrease in the number of criminal matters lodged in the court at Southport, with 452 new criminal matters (556 last year) but a 3.3 per cent increase in finalisations with 473 matters disposed of (458 last year), resulting in a 104.6 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 29.5 per cent were older than 12 months and 10.4 per cent older than 24 months. The number of criminal appeals lodged in Southport increased by 2.5 per cent and there was a 142.3 per cent increase in the number of criminal appeals finalised (from 26 last year to 63 this year), giving a clearance rate of 153.7 per cent.

There was a 2 per cent increase in the civil workload with 575 new civil matters lodged in Southport (564 last year), and a 17.9 per cent increase in finalisations with 640 being disposed of (543 last year), achieving a 111.3 per cent clearance rate. The increase in finalisations was reflected in a 280 per cent increase in civil appeal finalisations with the Southport court disposing of 19 civil appeals (five last year), and an 18 per cent decrease in the number of civil appeals lodged (from 11 last year to nine this year).

In the planning jurisdiction, there was a 7.7 per cent decrease in the number of new cases filed with 36 new cases (compared with 39 last year). Of the planning workload, 27 cases were finalised, compared with 37 finalisations last year, a decrease of 27 per cent. The number of active cases at the end of the year under report increased from 37 last year to 45 resulting in a 75.0 per cent clearance rate.

Other judges on circuit provide considerable assistance to the court at Southport.

Ipswich

Judiciary

Judge Richards

Judge Koppenol

Judge Richards and Judge Koppenol were assisted by circuit judges in dealing with the Ipswich caseload. Judge Richards holds a commission in the Childrens Court of Queensland, and manages the Ipswich lists. Both judges undertook circuits in centres throughout the state.

During 2008–09, 431 new criminal matters were lodged in the court at Ipswich (420 last year), and 424 matters were disposed of there, resulting in a 98.4 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 10.3 per cent were older than 12 months and 6.4 per cent older than 24 months. The number of criminal appeals lodged in Ipswich increased by 450 per cent (from 2 last year to 11 this year).

There was also a 40.2 per cent increase in the civil workload with 150 new civil matters lodged (107 last year), 116 were disposed of (69 last year), resulting in a 77.3 per cent clearance rate.

Beenleigh

Judiciary

Judge Dearden

Judge Dearden, the resident judge, also holds a commission in the Childrens Court of Queensland and manages the Beenleigh and Mount Isa lists. The judge also conducted circuits in Mount Isa and other centres. Some assistance was provided by judges on circuit from other centres.

During the year under report, there was a 4.2 per cent decrease in the number of criminal matters lodged in the court at Beenleigh, with 484 new criminal matters (505 last year) and 488 matters being disposed of there (567 last year), achieving a 100.8 per cent clearance rate. Of the remaining matters, 23.5 per cent were older than 12 months and 10.2 per cent older than 24 months. The number of criminal appeals lodged in Beenleigh increased by 114.3 per cent (from 7 last year to 15 this year).

There was a 2.9 per cent increase in the civil workload with 144 new civil matters lodged (140 last year), and a 22.2 per cent increase in dispositions with 154 cases finalised (126 last year), achieving a 106.9 per cent clearance rate.

Circuit centres

Depending upon caseload, District Court jury trials may be held in 24 circuit centres (excluding those with a resident judge), and the judges also travel to the 15 remote or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities throughout the state, for sentencing and some civil matters.

Judges sit in the court's appellate, criminal, civil and applications jurisdictions, as well as in the Planning and Environment Court and the Childrens Court of Queensland while on circuit.

A list of the 37 centres (excluding those with a resident judge) where judges sat on circuit during 2008–09 is set out below:

- Aurukun
- Bamaga
- Bowen
- Bundaberg
- Charleville
- Charters Towers
- Cloncurry
- Cooktown
- Cunnamulla
- Dalby
- Doomadgee
- Emerald
- Gladstone
- Goondiwindi
- Gympie
- Hervey Bay
- Innisfail
- Kingaroy
- Kowanyama
- Lockhart River
- Longreach
- Mackay
- Maryborough
- Mornington Island
- Mount Isa
- Murgon
- Normanton
- Palm Island
- Pormpuraaw
- Roma
- Stanthorpe
- Toowoomba
- Thursday Island
- Warwick
- Weipa/ Naranum
- Woorabinda
- Yarrabah

