

DISTRICT COURT OF QUEENSLAND

ANNUAL REPORT

2004-2005

The District Court of Queensland
Law Courts Complex
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28 October 2005

The Honourable LD Lavarch MP
Attorney-General and Minister for Justice
18th Floor
State Law Building
Cnr George and Ann Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Attorney

Pursuant to s.130A(1) of the *District Court Act* 1967, I enclose my Report on the operation of the District Court for the year ended 30 June 2005.

Yours sincerely

Chief Judge PM Wolfe

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The Chief Judge's Overview

Chief Judge Patricia Wolfe

INTRODUCTION

This is the ninth report on the operation of the District Court of Queensland and relates to the year ended 30 June 2005. It was prepared in consultation with the judges, in particular with the convenors of the judges' committees and the judges with particular responsibility for the court's specialist courts and tribunals: Senior Judge Skoien and Judge Wilson SC on the Planning and Environment Court and Judge O'Brien on the Childrens Court of Queensland (of which he is President), and on the activities of the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

PERFORMANCE

Disposition of Caseload

The court's performance over the year under report may be analysed in the context of the disposition of the court's caseload. The tables appended to this report provide that analysis. The court performed satisfactorily in terms of the amount of work completed and timeliness of disposition. This is especially commendable in light of the serious decrease in available judicial resources, and the demand of the increasing workload in many of the regional centres – a demand met by increasing the number of circuits to those places.

The District Court employs rigorous and effective modes of case management which are among the most effective in Australia. Its adjuncts, the Planning and Environment Court and the Health Practitioners Tribunal, also use various forms of judicial case management.

Disposition of Criminal Caseload

Judges of the Criminal Listing Taskforce have primary responsibility for management of the criminal caseload in Brisbane. They rely on the highly efficient and ongoing support of the Principal Registrar and Administrator and the District Court Criminal List Manager. The system implemented by Judge Hoath, Director of the Criminal Listing Taskforce, ensured that the court was appraised at the earliest opportunity as to what course matters will take and that matters are dealt with promptly. The reduction in available judicial resources, an apparent increase in Brisbane in the number of matters stayed as a result of hearings pending in the Mental Health Court and in

the number of matters ready for sentence but awaiting committal on other charges, explains the moderate increase in matters older than 12 months.

In Brisbane during 2004-2005 65.5% of all criminal matters were disposed of within 6 months, down from last year (71.9%). The Brisbane centre began the year with more active outstanding cases than last year (855 this year, 836 last year) and disposed of slightly fewer matters during the year (2586 this year, 2768 last year). The number of active undisposed matters as at 30 June 2004 increased by 23 to 878.

In Brisbane, 14.2% of active matters remained undisposed of more than 12 months after presentation of the indictment, more than the 10.9% achieved in the 2003-2004 year. Although the number of Brisbane trials has remained relatively stable over the period 2001-2002 to 2004-2005 (192 trials in 2001-2002 and 201 in the year under review) the length of trial has increased by 12% over the period.

This year the Court also disposed of 477 criminal matters in Cairns (up from 394 in 2003-2004), 609 in Southport (compared with 618 in 2003-2004), 432 in Townsville (404 in 2003-2004), 532 in Beenleigh (607 in 2003-2004), 565 in Ipswich (493 in 2003-2004), 423 in Maroochydore (501 in 2003-2004), and 293 in Rockhampton (304 in 2003-2004). Many others were disposed of in the circuit centres, including 251 in Maryborough (324 in 2003-2004), 116 in Bundaberg (90 in 2003-2004), 201 in Mackay (176 in 2003-2004) and 209 in Toowoomba (187 in 2003-2004). These figures are exclusive of the matters dealt with in the Childrens Court of Queensland.

Disposition of Civil and Applications Caseload

In 2004-2005 in Brisbane, 3873 new matters were filed, down by 45 on last year. This workload was again represented by the steady number of originating applications (1473, down one from the previous year), and a decrease in the number of claims (2400 compared with 2444 last year).

In Brisbane, Rockhampton, Cairns, Toowoomba and Bundaberg, all civil cases were disposed of within 12 months of entry for trial. In Brisbane, 29.9% were disposed of within 3 months, up from 25.4% in 2003-2004. Further 100% of Brisbane matters were disposed of within 9 months, with 89.59% in 6 months. Other major centres were as efficient, such as Cairns (46.2% within 3 months and 84.7% within 6 months), Southport (53% and 83.33%), and Maroochydore (34.2% and 71%).

At the start of the year under review, there were 71 matters entered for trial in Brisbane, down one from last year. During the year another 250 matters were entered for trial, and a total of 221 matters were disposed of. The number of matters undisposed of at the end of the year increased to 100 (71 in 2003-2004).

Outside Brisbane the Court disposed of 64 civil matters in Southport, 44 in Maroochydore, 12 in Townsville and 11 in Cairns. The major regional centres of Southport, Rockhampton, Ipswich, Toowoomba and Mackay disposed of more matters than in the previous year.

The District Court annual applications load steadied with 3486 matters heard in the 2004-2005 reporting period compared with 3631 the previous year. In Brisbane, 1786 matters were heard this year and 1997 last year. Cairns, Rockhampton, Maroochydore, Maryborough and Gympie bore a substantial rise in the applications load.

These statistics do not include the matters dealt with by Judges of the Court sitting as Judges of the Planning and Environment Court or constituting the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

Planning and Environment Court

The Planning and Environment Court is structured as a de facto division of the District Court of Queensland under the administration of the Chief Judge. It operates effectively and efficiently. The organization of its business is the responsibility of the District Court. Its judges are judges of the District Court, its registrar is the Principal Registrar of the District Court and the Supreme

Court. Appeals lie to the Court of Appeal, as do appeals from the judges sitting in the District Court.

The Judges of the Planning and Environment Court carry a significant workload. As was the case in the past reporting period, this year there was a jump in the number of new cases across all centres, at 722 (601 in 2003-2004, 490 in 2002-2003, 438 in 2001-2002). This is to be compared with the number of matters disposed of during the period, at 571 (589 in 2003-2004, 401 in 2002-2003, 348 in 2001-2002).

Brisbane again bore the brunt of the increase with 569 new matters, up from 487 in 2003-2004, 412 in 2002-2003 and 324 in 2001-2002. In Brisbane, 435 matters were disposed of in the year under review compared with 456 in 2003-2004 and 296 in 2002-2003).

Maroochydore, Townsville and Cairns all experienced a considerable rise in the total number of new cases. Cairns, Townsville and Maroochydore all disposed of a greater number of matters than in the previous reporting year. In Maroochydore, there were 63 new cases and 52 total disposals, compared with 42 new cases and 44 disposals in 2003-2004. In Townsville there were 17 new cases and 23 disposals (14 and 6 respectively in 2003-2004), in Cairns 36 new cases and 32 disposals (up from 19 and 17 in 2003-2004), in Rockhampton 4 new cases and 4 disposals (2 and 8 in 2003-2004) and in Southport 33 new cases and 25 disposals (37 new cases and 58 disposals in 2003-2004).

Appeals

The District Court hears all appeals from the Magistrates Courts, including criminal appeals pursuant to s.222 of the *Justices Act* 1886. It also determines appeals from a number of tribunals and bodies.

In 2004-2005 the District Court heard a total of 307 appeals at major centres throughout the State, including 112 appeals in Brisbane (up from 97 last year), 7 in Townsville (8 in 2003-2004), 58 in Cairns (22 in 2003-2004), 34 in Southport (24 in 2003-2004), 22 in Maroochydore (24 in 2003-2004) and 41 in Ipswich (15 in 2003-2004).

Circuits

The Court is committed to allocating sufficient District Court sittings in circuit centres to ensure that matters can be heard and decided in a timely fashion in regional, rural and remote parts of Queensland. However, despite the ever decreasing available judicial resources - 68 fewer available judge weeks in the 2004 calendar year than there were in the 2003 calendar year and 80 fewer than in the 2002 calendar year - the number of circuits had to be increased for the 2004 year to properly service regional, rural and remote Queensland. In the 2004 calendar year the Judges were allocated a total of 383 weeks on circuit (328 in 2003), 266 of which were completed by Brisbane Judges (235 in 2003). In the 2002 calendar year there were 370 total weeks circuit, 252 weeks of which were undertaken by Brisbane Judges.

Indigenous and Remote Circuits

The Judges of the District Court of Queensland have been sitting on circuits in the remote Aboriginal and Islander communities for some years now. The Judges based in Cairns and a number from Brisbane have sat in the Gulf and the Cape at Thursday Island, Mornington Island, Normanton, Doomadgee, Kowanyama, Bamaga, Aurukun and Pormpuraaw as well as the Lockhart River.

This year, remote circuits were performed to the Gulf on two occasions, to the Cape on two occasions, to Thursday Island on two occasions, and to Bamaga, Cooktown, Lockhart River and Palm Island. Judge Pack also sat at Palm Island on circuit.

Two central matters that continue to be of concern to the judges are the lack of appropriately trained interpreters in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in court proceedings and a court based Indigenous Liaison Officer.

The Judges now sit at Murgon to hear sentences, however the community courthouse at Cherbourg is inadequate for sittings of the District Court, even for sentencing. Cherbourg was proclaimed to be part of the Kingaroy jury district on 28 April 2005, and the first sittings for which those electors were made available to the jury system was for the Kingaroy sittings commencing 29 August 2005.

Comparative Performance¹

The 2005 Report on Government Services released in January 2005 by the Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision records that in 2003-2004 the District Court of Queensland received one of the lowest distributions of criminal court administration expenditure (less income) of the District and County Courts of Australia² despite having the third largest criminal workload and civil workload of these Australian courts and the second highest rate of civil and criminal finalisations of these courts.

Resources and access to the judicial system may also be measured by comparing the number of judicial officers in the context of the population of each jurisdiction. The Report found that the Queensland District Court had only 0.8 judicial officers (judges and judicial registrars available to hear and determine matters) per 100 000 people - the lowest of all States (Western Australia and South Australia had 1.3; New South Wales and Victoria 1.1).³

One way the Report measured performance was by the 'clearance rate'⁴ - the number of finalisations in the reporting period divided by the number of lodgements in that same period. A figure of 100% or higher means the court is keeping up with its workload or reducing its pending workload respectively, whereas lower than 100% indicates the court is accumulating cases, that the pending caseload of the court is increasing and that case processing times can be expected to increase in the immediate future.

In the criminal jurisdiction for the year from 01 July 2003-30 June 2004 the Report showed that this court's clearance rate had improved with a clearance rate of 92.9 % (as against 89.6% in the previous year). This compared with Victoria (104.8%); Western Australia (100.3%); New South Wales (95.2%) and South Australia (77.1%). In civil, this court improved markedly, attaining the civil clearance rate of 103.4% (as against 71.7% in the previous year). This compared with New South Wales (123.9%), Victoria (82.5%), Western Australia (95.3%) and South Australia (95.9%)⁵.

A means of measuring efficiency, albeit imperfectly, is to compare Australia's District and County Courts 'cost per finalisation',⁶ being the total net recurrent expenditure within the court in the financial year divided by the total number of finalisations for that same period. In 2003-2004, as in the previous year, Queensland net expenditure per District Court criminal finalisation was lowest of all States and in the civil jurisdiction Queensland's net expenditure per finalisation was also lower than that in the other states⁷.

THE COURTHOUSES

Brisbane

Detailed planning commenced, in the latter part of the reporting year, in relation to the establishment of a new courthouse for the Higher Courts in Brisbane. Over a number of years I have emphasised the inadequacy of the present facilities for these courts. The Attorney-General,

¹ Report on Government Services 2005, Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision

² Page 6.13 and figure 6.2 Vol 1 Report on Government Services, Table 6.2, Table 6.3, Table 6.5, Table 6.6

³ Table 6.16

⁴ Box 6.12

⁵ Table 6.17

⁶ Box 6.13

⁷ Page 6.44

the Director-General and the Deputy Director-General are to be commended for their assistance in actively progressing this issue.

Mackay

On 9 December 2004 I attended the opening by the Attorney-General of stage two of the Mackay courthouse, being the restoration of the original courthouse which was built in 1938. This refurbishment followed the construction of the new annexe with its four new courtrooms which opened earlier that year.

Hervey Bay

On 22 April 2005 the Hon the Premier opened an extension to the courthouse at Hervey Bay which adds a criminal court with full jury facilities and facilities for the giving of evidence by remote video link. When circumstances demand, this will now allow the District Court to preside over criminal trials in Hervey Bay, notwithstanding that the District Court will continue to operate actively in Maryborough, so that the court can continue to serve well the people of the whole region.

Thursday Island

On 4 May 2005 the Attorney-General opened the \$3 million Thursday Island Courthouse. It is Australia's northern most courthouse and provides the people of Torres Strait with a modern judicial facility including video-conferencing equipment and closed circuit television enabling remote evidence to be taken and recorded.

