



Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices

## **RVAHJ e-news**

**April 2008 Edition No. 20**

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### **In this e-news:**

- Annual dinner 2008
- Contact details for newly appointed honorary justices
- RVAHJ corporate plan and confidential membership satisfaction survey
- Update of your RVAHJ contact details and availability
- Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages - Certified True Copies
- Internal Audit Committee established
- Long term Association Secretary resigns
- Statutory declarations
- Passwords make your email safe
- How to receive e-news direct from the RVAHJ

### **Annual dinner 2008**

The 2008 RVAHJ Annual Dinner will be held on Friday 22 August 2008 at the Treacy Conference Centre, 126 The Avenue, Parkville (i.e. the same excellent venue used last year.)

This year's guest speaker is high profile jurist, Justice Lex Lasry QC . Justice Lasry has a remarkable legal background and has advocated in many precedent setting cases.

Put the date in your diary now. For bookings, see the details within the forthcoming June 2008 Custodes.

### **Contact details for newly appointed honorary justices**

Following discussions with the Department of Justice (Honorary Justice Office), the DOJ has advised that it will provide to every new HJ appointee, a contact list including the contact details of the RVAHJ.

The RVAHJ welcomes and appreciates this DOJ initiative.

### **RVAHJ corporate plan and confidential membership satisfaction survey**

The RVAHJ will undertake a confidential membership satisfaction survey as a initial step in developing a RVAHJ corporate plan.

The overall aims of the corporate plan are to:

- produce a concise page plan which sets an agreed direction for the RVAHJ for the next 3 to 5 years
- establish 4 or 5 priorities to focus upon
- better target where we allocate limited volunteer and paid resources
- establish a simple on-going corporate planning mechanism
- engage members and establish a transparent and inclusive planning process.

During late May 2008, an eight page questionnaire will be posted to 300 members chosen at random from the RVAHJ data base. The questionnaire will cover many aspects of the RVAHJ including current and future services, how well we communicate, membership fees and member engagement. The results of the confidential survey will help develop the corporate plan – and ensure the RVAHJ stays relevant to members' needs

As part of the corporate planning process, a planning day for members will be held in September 2008.

In the meantime, branch's may like to discuss:

- How good is the RVAHJ at communication with members and branches? How could it improve?
- What services would members like the RVAHJ to provide?
- What does the RVAHJ currently do well?
- What is the RVAHJ not good at doing?
- How do you see the RVAHJ in three years?

#### **Update of your RVAHJ contact details and availability**

The RVAHJ is undertaking a major upgrade of its data base to ensure the information we hold is accurate and up to date.

Thank you to all those members who have already returned their "Confirmation of personal details" (located on the reverse of the address sheet on the last edition of Custodes), if you haven't returned yours, please do so as soon as convenient.

Alternatively, details can updated on line ([www.rvahj.org.au](http://www.rvahj.org.au)) emailed ([admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au)), or faxed (03) 9525 7765.

#### **Registry of Births Deaths and Marriages - Certified True Copies**

Information from the branches indicates that there is still some confusion about Certified True Copies being lodged with the Registry of Births, Death and Marriages (RBDM)

The RBDM requires that certified true copies being lodged with it, must be certified by a Police Officer. The RBDM will reject any copy certified by Honorary Justices.

So, to be clear, Honorary Justices:

- should not certify true copies of documents to be lodged with the RBDM
- may certify copies of documents produced by the RBDM (such as a birth certificate) for lodging with other organisations.

Unfortunately, the RVAHJ has become aware that some Honorary Justices are certifying true copies for use within the RBDM, in the knowledge that the copies will be rejected, and hoping that the disgruntled customers may complain to the Registry to induce a change its requirements. The RVAHJ cannot condone this HJ behaviour – it is counter productive, creates further unnecessary stress and aggravation for the customer, and diminishes the professional standing of all Honorary Justices.

Whilst the RVAHJ has been advocating against the RBDM's certification requirement since 2004, the RBDM's current position is that certification by police officers is warranted because:

- police have greater knowledge of ongoing and emerging identity fraud issues
- police have knowledge and expertise in assessing the authenticity of key proof identity documents such as drivers licences
- police can act immediately in cases where fraudulent identification is presented for certification.
- interaction with the police provides a clear deterrent to those seeking to submit fraudulent documents.

The RVAHJ is still seeking avenues to have our members able to certify true copies for use in the RBDM.

### **Internal Audit Committee established**

The RVAHJ board, at its April meeting, approved the Terms of Reference for an Internal Audit Committee (IAC).

The IAC will be an essential plank in the Association's good governance strategy by providing strong and independent oversight of the entire organisation – including the RVAHJ board, Association operations and branch administration.

The Audit Committee will be chaired by RVAHJ director Michael Tiliacos (BA BBus) and will comprise at least four other RVAHJ members (who cannot be board members). External experts may be co-opted to the IAC as required. All IAC members must have the necessary skills and/or experience to contribute to the role, whilst also being prepared to attend meetings and complete some hands-on IAC work.