Committees

The membership of the judges' committees as at 30 June 2009, with the Chief Judge an ex officio member of each committee, was as follows:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Convenor: Judge Shanahan
Members: Judge Forde
Judge Bradley
Judge Kingham

Civil Procedure

Convenor: Judge Robin QC
Members: Judge McGill SC
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann
Judge Searles
Judge Andrews SC

Judicial Professional Development

Convenor: Judge Griffin SC
Members: Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann
Judge Andrews SC

Criminal Law

Convenor: Judge Robertson
Members: Judge Shanahan
Judge Dick SC
Judge Griffin SC
Judge Rafter SC
Judge Martin SC
Judge Clare SC

Court Planning

Convenor: Judge Griffin SC
Members: Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann

Salaries and Entitlements

Convenor: Judge Rackemann
Members: Judge Botting
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Searles

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee's goals are:

- to deal with matters relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders referred to the committee
- to liaise with representatives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about matters affecting the court and members of those communities, other than decisions of individual judges
- to recommend appropriate speakers on these topics at judges' conferences
- to develop and improve the relationship and understanding between the court and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- to keep other judges and the community informed of such improvements and developments.

On 3 September 2008 the Chief Judge and Judge Shanahan met with Professor Paul Mazerolle and his associates from Griffiths University's Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance to consult about the project Exploring Bail and Remand Experiences for Indigenous Queenslanders for the Department of Premier and Cabinet. The project aims to identify the factors that influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander accused adults being refused bail and to examine ways to assist Indigenous people to comply with bail conditions.

In October 2008 Judge Bradley, whilst on circuit in Toowoomba, met with the coordinator and the Chair of the Toowoomba Community Justice Group about

increasing the group's involvement in court processes in relation to Indigenous defendants.

On 30 October 2008 the three newly appointed interpreters in the Wik Mungkan language attended Cairns to receive certificates of appreciation from the Attorney-General. Judge Shanahan met with the interpreters that afternoon and offered them congratulations on behalf of the court. The training program was initiated by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General after many years of the need for interpreters being agitated. It is hoped that further training and accreditation will continue to occur.

On 28 January and 13 March 2009 the Chief Judge, Judge Shanahan and court staff met with a research team from the Queensland University of Technology contracted by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to examine factors that contribute to perceived disparities in sentencing outcomes for Indigenous and non-Indigenous defendants before Queensland Courts. Further consultation with other judges followed.

On 26 May 2009 Judge Shanahan attended a further meeting of the Statewide Community Justice Reference Group convened by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The ongoing action plan was reviewed and many issues concerning the role of the Community Justice Groups and the support and training available to them were discussed.

Judge Shanahan continued as a member of the NJCA Queensland sub-committee chaired by Justice Atkinson. The sub-committee organised Indigenous cultural awareness training at a workshop for judges and magistrates at the University of Queensland on 21 and 22 May 2009. The workshop was convened by Professor David Trigger, School of Social Science (Anthropology) and Michael Williams, Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander Studies Unit, University of Queensland. The workshop was funded by the NJCA. Approximately 30 judicial officers attended the workshop and it was hailed as a success. Judge Bradley continues as a member of the National Judicial College of Australia's Indigenous Justice Committee.

During the 2008–09 financial year, circuits were again performed to the Gulf (Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton), to the Cape (Weipa/Napranum, Kowanyama, Aurukun, Pormpuraaw and Lockhart River), to Thursday Island and Bamaga and to Yarrabah and Cooktown. From December 2008, circuits were again commenced to Palm Island. During the Kingaroy circuits, the court sat at Murgon to deal with Cherbourg sentence matters. The court also sat at Woorabinda to conduct sentence matters.

Judge Shanahan continues as a member of the AIJA Indigenous Justice Committee and on a sub-committee organising the AIJA Indigenous Courts Conference to be held in August 2009 in Rockhampton.

Civil Procedure Committee

The Civil Procedure Committee holds a general watching brief in respect of the civil side of the court's jurisdiction. The members are available as a source of experience and advice the judges may call on. Two sit on the Chief Justice's Rules Committee which has wide statutory responsibility including keeping under review rules applying in most courts of the state, the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules* in particular.

