

# Beaks stirred up over rights

**THE debate** about an Australian Bill of Rights continued last week, when Chief Justice Paul de Jersey launched a collection of essays titled *Don't Leave Us With the Bill: The Case Against an Australian Bill of Rights*.

Justice de Jersey is the most senior judicial officer to criticise a Bill of Rights.

A number of serving and retired judges have entered this debate, including former High Court judges Sir Ninian Stephen and Ian Callinan, former Tasmanian chief justice William Cox and former Federal Court judge Peter Heerey.

The debate is sure to intensify in coming months.



**There are** plenty of tips for who will fill the position of Queensland's public defender, left vacant when Brian Devereaux, SC, was recently appointed a judge. However, many in legal circles would like the position filled in-house by Legal Aid's man in the Court of Appeal, Rob East. One dark

horse for the position is now an experienced prosecutor.



**Solicitor** Tracy Lynne Geysen certainly got the ball rolling when she started Brisbane Lawyers Educating and Advocating Tougher Sentencing (for animal cruelty). BLEATS (now has more than 100 lawyers on its books, and they do pro bono work on RSPCA prosecutions. Tracy has left Barry and Nilsson Solicitors to start her own firm with Stephen White. It is the first in Australia to specialise in animal law.



**Personal injuries** law firm Trilby Misso is encouraging its staff to use their annual leave to volunteer for community service, including working overseas. Brisbane lawyer Kavita Maharaj has just spent four weeks teaching English and working with intellectually disabled children in remote and impoverished parts of India. Trilby Misso staff are provided with two days' paid leave a year

## Flirting with terminology

IT caused plenty of smirks when during a District Court appeal it emerged that a magistrate had used online dictionary Wiktionary to find the meaning of "private lap dance". The case, which had a major impact on the way adult entertainment premises advertise, arose out of a woman handing out flyers for the Gold Coast's Crazy Horse nightclub. However, it was the latest example of where the 21st century has outstripped legal terms. It is amazing the number of times there are major arguments in courts about the meaning of what are now common terms in everyday life.

to be used participating in volunteer programs.



**Here is** confirmation that half of NSW has moved to Queensland. There are now enough "cockroaches" working at the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions for a State of Origin prosecutors touch football game tomorrow. For some reason, they declined Earsay's offer to be an impartial referee.

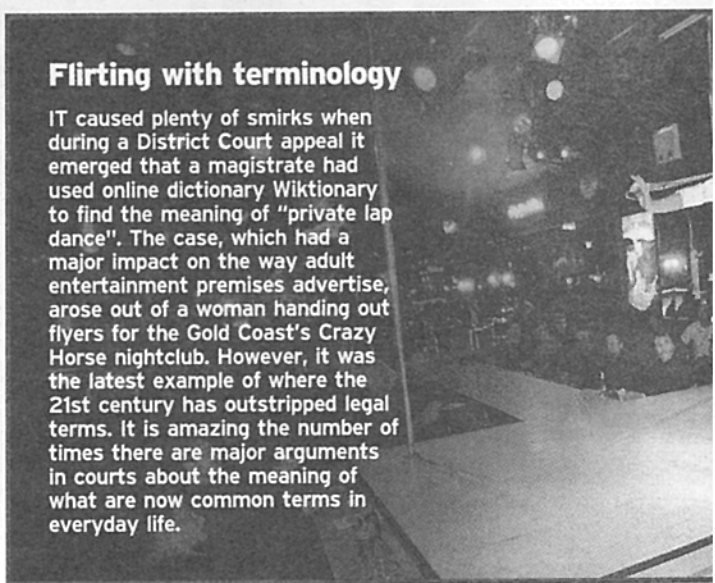


**Let's hope** the Queenslanders go better than popular senior prosecutor Ron Swanwick. We

hear golf-mad Ron was beaten last week by a visually impaired friend and Ron's brother, who hadn't played in three years.



**There were** a few raised eyebrows in the magistrate's court when a defendant gave his reason for being found with a swag of illegal weapons including swords, flick knives, knuckledusters and numchucks. He claimed to be in training to be a stuntman. While our man on the spot didn't want to be cruel, he wondered how much call there was for 165cm, 108kg stuntmen.



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