The new courthouse, replacing the original island courthouse built 70 years ago, features a courtroom, Judge's chambers, registry, interview and conference rooms, two holding cells, a room for vulnerable witnesses and an external dispute resolution area. The foyer and the courtroom contain striking artworks by local artists including a traditional headdress and wooden carvings.

During the year under review, Judge O'Brien and Judge Shanahan conducted court sittings on Thursday Island.

Thursday Island Courthouse

Dual Registries

Problems highlighted in the reports over a number of years arising from dual registries have not been addressed. In Southport, Maroochydore, Ipswich and Beenleigh resources and staff are shared between the District Court and Magistrates Court registries. In Maroochydore, Southport and Ipswich the District Court registry is physically located within the Magistrates Court registry and files are stored in the same compactor. Potential exists for confusion and injustice, or at the

very least, delay. In Southport, Maroochydore, Beenleigh and Ipswich the District Court Registrar also performs the role of Registrar of the Magistrates Court. Each of these important roles requires a full time dedicated officer.

However, planning is well underway for the construction of a modern courthouse at Ipswich, and of sufficient size to cater for one of the court's biggest workloads. This can be expected to increase exponentially with the implementation of the Government's South-East Queensland Regional Plan.

Chief Judge's Calendar

Apart from the time allotted to administrative responsibilities, I sat in the various jurisdictions of the court, both in and out of Brisbane: the criminal court (16 weeks), civil and applications (8 weeks), and in the Planning and Environment Court and the Health Practitioners Tribunal, as well as in Cairns, Toowoomba, Rockhampton and Southport (8 weeks). Aside from monthly Judges' meetings, meetings of the Judges' Committees and the Supreme Court Library Committee, conferences and public events, I regularly met with the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Director-General of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General and senior officers of the department, the Principal Registrar and Administrator, the Sheriff, listings managers and Higher Courts IT staff.

During the year I met regularly with the leaders and representatives of the many organisations principally involved in the justice system - the Queensland Bar Association, the Queensland Law Society, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Queensland, the Public Defender and Protect All Children Today (PACT).

I also attended meetings of the Council of Chief Judges, the Higher Courts IT Steering Committee, and the Monitoring Committee of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions which was established to monitor the progress of the implementation of the recommendations from the 2003 review of the ODPP and its interrelationship with the Department.

Practice Directions

During the year, two Practice Directions were issued. Applications for Adjustments of Property Interests (05/2004) and Evidence of Affected Children (01/2005)⁸.

Management

The Focus Group, comprising the Chief Justice, the President of the Court of Appeal, the Senior Judge Administrator, the Court Administrator, the Principal Registrar and the Director of the State Reporting Bureau, with the Chief Judge an invitee, met on 16 February 2005.

Jury initiative

On 1 January 2005 a juror support programme commenced. It was approved by the Judges of the Higher Courts to provide professional counselling services on request to jurors upon the completion of criminal trials. The level of use this service, although not substantial, is such as to confirm the appropriateness of its being offered.

Affected child witnesses

The *Evidence (Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2003* (Act No 55 of 2003) came into effect in January 2004, with considerable ramifications for the court, changing the way trials are conducted which involves child witnesses. Children's evidence is pre-recorded on videotape from a remote witness room in a preliminary hearing, pursuant to the stipulations of the Act.

The court continues to oversee the implementation of these reforms. All centres have at least one remote witness room and at least one courtroom with CCTV facilities. The adjudication and administration of the matters involving pre-recorded evidence, under this legislation has proved that the procedures are complex but have been successful. No tapes have been lost, and the Principal Registrar has ensured they are available for trials wherever held.

⁸ see Appendix 2

In the year under review, about 60% of the children whose evidence was ordered to be pre-recorded in the District Court had their evidence pre-recorded for trial. About 70% of the pre-recordings ordered proceeded in that the child witness, at least, was required to come to the courthouse to give evidence from a remote witness room. Most proceeded to have their evidence pre-recorded, although in some instances the pre-recording did not go ahead usually because the accused person pleaded guilty on the morning of the pre-recording. In almost 80% of the trials that did proceed to verdict (the child's pre-recorded evidence having been played at the trial) the accused was found guilty.

Child Witness Suite

Again, the Director-General is to be commended for her assistance and support of the initiative of the Judges of the District Court for an appropriately furnished and decorated suite of rooms in Brisbane for the giving of evidence by children, and other potentially vulnerable witnesses, remotely from the trial courtroom. This facility will serve the Higher Courts.

It has involved the refurbishment of a considerable area in the old District Court building in the Law Courts Complex. After consultation with the officers of the Department, the Director of Public Prosecutions, Legal Aid Queensland, the Bar and officers of Protect All Children Today (PACT), the Judges approved the plan which will provide a secure suite for the children. The suite contains two remote witness rooms, two waiting areas for children and their families, an office for a supervising officer that will be available for interviews, a specially equipped room for the children which will be operated by PACT, and a kitchen and a toilet - all linked by a secure corridor. The suite will connect to 6 courtrooms in the old building. At the time of writing, construction was almost completed. This is an important step towards improving the conditions under which affected child witnesses give their evidence. Attention is being given to the adequacy of similar facilities in other courthouses State-wide.

Rules Committee

The Rules Committee, chaired by Justice Williams, includes, from the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice, Mr Justice Muir and Justice Wilson, Judge Robin QC and Judge McGill SC from the District Court and the Principal Registrar of the Supreme and District Courts. It met at least fortnightly out of ordinary court hours.

CONTINUING JUDICIAL EDUCATION

Twenty Judges of the court attended the 18th Biennial Conference of the District and County Court Judges of Australia, in Melbourne, over the period 23-26 June 2005, where there were presentations on a range of subjects, including the social, cultural and moral issues of modern society with community perceptions of the courts and the judiciary, the effect of international law on Australian criminal law, jury management, sentencing the mentally ill and intellectually disabled and cross-cultural awareness with emphasis on Vietnamese Australians in the courts. The conference received a report from the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration, and Judge McGill SC presented a paper on civil procedure.

It is the practice of the court that all newly-appointed Judges participate in the National Judicial Orientation programme conducted annually under the auspices of the National Judicial College with the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration and the Judicial Commission of New South Wales. These live-in, week-long courses take place in Sydney. Judge Rackemann and Judge Tutt this year attended the course, which was held 18-22 October 2004.

In August 2004, Judge Noud, Judge Forde, Judge Bradley and Judge Richards attended the National Judicial College of Australia's Judgment Writing Workshop.

THE COURT AND THE PUBLIC

On Monday, 6 June 2005, in celebration of Queensland Day, the Higher Courts again hosted tours for members of the public, with 425 people participating in the tour of the Law Courts Complex in Brisbane. Special Law Week displays were erected in the main regional courthouses across the State and incorporated a new corporate video and factsheets.

The Judges have contributed to numerous meetings and conferences. Details of some of these events appear below.

In July 2004, Judge Shanahan spoke at the AIJA Child Witnesses – Best Practice Conference in Parramatta at which Judge O’Sullivan chaired a session. In August 2004, Judge Rackemann spoke on ecological sustainability for company directors and directors of government owned corporations at a Greening the Boardroom meeting; Judge Wilson SC spoke at the Lexis-Nexis Planning Law Conference on “Integrated Planning in Qld” and Judge Wilson SC and Judge Rackemann spoke at a QELA seminar on practice and procedure in the Planning and Environment Court.

In September 2004, Judge Forde was presented with an award for excellence in judicial administration at the Australian Institute for Judicial Administration annual conference in Sydney with particular mention of the training manual and video for training indigenous Community Justice Groups that he produced; and Judge Rackemann sat in New Zealand, as an observer, on the bench on the hearing of an appeal in the Environment Court and held discussions about case management with the Principal Environment Court Chief Judge, another judge, hearing commissioners and managers of that court. In October 2004, Judge Wilson spoke at the Succession Law Conference on testamentary capacity.

In November 2004, Judge Bradley attended the Law Stick Ceremony at Aurukun. The Law Stick was commissioned by the Aurukun Justice Group with the help of funding from the Queensland Law Society. Judge Bradley was invited to accept the Law Stick on behalf of the justice system and it was installed onto the bench. In December 2004, Judge Shanahan delivered his paper on the history of the Public Defender of Queensland at the launch of the History of Legal Aid Queensland; and Judge Forde spoke on “The need for training the members of the Justice Groups” at the annual conference for indigenous leaders of the Community Justice Groups.

In March 2005, the Australian Bar Association LAWASIA Moot Competition was held in the courtrooms of the District Court at Southport, with Senior Judge Trafford-Walker, Judge Newton and Judge Rackemann presiding. In April 2005, Judge Tutt gave a paper entitled "Feedback from the bench" to the Legal Aid Queensland continuing legal education program. In May 2005, Judge Alan Wilson and Judge Michael Rackemann delivered a joint paper entitled "Courting Change - consultation, case management, accessibility and dispute resolution in the Planning and Environment Court" at the Queensland Environment Law Association (QELA) conference; and Judge O’Sullivan spoke at the Annual Queensland PACT Conference. In June 2005, Judge Tutt spoke at the Queensland Law Society personal injuries conference on "A District Court perspective - differences between damages awarded pre and post tort reform".

Webpage (www.courts.qld.gov.au)

The courts’ webpage, hosted by the Supreme Court Library, continues to be a focus of public and professional attention, registering 853,300 hits this year.

International aspects

The District Court at Brisbane received a number of international visitors:

- On 3 September 2004, a delegation from the Beijing People’s High Court, led by Justice Yue Zhang, Director, Policy Research;
- On 14 January, 2005, Judge Hideo Kishi of the Japanese District Court;

- On 12 May, 2005, a delegation from Shanghai No 1 Intermediate People's Court, led by Mr Bao Xianming, President

In May 2005 in Dubai, Judge Dick SC assisted the International Bar Association in training Iraqi Judges and prosecutors on international human rights law, including the right to a fair trial and equality before the law as well as women's rights in the administration of justice.

JUDICIAL RETIREMENT

Judge Manus Boyce QC, who was appointed on 18 February 1988, retired on 5 October 2004.

Judge Brian Boulton, who was appointed on 22 February 1988, retired on 13 November 2004.

Judge Anthony Healy QC, who was appointed on 10 February 1987, retired on 7 March 2005.

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS

On 29 October 2004, Judge Milton Griffin SC was sworn in as a Judge of the District Court.

On 28 February 2005, Judge Julie Ryrie was sworn in as a Judge of the District Court.

On 28 February 2005, Judge Ian Dearden was sworn in as a Judge of the District Court with chambers at Southport.

PERSONAL

In the Australia Day Honours List, 2005, the Principal Registrar and Administrator, Mr Ken Toogood, was awarded a Public Service Medal (PSM) "for outstanding public service as Principal Registrar of the Supreme and District Courts of Queensland and for enhancing service delivery by Queensland Court Registries". Mr Toogood, who has held the position of Registrar for 16 years, deserves approbation for this well-justified recognition.

CONCLUSION

I thank the Judges, officers of the Registry and the court's administrative staff for another year's hard work. I particularly acknowledge the work done by those involved in achieving the court's overall performance despite the varied and onerous workload and in a climate characterised by additional responsibilities arising from reduced resources, particular demands and constant challenges. Throughout this period the Judges, and the public, have had the benefit of the Director-General, Ms Rachel Hunter's support for the court's work,, and the expert assistance of the Principal Registrar and Administrator, Mr Ken Toogood and the Deputy Court Administrator, Mr Cameron Woods and their staff.

Judges 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
Judge	His Honour Senior Judge Nelson Anthony Skoien
	His Honour Senior Judge Gilbert Trafford-Walker
	His Honour Judge Warren Howell
	His Honour Judge Ian MacGregor Wylie, QC
	His Honour Judge Keith Stuart Dodds (Maroochydore)
	His Honour Judge Anthony Joseph Healy, QC (<i>retired 7 March 2005</i>)
	His Honour Judge Manus Boyce, QC (<i>retired 6 October 2004</i>)
	His Honour Judge Garry Spencer Forno, QC
	His Honour Judge Brian James Boulton (<i>retired 14 November 2004</i>)
	His Honour Judge Hugh Wilfrid Harry Botting
	His Honour Judge Michael John Noud
	His Honour Judge Kerry John O'Brien
	His Honour Judge Neil Ferguson McLauchlan, QC
	His Honour Judge Philip David Robin, QC
	His Honour Judge Brian Charles Hoath
	His Honour Judge John Elwell Newton (Southport)
	Her Honour Judge Helen O'Sullivan
	His Honour Judge Peter James White (Cairns)
	His Honour Judge Philip Grahame Nase
	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 (Townsville)
	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
	His Honour Judge Alan Muir Wilson SC
	His Honour Judge Marshall Allan Irwin*
	His Honour Judge Michael Edward Rackemann (Southport)
	His Honour Judge Walter Henry Tutt (Beenleigh)
	His Honour Judge Milton James Griffin SC (<i>appointed 29 October 2004</i>)
	Her Honour Judge Julie Ann Ryrie (<i>appointed 28 February 2005</i>)
	His Honour Judge Ian Francis Macrae Dearden (Southport) (<i>appointed 28 February 2005</i>)

*Judge Irwin did not perform any of the duties or exercise any powers of a District Court Judge because he holds the office of Chief Magistrate: s.11 of the *Magistrates' Act 1991*.