For the most part, the committee communicates by electronic means rather than at formal meetings. A dominating function is assisting the Chief Judge when the court's views are sought out or should be offered on issues bearing on civil jurisdiction. Activity in the year began with the review commissioned by the government of the civil and criminal justice system in Queensland; submissions were prepared for and members of the committee met with the Hon. Martin Moynihan AO QC, who conducted the review. Other matters for consideration included:

- the need for a practice direction replicating that adopted in the Supreme Court in respect of filing of written submissions
- proposed changes to the request for trial date under the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules* and the proposal for electronic set-down of cases
- the significance and effect of the Commonwealth takeover of de-facto property disputes
- uniform proportionate liability provisions
- whether the court should continue to approve and register mediators (given developments in national mediator accreditation)
- the consultation draft of the *Administrative Review Policy*, which has culminated in the arrangements now in place for the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (the tribunal will exercise certain responsibilities presently entrusted to the court).

Courts Planning Committee

Judge Griffin QC served as convenor of the committee, and Judges Wilson SC, Rackemann and Kingham were its members. During the year it acted, primarily, to assist the Chief Judge (who attended its meetings) in addressing planning and strategic matters arising in the course of her the administration of the court. As in past years those matters often required prompt attention from available committee members who, for that reason, met informally rather than by pre-arrangement.

The committee's work included:

- assisting the Chief Judge with the drafting of correspondence relating to a range of administrative matters
- attending meetings concerning final designs for the new Ipswich courthouse
- discussing and making recommendations concerning circuits, associates (appointment, training and duties), the management of lists at centres without a resident judge, the pressures created by the absence of judges through illness, and the best use of judicial resources.

Professional Development Committee

This committee of the judges oversees the activities of the judges in the court in broadening and advancing the knowledge and understanding of the judges. The court has a budget for this purpose, administered by the Chief Judge with the assistance of the committee.

In June 2009 many of the judges attended the 20th Biennial Conference of the District and County Court

Judges of Australia and New Zealand in Sydney. The speakers included:

- Dr Graeme Pearman AM (*The impact and challenges of climate change*)
- Dr Ben Saul (*Human rights in an age of terror*)
- Dr Don Weatherburn PSM (*Beyond punishment*)
- Mr Chris Geraghty (*Lifting the wig on judicial prejudice*)
- Professor Marcia Langton AM (*Gender, justice and Aboriginal rights*).

The judges held their annual conference in August 2008. The speakers included:

- Professor Neil Brewer (*Credibility*)
- Dr Mohamad Abdulla from the Griffith Islamic Research Unit and Ms Farzanah Ally (*Islam and the Courts*)
- Dr Joe Tucci from the Australian Childhood Foundation on (*Trauma and Children*)
- Mr Tony Woodyatt from QPILCH, Nicole Little from Court Network for Humanity and Nicholas Tucker from PACT spoke about their organisations and the court
- Ms Robyn Hill, Ms Julie Steel, Mr Bradley King and Ms Tracy Dutton spoke about the organisational direction and current developments in the registry
- Judges Shanahan and Dick SC reported on affected child witnesses
- Judge Durward SC spoke about his involvement in the CDF Inquiry into combat deaths in Afghanistan.

Judges attended workshops or conferences throughout the year:

- Judge Andrews SC, Judge Clare SC and Judge Everson attended the NJCA's Judicial Orientation Programme on the Gold Coast
- Judge Newton, Judge Richards, Judge Kingham and Judge Durward SC attended the Phoenix Judges' Programme in Canberra
- Judge Durward SC, Judge Rafter SC, Judge Martin SC and Judge Everson attended the workshop *People and the Law in Queensland* at the University of Queensland, St Lucia.
- Judge Richards was the keynote speaker at the 2009 Ipswich Law Association Conference held on 12 March 2009
- Judge Wilson SC attended the Insurance Law Intensive at Noosa on 14 and 15 May 2009
- Judge Dick SC participated in the Youth Justice Demand Management CEO Forum at the Department of Communities in Brisbane on 13 May 2009.

