

# Preface

Despite the range and exceptional quality of scholarly work on public law in Australia, there has not to date been a monograph focused on the particular needs of practitioners – advocates, solicitors and judges – working in the field. This publication is intended to remedy that deficiency. It is a collection derived from a series of seminars on the “hardy perennials” of public law practice, frequently-arising subjects that are touched on or dealt with in other publications, but usually not from the distinct perspective of a practitioner, nor in a single work.

The seminars have been held under the auspices of the Constitutional and Administrative Law Section of the New South Wales Bar. That section started as two separate groups, one dealing with constitutional law and the other administrative law, established in 1996 at the instigation of David Jackson AM QC. The purpose of the sections was to further the Bar’s tradition of excellence in these fields, and to promote and broaden the technical expertise of members. Jackson QC was convener of the Constitutional Law Section from 1996 until 2001, when the role was taken over by Stephen Gageler SC. The Administrative Law Section was convened by Alan Robertson SC from 1996 until his Honour’s appointment in 2011. When Gageler SC was appointed Solicitor-General in 2008, the two sections were amalgamated under the leadership of Robertson SC. The section has held several seminars each year of a uniformly high standard, as well as an annual dinner. The work of the section has been underpinned by its secretaries, formerly Stephen Lloyd SC, more recently Stephen Free, Kate Richardson and James King.

Professional legal education under the auspices of the Bar Association in New South Wales has its modern origins in the seminars on evidence instigated by CLD Meares QC as President of the Bar Council in 1962 that led to the excellent collection, *Seminars on Evidence*, edited by Harold Glass QC and published in 1970. Meares QC considered that the focus of such education “should be concerned with severely practical questions” (Preface, p v). Before the enactment of the “uniform” *Evidence Act 1995*, that collection provided most of what an advocate with basic university training in the law of evidence needed to know in the daily conduct of trials.

This publication also celebrates that tradition, and the commitment and energy of those who established and led the section, and of those who have contributed to its deliberations.

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