Administrative Staff of the District Court

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

Principal Registrar and Administrator (Brisbane)	Ken Toogood
Deputy Court Administrator	Cameron Woods
Sheriff	Neil Hansen
Registrar (Cairns)	John Bingham
Registrar (Townsville)	Michael Reeves to 20 September 2004/Robyn Wegner from 20 September 2004
Registrar (Rockhampton)	Gordon Roberts to 24 March 2005/ Kate Bannerman (Acting) from 25 March 2005
Information Technology Manager	Ashley Hill
Deputy Registrars	Robyn Wegner (until 17 September 2004) Peter Irvine
Chief Judge's Executive Assistants	Jan Daniels / Maryanne Nottingham
A/Chief Bailiff	Ken Welsh
Deputy Chief Bailiff	Michael Hinge
Listings Coordinator	Kate Bannerman until 18 March 2005/Leanne McDonnell from 4 April 2005
Criminal List Manager	Amy Critchley, Stephen Till, Brad Sellers
Assistant Criminal List Manager	Stephen Till
Childrens Court List Manager	Lisa Ingram
Civil and Applications List Manager	Danny Coppolecchia
Planning and Environment List Manager	Alfina Tomarchio
Judge' Secretariat	Annette Cameron Nancye Gibson Bev Morgan Laura Murase

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

*Olivia Williamson (Associate to the Chief Judge), Cameron Woods (Deputy Court Administrator)
Chief Judge Wolfe, Maryanne Nottingham (Executive Assistant), Jan Daniels (Executive Assistant)*

Regional Judges

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

In Southport: Judge Healy QC (to March 2005), Judge Newton, Judge Rackemann and Judge Dearden (from June 2005)

In Maroochydore: Judge Dodds and Judge Robertson

In Cairns: Judge White and Judge Bradley

In Townsville: Judge Wall QC and Judge Pack

In Rockhampton: Judge Britton SC

In Ipswich: Judge Richards

In Beenleigh: Judge Tutt

Judge Peter White, Cairns

Specialist Courts

Planning and Environment Court

The Judges who sat in the Planning and Environment Court during 2004-2005 are listed below:

Chief Judge Wolfe
Senior Judge Skoien
Judge Dodds
Judge McLauchlan QC
Judge Robin QC
Judge Newton
Judge White
Judge Nase

Judge Robertson
Judge Brabazon QC
Judge Wall QC
Judge Pack
Judge Britton SC
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann
Judge Griffin SC

Childrens Court

Some District Court Judges are commissioned to sit as Childrens Court Judges. The Judges who sat in the Childrens Court during 2004-2005 are listed below:

Judge O'Brien (President)
Judge Healy QC (retired 7 March 2005)
Senior Judge Trafford-Walker
Judge Newton
Judge White
Judge Nase
Judge Robertson
Judge Wall QC
Judge Pack

Judge Samios
Judge Britton SC
Judge Richards
Judge Bradley
Judge Shanahan
Judge Dick SC
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Tutt
Judge Griffin SC

The Work of the District Court

The work of the District Court is the hearing of appeals and the conduct and trial of matters commenced by indictment (criminal), claim (civil) or originating applications (civil). It also includes interlocutory applications, that is, applications in pending matters, whether commenced by claim, originating application or indictment. The Chief Judge is responsible for the administration of the District 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 90% of all criminal matters in Brisbane which are prosecuted on indictment. The court exercises equitable and other jurisdiction within its civil monetary limit. The court's civil jurisdiction is generally limited to matters involving \$250,000 or less.

Other work of District Court Judges

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 the Childrens Court of Queensland. All Judges are members of the Health Practitioners Tribunal.

The caseloads and rates of disposition of matters in the criminal, civil, applications, appeals and Planning and Environment jurisdictions in respect the centres appear in Appendix 1 – the court's statistics.

Organisation of Work

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

Appellate

This court hears and determines all appeals from the Magistrates Courts as well as from various tribunals and other statutory bodies.

Civil

The court has an extensive general jurisdiction:

- 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.

Criminal

In practice the court deals with all indictable matters other than homicides and serious drug offences. The court regularly conducts trials involving:

- more than 24 offences attracting a maximum penalty of life imprisonment;
- offences under the *Corporations Law* and against Federal and State revenue laws. These may involve many millions of dollars;
- major trials involving public figures such as a former Premier, several former Ministers of the Crown, and a former Police Commissioner.

The Planning and Environment Court

This court is constituted by a District Court Judge appointed to it. It was constituted by the *Local Government (Planning and Environment) Act 1990*, 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 many millions of dollars. The court's decisions often have significant economic, health or lifestyle impact on large communities throughout the State.

Health Practitioners Tribunal

All District Court Judges are members of this Tribunal which was established by the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999*. The Health Practitioners Tribunal hears appeals from disciplinary tribunals in respect of most health professional groups, medical practitioners, chiropractors, dentists, dental technicians and prosthetists, occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists and speech pathologists.

Building and Other Appeals

The District Court also hears appeals from other professional disciplinary bodies. The relevant professions include teachers, nurses and engineers, as well as appeals under the *Associations Incorporation Act 1981*, the *Children Services Tribunal Act 2000*, and several other Acts. The District Court hears appeals from the Commercial and Consumer Tribunal which was established on 1 July 2003. This tribunal's jurisdiction including hearing or reviews of decisions concerning liquor licences or permits under the *Liquor Act 1992*, disciplinary action against licensees and building disputes under the *Queensland Building Services Authority Act 1991*, disciplinary matters under the *Property Agents and Motor Dealers Act 2000*, disputes under the *Retirement Villages Act 1999*, architects' registration and disciplinary hearings under the *Architects Act 2002* and decisions of the Building Services Authority under the *Building Act 1975*.

Childrens Court

The District Court Judges appointed to the Childrens Court of Queensland determine some of the 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.

Judge Brian Hoath, Director, Criminal Listing Taskforce

Criminal Jurisdiction

The Taskforce

The Judges of the Criminal Listing Taskforce, the Chief Judge, Judge O'Brien, Judge Hoath, Judge Shanahan, Judge Dick SC and Judge Griffin SC continue to manage the criminal list in Brisbane during the year. In Southport Judge Healy QC undertook management of the Southport criminal list until March this year and in the other regions, the lists were managed by the resident Judge.

The sharp increase in the number of indictments presented in south-east Queensland centres has levelled with Brisbane remaining steady with 2592 indictments presented, down 185 from last year. In Southport there were 629 indictments presented (672 last year) in Maroochydore 418 (527 last year), in Ipswich 498 (628), and Toowoomba, Maryborough and Mackay showed increases. Beenleigh was steady with 565 new indictments, 571 last year.

Many of the cases are reviewed or managed by the Judge before the review date, to ensure that the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has provided the defence with all witness' statements and particulars and that the defence has considered whether a s.590AA hearing is required. Before the trial review date, the parties in all cases are expected to raise any foreseeable problems as they arise. In many 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*.

Civil Jurisdiction

The District Court's civil jurisdiction is set out in s.68 of the *District Court Act 1967*.

Some matters were disposed of by Judges dealing with interlocutory applications in actions commenced by claims.

Disposition of civil cases

The civil cases which had been entered for trial but not determined by the end of the year in each of the major centres outside Brisbane is shown in Appendix 1.

Appellate Jurisdiction

The court hears all criminal and civil appeals from Magistrates Courts. It also determines appeals from decisions of various tribunals and other statutory bodies. Many, but not the most complex, are criminal appeals under Section 222 of the *Justices Act 1886*.

The number of appeals in major centres is shown in Appendix 1.

Case management of appeals to the District Court continued with regular reviews of outstanding appeals being conducted by the Registrar 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.

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.

The number of applications filed at the major centres and some circuit centres this year and in recent years is set out in Appendix 1.

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.

The Planning and Environment Court

The Planning and Environment Court (PEC) is constituted under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* and is comprised of 16 judges of the District Court of Queensland holding PEC commissions. The court operates as part of the District Court under the administration of the Chief Judge. In Brisbane its principal member is Senior Judge Skoien who supervises its day to day management, assisted by Judge Wilston SC, the Brisbane listings judge having responsibility for listing.

The judges resolved to proceed with reforms of practice and procedure which were already underway and remain alert to potential improvements. During the year the caseload has increased in some centres and significantly in Brisbane. Despite that increase the court has managed to sustain the speed with which it can offer hearing dates, and new matters can be heard within three or four months of commencement of proceedings.

Management of the lists is a co-operative effort between the judges in Brisbane and regional centres. The work of the PEC is diffuse and can arise in remote or unexpected areas. The PEC judges in the major cities keep a close watch on matters filed not only in their courts but also smaller registries in the locale. The Chief Judge is astute to respond quickly to advice from the PEC that the number of cases in particular centres is in need of attention, and reallocates judges to meet these demands.

The Brisbane judges have begun a system of reviews and callovers by telelink in courts within 400km of Brisbane or visited those centres to ensure matters there are dealt with promptly. Local registries are required to send details of all new proceedings to the Brisbane court, and statistics showing current matters and chronological detail. In this way the PEC can ensure matters filed in other centres including places which are not regularly visited by judges on circuit do not languish. The practice of reviewing or calling over matters by telephone has been enthusiastically embraced by lawyers outside Brisbane who avoid travel and agency costs, and it has also worked very well with self-represented parties who are able to attend court without undue expense or inconvenience, and a degree of informality.

These reforms are consistent with the tradition that the PEC is always ready to sit where and when parties require, and in places which are remote or unusual. The PEC judges throughout Queensland are constantly amenable to arrangements which ensure local residents see and hear the cases which affect their towns and neighbourhoods.

Additional reforms introduced in Brisbane and Southport involve more active case management, and greater emphasis on Alternative Dispute Resolution. All matters seeking hearings in those places are now required to attend pre-callover review hearings and, in larger matters, several reviews may be undertaken. At those hearings the parties are required to report on progress and discuss and receive orders about such matters as the nature and extent of the evidence to be adduced, timetables for the early exchange of experts' reports and the duration and nature of hearings.

The effects have been salutary. In shorter matters, parties who can resolve their disputes are now most likely to have achieved compromise before the callover for the sittings in which the matter is listed, with the benefit that callover lists are much more manageable and predictable. In long matters, trials have been dramatically shortened. The most vivid example is a Southport case originally estimated by the parties to require thirteen weeks hearing time. With the active and creditable cooperation of the parties and their lawyers, Judge Rackemann was able to impose directions which reduced the eventual trial to only ten hearing days.

ADR has been encouraged. At directions hearings for new matters the parties are now expected to show they have considered ways in which the dispute might be resolved other than through trial, and required to include orders that experts meet at an early stage in conclave without parties or lawyers and attempt to reduce areas of dispute. Mediation and Case Appraisal, using the *Uniform*

Civil Procedure Rules has been ordered in some matters. Again the effects have been pleasing, with issues and hearing times at least reduced and, in a good proportion of matters, the prospects of early compromise plainly enhanced. These practices remain under review, with ongoing consideration of their use in ways which are responsive to the particular elements of the jurisdiction.

To that end procedural changes in other similar jurisdictions have been followed and studied. The Chief Judge met with the Chief Judge of the New South Wales Land and Environment Court and Judge Wilson has met with the heads of jurisdiction in New South Wales and Victoria, and was invited to the joint annual conference of those courts in Canberra in June 2005. The radical changes introduced in NSW involving single court-appointed experts, and the concurrent hearing of the evidence of expert witnesses, have been closely monitored, including consultation with lawyers working in the NSW jurisdiction.

The Chief Judge, Senior Judge Skoien and the listings judges in Brisbane and Southport have continued to meet regularly with members of the legal profession. This remains a useful forum for both groups, with frank exchanges of views about practical aspects of list management, and procedural issues. The meetings are well attended and the professions appear to enjoy and appreciate them. They also enable the judges to flag, and invite discussion about, the changes which have been introduced.