Judges also presented papers or participated in seminars or conferences throughout the year:

- Judge Dick SC attended the South Pacific Council of Youth and Childrens Court Meeting, Western Samoa in July 2008
- Judge Wilson SC with Justice Warnick and John McGinness, Director, NJCA conducted a four day judgment writing course for senior PNG Magistrates in Port Moresby in November 2008
- Judge Dearden spoke at the 30th anniversary celebrations for the QUT Legal Practice Course and at the State DPP monthly CPD meeting in Brisbane in late October and early November
- The Chief Judge and Judge Brabazon QC attended the Jury Research and Practice Conference held in the Banco Court on 14 November 2008
- Judge Wilson SC launched the National Environmental Lawyers' Association on 6 March 2009

Registry services and administrative support

Office of Director of Courts



The Office of Director of Courts coordinates and oversees registry, court reporting, information management and technology, and corporate administration to provide essential support to the District Court throughout the state. This office also coordinates and manages consultation in relation to legislation and policy changes.

The current Executive Director and Principal Registrar, Ms Robyn Anne Hill, was appointed in early 2007. She is supported by executive, administrative staff and registry staff throughout Queensland.

As Principal Registrar, Ms Hill is an ex-officio member of the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting and of the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board. Ms Hill also attends at meetings of the Rules Committee.

The registries are responsible for:

- receiving documents for filing

- providing information about the general court process and the progress of particular matters
- sealing documents for service (such as subpoenas)
- maintaining court records
- ensuring that documents are created and distributed to give effect to orders of the court
- organising resources to enable matters to progress through the system and hearings to proceed
- performing all necessary administrative work associated with the criminal and civil jurisdictions of the court.

2008–09 was a busy year for the court, as the registries dealt with an increasing workload.

Registry staff are conscious of their responsibilities to the court, the legal profession and litigants. The registry has invested considerable time and effort in strategies to manage operational challenges and improve the services provided to court users. There was additional training and business processes were reviewed. This work is ongoing and is labour intensive but the results are very encouraging. There will be increased registry consultation with the profession and others to implement additional efficiencies in the coming year.



Supreme and District Courts senior management group (l-r): Kevin Meiklejohn, Executive Manager (Reporting Operations), State Reporting Bureau; Stephanie Attard, Director, State Reporting Bureau and Courts Corporate Services; Diane Antonsen, Executive Manager, Supreme and District Courts; Julie Steel, Deputy Director of Courts; Robyn Hill, Director of Courts; Bruce Hubert, Deputy Director, Courts Information Services Branch; Ashley Hill, Director, Courts Information Services Branch

In 2008–09 staff in the registries successfully:

- managed an increase of more than 35 per cent in default judgments
- supported an extension of the volunteer service in Brisbane to provide an information desk and Justice of the Peace service for courts' users
- collaborated with the Future Courts Program to develop and deliver pilots of fully electronic files and electronic trials
- the Planning and Environment Alternative Dispute Resolution Registrar conducted alternative dispute resolution sessions in 177 Planning and Environment Court appeals over 226 sessions

There are permanent District Court registries in Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville, and Cairns. Beenleigh, Ipswich, Maroochydore and Southport have resident judges who are supported by staff employed within the Magistrates Courts' registry. Other centres are visited on circuit and the local Magistrates Court registry generally performs the registry role in those centres.

Considerable work was undertaken with the various regional managers and registrars to pilot strategies to better manage jury panels outside Brisbane, with guidelines made for the regional and circuit centres. Legislative changes provided for majority verdicts, judge-only trials and removal of the requirement to sequester juries.

Extension of volunteer service

As part of the accessCourts program, the court began its partnership with the Court Network for Humanity in 2007–08. More than 4200 people have used the accessCourts service since its inception. The program operates in Brisbane and gives assistance to court participants. The volunteers provide emotional and practical support to litigants and those who accompany them to trials and hearings by helping to eliminate the anxiety and confusion experienced by many court users. The service was expanded during 2008–09:

- on 6 October 2008, to add an information desk and justice of the peace service
- in April 2009 to pilot a program to provide services to prisoners who are released directly into the court from remand.

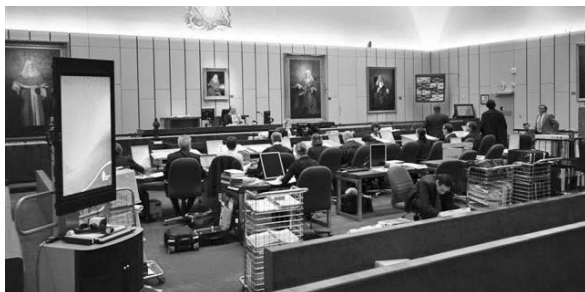
Legal and policy team

This team works with the Rules Committee and Strategic Policy Division in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, with the aim of ensuring that the registry considers legislative amendments and policy changes that might improve the registry's service to court users. During 2008–09, the responsibility for appointments as registrars or bailiffs was transferred from the Governor-in-Council to the chief executive of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. This has improved the flexibility and speed of appointments.

