

Editorial

Sources of Law and Legal Information in the Far East

This is one of our themes for this issue, which will continue in Autumn 2007. Our first three authors are: Sarah Spells of SOAS; Joe Kennedy of Baker & McKenzie. Wong & Leow in Singapore and Charlotte Pache of Merrill in Hong Kong. They have each provided extremely helpful guides to the jurisdictions in which they operate – in Sarah's case, her jurisdiction is fiendishly difficult, as her patch includes huge amounts of information in reasonably incomprehensible-to-us languages.

It has proved extremely difficult to commission articles for this theme, so I am doubly grateful to these three authors for their labours.

Current Topics

Our current topics include articles by Nick Holmes on blogging in law. Nick explains what a blog is and what it is used for. He discusses the various law blogs currently available, the constituent parts of a blog and how to set one up. He discusses whether blogging is good for business and how to go about publishing your blog.

Carl Clayton from SINTO in Sheffield describes its activities in the field of library co-operation and also discusses the very real issues involved in public access to legal information in the light of the electronic publishing revolution. Despite initiatives such as the Statute Law Database and BAILII, it is still difficult for members of the public to source legal information resources, which may only be available online and for fee. The Government is beginning to take an interest in this issue with a couple of recent reports being commissioned, but there is still some way to go.

Paulette Storey from Citizens Advice continues on this theme of public access to legal information via obtaining advice from local Citizens Advice Bureaux. Paulette explains how the comprehensive information systems, both for in-bureau use by volunteer advisers and for use by the general public via the internet, are put together. David Byrne concludes our current topics with an account of the innovative methods used by BT to capture knowledge within its commercial, legal and regulatory division.

Joint Study Institute Papers

We publish the two final papers from the JSI. Gillian Triggs seeks to find out whether the existing principles

of public international law are "fit for purpose" in responding to contemporary threats to collective security. She looks at the regulation of the use of force, the need to balance the rights of states with humanitarian concerns and the relationship between human rights and the rules applicable to detainees. Martin Bowman considers the changing nature and role of treaties in the application of international law, and also whether they have evolved sufficiently to deal with our globalised society.

From Our Own Correspondent(s)...

In this issue we are very pleased to welcome as our overseas correspondent Uma Narayan, who recently spent some time at the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies. On her return to Bombay she very kindly wrote us an extensive article on the sources of Indian legal information. Uma considers the evolution of the Indian legal system, how legislation is enacted and the system of case law. She describes both print and electronic sources of information.

Checklist

James Mullan and Clare Ireland from CMS Cameron McKenna have produced a very useful checklist for those of you who are considering moving all aspects of your serial control and circulation activities to a subscription agent.

BIALL Conference 2007

By the time you read this issue, the 2007 Conference will be over. We plan to publish a selection of the Conference papers in the Autumn issue, together with the results of the latest SLS/BIALL Academic Law Library Survey.

Cambridge University Press

We are pleased to say that our relationship with CUP as our publisher is going from strength to strength. The number of subscribers has risen dramatically due to the many consortia deals that CUP has organised. Ella Colvin, our publisher, and Susan Perkins, our journals manager continue to provide invaluable help and support and we look forward to a continuing happy relationship.

Christine Miskin