Some PEC judges used those meetings to announce practical changes to their conduct of trials, not without some disquiet from some senior lawyers: the commencement of cases 'on site', and pre-trial delivery of experts' reports. Adoption of these methods has not been universal. Its judicial adherents must be willing to read the experts reports before the trial date, and often arise very early to be at the subject site for a pre-hearing inspection. Their contention is that, by these means, lengthy openings from counsel are rendered unnecessary, and trials are also shortened because the first day is not wholly or mostly consumed with those openings, a subsequent inspection, and the reading of reports.

In Brisbane systems for managing current files have been revised so that cases cannot languish in the Registry, or become moribund. Parties are discouraged from adjourning matters to indeterminate dates, and old files back to the year 2000 in which nothing has occurred for long periods have been searched out and are being reviewed and hence revived, or finished. This more active method of file management has involved a great deal of extra work for Registry staff. The administrative staff of the Higher Courts Registry provide support to the PEC. The Brisbane PEC List Manager, Ms Alfina Tomarchio, has been of invaluable assistance, the contact between the parties and the profession, and the PEC judges in Brisbane. She is the public face of the Registry and the Court and has discharged that office with efficiency and grace.

Changes to the courts' statistical records were settled with the active contribution of the Chief Judge. The previous figures were prone to inaccuracy, and did not contain sufficient in the way of recording developments in caseloads. The new method will remove these defects and provide much more useful information about the court's progress and trends.

The PEC annual conference was not held at its usual time before Easter this year, but will occur in August. The Minister for Environment, Local Government, Planning and Women has continued her Department's practice of providing funds for this conference and to assist in providing the PEC judges with current texts and casebooks on issues arising in the jurisdiction. The Chief Judge and Judges Wilson and Rackemann again attended the QELA conference in 2005, and addressed the delegates. It is a forum for informal and frank exchanges between the members of the court, the legal professions, and senior experts about this important jurisdiction.

The judges of the PEC also work in the civil and criminal lists of the District Court. Their acceptance of commissions in the PEC is essentially voluntary, and involves an acknowledged burden: cases in the jurisdiction are never simple and frequently complex and difficult, and require much out of hours work considering and drafting judgments. Delivery of judgments nevertheless

remains, overall, remarkably quick. This application by the judges enhances the good operation of the PEC which, with active case management and no decline in the speed of its lists in the past year, remains at an acceptable standard. In the absence of any current indication the proposed merger will be proceeding imminently and, hence, that change in the courts practices would be inappropriate the judges of the PEC will strive to improve its procedures in ways which maintain that standard.

Judge Milton Griffin SC, Judge Alan Wilson SC, Judge Michael Rackemann

The Health Practitioners Tribunal

The Health Practitioners Tribunal was established by the *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* which came into force on 11 February 2000. The Tribunal is the ultimate disciplinary body for some eleven health professional groups, those being medical practitioners, chiropractors, dentists, dental technicians and prosthetists, occupational therapists, optometrists, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists and speech pathologists. The Tribunal also exercises an appellate jurisdiction under the Act hearing appeals against decisions made by the various professional Boards and other disciplinary panels set up under the legislation.

The Chief Judge is the chairperson of the Tribunal and all Judges are members of the Tribunal. The Chief Judge nominates a Judge of the court as the constituting member for a particular hearing. The hearing is conducted before the constituting member who sits with assessors appointed from gazetted lists, two from a list of members from the relevant profession and one from a public list of persons of good standing in the community.

Although all questions of law and fact must be decided by the Judge, the constituting member may have regard to the views of the assessors on factual issues as the member considers appropriate.

Throughout the year the operation of the Tribunal was coordinated by Judge O'Brien with the assistance from time to time of Judge Forde, Judge Richards and Judge Griffin SC.

As with all other work dealt with by the Court, the practice has been to allocate a number of designated weeks during which the Tribunal will sit during the year. After the necessary interlocutory steps have been completed, matters are set down for hearing during those sittings. This system provides greater certainty for the parties, the practitioners and the assessors whose attendance is necessary for particular hearings. It also contributes to the more efficient disposition of the wide range of work that comes before the Court during the year. The Court listings however maintain a degree of flexibility such that, subject to availability of assessors, any urgent matters can be brought on at relatively short notice.

The Tribunal remains a relatively new jurisdiction for this Court. There has however been a continued steady increase in the number of matters being referred to the Tribunal during the year. There was also a marked increase in the number of directions hearings conducted during the year and there are again indications that the volume and complexity of work flowing to the Tribunal will increase further in the future. The bulk of the work before the Tribunal continues to come from the Medical Board of Queensland (61% of all referrals and 75% of all appeals) although there has been an increase in the number of referrals from the Psychologists Board and the number of appeals from the Chiropractors' Board.

It remains a matter of ongoing concern that there is a lack of suitable courtroom and chambers within the Law Courts Complex in Brisbane to accommodate sittings of the Tribunal. The Tribunal has been required to sit in rooms at 40 Tank Street.

Once again the Court must acknowledge the invaluable assistance provided by the many assessors who have sat on the Tribunal throughout the year and by those members of the Registry staff who have assisted as Tribunal Registrars.

Childrens Court

The Childrens Court of Queensland is a specialist jurisdiction established under the *Childrens Court Act 1992*. The President of the court is Judge O'Brien and some other 15 Judges of the court also hold commissions under the Act. The work of the court has shown a significant increase over the past twelve months, primarily as a result of amendments to the *Juvenile Justice Act 1992* which have resulted in indictable offences involving children being dealt with, almost exclusively, in the Childrens Court.

On present indications it is likely that this increased volume of work will necessitate the granting of additional Childrens Court commissions to Judges of the District Court.

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.

Judge Kerry O'Brien, President of the Childrens Court

The Regional Centres

The court sits in Brisbane and the regional centres where some Judges are based. The regional centres are located at Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Maroochydore, Southport, Beenleigh and Ipswich. 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.

Circuit Centres

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

A list of the 35 centres (excluding those with a resident Judge) to which the court travelled on circuit during 2004-2005 appears below:

Aurukun	Bamaga	Bowen	Bundaberg
Charleville	Charters Towers	Clermont	Cloncurry
Cooktown	Cunnamulla	Dalby	Doomadgee
Emerald	Gladstone	Goondiwindi	Gympie
Hughenden	Innisfail	Kingaroy	Kowanyama
Lockhart River	Longreach	Mackay	Maryborough
Mornington Island	Mount Isa	Normanton	Palm Island
Roma	Stanthorpe	Toowoomba	Thursday Island
Warwick	Weipa	Yarrabah	

Remote Circuits

Circuits to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities continue to form an important part of the court's calendared sittings. The circuits involve sentence matters only, as facilities do not exist in the communities for jury trials. The circuits have an educative and deterrent aspect as the community can see at first hand the penalties imposed for various offences. The circuits also allow the Judge to meet with elders, community representatives and community justice groups.

The organisation of the circuits requires intensive administrative and coordination effort on the part of the Judges and associates.

In the year under report the Judges sat on circuit in the Gulf (Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton); Lockhart River and Cooktown; Thursday Island and Bamaga; the Cape (Weipa, Aurukun, and Kowanyama); Yarrabah and on Palm Island.

On 30 November 2004, Judge Bradley attended the Law Stick Ceremony at Aurukun. The Law Stick was commissioned by the Aurukun Justice Group with the help of funding from the Queensland Law Society. Judge Bradley was invited to accept the Law Stick on behalf of the justice system and it was installed onto the bench. The Law Stick will remain on the bench as a permanent reminder of the coming together of white and black law. The young boy (pictured), Robin Koowarta, who handed the Law Stick to Judge Bradley, is the grandson of John Koowarta, one of the prime movers behind the Wik native title action.



Committees

The membership of the Judges' Committees⁹ at 30 June 2005 was as follows:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Convenor: Judge Shanahan

Members: Judge Nase
Judge Forde
Judge Pack
Judge Bradley

Civil Procedure

Convenor: Judge Robin QC

Members: Judge McGill SC
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann

Conferences and Judicial Education

Convenor: Judge Dick SC

Members: Judge Dodds
Judge Rackemann

Criminal Law

Convenor: Judge Robertson

Members: Judge Shanahan
Judge Dick SC
Judge Griffin SC

Court Planning

Convenor: Judge Wilson SC

Members: Senior Judge Skoien
Judge Dodds
Judge Richards
Judge Dick SC
Judge Griffin SC

Regional Judges

Convenor: Judge Richards

Members: Judge Bradley
Judge Robertson

Salaries and Entitlements

Convenor: Judge Botting

Members: Judge Robin QC
Judge Wilson SC
Judge Rackemann

⁹ The Chief Judge is an ex officio member of each Committee

Judge Michael Shanahan and Judge Philip Nase

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 judge's conferences;
- To develop and improve the relationship and understanding between the court and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and
- To keep other judges and the community informed of such improvements and developments.

During the 2004-2005 financial year remote circuits were performed to the Gulf (Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton) on two occasions, to the Cape (Weipa, Aurukun and Kowanyama) on two occasions, to Thursday Island on two occasions, to Bamaga, Cooktown, Lockhart River and Palm Island. On 10 September 2004 Judge Bradley conducted sentence proceedings at Yarrabah for the first time. She held meetings with the Yarrabah Shire Council and the Community Justice Group as well as various other community groups. It is expected that the District Court will sit at Yarrabah two or three times a year.

On 30 November 2004 Judge Bradley represented the District Court at the placing of a Law Stick in the courthouse at Aurukun. The Law Stick Ceremony was considered by the Aurukun Community Justice Group to be fundamental to signifying the meeting of Aboriginal and "white Australian" law in Aurukun.

After a meeting in May 2004 with representatives of the Cherbourg community and the Chief Judge, Judge Dodds and Judge Shanahan, various correspondence was forwarded to the Attorney-General requesting consideration to upgrading the Murgon courthouse to hear jury trials so that local matters could be heard there rather than at Kingaroy. In that way eligible citizens from the surrounding district could perform jury service. Whilst, ultimately, the facilities at Murgon could not be upgraded, a review by the Attorney-General of jury districts saw the inclusion of the Murgon/Cherbourg district into the Kingaroy jury district. Citizens of that district eligible for jury duty will commence to be summonsed for the District Court sittings commencing 29 August 2005.

Requests were also made of the Attorney-General for an upgrade of the community court room at Cherbourg so that District Court sentence proceedings could be held there. In the interim, sentence proceedings involving Murgon and Cherbourg residents have been held in Murgon since September 2004. With some upgrading of the Cherbourg court room Judge Robertson was listed to hear sentence matters there in August 2005.

As a result of the destruction of the Palm Island courthouse, the Court was unable to continue the circuits to Palm Island. Judge Pack has requested the Registrar Townsville to write to the Palm Island Council advising of the Court's wish to resume circuits and inviting comments on any foreseeable problems. On 14 February 2005 the Chief Judge wrote to the Attorney-General requesting that consideration be given, when planning the rebuilding of the Palm Island courthouse, to it being a separate building from the police station.

Letters were also sent to the Attorney-General requesting consideration be given to the refurbishment of courtrooms at Lockhart River and Yarrabah.

Judge Shanahan continues as a member of the national AIJA Indigenous Cultural Awareness Committee.

The Committee is still very concerned over the lack of availability of appropriately trained interpreters in aboriginal languages, particularly in North Queensland. The Queensland Legal, Constitutional and Administrative Review Committee wrote to the Attorney-General about this issue after comments made in last year's annual report. The Attorney-General responded that there were a number of practical difficulties in the provision of appropriately trained interpreters. Not the least of these was that there were many different indigenous languages or dialects across Queensland and that interpreter accreditation was only available for Wik Mungkan and Dyirbal languages, as well as Torres Strait Creole. The Attorney-General noted there was not a large pool from which potential indigenous interpreters could be drawn.

On 18 May 2005 the Chief Judge again wrote to the Attorney-General concerning the issue. This was in the light of a specific request by members of the Aurukun Justice Group for formal training as interpreters. The Attorney-General responded on 30 June 2005 again noting the practical difficulties and commenting that "significant work is required to encourage Indigenous language speakers to request an interpreter so that they can be properly heard." The Attorney-General commented that the recently released Indigenous Justice Strategy outlined a range of strategies and initiatives which will help deliver meaningful services for indigenous Queenslanders.

The judges remain concerned that insufficient is being done to provide appropriate training and encourage participation in the training which is available. Whether accused persons or witnesses properly understood proceedings, particularly those held in remote communities, is a major concern for the administration of justice.

Recently the co-ordinator of the Aurukun Community Justice Group approached a leading expert in the field of interpreting services for indigenous people in an endeavour to provide interpreter training for a number of community members. Funding for that endeavour is currently being sought.

On 15 April 2005 the Chief Judge wrote to the Attorney-General raising grave concerns held by the judges as to the plight of children and young people of the Cape York communities, particularly in relation to a perceived increase of petrol sniffing and the lack of supervision for community based orders. The Chief Judge requested that the correspondence be forwarded to the Premier and the Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors.