Digital recording

Significant improvements were made to the digital recording solution to ensure that the system is reliable and stable. The State Reporting Bureau, in conjunction with the digital recording improvements, implemented a quality assurance framework. Process improvement work and standardisation of procedures across the state is ongoing. Work was also undertaken in to develop an e-commerce solution for the provision of transcripts.

eTrials and eFiles pilots



Pilot initiatives were instigated by the Future Courts Program and trialled in the Brisbane registry. The eTrials process involves the electronic management of large numbers of documents in selected trials. Registry staff

helped legal practitioners and self represented litigants to upload and manage documents on line and to access them during the hearings and trials. The eFiles strategy allows documents filed in the registry to be seen on line and is being trialled in the Planning and Environment Court. Documents are consulted online more than 140 times per day. It is convenient for the judges, the lawyers and parties to proceedings to be able to access court documents at times this way.

Planning and environment alternative dispute resolution

The free alternative dispute resolution (ADR) service offered by the Planning and Environment Court matters is popular. The Planning and Environment ADR registrar conducted mediations, facilitated 'without prejudice' conferences, case management conferences and chairs expert meetings. The service continues to save parties and the court time and expense; even if appeals cannot be resolved fully by ADR, the issues to be ventilated at the hearing are often reduced or articulated more efficiently.

Future Courts Program

In April 2009, the Director of Operations, Ms Julie Steel, was a guest presenter at the University of Montreal's Legal IT conference and visited courts in Singapore and England. She met with solicitors to discuss their innovative approach to the delivery of legal services. These approaches and processes are being considered for Queensland's registries. It is anticipated that the registry will work closely with the Future Courts Program as well as continuing efforts to improve processes and staff skills.

State Reporting Bureau

The State Reporting Bureau (SRB) provides recording and transcription services for the Supreme Court, District Court, Magistrates Court, Industrial Court and Industrial Relations Commission. SRB also provides reporting services for the Medical Assessment Tribunal, Mental Health Court, Industrial Court, Land Appeal Court and Legal Practice Tribunal.

Services are provided in Brisbane and at 35 regional and circuit centres in Queensland.

In respect of the Supreme Court Trial Division, reporting services are provided in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton and the circuit centres of Mount Isa, Bundaberg, Longreach, Maryborough, Toowoomba and Roma.

In respect of the District Court, reporting services are provided in Brisbane, Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Innisfail, Hughenden, Charters Towers, Bowen, Mackay, Gladstone, Bundaberg, Maryborough, Maroochydore, Gympie, Kingaroy, Emerald, Clermont, Mount Isa, Cloncurry, Longreach, Dalby, Roma, Toowoomba, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe, Warwick, Ipswich, Southport, Charleville and Cunnamulla.

During 2008–09, SRB implemented or commenced implementation of the following initiatives aimed at improving services and service delivery to its clients:

- the Australian Business Excellence Framework as a mechanism for improving the quality of our services
- establishing a quality team whose focus is on the implementation of a business improvement plan and the associated development of standardised processes and procedures across the state
- engaging a training officer to develop and provide standard training to all staff in addition to the continuation of our in-house training program to train existing audio reporters as CAT reporters
- the Transcripts Standardisation Project, which focuses on streamlining the production of transcripts and producing a single reference resource, resulting in reduced training requirements and increased productivity
- the e-commerce and electronic workflow project
- an automated online service for the:
 - ordering and payment of court transcripts
 - access to court transcripts to subscribers and internal users
 - electronic distribution of court transcripts to subscribers and internal users.

Courts Information Services Branch

During 2008–09 the Information Management Branch and the Court Technology Group were merged into the Courts Information Services Branch (CISB). The director of CISB is Mr Ashley Hill.

The merged branch incorporates the following teams:

- operations—which provides user support and day-to-day administration for court related applications as well as service desk support to judicial officers
- systems—which manages and enhances court related applications
- audio visual—which manages, supports and extends the audio and visual systems installed throughout the state
- Queensland Sentencing Information Service (QSIS)—which provides a comprehensive collection of sentencing information to assist decision makers on, and before, the Bench
- Queensland Courts communications—which develops and manages the communication materials used by the Supreme, District and Magistrates Courts throughout Queensland.

