



AUSTRALIAN JUDICIAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

ABOUT THE AJOA

The Australian Judicial Officers Association was established in 1993 originally named the Judicial Conference of Australia. The Association changed to its current name in March 2021. Its objects relate to the public interest in maintaining a strong and independent judiciary within a democratic society that adheres to the rule of law.

The Association consists of judges and magistrates drawn from all jurisdictions and levels of the Australian court system. Membership of the Association is open to all serving and retired judges and magistrates in Australia and to masters and judicial registrars. The membership now stands at over 700, which is significantly more than half of the judicial officers in Australia.

Membership of the AJOA is at historically high levels, which reflects the fact that the AJOA has been very active in pursuit of its objectives. The most important of these is to preserve and protect the independence of the judiciary.

The Association's Governing Council is currently chaired by Justice Glenn Martin AM of the Supreme Court of Queensland.

The Association achieves its objects in various ways:

- defending the judiciary and judicial officers against unwarranted attacks and responding to such attacks;
- informing the community about the proper role of the judiciary and the significance of an independent judiciary;
- communicating with other arms of government, for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding;
- seeking improvements in the administration of justice and accessibility of the judicial system; and
- undertaking of supporting research that will benefit these aims.

The Australian Judicial Officers Association has contributed to public debate on issues of importance to judicial officers, including correcting the more egregious misunderstandings or misrepresentations by the media.

The Association holds a Colloquium each year. Many of the papers from the AJOA's colloquiums are available on the AJOA's website (www.ajoa.asn.au).

The Association is funded almost entirely by membership subscriptions. The membership fee for the year 2021-2022 is \$240.00 (which includes GST) and the fee for retired judicial officers is \$60.00 (which includes GST).

The AJOA has published several handbooks:

- Judge for Yourself: a Guide to Sentencing in Australia, which explains to the public and the media the judicial role in sentencing.
- Working with the Media: a Handbook for Australian Judicial Officers, which provides basic information in order to assist judicial officers to understand better how the media works and to appreciate the factors that tend to motivate journalists in their dealings with courts.
- Judicial Independence from the Executive, which examines the development of this important context in Australia.
- Judges in Vice-Regal Roles, which considers this matter in depth in the Australian context.

The AJOA has undertaken a number of projects on a variety of topics, including –

- complaints against judicial officers
- processes for the appointment of judicial officers
- judicial retirement benefits
- the independence of the judiciary
- judicial exchanges
- a judicial appointments comparative study
- temporary judicial officers.

From time to time representations have been made to various governments and government bodies in regard to a range of issues. For example, representations were made in response to some matters in the Productivity Commission's report, Access to Justice Arrangements.

The AJOA has appeared before a committee of the Senate inquiring into Australia's judicial system and the role of judges.

The AJOA has also occasionally made representations to governments outside Australia in regard to matters which challenge the independence of the judiciary under the rule of law.

Each year is as challenging for the Australian judiciary as the previous year. It is critical that Australia's judicial officers continue their support for their national professional association.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact the AJOA's Secretariat at secretariat@ajoa.asn.au or visit the website, www.ajoa.asn.au.

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