The IAC's focus will not be on finding errors and laying blame but rather on helping the Association and its Branches to continually improve 'the way we do business'.

The IAC's broad assignment includes reviewing all financial and non-financial systems and encompasses independent oversight of our financial reporting systems, risk management, and ensuring the Association and its Branches comply with all relevant laws, regulations, RVAHJ rules, and best practice.

A copy of the terms of Reference will soon be available from the RVAHJ web site.

Please contact Michael Tiliacos on 9459 0665 (AH) or email [jp11146@rvahj.org.au](mailto:jp11146@rvahj.org.au) to discuss appointment to the IAC.

### **Long term Association Secretary resigns**

Long term Association Secretary, Leo King has finally hung up his pen, by resigning as a director, secretary and public officer of the Association.

Leo's contribution to the RVAHJ has been remarkable over many years – and is reflected in him being awarded a RVAHJ Life Membership in 2004. On behalf of all Association members, the Board thanks Leo for his contribution and wishes him well in future endeavours.

Leo will continue to have a focal role in the RVAHJ's in-service training program.

### **Statutory declarations**

The RVAHJ training committee recently provided the following answers to two interesting questions about statutory declarations:

#### Multiple page statutory declarations

Where a statutory declaration covers more than one sheet of paper the authorised person should number and sign each sheet at the foot to prevent the later substitution of pages. (For example: 1 of 3, 2 of 3, 3 of 3.)

The authorised witness' stamp (showing full name, address, and qualification) is only to appear on the same page as the Declarant's signature - as per any single page statutory declaration."

#### Signatory to be personally known

In some instances, the form being completed will also require that the Declarant is personally known to the authorised witness. This is not a question of proving identity and should be construed literally.

Therefore:

- if an Honorary Justice can recognize the Declarant as a acquaintance, either immediately or upon recollection, and within the stated period if a length of time is specified, the Honorary Justice should witness the signature
- if the Honorary Justice cannot recognize the Declarant as a acquaintance, either immediately or upon recollection, the Honorary Justice should politely explain the circumstances and decline their services."

### **Passwords make your email safe**

A member benefit of your Association membership is an RVAHJ email address. (e.g. [jp123456@rvahj.org.au](mailto:jp123456@rvahj.org.au))

The RVAHJ established initial default passwords for every member based on your unique JP or BJ registration number. However, it is important that you change this default password by setting a new secure password which is known only to you. (See instructions in the tables below)

When setting your new password, remember:

- you should use a combination of letters, numbers, and other special characters on your keyboard
- passwords are case sensitive, so an 'A' is not the same as an 'a'.

If you ever forget your password, contact Cathy in the RVAHJ office ph: (03) 9525 7099 or e-mail: [admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au) for assistance.

### How to receive e-news direct from the RVAHJ

RVAHJ e-news is sent to the every members' unique RVAHJ email address (eg [jp123456@rvahj.org.au](mailto:jp123456@rvahj.org.au)). If you also have a personal (non-RVAHJ) e-mail address, you can easily arrange for all RVAHJ e-mails to be forwarded to that personal address. For instructions, see below.

To receive RVAHJ 'e-news' on a regular basis, members must

- establish a mail forwarding address on the RVAHJ website; and
- change your password for the members' area of the RVAHJ website.

This is easy to do by following the steps below.

	<b>How to forward your RVAHJ email to another email address</b>
1.	Visit <a href="http://www.rvahj.org.au">www.rvahj.org.au</a>
2.	Click 'members area'
3.	Click 'web mail'
4.	Enter your user name. (Your user name is the letters 'jp' or 'bj' 'followed by your registration number e.g. jp123456)
5.	Enter your password. (Your default password is your registration number followed by the letters 'jp' or 'bj'. Eg 123456jp)
6.	Click 'options'
7.	Click ' Mail forwarding options'
8.	Enter your regular email address in the yellow box (This is the email address to which your email will be forwarded.)
9.	Do not click 'save a local copy' unless you intend to regularly read your email by visiting the RVAHJ web site.
10.	Click 'submit'
11.	Click 'sign out'

	<b>Changing your password</b>
12.	Visit <a href="http://www.rvahj.org.au">www.rvahj.org.au</a>
13.	Click 'members area'
14.	Click 'web mail'
15.	Enter your user name. (Your user name is the letters 'jp' or 'bj' 'followed by your registration number e.g. jp123456)
16.	Enter your password. (Unless you have already set a personal password, your default password is your registration number followed by the letters 'jp' or 'bj'. Eg 123456jp)
17.	Click 'options'
18.	Click ' Change password'
19.	Enter your current and new passwords where indicated.
20.	Click ' Change password'
21.	Click 'sign out'

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**Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices**

**Address:** 53 Broadway, Elwood  
**Post:** PO Box 317, Elwood 3184  
**Email:** [admin@rvahj.org.au](mailto:admin@rvahj.org.au)  
**Phone:** (03) 9525 7099  
**Fax:** (03) 9525 7765