Digital recording

Previous annual reports have highlighted problems with the digital recording solution adopted by the courts. A renewed effort by CISB staff and the application provider resulted in rectification of many of the problems that reduced systemic reliability. In addition to work on the recording application, the department provided funding to upgrade server infrastructure and 20 per cent of the courtroom recording PCs. A network upgrade is also underway that will contribute to improved performance and reliability. Many CISB staff are required to maintain efficient recording of hearings.

eTrials

The 2007–08 annual report highlighted the development of ‘eCourtroom’ capabilities. These systems were used in a pilot of eTrials during 2008–09 where the Planning and Environment Court heard a complex matter involving numerous parties. While the court did not use the eTrials solution to manage all evidence presented during the hearing, the parties and the court obtained a benefit from the limited adopting of this technology. Funding will be sought to provide the service on permanent, though limited, basis.

Civil systems

The *CIMSLite* system that is used to manage civil files in the registry was enhanced. This system manages all Supreme Court and District Court civil files. They can be searched online using the eSearch facility on the Queensland Courts website. More than 954 000 online searches were undertaken during 2008–09.

Queensland Courts communications

The Queensland Courts communications team maintains the website and manages court-related communications projects. The website is easy to navigate and targets key audiences such as jurors, the legal profession and self-represented litigants. It received more than 10.8 million visits during 2008–09.

Audio visual

During 2008–09 the audio visual team visited 48 courthouses to perform systems maintenance and carried out significant systems upgrades in 16 courtrooms. New capital works installations also occurred at two courthouses.

CISB also supports and maintains video conference facilities in selected correctional facilities and during 2008–09 significant upgrades were made to systems in five correctional centres. The audio visual team is also involved in audio visual installations at the new Ipswich courthouse and audio visual design works for the new metropolitan courthouse.

Achievements

- improvement to the stability of the digital recording solution
- proving a low complexity solution for supporting eTrials
- consolidating information management and audio visual capability into a single team.

Future directions

Future years will challenge CISB as it strives to deliver high quality services and maintain high quality systems in the face of shrinking revenue.

Related organisations

The court library

The mission of the Supreme Court of Queensland Library (SCQL) is to serve the judiciary and legal profession in the administration of justice in Queensland.

SCQL fulfils this mission through two important roles:

- as the primary legal library service in Queensland, SCQL provides the judiciary, the legal profession and the wider community with research assistance and access to a range of legal information resources (both online and in-person)
- as the role preserver and promotor of understanding of Queensland's legal history through publications, exhibitions, archival initiatives and education programs. These self-sustaining activities are funded through charitable donations, sponsorship and the sale of publications.

SCQL is fortunate to be governed by a committee of its users, which ensures services remain responsive and relevant to their needs. The SCQL Committee comprises members of the judiciary, nominees of the Queensland

Law Society and Bar Association of Queensland, and a nominee of the Attorney-General. In 2008–09 the SCQL Committee was chaired by the Honourable Justice Dutney.

Highlights of 2008–09

- As part of the ongoing SCQL Online website project, a new library catalogue interface was launched. The new interface incorporates enhanced remote access capabilities (enabling around the clock access to resources for users across the state) and user customisation options.
- SCQL Online gateways, incorporating the website, online catalogue and Judicial Virtual Library, registered over 3 million visits.
- Significant progress was made in the ongoing initiative to consolidate and streamline law library services for all members of the judiciary and legal profession in Queensland. The benefits of such consolidation are already being realised with improved services being delivered more cost efficiently.

- A total of 12 841 information requests were serviced (including reference enquiries, document delivery requests and research assistance requests).
- The publishing program released four new titles and commenced research for a further two book projects.
- The historical documents digitisation program scanned and processed 5674 pages of historical material, and the oral history collection was expanded with four interviews.
- As part of its community programs, SCQL hosted two lectures and a conference to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the colony of Queensland. In addition, three public exhibitions were curated.
- The SCQL schools program hosted 7810 student visitors to the courts.
- searchable database of full-text Queensland judgments
- integrated online searching of electronic and hardcopy collections, and the ability to receive convenient email updates for new material and custom searches
- seamless, remote access to full-text online databases for registered users (as licensing permits)
- secure research assistance and document delivery request system for legal practitioners, firms and libraries
- free access to weekly current awareness service *Queensland Legal Updater*.