The Attorney-General responded on 27 May 2005 and detailed the response of Queensland Health in relation to substance abuse problems in indigenous communities in North Queensland. This involved a number of initiatives aimed at combating petrol sniffing. On 24 June 2005 the Acting Premier responded on behalf of the Premier. The response detailed a number of initiatives across a number of Departments to address the problem of petrol sniffing. In relation to the problem of supervised orders, the issue is the subject of further investigation. On 26 May 2005 the Regional Director, Far North Queensland Region of the Department of Communities met with Judge Bradley in Cairns to consider the issue. Judge Bradley was assured that more regular visits to the Cape communities would be made by Departmental representatives to supervise young people on community based orders.

On 29 June 2005 the Chief Judge wrote to the Premier noting the response of the Acting Premier and commented that the steps being taken for prevention and treatment of these problems was heartening and that the details of the strategies and plans as they related to particular communities would be of assistance to the Judges who visited those remote communities on circuit.

The Committee continues to be concerned about training initiatives being provided to the members of Community Justice Groups throughout Queensland. On 8 December 2004, Judge Forde spoke at a conference for co-ordinators of Community Justice Groups organised by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy (DATSIP). The Chief Justice also spoke to the conference. This was, however, the only training session the judges were invited to attend throughout the financial year.

Further consultations are occurring with DATSIP in relation to ongoing training for Community Justice Groups.

The judges are still of the view that an Indigenous Liaison Officer should be appointed to the Courts. The Attorney-General has responded that the issue is addressed in the Indigenous Justice Strategy.

The judges are concerned at the impact the recent restructure of Aboriginal Legal Services will have on the provision of legal services to indigenous Australians particularly in relation to remote circuits.

CIVIL PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

The Committee has continued to operate as in previous years, on an ad hoc basis, usually on references from the Chief Judge, to assist in preparing Practice Directions and in formulating the Court's response to invitations for comment on proposed Commonwealth or State legislative or regulatory proposals involving changes bearing on changes in jurisdiction or practice, rules of evidence and the like, as well as more substantive enactments that may affect the Court's work. The Committee are available to consult with any judges about topics within their broad remit, and members perform educative functions by presenting at conferences of the judges (and outside events).

Two members of the Committee Judge Robin QC and Judge McGill SC sit on the Chief Justice's Rules Committee, which has statutory responsibility to monitor and keep responsive to current needs not only the Uniform Civil Procedure Rules, but others such as the Criminal Practice Rules and Legal Practitioners Admission Rules and to review pertinent legislation.

COURTS PLANNING COMMITTEE

The principal work of the Committee revolved around the preparation of a Core Principles Statement, to be presented to the Judges' Annual Conference in August 2005. Members considered the work undertaken by Dr Attracta Lagan following her address to the Conference in 2004, which included interviewing a number of Judges and preparing a draft of the matters such a Statement might include.

The Committee also prepared a checklist of matters about which newly appointed Judges should receive information, instruction and advice, which was delivered to the Chief Judge for her assistance in formulating the New Judge's Manual which is presented to each Judge on appointment.

Individual members of the Committee also assisted the Chief Judge by attending, in company with her or as her delegate, meetings concerning the construction of new facilities for child witnesses within the Court building; plans for the construction of a new Higher Courts Building; Information Technology; and like matters.

CONFERENCES AND JUDICIAL EDUCATION 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 on the recommendation of the committee. Judges of this Court attended conferences including those on self-represented litigants, cost proportionality and the copyright forum; as follows:

Senior Judge Skoien attended meetings and conferences as the representative of the District and County Courts of Australia and of the District Court of Queensland on the National Judicial College of Australia and the Judicial Conference of Australia respectively.

Judges O'Brien and Shanahan attended the National Judicial College of Australia's Phoenix Judges' Conference from 23-27 May 2005.

In August 2004, Judges Bradley, Forde, Noud and Richards attended the National Judicial College of Australia's Judgment Writing Workshop in August 2004.

From 22-26 June 2005 a number of Judges attended the 18th Biennial Conference of the Judges of the District and County Courts of Australia in Melbourne. The speakers included Professor Gillian Triggs who spoke on International Law, the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, Father Peter Norton, Policy Director Jesuit Social Services, Judge Jennifer Coate, President, Children's Court, Victoria, and Claire O'Neill, the former Mayor of Dandenong. There was a session devoted to Defamation. The speakers were Justice Bernard Bonjourn, Supreme Court of Victoria, Jeremy Sher QC and Jeremy Rusken QC. Other sessions included Public Perceptions of the Judiciary, Jury Management, Sentencing the Mentally Ill and Cross-Cultural Awareness.

On 27 July 2004, Judge McGill SC attended the Crown Copyright Consultation Forum, State Library of NSW, Sydney

On 30 July 2004, Judge O'Sullivan and Judge Shanahan attended the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration Seminar "Child Witnesses- Best Practice for Courts", a presenter and convenor, Parramatta District Court. Sydney.

On 25 February 2005 Judge Wilson SC attended the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration Case Management Workshop in Sydney.

On 5-6 May 2005 Judge Wilson SC and Judge Rackemann attended the joint NSW Land and Environment Court and Victorian Civil and Administration Tribunal Conference in Canberra.

On 17 September 2004 Judge Shanahan attended Forum on Self-represented Litigants, jointly hosted by Australian Institute of Judicial Administration and the Federal Court of Australia, Sydney

From 17-19 September 2004, Judge Dick SC attended the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration Annual Conference on Court Governance, Sydney

From 18-22 October 2004, Judges Rackemann and Tutt attended the National Judicial Orientation Program, Sydney

On 19 November 2004 the Chief Judge and Judge Shanahan attended the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration Jury Research Conference, Melbourne

Registry Services and Administrative Support

The offices of the Principal Registrar and Administrator and Sheriff provide administrative support to the Supreme and District Courts of Queensland.

Ashley Hill (Information Technology Manager), Ian McEwan (Director, State Reporting Bureau), Cameron Woods (Deputy Court Administrator), Chief Judge Wolfe, Ken Toogood (Principal Registrar and Administrator), Neil Hansen (Sheriff), Aladin Rahemtula (Supreme Court Librarian)

COUNTER RELATIONS

The amalgamation of the registry services in August 2003 provided a single service point for clients attending the Supreme Court and District Court Registries. The Higher Courts Registry, as it is now known, is located on the ground floor of the Brisbane Law Courts Complex.

On average, approximately 1,100 clients per week attend the Higher Court registries.

The counter currently has two wireless computer terminals and printers that are available for use by both the public and members of the legal profession to enable them to conduct searches and view document lists on court files at no financial outlay.

The renovations to the Registry counter which were referred to in the previous annual report have been partially completed. Work commenced on 1 April 2005 and the main section of the counter reopened for business on 30 June 2005. Prior to the reopening, counter services were temporarily relocated to another location.

The remainder of the Higher Courts Registry service area is due for completion early in the next financial year.

DEFAULT JUDGMENT

A party may end proceedings early by filing certain applications under the *Uniform Civil Procedure Rules 1999*. One of the methods used is to file an application for default judgment.

DECISION ON PAPERS

A party may file an application to have an order made by a Judge without the need for an oral hearing. When a decision is given, the registrar forwards to each party involved a copy of the order and reasons for decision.

Applications of this nature have decreased as compared to the previous reporting period.

CONSENT ORDERS

The court strongly encourages the use of Rule 666 of the Uniform Civil Procedures Rules to obtain a consent order from the Registrar where parties agree upon the terms of an order prior to the scheduled hearing date.

The complexity of consent orders issued by the Registrar has increased. For example, consent orders for leave to commence personal injury proceedings and for property adjustments relating to de facto relationships are more frequently being sought from the Registrar.

Applications for consent orders have continued to increase during this reporting period.

WAIVER OF FEES

Impecunious persons can apply to a registrar for a filing fee waiver and exemption.

A total of 26 applications were made to the registrar during the reporting period with 4 applications refused. The total value of fees waived is \$9300.

COSTS ASSESSMENT

When the court orders one party to pay another party's costs, unless the costs are agreed between the parties, an assessment of costs takes place before an assessing registrar.

The party entitled to the costs must file an itemised bill of its costs and serve the party liable for the costs. Initially, the assessment of costs involves a directions hearing before the registrar to ensure all procedural matters have been complied with. At the directions hearing, if there is nothing to delay the matter, a date will be given for assessment.

A party that is dissatisfied with the result of an assessment may seek the registrar's reasons for his/her determinations at the assessment. An application for re-consideration must be filed within 14 days of the conclusion of the assessment. An assessing registrar will endeavour to provide a response to an application for re-consideration within 3 months of the receipt of the application. However, the pressure of work may not allow the registrar to meet this self-imposed deadline.

FUNDS IN COURT

The *Court Funds Act* 1973 permits litigants to pay or deposit monies into court.

The number of accounts as at 30 June 2005 is 40 accounts with a monetary value of \$1,739,222.94.

The registrar obtained an order from the court on 26 May 2005 to transfer the sum of \$1058.19 to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The transfer was made up of two accounts that had not been dealt with during the previous six years other than under continuous investment or payment of interest.

FILING BY POST

There has been a significant increase in the number of documents filed by post during the year, with 1526 so filed in the year under review compared with 1175 in the previous year. Legal practitioners and self represented litigants find this service useful, as it alleviates the need to personally attend the Registry or engage town agents. The current postal dealing fee is \$18.50, this fee is in addition to any other fee charged.

Document Filings

2400 Claims and 1473 Originating Applications were created in the courts civil database Civil Information Management System (CIMS) this year, in addition 38,232 document filings have been recorded in the database.

E-Searching

The E-Searching facility is located at www.ecourts.courts.qld.gov.au/eSearching/eSearching.htm.

A search of the Court civil records can be conducted at any hour of the day free of charge. Data is updated in real time, although this is contingent on network availability. This service is widely used by both the legal profession and the public. Use of this service in the Higher Courts has increased with 460,000 searches being conducted, 128,000 of which were conducted outside normal business hours.

A guide to e-Searching is located on the website.

LISTINGS DIRECTORATE

The Listings Directorate is responsible for listing arrangements for the Supreme and District Court. It is managed by the Listings Coordinator – ListingsCoordinator@justice.qld.gov.au. The officers of the Listings Directorate are responsible for the administrative management of the Criminal, Civil, Planning and Environment Court, Childrens Court and Applications Lists. The relevant list manager is the first point of contact and practitioners are actively encouraged to use email for such contact. Since February 2005, the Listings Directorate has had assigned to it an officer to facilitate the administrative requirements imposed by the *Evidence (Protection of Children) Amendment Act 2003*. The Affected Child Witness–Evidence Officer - ACW-Evidence@justice.qld.gov.au ensures that the tapes are securely stored, edited, copied and delivered to the registry where the trial is being held.

CRIMINAL REGISTRY

During the past year the method of recording and processing the results of criminal hearings in the District Court has changed significantly with the phasing out of the Criminal Register System database, which was introduced in 1988, and the introduction of Queensland Wide Interlinked Court in March 2005. This followed the introduction of QWIC financials during the previous 12 month period. The new system allows all District Courts throughout the state to electronically view and transfer files to facilitate expedient disposal of criminal matters. In the fullness of time, as enhancements take place, it is envisaged that it will be possible for the majority of court result documents to be produced from QWIC. It is also envisaged that consistent statistical reports will be able to be obtained and provide an accurate snapshot of the court's position in dealing with criminal matters.

ALTERNATE DISPUTE RESOLUTION

Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR) is a process of resolving matters before the Court. The benefits of ADR include a more expeditious and less expensive resolution of disputes.

ADR in the District Court exists in two ways, namely mediation and case appraisal. Mediation is an agreed resolution of the matter with the assistance of an independent third party. Case appraisal

is a process where a case appraiser (a court-approved experienced lawyer) provisionally decides the dispute.

Legal practitioners and parties have embraced the ADR process which has resulted in reduced court waiting lists.

The names of court-approved mediators and case appraisers, their particulars and charge rates can be accessed on the court's website (www.courts.qld.gov.au).

STAFF TRAINING

The focus on staff training has shifted to increase staff knowledge of court process, procedures and the roles of the various sections within the organisation. Courses aimed at increasing the computer skills and client services have also been well attended. In total there have been some 229 attendances by registry staff to all in house and external courses offered. This is a 60% increase in the last 12 months.

PROJECTS

Many projects were undertaken during the year with a view to improving client service and work processes. The following are some of the more significant projects undertaken by the Brisbane registry during the year:

- * Review of registry practices, web site information and client services;
- * Transfer of registers to archives;
- * Implementation of District Court records disposal authority;
- * Review of fees and charges;
- * Revision of Workbook Training Manual;
- * Review of Exhibit Management;
- * Records storage assessment;
- * Review of desk manuals.