Queensland's online legal library

The realisation of a true consolidated online library for Queensland requires highly sophisticated information infrastructure. In 2008–09, SCQL continued to implement the SCQL Online project in stages, in particular the upgrade of the Millennium online catalogue system to facilitate remote, authenticated access to a range of resources and services.

SCQL Online (www.sclqld.org.au) is envisioned as a central gateway through which the legal profession and wider community will be able to access vital legal information, 24 hours a day seven days a week, regardless of their location. Current website features include:

Information services and collections

In recent years, the possible consolidation of publicly-funded law library services for the Queensland judiciary and legal profession has been widely discussed.

In 2008, the closure of the Queensland Law Society Library, and subsequent successful streamlining of library services for Queensland solicitors through the SCQL, demonstrated the benefits of this approach. Services were improved whilst also generating significant savings.

In 2008–09, similar opportunities were discussed with reference to the Department of Justice Library. The consolidation of selected legal library services across the Department of Justice Portfolio will assist in the reduction of duplicate material and also broaden the diversity of legal information available to all. In addition, by forming a more influential purchasing

consortium, more advantageous pricing and licensing agreements will be negotiated for the constituent bodies.

This year SCQL commenced negotiations with legal publishers on behalf of the portfolio library collections, with the objective of securing cost effective, broad and flexible terms of access.

SCQL continues to provide core information services (including reference, document delivery and research assistance) to the Queensland judiciary, legal profession and members of the public with matters before the Court. Additional services include:

- *Judicial Current Awareness* service, which circulated 5173 articles and speeches to Queensland judges and magistrates this year
- legal research and product training for judges, associates, legal practitioners and court staff
- judgment bulletins and indices, via the SCQL website and *Queensland Legal Indices*
- biographical sources on members of the judiciary.

Scholarly publishing

In 2008–09, SCQL published four new titles contributing to the public record of Queensland's legal history and celebrating significant milestones.

- The fourth volume of the *Supreme Court History Program Yearbook* features scholarly articles, together with tributes to retiring judges, legal personalia and a review of significant judicial and legislative developments.
- To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the re-establishment of the District Court, SCQL was commissioned to publish a history of the Court.

A Court Apart: The History of the District Court of Queensland by Dr Denver Beanland was launched in June 2009.

- *Guardian Of Your Rights: Queensland Council for Civil Liberties: A History, 1966-2007*, by Eddie Clarke, commemorates 40 years of service by the Queensland Council of Civil Liberties.
- *Far North: History of the North Queensland Law Association*, by Mr Gordon Dean, retired Magistrate and Honorary Archivist for the Magistrates Courts, marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the North Queensland Law Association (NQLA).

Legal heritage programs

Highlights of the Supreme Court History Program (SCHP) and historical document digitisation program include:

- digitisation of the Queensland Society of Notaries minute books and notarial register of Mr William Harold Conwell totalling 1062
- ongoing digitisation of the Bar Association of Queensland collection with 6553 pages of a total 11 943 pages having been processed
- recording of oral history interviews with His Honour Alan Wilson SC and with the Hon. William J Carter QC
- receipt of personal papers from the Hon. Ian Callinan AC QC for inclusion in the judicial biography collection.

Community outreach programs

SCQL was honoured to host, in conjunction with the UQ Centre for Public, International and Comparative Law (CPICL), the *Q150 Constitutional Conference* on Friday 29 May 2009.

The conference was held in the historic Queensland Legislative Council Chamber, Parliament House, to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the colony of Queensland. Papers focused on the origins and evolution of Queensland's constitution. Her Excellency Penelope Wensley AO, Governor of Queensland, delivered the opening address and other speakers included the Hon. Murray Gleeson AC QC, Former Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia, and the Hon. Justice James Allsop SC, President of the NSW Court of Appeal.

In addition, SCQL hosted the following lectures:

- On 27 March 2009, Dr Linda Mulcahy from Birkbeck College, London, presented the 2009 BH McPherson Oration on Legal History entitled *Fortresses, cathedrals and monuments of law: An account of the architecture of the English law court over time*.
- In conjunction with the Selden Society, Professor William Prest presented *Blackstone at the bar and at the bench* in the Banco Court on 5 June 2009.