Back row (left to right): *John McNamara, Rod Goody, Eric Kempin, Bob Houghton, Alex Hams, Angela Karageozis, Michael Reeves, Ian Mitchell, Neil Hansen, Ken Toogood*
Front row (left to right): *Neville Greig, Leanne McDonnell, Jo Stonebridge, Peter Irvine*

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Jury Management

The Sheriff's Office in Brisbane issued 188,042 Notices to Prospective Jurors for the court sittings of the 31 District and 11 Supreme Courts throughout the State.

In Brisbane, 6,101 jurors received summonses to appear for jury service, of which 4,574 jurors attended at least once. Of those attending, 2,265 jurors were empanelled at least once in the 236 jury trials. Of those trials, 68 extended outside normal court hours, and 38 juries needed accommodation overnight. Three juries were provided with accommodation for more than one night.

A review of jury fees in the previous year resulted in jury fees being increased in August 2004. The remuneration for empanelled jurors was increased to be in line with the Queensland minimum wage.

This year the Queensland Jury System, after a successful migration from the CITEC mainframe environment to in-house servers at the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, was implemented state-wide at every Higher Court location.

Enforcement

The Sheriff is responsible for the enforcement of court orders by way of certain types of warrants.

During the year 96 enforcement warrants were received by the sheriff for enforcement. 55 warrants were for Possession of Land, 39 for Seizure and Sale of Property, 1 Arrest Warrant and 1 for Delivery of Goods. Of these, 16 Possession of Land enforcement warrants, the Arrest warrant and the Delivery of Goods warrant were successfully enforced.

Bailiff's Office

During the year bailiffs and casual bailiffs were assigned to the following courts:

- * 1,484 days of criminal court sittings;
- * 199 days of civil court sittings;
- * 183 days of applications court;
- * 228 days of Planning and Environment Court sittings;
- * 39 days of Health Practitioners Tribunal sitting;
- * 35 days of administrative duties for the registry.

Information Technology

HIGHER COURTS IT STEERING COMMITTEE

The Higher Courts IT Steering Committee performs an important oversight role for the Higher Courts IT Team. The Steering Committee provides direction to the IT Manager, oversees IT projects managed from within the Higher Courts and is briefed on Departmental projects or initiatives that directly effect the Higher Courts. The composition of the Steering Committee during 2004-2005 was:

- Mr Jim McGowan - Deputy Director-General, Justice Administration, Department of Justice and Attorney-General (**Chair**)
- Justice Atkinson
- Chief Judge Wolfe
- Justice Alan Wilson SC
- Mr Phil Argyris – Director, Information Management Branch, Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Mr David Franklin – IT Manager, Law Society of Queensland
- Mr David Groth – Director, Courts Strategy Unit, Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Mr Ian McEwan – Director, State Reporting Bureau, Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Mr Pat Morgan – Director, Finance, Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- Mr Ken Toogood – Principal Registrar and Administrator, Higher Courts, Department of Justice and Attorney-General

ESTABLISHING LINKS WITH THE LEGAL PROFESSION

During 2004-2005 the Manager IT and some Judicial officers participated in a series of meetings with members of the profession to better understand the way law firms, large and small, use technology in their practice. The objective of these meetings was to determine if there were potential synergies between IT aspirations of industry and the Courts that could be exploited. The meetings have been quite informative and it is hoped that more meetings will be held during 2005-2006.

The Manager of IT also participated in the Queensland chapter of the Association of Legal Support Managers (ALSM) to better understand the challenges faced by the profession in bringing complex litigation matters to trial. The Higher Courts worked with the ALSM over the changes to Form 19 and in the drafting of a Practice Direction and Sample Document Protocol related to Document Management. The Courts recognise the expertise and acknowledge the contribution of the ALSM members.

The changes introduced through the Form 19 changes were presented on 24 November 2004 by the ALSM at the QUT Conference - Courts for the 21st Century: Information Management. The Higher Courts continue to enjoy a productive relationship with the QUT Faculty of Law.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY TEAM RE-STRUCTURE

In 2003-2004 a new organisational structure was approved for the Higher Courts IT staff. During 2004-2005 the positions created through that re-structure were filled and the IT team now has a full compliment of operational support staff.

EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENTS

A rolling program of IT asset replacement continued through 2004-2005 with a significant number of PCs replaced in Brisbane and regional Queensland. Additional IT equipment was also installed in selected regional courthouses to assist Judges who circuit to those centres.

The equipment supporting the Courts electronic service delivery systems was also upgraded to stay ahead of the ever increasing demand.

DONATION OF IT EQUIPMENT TO THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

The program of asset replacement allowed the Courts to donate refurbished IT equipment to the Solomon Islands Courts. For the last 25 years the Queensland Supreme Court has been providing assistance to the High Court of the Solomon Islands with Queensland judges sitting on the Bench there. With the support of the Director-General of the Department of Justice, Microsoft Australia, commercial software providers, the Higher Courts supplied 26 PCs and 6 printers configured as 6 independent networks for deployment throughout the Solomon Islands.

eCOURTS

The popularity and take up rate of the existing eCourts services remained high during 2004-2005. The eSearching facility (www.ecourts.courts.qld.gov.au/eSearching/eSearching.htm), in particular, proved to be extremely popular with over 460,000 searches being conducted, 128,000 of which were conducted outside normal business hours. These figures represent an impressive 57% increase from the 2003-2004 usage figures, highlighting the value of this service to the legal sector and the people of Queensland. On average there are now over 1,300 on-line searches conducted every business day. This capability and the frequency with which it is used represents a real boon to the Courts clients and demonstrates the Courts commitment to enhanced service delivery.

WIRELESS INTERNET IN COURTS

During 2004-2005 the Higher Courts participated in a whole-of-government trial of wireless Internet access technologies. While very limited in scope the trial clearly established the benefits of such technology to Courts clients and a project has been established to deploy the technology more widely in south east and regional Queensland during 2005-2006.

CIVIL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – CIMS

During 2003-2004 the Higher Courts planed to replace the aging CIMS system and worked to that end. Before starting work on a replacement the Higher Courts actively worked towards promoting a whole-of-courts system that would significantly enhance information flow between jurisdictions. This Enterprise Courts Management System would subsume the replacement system envisaged for CIMS.

Such a project is a major undertaking and, if endorsed by all stakeholders and funded, will take a number of years to implement.

CRIMINAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Higher Courts introduced QWIC, the system used to manage Criminal matters in the Magistrates Courts, during 2004-2005. The introduction of QWIC allowed the existing Mainframe based solution to be retired.

Related Organizations

THE COURT LIBRARY

During the year under review the Library has continued to develop a range of information services for the District Court Judges, whilst also pursuing publishing and community outreach programs. This broad scope of activities demonstrates the diversity of challenges and opportunities embraced by the Library, in the face of rapidly evolving technology and changing user needs. Successes to date may be attributed to an enterprising and innovative spirit which has flourished with the benefit of secure funding; generous support from the District Court, practitioners and the Department of Justice; and enthusiastic staff. In particular, the genuine interest and patronage of members of the judiciary, the legal profession and the wider community has been pivotal to Library achievements.

Since 1999 the Library has secured donations, sponsorships and special grants valued at over half a million dollars. This year, with the assistance of key partnerships, the Library was able to initiate a series of significant projects including: comprehensive review of Courts website (with assistance of ICLR); enhancement of collection resources (with assistance of the Faculty of Law at QUT and ICLR); Women in the Law in Queensland publication (with assistance of Department of Justice and Faculties of Law at QUT, UQ and Griffith University); legal heritage digitisation (with assistance of ICLR and Allens Arthur Robinson); Shakespeare and the Law Exhibition 2006 (with major sponsorship from Konica and QLS Grants Committee).

The Library realises the maximum benefit of these special contributions by continuing to pursue alternative strategies to minimise operating expenses, including the regular review of collections and services to assess relevancy and cost effectiveness. One such review sought feedback from District Court Judges with respect to the judicial current awareness service, which this year circularised 2,342 items on subjects as diverse as law, politics, history, philosophy, science and technology. All respondents elected to retain the service with 87% rating its usefulness highly.

Collection Development and Access Strategies

Collection development and access management was a priority this year. A major review of the core research collection in Brisbane was undertaken with a view to weeding duplicate titles which are no longer required, and directing available funds to updating superseded volumes and enhancing available information resources.

The Library was also able to effectively utilise available duplicate titles to provide the District Court judges based at the Tank Street chambers with a working reference collection, numbering more than 2,000 volumes. Such collections ensure that judges have convenient access to core titles, in addition to the variety of alternative information made available online via the Judicial Virtual Library. Similarly, District Court judges are able to access local reference collections in ten centres throughout Queensland, and this year the Library committed 30% of the total books and subscriptions budget to the development of these collections.

The Library is exploring alternative strategies to substantially improve the depth and diversity of legal research information available to the judiciary and profession. Such strategies include a partnership with QUT Faculty of Law to relocate its Pacific legal collection to the Library where it will be maintained and made accessible to judges, practitioners, students and the public. In addition, with special funding provided by the ICLR, opportunities to expand online collections are being explored, including the purchase of e-archives of historical law reports, treatises and trials.

Information Services and Online Initiatives

In the year under review, approximately 1.2 million information requests were serviced via the Library's information gateways which include the Courts website, the Judicial Virtual Library, the online catalogue and the intranets accessible from the public information kiosks within the Brisbane, Townsville and Rockhampton courthouse libraries. Such online access points are particularly beneficial for District Court judges working in regional areas, who are able to access a wide range of legal and non-legal information from their desktop.

The Courts website remains a popular resource for judges, practitioners and members of the wider community. Freely available resources and services include over 11,000 full text Queensland judgments including 1,078 District Court judgments and selected sentencing remarks; the District Court calendar; judicial articles and speeches; Uniform Civil Procedure Rules Bulletin; forms and legislation; and other material relating to Court procedure.

This year the Library assisted the Courts in publishing the Equal Treatment Bench Book online, and also launched a free daily law list email service, which now boasts approximately 1,300 subscribers. Continuing feedback is positive and users have requested additional judgment alerting and value added services. These are being considered as part of a comprehensive review of the Courts website which was substantially progressed this year following the provision of special funding by the Incorporated Council of Law Reporting. In addition to implementing best practice standards pertaining to design, navigation and accessibility, the Library will be working closely with the Court and other organisations such as the ICLR to improve the scope and currency of information available on the website.

Research and Publishing

In preceding years the Library has published two major works, *Sir Samuel Griffith the Law and the Constitution* and *Queensland Judges on the High Court*. However, in 2004 the Library commenced its most significant research and publication project to date, *Women in the Law in Queensland*.

This ambitious project is being undertaken to commemorate the centenary of the enactment of the *Legal Practitioners Act 1905*, which enabled women to be admitted as barristers and solicitors for the first time in Queensland and aims to collect and publish biographical and statistical material highlighting the invaluable contribution of women in the law in Queensland. The 800 page volume, to be launched in November 2005, will feature profiles of 52 prominent women, including the six women currently serving in the District Court. In addition, the book incorporates historical and contemporary commentary on the topic, and statistics collected and made available for the first time. This work, which will provide an invaluable resource for future researchers and which will also inform the general public, would not have been possible without the sponsorship and special funding provided through partnerships with a number of organisations including the Department of Justice and the Faculties of Law at QUT, UQ and Griffith University.

Additional publishing projects undertaken include *Table Talk of the Selden Society in Queensland: Papers delivered at the Annual General Meeting of the Selden Society in Brisbane 1989-2004* and the first oral history volume *Shared Vision: Recollections of the life and achievements of an inaugural Queensland Churchill Fellow, Dr Brian Wilson*. In 2006 the Library will publish the second oral history volume addressing the achievements of Mr O'Keeffe, former President of the QLS.

Community Outreach and Schools Program

During the year under review approximately 7,500 students visited the Court as part of the Schools Program, taking advantage of the variety of activities offered including: legal research seminars; tours of the Rare Books Precinct and historical displays; viewing cases; and 'Talk to a Judge'. The schools particularly appreciate the opportunity to speak with a judge, and judges of the District Court generously participated in this program, meeting with 19 school groups during the year. Further enhancement of the schools online booking facilities is underway to enable more automated administration of the increasing number of participating schools.

In addition, many visitors to the Court enjoyed the variety of exhibitions curated in the Rare Books Precinct including *Shaping Queensland: Power and Hart Families*, *Porcelain and Stone* fine art exhibition and memorial displays to commemorate the lives of Sir Walter Campbell AC QC and Sir Dormer Andrews. These visitors included 35 Chief Justices and senior Judges who met in the ceremonial Banco Court as part of the 11th Conference of Chief Justices of Asia and the Pacific.

In the coming year the first regional legal heritage display facilities will be launched to coincide with the inaugural Supreme Court History Program lecture in Cairns, to be delivered by Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton AO. These activities are being funded with the generous financial support of members of the Cairns legal profession.