Future directions

In the coming year SCQL will be focusing on preparations for relocation to the new court building in 2011. In addition, infrastructure and staffing strategies will continue to be refined to ensure the organisation remains well positioned to serve as the primary legal library for Queensland. Consolidation and strengthening will be key themes.

Major activities include:

- continuing to work collaboratively towards a consolidated and efficient library service across the Department of Justice and Attorney-General portfolio, to deliver improved services at a lower cost for all constituent bodies
- ongoing implementation of the SCQL Online project with incremental enhancements of the catalogue system to improve remote access to online resources
- removing of surplus print material in excess of 22 000 items (approximately 14 per cent of the collection) as required prior to relocation to the new court building
- publication of an illustrated commemorative book to celebrate the 150th anniversary, in 2011, of the establishment of the Supreme Court of Queensland.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Practice Directions

The following Practice Directions were issued by the Chief Judge during the year and are available on the Queensland Courts website, www.courts.qld.gov.au.

District Court

Number	Description	Date issued
2008/02	Filing written submissions	28 October 2008
2008/04	Costs assessment: interim arrangements	17 December 2008
2009/01	Recording devices in courtrooms: District Court	10 March 2009

Planning and Environment Court

Number	Description	Date issued
2008/01	Filing written submissions	10 December 2008
2008/02	Repeals PD 1 of 2006	19 December 2008

Appendix 2: District Court Associates as at 30 June 2009

Priya Dalal	Associate to Her Honour Chief Judge PM Wolfe	James Bishop	Associate to His Honour Judge MW Forde
Maree Griffiths	Associate to His Honour Judge KJ O'Brien	Sally Blumer	Associate to His Honour Judge CJL Brabazon QC
Malcolm Jorgensen	Associate to His Honour Senior Judge NA Skoien retired 27 September 2008	Scott Malcolmson	Associate to His Honour Judge DJ McGill SC
Samuel McLaughlin	Associate to His Honour Senior Judge G Trafford-Walker	Kara Cook	Associate to His Honour Judge CF Wall QC (Southport)
Alexander West	Associate to His Honour Judge W Howell retired 30 May 2008	John Newman	Associate to His Honour Judge RD Pack (Townsville)
Samantha Watkins	Associate to His Honour Judge KS Dodds (Maroochydhore)	Jennifer Samiec	Associate to His Honour Judge N Samios
Jodie Lewry	Associate to His Honour Judge HWH Botting	Gordon Roberts	Associate to His Honour Judge GT Britton SC (Rockhampton)
William Mair	Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Noud	Paul Mulhall	Associate to Her Honour Judge D Richards (Ipswich)
Regina Hopson	Associate to His Honour Judge PD Robin QC	Christine Wilson	Associate to Her Honour Judge S Bradley (Cairns)
Jennifer Kosiol	Associate to His Honour Judge JE Newton (Southport)	Shane Pierce	Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Shanahan
Philippa Miller-Ibos	Associate to Her Honour Judge H O'Sullivan	Natasha Jenkins	Associate to Her Honour Judge JM Dick SC
Dean Jones	Associate to His Honour Judge JM Robertson (Maroochydhore)	Ariane Wilkinson	Associate to His Honour Judge AM Wilson SC
		Jaelyn Rolfe	Associate to His Honour Judge ME Rackemann
		Sean Rowe	Associate to His Honour Judge WH Tutt

Alessandro De Luca Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Griffin SC

Michael Bonasia Associate to Her Honour Judge JA Ryrie

Rebecca Fogerty Associate to His Honour Judge IFM Dearden (Beenleigh)

Joseph Phipps Associate to Her Honour Judge FY Kingham (Southport)

Clancy Fox Associate to His Honour Judge SG Durward SC (Townsville)

Michael Williams Associate to His Honour Judge AJ Rafter SC

William Le Mass Associate to His Honour Judge TD Martin SC

Justin Hine Associate to His Honour Judge DG Searles

Lucinda McPhee Associate to His Honour Judge GJ Koppenol (Ipswich)

Sarah Tynan Associate to His Honour Judge DC Andrews SC

Karen Dodds Associate to Her Honour Judge LJ Clare SC

Spencer Browne Associate to His Honour Judge WG Everson

The District Court of Queensland
Law Courts Complex
304 George Street, Brisbane QLD 4000
PO Box 15167, City East QLD 4002

Registry:

Telephone: (07) 3247 9261
Fax: (07) 3247 5387

www.courts.qld.gov.au





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