Digitising Queensland's Legal Heritage

As mentioned, a portion of the special grant provided by the ICLR has been committed to a series of programs to digitise and compile Queensland legal history records, with the goal of making these widely available via online databases. Initiatives currently underway include the early Queensland cases project, which aims to summarise previously unreported early Queensland cases. In addition, the Library is sponsoring a project by well-known Townsville historian, Dr Dorothy Gibson-Wilde, to compile an online register of legal practitioners and law firms in North Queensland between 1861 and 1961. In the coming year a major initiative will be the digitisation and archiving of a significant donation of historically significant 19th century opinion books by Allens Arthur Robinson.

The Library has also continued its oral history program, which this year recorded in digital format five interviews with prominent members of the legal profession. The program has been extended to regional centres to coincide with the launch of the Supreme Court History Program in Cairns, Rockhampton and Townsville.

Library Committee

The Library's governing Committee comprises representatives from each stakeholder group including the judiciary, barristers, solicitors and the Department of Justice, thereby ensuring that Library users are directly responsible for collection development, service initiatives and resource allocation. The Library is indebted to Chief Judge Wolfe for her ongoing support and invaluable assistance as a member of the Committee. His Honour Judge Wilson SC and His Honour Judge Robin QC also continued their excellent work on the Collection Sub-Committee.

Conclusion

The mission of the Library is to serve the "judiciary and the legal profession in the administration of justice in Queensland", a mission which has not been rendered obsolete by advances in information technology or the internet. Rather the Library is exploiting these tools to develop more sophisticated information services which benefit the Court, practitioners and the wider community. This is the key component of the Library's strategic direction for 2005-2010.

As part of this strategy, the Library will be focusing on: enhancing value-added services via online gateways; streamlining access to diverse electronic resources; expanding the publication of Courts information on the Courts website; and adopting new technology which assists in delivering services more effectively. The goal is to consolidate existing disparate gateways to create a cohesive and competitive information service. It is proposed that electronic training facilities within the Library be substantially improved to support this focus on web-based services, and the Library is discussing opportunities for this development with a major sponsor.

Once again, the success of these endeavours will rely upon the collaborative efforts of the Library's key stakeholders, the Court, the legal profession and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, and on the ongoing close partnerships with key organisations such as the Bar Association, Queensland Law Society and Incorporated Council of Law Reporting.

STATE REPORTING BUREAU

The State Reporting Bureau provides a recording and/or transcription service for the Supreme, District and Magistrates Courts, Director of Public Prosecutions (Police Record of Interview), Industrial Court and Industrial Relations Commission. The Bureau also provides reporting services for the Medical Assessment Tribunal, Mental Health Court and Land Appeal Court.

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

Transcripts of proceedings are produced by audio recording or computer-assisted transcription (CAT).

The Bureau is in the process of implementing a state-of-the-art digital recording and transcription system. This system when fully implemented will enable improved access to the audio and/or transcription of proceedings.

The Bureau's provision of an accurate and timely transcript of proceedings is critical to the Court's capacity to carry out work efficiently and the administration of justice. Any reduction in the service provided by the Bureau will reduce the Court's capacity to do so.

Appendix 1: Court Statistics – Comprehensive Table of Statistics

CRIMINAL JURISDICTION

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
ANNUAL CASE LOAD			
Brisbane*			
At start of year	766	836	855
Presented during year	2,826	2,777	2,592
Disposed of during year	2,713	2,768	2,586
Undisposed	836	855	878
Townsville*			
At start of year	211	145	153
Presented during year	596	410	430
Disposed of during year	589	404	432
Undisposed	145	153	125
Cairns*			
At start of year	106	88	119
Presented during year	630	420	539
Disposed of during year	548	394	477
Undisposed	88	119	126
Rockhampton*			
At start of year	80	175	144
Presented during year	277	276	343
Disposed of during year	175	304	293
Undisposed	175	144	206
Southport*			
At start of year	199	147	183
Presented during year	573	672	629
Disposed of during year	549	618	609
Undisposed	202	183	194
Maroochydore			
At start of year	50	18	33
Presented during year	477	527	418
Disposed of during year	502	501	423
Undisposed	18	33	87
Ipswich			
At start of year	52	91	155
Presented during year	572	628	498
Disposed of during year	531	493	565
Undisposed	40	155	180
Beenleigh			
At start of year	228	216	183
Presented during year	580	571	565
Disposed of during year	574	607	532
Undisposed	216	183	187

*The difference between the "undisposed of at end of year" figure 2002-03 and the "At start of year" figure for 2003-04 results from the Courts adopting a new, and more rigorous, methodology.

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Toowoomba			
At start of year	3	14	33
Presented during year	179	203	189
Disposed of during year	162	187	209
Undisposed	14	33	32
Maryborough			
At start of year	100	64	16
Presented during year	294	304	236
Disposed of during year	339	324	251
Undisposed	64	16	24
Mackay			
At start of year	31	26	59
Presented during year	168	209	212
Disposed of during year	173	176	201
Undisposed	26	59	67
Bundaberg			
At start of year	5	5	12
Presented during year	134	95	121
Disposed of during year	136	90	116
Undisposed	5	12	23

AGE OF CRIMINAL CASES DISPOSED OF IN 2004-2005	<3	3-6	Total <6	6-9	9-12	>12	Total
	months	months	months	months	months	months	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Brisbane	41.3	24.2	65.5	14.0	6.3	14.2	100
Townsville	44.2	14.6	58.8	12.5	6.9	21.8	100
Cairns	62.7	19.9	82.6	5.7	2.3	9.4	100
Rockhampton	45.4	8.5	0	12.6	4.4	29.0	100
Southport	57.2	15.0	72.2	6.3	5.6	16.0	100
Ipswich	56.5	23.5	80.0	10.1	3.5	6.4	100
Maroochydore	70.5	12.0	82.5	3.7	5.3	8.5	100
Beenleigh	53.9	22.6	76.5	8.5	6.8	8.3	100
Toowoomba	68.8	12.5	81.3	8.2	2.9	7.7	100
Mackay	53.0	20.0	73.0	12.0	7.5	7.5	100
Maryborough	73.2	13.2	86.4	5.2	2.8	5.6	100
Bundaberg	72.4	12.1	84.5	3.4	3.4	8.6	100

CIVIL JURISDICTION

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
DOCUMENT FILINGS RECORDED BY CIMS	42,478	39,632	38,232

ORIGINATING PROCEEDINGS

Claims	2,729	2,444	2,400
Originating applications	790	1,474	1,473
Total	3,519	3,918	3,873

CIVIL CASES ENTERED FOR TRIAL

ANNUAL CASE LOAD

Brisbane

At start of year	114	72	71
Entered for trial during year	352	267	250
Disposed of during year	394	268	221
Undisposed	72	71	100

Townsville

At start of year	3	8	6
Entered for trial during year	22	17	12
Disposed of during year	17	19	12
Undisposed at end of year	8	6	12

Cairns

At start of year	6	8	5
Entered for trial during year	24	19	17
Disposed of during year	22	22	11
Undisposed at end of year	8	5	11

Rockhampton

At start of year	3	2	5
Entered for trial during year	5	11	5
Disposed of during year	6	8	9
Undisposed at end of year	3	5	1

Southport

At start of year	23	23	20
Entered for trial during year	69	55	81
Disposed of during year	69	58	64
Undisposed at end of year	23	20	37

Ipswich

At start of year	4	2	2
Entered for trial during year	3	3	6
Disposed of during year	5	3	7
Undisposed at end of year	2	2	1

Maroochydore

At start of year	25	22	14
Entered for trial during year	59	47	41
Disposed of during year	62	55	44
Undisposed at end of year	22	14	11

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Toowoomba			
At start of year	7	4	5
Entered for trial during year	8	8	7
Disposed of during year	11	7	8
Undisposed at end of year	4	5	4
Beenleigh			
At start of year	6	4	3
Entered for trial during year	10	8	9
Disposed of during year	14	9	8
Undisposed at end of year	2	3	4
Maryborough			
At start of year	2	12	10
Entered for trial during year	18	17	2
Disposed of during year	8	19	9
Undisposed at end of year	12	10	3
Mackay			
At start of year	4	6	9
Entered for trial during year	15	9	5
Disposed of during year	13	6	11
Undisposed at end of year	6	9	3
Bundaberg			
At start of year	2	1	1
Entered for trial during year	5	5	5
Disposed of during year	6	5	2
Undisposed at end of year	1	1	4

**PROPORTION OF CASES DISPOSED OF WITHIN
12 MONTHS OF ENTRY FOR TRIAL**

Brisbane	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Townsville	100.0%	100.0%	92.3%
Cairns	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Rockhampton	100.0%	87.5%	100.0%
Southport	94.2%	100.0%	98.5%
Ipswich	80.0%	100.0%	91.7%
Maroochydore	98.4%	92.6%	97.4%
Toowoomba	81.8%	100.0%	100.0%
Beenleigh	98.4%	92.6%	98.3%
Mackay	100.0%	100.0%	50.0%
Maryborough	100.0%	100.0%	71.4%
Bundaberg	100.0%	60.0%	100.0%

PERCENTAGE DISPOSITION OF CASES WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF ENTRY FOR TRIAL - 2004-2005	<3	3-6	6-9	9-12	>12	Total
	months	months	months	months	months	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Brisbane	29.9	59.7	10.4	0	0	100
Townsville	15.4	30.8	30.8	15.4	7.7	100
Cairns	46.2	38.5	7.7	7.7	0	100
Rockhampton	44.4	33.3	22.2	0	0	100
Southport	53.0	30.3	9.1	6.1	1.5	100
Ipswich	0	16.7	25.0	50.0	8.3	100
Maroochydore	34.2	36.8	21.1	5.3	2.6	100
Beenleigh	41.1	50.5	6.3	0.5	1.7	100
Toowoomba	20.0	40.0	40.0	0	0	100
Mackay	25.0	16.7	8.3	8.3	41.7	100
Maryborough	28.6	28.6	0	42.9	0	100
Bundaberg	50.0	0	0	50.0	0	100

APPEALS

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
APPEALS HEARD			
Brisbane	105	97	112
Cairns	31	22	58
Townsville	17	8	7
Rockhampton	1	4	10
Maroochydore	17	24	22
Southport	43	24	34
Beenleigh	7	5	6
Ipswich	14	15	41
Maryborough (includes Hervey Bay)	8	8	0
Toowoomba	5	12	8
Mackay	3	2	3
Bundaberg	9	0	6
Other	NA	NA	NA
Total	260++	221	307

++corrected total

APPLICATIONS

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
ANNUAL CASE LOAD			
Brisbane	1,421	1,997	1,786
Cairns	317	314	387
Townsville	209	253	271
Rockhampton	149	115	136
Maroochydore	179	319	381
Southport	492	303	205
Ipswich	55	78	54
Maryborough (includes Hervey Bay)	79	60	100
Toowoomba	27	63	54
Mackay	46	47	42
Bundaberg	28	43	26
Gladstone	15	11	13
Gympie	10	13	17
Mt Isa	11	15	11
Dalby	6	0	3
Other	N/A	N/A	NA
Total	3,044+	3,631	3,486

DECISIONS ON THE PAPERS

Applications filed	66	47	27
Orders made on paper	50	39	23
Oral hearings required	4	2	2

JUDGMENT BY DEFAULT – ENTERED BY REGISTRAR

Applications	530	492	452
Judgment entered	317	354	352

CONSENTS UNDER RULE 666 DEALT WITH BY THE REGISTRAR

Number of applications considered	463	595	850
Orders made	422	494	390
Refused	41	101	460

+corrected totals

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT JURISDICTION

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
ANNUAL CASE LOAD – ALL CENTRES (includes Brisbane, Townsville, Cairns, Rockhampton, Southport, Maroochydore)			
At start of year	182	271	283
New cases – Total	490	601	722
Disposed – Total	401	589	571
Undisposed	271	283	434
Brisbane			
At start of year	73	189	220
New Cases – Directions	312	338	387
New Cases – Consent Orders	100	149	182
New Cases – Total	412	487	569
Disposed – Judgments	58	58	62
Disposed – Withdrawals	105	143	106
Disposed – Consent Orders	133	271	267
Disposed – Total	296	456	435
Undisposed	189	220	354
Townsville			
At start of year	23	22	30
New Cases – Directions	4	14	7
New Cases – Consent Orders	2	0	10
New Cases – Total	6	14	17
Disposed – Judgments	3	3	5
Disposed – Withdrawals	1	1	7
Disposed – Consent Orders	3	2	11
Disposed – Total	7	6	23
Undisposed	22	30	24
Cairns			
At start of year	18	5	7
New Cases – Directions	2	11	36
New Cases – Consent Orders	0	8	0
New Cases – Total	2	19	36
Disposed – Judgments	4	3	13
Disposed – Withdrawals	9	12	5
Disposed – Consent Orders	2	2	14
Disposed – Total	15	17	32
Undisposed	5	7	11
Rockhampton			
At start of year	2	7	1
New Cases – Directions	6	2	4
New Cases – Consent Orders	1	0	0
New Cases – Total	7	2	4
Disposed – Judgments	1	4	2
Disposed – Withdrawals	1	3	0
Disposed – Consent Orders	0	1	2
Disposed – Total	2	8	4
Undisposed	7	1	1

	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
Southport			
At start of year	30	24	3
New Cases – Directions	34	37	31
New Cases – Consent Orders	5	0	2
New Cases – Total	39	37	33
Disposed – Judgments	15	7	7
Disposed – Withdrawals	15	8	3
Disposed – Consent Orders	15	43	15
Disposed – Total	45	58	25
Undisposed	24	3	7
Maroochydore			
At start of year	36	24	22
New Cases – Directions	24	39	45
New Cases – Consent Orders	0	3	18
New Cases – Total	24	42	63
Disposed – Judgments	26	22	13
Disposed – Withdrawals	9	10	4
Disposed – Consent Orders	1	12	35
Disposed – Total	36	44	52
Undisposed	24	22	33

PERCENTAGE DISPOSITION OF CASES WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF ENTRY FOR TRIAL - MAJOR CENTRES 2004-2005	<3	3-6	6-9	9-12	>12	Total
	months	months	months	months	months	
Brisbane	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Townsville	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cairns	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rockhampton	0%	75.0%	25.0%	0%	0%	100%
Southport	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Maroochydore	30.7%	23.1%	15.3%	7.6%	23.1%	100%

COST ASSESSMENT - REGISTRAR

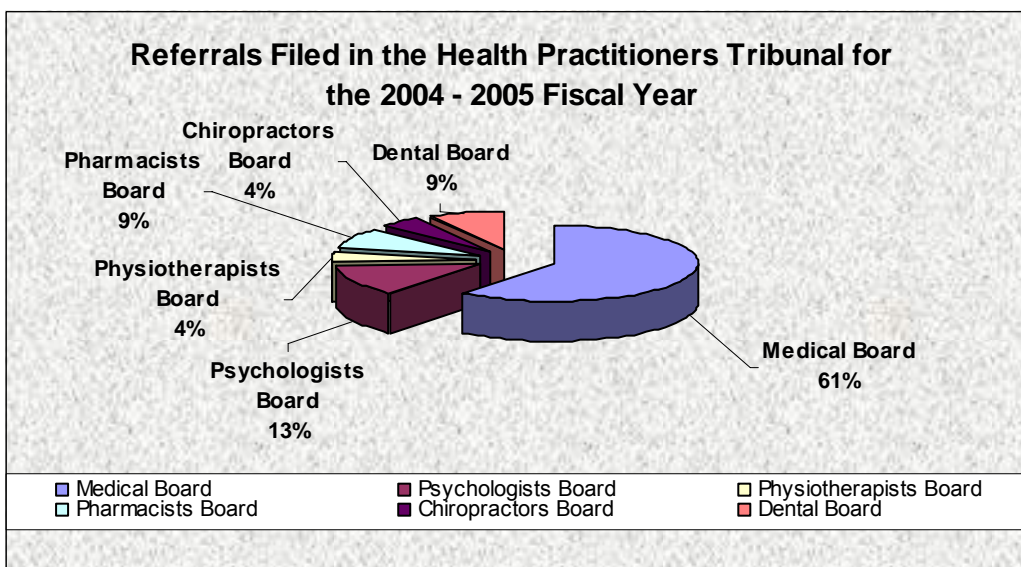
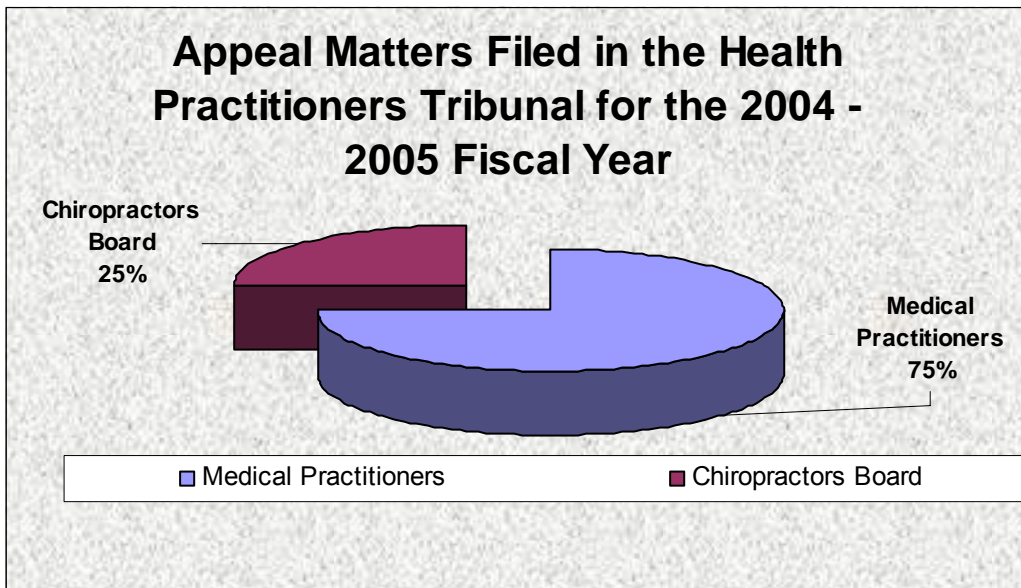
	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
APPLICATIONS FOR RE-CONSIDERATION			
Reserved as at 1 July	1	0	0
Number of applications	3	3	4
Disposed of <3 months	3	0	2
Disposed of >3 months	1	3	0
Otherwise disposed of (e.g., settled or withdrawn)	0	0	0
Outstanding as at 30 June	0	0	2

ASSESSMENT DIRECTIONS HEARINGS			
Settled	44	33	42
Adjourned	37	46	44
Default Allowance	43	40	51
Assessment date given	94	94	82
Total	218	213	219

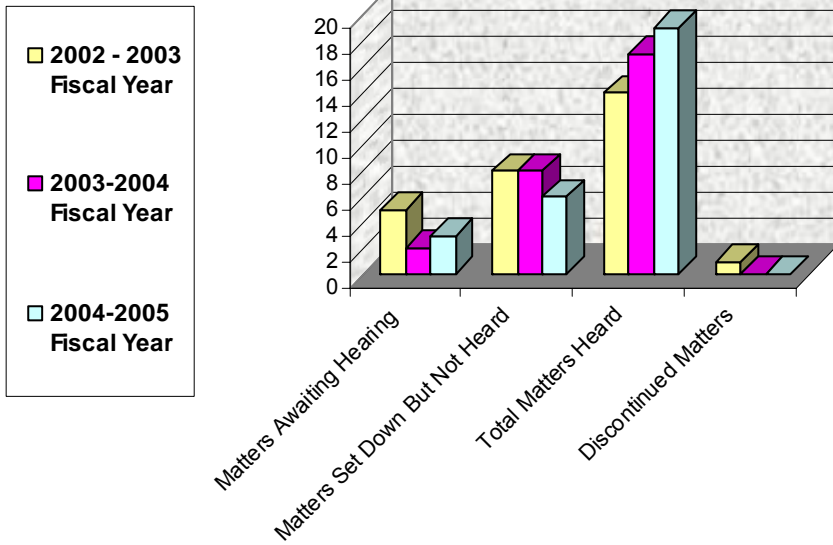
RESULT OF CASES SET DOWN FOR ASSESSMENT			
Adjourned	11	7	15
Settled	57	54	48
Assessed	28	23	37
Total	96	84	100

HEALTH PRACTITIONERS TRIBUNAL

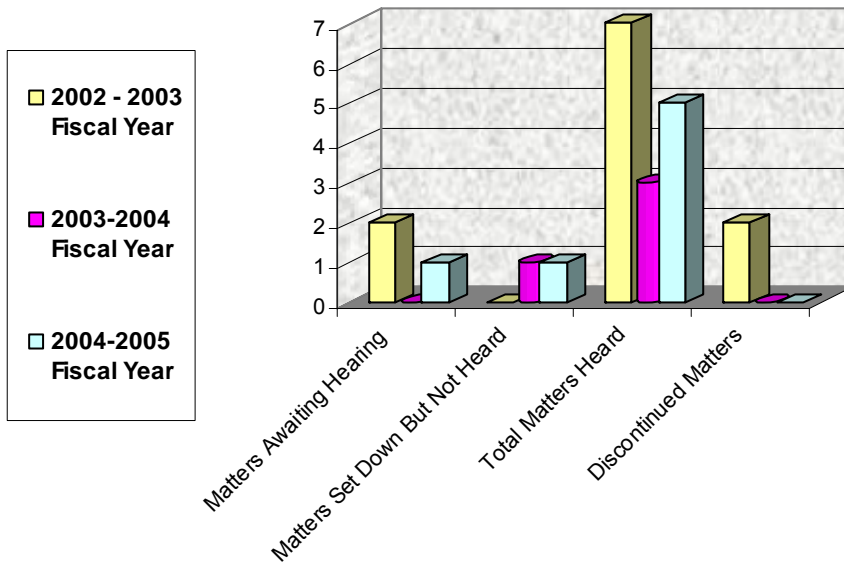
	Appeals	Referrals
CASE LOAD/NEW CASES		
Medical Practitioners/Medical Board	3	14
Psychologists		3
Physiotherapists Board		1
Pharmacists Board		2
Chiropractors Board	1	1
Dental Board		2
Total	4	23



Referral Matters in the Health Practitioners Tribunal



Appeal Matters in the Health Practitioners Tribunal



Appendix 2: Practice Directions

The following Practice directions were issued by the Chief Judge during the year and are available on the Court's website www.courts.qld.gov.au

Number	Description	Date Issued
2004/05	Applications for Adjustment of Property Interests – <i>Property Law Act 1974, Part 19</i>	8 November 2004
2005/01	<i>Evidence Act</i> – Division 4A Evidence of Affected Children (repeals Practice Direction 2004/02)	17 June 2005

Appendix 3: District Court Associates – as at 30 June 2005

Olivia Williamson, Associate to Her Honour Chief Judge PM Wolfe
Andrew McMaster, Associate to His Honour Senior Judge NA Skoien
Justin O'May, Associate to His Honour Senior Judge G Trafford-Walker
Ed Green, Associate to His Honour Judge W Howell
Scott Neaves, Associate to His Honour Judge I McG Wylie QC
Licia Millar, Associate to His Honour Judge KS Dodds (Maroochydore)
Dan Ford, Associate to His Honour Judge GS Forno QC
Ciaran Houston, Associate to His Honour Judge HWH Botting
Peter Winkle, Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Noud
Martin Keetels, Associate to His Honour Judge KJ O'Brien
Susan Downes, Associate to His Honour Judge NF McLauchlan QC
James Dillon, Associate to His Honour Judge PD Robin QC
Rebecca Graham, Associate to His Honour Judge BC Hoath
Robyn Blewer, Associate to His Honour Judge JE Newton (Southport)
Sarah Keys, Associate to Her Honour Judge H O'Sullivan
Brendan Manttan, Associate to His Honour Judge PJ White (Cairns)
Nathan Turner, Associate to His Honour Judge PG Nase
Kathrine Fordham-King, Associate to His Honour Judge JM Robertson (Maroochydore)
Alexander Griffin, Associate to His Honour Judge MW Forde
Alexander White, Associate to His Honour Judge CJL Brabazon QC
Scott Malcolmson, Associate to His Honour Judge DJ McGill SC
Edith Frankling, Associate to His Honour Judge CF Wall QC (Townsville)
Michael O'Dea, Associate to His Honour Judge RD Pack (Townsville)
Lily Brisick, Associate to His Honour Judge N Samios
Gordon Roberts, Associate to His Honour Judge GT Britton SC (Rockhampton)
Kate McMahan, Associate to Her Honour Judge D Richards (Ipswich)
Naomi de Costa, Associate to Her Honour Judge S Bradley (Cairns)
James Duffy, Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Shanahan
Stacey Coker, Associate to Her Honour Judge JM Dick SC
Darren Davies, Associate to His Honour Judge AM Wilson SC
Cara Thomson, Associate to His Honour Judge ME Rackemann (Southport)
Thomas Hiew, Associate to His Honour Judge WH Tutt (Beenleigh)
Zachary Rich, Associate to His Honour Judge MJ Griffin SC
Michael Bonasia, Associate to Her Honour Judge Ryrie
Meg Frisby, Associate to His Honour Judge Dearden